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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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Elephant)		Small Kindnesses)	Abundance)
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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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1. Surah Al Fatihah (The Opening)

Name

This Surah is named Al-Fatihah because of its subject-matter. Fatihah is that which opens a subject or a book or any other thing. In other words, Al-Fatihah is a sort of preface.

Period of Revelation

It is one of the very earliest Revelations to the Holy Prophet. As a matter of fact, we learn from authentic Traditions that it was the first complete Surah which was revealed to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). Before this, only a few miscellaneous verses were revealed which form parts of `Alaq, Muzzammil, Muddaththir, etc.

Theme

This Surah is in fact a prayer which Allah has taught to all those who want to make a study of His book. It has been placed at the very beginning of the book to teach this lesson to the reader: if you sincerely want to benefit from the Quran, you should offer this prayer to the Lord of the Universe.

This preface is meant to create a strong desire in the heart of the reader to seek guidance from the Lord of the Universe, Who alone can grant it. Thus Al-Fatihah indirectly teaches that the best thing for a man is to pray for guidance to the straight path, to study the Quran with the mental attitude of a seeker- after-truth and to recognize the fact that the Lord of the Universe is the source of all knowledge. He should, therefore, begin the study of the Quran with a prayer to him for guidance.

From this theme, it becomes clear that the real relation between Al-Fatihah and the Quran is not that of an introduction to a book but that of a prayer and its answer. Al-Fatihah is the prayer from the servant and the Quran is the answer from the Master to his prayer. The servant prays to Allah to show him guidance and the Master places the whole of the Quran before him in answer to his prayer, as if to say, "This is the Guidance you begged from Me."

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ١

ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٢

ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ٣

[1-3] In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.[1] Praise is only for Allah,[2] the Lord of the Universe,[3] the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful,[4] the Master of the Day of Judgment.[5]

مَٰلِكِ يَوۡمِ ٱلدِّينِ ٤

إِيَّاكَ نَعۡبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسۡتَعِينُ ٥

ٱهۡدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلۡمُسۡتَقِيمَ ٦

صِرَٰطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمۡتَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ غَيۡرِ ٱلۡمَغۡضُوبِ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ٧

[4-7] Thee alone we worship[6] and to Thee alone we pray for help.[7] Show us the straight way,[8] the way of those whom Thou hast blessed;[9] who have not incurred Thy wrath, nor gone astray.[10]

1Islamic culture requires a man to commence everything with the name of Allah. If this is done consciously and sincerely, it will surely produce three good results. First, it will keep him away from evil, because the very name of Allah will impel him to consider whether he is justified in associating His name with a wrong deed or an evil intention. Secondly, the very mention of the name of Allah will create in him the right attitude of mind and direct him to the right direction. Thirdly,he will receive Allah's help and blessing and will be protected from the temptations of Satan, for Allah turns to a man when he turns to Him.

2It has been stated in the Introduction to this Surah that AI-Fatihah is a prayer. It begins with the praise of Allah to Whom it is addressed in order to teach us the right way of making a supplication. We should not put forward our request bluntly and abruptly without an appropriate introduction. The right way is to acknowledge the excellences and the favors and the high position of the One to Whom we address our prayer. That is why we begin our prayer with the praise of Allah, for He is the perfection of all excellences and .is also our Benefactor. We pay homage to Allah to show that we sincerely acknowledge His excellences and also are grateful to Him for His countless favours. It should also be noted that not only Praise is for Allah but also Praise is only for Allah. This distinction is very important because it cuts at the root of the worship of any of His creation. As none of them is worthy of praise, none is worthy of worship. No man, no angel, no prophet, no so-called god, no star, no idol, in short. none of His creation inherently possesses any good quality. If one has any, it is given by Allah. Hence the Creator of these qualities alone deserves devotion, worship, gratitude, and none of His creation.

3The word Rab which has been translated into `Lord' stands for (a) Master and Owner, (b) Sustainer, Provider and Guardian, (c) Sovereign, Ruler, Administrator and Organizer. Allah is the Lord of the Universe in all these senses.

4Although the Arabic word Rahman itself is in the superlative form and denotes the attributes of beneficence and mercy in the highest degree, even this word fails to express the boundless extent of these attributes of Allah. Hence another word Rahim of the same root has been added to make up for the deficiency.

5After saying that Allah is Beneficent and Merciful, it has immediately been added that He is the Master of the Day of Judgment, so that the qualities of mercy and kindness might not mislead anyone into forgetting that on that Day He will gather together all human beings from the first to the last and require each and every one to give an account of all of one's acts to Him. A Muslim should, therefore, always keep in view the fact that Allah is not only Merciful, but He is also Just. He has, however, full authority to pardon or punish anyone He pleases, for He has complete power over everything. Therefore we should have full conviction that it lies absolutely in His power to make our end happy or sorrowful.

6The Arabic word ibadat is used in three senses: (a)worship and devotion, (b) submission and obedience, (c) subjection and servitude. Here it implies all the three, that is, We are Thy worshipers, Thy subjects and Thy slaves and We keep these relations with Thee and Thee alone and "We make none else the object of our worship in all the three senses."

7It means, We ask for Thy help because we know that Thou art the Lord of the whole Universe and Thou hast all powers and Thou art the Master of every thing. Therefore we turn to Thee for help for the fulfillment of our needs and requirements.

8That is, "Show us that way which may lead us aright in every walk of life and keep us absolutely free from errors and evil consequences and bring us success in the end." , This is the request which the servant of Allah makes to Him when he begins the study of the Qur'an. He prays to Him to guide him in every walk of life and save him from the labyrinths of doubt and uncertainty, which result from the lack of true knowledge. The servant also requests the Master to show him the right and the straight way of life from among the many by-paths and crooked ways.

9The straight way for which we are praying is the way which has always been followed by the people favored by Thee and which has always brought Thy favors and blessings.

10This is to show that the favored people are not those who go astray and incur the wrath of Allah, though apparently they might be enjoying the transitory good things of life. The really favored people are those who receive blessings on account of their righteous living. From this it also becomes clear that by favors are meant those real and permanent rewards, which result from righteous living and from winning the pleasure of Allah, and not those transitory good things of life which have been enjoyed even by the tyrants and worshipers of mammon and which are being enjoyed even today by all sorts of evildoers who have gone astray from the straight way.

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2. Surah Al Baqarah (The Cow)

Name

Why the name ***Al-Baqarah***?

Al-Baqarah (the Cow) has been so named from the story of the Cow occurring in this Surah (vv. 67-73). It has not, however, been used as a title to indicate the subject of the Surah. It will, therefore, be as wrong to translate the name Al-Baqarah into "The Cow" or "The Heifer" as to translate any English name, say Mr. Baker, Mr. Rice, Mr. Wolf etc., into their equivalents in other languages or *vice versa*, because this would imply that the Surah dealt with the subject of "The Cow". Many more Surahs of the Quran have been named in the same way because no comprehensive words exist in Arabic (in spite of its richness) to denote the wide scope of the subject discussed in them. As a matter of fact all human languages suffer from the same limitation.

Sequence

Though it is a *Madani* Surah, it follows naturally a *Makki* Surah Al- Fatihah, which ended with the prayer: "Show us the straight way." It begins with the answer to that prayer, "This is the Book (that)...is guidance..."

The greater part of Al-Baqarah was revealed during the first two years of the Holy Prophet's life at Al-Madinah. The smaller part which was revealed at a later period has been included in this Surah because its contents are closely related to those dealt with in this Surah. For instance, the verses prohibiting interest were revealed during the last period of the Holy prophet's life but have been inserted in this Surah. For the same reason, the last verses (284-286) of this Surah which were revealed at Makkah before the migration of the Holy Prophet to Al-Madinah have also been included in it.

Historical Background

In order to understand the meaning of this Surah, we should know its historical background:

1. At Makkah the Quran generally addressed the *mushrik* Quraish who were ignorant of Islam, but at Al-Madinah it was also concerned with the Jews who were acquainted with the creed of the Unity of Allah, Prophethood, Revelation, the Hereafter and angels. They also professed to believe in the law which was revealed by Allah to their Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon him), and in principle, their way was the same (Islam) that was being taught by Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). But they had strayed away from it during the centuries of degeneration and had adopted many un-Islamic creeds, rites and customs of which there was no mention and for which there was no sanction in the Torah. Not only this : they had tampered with the Torah by inserting their own explanations and interpretations into its text. They had distorted even that part of the Word of God which had remained intact in their Scriptures and taken out of it the real spirit of true religion and were now clinging to a lifeless frame of rituals. Consequently their beliefs, their morals and their conduct had gone to the lowest depths of degeneration. The pity is that they were not only satisfied with their condition but loved to cling to it. Besides this, they had no intention or inclination to accept any kind of reform. So they became bitter enemies of those who came to teach them the Right Way and did their worst to defeat every such effort. Though they were originally Muslims, they had swerved from the real Islam and made innovations and alterations in it and had fallen victims to hair splitting and sectarianism. They had forgotten and forsaken Allah and begun to serve mammon. So much so that they had even given up their original name "Muslim" and adopted the name "Jew" instead, and made religion the sole monopoly of the children of Israel.

   This was their religious condition when the Holy Prophet went to Al-Madinah and invited the Jews to the true religion. That is why more than one third of this Surah has been addressed to the children of Israel. A critical review of their history, their moral degeneration and their religious perversions has been made; side by side with this the high standard of morality and the fundamental principles of the pure religion have been put forward in order to bring out clearly the nature of the degeneration of the community of a prophet when it goes astray and to draw clear lines of demarcation between real piety and formalism, and the essentials and non-essentials of the true religion.

2. At Makkah Islam was mainly concerned with the propagation of its fundamental principles and the moral training of its followers. But after the migration of the Holy Prophet to Al-Madinah, where Muslims had come to settle from all over Arabia and where a tiny Islamic State had been set up with the help of the Ansar (local supporters), naturally the Quran had to turn its attention to the social, cultural, economic, political and legal problems as well. This accounts for the difference between the themes of the surahs revealed at Makkah and those at Al-Madinah. Accordingly about half of this Surah deals with those principles and regulations which are essential for the integration and solidarity of a community and for the solution of its problems.

3. After the migration to Al-Madinah, the struggle between Islam and un-Islam had also entered a new phase. Before this the Believers, who propagated Islam among their own clans and tribes, had to face its opponents at their own risk. But the conditions had changed at Al-Madinah, where Muslims from all parts of Arabia had come and settled as one community, and had established an independent city state. Here it became a struggle for the' survival of the Community itself, for the whole of non- Muslim Arabia was bent upon and united in crushing it totally. Hence the following instructions, upon which depended not only its success but its very survival, were revealed in this Surah :-

1. The Community should work with the utmost zeal to propagate its ideology and win over to its side the greatest possible number of people.
4. It should so expose its opponents as to leave no room for doubt in the mind of any sensible person that they were adhering to an absolutely wrong position.
5. It should infuse in it's members (the majority of whom were homeless and indigent and surrounded on all sides by enemies) that courage and fortitude which is so indispensable to their very existence in the adverse circumstances in which they were struggling and to prepare them to face these boldly.
6. It should also keep them ready and prepared to meet any armed menace, which might come from any side to suppress and crush their ideology, and to oppose it tooth and nail without minding the overwhelming numerical strength and the material resources of its enemies
7. It should also create in them that courage which is needed for the eradication of evil ways and for the establishment of the Islamic Way instead.

   That is why Allah has revealed in this Surah such instructions as may help achieve all the above mentioned objects.

8. During this period, a new type of "Muslims," *munafiqin* (hypocrites), had begun to appear. Though signs of duplicity had been noticed during the last days at Makkah, they took a different shape at Al-Madinah. At Makkah there were some people who professed Islam to be true but were not prepared to abide by the consequences of this profession and to sacrifice their worldly interests and relations and bear the afflictions which inevitably follow the acceptance of this creed. But at Al-Madinah different kinds of *munafiqin* (hypocrites) began to appear. There were some who had entered the Islamic fold merely to harm it from within. There were others who were surrounded by Muslims and, therefore, had become "Muslims" to safeguard their worldly interests. They, therefore, continued to have relations with the enemies so that if the latter became successful, their interests should remain secure. There were still others who had no strong conviction of the truth of Islam but had embraced it along with their clans. Lastly, there were those who were intellectually convinced of the truth of Islam but did not have enough moral courage to give up their former traditions, superstitions and personal ambitions and live up to the Islamic moral standards and make sacrifice in its way.

   At the time of the revelation of Al-Baqarah, all sorts of hypocrites had begun to appear. Allah has, therefore, briefly pointed out their characteristics here. Afterwards when their evil characteristics and mischievous deeds became manifest, Allah sent detailed instructions about them.

Theme: Guidance

This Surah is an invitation to the Divine Guidance and all the stories, incidents etc., revolve round this central theme. As this Surah has particularly been addressed to the Jews, many historical events have been cited from their own traditions to admonish and advise them that their own good lies in accepting the Guidance revealed to the Holy Prophet. They should, therefore, be the first to accept it because it was basically]y the same that was revealed to Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon him).

Topics and their Interconnection

These introductory verses declare the Quran to be the Book of Guidance : enunciate the articles of the Faith -- belief in Allah, Prophethood and Life-after-death; divide mankind into three main groups with regard to its acceptance or rejection -- Believers, disbelievers and hypocrites. 1 - 20

Allah invites mankind to accept the Guidance voluntarily and to submit to Him, the Lord and the Creator of the Universe and to believe in the Quran, His Guidance, and in the Life-after-death. 21 - 29

The story of the appointment of Adam as Allah's Vicegerent on Earth, of his life in the Garden, of his falling a prey to the temptations of Satan, of his repentance and its acceptance, has been related to show to mankind (Adam's offspring), that the only right thing for them is to accept and follow the Guidance. This story also shows that the Guidance of Islam is the same that was given to Adam and that it is the original religion of mankind. 30 - 39

In this portion invitation to the Guidance has particularly been extended to the children of Israel and their past and present attitude has been criticized to show that the cause of their degradation was their deviation from the Guidance. 40 - 120

The Jews have been exhorted to follow Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) who had come with the same Guidance and who was a descendant and follower of Prophet Abraham whom they highly honoured as their ancestor, and professed to follow as a prophet. The story of the building of the Ka`abah by him has been mentioned because it was going to be made the *qiblah* of the Muslim Community. 121 - 141

In this portion, the declaration of the change of *qiblah* from the Temple (Jerusalem) to the Ka`abah (Makkah) has been made as a symbol of the change of leadership from the children of Israel to the Muslim Community, which has also been fore-warned to guard against those transgressions against the Guidance that had led to the deposition of the Jews. 142 - 152

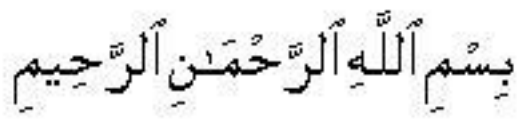
In this portion practical measures have been prescribed to enable the Muslims to discharge the heavy responsibilities of the leadership that had been entrusted to them for the promulgation of Guidance. Salat, Fast, Zakat, Haj and Jihad have been prescribed for the moral training of the *Ummat*. The Believers have been exhorted to obey authority, to be just, to fulfill pledges, to observe treaties, to spend wealth etc., in the way of Allah. Laws, rules and regulations have been laid down for their organization, cohesion and conduct of day-to-day life and for the solution of social, economic, political and international problems; on the other hand, drinking, gambling, lending money on interest etc., have been prohibited to keep the *Ummat* safe from disintegration. In between these, the basic articles of the Faith have been reiterated at suitable places, for these alone can enable and support one to stick to the Guidance. 153 - 251

These verses serve as an introduction to the prohibition of lending money on interest. The true conception of Allah, Revelation and Life-after-death has been emphasized to keep alive the sense of accountability. The stories of Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) and of the one who woke up after a sleep of hundred years have been related to show that Allah is All-Powerful and is able to raise the dead and call them to account. The Believers,

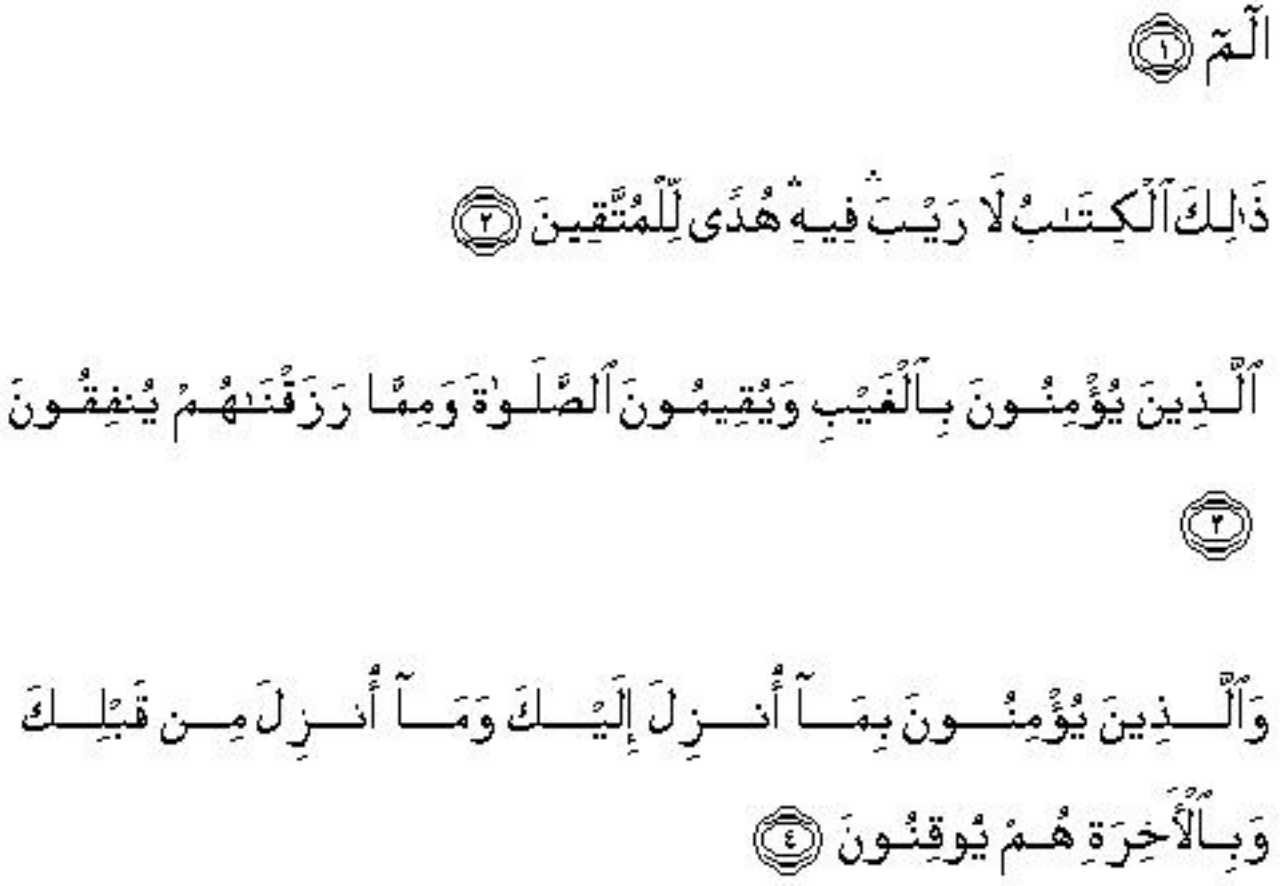
therefore, should keep this fact in view and refrain from taking interest on money. 252 - 260

The theme of 153 - 251 has been resumed and the Believers have been exhorted to spend in the way of Allah in order to please Him alone. In contrast to this, they have been warned against the evils of lending money on interest. Instructions have also been given for the honest conduct of day-to-day business transactions. 261 - 283

The basic articles of the Faith have been recapitulated here at the end of the Surah, just as they were enunciated at its beginning. Then the Surah ends with a prayer which the Muslim Community needed very much at that time when they were encountering untold hardships in the propagation of the Guidance. 284 - 286


بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.


الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيهِ ۛ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾

[1-4] Alif. Lam. Mim.[1] This is the Book of Allah: there is no doubt[2] about it. It is guidance to Godfearing people,[3] who believe in the unseen,[4] establish the Salats[5] and expend (in Our way) out of what We have bestowed on them;[6] who believe in the Book We have sent down to you (i.e. the Qur'an) and in the Books sent down before you,[7] and firmly

believe in the Hereafter.[8]

أُولَٰٓئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأُولَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥﴾

[5] Such people are on the right way from their Lord and such are truly successful.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٦﴾

خَتَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِمْ ۖ وَعَلَىٰٓ أَبْصَٰرِهِمْ
غِشَٰوَةٌ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

[6-7] As for those who have rejected[9] (these things), it is all the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them: they are not going to believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and ears and a covering has fallen over their eyes,[10] and they have incurred the severest punishment.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَبِٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَمَا هُم بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾

يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مَرَضًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟
يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾

أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا۟ كَمَآ ءَامَنَ ٱلنَّاسُ قَالُوٓا۟
أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَآ ءَامَنَ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ وَلَٰكِن لَّا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

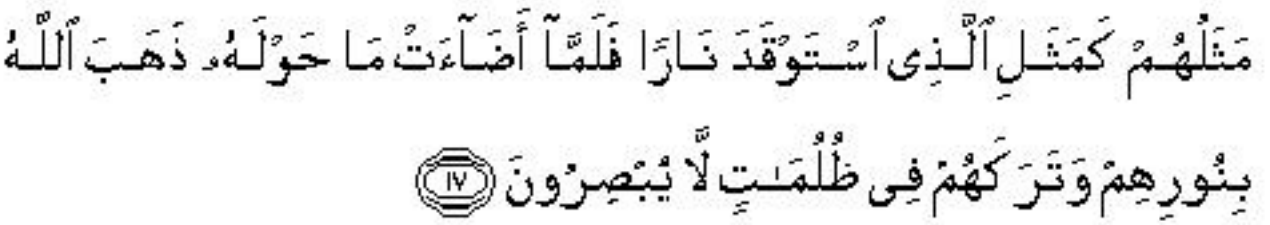
وَإِذَا لَقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ شَيَٰطِينِهِمْ قَالُوٓا۟
إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

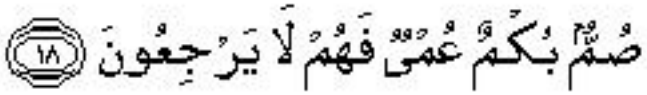
ٱللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِى طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

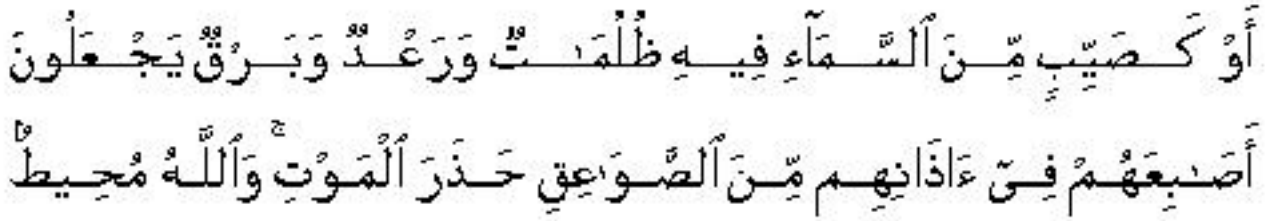
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَٰرَتُهُمْ
وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

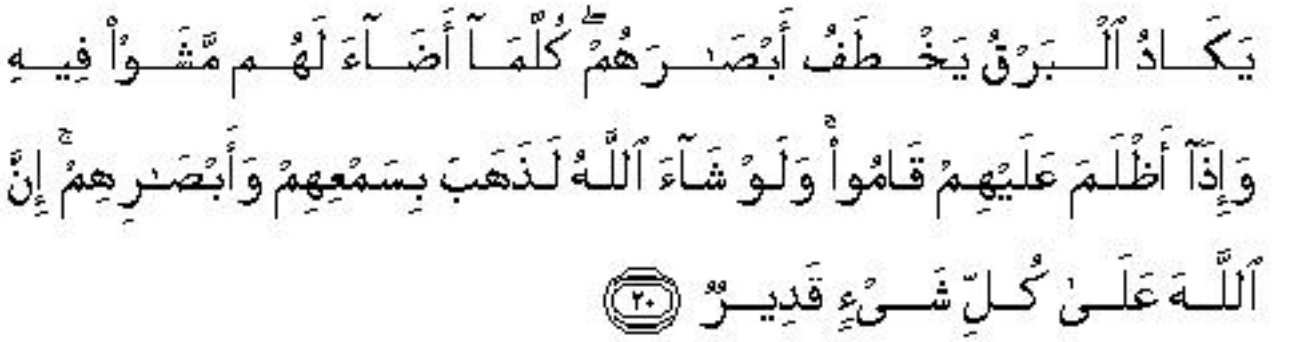
[8-16] Then there are some who say, "We believe in Allah and the Last Day", whereas they do not believe at all. They thus try to deceive Allah and the Believers, but they succeed in deceiving none except themselves and they realize it not.[11] In their hearts is a disease which Allah has increased all the more[12] and a painful doom is in store for them for the lie they utter. Whenever it is said to them, "Spread not disorder on the earth", their reply is, "We only seek to put things aright".Beware! they do spread disorder but they realize it not. And when it is said to them, "Believe sincerely as the other people have believed",[13] they reply, "Should we believe as fools have believed?"[14] Beware! they themselves are the fools, but they know it not. When they meet those who believe, they say, "We, too, are believers", but when they privily meet their evil geniuses,[15] they say, "Indeed we are with you: we are only

mocking at these people". (Little do they realize that) Allah is mocking at them. He gives them rope enough, and they wander on and on blindly in their mischief and rebellion. These are the people who have bartered away Guidance for error, but this is a profitless bargain that they have made, and they are not at all on the right way.


مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِى ٱسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّآ أَضَآءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُۥ ذَهَبَ ٱللَّهُ
بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِى ظُلُمَٰتٍ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾


صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْىٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٨﴾


أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَٰتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ
أَصَٰبِعَهُمْ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِم مِّنَ ٱلصَّوَٰعِقِ حَذَرَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ مُحِيطٌۢ
بِٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾


يَكَادُ ٱلْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَٰرَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَآ أَضَآءَ لَهُم مَّشَوْا۟ فِيهِ
وَإِذَآ أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا۟ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَٰرِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

[17-20] Their condition may be described in a parable: a man kindled a fire and when it illuminated all around him, Allah took away the light from their eyes and left them in utter darkness, where they could not see anything.[16] They are deaf; they are dumb; they are blind[17] so they will not return (to the right way). Or (still another parable may be cited to depict their condition): heavy rain is falling from the sky, accompanied by pitch darkness, thunder and lightning. When they hear the thunderclap, they thrust their fingers into their ears for fear of death, but Allah is encircling the disbelievers on all sides.[18] The lightning terrifies them as if it were going to snatch away their eyesight from them. When they see light, they move on a little further and When it becomes dark for them, they stand still.[19] Had Allah so willed, He could have deprived them totally of their hearing[20] and their sight. Most surely Allah has power over everything.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱعۡبُدُواْ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكُمۡ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن
قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ٢١

ٱلَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ فِرَٰشٗا وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بِنَآءٗ وَأَنزَلَ
مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ فَأَخۡرَجَ بِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ رِزۡقٗا لَّكُمۡۖ
فَلَا تَجۡعَلُواْ لِلَّهِ أَندَادٗا وَأَنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ٢٢

[21-22] O Mankind,[21] submit to your Lord Who created you and those who were before you; in this way only you may expect to save yourselves.[22] It is He Who has made the earth a bed for you and the sky a canopy; and it is He Who sends down rain from above for the growth of every kind of food products for your sustenance. So, when you know this, you should not set up equals to rank with Allah[23]

وَإِن كُنتُمۡ فِي رَيۡبٖ مِّمَّا نَزَّلۡنَا عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِنَا فَأۡتُواْ بِسُورَةٖ مِّن مِّثۡلِهِۦ وَٱدۡعُواْ
شُهَدَآءَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ٢٣

فَإِن لَّمۡ تَفۡعَلُواْ وَلَن تَفۡعَلُواْ فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِي وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلۡحِجَارَةُۖ
أُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ٢٤

[23-24] And if you be in doubt whether the Book We have sent down to Our Servant is from Us or not, then produce, at least, one Surah like this.[24] You may call all your associates to assist you and avail yourselves of the help of any one other than Allah. If you are genuine in your doubt, do this. But if you do not do this, and you can never do this, then fear the Fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers and which shall have men and stones for fuel[25]

وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن
تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُواْ مِنۡهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٖ رِّزۡقٗا قَالُواْ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِي رُزِقۡنَا
مِن قَبۡلُۖ وَأُتُواْ بِهِۦ مُتَشَٰبِهٗاۖ وَلَهُمۡ فِيهَآ أَزۡوَٰجٞ مُّطَهَّرَةٞۖ وَهُمۡ فِيهَا
خَٰلِدُونَ ٢٥

[25] And give good news (O Muhammad), to those who believe in this Book and do good deeds (in accordance with its teachings). For them there will be gardens underneath which canals flow. Their fruits will so resemble the fruits on the Earth that every time they will be provided with fruits, they will say, "Such fruits were provided to us before on the Earth.[26] " And there will be pure spouses[27] for them and therein they will live for ever.

۞إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَسۡتَحۡيِۦٓ أَن يَضۡرِبَ مَثَلٗا مَّا بَعُوضَةٗ فَمَا فَوۡقَهَاۚ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ فَيَعۡلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ ٱلۡحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّهِمۡۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَآ
أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَٰذَا مَثَلٗاۘ يُضِلُّ بِهِۦ كَثِيرٗا وَيَهۡدِي بِهِۦ كَثِيرٗاۚ وَمَا يُضِلُّ
بِهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلۡفَٰسِقِينَ ٢٦

ٱلَّذِينَ يَنقُضُونَ عَهۡدَ ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مِيثَٰقِهِۦ وَيَقۡطَعُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦٓ
أَن يُوصَلَ وَيُفۡسِدُونَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡخَٰسِرُونَ ٢٧

[26-27] Well, Allah is not ashamed to cite the similitude of a gnat or of something even more insignificant than this.[28] As for those who believe, they come to know from the same similitude that it is the Revelation from their Lord; but those who disbelieve, say, "What does Allah mean by such similitudes?"[29] Allah leads astray many and guides many to the right way by the same thing.[30] And He leads astray only those who disobey Allah; who break Allah's covenant after ratifying it;[31] who cut asunder what Allah has ordered to be joined,[32] and who produce chaos on the Earth.[33] These are the people who are indeed the losers.

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَكُنتُمْ أَمْوَٰتًا فَأَحْيَٰكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ
ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰٓ إِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ
فَسَوَّىٰهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

[28-29] How is it that you adopt the attitude of disbelief towards Allah when the fact is that you were lifeless and He gave you life, and He will take away life from you and wilt again restore you to life: then you shall ultimately return to Him. He it is Who created for you all that there is on the Earth; He then turned to the sky and ordered it into seven heavens.[34] And He has full knowledge of everything[35]

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّى جَاعِلٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ
قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ
بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَعَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ ٱلْأَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنۢبِـُٔونِى بِأَسْمَآءِ
هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾

قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ أَنۢبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَنۢبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ
إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ
تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[30-33] Just[36] recall the time when your Lord said to the angels,[37] "I am going to appoint a vicegerent[38] on the Earth." They humbly enquired, "Are you going to appoint such a one as will cause disorder and shed blood on the Earth?[39] We are already engaged in hymning Your praise, and hallowing Your name".[40] Allah replied, "I know what you do not know."[41] After this he taught Adam the names of all things.[42] Then He set these before the angels and asked, "Tell Me the names of these things, if you are right (in thinking that the appointment of a vicegerent will cause disorder)". They replied, "Glory be to You. You alone are free from defect. We possess only that much knowledge which You have given us.[43] Indeed You alone are All-Knowing and All-Wise." Then Allah said to Adam, "Tell them the names of these things." When Adam told them the names of all those things,[44] Allah declared, "Did I not tell you that I know those truths about the Earth and the Heavens which are hidden from you? I know what you disclose and what you hide."

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ
مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[34] Then We commanded the angels, "Bow yourselves to Adam. "All bowed[45] but Iblis[46] refused to do so; he waxed proud and joined the defiers.[47]

وَقُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا
وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟
بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ
﴿٣٦﴾

فَتَلَقَّىٰٓ ءَادَمُ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ كَلِمَٰتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾

[35-37] Then We said, "O Adam, you and your wife, both dwell in the Garden and eat to your hearts' content where from you will, but do not go near this tree;[48] otherwise you shall become transgressors"[49] After a time Satan tempted them with that tree to disobey. Our Command and brought them out of the state they were in, and We decreed, "Now, go down all of you from here; you are enemies of one another.[50] Henceforth you shall dwell and provide for yourselves on the Earth for a specified period." At that time Adam learnt appropriate words from his Lord and repented,[51] and his Lord accepted his repentance, for He is very Relenting and very Merciful.[52]

قُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَكَذَّبُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِۖ هُمۡ
فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ٣٩

[38-39] We said, "Now go down, all of you from here.[53] Henceforth there shall come to you Guidance from Me now and again: whoever will follow it shall have neither fear nor sorrow and whoever will refuse to accept it and defy Our Revelations[54] they shall be doomed to the Fire wherein they shall remain for ever.[55]

يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَتِيَ ٱلَّتِيٓ أَنۡعَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَأَوۡفُواْ بِعَهۡدِيٓ
أُوفِ بِعَهۡدِكُمۡ وَإِيَّٰيَ فَٱرۡهَبُونِ ٤٠

[40] O children of Israel![56] Just recall to mind My favour wherewith I blessed you fulfil your covenant with Me and I shall fulfil My covenant with you, and fear Me alone.

وَءَامِنُواْ بِمَآ أَنزَلۡتُ مُصَدِّقٗا لِّمَا مَعَكُمۡ وَلَا تَكُونُوٓاْ أَوَّلَ كَافِرِۭ بِهِۦۖ
وَلَا تَشۡتَرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِي ثَمَنٗا قَلِيلٗا وَإِيَّٰيَ فَٱتَّقُونِ ٤١

وَلَا تَلۡبِسُواْ ٱلۡحَقَّ بِٱلۡبَٰطِلِ وَتَكۡتُمُواْ ٱلۡحَقَّ وَأَنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ٤٢

وَأَقِيمُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُواْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱرۡكَعُواْ مَعَ ٱلرَّٰكِعِينَ ٤٣

۞ أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ أَفَلَا
تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلْخَٰشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[41-46] And believe in the Book I have now sent down; as it confirms the Scriptures you already possess, be not the first to reject it; barter not away My Revelations for paltry worldly gain,[57] and guard yourselves against My wrath Confound not the Truth with falsehood nor conceal it knowingly.[58] Establish the Salat, pay the Zakat[59] and bow down before Me along with those who bow down. How is it that you enjoin others to follow the Right Way, but forget it yourselves, though you read the Scriptures? Have you no sense at all? Seek help with the Salat and fortitude:[60] no doubt, Salat is a hard task but not for those obedient servants, who realize that ultimately they shall meet their Lord and shall return to Him.[61]

يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتِىَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّى فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِى نَفْسٌ عَن نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَٰعَةٌ وَلَا
يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[47-48] O Children of Israel! Just recall to mind My favour that bestowed upon you, and remember that I exalted you above all the peoples of the world.[62] And guard yourselves against the Day when no one shall avail anyone anything; nor shall intercession be accepted from anyone; nor shall anyone be acquitted for any (amount of) ransom; nor shall the guilty ones be helped from any quarter.[63]

وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَٰكُم مِّنْ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوٓءَ ٱلْعَذَابِ
يُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ ۚ وَفِى ذَٰلِكُم بَلَآءٌ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

[49] Recall[64] the time when We delivered you from the slavery of Pharaoh's people.[65] They had inflicted a dreadful torment on you: they killed your sons and let your daughters live. And in this there was a hard trial for you from your your Lord.[66]

وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ ٱلْبَحْرَ فَأَنجَيْنَٰكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

[50] Remember the time when We parted the sea to make way for you and let you pass safely through it and then drowned Pharaoh's people before your very eyes.

وَإِذْ وَٰعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰٓ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ ٱتَّخَذْتُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ
وَأَنتُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

[51-52] Call to mind that when We invited Moses for a fixed term of forty nights and days,[67] you took to calf worship in his absence.[68] Though you had committed a wicked transgression, yet We pardoned you even after that so that you might become grateful.

وَإِذْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

[53] Remember that (at that very time, when you were committing this gross iniquity) We gave Moses the Book and

the criterion of right and wrong[69] so that you might be guided aright.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُم بِٱتِّخَاذِكُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ
فَتُوبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ فَٱقْتُلُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِندَ بَارِئِكُمْ
فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٤﴾

[54] Remember that when Moses (returned with the Divine Gift, he) said to his people, "O my people, you have . wronged yourselves grievously by taking the calf for worship. Therefore, turn to your Creator . in penitence and slay the guilty ones among you.[70] This is best for you in the sight of your Creator." At that time your Creator accepted your repentance because He is Relenting 'and Merciful.

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَٰمُوسَىٰ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى ٱللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ
ٱلصَّٰعِقَةُ وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَٰكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

[55-56] Remember when you said, "O Moses, we are not going to believe you until we see with our own eyes Allah (talking to you)". At that very time a thunderbolt struck you while you were looking on and you fell lifeless. Then We raised you to life so that you might become grateful for this favour.[71]

وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْغَمَامَ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَنَّ وَٱلسَّلْوَىٰ ۖ كُلُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ
مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ ۖ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

[57] (Remember that) We caused the cloud to overshadow you and provided you with[72] manna and salva[73] for your food, saying, "Eat of the clean and pure things We have bestowed upon you" (In spite of this, your forefathers violated Our commands:) however, they did not harm Us but harmed only themselves.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ٱدْخُلُوا۟ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ
رَغَدًا وَٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا۟ حِطَّةٌ نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطَٰيَٰكُمْ
وَسَنَزِيدُ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

فَبَدَّلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ قَوْلًا غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى قِيلَ لَهُمْ
فَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ رِجْزًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْسُقُونَ
﴿٥٩﴾

[58-59] Then call to mind the time when We said, "Go into the town'[74] before you and eat to your hearts' content therein, wherefrom you will, but enter the gate bowing down with humility, repeating 'hittatun';[75] We will forgive your sins and increase the reward of the righteous". But the transgressors perverted the words said to them entirely into a different thing. So We sent down upon the transgressors a severe torment from the sky : that was the punishment for the disobedience they were showing.

۞ وَإِذِ ٱسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ فَقُلْنَا ٱضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلْحَجَرَ ۖ فَٱنفَجَرَتْ
مِنْهُ ٱثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۖ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ۖ كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟
مِن رِّزْقِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[60] Remember that when Moses prayed for water for his people, We answered, "Strike the rock with your staff" : whereupon twelve springs gushed forth from it;[76] the people of every clan came to know their drinking place. (Then they were enjoined:) "Eat and drink of what Allah has provided and do not spread disorder on the earth."

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَٰمُوسَىٰ لَن نَّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَٰحِدٍ فَٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ
لَنَا مِمَّا تُنۢبِتُ ٱلْأَرْضُ مِنۢ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّآئِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا ۖ
قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ ٱلَّذِى هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِٱلَّذِى هُوَ خَيْرٌ ۚ ٱهْبِطُوا۟ مِصْرًا
فَإِنَّ لَكُم مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ ۗ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلذِّلَّةُ وَٱلْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَآءُو بِغَضَبٍ
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَكْفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ
ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا۟ وَّكَانُوا۟ يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

[61] Remember: You grumbled: "O Moses, we cannot endure one and the same sort of food. Pray your Lord to bring for us the products of the earth green herbs, vegetables, corn, garlic, onions, pulses and the like." Moses replied: "What! would you exchange that which is meaner for that which is nobler?[77] Well, go and live in a town and you will get there what you demand." By and by, they became so degraded that disgrace and humiliation, misery and wretchedness were stamped upon them and they incurred Allah's wrath. That was because they began to reject the Revelations of Allah[78] and kill His Messengers without any just cause;[79] that was the consequence of their disobedience and their persistent transgression against the Law.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ وَٱلصَّٰبِـِٔينَ مَنْ
ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[62] Rest assured that whosoever from among the Muslims or the Jews or the Christians or the Sabaeans believes in Allah and the Last Day, and performs good deeds, he will have his reward with his Lord and he will have no cause for fear and grief.[80]

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ ٱلطُّورَ خُذُوا۟ مَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ
وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَكُنتُم
مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[63-64] Call to mind the .time when We raised above you the Tur and made a covenant with you,[81] saying, "Hold fast to the Book which We are giving you and bear in mind the commands and precepts contained therein. It is expected that this will lead you on to the paths of virtue and piety." But even after that you forsook the Covenant: nevertheless Allah did not withhold His grace and mercy from you; otherwise you would have been utterly ruined long before this.

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱعْتَدَوْا۟ مِنكُمْ فِى ٱلسَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا۟
قِرَدَةً خَٰسِـِٔينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

فَجَعَلْنَٰهَا نَكَٰلًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[65-66] And you know well the story of those among you who broke Sabbath.[82] We said to them, "Be apes[83] despised and hated by all. Thus We made their end a warning to the people of their time and succeeding generations, and an admonition for God-fearing people.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تَذْبَحُوا۟ بَقَرَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَتَّخِذُنَا
هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِٱللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

قَالُواْ ٱدۡعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِيَۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٞ
لَّا فَارِضٞ وَلَا بِكۡرٌ عَوَانُۢ بَيۡنَ ذَٰلِكَۖ فَٱفۡعَلُواْ مَا تُؤۡمَرُونَ ٦٨

قَالُواْ ٱدۡعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا لَوۡنُهَاۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٞ صَفۡرَآءُ
فَاقِعٞ لَّوۡنُهَا تَسُرُّ ٱلنَّٰظِرِينَ ٦٩

قَالُواْ ٱدۡعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ ٱلۡبَقَرَ تَشَٰبَهَ عَلَيۡنَا وَإِنَّآ
إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَمُهۡتَدُونَ ٧٠

قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٞ لَّا ذَلُولٞ تُثِيرُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَلَا تَسۡقِي ٱلۡحَرۡثَ مُسَلَّمَةٞ
لَّا شِيَةَ فِيهَاۚ قَالُواْ ٱلۡـَٰٔنَ جِئۡتَ بِٱلۡحَقِّۚ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُواْ يَفۡعَلُونَ
٧١

[67-71] Then call to mind the other event: when Moses said to his people, "Allah commands you to sacrifice a cow," they replied, "Do you mean to have a jest with us?" He answered, "I crave Allah's protection from behaving like ignorant people." Then they said, "Please make a request to your Lord to give us some details of the cow." Moses answered, "Allah says that the cow should neither be old nor immature but of middle age. Do, therefore, as you are bidden." But they further asked, "Please request your Lord to make it clear to us of what colour she should be." Moses answered, "He says that she should be of yellow colour, so deep and bright as to delight the beholders." Again they said, "Pray your Lord to specify for us the kind of cow that is required; for cows (of this type) look alike to us. We shall then find her, if God so wills." Moses answered, "Allah says that she should be a cow which has not been yoked nor has ploughed the land nor watered the fields; which is sound and whole, without belemish. " Then they cried out, "Now you have given an accurate description. " Then they sacrificed her but they did not appear to be doing this willingly.[84]

وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا ۖ وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا
كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُم مِّن بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ
مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ
الْمَاءُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ
﴿٧٤﴾

[72-74] You should also recall to mind another incident: You slew a man and began to dispute about the murder and accuse one another of it, but Allah had decreed that what you were trying to hide should be disclosed. So We commanded, "Strike the corpse of the murdered man with a part of the sacrificed cow. See how Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His Signs, so that you may understand".[85] But even after seeing these Signs your hearts hardened and became as hard as rocks; nay, even harder than rocks. For there are some rocks out of which springs gush forth, and others which split open, and water issues out of them; then there are some which tumble down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you are doing.

۞ أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ
ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِن بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

وَإِذَا لَقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ
بَعْضٍ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُم بِمَا فَتَحَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَآجُّوكُم بِهِۦ
عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ إِلَّآ أَمَانِىَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَٰذَا مِنْ
عِندِ ٱللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لَّهُم مِّمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَوَيْلٌ لَّهُم مِّمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ لَن تَمَسَّنَا ٱلنَّارُ إِلَّآ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً ۚ قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
عَهْدًا فَلَن يُخْلِفَ ٱللَّهُ عَهْدَهُۥٓ ۖ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

بَلَىٰ مَن كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَٰطَتْ بِهِۦ خَطِيٓـَٔتُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ
ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡجَنَّةِۖ هُمۡ فِيهَا

خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[75-82] O Muslims, do you then expect that these people will accept your invitation and become believers?[86] whereas there have always been among them some who have been hearing the Word of God, understanding it well and then perverting and tampering with it knowingly.[87] When they meet those who believe in Muhammad, they say, "We also believe in him." But when they meet one another in private, they say, "Have you got no sense that you disclose to them those things which Allah has revealed to you so that they might bring them as a proof against you before your Lord?[88] Do they really not know that Allah is fully aware of what they hide and what they disclose? -- Then there are among them some un-lettered people who have no knowledge of the Book but depend upon empty hopes and are guided by mere conjecture and guess-work.[89] So woe to their learned people, who write the law with their own hands and then say to the people, "This is from Allah," so that they might gain some paltry worldly end.[90] (They do not see that) this writing of their hands will bring woe to them and what they gain thereby will lead to their ruin. They also say, "The fire of Hell is not going to touch us, and even if it does at all, it will be only for a few days".[91] Say, "Have you obtained a promise from Allah which He would not break? Or, do you attribute to Allah things you do not know? Why will not the fire of Hell touch you? Whoever earns evil and becomes engrossed in sin shall be doomed to Hell and abide therein for ever. Only those people who believe and do good deeds, will be the dwellers of the Garden and live there for ever.

وَإِذۡ أَخَذۡنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ لَا تَعۡبُدُونَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَبِٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ

إِحۡسَٰنٗا وَذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَقُولُواْ لِلنَّاسِ

حُسۡنٗا وَأَقِيمُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُواْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيۡتُمۡ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗا مِّنكُمۡ

وَأَنتُم مُّعۡرِضُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[83] Remember that We made a solemn covenant with the children of Israel to this effect: worship none save Allah: be good to your parents, to your relatives, to the orphans and to the helpless; speak aright with the people: establish the Salat and pay the Zakat. But with the exception of a few, you all slid back from it and are paying no heed to it even now.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَآءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنفُسَكُم مِّن
دِيَٰرِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِّنكُم مِّن دِيَٰرِهِمْ
تَظَٰهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ وَإِن يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسَٰرَىٰ تُفَٰدُوهُمْ
وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ ۚ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ
بِبَعْضٍ ۚ فَمَا جَزَآءُ مَن يَفْعَلُ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْىٌ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَشَدِّ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ
عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ
عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[84-86] Remember also that We made another solemn covenant with you: you shall not shed blood among yourselves nor expel one another from your homes. And you confirmed it and you are a witness to it. But inspite of this, you are killing your brethren and driving them out from their homes and making unjust and aggressive alliances against one another. And when they come to you as captives, you trade on their ransoms whereas their expulsion itself was unlawful for you. Do you then believe in one part of the Scriptures and disbelieve in the other?[92] What other punishment do such people from among you deserve except an ignominious life in this world and the most grievous doom on the Day of Resurrection? Allah is not unaware of what you are doing. These are the people who have preferred the worldly life to the life in the Hereafter. Therefore their torment shall not be lightened nor shall help be given to them (from any quarter).

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ بِٱلرُّسُلِ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى
ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَيَّدْنَٰهُ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ ۗ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌۢ بِمَا لَا
تَهْوَىٰٓ أَنفُسُكُمُ ٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌۢ ۚ بَل لَّعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ كِتَٰبٌ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟
مِن قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مَّا عَرَفُوا۟ كَفَرُوا۟
بِهِۦ ۚ فَلَعْنَةُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

بِئْسَمَا ٱشْتَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَنفُسَهُمْ أَن يَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بَغْيًا أَن يُنَزِّلَ
ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ فَبَآءُو بِغَضَبٍ عَلَىٰ
غَضَبٍ ۚ وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

[87-90] And We gave Moses the Book and sent after him a train of Messengers in succession. Then We sent Jesus, son of Mary, with clear Signs and supported him with the Holy Spirit.[93] Then how is it that whenever a Messenger came to you wish that which did not suit your lusts, you grew rebellious against him, and repudiated some and slew others. They say, "Our hearts are secure."[94] Nay, the fact is that Allah has cursed them for their disbelief; so they are little disposed to believe. And how are they behaving now towards a Book which has come to them from Allah? Inspite of the fact that it confirms the Scriptures which they already possessed. and, inspite of the fact that, before it came, they used to pray for a signal victory over the disbelievers, they rejected it when it came, although they

recognized it.[95] May Allah's curse be upon such disbelievers! What a mean thing it is with which they delude their minds.[96] They reject the Guidance which Allah has sent down merely because of their grudge why Allah has in His bounty sent it to whom He chose from amongst His servants.[97] They have thus incurred wrath after wrath, and for such disbelievers there is a disgraceful doom.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ قَالُوا۟ نُؤْمِنُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ
بِمَا وَرَآءَهُۥ وَهُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنۢبِيَآءَ
ٱللَّهِ مِن قَبْلُ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

۞ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُم مُّوسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ثُمَّ ٱتَّخَذْتُمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ
وَأَنتُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ ٱلطُّورَ خُذُوا۟ مَآ
ءَاتَيْنَٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ ۖ قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأُشْرِبُوا۟ فِى
قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ ۚ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِهِۦٓ إِيمَٰنُكُمْ إِن كُنتُم
مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[91-93] When it is said to them, "Believe in that which Allah has sent down," they say, "We believe only in that which has been sent to us", and reject everything else, though it is the Truth and confirms what is with them. Well, ask them, "If you sincerely believed in what was sent down to you, why did you kill the Messengers of Allah (who were sent to you from amongst yourselves)? (More than that:) Moses came to you with clear Signs, yet no sooner was he away from you than you transgressed and took the calf for worship. Recall also to mind the Covenant We made with you while We raised the Tur over you: `Follow strictly the precepts We are giving you and give ear to Our Commandments.' Your forefathers replied, "We have heard but we will not obey." They were so prone to unbelief that they cherished the calf in their hearts. Tell them (O Muhammad). "If indeed you are believers, yours is a strange Faith that enjoins you to do such evil things."

قُلْ إِن كَانَتْ لَكُمُ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْأَخِرَةُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّن دُونِ
ٱلنَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا۟ ٱلْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

وَلَن يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًۢا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ ٱلنَّاسِ عَلَىٰ حَيَوٰةٍ وَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ ۚ يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ
لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحْزِحِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ أَن يُعَمَّرَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

[94-96] Say to them, "If the abode of the Hereafter with Allah is exclusively reserved for you and not for the rest of mankind, then you should long for death, if you arc sincere in your claim."[98] Believe it that they will never wish for it, for (they are fully aware of the consequences of) what they have sent before them for the Hereafter. And Allah knows well the mentality of the transgressors. You will find that, of all mankind, they are the greediest for life,[99] nay, they are even greedier than the mushriks. Each one of them longs to have a life Of a thousand years, but a long life can, by no means, remove them away from the scourge, for Allah is watching whatever they are doing.

قُلْ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُۥ نَزَّلَهُۥ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَىٰلَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ
لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

[97-98] Say to them, "Whoever is enemy to Gabriel,[100] should understand that he has, by Allah's command, revealed

to your heart the Qur'an[101] which confirms what was revealed before it,[102] and brings Guidance and glad tidings[103] to the Believers. (If their enmity to Gabriel is due to this, let them understand that) whoever is enemy to Allah, His Angels, His Messengers, Gabriel and Michael, Allah is enemy to such disbelievers."

وَلَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ ۖ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

أَوَكُلَّمَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ عَهْدًا نَّبَذَهُۥ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

وَٱتَّبَعُواْ مَا تَتْلُواْ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِنَّ
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ كَفَرُواْ يُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ ٱلسِّحْرَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ
هَٰرُوتَ وَمَٰرُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَآ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ
فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۖ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِۦ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِۦ ۚ
وَمَا هُم بِضَآرِّينَ بِهِۦ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ
وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُواْ لَمَنِ ٱشْتَرَىٰهُ مَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَٰقٍ ۚ

وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْاْ بِهِۦٓ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ لَوْ كَانُواْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱتَّقَوْاْ لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ ۖ لَّوْ كَانُواْ يَعْلَمُونَ

﴿١٠٣﴾

[99-103] We have sent down to you Revelations that clearly expound the Truth, and none but the disobedient reject them. Has it not always been so that every time they made a covenant, some of them set it aside? Nay, most of them never believe in it sincerely. And whenever a Messenger came to them from Allah, confirming that Scripture which they already possessed, some from among the people of the Book threw the Book of Allah behind their backs as though they knew nothing about it. (Instead of this,) they began to follow that (magic) to which the devils falsely attributed (the greatness of) the kingdom of Solomon.[104] In fact Solomon .was never involved in any practice of disbelief, but the satans, who taught magic to the people were themselves guilty of disbelief. They were after that thing which was sent to Harut and Marut, the two angels at Babylon. Whenever these two angels taught black art to anyone, they would always give a clear warning beforehand, saying, "We are merely a trial for you; so you should not commit blasphemy.[105] But in spite of this warning, those people used to learn from the angels the art which caused division between husband and wife.[106] Although it was obvious that they could not do any harm to anyone by means of this magic without Allah's permission, yet they learnt that art which could not be profitable even for them but was actually harmful. Moreover, they knew it full well that anyone, who purchased that art, would have no share in the Hereafter. What a vile commodity it was for which they sold off their souls, if they had but known it! Had they

believed in Allah and practised piety, they would have received a far better reward from AIIah, if they had but known it.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَقُولُواْ رَٰعِنَا وَقُولُواْ ٱنظُرْنَا وَٱسْمَعُواْۗ
وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾

مَّا يَوَدُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَلَا ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَن يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُم
مِّنْ خَيْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ
ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[104-105] O Believers,[107] do not say. "Ra 'ina" but say, "Unzurna " and listen[108] a to what is said; for the disbelievers deserve a painful punishment. The people who have rejected the message of Truth, be they the people of the Book or the mushriks, would never like that any good be sent down to you from your Lord, but Allah chooses for His mercy whom He wills, and Allah is Most Bountiful.

۞مَا نَنسَخْ مِنْ ءَايَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَآ أَوْ مِثْلِهَآۗ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِۖ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ
مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

[106-107] We bring a better verse or at least the like of it for whatever we abrogate or cause it to be forgotten.[109] Do you not know that Allah has full power over everything? Do you not know that the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah alone and that you have neither any protector nor helper beside Him?

أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَسْـَٔلُوا۟ رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ وَمَن يَتَبَدَّلِ
ٱلْكُفْرَ بِٱلْإِيمَـٰنِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ إِيمَـٰنِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا
مِّنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۖ فَٱعْفُوا۟ وَٱصْفَحُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ
يَأْتِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾

وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ۚ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا۟ لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

[108-110] Would you then ask your Prophet such questions as were asked of Moses in former times?[110] In fact, anyone, who changes the way of belief for that of disbelief, has surely swerved from the Right way. Many of the people of the Book desire to turn you anyhow back to unbelief. They wish this out of the envy of their hearts though the Truth has become quite clear to them. Yet, you should show forbearance and forgiveness to them'[111] till Allah Himself enforces His judgement. (Rest assured that) Allah has full power over everything: establish the Salat and pay the Zakat. you will find with Allah whatever good you send forward for your future; Allah is watching everything you do.

وَقَالُوا۟ لَن يَدْخُلَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَن كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَـٰرَىٰ ۗ تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ ۗ قُلْ
هَاتُوا۟ بُرْهَـٰنَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُۥٓ أَجْرُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

[111-112] They say, "None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or according to the Christians) a Christian." These are their wishful fancies.[112] Say to them, "Bring your proof, if you are right in your claim." The fact is that no one has any special claim to Paradise; whoever surrenders himself to Allah in obedience and follows the Right Way, shall get his reward from his Lord: there shall be neither fear nor grief for such people.

وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ ٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ وَقَالَتِ ٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ لَيْسَتِ
ٱلْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۚ فَٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ
﴿١١٣﴾

[113] The Jews say that the Christians have nothing (of the Truth) and the Christians say that the Jews have nothing of it, though both read the Scripture. And those who have no knowledge of the Scripture[113] also make similar claims. Allah will surely give His judgement on the Day of Resurrection in all the matters in which they differ.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ أَن يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ وَسَعَىٰ
فِى خَرَابِهَآ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَن يَدْخُلُوهَآ إِلَّا خَآئِفِينَ ۚ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا
خِزْىٌ وَلَهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

[114] And who could be a greater wrongdoer than the one who forbids the mention of Allah's name in places of worship and strives for their ruin? Such people do not deserve to enter the places of worship, and, if they enter at all, they should do so in fear;[114] for there is ignominy for them in this world and an awful punishment in the Hereafter.

وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْمَشْرِقُ وَٱلْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا۟ فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ ٱللَّهِ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

[115] The East and the West, all belong to Allah: you will face Allah in whichsoever direction you turn your face:[115] Allah is All-Embracing and All-Knowing.[116]

وَقَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ ۖ بَل لَّهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ كُلٌّ لَّهُۥ قَٰنِتُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

بَدِيعُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿١١٧﴾

[116-117] They say "Allah has adopted a son." Allah is above such things. As a matter of fact, whatever is in the heavens and on the earth belongs to Him and all are obedient to Him. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth: when He decrees a thing, He merely says, "Be," and there it is.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا ٱللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَآ ءَايَةٌ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۘ تَشَٰبَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ بَشِيرٗا وَنَذِيرٗاۖ وَلَا تُسۡـَٔلُ عَنۡ أَصۡحَٰبِ ٱلۡجَحِيمِ ١١٩

[118-119] The ignorant people say, "Why does not Allah Himself talk to us or why does not a Sign come to us?"[117] The people before them also talked like this, for all (who swerve from the Right Path) have the same mentality.[118] We have already shown clear Signs to those who believe;[119] (what greater Sign could there be than that) We have sent you with the knowledge of the Truth and made you a bearer of good tidings and a Warner?[120] Now, you are not responsible and answerable for those who are bent upon going to Hell.

وَلَن تَرۡضَىٰ عَنكَ ٱلۡيَهُودُ وَلَا ٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمۡۗ قُلۡ إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلۡهُدَىٰۗ وَلَئِنِ ٱتَّبَعۡتَ أَهۡوَآءَهُم بَعۡدَ ٱلَّذِي جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلۡعِلۡمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِيّٖ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ١٢٠

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ يَتۡلُونَهُۥ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِۦٓ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِهِۦۗ وَمَن يَكۡفُرۡ بِهِۦ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡخَٰسِرُونَ ١٢١

[120-121] The Jews and the Christians will never be satisfied with you, O Muhammad, until you follow their way.[121] Tell them plainly, "The right way is shown by Allah." And if, after all the' knowledge you have received, you were to yield to their desires, you shall find neither any friend nor helper to protect you from Allah's wrath. There are those, even among the people of the Scripture, who read the Book as it should be read and believe in it sincerely;[122] as for those who reject it, they are indeed the losers.

يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَتِيَ ٱلَّتِيٓ أَنۡعَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلۡتُكُمۡ عَلَى ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ١٢٢

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِى نَفْسٌ عَن نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا
تَنفَعُهَا شَفَٰعَةٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

[122-123] O children of Israel,[123] remember that special favour 1 bestowed upon you, and that I exalted you above all the communities of the world. And dread the Day when no one shall avail anyone in any way; nor shall any ransom be accepted from anyone; nor shall intercession profit any body; nor shall the offenders be helped from any quarter.

۞ وَإِذِ ٱبْتَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ رَبُّهُۥ بِكَلِمَٰتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّى جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ
قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

[124] Recall to mind that when his Lord put Abraham to test[124] in certain things and he fulfilled all of them, He said, "I am going to make you the leader of mankind." Abraham humbly asked, "Does this promise apply to my descendants also?" He replied, "My promise does not apply to the transgressors."[125]

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا ٱلْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَٱتَّخِذُوا۟ مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ مُصَلًّى ۖ
وَعَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِىَ لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَٱلْعَٰكِفِينَ
وَٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿١٢٥﴾

[125] And remember that We made this House (the Ka'bah) the centre nd sanctuary for mankind and enjoined the people to dedicate to worship the place where Abraham used to stand for prayer, and We urged Abraham and Ismail to keep My House pure for those who would go round it and those who would retire to it for devotion and prayer and for those who would bow down and prostrate themselves there in worhsip.[126]

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْ هَٰذَا بَلَدًا ءَامِنًا وَٱرْزُقْ أَهْلَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ
مَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُم بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۖ قَالَ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُۥ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ
أَضْطَرُّهُۥٓ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٢٦﴾

[126] And remember that Abraham prayed, "Lord, make this city a city of peace and security, and provide with every kind of fruit those of its people, who believe in Allah and the Last Day'. Allah answered, "As for the disbelievers, I will also provide them with the necessities of life in this world,[127] though in the Next World I will drag them to the torment of Hell, and that is the worst abode."

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ ٱلْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ ۖ إِنَّكَ
أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٢٧﴾

رَبَّنَا وَٱجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا
وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٨﴾

رَبَّنَا وَٱبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٢٩﴾

[127-129] And remember that when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the walls of the House, they prayed, "Lord, accept this service from us; You are All-Hearing and All-Knowing. Lord, make us Your Muslims (submissive servants) and also raise from our offspring a community which should be Muslim (submissive to Your Will). Show us the ways of Your worship and forbear our shortcomings: You are Forgiving and Merciful. Lord, raise up from among them a Messenger who shall recite Your Revelations to them and teach them the Book and Wisdom and purify their lives.[128] You art All-Powerful and All-Wise".[129]

وَمَن يَرْغَبُ عَن مِّلَّةِ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ إِلَّا مَن سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُۥ ۚ
وَلَقَدِ ٱصْطَفَيْنَٰهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥٓ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَآ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَٰبَنِىَّ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ ٱلدِّينَ
فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا
تَعْبُدُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِى قَالُوا۟ نَعْبُدُ إِلَٰهَكَ وَإِلَٰهَ ءَابَآئِكَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ
وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

[130-133] Now, who else can have aversion to the way of Abraham but the one who has debased himself with folly and ignorance? Abraham was the man whom We chose for Our service in this world, and in the Next World he shall be among the righteous. When his Lord said to him, "Surrender,"[130] he promptly responded, "I have surrendered to the Lord of the Universe (and become a Muslim)." He also enjoined on his children to follow the same way. Jacob also did the same[131] and his last will to his sons was, "O my children, Allah has chosen the same way of life[132] for you. Hence remain Muslims up to your last breath." Were you present at the time when Jacob was on the point of death? He asked his children, "Whom will you worship after me?" They all answered, "We will worship the same One Allah Whom you, your forefathers Abraham. Ismail and Isaac acknowledged as their Allah and to Him we all surrender as Muslims."[133]

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۖ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُم مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۖ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا
كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

[134] They were a people who passed away; they shall receive the reward of what they earned and you shall have the reward of what you will earn; and you will not be questioned as to what they did.[134]

وَقَالُوا۟ كُونُوا۟ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَٰرَىٰ تَهْتَدُوا۟ ۗ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا
كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

قُولُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ
وَمَآ أُوتِىَ ٱلنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

[135-136] The Jews say, "Become Jews and you will be rightly guided" ;the Christians say, "Become Christians and you will have the true guidance." Say to them, "Nay, we turn away from every other way and accept the way of Abraham, and Abraham did not associate other gods with Allah."[135] O Muslims, say to them, "We believe in Allah and the Guidance which has been sent down to us and which was sent to Abraham, Ismail , Isaac and Jacob and his descendants and which was given by their Lord to Moses and Jesus and to all other Prophets. We do not discriminate against any of them[136] and we have completely surrendered to Allah as Muslims."

فَإِنْ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ مَآ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ فَقَدِ ٱهْتَدَوا۟ ۖ وَّإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِى
شِقَاقٍ ۖ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٣٧﴾

[137] Then if they believe the way you have believed, they have the right guidance,and if they turn away from this, it will become obvious that they are obdurate. Therefore, rest assured that Allah will suffice to defend you against them: He hears everything and knows every thing.

صِبۡغَةَ ٱللَّهِۖ وَمَنۡ أَحۡسَنُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ صِبۡغَةٗۖ وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ عَٰبِدُونَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

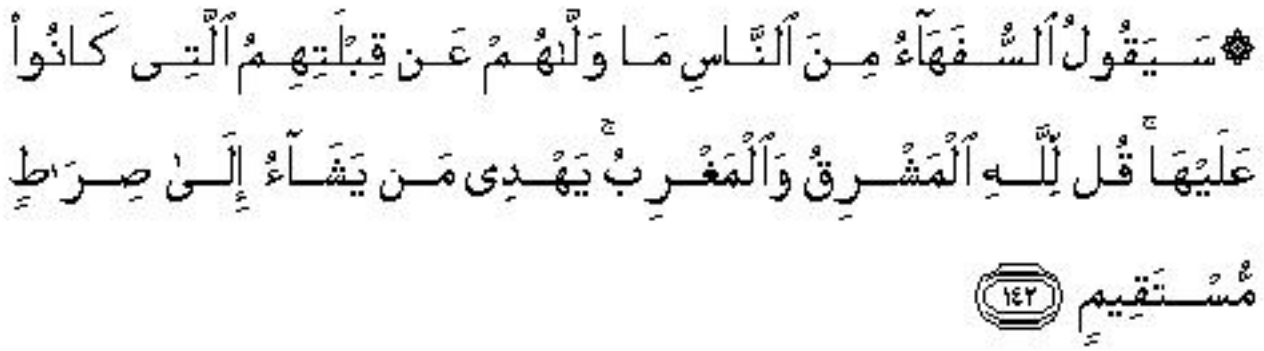
[138] Say, "Take Allah's colour,[137] and who can give a better colour than Allah? Therefore, we worship and submit to Him alone. "

قُلۡ أَتُحَآجُّونَنَا فِي ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمۡ وَلَنَآ أَعۡمَٰلُنَا وَلَكُمۡ أَعۡمَٰلُكُمۡ وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ مُخۡلِصُونَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

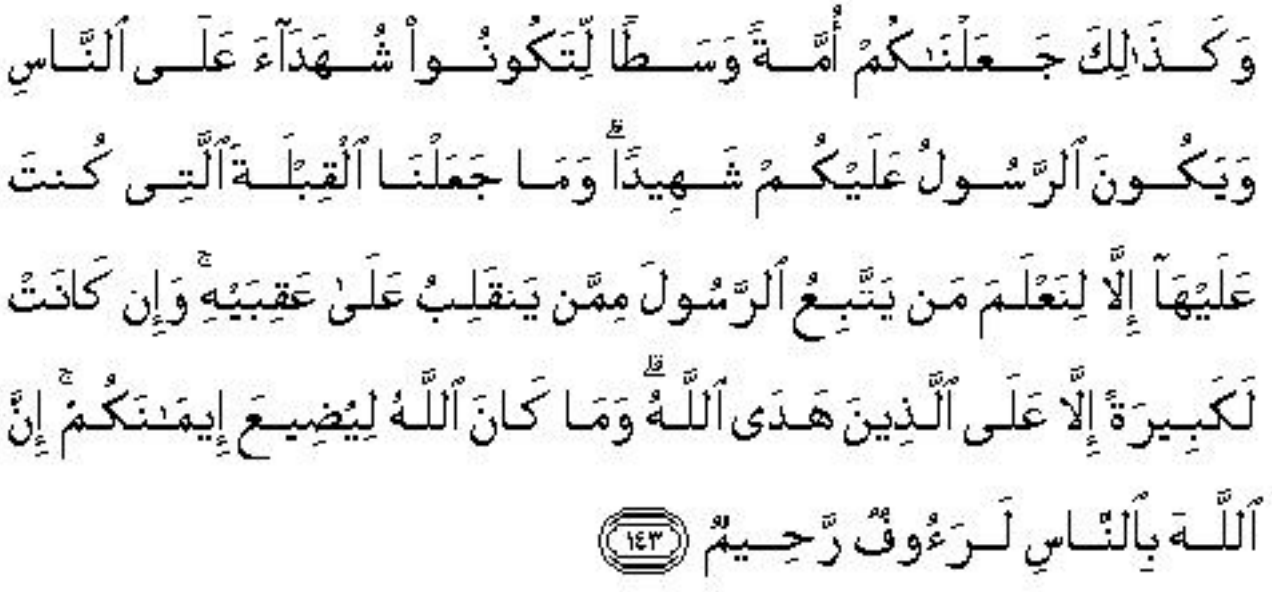
أَمۡ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبۡرَٰهِـۧمَ وَإِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ وَٱلۡأَسۡبَاطَ كَانُواْ هُودًا أَوۡ نَصَٰرَىٰۗ قُلۡ ءَأَنتُمۡ أَعۡلَمُ أَمِ ٱللَّهُۗ وَمَنۡ أَظۡلَمُ مِمَّن كَتَمَ شَهَٰدَةً عِندَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

تِلۡكَ أُمَّةٞ قَدۡ خَلَتۡۖ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتۡ وَلَكُم مَّا كَسَبۡتُمۡۖ وَلَا تُسۡـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿١٤١﴾

[139-141] O Prophet, say to them, "Do you argue with us concerning Allah, whereas He is our Lord and also your Lord?[138] We shall be accountable to Him for our deeds and you for yours; so we have dedicated our worship to Him alone.[139] Or do you say that Abraham. Ismail , Isaac, Jacob and his children were all Jews or Christians?" Ask them,"Do you know more than Allah does?[140] And who is more unjust than the one who hides the testimony which Allah has entrusted to him? Allah is not unaware of what you are doing.[141] They were a people who have passed away and they shall be repaid for what they earned and you for what you earn: you will not be questioned as to what they did.



[142] Of course, the foolish people will say, "What has turned them abruptly away from the qiblah towards which they formerly used to turn their faces in prayer?" [142] Tell them, O Messenger, `'East and West all belong to Allah; He shows the Right Way to anyone He wills."[143] Thus have We made you a Community of the "Golden Mean" so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind and the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you.[144]



[143] We had appointed the former giblah towards which you used to turn your face merely to test who would follow the Messenger and who would turn back.[145] It was indeed a hard test but not for those who had been blessed with Guidance from Allah. Allah will not let go to waste this faith of yours; rest assured that He is full of pity and mercy for mankind.

قَدْ نَرَىٰ تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۖ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَىٰهَا ۚ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ
شَطْرَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنتُمْ فَوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُۥ ۗ وَإِنَّ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

[144] We have seen you (O Muhammad), turning your face over and over again towards Heaven. Now, therefore, We turn you towards the giblah that you like best: so turn your face towards the Masjid Haram. Henceforth, wheresoever you may be, turn your face at prayer towards it.[146] The people who were given the Book know it well that the commandment (about the change of giblah) is in fact from their Lord, and is based on the Truth, but Allah is not unaware of what they are doing (in spite of this)

وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِكُلِّ ءَايَةٍ مَّا تَبِعُوا۟ قِبْلَتَكَ ۚ وَمَآ أَنتَ
بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا بَعْضُهُم بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلَئِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَآءَهُم
مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ ۙ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَّمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَعْرِفُونَهُۥ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا
مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

[145-147] Even though you may show every kind of sign to the people of the Book, they will not adopt your giblah, nor are you going to adopt their giblah; nor will any of them adopt the giblah of the other; therefore if, after the knowledge you have received, you follow their desires, you will certainly be counted among the transgressors.[147] As

for those to whom We gave the Book, they recognise the place (which has now been made giblah), as clearly as they recognise their own children.[148] But some of them are knowingly concealing the truth. This is in fact a Commandment from your Lord; so you should not have any doubt concerning this.

وَلِكُلٍّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا
يَأْتِ بِكُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾

[148] Everyone has a direction towards which he turns in Prayer: so try to excel one another in good works.[149] Allah will find you wheresoever you be, for nothing is out of Allah's reach.

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لَلْحَقُّ مِن
رَّبِّكَ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنتُمْ
فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلِأُتِمَّ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا
وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ
تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

فَٱذْكُرُونِىٓ أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لِى وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾

[149-152] At whatever place you may be, turn your face towards Masjid Haram (at Prayer time) for this is, in fact, a Commandment of your Lord, and Allah is not unaware of what you do. At whatever place you may be, you must turn your face towards the Masjid Haram, and wherever you may be, you must turn your face towards the same at prayer so that people might not find an argument against you.[150] As for the unjust people, they will never stop talking; so do not fear them but fear Me -- (Do this) so that I may complete My favour[151] upon you and you may find the way to real success,[152] just as (you have found from this: that) We sent the Messenger to you from among you, who recites to you Our Revelations; who purifies your lives; who instructs you in the Book and in Wisdom and teaches you those things that you did not know. So remember ' Me and I will remember you, and give thanks to Me and be not ungrateful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَن يُقْتَلُ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتٌۢ ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَىْءٍ مِّنَ ٱلْخَوْفِ وَٱلْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَنفُسِ وَٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَصَٰبَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

[153-157] O Believers,[153] seek help with fortitude and Salat, for Allah is with those who show fortitude.[154] And do not say of those who are slain in the way of Allah, "they are dead." In fact, they are alive but you do not perceive that life.[155] We will surely put you to trial by involving you in fear and hunger and by causing loss of property, life and earnings. And give good tidings to those who remain steadfast in these trials: when a misfortune comes to them, they say, "We are Allah's and we shall certainly return to Him,"[156] Their Lord will bestow great blessings and mercy upon them; such are the people who are rightly guided.

إِنَّ ٱلصَّفَا وَٱلْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَآئِرِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَمَنْ حَجَّ ٱلْبَيْتَ أَوِ ٱعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْهِ أَن يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا ۚ وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٨﴾

[158] Indeed Safa and Marwah are among the emblems of Allah: it is, therefore, no sin for him, who performs Hajj or `Umrah[157] to the House of AIlah, to run between the two hills;[158] and Allah knows and appreciates him who does any good with a willing heart.[159]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَآ أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلْهُدَىٰ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا
بَيَّنَّٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ۙ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ ٱللَّٰعِنُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ وَأَصْلَحُوا۟ وَبَيَّنُوا۟ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنَا ٱلتَّوَّابُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٠﴾

[159-160] Indeed Allah curses, and the cursers, too, curse those who conceal the clear teachings and guidance We have sent down, after We have made these plain in the Book for the guidance of all mankind.[160] I, however, will forgive those of them who repent of it, mend their ways and make own what they were concealing: for I am very generous in accepting repentance and showing mercy.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَمَاتُوا۟ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ ٱللَّهِ
وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

[161-162] Those who adopted the way of disbelief[161] and died as disbelievers, are accursed of Allah and of angels and of all mankind: they shall remain accursed for ever. Their punishment shall not be lightened, nor shall they be reprieved.

وَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

إِنَّ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ
وَٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلَّتِى تَجْرِى فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنفَعُ ٱلنَّاسَ وَمَآ أَنزَلَ
ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مِن مَّآءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ
فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ ٱلرِّيَٰحِ وَٱلسَّحَابِ ٱلْمُسَخَّرِ
بَيْنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ ۗ وَلَوْ يَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ إِذْ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْعَذَابَ أَنَّ ٱلْقُوَّةَ
لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿١٦٥﴾

إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتُّبِعُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ وَرَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ
ٱلْأَسْبَابُ ﴿١٦٦﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا۟
مِنَّا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ حَسَرَٰتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَمَا هُم بِخَٰرِجِينَ
مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٦٧﴾

[163-167] Your Deity is Allah alone: there is no deity save the All-Beneficent and All-Merciful Allah. (If they want a sign for the perception of this Reality) surety there are countless signs for those who use their common sense;[162] they can see alternation of the night and day, in the ships that sail the ocean laden with cargoes beneficial to mankind, and in the rain-water which Allah sends down from the sky and thereby gives life to the earth after its death and spreads over it all kinds of animate creatures, in the blowing of the winds and in the clouds which obediently wait for orders between the sky and the earth. (In spite of such clear signs of the Oneness of Allah), there are people who set up equals and rivals with Allah[163] and adore them with the adoration due to Allah . whereas the Believers adore Allah most ardently.[164] Would that these transgressors could realize now what they will realize, when they will see the chastisement before them that power and authority wholly belong to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment! When He will inflict punishment, those very leaders and guides whom they followed in the world will disown them. But punishment they shall get and all their bonds shall be cut off. Then those who followed them will say, "Would that we were given another chance to return to the world: then we will disown them just as they have disowned us today."[165] Thus will Allah bring before them the deeds they did in the world in such a manner as to make them wring their hands in regret but they shall be unable to come out of the Fire.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ كُلُوا۟ مِمَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ حَلَٰلًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾

إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلسُّوٓءِ وَٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ
﴿١٦٩﴾

[168-169] O people, eat of what is lawful and clean in the earth and do not follow the ways of Satan,[166] for he is your avowed enemy. He enjoins you to commit vice and indecency and induces you to attribute to Allah's name things you do not know to be from Him.[167]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ قَالُوا۟ بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَآ أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ
ءَابَآءَنَآ ۗ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ ءَابَآؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

وَمَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِى يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَآءً وَنِدَآءً ۚ
صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْىٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٧١﴾

[170-171] When it is said to them, "Follow the Commands that Allah has sent down," they reply, "We will follow only what we found our forefathers practising. [168] Well, will they go on following their forefathers even though they did not use common sense and did not find the right way? The mental condition of those who rejected the way of Allah may be likened to that of the cattle whom the shepherd calls but they hear nothing except the sound of shouts and cries.[169] They are deaf, they are dumb, they are blind; therefore they do not understand anything.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُلُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لِلَّهِ إِن
كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَيْتَةَ وَٱلدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ ٱلْخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ بِهِۦ لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
فَمَنِ ٱضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٧٣﴾

[172-173] O Believers, if you are true worshippers of Allah alone, eat without hesitation of the good and clean things wherewith We have provided you and be grateful to Allah.[170] Allah has only forbidden you to eat what dies of itself, and blood and swine flesh and what has been consecrated to any other name than of Allah.[171] But one will incur no sin if, forced by absolute necessity, he eats of any of these forbidden things, provided he has no intention of transgressing the law and does not take more than what is absolutely indispensable: for Allah is very Forgiving and very Merciful.[172]



إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِى بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَلَا
يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٤﴾
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشْتَرَوُا۟ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْعَذَابَ بِٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ فَمَآ أَصْبَرَهُمْ
عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٧٥﴾
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ نَزَّلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟
فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَفِى شِقَاقٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٧٦﴾

[174-176] Indeed those, who conceal the Commands that Allah has sent down in His Book and barter them away for paltry worldly gains, fill their bellies with fire.[173] Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He regard them as pure;[174] "a there is a painful torment for them. They are the people who have bartered away Guidance for error and Allah's pardon for His punishment. How audacious they are: they are ready even to endure the fire of Hell. This was inspite of the fact that Allah had sent down the Book with the Truth but the people who sought differences in the Book swerved far away from the Truth in their disputes.

۞لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ
وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ
وَٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ وَءَاتَى ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ
وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَٱلْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ ۖ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِى ٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ
وَحِينَ ٱلْبَأْسِ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

[177] It is no virtue. That you turn your faces towards the east or the west,[175] but virtue is that one should sincerely believe in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets and, out of His love, spend of one's choice wealth for relatives and orphans, for the needy and the wayfarer, for beggars and for the ransom of slaves, and establish the Salat and pay the Zakat. And the virtuous are those who keep their pledges when they make them and show fortitude in hardships and adversity and in the struggle between the Truth and falsehood; such are the truthful people and such are the pious.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِصَاصُ فِى ٱلْقَتْلَى ۖ ٱلْحُرُّ بِٱلْحُرِّ
وَٱلْعَبْدُ بِٱلْعَبْدِ وَٱلْأُنثَىٰ بِٱلْأُنثَىٰ ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِىَ لَهُۥ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَىْءٌ فَٱتِّبَاعٌۢ
بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَآءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَٰنٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ
فَمَنِ ٱعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُۥ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾

وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْقِصَاصِ حَيَوٰةٌ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

[178-179] O Believers, the lawn[176] of retribution has been prescribed for you in cases of murder; if a free man commits a murder, the free man shall he punished for it and a slave for a slave : likewise if a woman is guilty of murder the same shall he accountable for it.[177] But in case the injured brother[178] is willing to show leniency to the murderer, the blood money should he decided in accordance with the common law[179] and the murderer should pay it in a genuine way. This is an allowance and mercy from your Lord. Now there shall be a painful torment for anyone who transgresses the limits after this.[180] O men of understanding. There is security of life for you in the law of retribution.[181] It is expected that you will refrain from breaking this law.

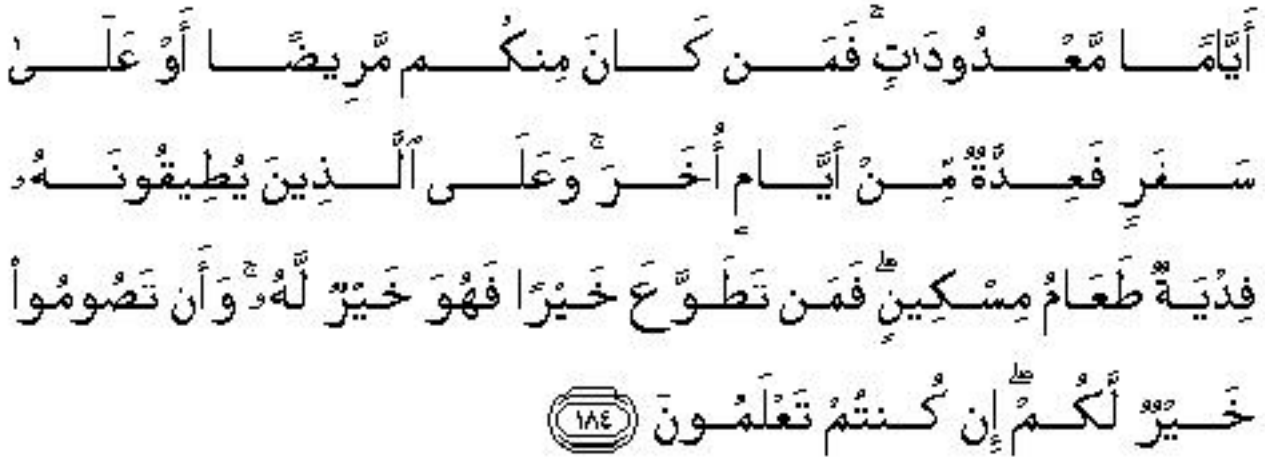
كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ إِن تَرَكَ خَيْرًا ٱلْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ
وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

فَمَنۢ بَدَّلَهُۥ بَعْدَمَا سَمِعَهُۥ فَإِنَّمَآ إِثْمُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨١﴾

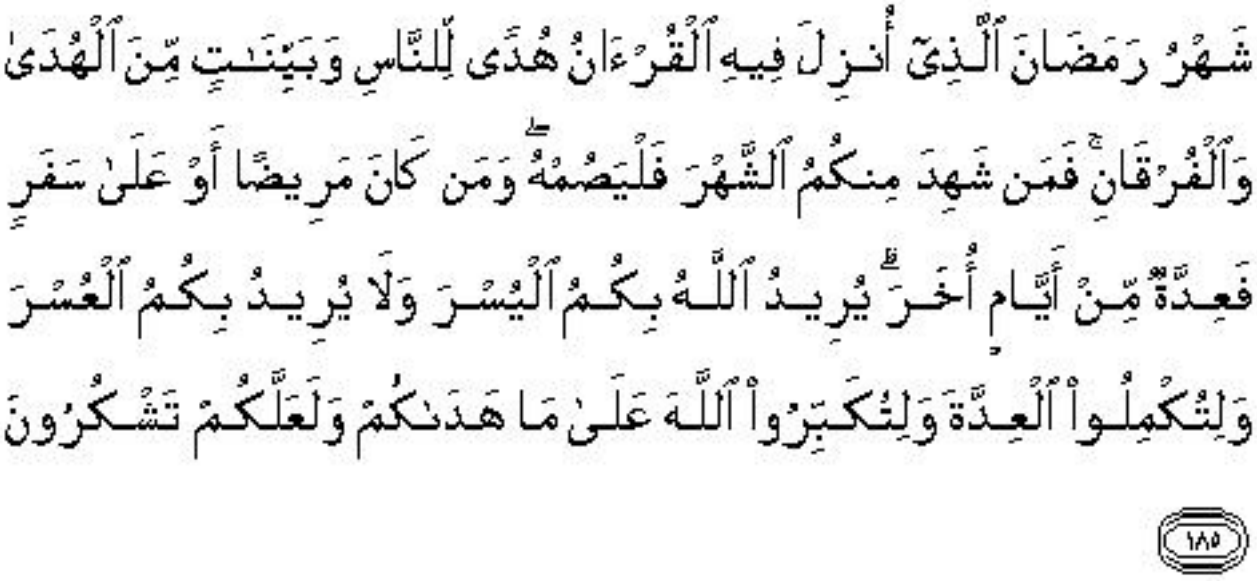
فَمَنْ خَافَ مِن مُّوصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَآ
إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٨٢﴾

[180-182] It has been prescribed for you that when death approaches one of you and he is leaving some property behind him, he should bequeath it equitably for his parents and relatives : it is an obligation on those who tear Allah.[182] Then if those, who heard the will, change it, they themselves shall bear the sin of this. Allah hears everything and knows everything. If, however. one apprehends genuinely that the testator had (intentionally or unintentionally) done some injustice, and then alters the will to set things right between the parties concerned, in that case he does not incur any sin. Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾


أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُۥ
فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۖ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَن تَصُومُوا۟
خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

[183-184] O Believers, the Fast has been made obligatory on you just as it was prescribed for the followers of the Prophets before you. It is expected that this will produce piety in you.[183] The Fast is to be observed for a fixed number of days. If, however, anyone of you be sick or on a journey, he should fast the same number of other days. As for those who can fast (but do not), the expiation of this shall be the feeding of one needy person for one fast day, and whoso does more than this [184] with a willing heart does it for his own good. But if you understand the thing, it is better for you to observe the Fast.[185]


شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ
وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ ٱلشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلْعُسْرَ
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا۟ ٱلْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ
﴿١٨٥﴾

[185] Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was sent down : this Book is a perfect guidance for mankind and consists of clear teachings which show the right way and are a criterion of Truth and falsehood. Therefore from now on whoever witnesses it, it is obligatory on hire to fast the whole month, but if one be ill or on a journey, he should make up for the same number by fasting on other days.[186] Allah desires to show leniency to you and does not desire to show any hardship. "therefore this method is being shown to you so that you may complete the number of Fast days and glorify Allah for the Guidance He has shown to you and be grateful to Him.[187]

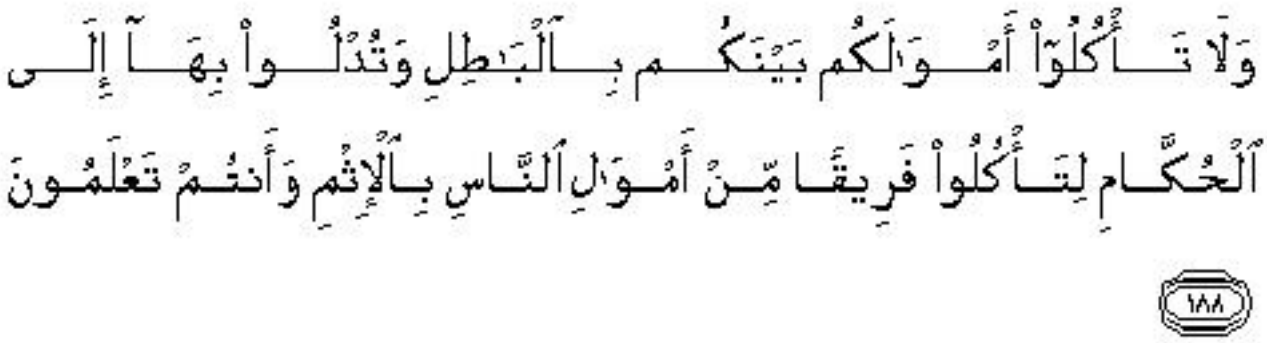
وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

[186] And if My servants ask you, O Prophet. concerning Me, tell them that I am quite near to them. I hear and answer the prayer of the suppliant, when he calls to Me. So let them respond to My call and believe in Me.[188] Convey this to them, O Prophet; perhaps they may be guided aright.[189]

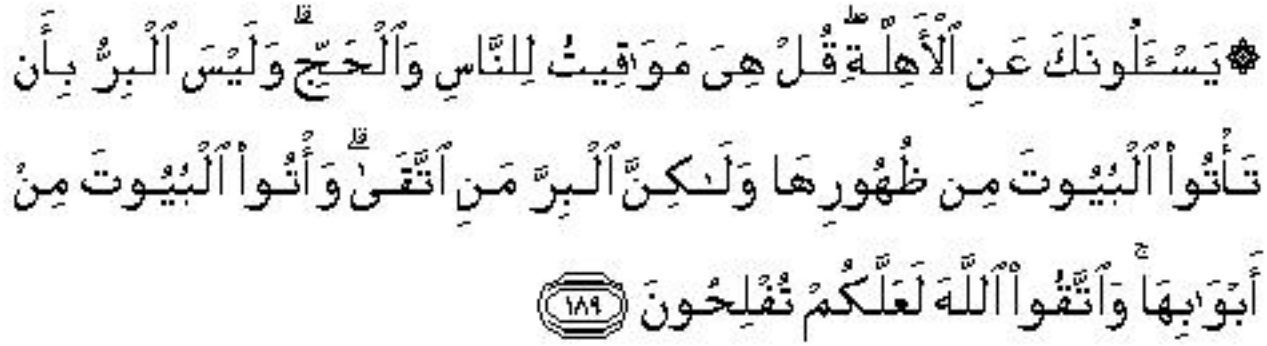
أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ
لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا
عَنكُمْ ۖ فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا
وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ
مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ
وَأَنتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا ۗ

كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

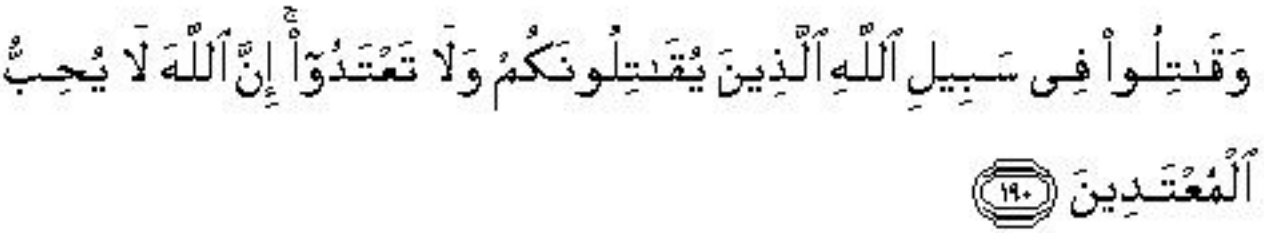
[187] It has been made lawful for you to go to your wives during the nights of the fast days. They are as a garment to you and you are as a garment to them.[190] Though Allah knew that you were secretly dishonest to yourselves, He has pardoned your guilt and forgiven you. NOW you are permitted to have intercourse with your wives and enjoy what Allah has made lawful for you.[191] You are also pemitted to eat and drink during the nights of the Fast months.[192] until you can discern the white streak of dawn from the blackness of night.[193] Then (abstain from all these things and) complete your fast till night-fall.[194] But you should not have intercourse with your wives while you confine yourselves to mosques.[195] These are the bounds set by Allah; so do nut go near them.[196] In this way Allah makes His Commands clear to mankind. It is expected that they will guard themselves against wrong ways.



[188] Do not usurp one another's property by unjust means nor offer it to the judges so that you may devour knowingly and unjustly a portion of the goods of others.[197]



[189] They ask you about the phases of the moan. Say, "These are signs for the people to reckon dates and fix the periods for hajj."[198] Also tell them, "It is no virtue to enter your houses from their backs during the Hajj days); real virtue is that one should refrain from incurring the displeasure of Allah; so enter your houses by their proper doors. and fear Allah so that you may gain (true) success.[199]



وَٱقۡتُلُوهُمۡ حَيۡثُ ثَقِفۡتُمُوهُمۡ وَأَخۡرِجُوهُم مِّنۡ حَيۡثُ أَخۡرَجُوكُمۡۚ وَٱلۡفِتۡنَةُ
أَشَدُّ مِنَ ٱلۡقَتۡلِۚ وَلَا تُقَٰتِلُوهُمۡ عِندَ ٱلۡمَسۡجِدِ ٱلۡحَرَامِ حَتَّىٰ
يُقَٰتِلُوكُمۡ فِيهِۖ فَإِن قَٰتَلُوكُمۡ فَٱقۡتُلُوهُمۡۗ كَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ
١٩١

فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوۡاْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ١٩٢

[190-192] And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight against you[200] but do not commit aggression because Allah does not like aggressors.[201] Fight against them wherever they confront you in combat and drive them out from where they drove you out. Though killing is bad. persecution is worse than killing[202] Do not fight against them near the Masjid Haram unless they attack you there. And if they attack you first (even in that sacred area), strike them (without any hesitation); this is the due punishment for such disbelievers. If, however, they desist from fighting (you should also do likewise), and know that Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[203]

وَقَٰتِلُوهُمۡ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتۡنَةٞ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ لِلَّهِۖ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوۡاْ فَلَا عُدۡوَٰنَ
إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ١٩٣

[193] Go on fighting with them till there is no more a state of tribulation and Allah's way is established instead.[204] Then if they desist from it, there should be no more hostility except against those who had been guilty of cruelty and brutality.[205]

ٱلشَّهۡرُ ٱلۡحَرَامُ بِٱلشَّهۡرِ ٱلۡحَرَامِ وَٱلۡحُرُمَٰتُ قِصَاصٞۚ فَمَنِ ٱعۡتَدَىٰ
عَلَيۡكُمۡ فَٱعۡتَدُواْ عَلَيۡهِ بِمِثۡلِ مَا ٱعۡتَدَىٰ عَلَيۡكُمۡۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ
وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلۡمُتَّقِينَ ١٩٤

[194] A prohibited month is to be respected, if the same is respected (by the enemy),[206] and likewise there is the law of just retribution for the violation of all prohibited things. Therefore, if anyone transgresses a prohibition by attacking you, you may do likewise, but always fear Allah and bear in mind that Allah is with those who desist from breaking Allah's bounds.

وَأَنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا۟ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى ٱلتَّهْلُكَةِ ۛ وَأَحْسِنُوٓا۟ ۛ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

[195] Spend your wealth in the Way of Allah and do not cast yourselves into ruin with your own hands.[207] Do all things gracefully, for Allah loves those who do all things with excellence.[208]

وَأَتِمُّوا۟ ٱلْحَجَّ وَٱلْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا ٱسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ ٱلْهَدْىِ ۖ
وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا۟ رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ ٱلْهَدْىُ مَحِلَّهُۥ ۚ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم
مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِۦٓ أَذًى مِّن رَّأْسِهِۦ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّن صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ
فَإِذَآ أَمِنتُمْ فَمَن تَمَتَّعَ بِٱلْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى ٱلْحَجِّ فَمَا ٱسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ ٱلْهَدْىِ ۚ
فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَٰثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِى ٱلْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۗ
تِلْكَ عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن لَّمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُۥ حَاضِرِى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۚ

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

[196] When you make up your mind to perform Hajj and `Umrah,accomplish these to please Allah. But if you are hemmed in somewhere, then offer to Allah whatever sacrifice you can afford.[209] And do not shave your heads until the sacrifice reaches its place.[210] But whoever among you is sick or has an ailment of the head and has his head shaved shall atone for this either by fasting or by alms-giving or by offering a sacrifice[211] However, when you are secure[212] (and you reach Makkah before the Hajj season begins), whoever takes advantage of this opportunity to perform `Umrah shall offer the sacrifice that he can afford. But if he cannot afford a sacrifice, he shall fast three

days during the Hajj season and seven days after reaching home, that is, ten days in all. This concession is only for those whose homes are not near the Masjid Haram,[213] refrain from transgressing these Commandments of Allah and know it well that Allah is very severe in punishment.

ٱلْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَٰتٌ ۚ فَمَن فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ ٱلْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا
جِدَالَ فِى ٱلْحَجِّ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوا۟ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ
ٱلزَّادِ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَٱتَّقُونِ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٧﴾

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَبْتَغُوا۟ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَآ أَفَضْتُم مِّنْ عَرَفَٰتٍ
فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عِندَ ٱلْمَشْعَرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۖ وَٱذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَإِن كُنتُم
مِّن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿١٩٨﴾

ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا۟ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١٩٩﴾

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَآءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ
ذِكْرًا ۗ فَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنْ
خَلَٰقٍ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

[197-200] The months for Hajj are well known to all; whoever makes up his mind to perform Hajj during these fixed months, let him totally abstain from all sorts of sexual indulgence,[214] wickedness[215] and wrangling[216] during the Hajj and remember that Allah knows whatever good you do. Take necessary provisions for Hajj, and piety is the best of all provisions: so refrain from disobeying Me, O men of understanding![217] And there is nothing wrong if you also seek

the bounty of your Lord during the pilgrimage.[218] Moreover, when you return from 'Arafat, stay at Mash'aril-Haram (Muzdalifah) and remember Allah. And remember Him just as He has enjoined you, for you had gone astray before this.[219] Then return from where others return and ask Allah's forgiveness.[220] Most surely He is Forgiving and Merciful. And when you have performed your Hajj rites, remember Allah as you had been remembering your own forefathers, or even with greater zeal.[221] (Even those who remember Allah do it in different ways). Some say, "Our Lord, give us all the good things here in this world. " Such people shall have no share in the Hereafter.

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ
حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

۞ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَٰتٍ ۚ فَمَن تَعَجَّلَ فِى يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ
وَمَن تَأَخَّرَ فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ لِمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ
تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

[201-203] Then there are others who say, "Our Lord, give us what is good in this world and also what is good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of Fire." Such people shall have their due share (in both the worlds) according to what they earn. And Allah is swift at settling accounts. So pass these few appointed days in remembering Allah; then there is nothing wrong if one hastens on (from Mina) after two days or stays there (a day) longer,[222] provided that he spends these days in piety. Do not disobey Him and remember that One Day you shall be mustered before Him.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُۥ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهِدُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِى
قَلْبِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ ٱلْخِصَامِ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ ٱلْحَرْثَ وَٱلنَّسْلَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ ٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلْعِزَّةُ بِٱلْإِثْمِ ۚ فَحَسْبُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ رَءُوفٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠٧﴾

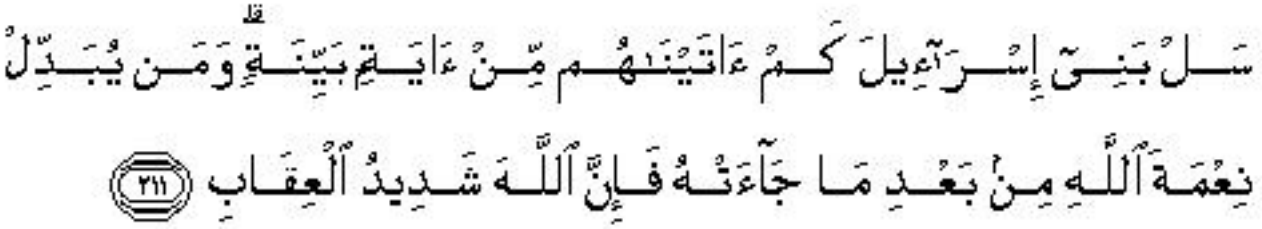
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ فِي ٱلسِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

فَإِن زَلَلْتُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْكُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

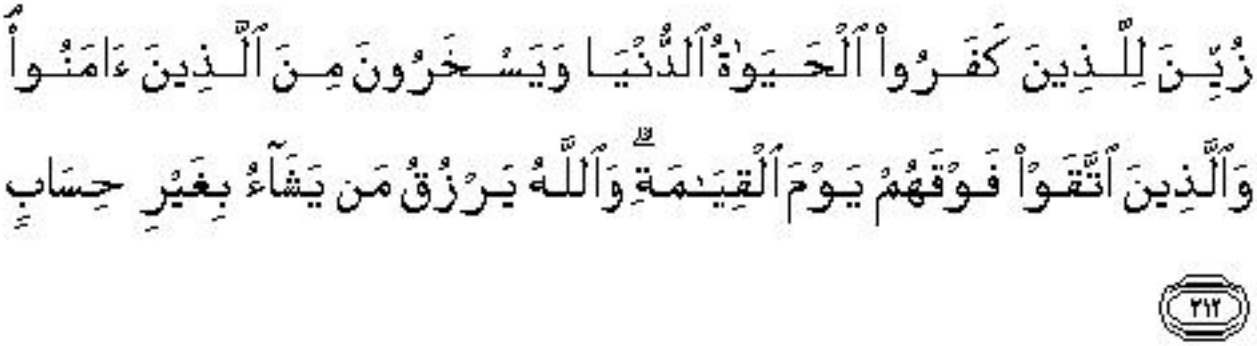
هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ ٱلْغَمَامِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَقُضِيَ ٱلْأَمْرُ ۚ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٢١٠﴾

[204-210] There is a certain type of man who charms you in this worldly life with his glib talk. He calls Allah to witness again and again that he cherishes good intentions in his heart,[223] whereas, in fact, he is the deadliest opponent[224] of the Truth. When he gets power[225] he directs all his efforts towards spreading mischief in the land,

destroying harvests and killing the human race whereas Allah (Whom he makes his witness) does not like mischief. And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah," vanity seizes him and makes him adhere to the sin. Hell is the proper place for such a person and it is a very bad dwelling indeed. On the other side, there is another type of man who devotes his whole life to please Allah, and Allah is gracious to such of His servants. O Believers, enter completely into Islam[226] and do not follow in" the footsteps of Satan, for he is your avowed enemy. If you lapse back after receiving the clear teachings that have come to you, know it well that Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. [227] (If people do not follow the right way even after receiving such clear admonitions), do they await that Allah Himself should come down to them in the canopies of clouds with a retinue of angels, and seal their doom[228] Ultimately every thing shall be presented before Allah (for judgement).



[211] Ask the children of Israel how many a clear sign We have shown to them: (also ask them) what a severe chastisement Allah inflicts on the community that, after receiving Allah's favour exchanges it (for wretchdness).[229]



[212] This worldly life has been made very charming and alluring for those who have adopted the way of disbelief. So they mock at those who have adopted the way of belief ,but (they forget that) the pious people will rank above them on the Day of Resurrection. As to the wordly provisions, Allah has full authority and power to bestow these without measure on anyone He wills.

كَانَ ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنزَلَ
مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ فِيمَا ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَا
ٱخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ
فَهَدَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَا ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَهْدِى
مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢١٣﴾

[213] In the beginning all the people followed the same way. (Afterwards there came a change and differences arose). Then Allah sent Prophets to give good tidings to those who followed the Right Way and warnings to those who swerved from it. And He sent down with them the Book based on the Truth so that it should judge between the people concerning their differences. (Differences arose not because people were not given the knowledge of the Truth in the beginning, nay), differences arose between those very people who had been given clear teachings, and (for no other reasons than that) they wanted to tyrannize over one another.[230] So Allah, by His leave, guided those who believed in the Prophets to the Truth about which they had differed; Allah guides whomever He pleases to the Right Way.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تَدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْجَنَّةَ
وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُم مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ خَلَوْا۟ مِن قَبْلِكُم ۖ مَّسَّتْهُمُ ٱلْبَأْسَآءُ وَٱلضَّرَّآءُ
وَزُلْزِلُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ ٱلرَّسُولُ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ مَتَىٰ نَصْرُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ أَلَآ
إِنَّ نَصْرَ ٱللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ ﴿٢١٤﴾

[214] Do[231] you think that you will enter Paradise without undergoing such trials as were experienced by the believers before you? They met with adversity and affliction and were so shaken by trials that the Prophet of the time and his followers cried out: "When will Allah's help come"? (Then they were comforted with the good tidings): "Yes, Allah's help is near."

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنفِقُونَ ۖ قُلْ مَآ أَنفَقْتُم
مِّنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۗ
وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١٥﴾

[215] The people ask, "What should we spend?" Tell them, "Whatever you spend, spend for your parents, your relatives, orphans, the needy and the wayfarer; and whatever good you do, Allah has knowledge of it.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ
خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰٓ أَن تُحِبُّوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

[216] You have been enjoined to go to war, and you dislike it; it may be that you dislike a thing and the same is good for you, and you love a thing and the same is bad for you: Allah knows but you do not.

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلشَّهْرِ ٱلْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ ۖ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ ۖ
وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌۢ بِهِۦ وَٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِۦ مِنْهُ
أَكْبَرُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱلْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ ٱلْقَتْلِ ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ
حَتَّىٰ يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ إِنِ ٱسْتَطَٰعُوا۟ ۚ وَمَن يَرْتَدِدْ مِنكُمْ
عَن دِينِهِۦ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ
فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢١٨﴾

[217-218] They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning warfare in the prohibited month. Say, "Fighting is a heinous offence in this month, but in the sight of Allah it is far worse to hinder people from the Way of Allah and to deny Him and to prevent His worshippers from visiting the Masjidal-Haram, and to expel the dwellers of the sacred place from it; and persecution is far worse than bloodshed.[232] As for them, they will go on fighting with you till they succeed in turning you away from your Faith, if they can. But (note it well that) whosoever renounces his Faith and dies a renegade, all his works shall be fruitless both in this world and in the Hereafter. All such people deserve the Fire and shall abide in Hell for ever.[233] In contrast to them, those, who have believed And left their homes in the way of Allah and exerted their utmost in His cause,[234] rightly look forward to His mercy: and Allah is Forgiving and full of mercy.

۞ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْخَمْرِ وَٱلْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ فِيهِمَآ إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَإِثْمُهُمَآ أَكْبَرُ مِن نَّفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنفِقُونَ قُلِ ٱلْعَفْوَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَيَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١٩﴾

[219] They ask you about drinking and gambling. Say, "There is great harm in both, though there is some benefit also for the people. But the harm of the sin thereof is far greater than their benefit."[235]

فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْأَخِرَةِ ۗ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ ۖ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَإِن
تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ ٱلْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ ٱلْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

[220] And they ask"What ought we to spend (in the way of Allah)"? Say"Spend whatever you can spare." Thus Allah makes His commands clear to you so that you may think about the good of both this world and the Hereafter. They ask you about the right way of dealing with orphans. Say "The right way is that which is for their good."[236] Then there

is no harm if you live a common life with them for they are after all your own brethren. Allah knows well the one who means harm and also the one who means good. If Allah had willed He would have been hard upon you in this matter for He is All-Powerful but He is at the same time All-Wise.

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ
أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ وَلَا تُنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ ۚ وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن
مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ
وَٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۖ وَيُبَيِّنُ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢١﴾

[221] Do not marry mushrik women unless they believe; a slave woman who believes is better than a free woman who does not believe, even though the latter may appear very attractive to you. (Likewise) do not wed your women to mushrik men unless they believe; a slave man who believes is better than a free man who does not, even though he may be very pleasing to you. These mushrik people invite you to the Fire[237] while Allah by His grace invites you to the Garden and His pardon, and He makes His revelations plain to the people so that they should learn a lesson and follow the admonition.

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْمَحِيضِ ۖ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَٱعْتَزِلُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فِى ٱلْمَحِيضِ ۖ وَلَا
تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ ۖ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلتَّوَّٰبِينَ وَيُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

نِسَآؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا۟ حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُمْ ۖ وَقَدِّمُوا۟ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّكُم مُّلَٰقُوهُ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾

[222-223] They ask about the monthly course. Say, "It is a state of impurity;[238] so keep apart from women during their monthly course and do not go near them until they are clean.[239] When they have cleansed themselves, then you may go to them in the manner Allah has enjoined you."[240] Most surely Allah loves those people who refrain from

evil and keep themselves pure and clean. Your wives are your tilth : so you may go to your tilth as you please,[241] but you should take care of your future[242] and refrain from the displeasure of Allah. Know it well that One Day you shall meet Him. (O Prophet !) bear good tidings to the Believers.

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِّأَيْمَـٰنِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ وَتُصْلِحُوا۟
بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٤﴾

لَّا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِٱللَّغْوِ فِىٓ أَيْمَـٰنِكُمْ وَلَـٰكِن يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا كَسَبَتْ
قُلُوبُكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٥﴾

[224-225] Do not use Allah's name for such oaths which are taken to keep back from virtue, piety and the welfare of mankind:[243] Allah hears everything you utter and knows everything. Allah does not call you to Account for unintentional and meaningless oaths,[244] but will surely take you to task for oaths taken deliberately and in earnest : Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.

لِّلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِن نِّسَآئِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ ۖ فَإِن فَآءُو فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٦﴾

وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا۟ ٱلطَّلَـٰقَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٧﴾

[226-227] Those who take an oath to keep apart from their wives are given four months (for a final decision),[245] Then if they resume their relations, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[246] And if they resolve on divorce,[247] (let them remember that) Allah hears everything and knows everything.

وَٱلْمُطَلَّقَٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَٰثَةَ قُرُوٓءٍ ۚ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ
أَن يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِن كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوٓا۟ إِصْلَٰحًا ۚ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ
ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

٢٢٨

[228] Divorced women must wait for three monthly courses. And it is not lawful for them to hide what Allah has created in their wombs, if they sincerely believe in Allah and the Last Day. Their husbands are best entitled to take[248] them back as their wives during this waiting period, if they desire reconciliation.[249]

ٱلطَّلَٰقُ مَرَّتَانِ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكٌۢ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌۢ بِإِحْسَٰنٍ ۗ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن
تَأْخُذُوا۟ مِمَّآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّآ أَن يَخَافَآ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ
أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا ٱفْتَدَتْ بِهِۦ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ
ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۚ وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ

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[229] Divorce may be pronounced twice; then either the wife be kept honourably or parted with gracefully.[250] And it is not lawful for you to take back anything out of what you have given them.[251] There is, however, an exception to this; if you fear that they might not be able to keep within the limits imposed by Allah, there is no harm if both agree mutually that the wife should obtain divorce by giving something as compensation to the husband.[252] These are the bounds set by Allah; therefore do not violate them, for those who violate the bounds of Allah are the tansgressors.

فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعۡدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنكِحَ زَوۡجًا غَيۡرَهُۥۗ فَإِن طَلَّقَهَا

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡهِمَآ أَن يَتَرَاجَعَآ إِن ظَنَّآ أَن يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِۗ وَتِلۡكَ حُدُودُ

ٱللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوۡمٖ يَعۡلَمُونَ ٢٣٠

[230] And if the husband divorces his wife (for the third time), she shall not remain his lawful wife after this (absolute) divorce, unless she marries another husband and the second husband divorces her.[253] (In that case) there is no harm if they re-marry, provided that the woman and her first husband are convinced that they will be able to keep within the bounds fixed by Allah. And these are Allah's bounds, which He makes clear for the guidance of those who know (the consequences of transgression).

وَإِذَا طَلَّقۡتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَبَلَغۡنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمۡسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعۡرُوفٍ أَوۡ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ

بِمَعۡرُوفٖۚ وَلَا تُمۡسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارٗا لِّتَعۡتَدُواْۚ وَمَن يَفۡعَلۡ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَدۡ ظَلَمَ

نَفۡسَهُۥۚ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوٓاْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ هُزُوٗاۚ وَٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَمَآ

أَنزَلَ عَلَيۡكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَٱلۡحِكۡمَةِ يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ

أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ ٢٣١

[231] And when you have divorced your wives and they are about to complete their prescribed term, then either retain them gracefully or release them generously. It is transgression to retain them merely for harassment; and whoever' does that indeed wrongs his own self.[254] Do not play with Allah's Commandments, and remember that Allah has blessed you with a great favour. He admonishes you to show due respect to the Book and the Wisdom He has sent to you.[255] Fear Allah and know that He is fully aware of everything.

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَن يَنكِحْنَ أَزْوَٰجَهُنَّ
إِذَا تَرَٰضَوْا۟ بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِۦ مَن كَانَ مِنكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ
بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٢﴾

[232] When you have divorced your wives absolutely and they have completed their prescribed term, then you should not prevent them from marrying their prospective husbands, if they mutually agree to marry each other in a lawful way.[256] You are enjoined not to commit such an offence,if you sincerely believe in Allah and the Last Day. It is most decent and pure for you to desist from this; Allah knows and you do not know.

۞ وَٱلْوَٰلِدَٰتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَٰدَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن
يُتِمَّ ٱلرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلْمَوْلُودِ لَهُۥ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ
لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَا تُضَآرَّ وَٰلِدَةٌۢ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ
لَّهُۥ بِوَلَدِهِۦ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱلْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَٰلِكَ ۗ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَن تَرَاضٍ
مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ۗ وَإِنْ أَرَدتُّمْ أَن تَسْتَرْضِعُوٓا۟
أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُم مَّآ ءَاتَيْتُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٣﴾

[233] The (divorced) mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, if the fathers desire the suckling to be completed.[257] In that case the father of the child shall, in the fair known way, be responsible for their food and clothing. But none should be burdened with more than one can bear: neither the mother should be pressed unjustly (to accept unfair terms) just because she is the mother nor should the father be burdened just because he is the father. And the same responsibility for the maintenance of the mother devolves upon the father of the child and his

heir.[258] There is no harm if they wean the child by mutual consent and consultation. Moreover, there is no harm if you choose to give your children a suckle by a wet nurse, provided that you pay her fairly. Fear Allah and know it well that whatever you do is in the sight of Allah.

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَٰجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ
وَعَشْرًا ۖ فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِنَّ
بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٤﴾

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُم بِهِۦ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ أَوْ
أَكْنَنتُمْ فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَٰكِن لَّا
تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّآ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۚ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا۟ عُقْدَةَ
ٱلنِّكَاحِ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ أَجَلَهُۥ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا
فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ فَٱحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾

[234-235] If those of you, who die, leave wives behind, they should abstain (from marriage) for four months and ten days.[259] Then when their waiting term expires, they are free to do whatever they choose for themselves, provided that it is decent; you shall not be answerable for this; Allah is fully aware of what you do. It is no offence if you make indirect proposal of marriage to widows during their waiting term or keep it concealed in your hearts: for Allah knows that you will naturally think of them. But be careful not to make any secret engagement. If you have to do anything, do it in an honourable way. And you should not settle anything finally about the marriage until the waiting term expires. Understand it well that Allah even knows what is hidden in your hearts; so fear Him. Also know that Allah is Lenient and Forgiving.

لَّا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا۟
لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى ٱلْمُوسِعِ قَدَرُهُۥ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُقْتِرِ قَدَرُهُۥ
مَتَٰعًۢا بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٢٣٦﴾

وَإِن طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ
فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّآ أَن يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَا۟ ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ عُقْدَةُ
ٱلنِّكَاحِ ۚ وَأَن تَعْفُوٓا۟ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَنسَوُا۟ ٱلْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٧﴾

[236-237] It is no sin if you divorce your wives while you have not yet touched them or fixed any dower for them. In such a case, pay them something anyhow.[260] A rich man should pay fairly according to his means and a poor man according to his resources, for this is an obligation on the righteous people. In case you fixed a dower for them and then divorced them before you touched them, you should pay half of the fixed dower. But there is no harm if the woman agrees to forego it or the man, in whose hands is the marriage tie, is generous enough (to pay the dower in full). And if you (men) act generously, it is akin to piety. Do not forget to show generosity in your dealings[261] with one another for Allah sees what you do.

حَٰفِظُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلصَّلَوَٰتِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱلْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا۟ لِلَّهِ قَٰنِتِينَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا ۖ فَإِذَآ أَمِنتُمْ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم
مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا۟ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٩﴾

[238-239] Take great care of your Prayers,[262] especially of a Prayer that has excellent qualities of Salat[263] and stand before Allah like devoted servants. Even if you are in danger, you must offer your Prayers anyhow on foot or on horseback. And when you have peace again, remember Allah in the manner He has taught you , which you did not

know before.

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَٰجًا وَصِيَّةً لِّأَزْوَٰجِهِم مَّتَٰعًا إِلَى
ٱلْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ ۚ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى مَا فَعَلْنَ
فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِنَّ مِن مَّعْرُوفٍ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٠﴾

وَلِلْمُطَلَّقَٰتِ مَتَٰعٌۢ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٤١﴾

[240-241] Those[264] of you, who shall die and leave wives behind them, should make a will to the effect that they should be provided with a year's maintenance and should not be turned out of their homes. But if they leave their homes of their own accord, you shall not be answerable for whatever they choose for themselves in a fair way; Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. Likewise, the divorced women should also be given something in accordance with the known fair standard. This is an obligation upon the God-fearing people.

كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤٢﴾

[242] Thus Allah makes clear His commandments for you: it is expected that you will use your common sense.

۞ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ ٱلْمَوْتِ
فَقَالَ لَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مُوتُوا۟ ثُمَّ أَحْيَٰهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ
أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٤٣﴾

وَقَٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٤﴾

مَّن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يُقۡرِضُ ٱللَّهَ قَرۡضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَـٰعِفَهُۥ لَهُۥٓ أَضۡعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَٱللَّهُ
يَقۡبِضُ وَيَبۡصُۜطُ وَإِلَيۡهِ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿٢٤٥﴾

[243-245] Have[265] you ever reflected upon the case of those who fled their homes for fear of death, and they were thousands in number? So Allah said to them, "Die"; then He again gave them life.[266] Indeed Allah is bountiful to mankind, but most of the people are ungrateful. O Muslims, fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah hears everything and knows everything. Who is there among you who will lend to Allah a good loan[267] that He may return it after multiplying it manifold? Allah alone can decrease and increase (wealth) and to Him you shall all return.

أَلَمۡ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلۡمَلَإِ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ مِنۢ
بَعۡدِ مُوسَىٰٓ إِذۡ قَالُواْ لِنَبِىٍّ لَّهُمُ ٱبۡعَثۡ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُّقَـٰتِلۡ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۖ
قَالَ هَلۡ عَسَيۡتُمۡ إِن كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَـٰتِلُواْۖ قَالُواْ وَمَا لَنَآ أَلَّا
نُقَـٰتِلَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَقَدۡ أُخۡرِجۡنَا مِن دِيَـٰرِنَا وَأَبۡنَآئِنَاۖ فَلَمَّا
كُتِبَ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوۡاْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنۡهُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمُۢ بِٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ

﴿٢٤٦﴾

[246] Have you also reflected upon the matter concerning the chiefs of the Israelites after (the death of) Moses? They said to their Prophet, "Appoint a king for us so that we may fight in the way of Allah."[268] The Prophet asked them, "Might it be that you will not fight, if fighting is prescribed for you?" They replied, "How can it be that we would refuse to fight in the way of Allah when we have been turned out of our homes and separated from our children?" But (in spite of this assurance) when they were enjoined to fight, they all, except a few of them, turned their backs. And Allah knows each and everyone of these transgressors.

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ
ٱلْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِٱلْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ ٱلْمَالِ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
ٱصْطَفَىٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُۥ بَسْطَةً فِى ٱلْعِلْمِ وَٱلْجِسْمِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يُؤْتِى مُلْكَهُۥ مَن
يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٧﴾

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ ءَايَةَ مُلْكِهِۦٓ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلتَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّن
رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ءَالُ مُوسَىٰ وَءَالُ هَٰرُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٤٨﴾

[247-248] Their Prophet said to them, "Allah has appointed Saul[269] to be king over you." Hearing this, they replied, "How has he been entitled to become king over us? We have a better right to kingship than he, for he does not even possess enough riches." The Prophet replied, "Allah has preferred him to you and blessed him with abundant powers of mind and body. And Allah has the power to give His kingdom to whomever He wills: Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." Their Prophet further informed them, "The sign of his appointment as king from Allah is that during his reign you will get back the Ark, wherein are the means of your peace of mind from your Lord, and which contains the sacred relics of the family of Moses and Aaron, and which is being borne at this time by the angels.[270] Herein is a great Sign for you, if you are true believers."

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِٱلْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُم بِنَهَرٍ فَمَن شَرِبَ مِنْهُ
فَلَيْسَ مِنِّى وَمَن لَّمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنِّىٓ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةًۢ بِيَدِهِۦ
فَشَرِبُوا۟ مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُۥ هُوَ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ قَالُوا۟ لَا
طَاقَةَ لَنَا ٱلْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِۦ ۚ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ ٱللَّهِ
كَم مِّن فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةًۢ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٢٤٩﴾

وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا۟ لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِۦ قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ
أَقْدَامَنَا وَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٥٠﴾

فَهَزَمُوهُم بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُۥدُ جَالُوتَ وَءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَهُۥ مِمَّا يَشَآءُ ۗ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَّفَسَدَتِ
ٱلْأَرْضُ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٥١﴾

[249-251] And when Saul marched out with his army, he warned: "Allah is going to put you to a test by the side of a river: whoso drinks of its water shall cease to be my companion: he alone shall be~my companion who does not quench his thirst with its water: one may, however, take except a few, drank their fill of it.[271] Afterwards when Saul, and those who had believed with him, crossed the river and advanced forward, the former said to Saul, "We have no power left this day to fight against Goliath and his hosts."[272] But those who believed that one Day they shall meet Allah, declared, "It has often been that a small host has, by Allah's grace, overcome a big host: for Allah is with those who show fortitude." Accordingly, when they marched forward to fight with Goliath and his hosts, they prayed, "Our Lord, bless us with fortitude, make firm our foothold and give us victory over the unbelieving host." Consequently, by Allah's grace, they routed the unbelievers, and David killed Goliath; and Allah gave him kingship and wisdom and taught him whatever other things He willed. And if Allah had not been repelling one set of people

by means of another, the earth[273] would have been filled with chaos.[274] But Allah is bountiful to the world (and so repels chaos in this way).

تِلْكَ ءَايَـٰتُ ٱللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢٥٢﴾

۞ تِلْكَ ٱلرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۘ مِّنْهُم مَّن كَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَرَفَعَ
بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَـٰتٍ ۚ وَءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ وَأَيَّدْنَـٰهُ بِرُوحِ
ٱلْقُدُسِ ۗ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَا ٱقْتَتَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ
ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتُ وَلَـٰكِنِ ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ ءَامَنَ وَمِنْهُم مَّن كَفَرَ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
مَا ٱقْتَتَلُوا۟ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿٢٥٣﴾

[252-253] These are Allah's revelations, which We are conveying to you accurately. And O Muhammad, most surely you are of those who have been sent as Messengers. Of these Messengers (whom We sent for the guidance of mankind), We raised some above the others in rank. Among them was one with whom Allah Himself had direct talks. There were others whom He raised high in rank in other ways. Likewise We gave clear signs to Jesus, son of Mary, and supported him with the Holy Spirit. Had Allah so willed the people who had seen clear signs would not have fought against one another after the Prophets. But (it was not Allah's will to prevent people forcibly from differences: so) they disagreed; then some of them accepted the Truth and others rejected it. If Allah had so willed they would have never fought against one another, but Allah does whatever He pleases (to fulfill His designs.)[275]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَـٰكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ
فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَـٰعَةٌ ۗ وَٱلْكَـٰفِرُونَ هُمُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٢٥٤﴾

[254] O Believers, spend of the wealth We have bestowed upon you[276] (in Our way) before the Day comes when there shall be no buying and no selling: when neither friendship nor intercession will be of any avail. Those, who adopt the way of disbelief are indeed the[277] wrongdoers.

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْحَىُّ ٱلْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُۥ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَّهُۥ مَا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ مَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُۥٓ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۚ يَعْلَمُ
مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَىْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّا بِمَا شَآءَ ۚ
وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ ۖ وَلَا يَـُٔودُهُۥ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ
ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٢٥٥﴾

[255] Allah: the Everlasting, the Sustainer of the whole Universe; there is no god but He.[278] He does neither slumber nor sleep.[279] Whatsoever is in the heavens and in the earth is His.[280] Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His own permission.?[281] He knows what is before the people and also what is hidden from them. And they cannot comprehend anything of His knowledge save whatever He Himself pleases to reveal.[282] His Kingdom[283] spreads over the heavens and the earth and the guarding of these does not weary Him. He alone is the Supreme and the Exalted.[284]

لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۖ قَد تَّبَيَّنَ ٱلرُّشْدُ مِنَ ٱلْغَىِّ ۚ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِٱلطَّٰغُوتِ
وَيُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱسْتَمْسَكَ بِٱلْعُرْوَةِ ٱلْوُثْقَىٰ لَا ٱنفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

ٱللَّهُ وَلِىُّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُمُ ٱلطَّٰغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ ٱلنُّورِ إِلَى
ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٥٧﴾

[256-257] There is no compulsion and coercion in regard to religion.[285] The right thing has been made distinct from the wrong thing: now whoever rejects taghut [286] and believes in Allah has taken a firm support that never gives way.

And Allah (Whose support he takes) hears everything and knows everything. Allah is the Helper and Protector of those who believe in Him: He brings them out of the depths of darkness[287] into the light. As for the disbelievers, they have taghut[288] as their patron, who drives them out of light into the depths of darkness. These are the people who are doomed to the Fire, wherein they shall live for ever.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِى حَآجَّ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمَ فِى رَبِّهِۦٓ أَنْ ءَاتَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ
إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّىَ ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا۠ أُحْىِۦ وَأُمِيتُ ۖ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْتِى بِٱلشَّمْسِ مِنَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ ٱلْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ ٱلَّذِى
كَفَرَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

[258] Have[289] you not considered the case of the person who had an argument with Abraham[290] as to `Whom Abraham acknowledged as his Lord?' The dispute arose because Allah had given him the kingship,[291] (which had made him arrogant). When Abraham said, "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death," he answered, "I give life and cause death." Then Abraham said, "Well, Allah brings the sun from the east: just bring it from the west." At this the disbeliever was confounded:[292] (yet he did not believe), for Allah does not show guidance to unjust people.

أَوْ كَٱلَّذِى مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِىَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ
أَنَّىٰ يُحْىِۦ هَٰذِهِ ٱللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۖ فَأَمَاتَهُ ٱللَّهُ مِاْئَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُۥ ۖ قَالَ
كَمْ لَبِثْتَ ۖ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۖ قَالَ بَل لَّبِثْتَ مِاْئَةَ عَامٍ
فَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۖ وَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ
وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ ءَايَةً لِّلنَّاسِ ۖ وَٱنظُرْ إِلَى ٱلْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ
نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا ۚ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُۥ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٥٩﴾

[259] Or take the case of the one who passed by a township that had fallen down upon its roofs.[293] He exclaimed, "How shall Allah bring back to life this township that has become dead?"[294] At this Allah caused him to die and he lay dead for a hundred years. Then Allah brought him back to life and asked him, "How long have you lain here?" He

answered. "I might have lain here for a day or a few hours." Allah said, "Nay, you have been lying here in this state for a hundred years: now, just have a look at your food and your drink; they have not become spoiled in the least. Then have a look at your ass, (and see that his very bones have become rotten) and We have done this in order to make you a Sign for the people.[295] Look, how We raise up the skeleton and set the bones (of the ass) and cover them with flesh and (put breath of life into them)." And when the Reality became manifest to him, he said, "I know that Allah has power over everything."

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِـۧمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِى كَيْفَ تُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ قَالَ أَوَلَمْ
تُؤْمِن ۖ قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِى ۖ قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ
ٱلطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ ٱجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ
ٱدْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا ۚ وَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٠﴾

[260] Call to mind the other event also, when Abraham said, "My Lord, show me how Thou bringest the dead back to life?" He said "Have you no faith in this?" Abraham humbly replied, "I do believe but I ask this to reassure my heart."[296] Allah said, "Well, take four birds and tame them with yourself and then (cut them into pieces) and place a piece of each of them on each hill. Then call them and they will come running to you; know this for certain that Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise."[297]

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ
حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِى كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٍ مِّا۟ئَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَآ أَنفَقُوا۟ مَنًّا
وَلَآ أَذًى ۙ لَّهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

﴿٢٦٢﴾

۞ قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَآ أَذًى ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَنِىٌّ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٣﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُبْطِلُوا۟ صَدَقَٰتِكُم بِٱلْمَنِّ وَٱلْأَذَىٰ كَٱلَّذِى يُنفِقُ مَالَهُۥ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۖ فَمَثَلُهُۥ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُۥ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُۥ صَلْدًا ۖ لَّا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٦٤﴾

[261-264] The charity[298] of those who expend their wealth in the way of Allah[299] may be likened to a grain of corn, which produces seven ears and each ear yields a hundred grains. Likewise Allah develops manifold the charity of anyone He pleases, for He is All-Embracing, All-Wise.[300] Those people who expend their wealth in the way of Allah, and then do not follow up their charity with reminders of their generosity nor injure the feelings of the recipient, shall get their reward from their Lord; they will have no fear and no sorrow of any kind.[301] A kind word and forbearance is better than that charity which is followed up by insult or injury. Allah is Self-Sufficient and Forbearing.[302] O Believers, do not spoil your charity by taunts and injury to the recipients like the one who practises charity to be seen by men, while he neither believes in Allah nor in the Last Day.[303] His charity may be likened to the rainfall on a rock which had only a thin layer of soil upon it. When heavy rain fell on it, the whole of the soil washed away and the rock was left bare[304] Such people do not gain the reward they imagine they have earned by their seeming charity; Allah does not show the Right Way to the ungrateful.[305]

وَمَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍۭ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَـَٔاتَتْ أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٦٥﴾

[265] In contrast to them, the charity of those, who expend their wealth sincerely with the sole desire of pleasing Allah, may be likened to a garden on a plateau. If heavy rain falls, it yields its produce twofold: and even if there is no heavy rain but only a light shower, that too, is sufficient[306] for it: whatever you do is in the sight of Allah.

أَيَوَدُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ لَهُۥ جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ وَأَصَابَهُ ٱلْكِبَرُ وَلَهُۥ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَآءُ
فَأَصَابَهَآ إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَٱحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْءَايَـٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦٦﴾

[266] Would anyone of you wish that he should have a green garden of palm trees and vines, watered by canals and laden with all sorts of fruit and then it should be consumed by a fiery whirlwind at the very time when he himself has grown very old and his small children are too feeble to earn anything?[307] Thus Allah makes His revelations clear and plain to you that you may ponder over them.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَـٰتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّآ
أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُم
بِـَٔاخِذِيهِ إِلَّآ أَن تُغْمِضُوا۟ فِيهِ ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِىٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿٢٦٧﴾

ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱلْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِٱلْفَحْشَآءِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ
وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٨﴾

[267-268] O Believers, expend in Allah's Way the best portion of the wealth you have earned and of that We have produced for you from the earth, and do not pick out for charity those worthless things which you yourselves would only accept in disdain by connivance, if they were offered to you. Understand it well that Allah does not stand in need of anything whatsoever and has all the praise-worthy attributes.[308] Satan holds out to you the threat of poverty and prompts you to adopt a shameless niggardly conduct, but Allah holds out from Himself the promise of pardon and bounty: Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.

يُؤْتِى ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِىَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا
يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٦٩﴾

[269] He bestows wisdom upon anyone He wills, and he who is given wisdom is in fact given great wealth,[309] but only those who have common sense learn lessons from these things.

وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن نَّفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُم مِّن نَّذْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُۥ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ
مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿٢٧٠﴾

إِن تُبْدُوا۟ ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِىَ ۖ وَإِن تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا ٱلْفُقَرَآءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ ۚ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنكُم مِّن سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٧١﴾

[270-271] Surely Allah knows whatever you may have spent and whatever vow you may have made, and the wrong-doers (who spend in the way of Satan) shall have no helpers.[310] If you practise charity publicly, it is good; but if you give charity secretly to the needy, it is much better for you,[311] for this will expiate many of your sins.[312] Anyhow, Allah is well aware of whatever you do.

۞ لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَىٰهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَمَا
تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا
تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٢﴾

[272] O Prophet, you are not responsible for their guidance; Allah Himself shows guidance to anyone He pleases. And whatever wealth you spend in charity, it is for your own good. As you spend of your wealth to win Allah's pleasure, you will be given full reward for whatever you spend and you will not be deprived in the least of your rightful due.[313]

لِلْفُقَرَآءِ ٱلَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ ٱلْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَآءَ مِنَ ٱلتَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُم بِسِيمَىٰهُمْ لَا
يَسْـَٔلُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا ۗ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٧٣﴾

[273] Those who are engaged so much in the cause of Allah that they cannot move about in the land to earn their livelihood and are, therefore, in straitened circumstances, specially deserve help. An ignorant person would suppose them to be well off because of their self-respect; you can know their real condition from their faces, for they are not the ones who would beg of people with importunity. And Allah will surely know whatever you will spend on them.[314]

ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ
عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٧٤﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ ٱلَّذِى يَتَخَبَّطُهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
مِنَ ٱلْمَسِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا ٱلْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۗ وَأَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَيْعَ
وَحَرَّمَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۚ فَمَن جَآءَهُۥ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ فَٱنتَهَىٰ فَلَهُۥ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُۥٓ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٧٥﴾

يَمْحَقُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَيُرْبِى ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ
﴿٢٧٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَأَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ لَهُمۡ
أَجۡرُهُمۡ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ وَلَا خَوۡفٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ يَحۡزَنُونَ ﴿٢٧٧﴾

[274-277] Those who spend their wealth secretly and openly by day and night, will have their reward with their Lord, and they have nothing to fear nor grieve. But those who devour interest[315] become like the one whom Satan has bewitched and maddened by his touch.[316] They have been condemned to this condition because they say, "Trade is just like interest",[317] whereas Allah has made trade lawful and interest unlawfu1.[318] Henceforth, if one abstains from taking interest after receiving this admonition from his Lord, no legal action will be taken against him regarding the interest he had devoured before; his case shall ultimately go to Allah.[319] But if one repeats the same crime after this, . he shall go to Hell, where he shall abide for ever. Allah deprives interest of all blessing and develops charity;[320] and Allah does not like an ungrateful, sinful person.[321] As to those who believe and do good deeds, establish the Salat and pay the Zakat, they will most surely have their reward with their Lord and they will have nothing to fear nor to grieve.[322]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَذَرُواْ مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓاْ
إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧٨﴾

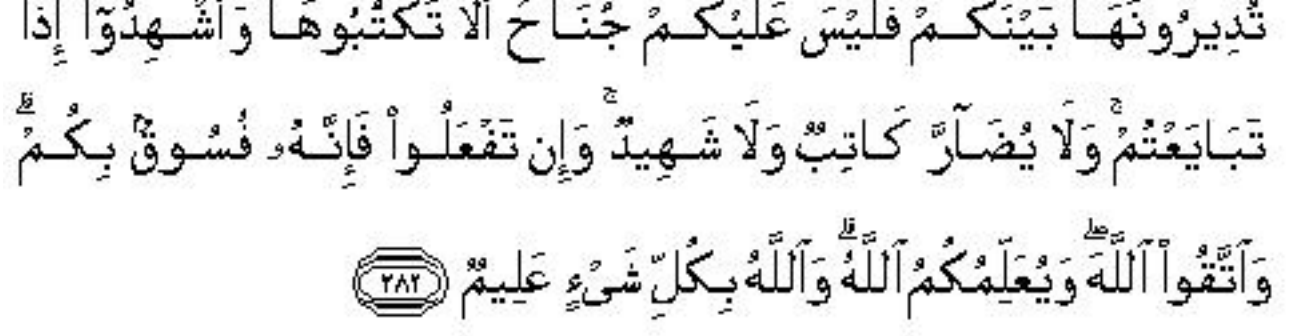
فَإِن لَّمۡ تَفۡعَلُواْ فَأۡذَنُواْ بِحَرۡبٖ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦۖ وَإِن تُبۡتُمۡ فَلَكُمۡ رُءُوسُ
أَمۡوَٰلِكُمۡ لَا تَظۡلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظۡلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧٩﴾

وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسۡرَةٖ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيۡسَرَةٖۚ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُواْ خَيۡرٞ
لَّكُمۡۖ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨٠﴾

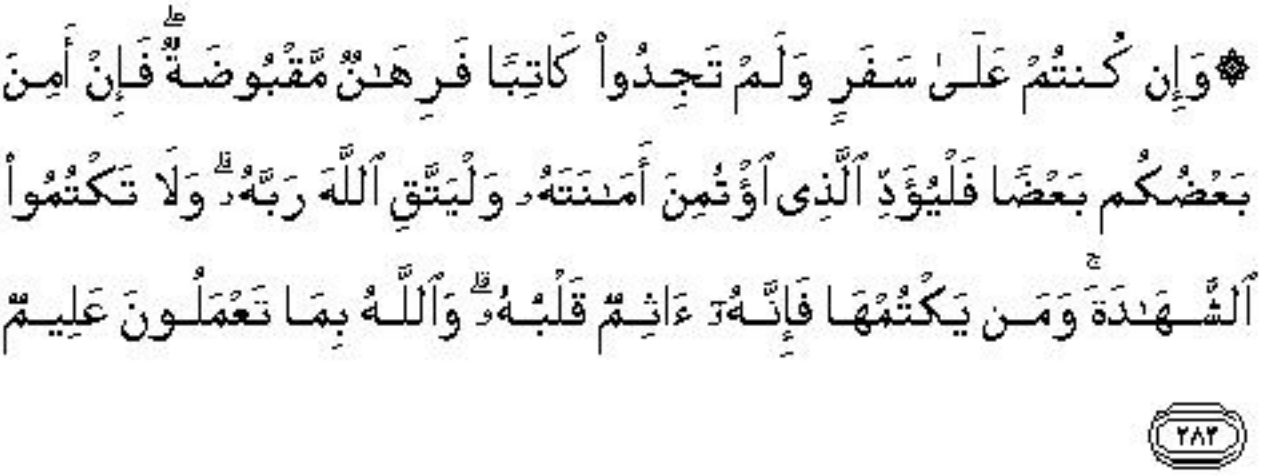
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾

[278-281] O Believers, fear Allah and give up that interest which is still due to you, if you are true Believers; but if you do not do so, then you are warned of the declaration of war against you by Allah and His Messenger.[323] If, however, you repent even now (and forego interest), you are entitled to your principal; do no wrong, and no wrong will be done to you. If your debtor be in straitened circumstances, give him time till his monetary condition becomes better. But if you remit the debt by way of charity, it would be better for you, if you only knew it.[324] Guard against the disgrace and misery of the bay when you shall return to Allah: there everyone shall be paid in full, for the good or evil one has earned and none shall be wronged.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَٱكْتُبُوهُ ۚ وَلْيَكْتُب بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌۢ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ وَلَا يَأْبَ كَاتِبٌ أَن يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِ ٱلْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُۥ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ فَإِن كَانَ ٱلَّذِى عَلَيْهِ ٱلْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَن يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُۥ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ وَٱسْتَشْهِدُوا۟ شَهِيدَيْنِ مِن رِّجَالِكُمْ ۖ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَٱمْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَىٰهُمَا ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَلَا يَأْبَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا۟ ۚ وَلَا تَسْـَٔمُوٓا۟ أَن تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَٰدَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوٓا۟ ۖ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَٰرَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا ۗ وَأَشْهِدُوٓا۟ إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ ۖ وَلَا يُضَآرَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ ۚ وَإِن تَفْعَلُوا۟ فَإِنَّهُۥ فُسُوقٌۢ بِكُمْ ۗ



[282] O Believers, when you contract a debt for a fixed;[325] term, you should put it in writing.[326] Let a scribe write with equity the document for the parties. The scribe whom Allah has given the gift of literacy should not refuse to write. Let him write and let the one under obligation (the debtor) dictate, and he should fear Allah, his Lord, and should not diminish from or add anything to the terms which have been settled. But if the borrower be of low understanding or weak or unable to dictate (for any reason), then let the guardian of his interests dictate it with equity. And let two men from among you[327] bear witness to all such documents. But if two men be not available, there should be one man and two women to bear witness so that if one of the women forgets (anything), the other may remind her. The witnesses should be from among such people whom you approve of as witnesses.[328] When the witnesses are asked to testify, they should not refuse to do so. Do not neglect to reduce to writing your transaction for a specified term, whether it be big or small. Allah considers this more just for you, for it facilitates the establishment of evidence and lessens doubts and suspicions. Of course, there is no harm if you do not put in writing the common transactions you conclude daily on the spot,[329] but in case of commercial transactions you should have witnesses. The scribe and the witnesses should not be harassed:[330] if you do so, you shall be guilty of sin. You should guard against the wrath of Allah; He gives you the knowledge of the right way for Allah has the knowledge of everything.



[283] If you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe to write the document, then transact your business on the security of a pledge in hand.[331] And, if any one transacts a piece of business with another merely on trust, then the one who is trusted should fulfil his trust and fear Allah, his Lord And never conceal evidence[332] for he who conceals it, has a sinful heart: Allah knows everything that you do.

لِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِن تُبْدُوا۟ مَا فِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ
أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُم بِهِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٨٤﴾

[284] To Allah belongs whatever[333] is in the heavens and the earth.[334] Allah will call you to account for what is in your minds whether you disclose it or hide[335] it. He, however, had full authority to pardon or punish anyone He pleases, for Allah has complete power over everything.[336]

ءَامَنَ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِۦ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ
وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَقَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا
وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

[285] The Messenger has believed in the Guidance which has been sent down to him from his Lord, and those who believe in the Messenger have also sincerely accepted the same. They all believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books and Messengers. And they say, "We do not discriminate against any of His Messengers. We have heard the Message and submitted to it. Our Lord, we look up to You for forgiveness, for to You we shall all return."[337]

لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا ٱكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ رَبَّنَا لَا
تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَآ إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُۥ
عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦ ۖ وَٱعْفُ عَنَّا وَٱغْفِرْ
لَنَا وَٱرْحَمْنَآ ۚ أَنتَ مَوْلَىٰنَا فَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٨٦﴾

[286] Allah does not burden any human being with a responsibility heavier than he can bear.[338] Everyone will enjoy the fruit of the good that one has earned and shall suffer for the evil that one has committed.[339] (O Believers, pray

like this to Allah:) "Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget and lapse into error inadvertently. Lord! lay not on us the kind of burdens that You had lain on the people before us.[340] Lord, lay not on us the kind of burden that we have not the strength to bear. [341] Be kind to us, forgive us and show mercy to us. You are our Protector : help us against the disbelievers."[342]

1Letters of the Arabic alphabet like Alif, Lam, Mim, called the mugatta'at, which are pre-fixed to a number of the Surahs of the Qur'an, were in common use in the Arabic literature of the period when the Qur'an was. revealed. The poets and rhetoricians made use of this style, and instances of this can even be found in the pre-Islamic prose and poetry which has survived. As their significance was appreciated by all concerned, none objected to or questioned their use, because it was no enigma to them. Even the bitterest opponents of the Qur'an, who never missed an opportunity, did not raise any objection against their use. But as their use was abandoned with the passage of time" it became difficult for the commentators to determine their exact meaning and significance. An ordinary reader, however, need not worry about their meanings because they make no difference as tar as the Guidance of the Qur'an is concerned.

2Its simple meaning is: "No doubt, this is the Book of Allah", but it may also imply that this is the Book which contains nothing doubtful. It is not like the common books on metaphysics and religion which are based on mere speculation and guess-work. Therefore even their authors cannot be free from doubts concerning their own theories, in spite of their assertion that they are convinced of them. In contrast to them, this Book is based on the Truth: its Author is He Who possesses full knowledge of the Reality. Therefore, there is indeed no room for doubt about its contents.

3That is, though there is nothing but guidance in this Book, there are a few pre-requisites for benefiting from it. The first pre-requisite is that one should be inclined to avoid vice, and should seek and practise virtue. But there is no guidance in the Qur'an for the people who do not bother to consider whether what they are doing is right or wrong, who follow the ways of the world or their own whims and lusts or move aimlessly in the ways of life.

4The second condition for obtaining guidance from the Qur'an is that one must believe in the "unseen" -- those realities which cannot be perceived by the senses and which do not come within human experience and observation, e.g. the essence and attributes of Allah, Angels, Revelation, Heaven, Hell, etc. These things must be taken on trust from the experts (Prophets) just as we do in many cases in the physical world. Therefore, only such a person, who believes in the "unseen", can benefit from the Guidance of the Qur'an. As for the one who believes only in those things which can be seen, tasted and smelt, or can be measured and weighed, cannot get any guidance from this Book.

5The third condition to benefit from the Qur'an is that one should be willing and ready to put into practice the teachings of the Qur'an. As the Salat (Prayer) is the first and foremost obligatory duty enjoined by the Qur'an, it is the practical proof and permanent test of the sincerity of one's Faith. Therefore, after a

person's profession of Islam, the moment he hears the call to the Prayer (which sounds regularly five times a day from every mosque in the Muslim world), he should join the congregation for the Salat, because this determines whether he is sincere in his profession or not. If he does not attend to the call and join the congregation, it is an indication that he is not sincere in his profession. It must also be noted that "iqama-tus-Salat¦(the establishment of Prayer is the comprehensive term. It means that Salat should be performed in congregation and that permanent arrangements should be made for it in every habitation; otherwise Salat will not be considered to have been established, even if every inhabitant of a place offers the Salat individually.

6The fourth condition to benefit from the Qur' an is that one should be willing to part with one's money according to the instructions of the Book in order to render the rights of Allah and Man and should make monetary sacrifices for the cause of Islam which he has accepted.

7The fifth condition is that one should believe in the truth of all those Books which Allah sent down by Revelation to the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings) and the Prophets before him at different times in different countries. Those who do not believe in any kind of guidance from Allah, cannot at all benefit from the guidance of the Qur'an. Likewise those who profess to believe in the necessity of guidance from Allah but do not turn to Revelation and the Prophets for it, or who dub their' own theories as "divine light", cannot obtain any guidance from it. Moreover, guidance is also denied to those who believe only in that revealed Book or Books in which their forefathers believed and reject all other guidance received from the same Source. Apart from all such people, the Qur'an guides only those who believe that they stand in need of Divine Guidance as well as admit that it does not come to every man individually but reaches humanity only through the Prophets and revealed Books.Then those who want guidance should not be slaves to any racial or national prejudices but should be seekers after truth and should submit to it wherever and in whatever form they find it.

8This is the sixth and last condition. "Hereafter" is a comprehensive word which applies to the collection of many beliefs, which are as follows: (a) Man has not been created irresponsible in the world but he is answerable to Allah for all his deeds here. (b) The present world order is not everlasting, but has to come to an end at a time only known to Allah. (c) After the present order has been brought to an end, Allah will create a new world, when He will bring back to life all human beings, born from the beginning of creation till Resurrection, simultaneously and will call them to account for their deeds, and then will reward them justly accordingly to what they had done in the world. (d) Those, who will be judged as good by Allah, will go to Paradise, and those who will be judged as bad will be cast into Hell. (e) The criterion of success or failure is not the prosperity or adversity of this worldly life, but successful in actual fact will be he who comes out successful in Allah's final judgement, and failure he who is a failure there. Those who do not believe in the life-after-death with the above implications, cannot benefit from the Qur'an because the one who entertains' even the slightest doubt about these; not to speak of rejecting them, can never follow the way of life which the Qur'an prescribes.

9That is, they refused to believe and fulfil all or any of the above mentioned six conditions.

10It does not mean that Allah had sealed up their hearts, so they refused to believe. But it means that when they rejected the above-mentioned pre-requisites of belief and chose and adopted for themselves a way contrary to the one presented by the Qur'an, Allah sealed up their hearts and ears. The Qur'an simply states a law of Nature: if one takes a biased view of something and deliberately nourishes prejudices against it in his mind, he can neither see any virtue in it nor hear anything in its favour nor open his heart to consider it dispassionately. This is the law of Nature and, as it is Allah's law, the act of sealing up of the hearts and the ears and the covering of the eyes has been attributed to Him.

11They deceive themselves by imagining that their duplicity will safeguard their interests but obviously their policy will prove harmful in this world as well as in the next. A hypocrite might succeed in deceiving some people for some time but he cannot deceive all people for all times. When such a person is exposed, he loses all honour once and for all. As to the Hereafter, mere lip-service will carry no weight there because it is deeds alone that matter there.

12"A disease": the disease of hypocrisy; and "Allah is increasing their disease all the more" means that He does not punish the hypocrites for their hypocrisy immediately, but gives them respite so that when their duplicity appears to succeed apparently they become more and more convinced of its efficiency and they go on becoming more and more hypocritical in their attitude and conduct.

13That is,"Just as the other people of your nation have accepted Islam truly and sincerely, so should you also accept it truly and honestly, if you profess to accept it".

14They regarded as tools the people who had accepted Islam sincerely and exposed themselves to troubles, hardships and dangers. In their opinion it was nothing but folly to earn the hostility of the whole country merely for the sake of truth and righteousness. They considered it wisdom not to bother about the right and the wrong at all but to look only after one's own interests.

15Shayatin plural of Shaitan, is an insurgent, haughty and devilish person, or an evil genius. This word is used both for the men and the jinn. Though it has mostly been used in the Qur'an for the jinn devils, in some places it has also been applied to human devils, and from the context it can easily be judged where it refers to human and where to jinn devils. Here it refers to the Arab chiefs who were in the fore-front in their opposition to Islam.

16The parable means that when a person, Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), spread the light of Truth that discriminated right from wrong and virtue from vice, those who used their faculties properly began to distinguish between these things. But the hypocrites, who were blinded by self-interest, could not see the right path even with the help of this light. "Allah took away the light from their eyes" should not

cause one the misunderstanding that the responsibility of not seeing the truth did not lie on them. Allah deprives of the sight only him who is not himself a seeker after truth, who chooses error for himself instead of guidance, who shuts his eyes to the truth. When they themselves turned away from the light of truth and chose to wander only in the darkness of falsehood, Allah also let them go astray.

17"Deaf" to hear the Truth, "dumb" to speak the Truth and "blind" to see the Truth.

18By thrusting their fingers into their ears, they delude themselves for a while that they have escaped destruction. But they cannot, in fact, save themselves because Allah, with all His powers, is encircling them on all sides.

19The first parable depicts those hypocrites who in their inmost hearts did not believe in Islam at all, but had become 'Muslims' for the sake of self-interest or expediency. The second parable gives a description of those hypocrites who were suffering from doubt, suspicion and lack of faith. Though they were not wholly unbelievers, they practised Islam only to the extent which might not involve them in trouble. In this parable rainfall stands for Islam which came as a blessing to humanity; pitch darkness, thunder and lightning stand for the impending obstacles, the threatening dangers and the glaring difficulties which were being experienced on account of the strong resistance from the opponents of Islam. When the situation eased a little, they began to move onward on the path of Islam, but when the clouds of difficulties began to appear, or when they were given such commands as were against their self-interest or their superstitious beliefs and prejudices, they again stood still in sheer perplexity.

20That is, Allah could, if He so willed, totally deprive these hypocrites also of the power to see the Truth just as He deprived the hypocrites described in the tirst parable. But Allah does not do so because it is His will to give them respite to see the Truth and hear the Truth to the extent they want to see and hear it. That is why He left them with only as much power as they made use of in seeing and hearing the Truth.

21Though the Qur' an invites all human beings to its message, to benefit or not to benefit from it depends on whether the people are really willing and inclined to benefit from it and on Allah's grace accordingly. Therefore, in the preceding verses distinction has been made between the people to show as to which of them can benefit from the guidance of this Book and which cannot. Now, the actual message for which the Qur'an was revealed is presented before all mankind.

22From errors of judgement and action in the world and from the punishment of God in the Hereafter.

23That is, "When you yourselves admit and acknowledge that all this has been done only by Allah, then you should serve and worship Him alone." "To set up others to equal in rank with Allah" means to hold others besides Allah as worthy of some kind of service and worship. As will be explained by the Qur'an below, there are certain kinds of worship which should exclusively be performed for the sake of Allah;

associating others with these is the shirk for the eradication of which the Qur' an was sent down.

24This challenge had been given several times in the Qur'an at Makkah. It was meant to convince the opponents that the Qur'an is Divine Word and could not be produced by human mind. Now it was reiterated at Madinah. (See Yunus, X: 38-39, Hud XI: 13-14).Bani Israel XVII: 88, At Tur LII:33-34).

25The allusion means: "You alone will not become fuel for Hell, but the idols of stone which you worship as deities in the world, will also be there with you to show that they had no share whatever in Godhead."

26It will be a pleasant surprise for the dwellers of Paradise to have fruits just like the ones with which they were familiar on the earth. Of course, they will be much more delicious. For instance, they will be like mangoes, pomegranates, oranges, etc., in shape and colour and the dwellers of Paradise will at once recognize them as such but they will be infinitely more delicious than the mangoes, pomegranates and oranges of the world.

27The word azwaj (sing. zauj) as used in the original is used both for the husband and for the wife: the wife is zauj for the husband, and the husband zauj for the wife. In Paradise the spouses will be joined on the basis of piety. For instance, if a certain man lived a pious life in this world, but his wife did not, their marriage will be dissolved in the Hereafter, and the pious man will be united with another pious woman whose marriage had similarly been dissolved and so on. But if both the husband and the wife led pious lives here, they will continue to live as husband and wife for ever in Paradise.

28Here an objection has been answered without making mention of it. The objection was that if the Qur'an had been the Book of Allah, it would not have adduced illustrations from such insignificant things as gnats, spiders, ants, bees, etc.

29Those people who do not want to understand the Reality and do not seek the Truth, get entangled in the words of such similitudes, draw wrong conclusions and go astray from the Truth on account of their own perversion. On the contrary, the seekers-after-truth, who are possessed of insight, ponder over the wisdom contained in them and are convinced that these sublime things can only be from Allah.

30"Fasiq ": disobedient, the one who transgresses the bounds set by Allah.

31The edicts or instructions issued by a sovereign to his subjects are called 'ahd according to the Arabic idiom, because they are obligatory on them. In this verse the word 'ahd has been used in the same sense. Allah's `ahd is His standing command to mankind to submit to Him, to obey Him and worship Him alone. The ratification of the same refers to the covenant to which the while of mankind agreed at the creation of Adam: it was that they would submit to Allah. (For further details, please refer to Al-A'raf, VII: 172).

32That is, these people break off the relations which Allah has enjoined to be established and upon the establishment and strength of which depends man's individual and collective well-being. This concise sentence is so vast in meaning that it covers the whole of the moral world, ranging from relations between two persons to international relations. "Breaking off relations" not only implies violation of human relations but it also implies abuse of relations in any way, because the result will be the same if and when these relations are not observed rightly and. properly. The Qur'an, therefore, abhors not only their violation but also their abuse as it causes chaos, conflict and disorder in the world.

33In these sentences the full definition of fasiq has been given: he is one who breaks off or vitiates relations between man and Allah or between man and man, and thus produces chaos on the earth. "

34It is not easy to determine the significance of "seven heavens". In every age man has been formulating different theories about cite heaven and the expanse of space surrounding the earth and beyond it according to his observations and speculations, which have been always changing. Hence it will not be correct to link anyone of these with the "seven heavens" referred to in the Qur'an. It may either mean that God has divided the whole Universe beyond the earth into seven permanent spheres, or that the part of the Universe in which the earth lies consists of seven spheres.

35Here, the people have been warned of two things: first, that they cannot, and should not, adopt an attitude of disbelief and rebellion against Allah, Who knows everything and from Whom nothing that one does remains hidden. Second, that the God Who knows everything is, in fact, the Source of true knowledge. Arty one who turns away from Him, will surely go astray into the darknesses of ignorance. When none beside Him is the source of knowledge, and none beside Him can provide the light by which one may walk one's way of life, what is then the good of turning away from Him?

36In the foregoing verses, Man has been asked to submit to Allah because He is his Creator and Sustainer and has power over his life and death, and because He is the Master and Ruler of the Universe in which he lives. In these verses, he has been exhorted to submit to Him because he is His vicegerent on the earth. As such, he is not only bound to serve Him but also to obey and act according to the Guidance sent down by Him. For if he did not do so and yielded to the temptations of Satan, his eternal enemy, he would be guilty of the worst crime of rebellion against Allah and meet with evil consequences. In the foregoing verses, Man has been asked to submit to Allah because He is his Creator and Sustainer and has power over his life and death, and because He is the Master and Ruler of the Universe in which he lives. In these verses, he has been exhorted to submit to Him because he is His vicegerent on the earth. As such, he is not only bound to serve Him but also to obey and act according to the Guidance sent down by Him. For if he did not do so and yielded to the temptations of Satan, his eternal enemy, he would be guilty of the worst crime of rebellion against Allah and meet with evil consequences. Incidentally, the Qur'an here throws light on the truth about man and his correct position in the Universe and presents the chapter of human history, which man could not have ascertained in any other way. The

important results that this chapter yields, are far more precious than the results which man tries to obtain by excavating miscellaneous bones from the earth and joining them together by speculation and conjecture.

37"Malak" literally means a "messenger", which is translated farishta (angel). Angels are not mere abstract powers without personality; they are beings with personalities and are so to speak the agents of Allah, Who employs them for the administration of His Kingdom. Ignorant people mistook them for associates in Godhead; others thought they were related to God and started to worship them as deities.

38Khalifah: one who exercises the delegated powers on behalf o: another as his vicegerent. Khalifah thus is not the master, but deputy of the Master; his powers are not his own but delegated to him by the real Master. He has, therefore. no right to have his own will but he is there to fulfil the will of the delegating Authority. It would be dishonesty and treason, if he assumed sovereign powers, or used them according to his own whim, or if he acknowledged another as his sovereign and submitted to his will.

39This was not an objection but a query raised by the angels, for the angels dare not object to any scheme of Allah. From the word Khalifah they had understood that the one, who was about to be created, was going to be entrusted with some powers, but they could not understand how an autonomous creature could fit in this totalitarian system of the universe. They also could not understand how that part of the universe, in which someone was entrusted with autonomy, could be free from disorder.

40By this, the angels did not mean to say that they should be entrusted with the vicegerency because they deserved it. They simply meant to say, "We are carrying out orders obediently, faithfully and earnestly and are keeping the whole universe clean and in order, and sing hymns of Your praise and sanctify You as Your humble servants. Therefore, we are unable to understand what need then is there for a vicegerent." The word tasbih has a double meaning: it means "to sanctify" as well as "to work earnestly and do one's utmost." Similarly taqdis also means both to sanctify and to purify.

41This was the reply to the second doubt of the angels: "You can not understand the need and wisdom of the appointment of a vicegerent as I do. Your services do not suffice for the purpose that I have in view. I want something more than the services you have mentioned. That is why I am going to create a being on the Earth and endow him with some powers."

42Nomenclature is the means by which human mind grasps the knowledge of things. Hence, the whole information of man, in fact, consists of assigning names. for things. Thus, teaching Adam the names of all things was meant to impart their knowledge to him.

43It appears that the knowledge of each angel and of each species of angels is confined only to his or its own special sphere. For example, the angels who deal with the air, know everything about the air but

nothing about water. The same is true about the angels who are responsible for other spheres. In contrast to them, man has been granted comprehensive knowledge. He may not know as much about these things as the angels in charge of a special sphere do but the comprehensiveness of knowledge that man has been granted has not been granted to the angels.

44This demonstration was the answer to the first doubt of the angels. Thus, Allah, so to say, informed them: "I am not giving Adam only authority but also knowledge. The chaos that you apprehended from his appointment is only one aspect of the matter. It has its good aspect also, which is more weighty and valuable than the evil aspect, and a wise man does not give up a greater good because of a lesser evil."

45This was symbolic of the submission and subjugation to Man of all the angels appointed to manage the Earth and that part of the Universe which is connected with it in any way. As Man was being appointed vicegerent in this part by Allah's command, it was ordained that all the angels, who worked in it must, as tar and as long as Allah willed, cooperate with him in their respective spheres whether he wanted to use the powers given to him rightly or wrongly. This implied: "You must help him in whatever he wants to do, irrespective of whether it is right or wrong. If he wants to commit theft or offer the Prayer, or intends to do another good or evil, you must cooperate with him in both cases as long as We allow him to act according to his will and choice." This may be illustrated by the example of a government officer. He is obeyed within his jurisdiction by every official but no sooner is he deposed by the government than those very officials, who carried out his orders promptly cease to obey him. They even handcuff him and take him to prison, if the government so orders. The command given to the angels to bow down before Adam was in the same nature. Possibly the word sajdah (bowing down) here is symbolic of only submission, but this also is possible that the angels were ordered to perform some such act actually to signify their subordination, and this seems to be more correct.

46Iblis dejected and desperate. As a term it is the name of the Jinn who disobeyed Allah and refused to bow down to Adam as a symbol of subordination to him and his offspring and asked Allah to grant him the opportunity of tempting mankind up to the Last Day. He is also called "ash-Shaitan" (Satan). He is not merely an abstract power of evil but is a being with his own personality like that of man. He was not an angel as is commonly understood but was one of the jinn who form a distinct species of their own separate from the angels. (Refer to Al-Kahf, XVIII: 50).

47From the words of the Text it so appears that probably Iblis was not alone in refusing to bow down before Adam, but a group of the jinn also was bent upon disobedience. Iblis has been particularly mentioned because he was their chief who led the rebellion. But this verse can also be translated as: "He was of the disbelievers." In this case, it would mean that there already existed a group of rebellious and disobedient jinn and Iblis belonged to it. The word "shayatin" in the Qur'an has generally been used for these jinn and their species, and wherever there is no basis for taking shayatin to imply men, this same jinn satans are implied.

48This shows that Adam and Eve were first kept in the "Garden" for a trial of their inclinations before they were to be sent to the Earth, the place where they were appointed as vicegerent. A tree was chosen for this purpose and they were forbidden even to go near it. They were duly warned that if they violated the command, they would be considered guilty of iniquity in the sight of Allah. The discussion as to what tree it was and why they were forbidden to go near it, is unnecessary. They were not forbidden because there was something intrinsically evil in the tree itself by which Adam and Eve could be harmed. It was chosen for the purpose of trial to see how far they remained constant on obedience to Allah's command as against the temptations of Satan. For this purpose it was enough to select a tree. That is why Allah has not mentioned the name and any characteristics of the tree. The Garden was a very suitable place for this trial because it was meant to show to Man that Paradise alone was the fit place for Allah's vicegerent, but if he yielded to satanic temptations, he would deprive himself of it. The only way to regain it was to oppose the enemy successfully who was always on the look-out to mislead him
The tree has not been named or pointedd out specifically in the Quran because there was nothing intrinsically evil in the tree itself. It was merely chosen for the purpose of trial.

49The Arabic word zalim is very comprehensive in its meaning. Zulm is "violation of a right or duty" and zalim is one who violates a right or duty. Anyone who disobeys Allah really violates three basic rights. First, he violates the rights of Allah Who is worthy of obedience. Second, he violates the rights of all those things and beings whom he employs in this disobedience, e.g., his own limbs and faculties, his fellow beings and those angels who contribute to the fulfilment of his will and all those things which he uses for the performance of the work of iniquity, for they have a right to be used only in accordance with the will of the real Master but it is an act of iniquity, if he abuses the powers he has over them. Lastly, he violates his own rights on himself, for his own self has a right that he should do his best to save it from destruction. He is also guilty of iniquity against himself when he brings the wrath of Allah on himself by his disobedience. That is why the Qur'an, in many places has used the term zulm for sin and zalim for the sinner.

50That is, "Satan shall be the adversary of man and man the adversary of Satan". The fact, that Satan tries his utmost to beguile man from the path of Allah to the path of destruction, is a clear proof that he is the arch-enemy of man. On the other side, man's humanity demands that he should fight Satan as his enemy. But it is a pity that man is so beguiled by the temptations of Satan that he begins to take him as his friend. This, however, does not mean that their mutual enmity has really been changed into friendship. It only means that man has been beguiled by his opponent and caught in the snare which has been laid for him.

51When Adam felt sorry for his guilt and wanted to repent and return to Allah, he could not find appropriate words for asking Allah's pardon. Then Allah took pity upon him on account of his grief and helplessness and taught him the appropriate words. The Arabic word "taubah" means both "to turn back" and "to turn to". When applied to man, it means that he has turned back from rebellion to submission,

and, when it is ascribed to Allah, it means that He has again turned with compassion to the penitent person.

52Here the Qur' an rejects the theory that the consequences of sin are inevitable and every man shall bear these anyhow. This is one of those selfinvented, nusleading theories which have done great harm to humanity. As a result of this, one loses for ever all hope of reform, when once one is involved in sin. Even if he feels sorry for a past sin and wants to make amends for it and changes his life for the better, this theory confronts him with despair: there is no hope for you because you are doomed for ever: you must bear the consequences of what you have done in the past. In contrast to this, the Qur'an says, "It lies absolutely fn Allah's power to reward a virtue or to punish a sin. If you are rewarded for a virtue, it is not on account of the natural result of your virtue, but it is through Allah's grace. He has full power to reward it or not. In the same way, if you are punished for a sin, it is not because of the inevitable consequences of the sin but because Allah has full power to punish or pardon it. Of course, being All-Wise, He does not use these powers indiscriminately, but takes into consideration the intention of the doer. If He rewards a virtue, He does so when He sees that His servant performed the good deeds to please Him. And if He rejects an apparent virtue, He does so because He knows that it lacked sincerity. In the same way, He punishes the crime which is committed in a spirit of rebellion and is not followed by self-reproach but by an evil desire to commit more crimes. He, however, exercises His grace, and forgives the sins for which His servant feels sorry and makes up his mind to change for the better. It is thus clear that the rejection of the theory of the inevitability of punishment for sin holds out new hopes of reform for sinners. Even the worst criminals and the staunchest unbelievers need not despair of forgiveness from Allah, provided that they confess their sins (of course, before their Lord and not before a priest), feel ashamed of their disobedience, give up their attitude of rebellion and adopt the attitude of submission instead.

53The repetition of this command after forgiveness is very significant. In the preceding verse, it has been said that Adam repented and Allah accepted his repentance. Thus Adam was not only absolved from the sin of disobedience, but his future descendants also were made immune from its effect. There was, therefore, no need for Allah to crucify "His only son" for the atonement of the sin of Adam and of his offspring.' On the contrary, Allah not only accepted his repentance but also appointed him as His Messenger to show Guidance to his children. The repetition of the command, "Go down from here", shows that the real purpose of Adam's creation was to make him vicegerent on tire Earth. He was kept in the Garden merely for trial and training, (please see E.N. 48). That is why he was not kept in the Garden after the acceptance of his repentance. He was sent to the Earth not by way of punishment but as a matter of course.

54Ayat is plural of ayat, which literally means a "sign" or "symbol" that points to something. The Qur'an has used this word in four different senses. At some places, it means merely a sign or symbol. At other places, the different phenomena of Nature have been termed as ayat of Allah, because each phenomenon points to the Reality which is hidden behind such curtains. Then the miracles which were given to the Messengers have also been called ayat (signs) hecause these showed that they were the

representatives of the Ruler of the universe. At some places the verses of the Book have been called "ayat" because they point not only to the Truth and the Right but also to the Great Author of the book It is not only the subject matter of the Book but also its words and mode of expression and its style that point to its Author. The meaning of the word ayat in a particular place becomes clear from the context in which it occurs.

55The law of Allah, contained in vv. 38-39 about the Guidance, has been in force ever since the creation of man and will remain so up to the Last Day. It has been called Allah's "covenant" in verse 27. It is meant to warn man not to invent a way of life for himself but to follow the Guidance of his Lord, for he is His servant as well as vicegerent. And there are only two means of knowing this: either a man should receive direct revelation from Allah, or follow the one who has received Revelation from Him. There is no third way of knowing Allah's Will. Therefore, every other way than these two is not only wrong but also rebellion which will lead ultimately to Hell. The story of the creation of man and the advent of mankind has been described in six other places in the Qur' an: Al-A'raf, VII: 11-25; Al-Hijr, XV: 2648; Bani Isra'il, XVII :60-b5; Al-Kahf, XVIII 50 : Ta Ha, XX :116-123, Sad, XXXVIII 71 - 85. It will be useful to read the same story in the Old Testament (Genesis, Chapters 1 to 3). The comparison of the Qur' anic version with the Biblical one, will conclusively show that the Qur' an has remained intact in its pure, original and unadulterated form just as it was revealed by Allah, while the Bible has been tampered with. It will also be interesting to contrast the conversation between Allah and the angels as has been given here in the Qur'an with that cited in the Talmud. The latter is not only void of spiritual values but is also ridiculous. According to it when the angels asked Allah why He was going to create Man, He answered that He was doing that so that good people should be born on the Earth. He did not mention the birth of bad people lest the angels should withhold their permission for the creation of Man.

56'Israel' means the servant of Allah. This was the title that Allah had bestowed upon Jacob, who was a son of Isaac, and a grandson of Abraham (Allah's peace be upon them all). His descendents are called children of Israel. Up to verse 39, it was an introductory discourse meant for all mankind. From verse 40 to verse 121 is a new discourse in which the children of Israel have been especially and particularly addressed. In some places it has also been directed towards the Christians and the mushriks of Arabia and in between towards the people who believed in the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). In order to understand the full significance of this address, the following should be kept in view. First, it aims to appeal to those few followers of the former Prophets, who were still capable of reforming themselves to believe in the Truth which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had brought and to cooperate with the mission which he had been appointed to perform. They are, therefore, told that the message of the Qur'an is the same as of the Scriptures of the former Prophets, and the mission of the Holy Prophet also was the same as theirs. It means to say: "At tirst this mission was entrusted to you so that you may put the Message into practice and then invite the world to accept it. But, not to speak of carrying out the mission, you discarded the Guidance and went on degenerating. The past history of your community and its present moral and religious degeneration are a standing witness against you. Now Allah has sent another Servant of His with the same Message and mission and there is

nothing new or strange in this for you. You should not, therefore, oppose the Truth knowingly. The best thing for you is to accept it and cooperate with those who are doing the same work that was once entrusted to you." Secondly, it aims to argue the Jews out of their wrong position and to expose their moral and religious degeneration thoroughly. Therefore, it proves conclusively that their attitude towards Islam was absolutely wrong; for they were opposing it, whereas they knew that its fundamentals were exactly the same as of their religion and that there was nothing in the teachings of the Qur'an that was different from or opposed to the teachings of the Torah in principle. It also shows that they had utterly failed to follow the Guidance which was given to them and fulfil the obligations of the leadership entrusted to them. As a proof thereof, such incidents have been cited as they could not deny. Moreover, this address unravelled the plots they were hatching, the doubts they were arousing, the crooked arguments they were advancing and the evil machinations they were contriving to defeat the mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), though they knew it to be from Allah. This also exposed their "piety", for it lacked sincerity and righteousness and was motivated by obduracy, prejudice and self-worship. It also proved beyond any shadow of doubt that they did not really want virtue to thrive. This produced the desired effect: it opened the eyes of the righteous element among the Jews and put an end to the spiritual and moral superiority they enjoyed against the common and polytheistic Arabs of Madinah. Besides, when they themselves were once exposed, they were so dismayed that they dared not oppose Islam openly with the courage of conviction. Thirdly, in the preceding verses, mankind had been invited to accept the Guidance of Allah. Now the example of the Israelites is being cited to show the consequences of discarding that Guidance. The reason why the Israelites have been held out as an example is that they are the only community whose history during the last four thousand years has been a living object lesson for all the nations of the world. In its history one can see all the ups and downs which result from following the Divine Guidance or from discarding it. Fourthly, though the appeal is addressed to the Jews, it is also meant to forewarn the Muslims against the pitfalls of degeneration into which the followers of the former Prophets had fallen. That is why, on the one hand, the moral weaknesses of the Jews, their wrong notions about religion, their wrong ways of thinking and living, have been pointed out, one by one, while, on the other, the demands of the true faith have been stated so that the Muslims are able to see the Right Way clearly and avoid wrong. ways. The Holy Prophet knew by Divine inspiration that, by and by, the Muslims also would follow the same ways that had been pointed out in this discourse. Therefore, according to a Tradition, he forewarned that they would discard the Guidance and follow, step by step, the communities of the former Prophets, that is, the Jews and the Christians, in their wrong ways. It is a pity that they have not paid any heed to this warning and adopted the same ways of degeneration.

57"Paltry gains": worldly gains for the sake of which these people discarded the commandments and precepts of Allah. As a matter of fact, even the whole wealth of the world put together is worthless, if it is gained in exchange for Allah's Guidance.

58In order to understand this verse, it should be kept in mind that the Arabs were generally illiterate and uneducated people. As against them, education was common among the Jews, who had among them

great scholars renowned even beyond Arabia. That is why the Arabs were overawed by the scholarship of the Jews, more so because their scholars and rabbis made a great show of their learning and piety and reinforced it with the practice of charms and amulets. The people of Madinah in particular were overawed by the learning of the Jews, for they were surrounded by big Jewish tribes and came in contact with them day and night. As a result, they were immensely influenced by them just as illiterate people usually are influenced by the neighbours who are more educated, more civilized and more religious in character.

Such were the conditions when the Holy Prophet upon whom be peace) presented himself as a Prophet and began to invite the people to Islam; naturally the illiterate Arabs turned to the Jews for guidance in this matter, and said: "You are the followers of a Prophet and possess a Book, so tell us what you think of this man and his teachings, who claims to be a Prophet." This question was repeatedly asked of the Jews by the people of Makkah, and when the Holy Prophet came to Madinah, here also many people visited the Jewish scholars again and again to ask them the same question. But their scholars never gave them the right answer. For they could not say that the doctrine of Tauhid that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) was preaching was wrong, nor that the knowledge which he imparted about the Prophets, scriptures, angels, and the Hereafter was wrong, nor that there was something wrong about the moral principles that he taught. They were neither ready to admit in plain words the righteousness of the teachings of the Holy Prophet; nor had they the courage to refute it openly; nor were they willing to profess the Truth candidly. Instead, they devised a subtle strategy to oppose it: they created one suspicion or the other about the Holy Prophet, his followers and his mission; they would concoct allegations against him and his followers and make false propaganda against them or raise frivolous objections so as to involve them in useless discussions. That is why they have been warned not to conceal the truth by covering it with falsehood, nor suppress it by spreading suspicions and by raising silly objections, nor mix it up with falsehood.

59The Salat and the Zakat have always formed the essential elements of the revealed religion (Islam). Like all other Prophets, the Israelite Prophets also had strictly enjoined these, but by and by the Jews became wholly neglectful of them. They gave up the performance of Salat in congregation and the majority of the people did not even offer it individually. Instead of paying Zakat, they started charging interest on money.

60That is, "If you face some difficulties in following the righteous way, sabr and Salat will help remove the difficulties and strengthen you to walk the way easily." Lexically, sabr means to check and tie, but in usage it stands for patience, perseverance, endurance and fortitude. The Qur'an uses this word to express that fortitude, that moral strength, that firmness of purpose and decision, that determination, moral discipline and self-control which enable a person to proceed with patience and courage in the face of afflictions, privations and temptations on the way he chooses in accordance with the dictates of his conscience. What the Qur'an means to stress is that the Muslims should develop this moral quality in themselves and should observe the Salat regularly to reinforce it from without.

61Salat is a hard task" only for the one who is disobedient to Allah and does not believe in the Hereafter. But it is a joyful duty for the one who is willingly and happily obedient to Allah and who believes that one day he will have therein. It is expected that this will lead you on to the paths of virtue and piety." But even after that you forsook the Covenant: nevertheless Allah did not withhold His grace and mercy from you; otherwise you would have been utterly ruined long before this.

62It refers to the period when the Israelites were the only people in the world who possessed the knowledge of the Truth from Allah and were, therefore, made leaders of the people of the world and were required to invite all other nations to His submission and to guide them on the Right Way.

63In this verse the Israelites have been warned to guard against their wrong notion about the Hereafter, for this was the main cause of their degeneration. They were under the delusion that they would win salvation just because they were the descendants of great Prophets and had relations with great saints and pious and righteous people. That is why they neglected we religion and involved themselves in sin. Here they are being disillusioned and warned that they will not escape the consequences of their evil deeds by virtue of their relation with some holy person or his intercession in their behalf. That is why immediately after reminding them of the favour (v. 47) they have been warned that they shall be punished like the guilty people who lived in this world without belief in the Hereafter.

64The events recalled here were well known to all and sundry among the Jews. Therefore, only brief references have been made to these historical events to show that they had remained ungrateful and had persisted in evil deeds in spite of the continuous favours showered upon them by Allah.

65"AI-i-Fir' aunö includes both the people of Pharaoh's own family and the people belonging to the ruling class of Egypt.

66It was a trial of their character. They were made to pass through the fire of the test to see whether they were pure gold or a base metal. Moreover, they were put to the test to see whether they would be grateful to Allah after their miraculous escape.

67When after their escape from Egypt the Israelites entered the Sinai Peninsula, Allah invited the Prophet Moses to Mount Tur for forty days and forty nights to give him Laws, Instructions and Commands for the guidance of the people who had recently been liberated from slavery. (For details, please see Exodus, chaps. 24 to 31). It should, however, be noted that the Tur, referred to here, is not the modern port of Tur on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez.

68Cow-worship was very common in Can'an, Egypt and the neighbouring countries. When the Israelites degenerated and became slaves of the Copts after the death of the Prophet Joseph, they learnt this evil practice too from their rulers along with other evils. (The incident of the calf-worship is given in detail in

Exodus, 32).

69"Furqan": a criterion for distinguishing truth from falsehood. Here it stands for the knowledge and understanding of religion which enables a person to discern between right and wrong, truth and falsehood.

70That is, those who made the calf a deity and worshipped it.

71When Moses went up to Mount Tur for forty days and forty nights, he was also told to bring with him seventy of the chiefs of Israel. Then Allah bestowed upon him the Book and Criterion and gave him the stone tablets with Instructions and Commandments inscribed on them for the guidance of the people, and he presented these to the chiefs. The Qur'an says that at that time some wicked people from among them began to say: "How can we believe, on a mere statement of yours, that Allah has had a talk with you?" At this Allah became angry with them and punished them. But the Bible says, "And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink". (Exodus, 24: 1011). Strange though it may appear, the same Bible also tells us that Moses said," "I beseech thee, skew me thy glory. And He said, "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me, and live." (For further details please see Exodus, 33:18-23).

72That is, "We sheltered you with clouds when you entered the Sinai Peninsula and had no place of shelter from the heat of the sun." One should remember that the Israelites had emigrated in large numbers from Egypt and had no place in the Sinai Peninsula to hide their heads, not to speak of houses and tents. Had Allah not kept the sky cloudy for a long time, they would have perished by the scorching heat of the desert sun.

73Manna and salva were the natural relief provisions supplied by Allah to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. Manna fell on the ground like dew-drops and salva flew in thousands like quails. There was such a plenty of these provisions that a whole nation lived on them for forty years and was never confronted with starvation or famine. In modern times even a well developed and resourceful country fords it extremely difficult to make adequate food arrangements for a few hundred thousand emigrants if they happen to enter it suddenly and unexpectedly. (For details refer to Exodus, 16; Numbers, 11:7-9, 31-32; Joshua, 5:12).

74The identity of the town has not so far been determined. As this incident took place when the Israelites were still wandering in the Sinai Peninsula, most probably it was situated somewhere there. But it is also possible that it might have been Shittim which was situated on the eastern bank of the Jordan, opposite to Jericho. According to the Bible, the Israelites conquered this city during the last years of Moses and committed debaucheries. Consequently, Allah inflicted a terrible punishment on them in the form of an

epidemic which killed twenty-four thousand of them. (Numbers, 25: 1-9).

75They were told not to enter the town like cruel and ruthless tyrants but to go in meekly and with humility like God-fearing people, just as the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) did at the conquest of Makkah. "Hittatun" can have two meanings: "You should enter the town, (1) begging Allah's forgiveness for sins, and (2) granting general amnesty and refraining from plundering and murdering the inhabitants."

76That rock can still be seen in the Sinai Peninsula with the twelve holes of the springs. Twelve springs were caused to flow for the Israelites in order to avoid water disputes among their twelve clans.

77It does not mean: "You are asking, instead of manna and salva which you get gratis, things for which you will have to till and cultivate the land." But it means: "You are neglecting that grand purpose the purification of your hearts and the preparation for the leadership of the world for which you are being made to travel in the desert: instead of this, you are after the gratification of your taste and palate and cannot forego those things even for some time. " (For comparison, see Numbers, 11: 4-9).

78They rejected the Revelations in different ways: (a) They refused to accept anything as revealed, if it went against their own ideas or desires; (b) they brazen-facedly violated the clear injunctions of Allah, knowing full well that they were discarding His Commandments; and (c) they distorted and twisted the meaning of Revelations in order to suit their desires and lusts.

79The history of the Israelites abounds in instances of the persecution of their own Prophets. We cite here a few from the Bible: (1) After the death of the Prophet Solomon, the kingdom of the Israelites was split into two states the kingdom of Judah with its capital at Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Israel with its capital at Samaria. As the two were often at war with each other, the things came to such a pass that the kingdom of Judah asked for help from the Aramaic kingdom of Damascus against their own brethren. At this the Prophet Hanani by God's command severely rebuked Asa king of Judah for relying on the king of Syria instead of relying on "the Eternal your God." But Asa instead of heeding the warning sent the Prophet of God to the prison house. (2 Chronicles, 16: 1-10). (2) When the Prophet Elijah rebuked the Israelites for serving and worshipping Baal, and asked them to serve and worship One God alone, they became his mortal enemies. King Ahab of Samaria threatened to kill him because his idolatrous wife incited him against the Prophet Elijah. In terror he ran for his life to the mountains in the Sinai Peninsula. During the period of affliction, he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even 1 only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away". (1 Kings, 19: 1-10). (3) King Ahab sent another Prophet, Micaiah, to prison for speaking out the truth. "And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, "Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water

of affliction, until I come in peace." (1 Kings, 22: 26-27). (4) When the people of Judah began to worship idols openly and to do what was evil in the sight of Allah, the Prophet Zecharia raised his voice against these evils, saying: "Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord. " (2 Chronicles, 24: 20-21) (5) When the Israelite state of Samaria was destroyed by the Assyrians, and the Jewish state at Jerusalem was threatened with imminent danger, the Prophet Jeremiah began to bewail and warn his people of their degeneration and its evil consequences. He lamented and cried, "Mend your ways otherwise you will meet with a far worse doom than Samaria." In answer to this the Jews cursed him, beat him and imprisoned him. They accused him of treachery against the nation and shouted, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans." He was arrested and flogged and confined in the dungeon cells. Then they put him into an underground cistern, lowering him down with ropes so that he should sink in the mud and die on the spot from starvation. (For details please refer to Jeremiah, I5: 10, 18: 20-23; 20:1-18 and Chapters 36 to 40.) (6) About the Prophet Amos, it is written that when he rebuked the Israelite state of Samaria for its evil and immoral doings and warned them of their evil are doing. These are the people who have preferred the worldly life to the life in the Hereafter. Therefore their torment shall not be lightened nor shall help be given to them (from any quarter). consequences, he was served with the notice:"O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah and prophesy there." (Amos, 7: 10-13). (7) When John the Baptist raised his voice against the immoralities which were being openly practised in the court of Herod, king of Judah, he was arrested and bound in prison. Then at the request of Herodias, his wife, who had a grudge against him, he sent one of the guards to bring his head. The man went and beheaded him in the prison and brought, his head on a dish to be presented to her. Thus, the Prophet of God was killed without any cause. (ark, 6: 17-29.) (8) The last victim of the evil designs of the high priests and the elders of the jews was Jesus Christ, who took them to task for their sins and hypocrisies and advised them to lead a righteous life. For this"crime" of his, they plotted against him: bought Judas, one of his twelve disciples, and sent a large mob with swords and cudgels to seize him and take him away to the house of the high priest. After binding him, they led him off, and handed him over to Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor. They tried to procure false evidence against him in order to have him put to death. They had become so hardhearted that they asked Pilate to release Barabbas, a murderer, as a boon at the festival but to "crucify him" . In this verse, the Qur'an briefly refers to this most shameful chapter of the history of the Israelites and declares that they fully deserved the curses and condemnation of Allah. They chose their worst offenders against law and morality and made them their chiefs and leaders, and sent their most pious and righteous men to the gaol or the gallows.

80The context in which this verse occurs shows that the Qur'an is not laying down here the details of the creed and righteous deeds, which one should believe and practise in order to earn salvation. These things have been described in their proper places. Here, the object is to refute the self-delusion of the Jews that salvation was their sole monopoly. They were suffering from the delusion that they had some special relationship with God; therefore whoever belonged to their race, would go straight to Heaven, irrespective of his creed and deeds, and all other people were born to become fuel of Hell. To remove

this misunderstanding of theirs Allah declares that salvation does not depend upon one's connection with any group but on one's right beliefs and good deeds. Whoever goes before Allah with these provisions will find his reward with Him, for Allah's judgement will be based on one's real worth and not on the census registers.

81The way this incident has been described at different places in the Qur'an, shows that it was at that time a well known incident among the Israelites, but now it is difficult to understand and know what actually happened. One may, however, understand that at the time of making the covenant at the foot of the mountain a dreadful situation was created and it so appeared that the mountain was going to fall upon them. A similar scene has been depicted in Surah Al-A'raf, VII: 171. (Please see E.N. 132 of VII, Al-A'raf) Although its description in the Bible is a little different from that of the Talmud, it depicts the scene very vividly: "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." (Exodus, 19: 18.) "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking : and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exodus, 20 :1819).

82Sabbath: Saturday. The Israelites were enjoined to keep the Sabbath as "a sign between me and you throughout your generations" for a perpetual covenant. "Six days tray work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever death any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." (Exodus, 31: 12-17) But when the Israelites became corrupt morally and religiously. they began to desecrate it openly and began to do business without hesitation on the Sabbath.

83This incident has been described in detail in Al-A'raf, VII: There is a difference of opinion as to what actually happened. Some are of the opinion that they were physically transformed into apes, while others hold the view that from that time onward they began to behave like apes. The words of the Qur'an, however, indicate that it was not a moral but a physical metamorphosis. In my opinion their bodies were transformed into those of apes, but their human minds were left intact in order to subject them to extreme torture.

84The Israelites were commanded to sacrifice a cow in order to rid them of the sanctity and worship of cow which they had adopted from the pagan nations around them. It was a test of their faith: if they really believed in Allah as their only Deity and did not make anyone or anything else the object of their worship, they should break the idol of their former worship with their own hands. But this proved to be a very hard test. They tried to evade and avoid the sacrifice because their belief in One God had not become firm as yet. They went on asking one detail after the other in order to put it off, but the more questions they asked the more they were driven into a tight corner. So much so that at last they were specifically told to sacrifice that very golden-coloured cow, which was being specially chosen for worship at that time. The Bible also mentions this incident, but does not tell how the Israelites tried to put it off by asking a number

of unnecessary questions. (Please refer to Numbers, 19: 1-10).

85The wording of the Qur'an clearly shows that the murdered man came to life for a little while and told the name of his murderer. However, there is some ambiguity concerning the method applied for discovering the murderer, that is, the striking of the dead body of the murdered man with a piece of "the sacrificed cow". A method similar to this described in Deut. 21: 1-9, confirms the interpretation put forward by the ancient scholars, that is, the dead body was struck with a piece of the flesh of the sacrificed cow and it came to life. In this way, a Sign of Allah was shown and at the same time it was demonstrated that the object of their worship was so powerless that its slaughter did not cause any harm. On the contrary, its slaughter proved useful.

86Here the addressees are the new converts of Madinah, who had embraced Islam only recently. They had become interested in the Holy Prophet because they had often heard from the neighbouring Jews about Prophethood, Revelation, Angels, Divine Law, etc. They had also heard from them that they were expecting a new Prophet whose followers would prevail over the whole world. That is why the people of Madinah turned to the Holy Prophet when they heard of him and entered into the fold of Islam in large numbers. Naturally, they expected that the Jews, who possessed revealed Scriptures and who themselves had foretold the coming of a Prophet, would be the first to welcome Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) as a Prophet and would be in the forefront of his supporters. When, contrary to their expectations, the Jews did not come forward, the new Muslims themselves went to them and invited them to accept Islam, but they failed to persuade them. The hypocrites and the opponents of Islam used this rejection as an argument against Islam itself. They argued like this: there must be something suspicious about it: had Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) really been a Prophet, these pious and learned followes of the earlier scriptures, would nothave rejected him Knowingly, and ruined their Hereafter. In order to counteract the mischief caused by this fallacy, the past history of the Jews has been related to show that nothing better could be expected of them. This also cautioned the simple Muslims against cherishing any hope that the Jews of their city would in a body welcome Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) as the Prophet about whom prophecies has been made in their own Books. They have been warned that they should not entertain such expectations from the people whose history has been so and so. This was necessary because they were liable to become disheartened because of the rejection of Islam by them. As to the Jews, they had become so degenerate and hard-hearted that they were not moved even by those verses which melted the hearts of the pagans who formerly used to kill their own daughters. Not only this, these hard-hearted Jews made fun of those very verses also. Therefore, the zealous Muslims were warned that they should understand the real condition of the Jews, who had corrupted the Truth to suit their own desires and then had the audacity to have their hopes centred on the religion which they had themselves perverted. it was wrong to entertain any vain hopes that such people would accept the Truth as soon as it was presented before them.

87"Some among them": their rabbis and jurists. "Word of God": the Torah, Psalms and other Books which they had received through their Prophets. The Jewish scholars not only twisted, distorted and

misinterpreted the revealed scriptures, and read into them the meaning they wanted to read, but they also tampered with the actual words of the text.

88When they met secretly, they warned each other not to disclose to the Muslims those passages of the Torah and other Scriptures which contained prophecies about the Holy Prophet. They also warned each other not to inform the Muslims about those verses and teachings of their holy books which, they feared, would expose to objection their own present condition and attitude for they were afraid that the Muslims would present these as arguments against them on the Day of Judgement. This is an instance of the kind of belief they held about Allah's knowledge. They were under the delusion that if they succeeded in hiding the Truth and their corruption of the Scriptures in this world, there would be no possibility of bringing a case against them in the Next World. That is why in the parenthetical clause that follows they have been asked whether they really believed Allah to be unaware of the affairs of the people.

89This refers to the common people of the Jews, who were totally ignorant of the teachings of their own Scriptures. They had neither any knowledge of the fundamentals of religion, nor of the regulations concerning morality and rules of everyday life, nor of the principles leading to ultimate success or failure. And the pity is that they had formed their own notions about religion without this knowledge and were living on false hopes.

90This refers to what their learned people did. They not only perverted their Scriptures to suit their desires and vanities, but also blended with the Text of the Bible their own interpretations, their national history, their superstitions, their self-made theories, philosophies and laws. Then they presented all this mixture before the people as if it were actually from God. Every historical fiction, every interpretation, every man-made creed, and every bye law that had somehow entered into the Holy Book, became the "Word of God," and it was absolutely obligatory for every Jew to believe in all these things and, if one did not, he was declared to be a renegade or a heretic.

91There was a general belief among the common Jews and their religious leaders that they would not be seat to Hell in spite of their wrong beliefs and evil deeds just because they were Jews. They thought that even if any punishment was imposed on them, it would be for a few days only after which they would be sent to Paradise.

92As a concrete example of this may be cited the strange conduct of the different clans of the Jews, who lived in the neighbourhood of Madinah. Before the migration of the Holy Prophet, they had entered into alliances with the neighbouring Arab clans, Aus and Khazraj. When one Arab clan went to war with the other clan, their respective Jewish allies also went to war against each other. Thus Jews waged war upon Jews, whereas this was clearly against the teachings of their Scriptures which they knowingly violated. But when the Jews of one clan fell into the hands of the other clan as prisoners of war, they would redeem them after taking ransom for them. When they were questioned about this inhuman trade of their

own brethren, they tried to justify it, saying that it was allowed by the Scriptures. It is strange that they forgot the same Scriptures which they brazenfacedly violated by going to war against each other. Thus on the one hand, they accepted that part of the Scriptures which allowed ransom for prisoners and , on the other hand, rejected that part which prohibited war against their own brethren in faith.

93"Ruh-ul-Qudus" (Holy Spirit) May refer to Revelation or to angel Gabriel who brought it to the Prophets or to the Holy Soul of Jesus Christ which Allah had created pure. "Clear Signs" refer to his miracles and to his wonderful personal qualities and his miraculous birth, which were to every lover of truth a clear proof of the fact that he was a true Prophet of Allah.

94By this they meant to say, "We are so staunch in our Faith that we are not going to be influenced by anything that you might say to the contrary." All those are slaves of irrational prejudices, delude themselves like this. They regard such an obstinate attitude as a sign of their firm Faith and, therefore, a virtue. In tact, there can be no greater vice than to stick to one's own traditional creeds and beliefs even though there are strong arguments against them.

95Before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the Jews were looking forward with great longings to the Prophet about whom there were many prophecies in their own Scriptures. They used to pray: "May he come soon so that we should triumph over the disbelievers and regain our lost glory! ". The people of Madinah themselves bore witness that the Jews lived in this expectation. It had become a bye-word with them to proclaim: "Let the pagans tyrannise over us as much as they like. When that Prophet comes, we will settle accounts with them." Accordingly, when the people of Madinah learnt that Muhammad (Allah's peace he upon him) had declared himself to be a Prophet, they recalled these things and thought that he might be the very Prophet about whom they had heard so much from the Jews. So they said to one another, "Let us go and accept him lest the Jews should forestall us." That was the reason why the Muslims of Madinah could not understand the attitude of the Jews who, instead of accepting him as the Prophet for whom they had been so anxiously waiting, had become his greatest opponents. As to the fact that "they did recognize the Holy Prophet," many proofs were furnished at that very time. The most authentic evidence is that of Hadrat Safiyyah (one of the wives of the Holy Prophet), who was the daughter of one learned Jew and the niece of another. She says, "When the Holy Prophet migrated to Madinah, my father and uncle went to see him. When they returned home, I myself heard the following conversation between them: Uncle: Is he really the same Prophet about whom there occur prophecies in our books? Father: By God, he is the same. U Are you quite sure of it? F. Yes. U. Then what is your intention? F. I will oppose him as long as I live and will not let his mission succeed. (Ibn Hisham, Vol. II, p. 165, Cairo Edition, 1936).

96The verse may also mean: "What a miserable thing it is for which they have sold off their future life and salvation in the Hereafter!"

97They wished that the Prophet should have been one of their own race; therefore, they refused to accept him when he was raised among a race which they considered to be inferior to theirs. This meant that Allah ought to have consulted them before appointing His Messenger, and when Allah did not do so, and in His bounty appointed one He chose by Himself, they were offended.

98This was a retort which implied that if they really were sure and enamoured of the Hereafter, they would not dread death, but would prefer it to the life in this world. They, however, were (and are) so much given to this worldliness that they were terrified by the very thought of death and the Hereafter.

99The literal translation of the word ala hayat-in"is "any kind of life". It means that they wished to live without giving any consideration to the kind of life they led. It did not matter whether that was a life of honour and grace, or a life of dishonour and disgrace.

100The Jews not only reviled Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and the believers, but also spoke abusively of Gabriel, the chosen Divine Messenger. They said. "He is our enemy: He is not an angel of blessings but of affliction. "

101As Gabriel revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) by Allah's Command, so by abusing Gabriel they actually abused Allah.

102That is, "You abuse Gabriel for no other reason than that he has brought down the Qur'an, whereas the Qur'an confirms the teachings of the Torah; so, in a way, you abuse the Torah as well.

103In the preceding verses, the Jews have been warned of the consequences of their attitude towards the Qur'an and the mission of the Holy Prophet. In this part of the verse, they have been admonished to consider the matter from another point of view. As the Qur'an shows the way to right guidance and brings good tidings to the believers, it is sheer folly to oppose it and reject it. Thus ney harm none but themselves by depriving themselves of the true success which follows its acceptance.

104Shayatin may refer both to the devils from among the jinn or to the devils from among human beings. Here it refers to both. When the Jews fell to the lowest depths of degeneration, morally and materially, and lost all the noble qualities because of their captivity, ignorance, poverty, homeless wanderings, etc. they turned to magic, sorcery, enchantment, witchcraft and other black arts and "occult sciences." They began to adopt methods through which they could attain all their ends without putting in any kind of labour and toil. Then the devils began to beguile them by ascribing the origin of the occult sciences to Solomon and proclaimed that Solomon owed his wonderful kingdom and his extraordinary powers to the occult sciences which they were teaching the people. Jews at once succumbed and welcomed these as a great boon: so much so that even their rabbis began to practise magical arts. Consequently they lost all their interest in the Scriptures and would not listen to those who invited them to Allah's Guidance. 104-a.

Here the Quran refutes not only the false accusation of sorcery against Solomon, but also the other charges levelled against him in the Bible (I Kings, Chapter 11). According to it "Solomon was a lover of women and his wives seduced him to follow foreign gods, and he did what was evil in the eyes of the Eternal and put up shrines and idols of their gods." The Quran refutes these charges, so as to say, "Solomon was never involved in any practices of disbelief, and only that one who was a disbeliever could be guilty of `love of women', `worship of gods and idols' and what was evil in the eyes of the Eternal."

105The incident referred to in this verse has been interpreted in different ways, but what I have been able to understand is this: It appears that when the Istraelites were captives in Babylon, Allah sent two angels in human guise to test them. Just as the angels were sent to the people of the Prophet Lot as handsome boys, so they were sent to the Israelites as saints and religious guides. For this purpose, they might have set up an institution to teach magic and might also be warning everyone who came to learn these things, saying: "We are holding out these temptations merely for your trial. You should not, therefore, ruin your Hereafter by seeking this "science". But in spite of this warning, the people came to them in large numbers for talismans, charms and amulets. There is nothing strange in the coming of angels in human guise. Being agents of Divine Kingdom they are endowed with extraordinary powers to perform their respective duties. As to the question why they taught magic to the people, we can understand this by an illustration. It is like the case of the police who sometimes arrange to hand over signed currency notes to corrupt officials as bribes in order to catch them red-handed. Just as there is nothing wrong in this, so there is nothing wrong in what the angels did for the trial of the degenerate Jews.

106The greatest demand on this occult science was for an amulet or a device to help separate a wife from her husband in order to entice her. This shows how depraved they had become. Their greatest enjoyment was to make love with other people's wives and to separate them from their husbands. This was the worst form of depravity because it struck at the root of family life which is the very foundation of society. If the relations between husband and wife are sound. the whole society will be sound and solid. But if they are bad, the whole society will become rotten. Thus they were the worst offenders because they cut at the root of those relations on which depended their own solidarity and that of their society. A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says that Satan sends his agents to the tour corners of the world. When they come back to him to report, they relate the deeds they have performed. One says that he has created such and such dispute and the other that he has spread chaos and so on, but Satan goes on commenting, "You have done nothing." Then comes another one who says; "I have caused division between a man and his wife." Satan hugs him and says, "You have indeed done a great deed." In the light of this Tradition, it becomes clear why the two angels were sent to the Israelites with the charm that caused division between man and wife; that was, in fact, the very standard which could measure accurately their moral degradation.

107From this verse onward, the Believers have been warned to be on their guard against the different kinds of mischief which the Jews were fomenting against Islam and the Islamic Community. Besides this, doubts and suspicions which were being disseminated by them in the minds and hearts of the Muslims

have been removed and those special problems which , came up for discussion between the Muslims and the Jews have been dealt with. Here it should also be kept in view that when the Holy Prophet came to live at Madinah, and Islam began to spread in the country' around it, the Jews tried to involve the Muslims in various kinds of religious disputes and theological controversies. They also tried to affect the simple and sincere Muslims with the same disease from which they themselves were suffering, that is, the malady of hair-splitting and asking frivolous and irrelevant questions. For this purpose, they attended even the meetings of the Holy Prophet and resorted to cunning and subtle talk, which showed how depraved they had become.

108Whenever the Jews came to attend the Holy Prophet's assembly they showed every kind of outward respect to him but surreptitiously tried their worst to insult and slight him. They would use ambiguous words derisively or twist them into an insult by a slight mispronunciation. For instance, if they wanted to invite his attention to any particular thing they would say "Ra'i-na"which means "Just pay attention, please," but it has other meanings also. In Hebrew there was a word of similar sound which meant, "Listen, may you become deaf," and in Arabic itself it also meant, "a proud and ignorant person." Besides this, in colloquial speech it meant, "If you listen to us, we will listen to you." Then with a little twist of the tongue it could be turned into ra- i -ya-na which means "Our shepherd". In order to guard against the use of such ambiguous words as sounded complimentary but might be abused by wicked people, the Believers were advised to say, "unzurna: " Kindly pay attention to us," which could serve the same purpose without having any secondary bad sense like "ra'i-na. "They were also advised to listen attentively to the Holy Prophet so that there should be no need of inviting his attention.

109This is the answer to an objection which the Jews raised to create doubts in the minds of the Muslims. They argued like this: The Qur'an says that the former Scriptures had been sent down by Allah and that it also has been sent down by Him. If it is so, why does the Qur'an then give such commands as differ from those contained in the former Books'? How can the same Allah give different commands at different times? Besides, they said, "The Qur'an asserts that the Jews and the Christians have forgotten a part of the teachings sent down to them. How is it possible that the teachings of Allah could be obliterated from memory?" They did not raise these objections for the sake of arriving at the truth but for the sake of creating mischief. Allah answers their objections thus: "I am the Sovereign and My powers are unlimited. I can repeal any order of Mine or allow it to be forgotten, but I substitute for it something that serves the same purpose better or at least equally well."

110The Jews were addicted to hair-splitting. They put subtle and unnecessary questions to the Muslims and would incite them to inquire about the same from the Holy Prophet. As they intended merely to create mischief, Allah warned the Muslims not to follow their example. The Holy Prophet also advised the Believers not to indulge in the pastime of making fine distinctions and asking unnecessary questions because such things had ruined the communities that went before them. They should do what they were asked to do and refrain from what they were prohibited. They should not waste their powers and energies in useless pursuits but attend to important matters.

111That is "their enmity and jealousy should not incite you to lose your balance of mind and involve you in arguments, discussions and disputes with them. You should not lose your dignity and waste your precious time in such useless pursuits but should go on doing the right and wait patiently for Allah's judgement . You should remember Allah and do good deeds because these are the things that will avail you before Allah and not those things and the like."

112It means, "In fact these are merely their own wishes, but they assert these as if it were actually going to happen so."

113It refers to the idolaters of Arabia, who were ignorant of the Scriptures, and sanctuary for mankind and enjoined the people to dedicate to worship the place where Abraham used to stand for prayer, and We urged Abraham and Ismail to keep My House pure for those who would go round it and those who would retire to it for devotion and prayer and for those who would bow down and prostrate themselves there in worhsip.

114That is, the places of worship should not be in the hands of such transgressors, who become their trustees, but under the management of those who possess power and fear Allah. This arrangement will prevent the wicked people from doing any mischief there for fear of retribution. It also implied that the disbelievers of Makkah had quite unjustly prevented their own brethren (who had embraced Islam) from entering the Ka'bah which they themselves called the "House of Allah".

115That is, "Allah is not confined to any one direction, eastern or western, but is Master of all directions and places. If a particular direction is fixed for worship, it does not mean that Allah resides in that direction only. There is, therefore, no need to enter into disputes as to why a certain direction and place has been fixed instead of the other or why faces were at first turned towards a particular direction but now are being turned towards a different direction and a different place. "

116Allah is neither limited nor narrow-minded nor short-sighted nor indigent, as they suppose He is. On the contrary, His Kingdom is boundless and so are His vision and generosity. He also knows which of His servants remembers Him and also where and when and with what intention.

117They demanded hat either Allah Himself should come before them and say, "This is My Book and these are My Instructions for you to follow." Or, He should show such a Sign to them as would conclusively demonstrate that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was really a Messenger of Allah and that what he presented was revealed to him by Allah.

118That is, "The objections and demands of those who are opposing the Truth today are not new. These are exactly the same as have always been put forward by those who go astray from the Right Way, as all

the wicked people of all ages think alike and follow the same line of argument."

119The demand that Allah Himself should speak to them was so absurd that it needed no reply. As to the other demand that Allah should show them a Sign, Allah answers that He has shown many clear Signs but those who are not inclined to believe cannot see them.

120Not to speak of the other Signs, the most conspicuous Sign was the personality of Muhammad himself (Allah's peace be upon him). They knew everything about his life before Prophethood; the conditions of his country and nation and the circumstances and environment under which he was brought up and how he spent the first forty years of his life before his appointment as a Prophet;

121That is, "The reason why these people are displeased with you is not that they are sincere seekers after Truth and that you have failed to make it as clear to them as it should have been. On the contrary, they. are offended with you just because you have made the Truth so clear that no loop-hole has been left for them to make religion a paying concern for the gratification of their desires and lusts. Therefore leave them alone and do not try to reconcile them because it is not possible to please them unless you also adopt the same attitude towards religion as they have adopted. They would have been very happy with you, if you had acted hypocritically like them and made God-worship a cloak for self-worship. It is impossible to please them unless you follow their bad example in your beliefs and practices."

122The reference is to the pious among the people of the Book, who study the Qur'an honestly and sincerely and accept as true what is true according to the Book of Allah.

123From here begins a new discourse. In order to understand it, the following should be kept in mind

(1) After Noah, Abraham was the first Prophet who was appointed by Allah to spread the universal Message of Islam. He began his mission in his own country, 'Iraq, and invited the people to Islam (submission to Allah). Then he visited Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Arabia with the same mission. Afterwards he appointed his deputies in different places. He deputed Lot, his nephew, to Trans-Jordan, Isaac, his son, to Syria and Palestine, and Ismail, the elder son, to Arabia. Then he was commanded by Allah to build at Makkah that house of worship which is called the Ka'bah and to make it the centre of his mission.

(2) From the two sons of the Prophet Abraham sprang two nations Isma`ilites and Israelites. The former were the descendants of Ishmael who settled in Arabia. The Quraish and some other Arab clans were his direct descendants but even those Arab clans which were not his descendants claimed to he Isma 'ilites because they were more or less influenced by his mission. The latter, the Israelites, were the descendants of Jacob, son of Isaac. Jospeh, Moses, David, Solomon, John, Jesus (may Allah's peace be upon them all) and many other Prophets rose from among them. They were called Israelites after Israel,

the second name of Jacob. Some other people who accepted their religion also merged into them. All the Prophets of Israel, including Jesus, preached Islam, submission to Allah, but when the Israelites became degenerate and lost their religion (Islam) they invented Judaism and later Christianity.

(3) Abraham was appointed to invite the world to surrender to Allah and to reform the people in accordance with Allah's Guidance. He himself surrendered and acted upon the knowledge he received from Allah and exerted his utmost to propagate that knowledge and to persuade all the people to submit to the Sovereign of the Universe. Therefore he was made the leader of the world. Afterwards this leadership, with all its responsibilities, was transferred to the Israelites, the descendants of Isaac and Jacob. This was the special favour which the Israelites were asked, over and over again, to remember. Accordingly, during the time of Solomon, the Holy Temple at Jerusalem became the centre and the qiblah (the place towards which face is to be turned for prayer) of all the worshippers of Allah, as long as the Israelites remaind the leaders of this mission.

(4) In the foregoing address (vv.40-121), Allah has charged the Israelites with their sins of omission and commission during their leadership. Therefore the Qur'an points out their moral condition and tells them plainly, "You have proved yourselves quite unworthy of the favour shown to you. You have not only neglected to perform the obligations of leadership but have also discarded the Guidance of Allah from your own lives. Now the things have come to such a pass that you havebecome a community utterly unfit for leadership."

(5) Now they are being told that leadership is not the privilege of the descendants of Abraham as such, for none has any exclusive claim to it by the mere accident of birth. It was bestowed only upon those who submitted to Allah and followed His Guidance like Abraham. As they have swerved from that Way, and proved utterly unworthy of leadership, they are deposed from it.

(6) It also implied that the non-Israelite followers of the Prophet Moses and Jesus, who were proud of their relationship with Abraham had also swerved from the way of Abraham. Similarly, the idolaters of Arabia, who were also proud of their relationship with Abraham and Ismail have been told that they too were utterly unworthy of leadership, for they, too, had swerved from the Way of Abraham and Ismail.

(7) Now that the Israelites had been deposed from leadership, the argument proceeds to show why Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was raised as a Prophet from among the descendants ofIsmail, in answer to the prayer of Abraham and Ismail . It is because he followed the same Way as was followed by Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and all the Prophets before him. He and his followers believed in all the Prophets sent by Allah, and invited the world to the same Way that was shown by the former Prophets. Therefore the followers of this Prophet alone were worthy of that leadership.

(8) With the transfer of leadership, it was essential to change its centre as well. As long as the Israelites were the leaders, the Holy Temple at Jerusalem was the centre and giblah of all the followers of the

Truth. That was why the Holy Prophet and his followers also used to turn their faces at first towards it at prayer. But when the Israelites were deposed from leadership, the Holy Temple automatically ceased to be the giblah. It was therefore, declared that the Ka'bah at Makkah, where Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) started his mission, is to be the giblah in future. As it also was the centre of Abraham's mission, neither the Israelites nor the Arabs could object to it because both acknowledged Abraham as their Prophet and ancestor. Thus there was no reason left for them to raise any objection against making the Ka`bah the centre of the Divine mission. But the fact is that obdurate people will goon arguing against the Truth even after knowing it to be the Truth.

(9) After declaring the Muslims to be the leaders, with the Ka`bah as their centre, Allah gives instructions (vv. 153-286) for their guidance to enable them to carry out their obligations as leaders of the world.

124At different places the Qur'an has described in detail the hard test to which Abraham was put before he was made the leader and guide of mankind. When he passed successfully through all those trials and proved himself fit and capable of performing this great responsibility, he was exalted to this high position. Ever since the Truth was revealed to him, his whole life was a series of sacrifices in its cause. He sacrificed everything which is valued in life, and encountered every kind of danger in the way of Truth.

125That is, "This promise shall apply only to those of your descendants who will be good and capable, and not to those who will be transgressors." Thus, obviously, the misguided children of Israel and the idolatrous children of Ishmael were not entitled to this promise.

126The purification of the House was not only to be from rubbish but also from all kinds of false worship so that the name of Allah alone should be glorified in it. The real purification of Allah's House is that no other name than His should be mentioned in it. For the worship of anyone else or the invoking of any other name for help really polluted the House. This verse charges, in a subtle manner, the Quraish with the crime of keeping idols in the Ka`bah and worshipping them instead of Allah. It implies that these idolaters who were proud of being the heirs of Abraham and Ismail were not discharging the obligations of that heritage. Hence they, like the Israelites, have forfeited all rights to the promise of Allah made to Abraham.

127When Abraham prayed to Allah to provide his descendants with the necessities of life, he excluded from his prayer the would-be transgressors, because Allah had excluded them from His promise of leadership. Allah, however, removed his misunderstanding immediately, saying, "There is a great difference between the two things. While the righteous leadership will be bestowed upon the true believers only, the necessities of life will be given to both the believers and the unbelievers." It also implies that the possession of wealth is not the standard to judge whether Allah is pleased with one or not. If one is given abundance of wealth, it does not necessarily mean that Allah is pleased with him and considers him to be worthy of leadership as well.

128"Purify their lives:" purify their beliefs, ideas, deeds, habits, customs, culture, politics, in short, every aspect of life.

129As .Allah has full powers and perfect wisdom, He granted this prayer of the Prophet Abraham and made Hadrat Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) His Messenger.

130The word used in the text is "aslim," that is, "become a Muslim," or "adopt the attitude of Islam" (surrender to the will of Allah). Thus a Muslim is one who surrenders himself completely to Allah and obeys Him; who acknowledges Allah alone as His Lord, Master, Sovereign, Ruler, Lawgiver and God of worship; and who adopts the way of life prescribed by Him. Islam is the religious system based on this creed and attitude. This was the religion of all the Prophets who came to different countries and different nations.

131Special mention of Jacob has been made because the Israelites were his direct descendants.

132The Arabic word "din" has a much wider scope than the English ward "religion".It covers life in its entirety, and no aspect of individual or community life is outside its realm.

133Though Jacob's death has been described in detail in the Bible, no mention has been made of this last will of his. It, however, has been given in detail in the Talmud and its substance is more or less the same as that contained in the Qur'an: "At the time when Jacob quitted this world, he summoned his sans and said to them, 'Serve the Lord your God, and He will deliver ye from all trouble. even as He delivered your fathers ..... Teach your children to love God, and observe His commandments, for God will guard those who do justly and walk in righteousness through all his ways .....' And the sons of Jacob responded, 'All that you have commanded us, our father!, we will do. May God he with us.' And Jacob answered: 'The Lord will be with ye if ye shall depart not from His ways to the right hand or the left'." The same thing about the Prophet Jacob's will has been cited by Rodwell front Midr. Rabbah, "Have ye any doubts in your hearts concerning the Holy One, Messed be He." They said, "Hear O Israel, our Father. As there is no doubt in thy heart, so neither is there in ours. For the Lord is our God, and He is One."

134That is, "Though you are their descendants, you have no real connection with them; nor have you any right to claim relationship with them, when you have swerved from their way. Allah will not ask you what your forefathers did but He will ask you what you yourselves did " What we call our "actions and deeds" are, according to the Qur'an, our earnings, because every action and every deed either produces a good result or a bad consequence. If it is good, Allah will be pleased with us and give us its due reward. If it is bad, He will inflict due punishment upon us. The Qur'an refers to actions and deeds as earnings in order to focus attention on the serious results produced by them.

135In order to understand the true significance of this answer, two things should be kept in mind.

(1) Judaism and Christianity were born long after the death of Abraham. Judaism, with its special rituals, peculiar regulations, etc., took its birth and name some tour hundred years before Christ. As to "Christianity", it took its name and adopted its special creed and form long after the recall of Jesus. Thus it is clear that their claim that one must become a Jew or a Christian in order to obtain guidance was historically untenable. For in that case, Abraham, Jesus and all the other Prophets and all the good people who had passed away long before the birth of Judaism and Christianity could not be counted among the right-guided persons for the simple reason that these "religions" did not exist at the time they lived. Thus, it was obvious that the Jews and Christians could not say that these Prophets were not right-guided, nor could they claim that they followed Judaism or Christianity. As a corollary to this, true Guidance did not, even according to them, consist of the particular features which divided them into two distinct religions, but it was that eternal universal way which has been shown by all the Messengers of Allah and which has always been followed by the good people of all ages.

(2) It also meant to warn the Jews and the Christians that both practised shirk and had, therefore, swerved from the way of Abraham, who did not associate any other object with Allah in his worship, his reverence, his submission and his obedience to Him. They could not deny this because their own Scriptures bore testimony to it.

136"We do not discriminate against any of them" means that we believe in all the Prophets of Allah and reject none. It is obvious that all the Prophets who came from Allah brought the same Truth and invited the people to the same Guidance and Right Way. Hence anyone who follows the Truth must accept all the Prophets. Those who accept one Prophet and reject the other really reject even the one whom they profess to accept. Had they followed the universal Guidance taught by Moses, Jesus and other Prophets, they could not have rejected any other Prophet (i.e. Muhammad, Allah's peace be upon him). As a matter of fact, they were not following the teachings of any Prophet, but merely professing to accept their own Prophets just because their fathers did so. Thus their real religion was prejudice, race-worship and blind imitation of their forefathers.

137It may also mean, "We took Allah's colour." Before the advent of Christianity, it was a custom among the Jews to give a bath to those who accepted Judaism. It meant to imply that all the sins of the baptised person were washed away and he had received a new colour of life. This same custom was later on adopted by the Christians and it was termed "Baptism", which is a ceremonial immersion in water or an application of water as an initiatory rite or sacrament of the Christian Church. It is applied not only to the new converts but also to all newly-born babies. The Qur'an says that there is nothing substantial in this ceremonial "colouring," since it is not necessary for salvation. For this purpose one should take colour from Allah by adopting His Way and submitting to His Law.

138That is, "What we only say is that Allah is Lord of all of us, and we should all submit to Him. Why should you then have any dispute with us concerning Allah? Is it a thing concerning which you should

have any dispute with us'? As a matter of fact, it is we who have a cause of dispute and not you, for it is you (and not we) who associate other objects of worship with Allah." The original Arabic words tray also mean: "Are you having a dispute with us for the sake of Allah....?" It would then mean: "If you really are having a dispute with us for the sake of Allah and not for the sake of prejudice or worldly interests, it can be settled amicably.

139That is, "You are responsible for your deeds and we are for ours. If you have associated other partners with Allah in His Godhead and if you worship and obey them, you are free to do so but you yourselves will bear its consequences. As to the dispute between us, it can be ended if you allow us the same freedom of worship that we allow you. When we do not dispute with you about your associating other gods with Allah, you should at least concede us the right to worship the One Allah without associating any partner with Him, Whom we have chosen for exclusive worship and submission."

140This question was addressed to the common people of the Jews and Christians, who in their ignorance sincerely believed that all these great Prophets were Jews or Christians.

141This question was addressed to their scholars, who were not ignorant of the fact that Judaism and Christianity with their special rituals, etc., were the products of a later age. In spite of this they were under the delusion that the Truth was confined to their own sects, and they kept their common people under the delusion that salvation depended on those beliefs, ways and regulations, which had been invented, long after the Prophets, by their own rabbis and priests, spiritual leaders and interpreters. Whenever they were confronted with the question: "To which of these sects of yours did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and other Prophets belong?", they would never answer this directly. For they could not claim that those Prophets belonged to their particular sect as they knew that history proved that claim to be absurd. But, in spite of this established fact, they could not admit it in clear words that the Prophets were neither Jews nor Christians, because this would have automatically refuted their claims.

142After the Hijrah the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) continued to turn his face in the Prayer towards the Temple (at Jerusalem) for about 16 or 17 months; then he was commanded to turn his face towards the Ka'bah (at Makkah). This change of the qiblah (direction of Prayer) with its implications has been described in detail in the succeeding verses.

143Those foolish people who did not have the sense to appreciate the true significance of this change began to raise different kinds of objections in order to create doubts in the minds of the Believers. Being narrow-minded, they thought that Allah was confined to a particular point or direction and the change of qiblah meant turning away from Him. This absurd objection has been removed by the declaration that east, west and all other directions belong to Allah. The fact that the qiblah lies in a certain direction does not mean that Allah is confined to that direction only. Those people who are blessed with guidance cannot entertain such narrow ideas. (Also refer to E.N.'s 115 and 116).

144This is the declaration of the leadership of the Muslim Community. "Thus" refers both to the Guidance of Allah which was sent through Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and to the change of the qiblah. It was by following the Guidance that the Muslims achieved those excellences which led to their appointment as the "Community of the Golden Mean," and it was the change of the qiblah from the Temple to the Ka`bah that was an indication that the Israelites had been deposed from the leadership and the Muslims had been appointed to it. Therefore the change of the giblah from the Temple to the Ka`bah was not merely a change of direction as the foolish people took it to be, but it was really the formal declaration of the change of leadership from the Israelites to the followers of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

The word "ummat wasat" is so comprehensive in meaning that no English word can correctly convey its full sense. It is a righteous and noble community which does not go beyond proper limits, but follows the middle course and deals out justice evenly to the nations of the world as an impartial judge, and bases all its relations with other nations on truth and justice.

The meaning of "We have appointed you as ummat wasat so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind and the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you" is: On the Judgement Day when all mankind will be called to account together, the Messenger, as Our authorised representative, will give evidence in regard to you to prove that he had imparted to you, by word and by deed, without any reservation, the whole teaching of sound thought, righteous deed and justice given by Us. Then you, being representatives of the Messenger, in your turn, will be required to give evidence to prove that you had done your utmost to impart, by word and deed, to mankind whatever the Messenger had imparted to you just as you had received it from the Messenger.

Thus, a person or group's being appointed by God a witness by itself amounts to its being exalted to the office of leadership and religious guide in the world. Though it is a position of honour, it carries very onerous responsibilities with it. It requires that the Muslim Community should become a living witness of piety, truth and justice before the world just as the Holy Prophet bore witness before it, and its wards and deeds should suffice to demonstrate to the world the meaning of truth, justice and piety. It also implies that it is a great responsibility for which the Muslim Community is accountable. Just as the Holy Prophet was responsible for conveying the Guidance of Allah, so the Muslims are responsible for conveying it to the people of the world. If they fail to prove in the Court of Allah that they have discharged this responsibility to the best of their ability, they will be condemned there. And they along with their evil geniuses and accomplices shall be accountable for all the evils which prevailed during their term of leadership, if they had shown any relaxation in the performance of their obligation as witnesses of the Truth. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will surely ask, "What did you do to prevent it when you saw the epidemic of sin, tyranny and impiety breaking out in the world?"

145The change of the qiblah also served to separate the Believers from the slaves of prejudice and

racialism. On the one side, there were the Arabs who were not ready to give up their own Ka'bah and to adopt the Temple at Jerusalem as the qiblah. They were tried first. It was a hard test but the sincere believers passed successfully through this and the worshippers of the idol of nationalism failed. Now when the qiblah was changed from Jerusalem to the Ka'bah, those Jews and Christians who had embraced Islam were put to the test. It was very difficult for them to accept any other qiblah than the one of their forefathers. Thus the worshippers of race, who turned back from Islam were separated from the worshippers of Allah and fatally the worshippers of Allah only remained with the Holy Prophet.

146This is the commandment for the change of the giblah, which was enjoined in Rajab or Sha'ban, A.H. 2. When this was revealed, according to Ibn Sa'd, the Holy Prophet was leading the Zuhr (early afternoon) prayer in the house of Bishr bin Bara' bin Ma'rur where he had gone in response to an invitation. This verse was revealed when he had gone through half of the prayer. lie at once turned his face towards the Ka'bah during the prayer and those who were saying their Prayer following his lead did the same. Afterwards it was announced publicly in Madinah and its suburbs that the giblah had been changed. Bara' bin Azib says that at one place this announcement was heard at a time when the people had bent down in the Prayer. But when they heard the commandment, they turned about in the same posture towards the Ka'bah. Anas bin Malik says that the people of Bani Salamah heard of the change of the qiblah next morning at a time when they had already gone through half of the Prayer. As soon as they heard the announcement: "Beware, the giblah has been changed to the Ka'bah," the whole congregation turned about towards the Ka`bah.

In this connection, it should also be kept in mind that the Holy Temple at Jerusalem is to the north of Madinah and the Ka`bah at Makkah to the south of it. The Imam (who led the Prayer) must have walked to the rear of the congregation, who had to turn about and also to move about a little in order to adjust the rows. All these things have been related in detail in the Traditions.

Moreover, it is quite clear from "We have seen you turn your face over and over again towards heaven" and "We turn you towards the giblah that you like best" that the Holy Prophet used to pray for, and was expecting this change, for he himself was feeling that the term of the leadership of the Israelites had come to an end and consequently Jerusalem had also ceased to be the centre. Therefore Ka`bah which had been set up by the Prophet Abraham should be the qiblah.

"Masjid Haram" means the "Inviolable place of worship and reverence". It refers to that place of worship at Makkah which has the Ka'bah in its centre.

The Commandment "Turn your face towards the Ka'abah" does not mean that one should turn one's face exactly to the point of the Ka'abah from every part of the globe. Obviously it is very difficult for everyone to do so at all times from all places of the globe. That is why the Qur'an directs us to turn our faces towards the Ka'abah and not to the point of the Ka'abah : We should do our best to find out the exact direction of the Ka`abah : then if we are satisfied that a certain direction is most probably the correct

direction, we should turn our faces towards it. But when it is not possible to ascertain the exact direction (for example, in a boat or a train, etc.) one should turn one's face to the probable right direction, and if during the prayer the correct direction is found out, one should turn one's face towards it at once.

147That is, "You cannot convince by argument those who are disputing with you about the wisdom of the change of the giblah because they are not disposed to listen to any reasoning on account of their deep prejudices and obduracy: nor can you end this dispute by adopting the giblah of anyone of them; for all of them have different qiblahs, and, as a Prophet of Allah, you cannot make compromises on the principle of "give and take". Therefore the only thing you have to do is to stick to Our Commandments strictly and firmly. If you turn away from these, you will be transgressing the limits of Prophethood and showing ingratitude towards the favour of leadership with which We have blessed you."

148This Arabic idiom is employed when one knows something with certainty and has absolutely no doubt about its identity. The metaphor has been derived from the fact that none can make any mistake in recognizing one's own children. Here it has been used to show that the learned people of the Jews and Christians knew it as a fact that the Ka'bah was built by the Prophet Abraham, just as they knew their own children. They also knew that the Holy Temple at Jerusalem was built by the Prophet Solomon some 1,300 years after the Ka'bah was built by the Prophet Abraham. The Ka'bah, therefore, had priority and superiority over the "Temple" and the Jews and the Christians should have no difficulty in recognizing and acknowledging it as the qiblah in the light of the above historical facts.

149There is a subtle gap between the first sentence and the second, which has been left for the reader to fill. Everyone who wants to offer his Prayer must turn his face to one or the other direction. But the real thing that matters is not the direction of the face at prayer but those virtues which are to be gained by offering the prayer. Hence the thing that really matters is the spirit and real purpose of the Prayer and not any particular direction or place.

150That is, "We have reiterated this Commandment lest anyone of you should turn his face to any other direction in the prayer and give to opponents cause to say, `These people of the ummat wasat claim that they are witnesses of the Truth but their behaviour falsifies it. While they profess that the Commandment about the change of the giblah has come from their Lord, they do not act upon it'.

151The blessing refers to the blessing of leadership which Allah had wrested from the children of Israel and invested in the Muslims. This is the greatest reward which is given to any community when it adopts and follows the righteous way and is entrusted by Allah with the work of guiding the world on the path of virtue. Here Allah tells the Muslims, "The change of giblah is symbolic of the change of leadership. You should, therefore, observe this Commandment strictly, lest leadership should be wrested from you on account of your disobedience or ingratitude. This favour will be conferred on you in perfection, if you obey the Commandment

152That is, "You should expect this blessing if you submit to this Commandment about the change of the giblah." This promise is very encouraging for a servant of Allah. The assurance gives him great consolation that he should expect such a great reward from his King, if he obeys His Commandments with all his heart and soul.

153After their appointment to leadership, the Believers from hereon are given such instructions and directions as are essential for training and enabling them to discharge the duties of that position of responsibility. They are first of all warned that leadership is not a bed of roses but a bed of thorns. They will be confronted with difficulties, hardships, and trials at the very outset and will have to undergo untold sufferings and losses. But if they went Through all those ordeals with fortitude and proceeded on in the way of Allah, they would be blessed with countless blessings and rewards by Him.

154That is, "Fortitude and Prayer will generate in you the power which is required to bear that burden of responsibility with which you have been entrusted. Fortitude will give you that patience and courage under the afflictions, privations and temptations which you are bound to encounter and that moral strength and endurance which will be sorely needed in Allah's way, which is full of dangers. The Prayer will train you in discipline and other moral qualities which are essential for the right type of leadership.

155It is forbidden to refer to those who are martyred for Allah's sake as "dead" because the very word "death" and its thought are very discouraging, and kill the spirit of self-sacrifice and the urge to fight in the way of Allah. Instead, the Muslims are told to believe that those who fall martyrs in the way of Allah in fact enjoy eternal life. And this is a reality which revitalises and keeps alive the spirit of courage and valour.

156These words are to be uttered merely with the tongue, but we whould believe sincerely from the core of our hearts that "We belong to Allah and to none else." Thus, if anything is sacrificed in the way of Allah, if is spent rightly because it has gone to His service to Whom it really belonged."

"We shall certainly return to Him" :"We shall not live here for ever but shall have to leave this world one day. Thus, sooner or later we must die and go to Allah. It is, therefore, far better to fight in His way and lay down our lives for His sake than to pass our lives in self-seeking and self-worship and then die of some disease or accident."

157Hajj is pilgrimage to the Ka'bah during the fixed days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah and 'Umrah is the voluntary visit to the Ka'bah in other than the Hajj days. Directions about Hajj and 'Umrah are being given at this place because the Ka'bah had recently been made the giblah and naturally questions and problems connected with it had arisen.

158The running between Safa and Marwah (the two hills) near the Ka'bah was one of the rituals taught by Allah to Abraham in connection with Hajj. But afterwards when the people began to associate false

gods with Allah, they built temples on Safa and Marwah and dedicated these to two idols, Asaf and Na'ilah, and went round them in reverence to them. When the Arabs embraced (slant, a question arose whether running between Safa and Marwah was one of the original rituals of Hajj or whether this had been invented by the worshippers of false gods and whether they would not be guilty of practising shirk by running between the two hills.

Besides this, a Tradition related by Hadrat 'A'ishah says that the people of Madinah had an old aversion to running between Safa and Marwah even before they accepted Islam for they were devotees of Manat and did not worship Asaf and Na'ilah. Therefore, now when the Ka'bah was made the qiblah, Allah removed their misunderstanding concerning the running between Safa and Marwah and told them that this ritual had really been connected with Hajj ever since the time of the Prophet Abraham and was not the invention of the ignorant people after hire.

159That is, it is far better to run between the two hills with a willing heart to please Allah than as a mere compliance with a Command from Him.

160The greatest crime of the Jewish scholars was that they had made the teachings of their Scriptures the monopoly of their rabbis and professional scribes. Not to speak of imparting these to the Gentiles, they did not teach them even to the common Jews. As a result, the Jews began to practise irreligious things because of their ignorance. Even then their rabbis did not do anything to reform and educate them. Instead of this, they went on, directly or indirectly, certifying every irreligious practice as legal merely for the sake of winning and retaining popularity. The Muslims are being forewarned that as leaders of the world they should propagate and spread the Guidance given to them and should not keep it back from the common people as the Jewish rabbis and scribes did.

161The literal meaning of the word kufr is "to conceal". By and by it came to be used for the concealment of the Truth and then for its rejection, as the antonym of imam n. Iman means to believe, to accept and to admit, and kufr means to disbelieve, to reject and to oppose. According to the Qur'an, one shall be guilty of kufr.

(1) If one does not believe in Allah at all or refuses to accept Him as the Supreme Authority or as one's Master and that of the entire Universe or as the only God of worship, or

(2) If one professes to acknowledge Allah but refuses to accept His commandments and Guidance as the sole source of the knowledge of Truth and of Law, or

(3) If one accepts on principle the Guidance of Allah, but refuses to accept the authority of the Messengers whom Allah has sent with His Commandments and Guidance, or

4) If one accepts a particular Messenger (or Messengers) and rejects others according to one's whim or prejudices, or

(5) If one discards the whole or any part of the Islamic creed, or its code of life, or the teachings of the Messenger, or

(6) If one accepts all these things in theory but discards the Commandments of God deliberately in practice and persists in this conduct and leads a life of rebellion instead of submission.

All the above modes of thought and action are rebellion against Allah and are kufr according to the Qur'an. Besides the above usages, the Qur'an sometimes uses the word kufr in the sense of ingratitude as an antonym of shukr. Shukr means that one should be grateful only to Him Who has bestowed the blessing, should appreciate His favour,.should use and spend the blessing only according to His Will, and should submit to Him completely and faithfully like a loyal servant. On the contrary, kufr or ingratitude is that one should either refuse to acknowledge the favour of one's benefactor, and should regard it as a result of one's own ability, or as a favour and result of the influence of another one, or should depreciate the blessing bestowed by Him and waste it, or should use the blessing against His Will, or should adopt an attitude of rebellion against him inspite of His favours and blessings. Such an attitude of kufr is generally described as ingratitude, disloyalty, rebellion and treason.

162Anyone who does not look around like an animal but makes an intelligent observation of the great system of the universe that is working day and night before his very eyes, and is not blinded by prejudice or obduracy, can see many a sign pointing to the Reality. He will certainly see that it is being ruled only by the All-Powerful, All-Wise Sovereign. He can also understand that Allah alone is the God of the whole universe and that there is absolutely no room for any kind of interference or partnership, for no one else has any quality or power or authority to entitle him to the claim of Godhead.

163They set up equals.....": they ascribe some of the exclusive qualities and powers of Allah to others and render all or some of His exclusive rights to false gods. For instance, though Allah alone has control over all the forces of nature and has the power to fulfil all the needs of His creatures and to hear their prayers and requests, and although He alone knows all that is open or hidden, yet they invoke others for help or attribute all or some of these powers and qualities to others than Allah and thus set up compeers to rank with Him.

Again it is the exclusive right of Allah that His subjects should acknowledge Him as the Supreme Authority, bow down their heads before Him and fear Him alone in open and secret. But as they render all or some rights to others than Allah, they set up compeers with Him. Then, Allah alone is entitled to prescribe what is lawful and what is unlawful, what is clean and what is unclean. He alone has the authority to define the rights and duties of His subjects, lay down commands and prohibitions for them, etc. Therefore those who arrogate to themselves any of these rights shall be guilty of shirk. Again, He

alone deserves to be acknowledged as the Sovereign and, as His subjects, the people should consider His Commandments to be final and turn to Him for guidance; therefore those who ascribe any of these rights to others than Allah, set up compeers with Him; likewise those institutions or persons who claim to possess any of these qualities or rights or assume to themselves any of these qualities or rights or demand that others should accede these to them, set themselves as compeers with Allah, whether or not they put forward formal claims to Godhead.

164Belief in Allah demands that one should prefer His Will to one's own will or to that of others, and cherish His love so dearly as to be ready to sacrifice all other affections for its sake.

165This helpless end of the ring-leaders and misguiders and their followers has been specially mentioned here to warn the Muslims to be very careful in selecting and electing their leaders and guides. The former communities weal astray because they followed wrong leaders and evil guides. The Muslims should, therefore, learn a lesson from their end and discriminate between leaders and misleaders and should not follow the latter.

166They have been told to break all those restrictions which superstition and ignorance had imposed upon articles of food and drink.

167That is, "Satan makes people believe that these superstitious customs and restrictions upon food and drink are a part of religion and have been enjoined by Allah, although there is no authority to show that they are from Him."

168The only authority they have for their superstitious practices is that these have been the customs of their forefathers, and the foolish followers consider this a good authority.

169This parable has two aspects:

(1) That these people are like those herds of cattle which merely hear the call and cry of the drovers and move about at the sound of their call without understanding the meaning of their words.

(2) That preaching before them is like preaching to the cattle which only hear the sounds but do not comprehend the meaning and the implication of the words that are spoken to them. The words used are comprehensive and cover both the aspects.

170The Believers are enjoined to break all sorts of unnecessary, improper and unlawful restrictions imposed by the pundits, the priests, the rabbis, the clergies, the forefathers, etc.

For if they really believe in Allah, as they profess, they should abstain from eating only what Allah has

forbidden and eat, without any hesitation, only what Allah has declared lawful.

According to a Tradition of the Holy Prophet, "One who offers the Salat in the way we offer, turns his face towards the giblah to which we turn our face, and eats what we have slaughtered, is a Muslim." Therefore if one has any scruples regarding the eating of those things which Allah has declared lawful, he has not as yet become a true Muslim, even if he offers the Salat, turning his face towards the Ka`bah. He should give up the prejudices and superstitions of ignorance if he really and sincerely has become a Muslim. For the very observance of old traditions and customs is a proof that he is still imbued with the poison of ignorance.

171This applies both to the flesh of the animal which is slaughtered in the name of any other than Allah and to the food which is offered as a vow to any other than Allah. As a matter of fact, everything whether animal, corn, or another eatable:, actually belongs to Allah and is given by Him; therefore it should be offered as charity, or as vow, only in His name as a mark of gratitude to Him. If it is offered in any other name it means that one regards it also, instead of Allah, or along with Allah, as supreme, and the bestower of favours and blessings.

172In this verse, permission for the use of an unclean thing has been given on three conditions: (1) It must be really a case of extremity. For instance, if one is dying of hunger or thirst or if one's life is in danger because of some disease and there is nothing available except an unclean thing, one is permitted to take it. (2) One should not cherish any desire in one's heart to break the law of Allah. (3) One should not take even a bit more than what is absolutely necessary. For example, if in a certain case, a few bits or drops of an unclean thing can save life, then nothing more than this absolute minimum should be taken.

173These were their learned people, who, in spite of possessing the knowledge of the Divine Book, kept it back from the common people, and were responsible for all the superstitions, false customs and unnecessary restrictions which were prevalent among them and which gave birth to new codes of law. Besides this, they were also guilty of another crime. They did not utter a word against the evil practices which began to spread as a result of that ignorance which had been deliberately created among them. Not only this: the majority of them considered this sorry condition to be advantageous to themselves and so let the Commandments of Allah remain hidden from the people.

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175In order to show the futility of excessive emphasis on external religious forms, it has been pointed out, as an instance, that there is no real virtue in the mere act of turning faces to the east or to the west in prayer.For the mere performance of some religious rites or formalities or show of piety is not real virtue which may have any importance or value with Allah.

176The Arabic word "visas"stands for the return of life for life in cases of murder. It does not, however, mean that the murderer should be killed in the same manner in which he committed the murder. It only means that his life should be taken as he took the life of the other.

177The principle of the equality of the value of human life has been prescribed here in order to meet the strictest claims of justice. The value of blood and consequently retribution for it are not to be determined by the rank of the slain or that of the murderer. It has, therefore, been clearly laid down that the murderer himself shall be made to pay for the blood.

Before the advent of Islam, they put a higher value on the blood of a member of their own clan and demanded the life of a man of the same rank from the clan of the murderer or the lives of scores or even hundreds from the tribe of the murderer according to the value put on the blood of the slain. On the other hand, if the murderer happened to belong to a higher rank than that of the slain, their "judgement" was that the life of the murderer should not be taken for the life of the slain. And this inequality in the evaluation of blood was not confined only to that age of ignorance. Even today the "civilised" nations are not ashamed of declaring openly that if one person of their nation is killed, they will take the lives of fifty men from the nation of the murderer. And they put these challenges into practice. We often hear that so many people belonging to the subject nation have been put to death to avenge the murder of one person belonging to the ruling nation. But if the murderer belonged to a "civilised" ruling nation and the slain to an "uncivilised" subject nation, their judges would not pass the sentence of death on him. In order to guard against these unjust rules, Allah has ordained that the life of the murderer and the murderer alone should be taken for the life of the slain, irrespective of the rank or race of the murderer or that of the slain.

178The use of the word "brother" here contains a kind of recommendation. That is, "Though the murderer has injured you very grievously, he is after all your brother by the human relation. Therefore, if you restrain your rage against your erring brother and refrain from retaliation and remit the penalty of death, you will raise your standard of humanity."

This verse also shows that, according to the Islamic Penal Code, even murder is a compoundable offence. The heirs of the murdered person have the right to pardon the murderer, if they deem it proper. In that case the court cannot insist on taking his life. Of course, the murderer will have to pay the blood money if the rightful claimants demand it.

179The word "ma'ruf" has been used in many places in the Qur'an. It refers to those just and rational rules of conduct which are generally known and accepted by all fair-minded people. They are so clear and well known that everyone who is not blinded by self-interest and prejudice will acknowledge them as right and just, and the Islamic law recognizes them in all those matters for which it has not laid down any regulations. Such common laws and general usages are termed "ma ruf .

180For instance, it will be transgression if the heirs of the slain try to retaliate even after accepting the ransom, or if the murderer does not mean to pay the ransom gracefully, or otherwise reacts in an ungrateful manner.

181This verse refutes the opinion of those people who go to the other extreme and advocate total abolition of capital punishment. If it is inhuman to insist on retaliation, it is equally inhuman to encourage murder by totally abolishing capital punishment, as has been done in some "civilised" countries. That is why Allah declares that there is life for society in the law of retribution. If a society does not pay due regard to the sanctity of life and tries to protect a murderer, it sets a premium on crime and puts in danger the lives of many innocent people.

182This commandment about making a will for the distribution of property was given at a time when the law of inheritance had not yet been prescribed. Its object was to safeguard the rights of the lawful heirs against injustice. Afterwards when Allah Himself prescribed a law for the distribution of inheritance (as laid down in Surah An-Nisa below), the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) enjoined the following two rules in explanation of the commandments concerning the making of will and distribution of inheritance:

183Islam proceeded step by step and by degrees in the imposition of its obligatory duties. The same was done in the case of the Fast. At first the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) advised the Muslims to observe fasts only for three days in a month but this was not obligatory. Then in the second year of the Hijrah, this Command (v. 183) about fasting in the month of Ramadan was revealed. This, however, left an option for those who were able to fast but did not. They were required to feed one poor man as an expiation of one day's fast (v. 184). Then, later, the final commandment contained in the next verse (185) modified this, and the concession for able-bodied people was withdrawn, but retained for a sick person or wayfarer and by analogy for a pregnant or a suckling woman and for those old people who were not able to fast.

In a lengthy statement quoted by lmam Ahmad bin Hanbal, Hadrat Mu'az hilt Jabal says: "The Salat and the Fast took their present form gradually. At first the Muslims faced Jerusalem during the Salat but after some years they were commanded to turn their faces towards the Ka`abah, Makkah. Besides this, at first they used to inform one another about the time of each Salat but afterwards the same was proclaimed by means of Azan (the call for prayer). (As to the Fast), when the Holy Prophet migrated to Al-Madinah, he observed fasts for three days in a month and also on the tenth of Muharram. Then Allah made it

obligatory to fast during the whole month of Ramadan but allowed the feeding of one person as an expiation for one who did not observe fasts, though he could. Afterwards this concession of feeding one person for one day of fast was cancelled in the case of healthy persons and the one not on a journey (Ibn Kathir, p.2 14).

Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and other scholars have also quoted Traditions from Hadrat `A'ishah, `Abdullah bin `Umar, and `Abdullah bin Mas'ud to the same effect. In support of the same, Ibn Jarir Tabari, a famous commentator of the Qur'an, has quoted Traditions citing the authority in full from several Companions and their followers. In one of these Traditions, he quotes the following explanation of Hadrat Mu'az bin Jabal: "As the Arabs were not used to fasting, it was hard for them at first to observe fasts. They were, therefore, given the option to feed one poor person on the day they did not observe fast during the month of Ramadan. Afterwards a Commandment was revealed, cancelling this concession except in the case of a sick person or one on a journey". He quotes another tradition from Ibn `Abbas to this effect. In the first Commandment (v.184), Allah had allowed expiation for fasts even for an able-bodied person who could fast but did not. In verse 185 which was revealed next year, the concession for an able-bodied person was cancelled but was retained for a sick person or a wayfarer.

184More than this": to feed more than one person for each fasting day, or to feed one as well as observe the fast.

185The fast commandment about fasting contained in vv. 183-84 was revealed in the second year of Hijrah before the battle of Badr. The subsequent verses were revealed a year later but were inserted here because they dealt with the same matter.

186It has been left to the option of the individual to observe or not to observe fasts during a journey. Some of the Companions of the Holy Prophet observed fasts and some did not when they were on a journey with him and neither raised any objection against the other. The Holy Prophet himself sometimes observed fasts on a journey and sometimes did not. Once he saw people gathered round a man who had fallen to the ground and asked what was the matter with him. He was told that he had become too weak to stand on account of observing fasts; he remarked that it was no virtue to observe fasts in such a condition.

During war time, he used to issue orders for postponing the fasts. Hadrat 'Umar has related that they did not observe fasts twice during the month of Ramadan when they went to war under the command of the Holy Prophet: on the occasion of the battle of Badr and at the conquest of Makkah. Ibn 'Umar says that on the eve of the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet declared, "As we are going to tight our enemy you should postpone your fasts so that you may conserve your strength to tight." 'there is no clear injunction from the Holy Prophet for the prescription of a minimum standard of distance for postponing the fasts. His Companions also differed in practice with regard to the standard. But it is obvious that the fast may be postponed for that distance which is commonly understood to be a journey and in which one

begins to feel being on a journey.

There is a difference of opinion as to whether the people of a city, which is attacked by an enemy, can postpone the fast for the sake of Jihad, inspite of being the residents. Some scholars do not allow this. But Imam Ibn Taimiyyah has maintained with strong arguments that postponement of the fast under such circumstances is permissible.

187Allah is so bountiful that He does not want to deprive His servants of the blessings of fasting. Therefore He has not confined it to the month of Ramadan but has opened another way for its completion for those who fail to complete it during this month for genuin reasons. They should make up the deficiency by observing fast on other days in order to show their gratitude for the revelation of the Qur'an during the month of Ramadan.

It is clear from this verse that fasting in Ramadan has been prescribed not only as a form of worship and a training for piety, but also to show gratitude for the great blessing of the Revelation of the Qur'an during the month of Ramadan. And the best way to show gratitude for a favour is to fulfil the object for which it was bestowed and to prepare oneself for its completion as best as one can. The object for which Allah has bestowed the Qur'an upon us is to reveal His Will so that we may fulfil it ourselves and persuade others to do the same. Fasting provides the best training for the fulfilment of this object and is both a devotion and a sign of gratitude for the favour shown in the form of the Qur'an.

188That is, "Although you cannot see Me nor perceive Me with your senses, yet you must never imagine that I am far from you. Nay, I am so near to every servant of Mine that he can invoke Me and place his request before Me wherever he is. So much so that I hear and answer even those requests which are not expressed in words but are made only in the innermost heart. As to the false and impotent gods you have created in your ignorance and folly, you have to travel co them, and even then they do not hear and answer you. But here am I, the Sovereign, the absolute Ruler of the boundless universe and Possessor of all powers and authority, so near to hear and answer you that you need no recommendation of intercession for making any request anywhere at any time you like. Therefore you should free yourselves from the folly of running from door to door after false gods, and accept My invitation and turn to Me and trust in Me and submit to Me and become My servants."

189That is, "They may learn this truth from you and adopt the right attitude, in which lies their own good. "

190That is, just as nothing can intervene between the clothes and the body and each fits into the other naturally, so is the relation between the husband and the wife: each is a means of comfort, protection and happiness for the other.

191Although at first there was no clear injunction forbidding intercourse between husband and wife

during the nights of Ramadan, yet the Muslims had a vague notion that it was not lawful to do so and it was with a guilty conscience that sometimes some of them went to bed with their wives. There was thus a danger of developing a criminal and sinful mental attitude. Therefore, Allah first warned them of their dishonest behaviour towards their conscience and then made it lawful so that they might do it with a clear conscience.

192There was also a misunderstanding about the timings of eating and drinking during Ramadan. Some people were of the opinion that eating and drinking was prohibited after the `Isha' (night) Prayer up to sunset of the next day. Others thought that one was permitted to eat and drink as long as one kept awake after the 'Isha' Prayer, but could not do so after one had fallen asleep; they were often put to great inconvenience on account of these notions of their own creation. In this verse their misunderstandings were removed and the duration of the period of fasting was fixed from the dawn of the morning to the sunset, and eating and drinking and intercourse with wives were permitted from sunset to dawn. Besides, the Holy Prophet instructed that a meal should be taken before the dawn (of morning) as a preparation for fasting.

193Islam has set a standard of time for its practices which can be applied universally by people at every stage of civilization and in every part of the globe. That is why it does not fix the boundary lines of its religious practices by watches and clocks but by clear signs in the sky. This is a standard which can suit the people of every age and country, and can be set by watches between these prescribed bounds to suit their circumstances and convenience. But those people who do not understand its philosophy raise foolish objections. For example, they say that this standard cannot work near the Poles, because there the duration of the day and the night is of many months. They forget that even in the polar regions, the signs of morning and evening and mid-night appear as regularly as in other places and the inhabitants regulate the tunings of work, play, sleep, etc. in accordance with the appearance of these signs. When there were no watches and clocks, the inhabitants of the Arctic Circle fixed their timings by these signs. Thus when these signs can help them to fix the timings in other matters of life, they can also serve them to fix the timings of the Prayer and of the commencement and end of the Fast.

194"Complete your fast till nightfall" means: "Your fast ends where the boundary of the night begins." It is obvious that the boundary line of the night begins at sunset: therefore the fast should be broken at the time of sunset for which we should look at the eastern horizon. If we see the darkness of the night rising up there, it is a signal for the breaking of the fast. In the same way, the rising of the white streak of the morning in the eastern horizon is a signal for the beginning of the fast.

It must be clearly understood that in the Islamic Code of Law there are no hard and fast limits, exact to the second or minute, for the duration of the fast. There is great latitude in both the limits. Differences of a minute or a second either way do not make the fast defective. The fast becomes complete as soon as the darkness of night begins to rise in the east. It should, therefore, be broken at sunset. In the same way, when the dawn of the morning appears in the eastern horizon, the boundary line begins for observing the

fast and eating and drinking, should be stopped. But here, too, there is an allowance for one to finish ones meal even though the dawn of the morning might have appeared, if one could not wake up in time for it. There is a Tradition of the Holy Prophet to this effect: "If one, while taking his meals, hears the call for the morning Prayer (or the sound of the siren as in our age) for beginning the fast, one should not withdraw one's hand inunediately from food, but should finish the meal." Likewise, one is enjoined to break the fast without delay as soon as the dark line of the night appears in the east.

195I'tikaf is a special voluntary practice of devotion during the last ten days of the month of Ramadan. One confines oneself to a mosque and devotes one's whole time to prayer and meditation in addition to the prescribed obligatory religious duties. One is required to abstain from all worldly pursuits, desires, lusts, etc., and is not to leave the mosque except to attend to the call of nature etc.

196The wording of the Commandment about the extreme limits is very significant. It not only prohibits one from transgressing them but also warns one not even to go near them. It is very dangerous to roam about on the boundary lines of the forbidden territory for one is liable to enter into it by mistake. Going near them has, therefore, been prohibited. The Holy Prophet emphasized the same pint, saying, "Every king has some reserved land and Allah's 'reserved' land is hounded by those limits which prescribe the lawful and the unlawful, the right and the wrong. The animal which grazes near the last bounds of the reserved land might one day enter into it." It is a pity that. inspite of this clear warning. many people, who are ignorant of the spirit of Islamic law, persist in going to the extreme limits and many "learned" people try to find excuses for them from the same Islamic Code of Law that warns the Muslims not to go near the boundary line. That is why many people get involved in vice and stray front the straight path. Obviously, it is not an easy thing to demarcate these tine boundary lines and to control oneself from transgressing them, when one is roaming near them.

197This verse has two aspects: One should not try to seize the property of another by bribing the judges, and one should not go to the court of law to seize the property of another through specious arguments. It is just possible that the judge might decide, on the basis of available evidence, in favour of the transgressor, but it does not mean that the property has thereby really become lawful for him. The Holy Prophet warned such people. saying, `'After all I am a human being. It is just possible that in a case brought before me, one better versed in the art of talking than his opponent might persuade me to decide the case in his favour. But let it be understood that anything gained in this way from a brother will, in fact, mean the acquiring of a piece of Hell for himself in spite of my decree in his favour."

198The phases of the moon have attracted the attention of mankind in every age, and different kinds of rites and superstitions have been connected with these in every country. The Arabs also had some superstitions connected with these. They took omens from them for journeys, marriage ceremonies, business, etc., and performed some superstitious practices, for they believed that the phases and the eclipse of the moon affected their fortunes. Therefore they questioned the Holy Prophet concerning this. Allah answered their question and informed them that the phases of the moon were nothing but uatural

calendar in the sky to indicate dates of the month to the people simultaneously throughout the world. Hajj has been specially mentioned in this connection because of its religious, cultural and economic importance to the Arabs. Four months of the year were fixed for Hajj and 'Umrah during which war was suspended and the routes were made safe, and business flourished on account of peace.

199This was one of their superstitious customs. As soon as they put on the Ihram, the ceremonial dress for Hajj, they would not enter their houses by the front doors, but would enter them by jumping over the walls or through windows in the rear of their houses. In this verse, Allah has not only refuted this superstitious custom but also warned that virtue has nothing to do with the superstitious rites and customs which were being practised merely in blind imitation of their forefathers, for they did not affect the fortune of man in any way.

200That is, "Fight with those people who hinder you from the way of Allah; who have become your enemies because you are trying to reform the way of life in accordance with the Guidance of Allah; who are preventing you from the work of reform by force and persecution." Before this, when the Muslims were yet weak and scattered, they were commanded to propagate Islam and bear all tyrannies with fortitude. But when they had established a tiny state at Madinah they were. far the tirst time, allowed to go to war against those who were opposing this reformative movement with force. The battle of Badr took place after this and a series of battles started with it.

201The Muslims were warned that the aim of their war should not be self-interest nor material gain nor retaliation. They should not, therefore, go to war against those who were neither opposing them nor hindering them from their work. Besides this, the Holy Prophet gave detailed instructions for keeping the war humane. He asked the Muslims to refrain from barbaric methods in warfare and from doing any kind of harm or injury to children, women, old people and the wounded. He also prohibited the dishonouring of the dead bodies of the slain, the wanton destruction of harvests, trees, animals, etc., and all other forms of cruelty, barbarism and vandalism. The Muslims were allowed to use farce only where it was absolutely indispensable and to the extent it was absolutely necessary.

202"Persecution and suppression of opinion by violence, force or threat," is the exact translation of the Arabic word "fitnah," as used in this verse. The verse implies that it is a heinous offence to persecute a person or party by Harassing and oppressive treatment for holding ideas and theories opposed to those in vogue at the time, and it is abominable to intlict on people injury and punishment for adhering to and propagating those ideas and theories with a view to reforming the ways of society. Though bloodshed is an evil thing, to oppress and harass others for adhering to their own faith and principles and to force them to give these up and adopt those of the oppressors is tar worse. Therefore it is lawful and justifiable to use force against such people as a resort to brute force instead of argument.

203That is. "You should create in yourselves those qualities which are the attributes of Allah in whom you

believe. tie forgives even the worst offenders and criminals and shows mercy to theta. You also should try to mould yourselves after this model. Your war should not he to quench your thirst for revenge but for the cause of Allah. As long as they oppose the way of Allah and continue their light against you, you also should fight against them, but no sooner do they stop fighting and give up their hostile attitude titan you also should stop fighting.

204Here the word "fitnah" has been used in a different sense from that in verse 191. The context clearly shows that here it denotes that condition of society which is not safe and free for adoption of the way of Allah. That is why the Muslims have been exhorted to continue the tight to change this state of affairs and to restore peace and freedom fur the way of Allah. It should also be noted that the Arabic word din' which has been translated here into "Way"' originally means "submission" and is technically used for the way of life which is built on the sovereignty of someone whose commands and regulations are to he followed. Therefore that condition of society in which there is the rule and sovereignty of man over man and in which it is not possible for anyone to follow the Way of Allah is fitnah. The aim of war in Islam is to abolish fitnah and establish Allah's Way so as to enable people to live as servants of Allah in accordance with the Divine Law.

205It does not wean that Islam incites the believers to go to war to force unbelievers at the point of sword to give up disbelief and polytheism and adopt the Way of Allah instead. War is to be waged only to make them give up fitnah. As a matter of fact, Islam allows freedom of belief to all non-Muslims. One may adopt any way of life that one chooses and may or may not worship anyone or anything. It exhorts the believers to preach and to persuade the unbelievers and the wrong doers by argument to give up their false faith and evil ways, but it does not allow the unbelievers the right to enforce on God's earth any ungodly law and make the servants of Allah the servants of some one else. In order to remove such an unjust condition, Islam allows both preaching and fighting according to the requirements of the occasion. The believers, therefore, cannot rest content unless this fitnah, political domination and legal sovereignty of unbelievers, is eradicated and freedom for the Way of Allah is secured.

From the words, "Then if they desist from it, there should be no more hostility except against those who had been guilty of cruelty and brutality," it has been deduced that when the Islamic rule replaces ungodly rule, there should be a general amnesty save for those who had been extremely cruel and tyrannous in opposing the Truth when in power. Although in this case also it behoves the believers to show forgiveness at the time of victory, yet they would be perfectly justified in punishing those who broke all limits in their blind opposition and persecution. The Holy Prophet, who was an embodiment of mercy and clemency, himself availed of this permission and sentenced to death `Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait and Nadr bin Harith, two prisoners of war taken in the battle of Badr: Moreover, although a general amnesty was proclaimed after the conquest of Makkah, seventeen persons who were the worst offenders against Islam were made an exception and four of these were sentenced to death.

206This verse answered the question that arose about fighting during the four sacred months of the lunar

year, that is, Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram dedicated to Hajj and Rajab to `Umrah. These were called the prohibited months because ever since the time of the Prophet Abraham, war, murder, robbery and every sort of violation and infringement of law were forbidden during these months so that pilgrims might go to and return from the Ka`bah in peace and security.

But by and by the Arabs began to violate their sanctity by a crooked device. They used to alter the usual order of the months to suit their convenience: If they wanted to attack for robbery, revenge, etc., they would violate a sacred -month and then consecrate another month instead. The Muslims were, therefore, at a loss to know what to do if the unbelievers committed a breach of the sanctity of a sacred month by resorting to this vicious practice and attack them in that sacred month.

This verse removed their difficulty by allowing them to fight with them in a sacred month, if the disbelievers began hostilities in it but they, on their part, should not transgress the limits in any case: and if the unbelievers observed the sanctity of the sacred months and desisted from war, the Muslims also should do the same, but if they violated the same and attacked the `Muslims, they should also retaliate in the same prohibited month.

207"To spend in the Way of Allah" is to make monetary sacrifices for the establishment of the way of life prescribed by Allah. The verse implies, "If you behave selfishly and do not spend your wealth to establish the Way of Allah; you will bring yourselves to ruin in this world and to damnation in the Hereafter. In the world, Allah will set the unbelievers to dominate over you, and, in the Hereafter, He will condemn you and hold you accountable for not spending the wealth by Him in His Way.

208The word ihsan as used in the original is from hush which means to do a thing well. One kind of action is that a person should rest content with the mere performance of duty: this is obedience, which requires nothing more than the fear of Allah. The superior kind of deed, however, is that he should do it well: should put all his abilities and resources into it: should exert his utmost to complete it with all his heart and mind and body. This is ihsan which is motivated by a deep love for and dedication to Allah.

209That is, in case you are prevented in the way from proceeding on to the Ka`bah and are obliged to break your journey, you should make offering of whatever animal is available camel, cow, goat to Allah.

210There is a difference of opinion as to what is meant here by "the sacrifice reaching its place" . According to the Hanafi school of thought, it refers to the bounds of the Masjid Haram. If a person is prevented on the way, he should send the animal or the money to buy one to be sacrificed there on his behalf: According to Imam Malik and Imam Shafe'i, the sacrifice should be made at the very place where one has been prevented. One should not, have one's head shaved or the hair cut until one has offered the animal sacrifice.

211According to a Tradition, the Holy Prophet directed that in such a case, one should observe fast for three days or feed six indigent persons or sacrifice at least a goat.

212"Security" here refers to the removal of the cause, whatever that might have been, including the hostility of an enemy, and whatever was mainly responsible for the prevention from Hajj at that time. Just as "prevention" includes all the causes which prevent one from performing Hajj, so security includes the removal of all the causes of prevention.

213Before the advent of Islam, the Arabs thought it was a great sin to perform both Hajj and `Umrah during one and the same journey. According to their self-made law, different journeys had to be undertaken for each. In this verse Allah removed the self-imposed restriction save for those who lived within the appointed bounds of the "Sanctuary," because it was not difficult for them tc undertake different journeys for Hajj and `Umrah. They had merely to put off the pilgrim's garment (ihram) and release themselves from the prescribed restriction and ceremonials after the performance of `Umrah and then renew the same during the Hajj days.

In order to understand the references to the Hajj rites in the succeeding verses, it will be worthwhile to state these briefly. The pilgrims should put on the pilgrims' garment (ihram) as soon as they reach a miqat, one of the fixed points on all the roads to Makkah. After this they should abide by the code prescribed for Hajj. If on reaching Makkah, a pilgrim wished to perform 'Umrah, he might then put off, ihram and release himself from restrictions imposed by it up to the 7th of Dhul-Hijjah. On the 8th, he should again put on ihram at Makkah and go to Mina, a valley, about six miles from there. On the 9th he should proceed to the valley of `Arafat, which is about five miles further from Mina and stay there up to the evening. Then he should return to Mash'aril-Haram (Muzdalifah) which is midway between 'Arafat and Mina, and pass the night between the 9th and the 10th there in prayer, meditation and devotion. On the morning of the 10th, he should come back to Mina and offer sacrifice there. After this he should get his head shaved, put off the ihram and return to Makkah and perform Tawwaf-i-Ziarat (going round the Ka`bah). Then he should go to Mina and stay there for two or three days. The three days (from the 11 th to the 13th of Dhul-Hijjah) are called the days of " Tashriq."

214While in the state of ihram, not only intercourse between husband and wife is prohibited but that sort of conversation too, which might excite sexual passions.

215Though all sorts of evil deeds are unlawful at all times, they become all the more grave when committed during the course of Hajj.

216One cannot even rebuke a servant.

217Before the advent of Islam, taking of provisions for the pilgrimage journey was considered to be a

worldly act and it was expected that a pious than would go to the House of Allah without any worldly goods. Here it is declared that it is no virtue to go without provisions on pilgrimage to Makkah. Real virtue is that one should fear God, obey Him and keep one's life pure. If a pilgrim does not take any provisions with him, but commits evil deeds without any fear of Allah, he makes a profitless show of piety. In the sight of Allah and men, such a man will dishonour both himself and the pilgrimage he is performing. On the other hand, if a pilgrim has fear of Allah embedded in his heart and keeps his morals pure, he will gain honour with Allah and men, though he may have provided himself fully with provisions.

218The Arabs had another wrong notion about Hajj. They considered it a worldly thing to do any kind of business during the Hajj season. The Qur'an removes this misconception also and declares that if a pious man observes the Law of Allah and then does some business to earn his livelihood, he really seeks the bounty of Allah. And there is nothing wrong in seeking the bounty of Allah along with seeking His pleasure.

219That is, "You should give up all those ungodly customs of ignorance which you used to practise in pre-Islamic days along with the worship of Allah. Now worship Allah exclusively in accordance with the Guidance He has revealed.

220Ever since the time of the Prophet Abraham and Ishmael (may Allah's peace be upon them), the pilgrims used to go to `Arafat from Makkah on the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah for the performance of Hajj and then returned from there to Muzdalifah on the morning of the 10th. But later when the Quraish established their own priesthood, they arrogantly asserted: "It is below our dignity to go to `Arafat along with the common Arabs because we live in the Sanctuary." Accordingly, they reserved this mark of distincion for themselves and would halt at Muzdalifah and let others proceed on to `Arafat. Then this distinction was extended to Bani Khuza'ah and Bani Kinanah and the other tribes with whom the Quraish had marriage relations. Later, even the allies of the Quraish adopted this privilege of distinction and they too would stop short of 'Arafat. In this verse the same privilege of distinction and pride has been abolished. Addressing the Quraish, their relatives and allies in particular and the common Arabs in general it has been enjoined that they should accompany others to perform the essential ceremonials at `Arafat, halt there and return along with them to Makkah, and should ask Allah's forgiveness for their breach of the Prophet Abraham's way, which they committed in the past on account of tribal pride and distinction.

221After performing their Hajj, the Arabs used to hold meetings in Mina and brag about their own achievements and those of their forefathers. Here they were told to give up these customs of ignorance, and pass their time in remembering and glorifying Allah instead of singing praises of their ancestors.

222That is, "It does not matter whether you return from Mina to Makkah on the 12th or the 13th of Dhul-Hijjah during the Tashriq days. The real thing that matters is not the number of days you stayed at Mina but whether you spent those days in establishing your relation with Allah during those days or in merry

making."

223This typical man of the world pretends to show that he is a sincere well-wisher of the people. Time and again he assures the people, saying, "Allah is my witness that I intend nothing but good. I am not working for self-interest but for the sake of truth and right and for the welfare of the people." But all glib talk of this worldly-wise man is hypocritical.

224He is "the deadliest opponent of the truth." because in his enmity, he does not hesitate to employ any kind of falsehood, dishonesty, treachery or any other crooked method, in spite of his smooth tongue, plausible talk and solemn oaths in the name of Allah. talk."

225It may also mean, "When he returns to everyday life after this glib

226That is, "Come into the fold of Islam completely without any reservation. Your thoughts, your theories, your culture, your sciences, your manners, your dealings, your efforts etc., should in every aspect of life, be subordinated to Islam. You should not divide your life into different compartments so as to follow Islam in one and discard it in the other. "

227That is, He is All-Powerful and also knows how to punish the criminals.

228Particular attention should be paid to these words for they enunciate a great universal truth. Allah has sent man to this world to undergo a test. He has revealed the Truth through His Messengers and given man the freedom to believe or not to believe in it, and after believing in it to submit or not to submit to it. He keeps the Reality hidden from man and leaves it to him to judge it rationally in the light of the teachings of his Messengers, His Books and the Signs shown by His Messengers. He never makes the Reality so naked as to leave no alternative but to acknowledge it, for after that no question of a trial is left and success or failure in the test becomes meaningless. That is why Allah gives warning, as if to say, "Do not wait for that time when Allah with His angels will come before you in His glory. At that time your doom shall be sealed and no more chance left for any test. Then belief and submission will have no value. Belief has a value only as long as the Reality remains hidden from your senses and you recognize and acknowledge it by means of your own reasoning and then prove your moral courage by submitting to it without any coercion. When you see with your own eyes Allah on the throne of His glory and angels functioning on the earth and in the heavens and find yourself completely in His power, then belief and submission will have no value. At that time even confirmed sinners and obdurate unbelievers will not dare to disbelieve or disobey. But then it will be useless because the time for test will be over. When the curtain is raised and the `Reality' is seen by everyone, then no more chance shall be given nor shall there be any more test because that will be the time of the Judgement.

229The Muslims have been told to enquire about it especially from the children of Israel because the

latter were a living object lesson for the former who were now replacing them as leaders of the world; The children of Israel had been favoured with Prophethood and Divine Book and had been entrusted with leadership for the guidance of the world but they had deprived themselves of this blessing (leadership) for involving themselves in wretchedness in the lusts of this worldliness, duplicity and in the evil deeds of pseudo-knowledge. Therefore the Muslims who were replacing them were forewarned to be on their guard against these evils and learn a lesson from their history.

230Here the theory of evolution in religion has been refuted. The socalled scholars say that man began his religious life in the darkness of polytheism: then by and by he began to worship God, but associated other gods with Him. This went on for a long time; at last he recognized and accepted the Oneness of God. But the Qur'an contradicts this and says that human life began in full Divine light. When Allah created the first Man, Adam, He revealed the Truth to him and showed him the Right Way. Adam's descendants followed his way for a long time and all of them were members of one and the same community. Then they began to follow new ways and invented new religions. And they did so inspite of the fact that the Truth had been shown to them just because they wanted to misappropriate to themselves more than their own due share and rights sanctioned by it. In order to prevent the misguided people, from this evil, Allah sent His Messengers to invite them to the original Divine Way. They were not sent to found new religious communities after their own names, but to bring those who had swerved from the Right path to the original religion of mankind and to the same one community which was formed in accordance with the Guidance of Allah, at the time when Man began his life on the earth.

231A whole story has been left out between this verse and the preceding one, for this verse itself points to it and because it had already been related in detail in the Surahs which were revealed before this at Makkah. In the preceding verse it was stated that the Messengers, were sent to remove those differences which had arisen in religion, but the story of their hardships and long persecutions was omitted because it had already been described in detail in the Makki Revelations. Hence the believers are warned that the Messengers and their followers have always had to struggle hard with the rebels against Allah in order to establish His Way, and that the true Faith of Islam has never been a bed of roses. One has to exert one's utmost to establish it and to fight against all those evil forces that oppose its establishment, even at the sacrifice of one's life, if need be.

232The objection, which was raised in the form of a question about warfare in the sacred month, refers to an incident which took place in the month of Rajab in the second year of Hijra.
The Holy Prophet sent a detachment of eight men to Nakhlah, a place midway between Makkah and Ta'if. He toad them to watch the movements of the Quraish and find out their future plans. Though he had not given them permission to fight, they attacked a small trading caravan of the Quraish, killed one than and took the rest prisoners and brought them to Madinah along with their goods.

As this incident took place at a time when it could not be said with certainty whether the month of Rajab had come to an end and the month of Sha'ban had commenced, it was doubtful whether the attack was

made in Rajab, a prohibited month, or in Sha'ban. Nevertheless, the Quraish and their secret allies, the Jews, and the doublefaced "Muslims" of Madinah, took it as a God-given opportunity to make strong propaganda and raise serious objections against the Believers. They ironically remarked, "What a pious people they are! They do not hesitate to shed blood even in a prohibited month." Such objections have been answered in this verse which implies, "No doubt, bloodshed is a very bad thing but their objection is not reasonable, coming as it does from the mouths of those people who themselves had carried on for thirteen years the most cruel form of persecution against hundreds of their own brethren for no other reason than that they believed in one Allah. They not only forced these brethren of their own to leave their beloved homes but also prevented them from paying a visit to the Ka`bah, although this sacred place was not the property of anyone. Their crime was all the more heinous because such a wicked antagonism had never existed during the previous two thousand years or so. Therefore those workers of iniquity, the list of whose crimes was so black, had no right to raise objections on the basis of a trivial border incident. " Moreover, this incident took place without the permission of the Holy Prophet, and was, therefore, nothing more than an' irresponsible act on the part of a few members of the Islamic party.

It should also be kept in view that when this detachment came to the Holy Prophet with the prisoners and the spoils, he said, "I never gave you permission to fight." He also refused to accept the share due to the public treasury from the spoils. This clearly showed that it was an unlawful and unauthorised act. The common Muslims also took their men to task for this incident and there was not a single Muslim in the whole of Madinah who approved of this act of theirs.

233Some simple-minded Muslims regarded as genuine the abovementioned objection raised by the disbelievers and the Jews. They were under the wrong impression that this and the like were honest objections, and if they were removed, the objectors would be satisfied and there would be peace with them. In this verse, these Muslims have been warned not to cherish any such expectations about them because they did not raise these objections for clarification but to make propaganda against the Muslims. Their real objection against the Muslims was that they had accepted Islam and were inviting the world to it: There could, therefore, be no peace between them and the objectors as long as they stuck to their belief in Allah. Therefore the Muslims were told not to under-rate the enemies of their Faith. They should remember that the one who tries to turn them away from their Faith is a worse enemy than the one who tries to rob them of their wealth, for the latter tries to ruin only their life in this world, which is after all transitory, while the former tries to ruin their life in the Hereafter, which is eternal.

234The word "jihad" means to exert one's utmost for the achievement of an object. It is not a synonym for "holy war" but has a far wider meaning than this and covers every kind of effort. And the mujahid is one who is always after the achievement of his ideal, plans for it, propagates it with his tongue and pen and struggles for it with all his heart and body. In short, he spends all his efforts and resources for its achievement and fights against all those forces that oppose it; so much so that he does not hesitate to put even Ms very life in danger for his ideal. The struggle and fight to such a person will be technically Jihad. A Muslim, however, is required to do all this in the way of Allah alone under certain moral

restrictions for establishing the Way prescribed by Him and for elevating His Word above all. And there should be absolutely no other object than this before a Muslim in performing Jihad. It has thus become clear that the Jihad of a Muslim is not "general war of extermination against infidels"

235This was the first instruction about alcoholic and intoxicating drinks and games of chance for stakes. At first a mere disapproval of these things was pronounced to serve as a preliminary to their final prohibition. The next step in this direction was that the Muslims were prohibited from offering the Prayers when they were drunk. Finally drinking, gambling and the like were made absolutely unlawful. (Please refer to An-Nisa', IV: 43 and Al-Ma'idah, V: 90).

236Before the revelation of this verse, very strict warnings had been administered for the preservation of the rights of orphans. Warnings like "those who misappropriate the property of orphans fill their bellies with fire," had made the Muslims so fearful that the guardians of the orphans had made separate arrangements for their meals etc. But, inspite of all this, they feared lest any part of the property of the orphans should get mixed up with their property and they should incur the wrath of Allah. That is why they asked the Holy Prophet to define for them the limits of their relations with orphans. They have been told to do sincerely what is best in their interest and at the same time warned that Allah knows everything.

237The reason why the believers have been prohibited from marrying musrhik spouses is that `they invite you to the Fire'. This means that such marriage might mislead the Muslim spouses to the ways of shirk, for the relations between husband and wife are not merely sexual but spiritual and cultural as well. It is possible that the Muslim spouse may influence the mushrik spouse and his or her family and their offspring in favour of the Islamic way of life. But it is equally possible that the mushrik spouse may imbue the Muslim spouse, his (or her) family or their offspring, with the spirit and ways of shirk. Most probably as a result of such a marriage, a mixture of Islam and un-Islam will be bred in such a family. A non-Muslim might approve of this, but a Muslim cannot. One who sincerely believes in Islam can never take such a risk merely for the sake of the gratification of his lust. He would rather suppress his passions than do anything that might mislead him to disbelief, blasphemy and shirk or, at least mislead his progeny.

238The Arabic word "adha" stands both for illness and for uncleanliness. Menses are not only a state of impurity but also of disease. During the monthly period, women are medically nearer a state of illness than of health.

239The Qur'an uses indirect and covert hints and suggestions for the expression of such delicate matters. The instructions, "They should be separated" and "Do not go near them", do not mean that the women should be made untouchables during their monthly periods, as they are made by the Jews, the Hindus and some other communities. The Holy Prophet explained that this commandment meant only to prohibit intercourse with them during the menses. All other relations with them may be continued as before.

240The Arabic word amr does not refer to any legal injunction but to the natural instinct that has been embedded in the nature of every human being and animal and is known to every one.

241Allah has not created women merely for the enjoyment and entertainment of men. The relation between the two is as serious an affair as that of a farmer and his field. The farmer does not go to his field merely for recreation and enjoyment but for cultivation to get produce from it. In the same way, a man should go to his wife to produce children. Allah's law, however, is not concerned with the method of cultivation but with the demand that man should go to the field and not elsewhere and to his own field and for production.

242The Arabic words are comprehensive. They may imply : "You should try to produce children for the continuation of your race",or that "You must take special pains to bring up and train them morally to be good men." Here both the aspects are implied. That is why they have been warned, in the next sentence, that they shall be called to account by Allah for any deliberate disregard of these obligations.

243We learn from authentic Traditions that if anyone takes a thoughtless oath to do or not to do a thing and afterwards realizes that fairness demands its abrogation, he should abrogate it and expiate for it. The expiation for breaking an oath is the feeding of ten needy persons or clothing them or the liberation of a slave. If one cannot afford this, he must observe fast for three days. (Please see Al-Ma'idah, V : 89).

244There is neither expiation nor any punishment for those oaths that one utters unawares as a by word.

245Although it is true that relations between husband and wife do not always remain cordial, yet Allah's law does not allow that the strained relations should continue indefinitely. Therefore it lays down the maximum period of four months for a separation in which they legally remain husband and wife but practically live separate lives without any conjugal relations between them. Such a separation is termed "ila" in the Islamic code of Law. During this period they must either make a reconciliation between themselves or part for good so that they may be free to marry a suitable person of their liking.

From the words "Those who take an oath" the jurists belonging to the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools of thought conclude that this period of four months applies only to those cases of separation which are made on oath; if they remain separate for any length of time without an oath, this law would not apply to them. On the other hand, the jurists belonging to the Maliki school of thought are of the opinion that the maximum period of four months applies to all cases of separation. A saying of Imam Ahmad also supports this opinion.

Hadrat `Ali, Ibn `Abbas and Hasan Basri are of the opinion that this law applies only to that case of separation which is the result of strained relations, and does not apply to the case in which the husband.

and the wife agree to discontinue conjugal relations with mutual consent for some common good and at the same time keep cordial relations. There are other jurists who are of the opinion that the law of 'ila' would apply to every case of separation made on oath irrespective of the fact whether their relations remain good or bad; hence it should not go beyond the prescribed term of four months.

246Some jurists interpret this to mean that if they break their oaths within four months and re-establish conjugal relations, there would be no expiation for this; Allah will forgive the breach of their oath without expiation. But the majority of jurists are of the opinion that expiation must be made in any case. "Allah will forgive and show mercy" does not mean that the expiation will be remitted. It merely means that Allah will accept the expiation and forgive wrong done by each against the other during their separation.

247According to the verdict of Caliph `Uthman, Ibn Mas'ud, Zaid bin Thabit and some other jurists, they can reunite only within four months. The expiry of this term itself is a proof that the husband has decided upon divorce. Hence after its expiry, divorce will automatically take place and the husband will forfeit the right of reunion during the waiting term. If, however, both of them agree, they can remarry. There is a verdict to the same effect from Hadrat `Umar, `Ali, Ibn `Abbas and Ibn 'Umar and the jurists of the Hanafi school have accepted the same.

Hadrat Said bin Musayyib, Makh-ul, Zuhri and some others are of the opinion that after the expiry of four months, there shall be an automatic divorce but this will be a single revocable divorce and the husband will have the right to reunite within the term (`iddat) and if he does not reunite within the term, they may remarry if they so desire.

As against this, Hadrat `A'ishah, Abud-Darda' and many other jurists of Madinah are of the opinion that after the expiry of four months the case should be taken to a court so that the judge may order the husband either to reunite with his wife or divorce her. There is also a verdict of Hadrat `Umar, Hadrat `Ali and Ibn `Umar to this effect and the same has been accepted by Imam Malik and Imam Shafi'i also.

248That is, "Fear Allah and do not divorce your wives for frivolous and unjustifiable reasons, for He knows everything."

249Jurists differ in the interpretation of this verse. According to one section of them, divorce does not take place and the husband retains the right of reunion up to the time of the purification of the wife by a bath after the third monthly course. This is the opinion of Hadrat Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Ali, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Musa Ash-'ari, Ibn Mas'ud and some other Companions of the first rank, and the Hanafi jurists have accepted the same. On the contrary, the other section says that the husband forfeits the right of reunion as soon as the wife has a discharge of the third monthly course. This opinion is held by Hadrat `A'ishah, Ibn `Umar and Zaid bin Thabit, and the Shafe'i and the Maliki jurists have adopted the same. It must, however, be clearly understood that the husband retains the right of reunion only in the case when he

has pronounced one divorce or two divorces, but he forfeits the right of reunion when he has pronounced three divorces.

250This brief verse was meant to reform a serious social evil common in Arabia before the advent of Islam. A husband was allowed to pronounce divorce as often as he pleased. Whenever his relations were strained with his wife, he would pronounce a divorce and then reunite as and when it suited him. As there was no limit to this, it was repeated over and over again. Thus the wife could neither have conjugal relations with him nor was free to marry anyone else. This verse of the Qur'an shuts this door of cruelty. During his whole married life, a husband may use the right of divorce and reunion with one wife only twice. After that whenever he pronounces divorce for the third time, wife shall be separated from him permanently.

In order to check hasty action and leave the door open for reconciliation at many stages, the right method of pronouncing divorce as taught in the Qur'an and the Traditions is that if and when it becomes inevitable, it should be pronounced only when she is not in her menses and even if a dispute arises during the monthly period, it is not right to pronounce divorce during that condition, but he should wait for her to cleanse herself and then may pronounce a single divorce, if he so likes. Then he should wait for the next monthly course and pronounce the second divorce if he so wishes after she is cleansed. Then he should wait for the next monthly course to pronounce the third and final divorce after she is cleansed. It is, however, better to wait and reconsider the matter after the first and second pronouncements, for in the case of one or two divorces, the husband retains the right to take her back as his wife before the expiry of the term, and even if the term has expired, the couple has a chance to remarry by mutual consent. But if divorce is pronounced for the third time in the third period of purity, the husband forfeits the right to take her back nor can the couple remarry.

As for those ignorant people who pronounce all the three divorces in one and the same sitting, they commit a heinous sin against the Law. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has very severely denounced this practice and Hadrat `Umar used to whip the husband who pronounced three divorces at one and the same sitting.

251The husband has no right to demand anything of the dower given to the wife in consideration for the marriage or ornaments, clothes etc., given to her as gifts. It is utterly against the moral principles of Islam to ask for the return of anything given to another as a present or gift. The Holy Prophet has likened this disgraceful behaviour to the licking up of his own vomit by the dog. It is indeed very shameful on the part of a husband to keep back or demand, after the divorce, what he himself gave to his wife. As a matter of fact Islam exhorts the husband who divorces his wife to give her something at her departure. (Please see Al-Baqarah, II : 241).

252When divorce is obtained by the wife from her husband by compensation, it is called khula' in the Islamic Law. If the husband and the wife agree between themselves on some terms regarding this, the

same shall be enforced. But if the case goes to the court, it will first of all try to ascertain whether the wife really dislikes her husband so much that she cannot live with him any longer. Then if the court is satisfied that they cannot live together happily, it shall fix as compensation anything that it considers proper, and the husband shall have to accept that and divorce his wife. The jurists are generally of the opinion that the compensation should not exceed the dower given by the husband.

In such a case, the husband forfeits the right of reunion after the divorce because it has been bought, so to speak, by the wife. Of course, it is lawful for them to remarry with mutual consent.

According to the majority of Muslims, the term for the wife in the case of khula' is the same as that of divorce. But Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and others have related Traditions to the effect that the Holy Prophet prescribed only one monthly course as the term for the wife after the divorce, and Caliph `Uthman decided a case in accordance with this. (Ibn Kathir, Vol. I, p. 276)

253Authentic Traditions warn against any pre-arranged scheme that a certain man should marry a certain divorced woman with the understanding that he would divorce her again to enable the former husband to remarry his divorced wife. This shall be an unlawful act and such a marriage shall be no marriage at all but adultery and the woman shall not become the lawful wife of the first husband by such a prearranged scheme. Hadrat `Ali, Ibn Mas'ud Abu Hurairah and `Uqbah bin-'Amir, all relate the Tradition to the effect that the Holy Prophet cursed all the persons who indulge in such devices.

254It is not right for a person to divorce his wife and then reunite with her before the expiry of the term simply to get another opportunity to torment and harass her. Therefore Allah has warned that if the husband sincerely intends to take his wife back, he should re-unite with the intention of treating her well; otherwise the best thing would be to release her in a noble way. (Please also refer to E.N. 250).

255It means, "Do not forget the fact that Allah has appointed you to a position of the highest responsibility. He has given you the Book and taught you wisdom and entrusted you with the duty of guiding the world. You have been made the "Community of the Golden Mean" and the witnesses of virtue and truth. It does not, therefore, behove you to play with the Revelations by means of sophistry and take undue advantage of the letter of the Law and lead wicked and unjust lives in your homes, when you are expected to show the Right Way to the world. "

256That is, "If both agree to re-marry after the expiry of the term, the relatives of the divorced woman should not prevent her from remarrying her former husband, who had divorced her once or twice but had not become re-united with her during the prescribed term. It may also mean that the husband who had divorced his wife thrice should not prevent her from marrying another person after the expiry of the prescribed term. There is nothing meaner that one should prevent his divorced wife from marrying another man just because he himself has divorced her. "

257This applies to all the cases in which the husband and the wife have separated in any manner divorce, khula' or judicial separation) and the child is still a suckling.

258If the father dies, the responsibility of remunerating the mother or the wet nurse who suckles the infant lies on the guardian just as it lay on the father.

259This prescribed term for waiting also applies to those widows who might not have had any intercourse with their husbands. The pregnant widow is, however, an exception. Her prescribed term is her delivery whether it takes place just after the death of the husband or several months after it.

"They must abstain" implies that they must not remarry during the term, nor adorn themselves in any manner during this period. Traditions give clear instructions that widows should not wear ornaments and coloured and showy dresses, nor adorn themselves with any kind of make-up during the term. There is, however, a difference of opinion as to whether a widow should pass the term in the house of the deceased husband or not. Hadrat 'Umar, `Uthman Ibn `Umar, Zaid bin Thabit, Ibn Mas'ud, Umm Salamah, Said bin al-Musayyib, Ibrahim Nakha'i, Muhammad bin Sirin, and the four Imams (may Allah show mercy to all of them) are of the opinion that she should reside in the house of the deceased husband. On the contrary, Hadrat 'A'ishah, Ibn 'Abbas, Hadrat 'Ali, Jabir bin 'Abdullah, 'Ata', Ta'us, Hasan Basri, 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz, and all the Zahiris are of the opinion that she is free to pass the period wherever she likes, and can also go on a journey.

260After all some harm is done to the woman when the marital relation is broken even under such a condition. Therefore some compensation, according to one's means, must be paid.

261That is mutual generosity in dealings is essential for the harmony and betterment of human relations. Social life can never be happy if each and every person insists on his own legal rights.

262After enunciating rules and regulations for ensuring social welfare and for leading a civilized life, Allah has impressed the importance of the Salat as a finishing touch because it alone can produce fear of Allah and feelings of virtue and piety and create the attitude of obedience to the Divine Law and keep one on the right path. None can remain firm in one's obedience to the Law of Allah without Salat, for one is liable to swerve into one kind of disobedience or the other like the Jews.

263Interpreters differ in regard to the meaning of "Salat-al-wusta"but the majority of them are of the opinion that it refers to one of the five Prayers, and most of them have opined that it is the "Asr Prayer." There is, however, no definite saying of the Holy Prophet in support of any of these interpretations. Those who are in favour of the " `Asr Prayer" infer their opinion from this Tradition: In the "Battle of the Clans," the Holy Prophet was so engaged in repelling the invasion of the enemies that he got no time to offer the " `Asr Prayer" till sunset. Then he said, "May Allah fill their graves with fire for depriving us of our 'Salat al-

wusta'." From this they infer that by "Salat al-wusta" is meant the " 'Asr Prayer." But in my opinion what the Holy Prophet meant by this was that they were responsible for the spiritual loss the Muslims had suffered by their inability to offer their " 'Asr Prayer" in time and with peace of mind. As the Prayer whose loss the Holy Prophet regretted happened to be the " 'Asr Prayer," the interpreters were led to conclude that the "'Asr Prayer" itself was the Salat al- wu.sta.

The Arabic word "wusta" means both middle and excellent. Thus, Salat al-wusta implies both the middle Prayer and also an excellent Prayer which is said in time and with full attention to Allah, that is, a Prayer which has all the excellent qualities of Salat. The subsequent sentence, "Stand before Allah like obedient servants", itself supports the interpretation that it meant an excellent Prayer offered to Allah, having all the excellent qualities of Salat, and not any one particular Prayer out of the five prescribed Prayers.

264At the end of the discourse, this has been added as an appendix and supplement.

265From here begins a new address. In it the Muslims have been exhorted to do Jihad," i.e., to exert their utmost in the Way of Allah and make monetary sacrifices for the cause. At the same time they have been warned to guard against those weaknesses that had led to the degeneration and downfall of the children of Israel. It will help understand this address, if we keep in mind the occasion of its revelation. At that time the Muslims, who had been expelled from Makkah a year or so earlier and were living as refugees at Madinah, were asking over and over again for permission to fight with the disbelievers who had been persecuting them relentlessly for years. But, when the permission they themselves had asked was given, some of them began to lose heart (Please refer to Al-Baqarah, II : 216). That is why two important events from the history of the Israelites are being related to serve as a fore-warning to the Muslims and to stimulate their zeal and courage.

266This refers to the exodus of the children of Israel (for details please see Al-Ma'idah, V: 20-26), when they had left Egypt in large numbers and were wandering homeless in the deserts and wildernesses and were very anxious to find a home for themselves. But when inspired by Allah, the Prophet Moses ordered them to fight against the Canaanites and expel them from Palestine and conquer that territory, they showed cowardice and refused to march forward. Consequently Allah left them to wander in the land for forty years so that that generation should come to an end and a new one be brought up in the hardships of the desert. Then Allah gave them victory over the Canaanites. Probably "death and second life" refer to these two aspects of the exodus.

267"Good loan" is that which is lent without any idea of personal gain or interest but is given with the sole intention to please Allah. Allah in His bounty credits the wealth thus spent in His Way as a loan on Himself. He promises that He will not only return the actual debt but increase it manifold, provided that it is a good loan in the real sense and is lent merely to please Him and for the sake of the objects He approves.

268This incident has been mentioned here to fore-warn the Muslims about the hardship and trials of Jihad.

About 1000 B.C., the Amalikites tyrannized over the Israelites and usurped many parts of Palestine from them. At that time the Prophet Samuel, who was at the helm of the affairs of Israel, had grown very old. So the elders of Israel went to Samuel and said, "You are old. Now appoint a king for us to rule us and march in front of us and fight in the way of God." They asked for a king to rule them like all other nations. They made this demand because under the evil influence of the irreligious foreign rulers, they had forgotten the very distinction between "Divine Rule" and "kingship." That is why `the thing displeased Samuel' and incurred the wrath of the Lord. Here are given some details from Chapters 7, 8, 12 of I Samuel.

"And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life ..... And it came to pass when Samuel was old, then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all the nations .... But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, "Give us a king to judge us". And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them ..... And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him of a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint them captains over thousands and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields and your vineyards, and give them to his servants ..... And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vine-yard, and give to his officers and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen yourselves; and the Lord will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles. And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king..... (7:15, 8:4-22).

"And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice ..... and have made a king over you ..... And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king. Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the Lord hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the Lord and serve Him, and obey His voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following

the Lord your God: but if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers.....Moreover as for me God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way. .. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king." (12:12-23)

From the above quotations, it is quite clear that God and His Prophet did not approve of their demand for a king. As to the question, "Why has not God condemned in the Qur'an this demand of the elders of Israel for a king?", the answer is obvious. The story has been related here only for the benefit of the Muslims so that they may learn a lesson from this. Therefore there was no occasion for the condemnation or approval of the institution of kingship, and it would have been irrelevant to discuss whether this demand was right or wrong. Here the only object in view is to state the cause of the downfall of the Israelites, their cowardice, self-worship and lack of discipline so that these might serve as a fore-warning to the Muslims and they should avoid the nourishment of such weaknesses amongst themselves.

269The Bible says, "Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish .....And he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice young man and a goodly person: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people. And the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses ..... And when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them.....And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, behold the min whom I spake to thee of! this same shall reign over my people ..... And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden which were about thirty persons ..... Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head.....and said, the Lord hath appointed thee to be captain over his inheritance ..... And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen ..... (I Samuel, chapters 9, 10).

Saul was appointed to be leader of Israel at the command of God like Aaron. David and Christ (God's . peace be upon them all), but the Qur`an or the Traditions do not say explicitly whether he was appointed as a Prophet as well. His appointment as king by God does not necessary mean that he was also made a Prophet.

270Though the Bible differs a little from the Qur'an about the details of the Ark, yet we learn much from it.

The Israelites considered the Ark to be very sacred, that is the Ark of the Covenant. They believed that by means of it "God may come among us and rescue us from the power of enemies." That is why its return gave them (shechinah) peace of mind and courage.

The Ark contained the sacred relics of the house of Moses and Aaron. These were the fragments of the

tablets given to Moses on the Mount Sinai. Besides, there was the original copy of the Torah which was written under the guidance of Moses and given to the Levites. It also contained a bottle of manna so that the future generations of Israel should be grateful to Allah for the blessing which He had bestowed upon their forefathers in the desert. Probably it also contained the staff of Moses, which was a great sign of Allah.

Probably the Qur'an refers to the incident mentioned in chapters 4, 5, 6, of I Samuel.

The Ark of the Lord was captured by the Philistines in a battle in which the Israelites were routed. The Israelites were so disheartened that they cried, "The glory is gone from Israel on account of the capture of the Ark of God." The Ark remained in the land of the Philistines for seven months but there was deadly panic in every town to which it was driven, for "God laid a heavy hand upon them there." So much so that they began to cry, "The Ark of the God of Israel must not remain amongst us any longer for His hand is severer on us." Then they decided to send it back to Israel. "They took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart. And the kine took the straight way to the way of Bethshemesh" .

As the cart was driven without any driver, obviously it was being driven by the angels towards the children of Israel under the direction of God.

271The river might have been the Jordan or some other stream or rivulet, which Saul had to cross with the army of Israel. As he knew there was very little discipline in his community, he applied this test to sift the competent from the incompetent, and the brave from the cowardly. It is obvious that those, who could not control their thirst for a little while, could not be trusted to keep discipline in the face of that enemy by whom they had previously been defeated.

As the same test was applied by Gideon before Saul, Palmer and Rodwell have come to the strange conclusion that Gideon and Saul are here (v. 249) confused. Of course, by this they wanted to show that the Qur'an was not a revealed Book but was the invention of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). This objection is absurd on the face of it. If two similar events had happened and only one of these is mentioned in the Bible, it does not prove that the other did not happen just because it was not mentioned in it. Moreover, it has never been claimed that the Bible contains the complete history of the Israelites with its full details. The very fact that the Talmud contains many incidens which are not mentioned in the Bible is a proof thereof.

272Probably these were the people who had shown lack of endurance by the riverside.

273According to the Bible, David was a raw youth at that time. By chance he reached the army of Saul at the time when Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, was uttering his challenge: "I defy the force of Israel. Give me a man and let us have a fight." Hearing these words the Israelites were dismayed and daunted, but David said to Saul, "Let not my Lord's courage fail him: Your servant will go and fight the

Philistines." Saul would not agree but David persisted and was allowed to tight him. When Goliath saw him, he despised him for his youth and said, "Come here and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field." Then David answered, "The Eternal will deliver you into my hands so that all the world may learn that Israel has a God, till all here present, learn that the Eternal does not save by sword and spear ..... the fight is in the Eternal's hands, and He will put you in our power.' Then David slew him and became very popular among the Israelites. Saul gave his own daughter to him in marriage and after him he became the king of Israel. (For further details please refer to I Samuel, Chapters 17, 18).

274In order to keep peace and order on the Earth, Allah allows different groups, different nations and different parties to gain and retain power to a certain limit but when they transgress that limit, He replaces them by others and breaks their power. If Allah had allowed any one party or nation to continue in power for ever, Allah's Earth would have been filled with utter confusion and disorder.

275Naturally a question arises: Why does not then Allah will it`? Why sloes He allow differences that sometimes result in wranglings, even fights? Is He helpless to stop these? Of course, He is All-Powerful and could have stopped these and none would have dared to swerve even the least from the Guidance He sent through His Messengers. But it is not His will to force people to follow a particular, defined fixed way, because He has sent man on the Earth for a trial. If He had taken away freedom of action from man the trial would have become meaningless. He sent His Messengers to invite the people to the Right Way and convince them by arguments and signs. The Messengers were not sent to force people to believe and submit to Allah. Differences and fights took place because the people abused the limited freedom of will and freedom of action which was given to them by Allah and then invented ways of life different from that Way which was sent down by Allah. Thus it is quite obvious that differences did not arise because Allah failed (though He willed) to force the people to choose the Right Way. Of course, Allah is able to do anything He wills.

276Believers have been exhorted to make monetary sacrifices for the achievement of the cause they believe in.

277"Those who adopt the way of disbelief" may either refer to those who refuse to obey the commands of Allah and consider the hoarding of wealth to be dearer than the winning of His approval, or to those who do not believe in the Day about which warning has been given, salvation in the Hereafter through somebody's friendship or intercession.

278Though ignorant people might make several gods and set up objects of worship, the fact remains that the whole of creation belongs to the Eternal, Who has no partner whatsoever. He is the living Allah Who sustains the whole universe. He alone is the Master of His kingdom. None else is a partner in His attributes, characteristics, powers and rights. Hence a lie is invented whenever any Palce god is set up beside Allah on the earth or in the heavens and a war is waged against the Truth.

279This refutes the conception of Allah which is based on the assumption that He has weaknesses and limitations like imperfect human beings. For instance the Bible says, "And on the seventh day God ended His work which he had made: and He rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had made" (Genesis 2 : 2), and "Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine." (Psalms 78 : 65). Of course, Allah is absolutely free from such weaknesses.

280He is the Master and Owner of the earth and the heavens and each and everything contained in them, and none else has any part or share in His Ownership, His Authority, His Kingdom, His Sovereignty and His Rule. Anyone or anything that can be conceived as god will surely be a part of the universe and every part of this universe is Allah's property and cannot, therefore, be His partner or rival.

281This refutes the wrong notion of those who are under the delusion that saints, angels, etc., wield great influence with Allah, and they will intercede with Him and force Him to pardon them. They are being warned that no creature of His can stand before Him and intercede for others, not to speak of forcing Allah to pardon them. No prophet, no angel, and no saint will dare utter a word without the permission of the Sovereign of the universe.

282According to the Qur'an, it is an unpardonable sin to associate any partner or set up any rival to rank with Allah or to assume for oneself His rights or characteristics in any way whatsoever. This is called shirk. In the preceding verse, the Quran strikes at the very root of shirk by declaring that Allah's Sovereignty is unlimited and His Power is absolute. In this verse the same thing is presented from another point of view, by posing the question: How can anyone interfere in the management of the universe when none possesses that knowledge which is a prerequisite for this? The knowledge of the angels and human beings is so imperfect that none of them can understand the system of the universe and, therefore, any interference in its management would invariably result in chaos. Not to speak of the management of the universe, people cannot even know in what lies their own good. It is thus obvious that they should have full confidence in the Guidance of Allah Who is the real source of all knowledge and Who knows in what lies their own good.

283The word "kursi' (chair) has been used here figuratively as a symbol of power and authority. Even in English the word chair is used for the seat of authority, and government.

284This verse is known as Ayat al-Kursi. It gives such a perfect ,knowledge of Allah that has no parallel elsewhere. That is why a Tradition has declared it to be the best verse of the Qur'an. This verse is known as Ayat al-Kursi. It gives such a perfect ,knowledge of Allah that has no parallel elsewhere. That is why a Tradition has declared it to be the best verse of the Qur'an.

Here a question arises: In what connection has Allah and His attributes been mentioned in this place? In

order to answer this question, we should survey the address which begins from verse 243. First of all the believers have been exhorted to exert their utmost in the Way of Allah and make sacrifice of life and property for its establishment. They have also been warned to ward off those weaknesses in which the Israelites were involved. Then it has been impressed upon them that success does not depend merely upon numbers, provisions and armaments, but upon faith, fortitude, discipline and firm determination. Then the wisdom of war as a weapon with which Allah repels one group by another has been stated; that is, if only one group or one party had been allowed to continue in power, it would have made life difficult for its rivals and opponents. Then it has been shown that Allah is not powerless to remove differences from among the people but it is not His Will to remove these forcibly. Therefore He sends His Messengers with the Truth for this purpose, but leaves the people free to accept or reject it. Again as in the beginning of this discourse, the Muslims have been enjoined to spend their wealth in the Way of Allah. Then in this verse it has been declared that inspite of the differences in the creeds and the religions of the people, the fact is that Allah sustains and controls the whole universe. Of course, it is not His Will to force the people to believe in Him, but He only warns them through His Messengers that those, who will believe in Him and sacrifice their lives and properties in His Way in order to please Him, will be gainers and those, who will disbelieve, shall be losers

285The word "din" implies the concept about Allah as stated in the Ayat al-Kursi above as well as the entire way of life built on it. The verse means that the creed of Islam and its way of life cannot be thrust upon anyone forcibly. As a matter of fact, this cannot be forced upon anyone.

286The word taghut literally applies to everyone who transgresses the limits. The Qur'an uses this word for one who rebels against Allah and claims himself to be the master and sovereign of His servants and forces them to become his servants.

Man's rebellion against Allah has three degrees of criminality: (1) One is fasiq (disobedient) if one professes to be His subject but practically acts against His commandments; (2) One is kafir (disbeliever) if one becomes independent of Him or owes allegiance to someone else; (3) One is taghut if one rebels against Allah and exerts to make His subjects subservient to himself. Such a one may be Satan or a priest or a religious or a political leader or a king or a state. Therefore no one can be a true believer of Allah unless he disowns taghut.

287"Darkness" stands for the darkness of ignorance that causes one to go astray from the Right Way, and to spend all one's efforts and energies in wrong way. In contrast to this, "light" stands for the light of the Truth which enables one to see clearly the Reality and perceive the real aim of life and follow consciously and deliberately the Right Way.

288Though taghut is singular in form, here it is plural in meaning, for the one who rejects Allah becomes a slave not of one but of several forms of taghut, One of these is Satan who goes on tempting him with many false and alluring temptations. Another is his own self that makes him a slave of passions and lusts

and misleads him into crooked ways. Then there are others, his wife and children, his kith and kin, his clan and family, his friends and nation, his political and religious leaders and his government. All these are taghut for him and desire to make him a slave of their wishes and ambitions. And this slave of all these masters wastes his whole life in trying to accomplish the impossible feat of pleasing each and every one of them.

289In the foregoing verse it was declared that Allah is the Helper and Protector of a believer and brings him out of darkness, and taghut is the helper of the unbelievers and misleads them into darkness. Now three events are cited as a proof thereof. The first is the instance of a person to whom the Truth was presented with so clear arguments that he could not find any answer against them. But in spite of this, he did not accept it because he was misled by taghut and so he went on wandering in the darkness. ?he other two instances are of those who had full confidence in Allah, so Allah not only took them out of darkness into light but also made them eye-witnesses of the unseen Reality to enable them to give testimony concerning it.

290The person referred to is Nimrod who was the king of `Iraq, the land of the birth of Abraham. The Bible does not mention this dispute but the Talmud relates it in detail and its version is substantially the same as that of the Qur'an. It says that Abraham's father was the chief officer of king Nimrod and a great favourite with his royal master. His son Abraham was a lover of the Lord from his earliest childhood. When he grew up he began to preach openly the "Oneness" of God and condemn the association of any partner or rival with Him. In order to demonstrate this, he broke the idols and his father hastened before king Nimrod and denounced Abraham, saying, "He has acted so and so; let him be brought before thee for judgement." Abraham was summoned before the king and the dispute mentioned here took place between them.

291The point at issue in the dispute was as to whom Abraham acknowledged as his Lord Allah or Nimrod. The dispute arose because of the arrogance of Nimrod whom Allah had given kingdom. In order to understand the true nature of the dispute the following should be kept in view

(1) It has always been a common characteristic of all the mushrik societies to accept Allah as the God of gods and the Lord of lords but, at the same tune, to associate other gods and lords with Him, so as not to acknowledge Him exclusively as the Lord and God and worship Him as the Deity.

(2) They have always divided Godhead into two parts the supernatural Godhead and the sovereign Godhead. They assign to God the supernatural Godhead which controls every kind of cause that produces an effect: so they turn to Him for help in their needs and difficulties but in their ignorance they set up spirits, angels, jinns, stars and many others as partners with the Supreme God, and pray to them, worship them and present offerings to them at temples dedicated to them. As to the sovereign Godhead, which really belongs to God and entitles Him alone to prescribe the way of life and to demand obedience

to His commandments and to have absolute authority over all the affairs of the world, the mushrikin have in every age either totally usurped this rank of Godhead from God and handed it over to royal families, priests, guides, elders of society, etc., or divided it between these gods and God. That is why the royal families have often claimed the rank of Godhead in the second sense, and in order to strengthen their claim, have declared themselves to be descendants of gods in the first sense, and the priests have always strengthened and supported them , in their evil designs of becoming gods.

(3) Nimrod claimed to be a god possessing the rank of sovereign godhead. He did not deny the existence of God nor did he claim to be the creator of the heavens and the earth nor the sustainer and ruler of the universe. He only claimed to be the absolute lord and sovereign of `Iraq and its inhabitants. His claim was that whatever he said was law and there was none over him to whom he might be held accountable: therefore any inhabitant of 'Iraq who did not acknowledge him exclusively as his lord was a rebel.

(4) The dispute referred to arose when Abraham declared, "I acknowledge the Lord of the universe exclusively as my Lord and God of worship and I disown categorically the lordship and godhead of everyone else." Obviously, the declaration of this creed not only struck at the root of the national religion and religious gods but at the national state and its central power, king Nimrod, who claimed to be the absolute lord of 'Iraq. That is why it was not tolerated and the Prophet Abraham was brought before Nimrod for trial as a rebel.

292Although Abraham had made it quite clear in his very tirst sentence that there can be no other lord than Allah, yet Nimrod impudently tried to refute his argument. But after the second argument, Nimrod was so non-plussed that he could not find any further argument to continue the dispute, as he himself knew and acknowledged that the sun and the moon were under the command of that God Whom Abraham acknowledged as Lord. He, however, would not accept this Truth which had become quite clear even to him because to accept it meant the giving up of his claim to despotism. As the rebel within him was not ready for this, he would not come out from the darkness of self - worship into the light of the Truth, even though he was dumbfounded. If he had made Allah his patron instead of his own "self," he would have found the right guidance from Abraham's preaching.

The Talmud says that after this dispute the king sent him to prison, where he remained for ten days. Then the king and his council sentenced him to be burnt alive and cast him into the flaming furnace. This incident has been mentioned in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Anbiya (XXI:51-74).

293It is useless to form conjectures as to 'who the person and which the township was, for it is not only irrelevant but also impossible to know this. There is no mention of these things in the Quran or the authentic Traditions either, and we have no other reliable source. The purpose for which the incident has been related here is that "Allah brings into light those who make Him their patron." It is, however, clear from his subsequent words that he must have been a Prophet.

294This question did not mean that he disbelieved in Resurrection or he had any doubt about it. It simply meant that he, like other Prophets, wanted to see the Reality with his own eyes.

295The resurrection of a person who had been dead for a hundred years was itself a living Sign for the people of his age.

296That is, "I want that peace of mind which is gained by actual experience. "

297Some people have offered strange interpretations for the two abovementioned extraordinary events. But there is no need to make far-fetched interpretations, for Allah is able to do everything He wills, as the person referred to in the first event declared. Moreover, Allah's dealings with His Prophets are of an extraordinary nature; for an ordinary believer does not need to see actually the Reality with his own eyes for the performance of his duties but it is essential for the mission of a Prophet that he should see with , his own eyes those realities towards which he has to invite the people. The Prophets have to tell the people with full and firm conviction: "We have seen with our own eyes those realities about which your knowledge is based on mere guess-work. You are ignorant; but We possess knowledge; you are blind, but We possess sight." That is why the angels came to them in person so that they should see them with their own eyes. They were also shown the actual working of the system of the heavens and the earth, and Paradise and Hell and Resurrection after death. Though the Prophets believed in all these things even before their appointment as Messengers, they were made witnesses of the realities after their appointment as a special favour and distinction of prophethood. (For further reference, please see E.N.'s 17, 18, 19, 34 of Surah Hud, Xl).

298In the address which -began with verse 243, the believers were exhorted to make sacrifices of life and property for the success of the great and noble cause they believed in. After strengthening their faith in Allah, for whose cause they were required to make sacrifices, the same theme has been resumed from this verse, and instructions have been given for the development of that attitude which is essential for making such sacrifices. It is obvious that people cannot snake monetary sacrifices for a moral cause unless their economic point of view is totally changed. The materialists, who live and die in order to amass wealth and weigh everything in the scales of profit and loss, can never be expected to spend anything for higher ends. Even when they seem to be spending for some noble cause, they do so after calculating how far it would benefit their tribe, their own person or their nation. Obviously with such a mental attitude, one cannot move even a step forward in the Way of Allah. In order to uplift the Word of Allah, one has to spend one's life, energy and wealth, irrespective of any worldly gain or loss. This way requires a broad view, great courage, a big heart and, above all, a sincere desire to win Allah's approval. Moreover, it requires radical changes in the social system in order to eradicate the materialistic morality and create spiritual values instead. That is why from here on up to verse 281, instructions have been given for the creation of that kind of moral attitude.

299All that wealth which is spent in accordance with the Divine Law and only for the achievement of Allah's approval is spent in the Way of Allah, even though it might have been spent for one's own needs or those of one's relatives or for the indigent or for public works or for the propagation of Islam or for Jihad.

300As Allah has limitless resources and knows everything, one must rest assured that the more sincere one is and the deeper feelings of devotion one has in spending one's wealth in the Way of Allah, the greater will be the reward one will get from Him. One must have a firm conviction that Allah, Who produces seven hundred grains from one grain, has most surely the power of developing the charity seven hundredfold.

After stating this fact, two attributes of Allah have been specially mentioned in this connection to show that the resources of Allah are boundless and He is able to reward deeds to the extent they deserve, and to show that He knows everything and is not unaware of what is spent and with what intention. Therefore there is absolutely no risk of losing one's due reward.

301There is neither any fear of losing their due reward nor shall there ever come a time when they will regret what they have spent.

302This implies two things. First, Allah does not stand in need of anybody's charity, for He is Self-Sufficient. Secondly, He likes those people who are generous and large-hearted, but does not like frivolous and narrow-minded people, for He Himself is Generous, Clement and Forbearing. How, then Allah, Who bestows on the people the necessities of life without stint, and forgives and pardons them over and over again in spite of their errors, would like those who mar the self-respect of a person by sending repeated reminders of their charity and making pointed references to it even though they might have given only a farthing.

A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will neither speak a word nor even so much as look at a person who makes pointed references to the gift he gave to some one.

303His hypocrisy itself clearly shows that he does not believe in Allah and the Hereafter. The very fact that he practises charity so as to be seen by men, shows that they are his .gods (and not Allah), from whom he expects to get his reward. A hypocrite does neither expect any reward from God nor he believes that one Day all deeds will be judged and rewarded.

304In this parable the rain is the charity. The hard barren rock on which the rain falls is the evil intention with which that charity is practised. The thin layer of the earth is the seeming virtue which hides the evil intention. Though rainfall makes the crop grow, it does actual harm, if it falls on a rock which has only a thin layer of soil on it, by washing away even that thin soil and leaving the rock bare. In the same way,

though charity has the power of developing virtue, it fails to do so, if it is not practised with good intentions. W without these things the wealth spent in charity is nothing more than so much wealth wasted like the rainfall on the rock with a thin layer of soil.

305The word "kafir" here stands for the ungrateful person. Anyone who does not spend the wealth given to him by Allah in His Way and for His Pleasure but spends it to gain approbation from people, is an ungrateful wretch because he forgets the favour of Allah. It is equally true of him who spends something in the Way of Allah but at the same time does harm to the recipient. When such a person himself does not want His approval, it is not Allah's Will to show him the way of His approval.

306"Heavy rainfall" is that charity which is practised with the best intentions and the deepest feelings of devotion, and the light shower of that charity which, though sincere, has not so much depth and intensity of feelings behind it as in the former case.

307That is, "It is quite obvious that you do not like the earnings of your whole life to be consumed at that critical period of your old age when you need them very badly and when there is no more chance for you to earn anything afresh. Exactly the same shall be your condition when .you enter into the Life-after-death without any provision for it. You shall then realize all of a sudden, like the old man of the parable, that the earnings of your whole life were left behind in the world and were as useless for you in the other world as the consumed garden to the old man. Besides this, you shall find yourself as helpless as the old man of the parable because in the Life-after-death there would be no more chance for you to earn anything for the Next World. If you do not practise charity etc., in this world in the way it has been enjoined, but spend your whole life and its energies for the interest of this world only, you will meet, at your death, with the same critical and helpless situation as the old man of the parable met. He lost his only garden, the earnings of his whole life and the support of his old age at that period of his life when he himself was unable to plant a new garden, and his children were unable to do anything because of their tender age."

308It implies that Allah Who does not standin need of anything or anyone enjoins the people to spend the best things in His Way not for Himself but for their own good. As He Himself has all the praiseworthy attributes and all the excellent qualities. I He does not approve of anyone who has a low character. He Himself is so generous that He is always showering His blessings on His creatures; therefore He does not love the narrow-minded, mean people who pick out worthless things for charity.

309"Hikmat" which has been translated "wisdom," stands for the knowledge with the power of discerning what is true and right. Hence anyone who has wisdom will not adopt the narrow ways of Satan but will follow the broad Way of Allah. According to the narrow-minded disciples of Satan, it is wisdom and cleverness to be parsimonious with their wealth and to be always on the look-out lire acquiring more and more of it. On the contrary, those, who have been given true wisdom, consider this course to be very foolish. According to them wisdom is to spend one's wealth generously in good works after fulfilling one's

own necessities of a moderate standard. It is just possible that the former may enjoy a more prosperous life here in this world but this is not the whole life. It is only a very small portion of the real life which continues after death. He, therefore, must be a big fool who gets enjoyment in this short life 2t the expense of happiness in the eternal life. The wise one is he who makes the best use of this short life and makes provision for the prosperity of the eternal life, even if he has been given small wealth here.

310Allah is fully aware of the intentions and actions of everyone and knows whether one spends in the way of Allah or in the way of Satan and whether .me makes a vow to Allah or to someone else. Therefore those, who spend fur His cause and make vows to Hint, will most surely get their rewards from Him. And those evildoers, who speed for the cause of Satan and make vows to others, shall have no helper to protect them from His punishment.

Nadhar (a vow) is a solemn pomise made by a person to perform some act, or make some offering or gift etc., not binding on him, in case some wish of his should be fulfilled. If that wish is lawful and is asked of Allah and the vow is made to Allah alone, such a vow must be fulfilled as a religious duty. for it is in obedience to Allah. But if the wish is unlawful or the vow is made to someone other than Allah, then the making of the vow is sinful and its fulfilment would merit condemnation.

311It is better to practise the obligatory charity (Zakat) openly and every other kind of charity secretly. The same principle applies to all other religious practices. It is better to perform the obligatory duties openly and the voluntary ones secretly.

312It helps reform the character of a man if he performs good deeds secretly. It develops virtues in him and eradicates vices. As a result, one becomes such a favourite of Allah, that Allah in view of one's virtue and sincerity, forgives any minor sins of commission or omission He wills.

313In this verse a misunderstanding of the Muslims has been removed. At first they hesitated to give monetary help to their non-Muslim relatives and other non-Muslims. They thought that monetary help to Muslims alone was in the Way of Allah. Here they have been told that they have not been made responsible for thrusting Guidance upon the unbelievers: their responsibility ends when they have conveyed the Truth to them. It lies with Allah to bestow (or not to bestow) the light of perception. The Muslims, therefore, should not hesitate to fulfil the needs of the non-Muslims just because they have not accepted the Guidance. If they fulfil the need of anyone to please Allah, He will give them their reward.

314This refers to the people who devote themselves wholly to the service of Islam and are, therefore, unable to earn their livelihood. There was a regular band of such volunteers of Islam known as Ashab as-suffah. They numbered about 400 and were always at the beck and call of the Holy Prophet, who had imparted to them the knowledge of Islam and trained them for its service. They imparted their acquired knowledge to others and went on different missions and expeditions under the instruction of the Holy

Prophet. Obviously, such people specially deserve help because they are whole-time workers of Islam and have no spare time to earn their livelihood.

315The Arabic word riba' literally means "increase in" or "addition to" anything. Technically it was applied to that additional sum which the creditor charged from the debtor at a fixed rate on the principal he lent, that is, interest. At the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, interest was charged in several ways. For instance, a person sold something and fixed a time-limit for the payment of its price, and if the buyer failed to pay it within the fixed period, he was allowed more time but had to pay an additional sum. Or a person lent a sum of money and asked the debtor to pay it back together with an agreed additional sum of money within a fixed period. Or a rate of interest was fixed for a specific period and if the principal along with the interest was not paid within that period, the rate of interest was enhanced for the extended period, and so on.

316The Qur'an likens the money-lender to a madman. Just as a madman loses his sense on account of his disordered intellect, so the money-lender is so mad for money-making that he divorces himself from commonsense. He is so senselessly foolish and impudent that he does not mind how his selfishness and greed are cutting at the very root of human love, brotherhood and fellow-feeling, and destroying the common good of mankind. He does not care at all that he is gaining prosperity at the expense of many. That is how he behaves like a madman in this world. In the next world he will rise like a madman at the time of Resurrection, for, in the Hereafter a person will rise in the same condition in which he dies here.

317They based their vice on a wrong theory and did not see the fundamental difference between profit and interest. They argued like this: When profit on capital is lawful in trade, why should the interest on money invested in loans be unlawful? And the Arab money-lenders were not alone in arguing like this; the bankers and money-lenders of today also put forward similar arguments for charging interest. They argue that a person, who lends a sum of money to another, could himself make profit from it and that the debtor actually does invest it in a profitable business. Why should not the creditor then get a portion of that profit from the debtor for his productive credit? However, what they forget is that there is no business in the whole world where there is a fixed and guaranteed profit without any risk. In trade, commerce, industry, agriculture etc., one has to spend both labour and capital and at the same time one has to face risks, without any guarantee of a fixed profit. Let us for the present leave aside the case of the debtor who borrows money for consumption and not for production, and also the issue of the rate of interest. Let us compare the case of the money-lender who lends money at a moderate rate of interest for profitable business with the case of those engaged in other kinds of business. They devote their whole time, labour, talent and invest their own capital, etc., and work day and night so that their business may become profitable by virtue of their own efforts. But even then they are not guaranteed any fixed profit, and have to bear all the risks. On the contrary, the money-lender, who lends only his capital, goes on receiving a fixed amount of profit without any risk whatsoever. By what reasoning and on what principles of logic, justice and economics is it right for him to receive a fixed amount of profit? How can one be justified in lending on a fixed rate of interest to a factory a sum of money today for twenty years, when none can say

what rise or fall in price may take place during these twenty years? And how is the subscriber to a war loan justified in charging interest at a fixed rate for a full century, and that too, from his own nation, whereas the whole nation has to face risks, bear losses and make sacrifices?

318The fundamental difference between profit and interest that produces different moral and economic results is this :

(I) The settlement of profit in trade between the buyer and the seller is made on equal terms. The buyer purchases the article he needs and the seller gets profit for the time, labour and brains he employs in providing that article to the buyer. In contrast, in the case of interest, the debtor cannot settle the transaction on equal terns with the creditor because of his weaker position. As far as the money lender is concerned, he gets that fixed sum of interest which he considers his profit. If the debtor spends the borrowed money in fulfilling his personal needs, the time factor definitely does not bring any profit at all. And if he invests that money in trade, commerce, industry, agriculture, etc., then there are equal chances of profit or loss. Thus lending money at interest might bring a guaranteed and fixed profit to one party and loss to the other, or a guaranteed and fixed profit to one party and an uncertain and indefinite profit to the other.

(2) 'The trader charges his profit, however high it tray be, once for all but the money-lender goes on charging interest over and over again and it goes on increasing with the passage of time. The profit which the debtor makes on the money of the creditor, however large it may be, has after all its own limits, but there is no limit to the interest the creditor may charge on his money. He may, as sometimes it actually happens, receive all the earnings of the debtor, nay, may even deprive him of all the means of livelihood or of the articles of his personal use and still might have the same amount of debt against him that was at the tune of borrowing.

(3) The transaction in trade comes to an end as soon as the article and its price change hands. After this the buyer is not required to return anything to the seller. As regards the rent of furniture, house, land, etc. the lent thing is not itself spent up but is returned to the owner after the term. But in the case of the principal the debtor has to spend it first and then to reproduce it and return it to the creditor along with its interest. Thus the debtor runs a double risk; he has to reproduce the principal and also to produce its interest.

(4) One engaged in trade, industry, agriculture, etc., earns profit by spending time, labour and intelligence but the money-lender becomes the stronger partner in the earnings of the debtor without any risk or labour on his part simply because he invests the money which is over and above his need. Ne is a partner only to the extent that he is entitled to a fixed guaranteed interest, irrespective of whether there is any profit at all or how much, or whether there is even a loss.

From the above it becomes clear that even from the economic point of view, trade helps construct society

but interest leads to ruin. As for the moral point of view, interest, by its very nature, creates parsimony, selfishness, cruelty, hard-heartedness, money-worship, etc., and kills the spirit of fellow-feeling and co-operation It is, therefore, ruinous for society both morally and economically. As to the question what should one do with the money for which one has no use, the answer is that one may invest it in commerce, industry, etc. on the basis of partnership and share profits and losses alike.

319This allowance applies only to the legal aspect of the interest which had been taken before the revelation of this verse about prohibition and does not mean that the income from that interest had also been made lawful. From the very wording of the verse, it is clear that the case will go to Allah for decision and that it has not been pardoned outright by Allah ln order to avoid endless litigation on this account, it has been declared that no legal demand for its return should be made. But from the moral point of view, it remains unclean and one who has taken it must do his best to cleanse himself of it. He should abstain from spending it on himself and try his best to find out the people from whom he received it and return it to them. In case he is unable to locate or fmd out anyone of those people, he should spend the unclean and unlawful wealth on social welfare. This is the only way in which he can save himself from the punishment of Allah Who will decide his case on the Day of Judgement. As to the person who goes on enjoying this unlawful wealth, he may be liable to punishment even for his money-lending in the past.

320This is true from the social, economic, moral and spiritual points of view. Though apparently interest enriches and charity impoverishes, it is really just the opposite of it. According to the law of Allah, interest is, in its very nature, a hindrance to the social, economic, moral and spiritual progress and charity (including a loan without interest) helps their development.

if we look at interest from the moral and spiritual points of view, we see clearly that it is based on greed, selfishness, parsimony, narrow-mindedness, hardheartedness and the like and nurtures the same evils in the money-lender. On the other hand, charity is based on generosity, sympathy, broad-mindedness, largeheartedness and the like and develops the same high qualities. Can anyone deny that these qualities are far better than the former?

From the social point of view, even a little thinking will show that a society can never become strong and stable if its individual members base their mutual dealings on selfishness and if one is not willing to help the other without self-interest. If the rich people believe that the poor people exist merely to afford them an opportunity for exploitation, there will be a clash of interest which will result in the disintegration of society. If other factors also help this evil state of affairs, these will surely produce class struggle. On the other hand, if the individual members of a society base their dealings on mutual sympathy and treat each other with generosity, they will most surely strengthen it. If everyone tries to help the other in need, and if the "haves" treat the "havenots" with sympathy or at least with justice, mutual love and fellow-feeling will develop in society and it will become strong and stable. Obviously, its progress will be accelerated by mutual co-operation and fellow-feeling.

Now let us consider interest from the economic point of view. Loans are of two kinds. The consumptive loan is borrowed by the helpless needy persons for their personal needs and the economic loan is taken by businessmen for trade, commerce, industry, agriculture, etc. As to the first kind of loan, everyone knows that interest on it produces ruinous results. In every country the money-lenders and bankers are sucking the blood of the labourers, peasants and the common poor, and making their condition miserable. The interest charges render the payment of debt almost impossible for such people and they have to borrow one loan after the other to get out of this mess. Even after paying interest equal to many times the original principal, the principal still remains as it was before. The major portion of the income of the debtor is taken away by the money-lender and the poor debtor finds himself unable to make both ends meet. Naturally this kills the interest of the labourers in their work. When the fruit of their labour is taken away by others, they cannot put their whole heart into their work. More than that: when worry, anxiety, poor food, etc.., spoil their health, they cannot afford even to buy the necessary medicine for want of money. Thus money-lending leads to the fattening and battening of a few at the expenses of the blood-sucking of the majority and results in the general deterioration of the nation. The inefficiency caused in their way lowers the quality and standard of national production. In the end the bloodsuckers themselves fall a prey to their own iniquity. When the suppressed anger and hatred of the depressed people engendered by the selfishness of the cruel money-lenders, bursts out into a bloody revolution, it sweeps away their honour and lives along with their ill-gotten wealth.

As to the fixed interest on economic loans, three out of the many evils are given below

(1) Those concerns that cannot pay an interest higher than or equal to the market rate cannot draw in capital howsoever useful they may be for the nation. All the available money flows into those channels of commerce and industry which can bring interest equal to or greater than the market rate of interest, howsoever harmful or ruinous they might be from the national point of view.

(2) There is no business commercial, industrial, agricultural that can guarantee a fixed and uniform rate of profit, say five, six or ten per cent or more under all circumstances. Not to speak of such a guarantee, there cannot be any guarantee against loss in any business. Therefore, the business which borrows capital at a fixed rate of interest can never be free from risk or loss.

(3) As the money-lender himself is not directly a partner in the profit or the loss of the business but keeps in view only his guaranteed fixed interest, he is not interested in its welfare. His only concern is his own interest; therefore he very selfishly tries to withdraw and withhold his money whenever he has even the slightest fear of a slump in the market. In this way he creates panic by his selfishness and paves the way for a further crisis and when there is already a crisis, he accelerates it into a disaster.

The above mentioned three evils of interest are so obvious that they are well known to everyone who knows even the ABC of economics. Can then anyone deny the truth of the natural law enunciated by Allah that interest does not increase but decreases the national economic wealth?

Now let us consider charity from the economic point of view. If the well-to-do people of a society spend money liberally in buying their own necessities of life and those of their dependents and distribute a part of their wealth among the needy to enable them to buy their necessities of life, or if they lend it to businessmen without interest, or invest it in business on the basis of partnership, or lend it without interest to their government for national service, then obviously, commerce, industry, agriculture, etc., will thrive to a very high standard. The standard of national prosperity will rise higher and higher and the production of its wealth will become larger as compared with the country where interest is lawful. Thus it is clear that interest hinders the progress of a nation and charity helps its development.

321The money-lender is no doubt an ungrateful wretch. As a grateful servant of Allah, Who gives him spare money, the least he ought to do is to lend it to his other servants without interest. And if, instead of this, he uses the bounty of Allah to exploit His other servants who are getting less than he, he becomes not only ungrateful but also cruel and wicked.

322In this passage Allah has presented two characters for contrast. One is the selfish worshipper of wealth, the Shylock, who, unmindful of Allah and His creatures, is engaged day and night in amassing and hoarding wealth. The other is the worshipper of Allah, the generous and sympathetic person who observes the rights of Allah and His creatures; who earns wealth and spends it on his ownself and on others and in doing good works. Allah disapproves of the first type of people because they cannot build any good and stable society : nay, they even make themselves and others miserable in this world, and they shall meet with grief, sorrow and affliction in the Hereafter. In contrast to this, Allah approves of the second type of people for they help build a good and stable society and achieve real success. They have also peace of mind in this world and will be blessed with all kinds of heavenly pleasures in the Hereafter.

323This verse was revealed after the conquest of Makkah, but was inserted here because it also deals with interest. Even before its revelation, interest was regarded as a hateful thing though it had not yet been legally forbidden. But after its revelation, money-lending on interest became a criminal offence in the Islamic State. Those clans who carried on this business in Arabia, were duly warned to give it up for otherwise a war would be declared against them. When the Christians of Najran were granted autonomy within the Islamic State, it was specified in the treaty that if they continued their money-lending business, the treaty would come to an end and there would be a state of war between the parties.

From the concluding portion of this verse, Ibn `Abbas, Hasan Basri, Ibn Sirin and Rubai'-bin-Anas have concluded that the one who takes interest in the Islamic State should be warned to repent of it, and if he does not give it up, he should be put to death. But the other jurists are of the opinion that he should be put in prison and kept there until he undertakes to give up this business.

324This verse empowers an Islamic court of law to compel the creditors to give more time to the debtors for the payment of debts, if they are in such straitened circumstances that they cannot pay back their

debts. Under certain circumstances, the court is entitled to write off the debt altogether or a part of it. A Tradition says that a man suffered loss in his business and came heavily under debt. When his case was taken to the Holy Prophet, he made an appeal to the people to help him out of it. Accordingly, the people made monetary contributions, but even then he could not clear all his debts. Then the Holy Prophet addressed the creditors and told them that they would have to be satisfied with whatever was collected for the payment of their debts. The jurists have explained that the house in which a tnan lives, his utensils, clothes and tools of trade can in no case be confiscated.

325From this it is deduced that the term for a debt must be specified.

326This warns against a common practice: friends and relatives do not put debt agreements into formal writing, for such a thing, according to them, shows lack of trust. Allah admonishes that agreements concerning debt and business should be recorded and testified by witnesses in order to keep the affairs of the people clean. A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says that three kinds of the people cry out to Allah for help but are not answered: first, those who have ill tempered wives but do not divorce them; second, those who are entrusted with the property of orphans but return it to them before they attain maturity; third, those who lend money to others without any document or evidence.

327"From among you": from among the Muslims. Imam Abu Hanifah, holds the opinion that the non-Muslims also can be made the witnesses.

328As the establishment of the truth of a case depends to a great degree on the reliability of witnesses, a very high standard of qualification is demanded of them. Only those persons who are known to lead respectable lives and bear good moral character and are honest should be made the witnesses.

329Even in the case of those transactions which are carried out on the spot in everyday business, it is better to record them; nevertheless there is no harm if commercial transactions carried on daily between neighbouring traders are not recorded.

330It implies two things. No one should be forced to become a scribe or a witness against his will, and no one should harass the scribe or the witness just because he gives true evidence against the interests of a party.

331It does not mean that a pledge may be held on security only while on a journey. It has been specially mentioned in this connection because such a condition generally occurs on a journey. Moreover, inability to get a scribe is not an essential condition for holding something as a pledge. If a needy person cannot obtain a debt unless he delivers something as security for it, he is allowed to do so. The Qur'an deliberately omits the mention of this latter condition, because it intends to teach generosity to the Believers. It is obviously below the dignity of a man of high character not to lend money to a needy

person without having a pledge in hand. It is, however, understood that if the pledge is productive, the creditor should keep a regular account of the produce and deduct it from the debt; otherwise any profit drawn from the pledged property would be interest. In this connection, one should also know that the only object in view of holding a pledge is the security of the repayment of the debt and it does not entitle the creditor in any way to make profit out of it. For instance, if a creditor himself lives in the house which he holds as a pledge for his debt or if he lets it to someone else, he in fact is guilty of taking interest, if he does not credit the rent of the house to the debtor, for there is no difference between taking direct interest on a debt or earning money from it or making use of the property delivered as a pledge. The creditor, however, may benefit from the milk of a pledged head of cattle, or may ride or carry burden on a horse, camel, etc., because that would be the compensation for the fodder given to them.

332"Concealing of evidence" applies both to the evasion of evidence and to the concealment of the true facts while giving evidence.

333In the concluding portion of the Surah, the basic creeds of Islam have been stated just as they were stated at its beginning. Therefore it will be useful to compare verses 284-285 with vv, 1-4.

334This is the first article of Faith. The acceptance of the fact that Allah is the Master of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, leaves no alternative for man but to submit to Him.

335In this sentence two more articles of Faith have been stated. First, every person is individually responsible and accountable to Allah for his actions. Second, the Sovereign, to whom man is accountable for his actions, has full knowledge of what is hidden and what is open; He even knows those intentions and thoughts that are hidden in the heart.

336It means that Allah is the absolute Sovereign and not a constitutional ruler. His powers are not bound by any law so as to force Him to act in accordance with it. He is the sole Master and has full authority to punish anyone or to forgive anyone He wills.

337In this verse, the basic articles of Faith have been restated briefly. Belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books and in all of His Messengers without exception and discrimination against any and in the accountability to Him at the end of this life are the five basic articles of Faith. After the acceptance of these, the attitude for a Muslim is to submit obediently to each and every commandment of Allah. At the same time, he should not become vain on account of his good acts but should pray to Allah to forgive and show forbearance to him.

338That is, "Allah will not call to account anyone for not doing something which he could not possibly do: nor will He punish him because he did not abstain from a thing, when he could not possibly abstain from it." It must, however, be clearly understood that an individual himself is not his own judge to decide what

he can do and what he cannot do. It is Allah, Who will decide what a certain person could do and what he could not do.

339This is the other general principle of the law. Both the rewards and the punishments are really the results and consequences of the acts and deeds of every individual. One will get a reward only for the good deed one has himself done and not for the good acts of someone else. It must, however, be noted that if 'someone has done some good act which goes on producing good results long after his death, all those acts will also be put to his credit in his balance sheet as long as they last. In the same way, if someone has done some evil, which goes on producing evil results long after one's death, all those also will be put against one's account as long as they fast. But all these results, both good and bad, will be the consequences of one's own deeds. In short, a person shall be rewarded or punished only. for that thing to which he himself contributed intentionally and actually. There is no transfer of accounts in the Divine Law of Retribution.

340That is, "O Lord, save and protect us from such trials, persecutions and obstacles as were encountered by those who went Your way before us." Although it is the law of Allah that those, who make up their minds to follow the way of Truth, must undergo hard trials and suffer from cruel persecutions, a Believer should pray to Allah to make the way easy for him and should face them with courage when he actually meets with them.

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342In order to understand the true spirit of this prayer, it should be kept in view that these verses were revealed on the occasion of the Mi'raj (Ascension to Heaven) of the Holy Prophet about a year before his migration to Madinah. At that time the struggle between Islam and kufr had reached its climax and the persecution of the Believers was at its worst. And this was not confined to Makkah alone: there was no place in the whole of Arabia where a Muslim was allowed to live in peace. It was to cope with these circumstances that the Muslims were taught to utter this prayer to Allah. It is self-evident that when the Master Himself teaches the servat the way of begging from Him, the servant gets the conviction that his request will be granted. That is why this prayer tilled the Muslims with extraordinary courage and brought peace of mind to them in the hour of their worst persecution. Moreover, this prayer taught theta to keep their passions under control and within the limits contained in this prayer and not to allow them to turn into wrong channels. That is why it is free from any kind of bitterness against their enemies, and there is not any tinge in it of revenge or of worldliness. This was urgently needed at that time because the Muslims were undergoing greater hardships and monetary losses and suffering untold cruelties and were pressed hard both physically and economically. Incidentally, the contrast between the high ideals

contained in their prayer and the persecution which the Believers were suffering at that time brings out clearly the high standard of the spiritual and moral training they were receiving even at that critical time. And that is the high standard of morality that has been laid down for every true believer to attain.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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3. Surah Al i Imran (The Family of Imran)

Name

This Surah takes its name from v. 33. Al-i-Imran, like the names of many other surahs, is merely a name to distinguish it from other surahs and does not imply that the family of Imran has been discussed in it.

The Period of Revelation

This Surah consists of four discourses The first discourses :-

The first discourse (vv. 1-32) was probably revealed soon after the Battle of Badr.

The second discourse (vv. 33-63) was revealed in 9 A. H. on the occasion of the visit of the deputation from the Christians of Najran.

The third discourse (vv. 64-120) appears to have been revealed immediately after the first one.

The fourth discourse (vv. 121-200) was revealed after the Battle of Uhd.

Subject

Though these discourses were revealed at different periods and on different occasions, they are so inter-linked and so inter-connected iii regard to their aim, object and central theme that they make together one continuous whole. This Surah has been especially addressed to two groups-the people of the Book (the Jews and the Christians) and the followers of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

The message has been extended to the Jews and the Christians in continuation of the invitation in Al-Baqarah, in

which they have been admonished for their erroneous beliefs and evil morals and advised to accept, as a remedy, the Truth of the Quran. They have been told here that Muhammad (Allah's peace be, upon him) taught the same right way of life that had been preached by their own Prophets; that it alone was the Right Way, the way of Allah; hence any deviation from it will be wrong even according to their own Scriptures.

The second group, the Muslims, who had been declared to be the best Community in Al-Baqarah and appointed torch-bearers of the Truth and entrusted with the responsibility of reforming the world, have been given additional instructions in continuation of those given in the preceding Surah. The Muslims have been warned to learn a lesson from the religious and moral degeneration of the former communities and to refrain from treading in their footsteps. Instructions have also been given about the reformative work they had to perform. Besides this, they have been taught how to deal with the people of the Book and the hypocrites who were putting different kinds of hindrances in the way of Allah. Above all, they have been warned to guard against those weaknesses which had come to the surface in the Battle Uhd.

Background

The following is the background of the Surah:

1. The Believers had met with all sorts of trials and hardships about which they had been forewarned in Al-Baqarah. Though they had come out victorious in the Battle of Badr, they were not out of danger yet. Their victory had aroused the enmity of all those powers in Arabia which were opposed to the Islamic Movement. Signs of threatening storms had begun to appear on all sides and the Muslims were in a perpetual state of fear and anxiety. It looked as if the whole Arabian world around the tiny state of Al-Madinah - which was no more than a village state at that time -- was bent upon blotting out its very existence. This state of war was also adversely affecting its economy, which had already been badly disturbed by the influx of the Muslim refugees from Makkah.

2. Then there was the disturbing problem of the Jewish clans who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madinah. They were discarding the treaties of alliance they had made with the Holy Prophet after his migration from Makkah. So much so that on the occasion of the Battle of Badr, these people of the Book sympathized with the evil aims of the idolaters, in spite of the fact that their fundamental articles of the Faith - Oneness of Allah, Prophethood, Life-after- death -- were the same as those of the Muslims. After the Battle of Badr, they openly began to incite the Quraish and other Arab clans to wreak their vengeance on the Muslims. Thus those Jewish clans set aside their centuries-old friendly and neighborly relations with the people of Al-Madinah. At last when their mischievous actions and breaches of treaties became unbearable, the Holy Prophet attacked the Bani- Qainu-qa'a, the most mischievous of all the other Jewish clans who had conspired with the hypocrites of Al-Madinah and the idolatrous Arab clans to encircle the Believers on all sides. The magnitude of the peril might be judged from the fact that even the life of the Holy Prophet himself was always in danger. Therefore his Companions slept in their armors during that period and kept watch at night to guard against any sudden attack, and whenever the Holy Prophet happened to be out of sight even for a short while, they would at once set out in search of him.

3. This incitement by the Jews added fuel to the fire which was burning in the hearts of the Quraish and they began to make preparations to avenge the defeat they had suffered at Bad. A year after this an army of 3,000 strong marched out of Makkah to invade Al-Madinah and a battle took place at the foot of Mount Uhd. The Holy Prophet came out of Al-Madinah with one thousand men to meet the enemy. While they were marching to the battle-field, three hundred hypocrites deserted the army and returned to Al- Madinah, but there still remained a small band of hypocrites among the seven hundred who accompanied the Holy Prophet. They played their part and did their worst to create mischief and chaos in the ranks of the Believers during the Battle. This was the first clear indication of the fact that within the fold of the Muslim Community there was quite a large number of saboteurs who were always ready to conspire with the external enemies to harm their own brethren.

4. Though the devices of the hypocrites had played a great part in the set-back at Uhd, the weaknesses of the Muslims themselves contributed no less to it. And it was but natural that the Muslims should show signs of moral weakness for they were a new community which had only recently been formed on a new ideology and had not as yet got a thorough moral training. Naturally in this second hard test of their physical and moral strength, some weaknesses came to the surface. That is why a detailed review of the Battle of Uhd was needed to warn the Muslims of their shortcomings and to issue instructions for their reform. It should also be noted that this review of the Battle is quite different from the reviews that are usually made by generals on similar occasions.

Subject: Guidance

This Surah is the sequel to, Al-Baqarah and the invitation therein is continued to the people of the Book. In Al-Baqarah the Jews were pointedly invited to accept the Guidance and in this Surah the Christians have particularly been admonished to give up their erroneous beliefs and accept the Guidance of the Quran. At the same time, the Muslims have been instructed to nourish the virtues that may enable them to carry out their obligations and spread the Divine Guidance.

Topics and their Interconnection

In these introductory verses, the fundamental truths about Allah, Revelation and Life-after-death have been reiterated to serve as fitting preliminaries, leading to the main topics discussed in the Surah. 1 - 32

This discourse is particularly addressed to the Christians and invites them to accept Islam. It clears Jesus and his mother not only from the stigma maliciously set upon them by the Jews, but also refutes the erroneous Christian creed of the Divinity of Jesus which had been formulated because of his miraculous birth. For this purpose the instances of John the Baptist to a barren woman and an extremely aged man and that of Adam without father and mother have been cited to show that there is nothing in the birth of Jesus without a father to entitle him to Divinity. 33 - 65

In these verses the people of the Book, the Jews, have been invited to give up their sinister ways and accept the divine Guidance. At the same time the Muslims have been warned to be on their guard against their malicious

intentions, erroneous ways and absurd objections. 66 - 101

The Muslims have been instructed to learn lessons from the history of the people of the Book and also to guard themselves against their machinations, and to prepare and train themselves to establish virtue and eradicate evil. 102 - 120

In this portion, a review of the Battle of Uhd has been mad to teach and reassure the Muslims that the machinations of their enemies could do them no harm, if they would practice restraint and fortitude and have fear of Allah. It has been pointed out that the set-back they had suffered was due to the lack of some moral qualities and the existence of some evils. Since the main cause of the defeat was the greed of the archers, guarding the pass, the taking of interest has been prohibited to eradicate this evil. 121 - 175

The main theme of the verses 109 - 120 has been resumed to reassure and encourage the Muslims against the dangerous plots of their enemies. 175 - 189

This is the conclusion of the Surah and is not directly connected with the verses immediately preceding it but with the theme of the Surah as a whole. 190 - 200

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْحَيُّ ٱلْقَيُّومُ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] Alif. Lam. Mim. Allah! He is the Ever-living, the Sustainer of the Universe. In reality there is no god but He.[1]

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٣﴾

مِن قَبۡلُ هُدٗى لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَنزَلَ ٱلۡفُرۡقَانَۗ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمۡ
عَذَابٞ شَدِيدٞۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٞ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٍ ٤

[3-4] He has sent down to you the Book, which has brought the Truth and confirms the Scriptures which preceded it. Before this, He sent down the Torah and the Gospel for the guidance of mankind,[2] and He has sent down the Criterion (of right and wrong). Now there shall be a severe punishment for those who reject the Commandments of Allah: for Allah is Almighty, Avenger of wickedness.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَخۡفَىٰ عَلَيۡهِ شَيۡءٞ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ٥

هُوَ ٱلَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡحَامِ كَيۡفَ يَشَآءُۚ لَآ
إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٦

هُوَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَنزَلَ عَلَيۡكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِنۡهُ ءَايَٰتٞ مُّحۡكَمَٰتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ
وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَٰبِهَٰتٞۖ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمۡ زَيۡغٞ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَٰبَهَ مِنۡهُ
ٱبۡتِغَآءَ ٱلۡفِتۡنَةِ وَٱبۡتِغَآءَ تَأۡوِيلِهِۦۖ وَمَا يَعۡلَمُ تَأۡوِيلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُۗ وَٱلرَّٰسِخُونَ فِي
ٱلۡعِلۡمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ كُلّٞ مِّنۡ عِندِ رَبِّنَاۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُوْلُواْ ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِ
٧

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ
ٱلْوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ ٱلنَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ
ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿٩﴾

[5-9] Nothing in the Earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah.[3] It is He Who shapes you in the wombs of your mothers as He wills.[4] There is no deity but He, the Al-Mighty, the All-Wise. It is He Who has sent down this Book to you. There are two kinds of verses in this Book: muhkamat (which are precise in meaning:) they are the essence of the Books[5] and the other kind is mutashabihat (which are ambiguous.) Those, who are perverse of heart, always go after the mutashabihat in pursuit of mischief and try to interpret them arbitrarily, whereas in fact, none save Allah knows their real meanings![6] In contrast to them, those, who possess sound knowledge, say, "We believe in them because all of them are from our Lord."[7] And the fact is that only the people of insight can learn lessons from such things. They pray to Allah, "Our Lord, let not our hearts become perverse after 'Thou hast once guided us aright, bestow upon us mercy from Thyself for Thou art the real Benefactor! Lord! Thou wilt surely gather all mankind together on a Day which is inevitable, for Thou never failest to fulfil Thy promise."

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَن تُغْنِىَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۖ
وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٠﴾

كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿١١﴾

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ سَتُغْلَبُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿١٢﴾

قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ ءَايَةٌ فِى فِئَتَيْنِ ٱلْتَقَتَا ۖ فِئَةٌ تُقَٰتِلُ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَأُخْرَىٰ كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُم مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَأْىَ ٱلْعَيْنِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهِۦ مَن
يَشَآءُ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿١٣﴾

[10-13] As for those, who have adopted the attitude of disbelief,[8] neither their riches nor their children shall avail them against Allah: they shall become fuel for Hell. Their end shall be the same as that of the people of Pharaoh and other disbelievers who went before them; they treated the Divine Revelations as falsehoods and Allah seized them because of their sins; for Allah is very stern in retribution. Therefore, O Muhammad, say to those who have rejected your Message, "The time is approaching fast when you shall be overpowered and driven to Hell: and Hell is a horrible abode. You have already had a Sign in the two hosts which met on the battle-field (at Badr). One of these hosts was fighting for the cause of Allah and the other was of the disbelievers: the lookers-on saw with their own eyes that the host of the disbelievers,[9] was twice as big as that of the believers, but (the result of the Battle proved conclusively that) Allah strengthens with His succour whom He wills: there is truly a great lesson hidden in it for those who have eyes to discern."[10]

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْبَنِينَ وَٱلْقَنَٰطِيرِ ٱلْمُقَنطَرَةِ مِنَ
ٱلذَّهَبِ وَٱلْفِضَّةِ وَٱلْخَيْلِ ٱلْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ وَٱلْحَرْثِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلْمَـَٔابِ ﴿١٤﴾

قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُم بِخَيْرٍ مِّن ذَٰلِكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾

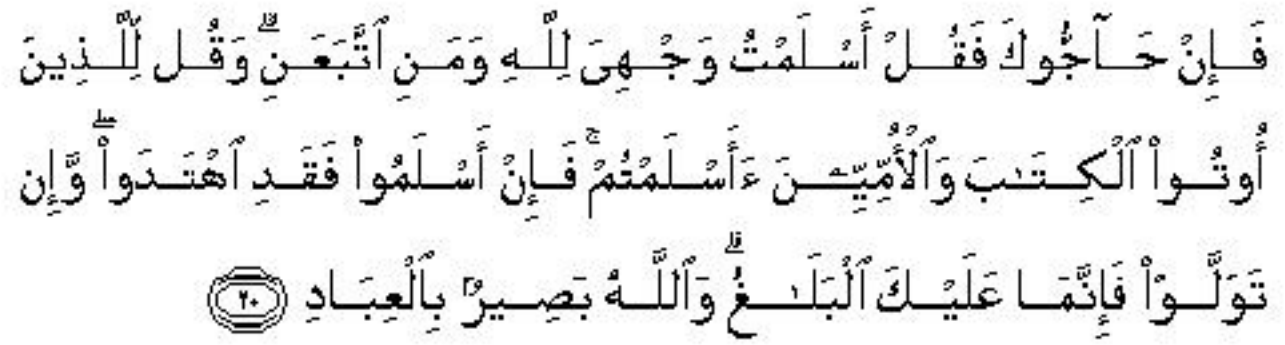
ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ وَٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ وَٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ وَٱلْمُنفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِٱلْأَسْحَارِ ﴿١٧﴾

[14-17] Love of lusts for women and children. hoarded Heaps of gold and silver, choicest horses, cattle and corn fields, has been made very tempting for people, but these are mere provisions for the transitory life of this world; the ever-lasting and the best abode, however, is with Allah. Say, "Should I tell you a thing better than these? There will be Gardens underneath which canals flow for those, who adopt the attitude of piety; there they will dwell for ever and will have pure spouses[11] and they will enjoy Allah's favour. And Allah watches very closely the conduct of His servants."[12] These are the people, who say, "Lord, we have believed sincerely; forgive us our sins and save us from the fire of Hell." They show fortitude,[13] are truthful, obedient and charitable, and implore Allah's forgiveness in the early hours of the morning.

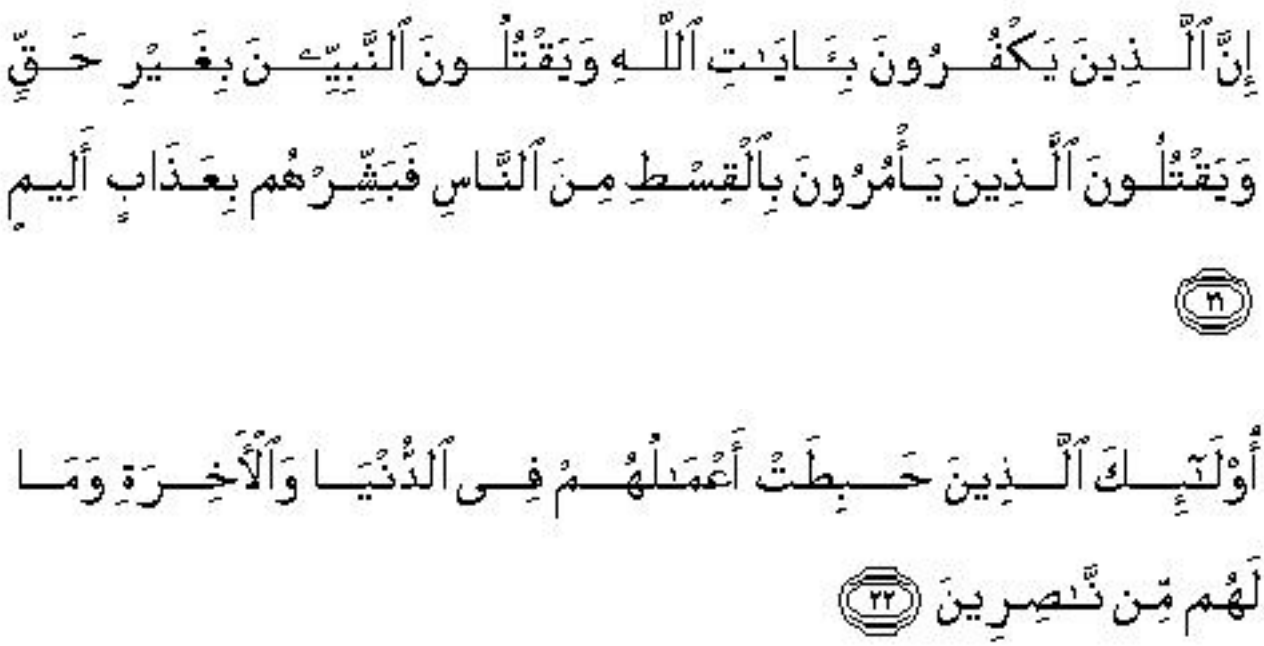
شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًۢا بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٨﴾

[18] Allah Himself has testified to the fact that there is no deity save Him:[14] the angels and all those endowed with knowledge testify the fact with truth and justice [15] that there is no deity save the All-Mighty the All-Wise.

إِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمُ ۗ وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعِلْمُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩﴾



[19-20] Indeed, Islam is the only right way of life in the sight of Allah.[16] Those who were given the Book, had adopted ways different from this Way for no other reason than to enable themselves to behave unjustly towards one another, after knowledge .had come to them;[17] they should know that Allah is very prompt at reckoning with those who deny and reject His Commandments and Guidance. Now, if they dispute with you, tell them, "As for me and my followers, we have surrendered to Allah." Then ask those, who possess the Book and those who do not, "Have you also surrendered to Him"?[18] If they have surrendered, they are rightly guided. But if they turn away (you need not worry), for your sole responsibility was to convey the Message. As to the consequence, Allah Himself watches closely what His servants do.



[21-22] Give the good tidings of a painful chastisement[19] to those who reject Allah's .Revelations and slay His Prophets unjustly and are deadly against those who rise up from among the people to enjoin right and justice. They are the ones whose works have come to naught in this world and in the Next,[20] and they have no helpers.[21]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ نَصِيبًا مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ
لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا۟ لَن تَمَسَّنَا ٱلنَّارُ إِلَّآ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَٰتٍ ۖ وَغَرَّهُمْ فِى دِينِهِم مَّا
كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَٰهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۖ وَوُفِّيَتْ
كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

[23-25] Have you not marked the behaviour of those who have received a share of the knowledge of the Book? When they are invited to the Book of Allah so that it may judge between them, some of them evade it and turn away from Its judgement.[22] They do this because they say, "The fire of Hell is not going to touch us and even if it does at all, it will be only for a few days."[23] Such self invented beliefs have involved them in various kinds of misunderstandings about their religion. But what will they do when We will gather them together on the Day which is sure to come? On that day, everyone will be paid in full for what one has earned, and none shall be wronged.

قُلِ ٱللَّهُمَّ مَٰلِكَ ٱلْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِى ٱلْمُلْكَ مَن تَشَآءُ وَتَنزِعُ ٱلْمُلْكَ مِمَّن تَشَآءُ
وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَآءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَآءُ ۖ بِيَدِكَ ٱلْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

﴿٢٦﴾

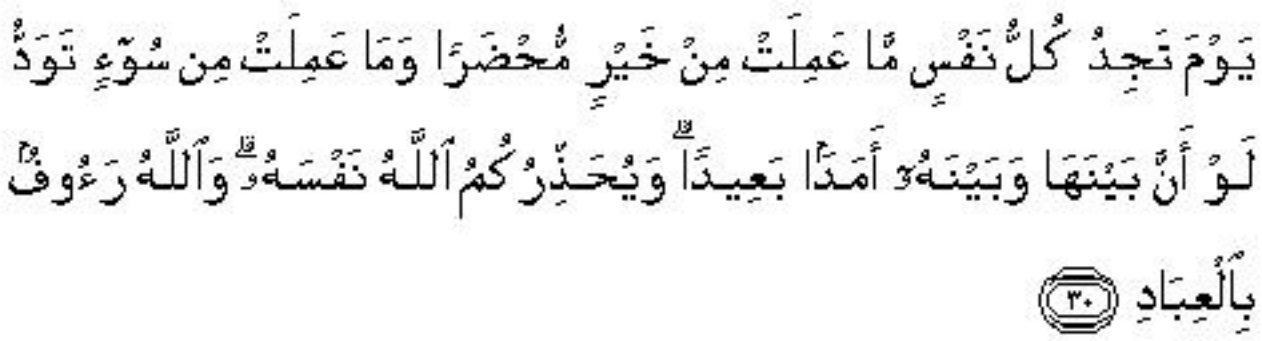
تُولِجُ ٱلَّيۡلَ فِي ٱلنَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِي ٱلَّيۡلِۖ وَتُخۡرِجُ ٱلۡحَيَّ مِنَ ٱلۡمَيِّتِ
وَتُخۡرِجُ ٱلۡمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلۡحَيِّۖ وَتَرۡزُقُ مَن تَشَآءُ بِغَيۡرِ حِسَابٖ ٢٧

[26-27] Say, "O Allah, Sovereign of the Kingdom, Thou bestowest kingdom on whomever Thou wilt and Thou takest it away from whomever Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whomever Thou wilt and Thou abasest whomever Thou wilt. All that is good is in Thy power: indeed Thou hast full power over all things. Thou causest the night to pass into the day and Thou causest the day to pass into the night; Thou bringest forth the living out of the dead and Thou bringest forth the dead out of the living and Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou wilt without stint."[24]

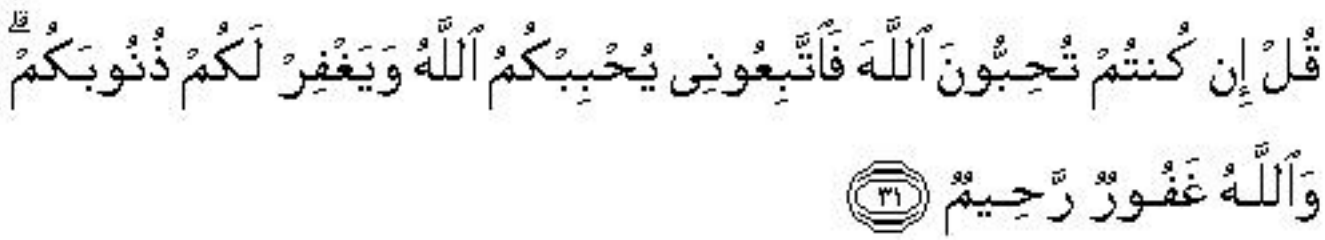
لَّا يَتَّخِذِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ أَوۡلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَۖ وَمَن يَفۡعَلۡ ذَٰلِكَ
فَلَيۡسَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ فِي شَيۡءٍ إِلَّآ أَن تَتَّقُواْ مِنۡهُمۡ تُقَىٰةٗۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ نَفۡسَهُۥۗ
وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ٢٨

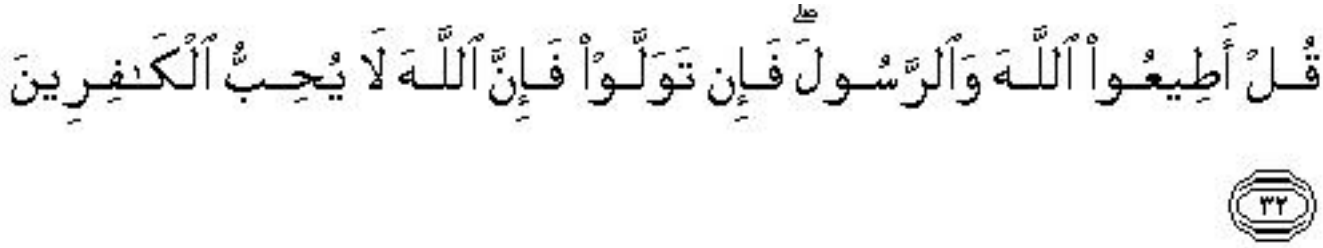
[28] Let not the Believers make the disbelievers their friends and take them into their confidence in preference to the Believers. Whoever will do this shall have no relation left with Allah; however your show of friendship towards them will be pardonable, if you do so to guard against their tyranny.[25] Anyhow Allah warns you to fear Him because to Him you shall return.[26]

قُلۡ إِن تُخۡفُواْ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمۡ أَوۡ تُبۡدُوهُ يَعۡلَمۡهُ ٱللَّهُۗ وَيَعۡلَمُ مَا
فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ٢٩



[29-30] O Prophet, warn the people to note it well that Allah knows whatever is in your hearts whether you hide it or reveal it, for He knows everything that is in the heavens and in the earth and He has full power over all things. That Day is approaching when everyone shall find before him whatever he has done be it good or evil. On that Day one would wish that there were a long span of time between himself and that Day. Allah warns you to fear Him for He is very Compassionate towards His servants.[27]





[31-32] O Prophet, tell the people, "If you sincerely love Allah follow me; then will Allah love you and forgive your sins, for He is Forgiving and Merciful. " Also say to them, "Obey Allah and His Messenger." And if, in spite of this, they do not accept your invitation, (warn them that) Allah does not love those who refuse to obey Him and His Messenger.[28]

۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ وَنُوحًا وَءَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَءَالَ عِمْرَٰنَ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

ذُرِّيَّةًۢ بَعْضُهَا مِنۢ بَعْضٍ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

إِذْ قَالَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُ عِمْرَٰنَ رَبِّ إِنِّى نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِى بَطْنِى مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٥﴾

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّى وَضَعْتُهَآ أُنثَىٰ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ وَلَيْسَ ٱلذَّكَرُ كَٱلْأُنثَىٰ ۖ وَإِنِّى سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّىٓ أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ٱلرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣٦﴾

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنۢبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا
زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيۡهَا زَكَرِيَّا ٱلۡمِحۡرَابَ وَجَدَ عِندَهَا رِزۡقًا ۖ
قَالَ يَٰمَرۡيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكِ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَتۡ هُوَ مِنۡ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَرۡزُقُ مَن
يَشَآءُ بِغَيۡرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

[33-37] Allah[29] had chosen (for His Message) Adam, and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of Imran[30] in preference to all the people of the world. They all belonged to the same chain and were the offspring of one another. Allah knows everything and hears everything.[31] (He was hearing,) when the woman of `Imran[32] was saying,. "My Lord, 1 vow to Thee what is in my womb for Thy special service: so accept this offering of mine for Thou hearest and knowest everything."[33] Afterwards when she delivered her child, she said, "Lord, I have delivered a girl" --- and Allah knew very well what she had delivered --- "and the male is not (handicapped) like the female.[34] As it is, I have named her Mary, and I implore Thy protection for her and for her future offspring from the mischief of Satan, the Accursed." So, her Lord very graciously accepted the girl and made her grow up as a good girl and entrusted her to the care of Zacharias.

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُۥ ۖ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبۡ لِى مِن لَّدُنكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ
إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ ٱلدُّعَآءِ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَنَادَتۡهُ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُصَلِّى فِى ٱلۡمِحۡرَابِ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحۡيَىٰ
مُصَدِّقَۢا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[38-39] Whenever Zacharias[35] entered the sanctuary[36] to see her, he found some eatables with her; he would ask, "O Mary, whence have these come to you?" She would answer, "It is from Allah: Allah provides without stint for

whom He wills." Thereupon Zacharias invoked his Lord and said, "Lord, bestow upon me from Thyself righteous offspring for Thou alone hearest prayers."[37] As he stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called him and said, "Allah gives you the good news of a son to be named John;[38] he will come to confirm a Command from Allah;[39] he will be a great leader: he will be highly disciplined: he will be appointed a Prophet, and will be among the righteous."

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَٰمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ ٱلْكِبَرُ وَٱمْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ ۖ قَالَ
كَذَٰلِكَ ٱللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿٤٠﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱجْعَل لِّيٓ ءَايَةً ۚ قَالَ ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا ۗ
وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِٱلْعَشِيِّ وَٱلْإِبْكَٰرِ ﴿٤١﴾

[40-41] Zacharias said, "Lord, how shall I beget a son now that I have grown very old and my wife is barren?" "Thus will it be,"[40] was the answer. "Allah does whatever He wills." He said, "Lord, give me a Sign."[41] "Your Sign is that you shall not (be able to) speak to anyone for three days but by gestures. During this period you should remember your Lord much and glorify His Name in the morning and in the evening."[42]

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱصْطَفَىٰكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَٱصْطَفَىٰكِ عَلَىٰ
نِسَآءِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

يَٰمَرْيَمُ ٱقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَٱسْجُدِي وَٱرْكَعِي مَعَ ٱلرَّٰكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[42-43] Then came the time when the angels said: “O Mary! Behold, Allah has chosen you, and made you pure, and exalted you above all the women in the world. O Mary! Remain devout to your Lord, and prostrate yourself in worship, and bow with those who bow (before Him)”

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَٰمَهُمْ
أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

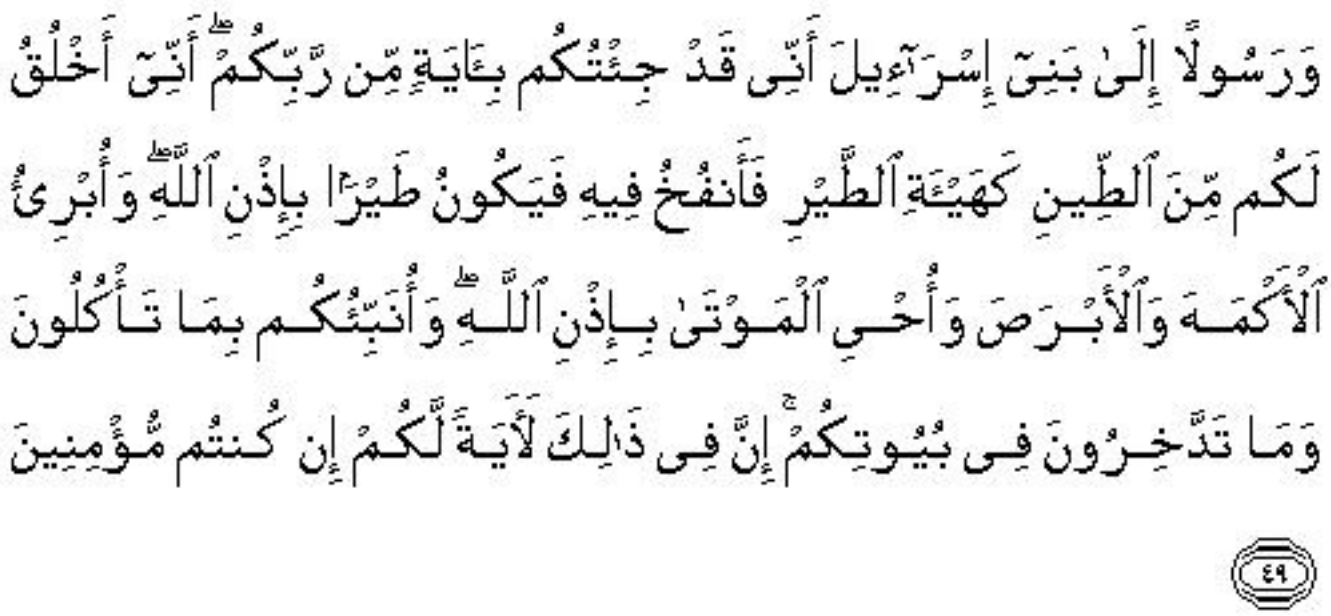
[44] O Muhammad, these are the "unseen" things, We are revealing to you: you were not present there when the priests of the Temple were casting lots by throwing their quills to decide which of them should be the guardian of Mary:[43] nor were you with them when they were arguing about it.

إِذْ قَالَتِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ
ٱسْمُهُ ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَمِنَ
ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

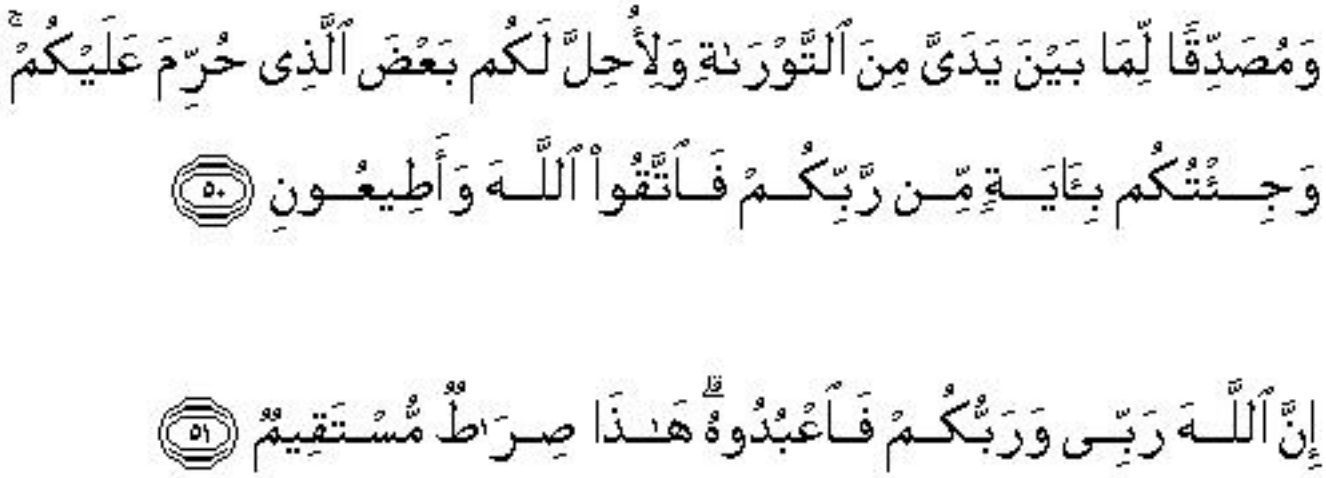
وَيُكَلِّمُ ٱلنَّاسَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِى وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِى بَشَرٌ ۖ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ ٱللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ
مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٤٨﴾

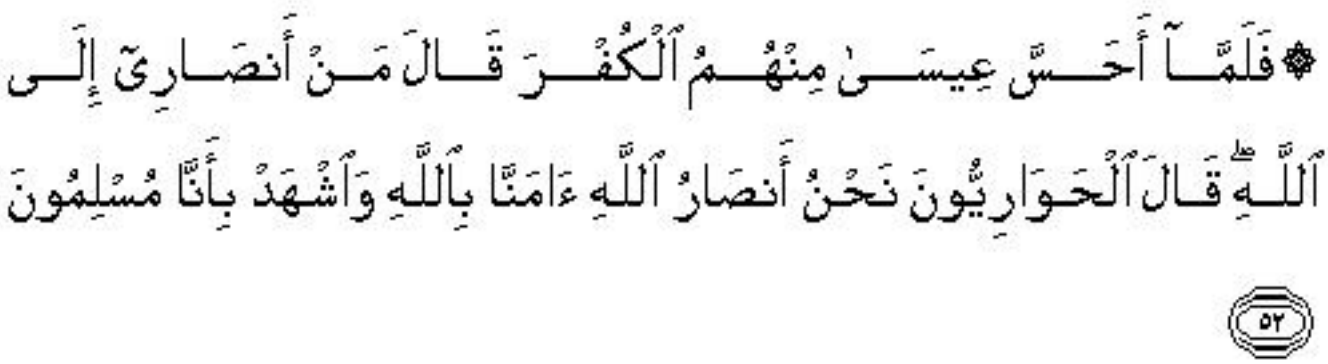


[45-49] And remember when the angels said, "O Mary, Allah sends you the good news of a Command of His: his name shall be Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. He will be highly honoured in this world and in the Next World and he will be among those favoured by Allah. He will speak to the people alike when in the cradle and when grown up, and he will be among the righteous." Hearing this, Mary said, "How, O Lord, shall I have a son, when no man has ever touched me?" "Thus shall it be,"[44] was the answer. Allah creates whatever He wills. When He decrees a thing, He only says, "Be" and it is. (Continuing their message, the angels added,) "And Allah will teach him the Book and wisdom, and give him the knowledge of the Torah and the Gospel, and appoint him as His Messenger to the children of Israel."

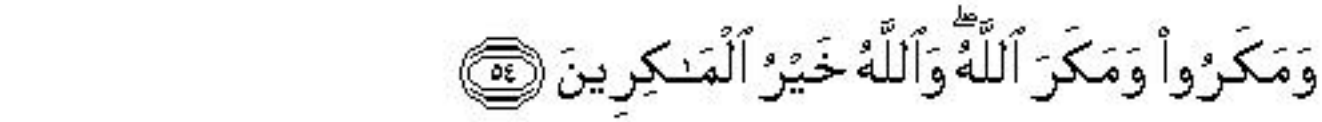


[50-51] (And when he came as a Messenger to the children of Israel, he said,) "I have come to you with a clear Sign from your Lord: in your very presence, I make the likeness of a bird out of clay and breathe into it and it becomes, by Allah's Command, a bird. I heal those born blind and the lepers and I bring to life the dead by Allah's Command: I inform you of what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Surely there is a great Sign for you in all this, if

you have a mind to believe. [45] And I have come to confirm those teachings of the Guidance of the Torah which are intact in my time.[46] Lo! I have come with a clear Sign from your Lord;[47] so fear Allah and obey me. Indeed Allah is my Lord, and also your Lord; therefore worship Him alone: that is the straight way."[48]



[52-53] When Jesus perceived that the children of Israel were bent upon disbelief, he said, "Who will be my helper in the cause of Allah?" The disciples[49] (promptly responded and) said, "We are Allah's helpers:[50] we have believed in Allah; so do bear witness that we are Muslims (who surrender to Allah). Lord! we have believed in that which Thou hast sent down and followed Thy Messenger; so enroll us among those who bear witness.



إِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَىٰٓ إِنِّى مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَىَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَجَاعِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ
٥٥

فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَأُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن
نَّٰصِرِينَ ٥٦

وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا
يُحِبُّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٥٧

[54-57] Then the children of Israel began to plot (against Jesus) and Allah also devised His secret plan, and Allah is the best of devisers. (It was to carry out His secret plan that) He said, "O Jesus, now I will recall[51] you and raise you up to Myself and cleanse you of (the uncongenial company and the filthy environment of) those who have rejected you and will set up those who follow you above those who have rejected you[52] till the Day of Resurrection. And ultimately all of you shall return to Me: then I will judge between you in what you differ, and punish with a grievous punishment, both in this world and in the Hereafter, those who have adopted the attitude of disbelief and rejection and they shall have none to help them. And those, who have believed and done good deeds, shall be given their rewards in full. And note it well that Allah does not like the transgressors."

ذَٰلِكَ نَتۡلُوهُ عَلَيۡكَ مِنَ ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِ وَٱلذِّكۡرِ ٱلۡحَكِيمِ ﴿٥٨﴾

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ ءَادَمَۖ خَلَقَهُۥ مِن تُرَابٖ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥٩﴾

ٱلۡحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡمُمۡتَرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[58-60] The stories which We are relating to you are full of signs and wisdom. In the sight of Allah, the case of the birth of Jesus is like that of Adam, whom He created out of dust and said, "Be", and he was.[53] This is the fact of the matter your lord is imparting, and you should not be of those who doubt it.[54]

فَمَنۡ حَآجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلۡعِلۡمِ فَقُلۡ تَعَالَوۡاْ نَدۡعُ أَبۡنَآءَنَا وَأَبۡنَآءَكُمۡ وَنِسَآءَنَا وَنِسَآءَكُمۡ وَأَنفُسَنَا وَأَنفُسَكُمۡ ثُمَّ نَبۡتَهِلۡ فَنَجۡعَل لَّعۡنَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٦١﴾

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ ٱلۡقَصَصُ ٱلۡحَقُّۚ وَمَا مِنۡ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ﴿٦٢﴾

فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

[61-63] After the coming of this knowledge to you, if anyone argues with you about this matter, say, O Muhammad, "Come, let us both gather together and also bring our children and your children, our women and your women, and then pray to Allah and invoke Him to lay the liars under His curse."[55] These narratives are absolutely true and the fact is that there is no deity save Allah; indeed Allah is All Mighty and All-Wise. Then if they turn away (from accepting the challenge) it will be a clear proof of their mischief and Allah has full knowledge of the mischief-makers.

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ
وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟
فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[64] Say,[56] "O people of the Book! Come to what is common between us and you,[57] that we worship none but Allah; that we associate nothing with Him and that none of us shall make as our Lord any other than Allah." If they reject your invitation, then tell them plainly, "Bear witness that we are Muslims (who worship and surrender to Allah alone)."

يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَتِ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ وَٱلْإِنجِيلُ
إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

[65] O people. of the Book, why do you argue with us about Abraham (as to whether he was a Jew or a Christian? You know that) the Torah and the Gospel were sent down long after him. Why do you not, then, understand even this?[58] You have had enough arguments

هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ حَٰجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ
فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٦٦

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَٰكِن كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ
مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ٦٧

إِنَّ أَوْلَى ٱلنَّاسِ بِإِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَٰذَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
وَلِىُّ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٦٨

[66-68] You have had enough arguments about things of which you had some knowledge: why should you now argue about that also of which you know nothing at all? Allah knows, but you know nothing. Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Muslim, sound in the Faith,[59] and he was not of those who set up partners with Allah. Surely only those people who follow Abraham are entitled to claim a relationship with Him. Now this Prophet and the Believers are better entitled to this relationship: Allah is the Protector of only those who are Believers.

وَدَّت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَوْ يُضِلُّونَكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا
يَشْعُرُونَ ٦٩

يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تَكۡفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَنتُمۡ تَشۡهَدُونَ ٧٠

يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لِمَ تَلۡبِسُونَ ٱلۡحَقَّ بِٱلۡبَٰطِلِ وَتَكۡتُمُونَ ٱلۡحَقَّ وَأَنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ٧١

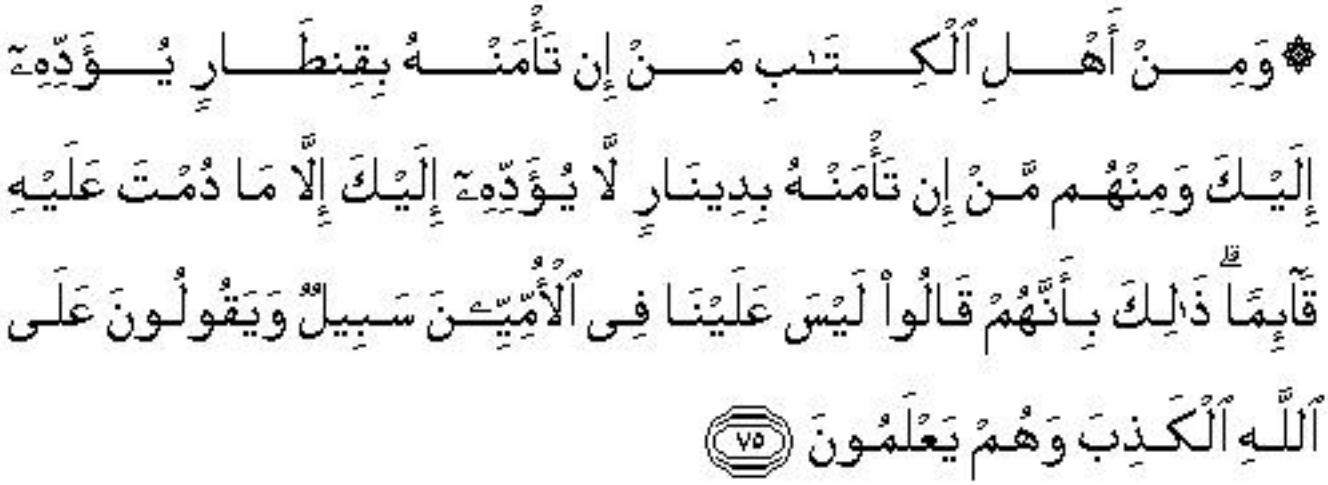
[69-71] (O Believers,) a party of the people of the Book longs to lead you astray, somehow or other; whereas they mislead none except themselves, but they do not perceive it. O people of the Book, why do you deny Allah's Signs, which you yourselves are witnessing?[60] O people of the Book, why do you confound the Truth with falsehood and conceal the Truth knowingly?

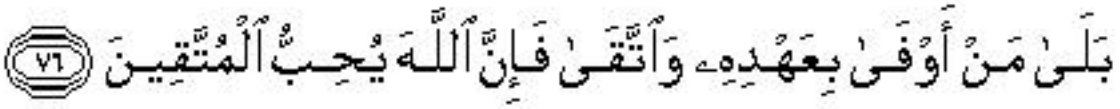
وَقَالَت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنۡ أَهۡلِ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ءَامِنُواْ بِٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَجۡهَ ٱلنَّهَارِ وَٱكۡفُرُوٓاْ ءَاخِرَهُۥ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡجِعُونَ ٧٢

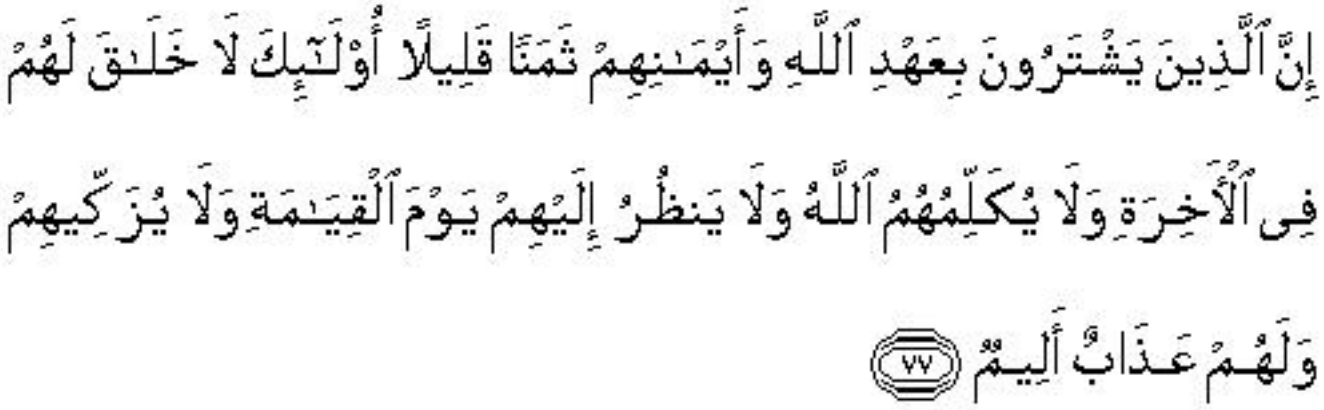
وَلَا تُؤۡمِنُوٓاْ إِلَّا لِمَن تَبِعَ دِينَكُمۡ قُلۡ إِنَّ ٱلۡهُدَىٰ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ أَن يُؤۡتَىٰٓ أَحَدٞ مِّثۡلَ مَآ أُوتِيتُمۡ أَوۡ يُحَآجُّوكُمۡ عِندَ رَبِّكُمۡۗ قُلۡ إِنَّ ٱلۡفَضۡلَ بِيَدِ ٱللَّهِ يُؤۡتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٞ ٧٣

يَخۡتَصُّ بِرَحۡمَتِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۗ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلۡفَضۡلِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٧٤

[72-74] Another party of the people of the Book says to one another, "Profess in the morning what has been sent down to the Believers and reject it in the evening: it may be that, by this device, they will turn back from their Faith."[61] They also say, "Do not follow any except the one who follows your own religion." O Prophet, say to them, "In fact the real guidance is the guidance of Allah: (It is His Will) that He may bless one with the same that He once bestowed upon you, or He may provide others with a strong argument against you to put it before your Lord." O Prophet, say to them, "Bounty and Grace belong to Allah and He may bestow these upon any one He wills,[61a] for He is All Embracing,[62] All-knowing:[63] He chooses for His favour whom He wills and His grace is boundless."







[75-77] There is among the people of the Book such a person who will return to you intact a heap of gold entrusted to him by you. But there is among them also such a one who will not return even a single dinar entrusted to him by you unless you demand it with importunity. They justify their immoral behaviour, saying, "We are not to be called to account for our behaviour towards the unlettered (gentiles)."[64] Obviously, this is a falsehood of their own which they

deliberately . ascribe to Allah, knowing well that He has never permitted such a thing. Well, will they not be called to account? Nay, Allah loves only such pious people who fulfil their Covenant and abstain from evil. As for those who barter away their Covenant with Allah and their own oaths for a paltry profit; they shall have no share in the Hereafter; Allah will not speak to them nor even look at them nor cleanse them of sins on the Day of Resurrectien.[65] There is, on the other hand, a painful punishment in store for them.

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُۥنَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِٱلْكِتَٰبِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَمَا
هُوَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[78] There are among them some people, who, in reading the Book, twist their tongues in a way to make you think that what they read is a part of the Book, whereas, in fact it is not a part of the Book.[66] They also assert, "What we are reading is from Allah," when in fact it is not from Allah. They knowingly ascribe the lie to Allah.

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُؤْتِيَهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحُكْمَ وَٱلنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ
يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا۟ عِبَادًا لِّى مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَٰكِن كُونُوا۟ رَبَّٰنِيِّۦنَ بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

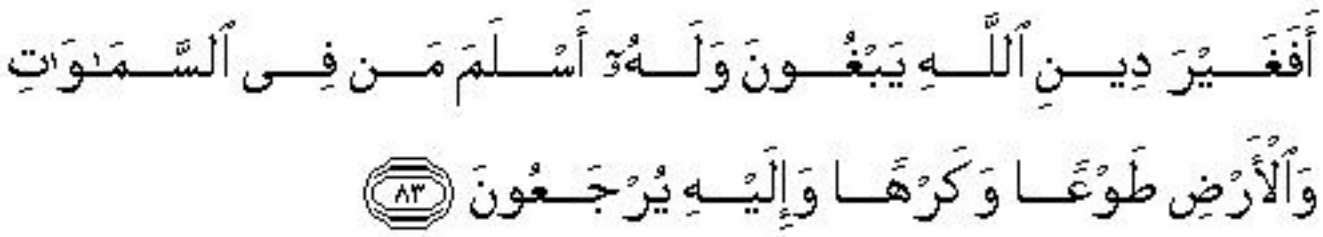
وَلَا يَأْمُرَكُمْ أَن تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ وَٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ أَرْبَابًا ۗ أَيَأْمُرُكُم
بِٱلْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[79-80] No man, to whom Allah gives the Book and sound judgment and Prophethood, would say thereafter to the people, "Be worshippers of me instead of Allah." He will surely say, "Be true Rabbanis[67] in accordance with the teachings of the Book you read and teach. He will never enjoin you to make the angels or the Prophets your lords;

is it conceivable that a Prophet should enjoin you to adopt disbelief, after you have surrendered to Allah?"[68]



[81-82] Remember, Allah made this Covenant with His Messengers: "Now that We have given you the Book and Wisdom, you are hereby bound to believe in and help a Messenger,[69] who comes to you afterwards, confirming the teachings you already possess." After this, He asked, "Do you confirm this and take up the heavy responsibility of your Covenant with Me?" They said, "Yes, we confirm." Then Allah said, "Very well, bear witness to this and I also bear witness with you. Now whosoever breaks the Covenant after this, he shall be a transgressor."[70]



قُلْ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَٱلْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَٱلنَّبِيُّونَ
مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُۥ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ دِينًا فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِنَ
ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[83-85] Now do these people desire to give up the way of Allah's submission (Islam) and adopt a different way (knowing well), that all things in heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, submit to Allah,[71] and to Him shall all return? O Prophet, say, "We believe in Allah and in the teachings which have been sent down to us, and also in those teachings sent down to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob and his descendants, and in the guidance that was given by Allah to Moses, Jesus and other Messengers. We do not discriminate against anyone of them[72] and we submit and surrender to Him." And whoso adopts any other than this way of submission (Islam), that way shall not be accepted from him and in the Hereafter he shall be among the losers.

كَيْفَ يَهْدِى ٱللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا۟ بَعْدَ إِيمَٰنِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱلرَّسُولَ حَقٌّ
وَجَآءَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ أَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ
﴿٨٧﴾

[86-87] How can it be that Allah would guide the people who adopted disbelief after they had acknowledged the Faith and after they themselves had borne witness that he was a true Prophet and after clear Signs had come to them?[73] For Allah does not guide the unjust people. The fitting recompense for their iniquity is that they are under the curse of Allah and of the angels and of all mankind.

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٨٩﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بَعْدَ إِيمَٰنِهِمْ ثُمَّ ٱزْدَادُوا۟ كُفْرًا لَّن تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلضَّآلُّونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَمَاتُوا۟ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِم مِّلْءُ ٱلْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوِ ٱفْتَدَىٰ بِهِۦٓ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

[88-91] They shall remain under it for ever; neither will their punishment be lightened nor shall they be reprieved. However, those who repent after this and mend their ways will be redeemed; Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. As for those who believed and then disbelieved and persisted in their disbelief;[74] even their repentance shall not be accepted because they are obdurate transgressors. Believe it that if anyone of those who adopted disbelief and died as a disbeliever were to fill the whole earth with gold and offer it as ransom for redemption, that will not be accepted. There is a painful punishment in store for such people and they will not find any helpers.

لَن تَنَالُوا۟ ٱلْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِن شَىْءٍ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

[92] You can never attain piety unless you spend (in the way of Allah) of what you love;[75] surely Allah will have full knowledge of what you spend.

۞ كُلُّ ٱلطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ
مِن قَبْلِ أَن تُنَزَّلَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ ۗ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ فَٱتْلُوهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ
﴿٩٣﴾

فَمَنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

قُلْ صَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ فَٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا
كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

[93-95] All these articles of food (which are lawful in the Muhammadan Law), were also lawful to the children of Israel[76] except those which Israel[77] had forbidden for himself before the Torah had been sent down. Say to them, "Bring the Torah and read out any passage from it (in support of your objection), if what you say be true. "-If even after this, some people persist in attributing to Allah false things of their own fabrication, they are, indeed, unjust

people. Say, "What Allah has said is the very Truth; so follow exclusively the way of Abraham, and Abraham was not of those who associated other gods with Allah."[78]

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾

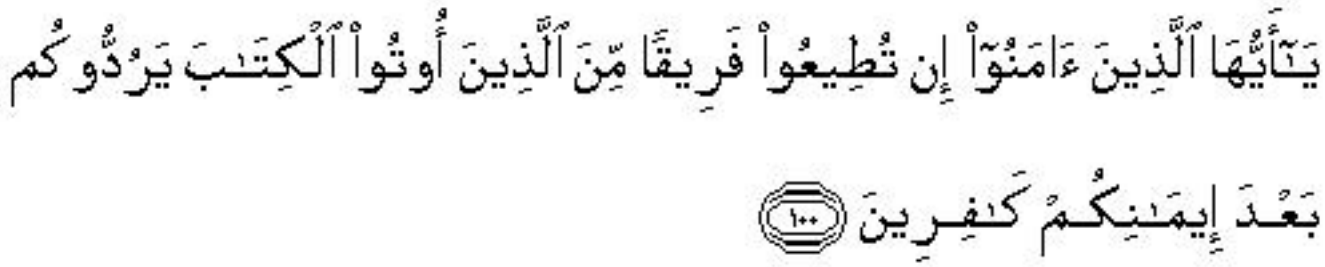
فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ وَمَن دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ
حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ
﴿٩٧﴾

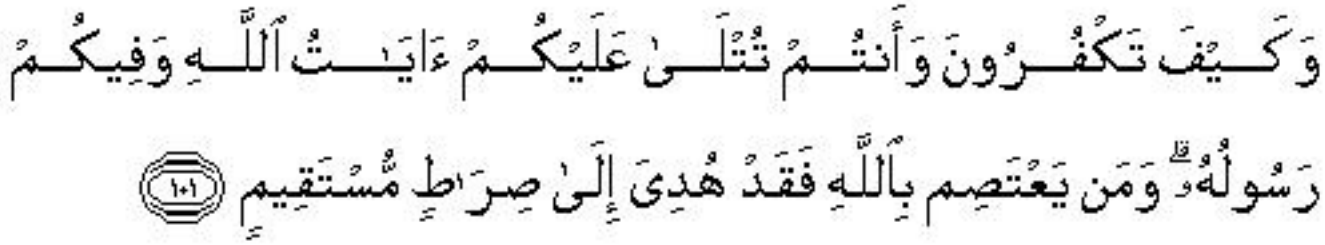
[96-97] Undoubtedly the first house of worship ever to be built for mankind is the one which is at Makkah: it was blessed and made the centre of Guidance for all peoples.[79] In it are clear Signs:[80] there is the spot where Abraham used to worship: then it is the sanctuary, and whoso enters it becomes safe and secure.[81] Allah has, therefore, a right on the people that the one, who can afford to reach the house, should perform Haj there: and the one who disobeys (this Commandment should know that) Allah is All-Sufficient and does not stand in need of any creature of the worlds.

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ
عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

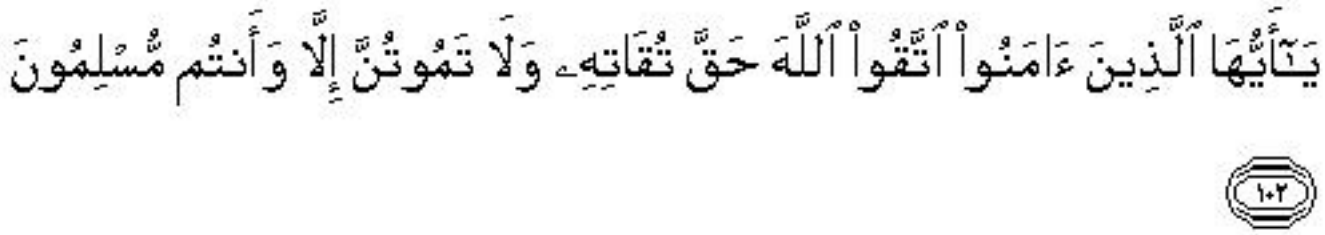
قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ تَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا
وَأَنتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

[98-99] Say, "O people of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the Revelations of Allah? Surely Allah is watching what you are doing"Say, "O people of Book, why do you stand in the way of him who believes in the Revelations of Allah and desire that he should follow a crooked way when you yourselves are a witness to it (that he is on the Right Way)?" Allah is not unaware of what you are doing.





[100-101] O Believers, if you follow some of the people of the Book they will again turn you away from belief into unbelief. There is no reason why you should now turn to unbelief, when Allah's Revelations are being recited to you and His Messenger is among you; whoso holds fast to Allah, surely he will be guided to the Right Way.



وَٱعْتَصِمُواْ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُواْ ۚ وَٱذْكُرُواْ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ
كُنتُمْ أَعْدَآءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِۦٓ إِخْوَٰنًا وَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ
شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

[102-103] O Believers, fear Allah as He should be feared and see that you do not die save as true Muslims[82] - Hold fast together to Allah's cord[83] and let nothing divide you. Remember the favour of Allah upon you, when you were enemies to one another, then He united your hearts, and by His grace, you became like brothers, and you were on the brink of the abyss of Fire and He rescued you from it.[84] Thus does Allah make His signs clear to you so that you may find the right path to true success by these.[85]

وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

وَلَا تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُواْ وَٱخْتَلَفُواْ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتُ ۚ
وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ ۚ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكَفَرْتُم
بَعْدَ إِيمَٰنِكُمْ فَذُوقُواْ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ٱبۡيَضَّتۡ وُجُوهُهُمۡ فَفِي رَحۡمَةِ ٱللَّهِ هُمۡ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ نَتۡلُوهَا عَلَيۡكَ بِٱلۡحَقِّۗ وَمَا ٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلۡمٗا لِّلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرۡجَعُ ٱلۡأُمُورُ ﴿١٠٩﴾

[104-109] There should always be among you some people who invite to what is good and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong: They alone will attain true success. And do not be like those, who became divided into sects and got involved in differences of opinion even after receiving clear teachings.[86] Those (who have caused divisions), shall suffer a terrible punishment on the Day, when the faces (of some) will be brightened with joy and those of others shall be blackened with gloom. (It will be said to those,) whose faces shall be blackened, "Did you adopt the way of disbelief after receiving Faith? Well, then taste the torment for showing gross ingratitude towards it." As regards those, whose faces will be brightened, they will enjoy Allah's mercy and abide therein for ever. These are Allah's Revelations, which We are reciting to you in all Truth, for Allah does not will to be unjust[87] to the people of the world. All that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah, and to Allah are all the matters presented.

كُنتُمۡ خَيۡرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخۡرِجَتۡ لِلنَّاسِ تَأۡمُرُونَ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَتَنۡهَوۡنَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ وَتُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِۗ وَلَوۡ ءَامَنَ أَهۡلُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيۡرٗا لَّهُمۚ مِّنۡهُمُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ وَأَكۡثَرُهُمُ ٱلۡفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

لَن يَضُرُّوكُمْ إِلَّآ أَذًى ۖ وَإِن يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ يُوَلُّوكُمُ ٱلْأَدْبَٰرَ ثُمَّ لَا
يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلذِّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا ثُقِفُوٓا۟ إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَبَآءُو بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَسْكَنَةُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟
يَكْفُرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ ٱلْأَنۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا۟
وَّكَانُوا۟ يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

[110-112] Now you are the best community which has been raised up for the guidance of mankind:[88] you enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. Had these people of the Book[89] also believed, it would have surely been better for them. Though there are among them some believers, yet most of them are transgressors. Anyhow they can do no harm to you: the worst they can do is to inflict a trifling hurt on you. If they fight with you, they will turn their backs on you, and shall not get any help from anywhere. Disgrace and humiliation have been stamped upon them wherever they may be except in the case when they get refuge under the favour of Allah or under the patronage of other people.[90] They have incurred the wrath of Allah; therefore misery and humiliation have been stamped upon them. This is because they rejected the Revelations of Allah and killed His Prophets without any just cause; this is the consequence of their disobedience and their transgression.

۞ لَيْسُوا۟ سَوَآءً ۗ مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أُمَّةٌ قَآئِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ءَانَآءَ
ٱلَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ
وَيُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَن يُكْفَرُوهُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَن تُغْنِىَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۖ
وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

مَثَلُ مَا يُنفِقُونَ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ فِيهَا صِرٌّ أَصَابَتْ
حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ فَأَهْلَكَتْهُ ۚ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَٰكِنْ أَنفُسَهُمْ
يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

[113-117] Yet all the people of the Book are not alike: there are among them some who are steadfastly on the right path; who recite the Revelations of Allah at night and fall prostrate before Him; who believe in AIlah and the Last Day; who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and remain earnestly engaged in good works; these are the righteous people, and whatever good they do, they will not be denied the just reward for it, for Allah knows full well the pious people. As for those who have adopted the way of disbelief, neither their wealth nor their children shall avail them against Allah; they deserve Hell, and there they shall abide for ever. Whatever they are spending in this worldly life may be likened to the wind that brings frost in it and smites and destroys totally the tillage of those who have been unjust to themselves;[91] Allah has not done any injustice to them but in fact they themselves are doing injustice to themselves.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّخِذُواْ بِطَانَةً مِّن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا
وَدُّواْ مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ ٱلْبَغْضَآءُ مِنْ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِى صُدُورُهُمْ
أَكْبَرُ ۚ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ ٱلْأَيَٰتِ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

هَٰٓأَنتُمْ أُولَآءِ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْكِتَٰبِ كُلِّهِۦ
وَإِذَا لَقُوكُمْ قَالُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْاْ عَضُّواْ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ ٱلْغَيْظِ ۚ قُلْ
مُوتُواْ بِغَيْظِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿١١٩﴾

إِن تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِن تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُواْ
بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تَصْبِرُواْ وَتَتَّقُواْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾

[118-120] O Believers, do not take into your confidence any other than the people of your own community for they never miss any opportunity of exploiting any weakness of yours[92] They desire that which is harmful to you; their malice has become apparent from what they say, but what they conceal in their hearts is yet far worse. We have made clear to you the signs thereof, and if you are wise, (you will be very cautious in your relations with them.) As for you, you love them but they do not love you, even though you believe in all the revealed Books.[93] When they meet you, they say, "We also believe (in. your Prophet and in your Book"), but when they go aside, they bite their finger-tips in their rage against you.- Say to them, "Perish in your rage: Allah knows even that which is hidden in the hearts." They grieve if you are blessed with some good and rejoice if an evil befalls you. But their crafty schemes cannot harm you at all, if you show fortitude and fear Allah in whatever you do. Allah encircles whatever they are doing.

وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَـٰعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢١﴾

[121] O Messenger,[94] mention that occasion to the Muslims when you set out from your house-hold early in the morning and began to assign to the Muslims their positions on the battlefield (of Uhd). Allah hears everything and knows everything.

إِذْ هَمَّت طَّآئِفَتَانِ مِنكُمْ أَن تَفْشَلَا وَٱللَّهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا ۗ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

[122-123] Remember that two groups from among you were about to show cowardice,[95] though Allah was there to succour them, and the Believers should trust in Allah alone. Indeed Allah had already succoured you in the battle of Badr when you were in a much weaker position, therefore you should refrain from showing ingratitude towards Allah: it is expected that you will be grateful now.

إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَن يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَن يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِثَلَـٰثَةِ ءَالَـٰفٍ مِّنَ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ مُنزَلِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

بَلَىٰٓ إِن تَصۡبِرُواْ وَتَتَّقُواْ وَيَأۡتُوكُم مِّن فَوۡرِهِمۡ هَٰذَا يُمۡدِدۡكُمۡ رَبُّكُم
بِخَمۡسَةِ ءَالَٰفٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ١٢٥

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشۡرَىٰ لَكُمۡ وَلِتَطۡمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم بِهِۦۚ وَمَا ٱلنَّصۡرُ إِلَّا مِنۡ
عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡحَكِيمِ ١٢٦

لِيَقۡطَعَ طَرَفٗا مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَوۡ يَكۡبِتَهُمۡ فَيَنقَلِبُواْ خَآئِبِينَ ١٢٧

[124-127] Remember when you said to the Believers, "Does it not suffice you that Allah should help you by sending down three thousand angels?"[96] -Yes, if you show fortitude and fear Allah in whatever you do, Allah will help you with (not three thousand but) five thousand angels, known by certain marks, in case of a sudden attack from the enemy. Allah has told you this so that you may rejoice and your hearts be filled with peace: victory and succour come from Allah alone, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise. (He will succour you) so that He may cut off a flank of the disbelievers or put them to rout with dishonour.

لَيۡسَ لَكَ مِنَ ٱلۡأَمۡرِ شَيۡءٌ أَوۡ يَتُوبَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ أَوۡ يُعَذِّبَهُمۡ فَإِنَّهُمۡ ظَٰلِمُونَ

١٢٨

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ يَغۡفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ
مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ١٢٩

[128-129] (O Prophet,) you have no authority to decide the affair: Allah alone has the authority to pardon them or punish them for they are workers of iniquity. Allah is the Owner of whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth: He may forgive whomever He pleases and punish whomever He wills; Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[97]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَأۡكُلُواْ ٱلرِّبَوٰٓاْ أَضۡعَٰفٗا مُّضَٰعَفَةٗۖ
وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ١٣٠

وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِيٓ أُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ١٣١

وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُرۡحَمُونَ ١٣٢

۞ وَسَارِعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرۡضُهَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ
أُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ ١٣٣

ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ فِى ٱلسَّرَّآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَٱلْكَٰظِمِينَ ٱلْغَيْظَ وَٱلْعَافِينَ عَنِ
ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا۟ فَٰحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَٱسْتَغْفَرُوا۟
لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا۟ وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

[130-136] O Believers, give up the devouring of interest by doubling and redoubling it,[98] and fear Allah: it is expected that you will achieve (true) success. And guard yourselves against that Fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers, and obey Allah and His Messenger; it is expected that you will be shown mercy. Hasten to follow the path that leads to forgiveness from your Lord and to the Garden, which is as vast as the heavens and the earth and has been prepared for those pious people who spend their wealth freely in the way of Allah alike in prosperity and in adversity; who control their rage and forgive other people,-Allah likes such good people very much,[99] -who, if ever they commit a base deed or wrong their own soul by the commission of a sin, remember Allah instantly and ask for forgiveness from Him for their shortcomings-for who, but Allah, can forgive sins?-who do not knowingly persist in the wrongs they did. These will be rewarded with forgiveness from Allah and with Gardens beneath which canals flow and they will reside therein for ever: and how excellent is the reward of those who do good deeds.

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَـٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

هَـٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

[137-138] As for those who treated (the Divine Revelations) as false, traverse the land and see for yourselves the wretched end of such people, who lived during the eras before your time. This is a clear warning for the people and guidance and admonition for those who fear Allah.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَنتُمُ ٱلْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

إِن يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ ٱلْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُۥ ۚ وَتِلْكَ ٱلْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنكُمْ شُهَدَآءَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

وَلِيُمَحِّصَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَيَمْحَقَ ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تَدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُوا۟ مِنكُمْ
وَيَعْلَمَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

وَلَقَدْ كُنتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ ٱلْمَوْتَ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ
وَأَنتُمْ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

[139-143] Be not faint hearted and be not sorrowful, you will surely gain the upper hand, if you be true believers. If you have received a blow now, your enemy also received a similar blow.[100] These are the vicissitudes of time that We alternate among the people; this has been done so that Allah may test from among you who were believers and choose the righteous witnesses of the Truth;[101] for Allah does not like the workers of iniquity-and by this test He willed to sort out true believers and to crush down the disbelievers. Do you think that you will enter Paradise without undergoing any trial? Allah has not yet tried you to see who among you are ready to lay down your lives in His way and who will show fortitude for His sake. You used to long for death but that was before you confronted it. Well, now it has come before you, and you have seen it with your own eyes.[102]

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ ٱلرُّسُلُ ۚ
أَفَإِيْن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ ٱنقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَٰبِكُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَنقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ
فَلَن يَضُرَّ ٱللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا ۗ وَسَيَجْزِى ٱللَّهُ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

[144] Muhammad is no more than a Messenger: other Messengers have already passed before him: if, then, he also dies or is slain, will you then turn about on your heels?[103] Remember, he, who turns about on his heels, will do no harm at all to Allah; of course Allah will duly reward those who live as His grateful servants.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ كِتَٰبًا مُّؤَجَّلًا ۗ وَمَن يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ
ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا وَمَن يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا ۚ وَسَنَجْزِى
ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

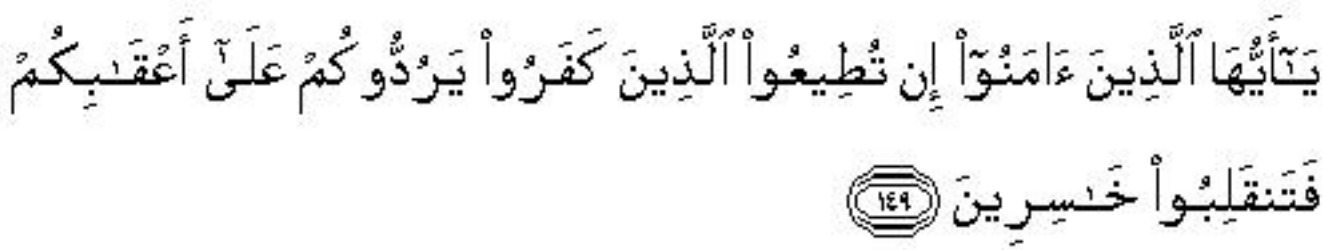
وَكَأَيِّن مِّن نَّبِىٍّ قَٰتَلَ مَعَهُۥ رِبِّيُّونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا۟ لِمَآ أَصَابَهُمْ
فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا۟ وَمَا ٱسْتَكَانُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ
﴿١٤٦﴾

وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلَهُمْ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِىٓ أَمْرِنَا
وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَٱنصُرْنَا عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

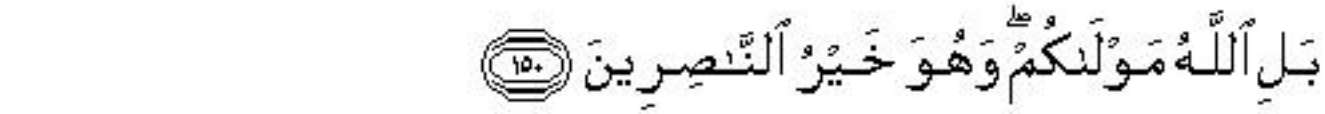
فَـَٔاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ثَوَابَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿١٤٨﴾

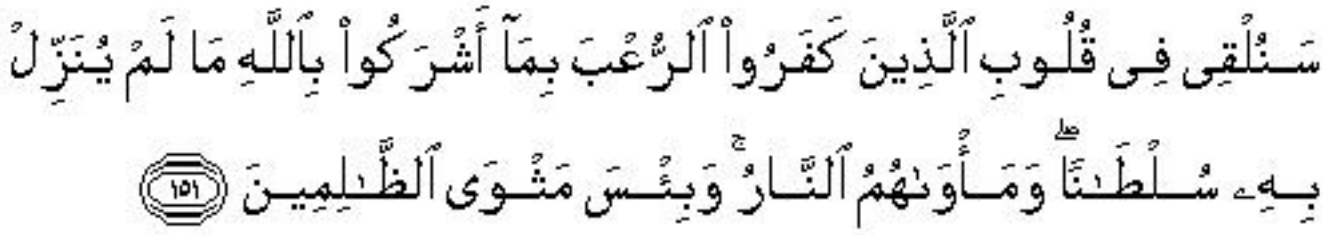
[145-148] No human being can ever die save by Allah's leave, and the time of death has been pre-ordained.[104] Whoso makes efforts with the intention of the reward of this world, We will reward him in this world, and whoso makes efforts with the intention of the reward of the Hereafter will get it[105] and We will certainly reward the grateful servants.[106] Before this have passed many such Prophets in whose company large bands of worshippers of Allah

have fought (in His way); they never lost heart during the adversities that befell them in the way of Allah; nor did they show any weakness; nor did they submit (to falsehood:[107]) Allah likes the people who show fortitude. Their only prayer was: "Our Lord, forgive our errors and shortcomings; pardon us the excesses we have committed in our affairs; make our footings secure and hold us firm against the disbelievers. " Whereupon Allah gave them the rewards of this world and also the better rewards of the Next World: Allah likes only those people who do good deeds.

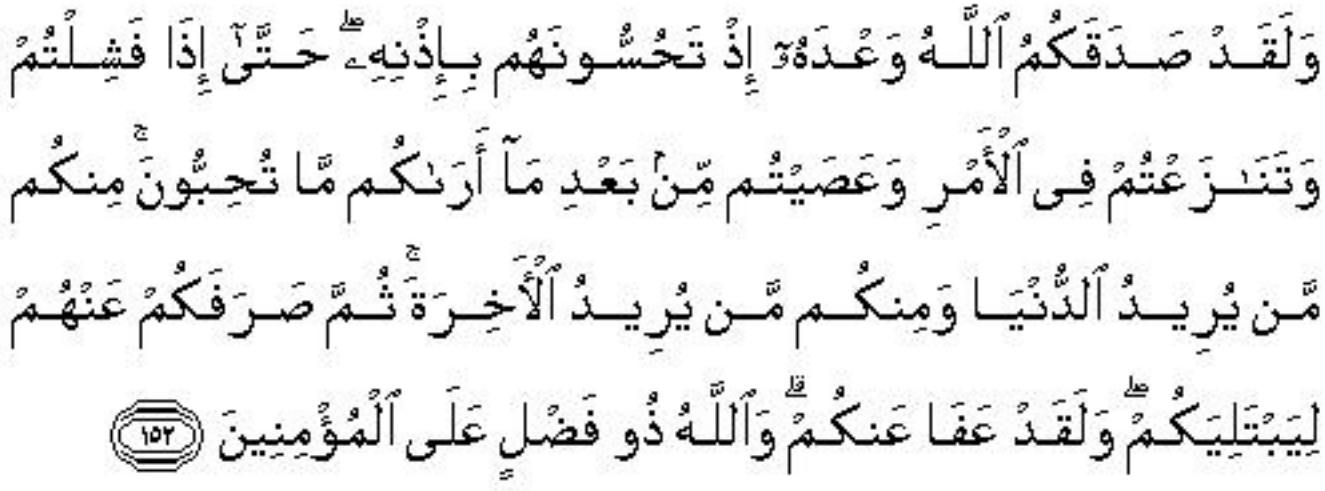


[149] O Believers, if you follow the counsel of those who have adopted the way of disbelief, they will cause you to turn back to unbelief[108] and you will be the losers.

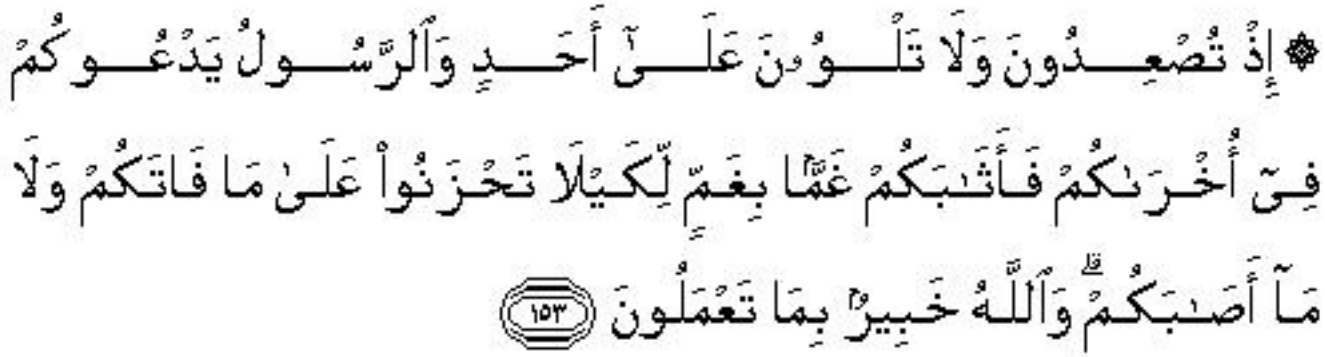




[150-151] (What they are saying is quite wrong) the fact is that Allah is your Protector and Helper and He is the best of all Helpers. The time is coming when We will cast awe into the hearts of the rejecters of the Truth: this is because they have set up with Allah partners, for whom He has sent no authority. Hell shall be their final abode and wretched indeed is the dwelling place of the workers of iniquity.



[152] Allah did fulfil His promise (of help) to you: in the initial stage of the battle, it was you who were killing them by Allah's leave until you lost heart and disputed about your duty and disobeyed your leader, when Allah showed you what (the spoils) you coveted,[108a]-for there were among you some who hankered after the life of this world, and others, who cherished the Life-after-death. Then Allah caused your retreat before the disbelievers in order to test you, but the fact is that even then Allah pardoned[109] you, for Allah is very gracious to the believers.



[153] Recall how you were fleeing in such a panic that you did not even look back at one another, and the Messenger in your rear was calling nut to you.[110] Consequently, Allah inflicted upon you one sorrow after the other[111] so that you may learn this lesson for the that you should not grieve for what you have lost and for any misfortune that might befall you: Allah is fully aware of all that you are doing.

ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ طَآئِفَةً مِّنكُمْ ۖ وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ
أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِٱللَّهِ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ ظَنَّ ٱلْجَـٰهِلِيَّةِ ۖ يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا
مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُۥ لِلَّهِ ۗ يُخْفُونَ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ
لَكَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ شَىْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَـٰهُنَا ۗ قُل لَّوْ كُنتُمْ فِى
بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۖ وَلِيَبْتَلِىَ ٱللَّهُ مَا
فِى صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿١٥٤﴾

[154] Then after this grief, Allah sent down upon some of you such a sense of peace and security that they began to drowse,[112] but the others, who attached importance only to their own worldly interests, began to cherish about Allah thoughts of ignorance which were void of truth. Now they ask, "Have we also a say in .the conduct of affairs?" Say, ("No one has share in this.) The authority over the affairs rests wholly with Allah." In fact they are not disclosing to you what they are concealing in their hearts: what they really mean is this: "If we had a say (in the conduct of) the affairs, none of us would have been slain here." Tell them, "Even though you had remained in your houses, those, who were destined to be slain, would have gone forth of their own accord to the places where they were destined to be slain." And all this happened so that Allah may test that which was hidden in your hearts, and sort out the base thing from your hearts. Allah is fully aware of what is in the hearts.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا
ٱسْتَزَلَّهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ۗ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾

[155] As for those of you who turned their backs on the day the two hosts met, they failed in their duty because Satan had exploited some of their weaknesses and made their footing insecure. Nevertheless Allah pardoned them, for Allah is indeed Forgiving and

Forbearing.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَقَالُواْ لِإِخۡوَٰنِهِمۡ
إِذَا ضَرَبُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَوۡ كَانُواْ غُزّٗى لَّوۡ كَانُواْ عِندَنَا مَا مَاتُواْ
وَمَا قُتِلُواْ لِيَجۡعَلَ ٱللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ حَسۡرَةٗ فِي قُلُوبِهِمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحۡيِۦ
وَيُمِيتُۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ ١٥٦

وَلَئِن قُتِلۡتُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَوۡ مُتُّمۡ لَمَغۡفِرَةٞ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَحۡمَةٌ خَيۡرٞ
مِّمَّا يَجۡمَعُونَ ١٥٧

وَلَئِن مُّتُّمۡ أَوۡ قُتِلۡتُمۡ لَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُحۡشَرُونَ ١٥٨

[156-158] O Believers, do not behave like disbelievers: when their brethren are on a journey or take part in a battle, (and ever meet with some accident) they say, "Had they stayed with us, they would not have died nor would have been slain." Allah makes such things[113] a cause of grief and anguish in their hearts: for in fact, it is Allah who ordains both life and death; Allah is watching all that you do. If you are slain or die in the way of Allah, you will get Allah's forgiveness and mercy which are far better than all the things they amass. Anyhow, you shall be gathered together before Allah whether you die or are slain.

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ
حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ
فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

إِن يَنصُرْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَخْذُلْكُمْ
فَمَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يَنصُرُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۗ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
﴿١٦٠﴾

[159-160] (O Messenger,) it is a great mercy of Allah that you are very gentle and lenient towards them: for, had you been harsh and hard hearted, they all would have broken away from you: so pardon them and implore Allah to forgive them, and take counsel with them in the conduct of the affairs; then, when once you make up your mind (to do a thing), trust in Allah (and do it). Allah likes those who trust in Him in whatever they do. If Allah helps you, no power can overcome you, and if He forsakes you, who is there, then, after Him to help you? Therefore, true believers should trust in Allah alone.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِىٍّ أَن يَغُلَّ ۚ وَمَن يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾

أَفَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ رِضْوَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَنۢ بَآءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ
ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦٢﴾

هُمْ دَرَجَٰتٌ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بَصِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

لَقَدْ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ
يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ
وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٦٤﴾

[161-164] It is not conceivable that a Prophet should ever commit breach of trust,[114] for whoso breaks His trust shall bring forth with him on the Day of Resurrection that which he had misappropriated. Then everyone shall be recompensed in full for what one earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly. How can then it be conceivable that the one, who always follows Allah's will, should behave like the one who incurs Allah's wrath and is ultimately doomed to Hell, which is the mast abominable abode? These two types of people have, in the sight of Allah, ranks of far different grades, for Allah is watching what they are doing. As a matter of fact, it is the great favour of Allah to the Believers that He has raised up in their midst from among themselves a Messenger who recites to them His Revelations, purifies their lives and teaches them the Book and Wisdom, though before this these very people had been in manifest error.

أَوَلَمَّآ أَصَٰبَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُم مِّثْلَيْهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنَّىٰ هَٰذَا ۖ قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ
عِندِ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٦٥﴾

وَمَآ أَصَـٰبَكُم يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ فَبِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

١٦٦

وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا۟ ۚ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ قَـٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَوِ ٱدْفَعُوا۟ ۖ
قَالُوا۟ لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَّا ٱتَّبَعْنَـٰكُمْ ۗ هُمْ لِلْكُفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَـٰنِ ۚ
يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ

١٦٧

ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا۟ لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا۟ ۗ قُلْ فَٱدْرَءُوا۟ عَنْ
أَنفُسِكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ

١٦٨

[165-168] And how is it that, when a disaster befell you, you exclaimed, "Whence is this?[115] You yourselves had (in the battle of Badr) inflicted twice as great a disaster (on your enemy).[116] O Prophet, say to them, "You yourselves have brought about this disaster upon yourselves."[117] Allah has, indeed, power over everything.[118] It was by Allah's leave that you suffered the loss on the day the two armies met so that Allah might test the true believers and also the hypocrites. When these hypocrites were told to come and fight in the way of Allah or at least in the defence (of their city), they said, "Had we known that the fighting would take place today, we would have certainly gone out with you."[119] At the time they were uttering these words, they were nearer to unbelief than to faith, for they utter with their tongues what is not in their hearts; but Allah knows well what they conceal in their hearts. These are the very people who, while they themselves stayed at home, said of their brethren, who had gone to the battle and had been slain, "If they had obeyed us, they would not have been slain." Tell them, "If you really believe in what you say, you should turn away your own death, when it comes to you."

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتًۢا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ عِندَ
رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

فَرِحِينَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِم
مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

۞ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
﴿١٧١﴾

[169-171] Do not regard as dead those who have been slain in the way of Allah; nay, they are really alive[120] and are well provided for by their Lord. They rejoice in what Allah with His bounty has given them,[121] and they are happy to think that there is nothing to fear or to grieve also for those believers whom they have left behind and who have not yet Joined them. They feel happy to have received the reward and the bounty of Allah and they have come to know that most surely Allah does not let go to waste the reward of the Believers.

ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِلَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَصَابَهُمُ ٱلْقَرْحُ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟
مِنْهُمْ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٢﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ ٱلنَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَٰنًا
وَقَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا ٱللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ ٱلْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾

فَٱنقَلَبُوا۟ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمْسَسْهُمْ سُوٓءٌ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ رِضْوَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَٱللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾

إِنَّمَا ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم
مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

[172-175] As for those, who responded to the call of Allah and His Messenger even after receiving the injury[122] there will be a great reward for such of those who do righteous works and refrain from evil and who,[123] when the people said to them, "Big armies have gathered against you: so fear them," became more firm in their Faith, and answered, "Allah is all sufficient for us, for He is the best Protector." Ultimately they returned home with the blessing and grace of Allah; they did not suffer any harm at all. Besides this, they had the, honour of following what pleased Allah, and Allah's bounty is infinite. (Now you must have realized that) it was Satan who was frightening the people with the fear of his friends; therefore in future do not fear men but fear Me, if you are true believers.[124]

وَلَا يَحْزُنكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْكُفْرِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ لَن يَضُرُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا
يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَظًّا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾

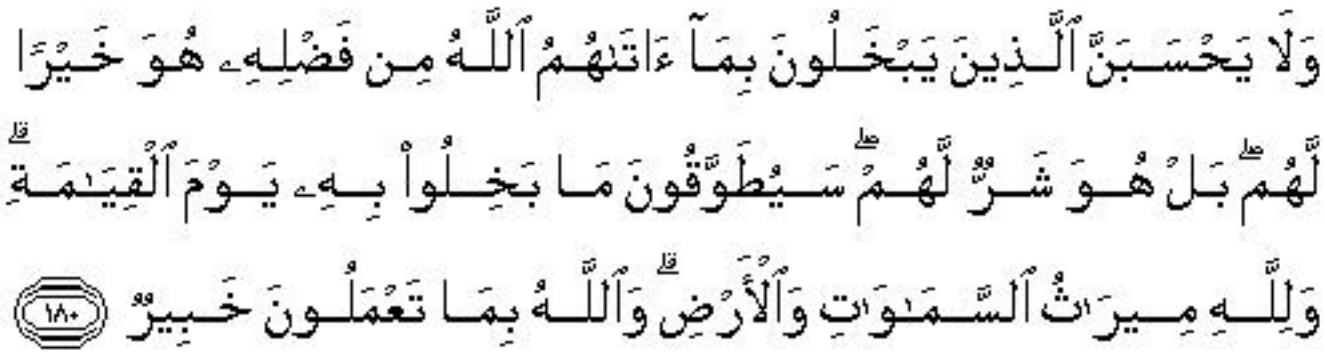
إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱشۡتَرَوُاْ ٱلۡكُفۡرَ بِٱلۡإِيمَٰنِ لَن يَضُرُّواْ ٱللَّهَ شَيۡـٔٗاۖ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ١٧٧

وَلَا يَحۡسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَنَّمَا نُمۡلِي لَهُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لِّأَنفُسِهِمۡۚ إِنَّمَا نُمۡلِي لَهُمۡ لِيَزۡدَادُوٓاْ إِثۡمٗاۚ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ مُّهِينٞ ١٧٨

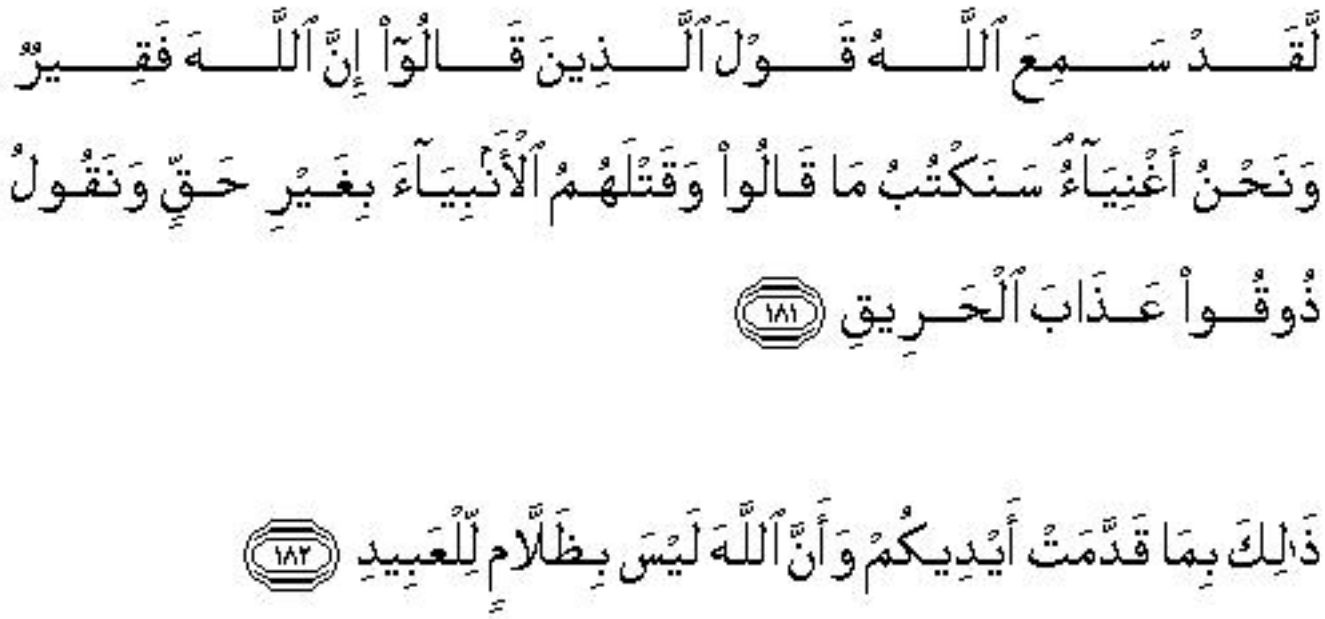
[176-178] (O Messenger,) let not the mischievous activities of those, who are striving today in the way of unbelief, grieve you; they can do absolutely no harm to Allah: thus Allah intends that they should not have any share in the Hereafter, and there is a very severe punishment in store for them. Those, who are bartering away faith for unbelief, are surely doing no harm to Allah: a grievous torment awaits them. Let not the disbelievers think that the respite We are giving them is good for themselves; as a matter of fact, We are giving them respite so that they might gather a heavy burden of sins for themselves; then there shall be disgraceful punishment for them.

مَّا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَنتُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ ٱلۡخَبِيثَ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبِۗ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُطۡلِعَكُمۡ عَلَى ٱلۡغَيۡبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَجۡتَبِي مِن رُّسُلِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۖ فَـَٔامِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦۚ وَإِن تُؤۡمِنُواْ وَتَتَّقُواْ فَلَكُمۡ أَجۡرٌ عَظِيمٞ ١٧٩

[179] Allah will not leave the Believers in the state in which you happened to be at present:[125] He will surely separate the pure from the impure people but Allah will not do this by disclosing the unseen to you.[126] As for disclosing the unseen, He chooses those of His Messengers He pleases; therefore put your faith in Allah and His Messenger (regarding the unseen) for there shall be a big reward for you, if you follow the way of faith in Allah and fear Him.



[180] Let not those whom Allah has blessed with His bounty and are behaving in a niggardly manner think it to be good for themselves; nay, it is very bad for them. Whatever they are hoarding parsimoniously shall be hung round their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection; for Allah alone will inherit all that is in the heaven and the earth[127] and He is fully aware of what you are doing.



[181-182] Allah has heard the saying of those who said; "Allah is poor and we are rich."[128] We will record this (in their Conduct Book) along with their previous record of unjust killing of their Prophets. And (on the Day of Judgment), We will say to them, "Now taste the torment of the burning Fire. This is for what you earned with your own hands. Allah is not unjust to His servants."

ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَهِدَ إِلَيۡنَآ أَلَّا نُؤۡمِنَ لِرَسُولٍ حَتَّىٰ يَأۡتِيَنَا بِقُرۡبَانٖ تَأۡكُلُهُ
ٱلنَّارُۗ قُلۡ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رُسُلٞ مِّن قَبۡلِي بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ وَبِٱلَّذِي قُلۡتُمۡ فَلِمَ
قَتَلۡتُمُوهُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ١٨٣

فَإِن كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدۡ كُذِّبَ رُسُلٞ مِّن قَبۡلِكَ جَآءُو بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلزُّبُرِ
وَٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلۡمُنِيرِ ١٨٤

كُلُّ نَفۡسٖ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلۡمَوۡتِۗ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوۡنَ أُجُورَكُمۡ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۖ فَمَن زُحۡزِحَ
عَنِ ٱلنَّارِ وَأُدۡخِلَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ فَقَدۡ فَازَۗ وَمَا ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَآ إِلَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلۡغُرُورِ
١٨٥

[183-185] There are those who say "Allah has enjoined us that we should not accept anyone as a Messenger unless he offers, in our presence, a sacrifice which fire from heaven should devour." Say to them, "Many Messengers came to you before me with clear Signs, and they brought also the Sign you speak of: if you are sincere (in your demand), why did you kill those Messengers?"[129] If they now charge you with imposture, O Muhammad, before you they treated as impostors many a Messenger who came with clear Signs, and with Scriptures and light-giving Books. Since every being shall taste death, all of you shall get your full recompense on the Day of Resurrection. Then only that one will be truly successful, who escapes from the Hell-fire and is admitted to the Garden. As regards the life of this world, it is (as it appears); merely a thing that deceives.[130]

۞ لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِيٓ أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟ أَذًى كَثِيرًا ۚ وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ
مِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُۥ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا
تَكْتُمُونَهُۥ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَٱشْتَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَبِئْسَ مَا
يَشْتَرُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَآ أَتَوا۟ وَّيُحِبُّونَ أَن يُحْمَدُوا۟
بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا۟ فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُم بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨٨﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٨٩﴾

[186-189] O Muslims, you shall surely be tried in your possessions and in your selves; you shall hear many hurtful

things from those who were given the Book before you and from those who associate other gods with Allah. But if you show fortitude, and fear Allah under all circumstances,[131] this will be (a proof of) constancy of purpose. Remind the people of the Book that Allah made the Covenant with them and enjoined: "You shall spread the teachings of the Book among the peoples and shall not keep these concealed."[132] But they flung the Book behind their backs and' bartered it away for paltry worldly gains. What a bad business they are carrying on! Do not think that those, who exult in their misdeeds and who love to be praised even for deeds they have not actually performed,[133] shall escape chastisement; the fact is that a grievous chastisement awaits them; for to Allah belong the earth and the heavens and He has power over each and everything.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ
لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩٠﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ
ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ ٱلنَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُۥ ۖ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ
مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿١٩٢﴾

رَّبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا سَمِعۡنَا مُنَادِيٗا يُنَادِي لِلۡإِيمَٰنِ أَنۡ ءَامِنُواْ بِرَبِّكُمۡ فَـَٔامَنَّاۚ
رَبَّنَا فَٱغۡفِرۡ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرۡ عَنَّا سَيِّـَٔاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ ٱلۡأَبۡرَارِ ﴿١٩٣﴾

رَبَّنَا وَءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدتَّنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخۡزِنَا يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۗ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخۡلِفُ
ٱلۡمِيعَادَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

[190-194] In[134] the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are many signs for the people of good sense, who standing and sitting and lying down remember Allah and reflect upon the (wonders) of the structure of the earth and the heavens.[135] (Then they cry out spontaneously,) "Our Lord, Thou, hast not created all this in vain, 'for Thou art free from doing such a thing. So save us from the torment of the Hell-fire[136] for, O Lord, surely Thou wilt have abased him, whom Thou wilt cast into Hell-fire; then such workers of iniquity shall have no helper. O Lord, we heard a caller, who invited to the Faith, saying, "Believe in your Lord," and we accepted his invitation;[137] so, our Lord, forgive us our sins and remit our evil deeds and let our end be with the righteous people. Lord, fulfil the promises Thou hast made to us through Thy Messengers and do not put us to shame on the Day of Resurrection, for Thou never goest against Thy promise."[138]

فَٱسۡتَجَابَ لَهُمۡ رَبُّهُمۡ أَنِّي لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَٰمِلٖ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوۡ
أُنثَىٰۖ بَعۡضُكُم مِّنۢ بَعۡضٖۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَأُخۡرِجُواْ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمۡ
وَأُوذُواْ فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَٰتَلُواْ وَقُتِلُواْ لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنۡهُمۡ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمۡ
وَلَأُدۡخِلَنَّهُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ ثَوَابٗا مِّنۡ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِۗ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسۡنُ ٱلثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

[195] Their Lord answered their prayer, saying, "I do not let go to waste the labour of any worker from among you whether male or female, for all of you (human beings) are the offspring of one another.[139] I will, therefore, forgive all the shortcomings of those who left their homes or were expelled from them for My sake or were persecuted, and of those who fought for My cause and were slain, and admit them to the Gardens underneath which canals flow." This is their reward from Allah and with Allah alone is the richest reward.[140]

لَا يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْبِلَـٰدِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

مَتَـٰعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿١٩٧﴾

لَـٰكِنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّلْأَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٨﴾

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ لَمَن يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ
خَـٰشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ
عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩٩﴾

[196-199] Let not the activities of the disbelievers in the countries deceive you, for this is merely a brief enjoyment of this transitory life; then all of them shall go to Hell which is the worst abode. On the other hand, pious people, who fear Allah, will be given Gardens underneath which canals flow: therein they will live for ever. This is their hospitality from Allah, and that, which is with Allah is the best for the righteous people. And there are some even among the people of the Book, who believe in Allah and in the Book which has been sent down to you and in the Scripture which was sent down to themselves before

this; they humble themselves before Allah and do not barter away Allah's Revelation for paltry worldly gains; they will have their reward from their Lord; for Allah is very swift in settling accounts.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱصۡبِرُواْ وَصَابِرُواْ وَرَابِطُواْ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ٢٠٠

[200] O Believers, Practice fortitude and show valour in fighting against worshippers of falsehood;[141] be ever prepared for the service of Truth, and always fear Allah: it is expected that you, will achieve true success.

1Please see E.N. 278, Al-Baqarah.

2There exists a common misconception about the Torah (Taurat) and the Gospel (Injil) for the people generally take the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) for the Torah, and the Gospels (the first four books of the New Testament) for the Injil. The misconception creates doubts about Revelation itself and a question arises, "Are these books really the Word of God? And does the Holy Qur'an really confirm all their contents"? As a matter of fact, the Torah, which the Qur'an confirms, is not the Pentateuch but is contained in it, and the Injil is not "the four Gospels" but is widen these books.

The Taurat consists of those commandments and injunctions which were given to Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon him) during his Prophethood, which lasted for about forty years. Of these were the Ten commandments which were inscribed on stone tablets and delivered to Moses on Mount Tur: as regards the remaining Commandments and injunctions he himself had put down in writing. Then he handed one copy of the Torah to each of the twelve tribes of Israel for guidance. One copy was entrusted to the Levites for safe custody, which along with the stone tablets, was deposited in the Ark.

That Taurat remained quite sate and sound as an entire book up to the first destruction of Jerusalem. But, by and by, the Israelites grew so indifferent to and negligent and unmindful of it that when the Temple of Solomon was under repair during the reign of Joshiah, Hilkiah. the high Priest came across it by chance but did not know that it was the Torah; he thought it was only a Law book and passed it on to the Royal Scribe as a curio. The latter presented it to king Joshiah who tore his clothes and ordered Hilkiah and others to consult the Eternal about the terms of the book. (2 Kings, 22: 8-13). Such was the condition of the Israelites when Nebuchadnezzar sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, and they lost for ever even the very few copies of the Torah which had long lain neglected in some forgotten niches.

The Old Testament was compiled by Ezra, when the Israelites returned home to Jerusalem after their captivity in Babylon and built the Temple anew. Ezra gathered together some prominent men of his community, and with their help compiled the whole history of Israel which now comprises the first 17 books of the Bible. Of these Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronorny tell the life history of Prophet Moses and include those verses of the real Taurat which became available to Ezra and his assistants, who incorporated them in those books at appropriate places in the chronological order of their revelation. Thus it is obvious that the Pentateuch as a whole is not the Taurat but includes it. The real Taurat comprises those verses which are scattered all over the life story of Prophet Moses, and it is not difficult even today to locate and recognize them. Such portions where the author says, "God said to Moses," or Moses said, The Lord your God says," the Taurat begins, and where the narrative of the life story is resumed, there that part of the Taurat ends. At those places the author of the Bible has inserted certain things by way of explanation or commentary, and it is here that the ordinary reader fails to distinguish the real Taurat from the commentary. However, those who have an insight into the nature of Divine Scriptures, can distinguish, to some degree of exactness, the explanatory. notes from the revealed verses.

According to the Qur'an, only such scattered portions in the Pentateuch are the Taurat and it confirms them alone. And this can be testified by putting together these verses and comparing them with the Qur'an. Here and there one might come across a minor difference in their details, but one cannot find even the slightest difference between the fundamental teachings of the two. Even today one can see clearly that both the Scriptures have come from the same source.

Likewise, the Injil is the name of those inspired discourses and sayings which Jesus (Allah's peace be upon him) uttered as a prophet during the last couple of years of his life. We have no means now of ascertaining whether these pious utterances were recorded and compiled during the lifetime of Jesus. In the introduction to his translation of the Bible, Moffat says, "Jesus wrote nothing and for a time his immediate disciples felt no impulse to write any account of him. The data of the historical Jesus, therefore is based on the vivid recollections and traditions of the primitive Palestinian disciples. How soon their materials took written shape we cannot tell, but at least one written record of them was probably in existence by about A.D.50." Anyhow, when, long after his recall, the stories of Jesus were compiled in the shape of tour Gospels, (the period of the composition of Mark, the tirst to be composed was 65-75 A.D.), some of his written or inspired sayings were also inserted at appropriate places in the historical sketches. Thus it is obvious that the first tour Gospels are not the Injil, the discourses and sayings of Jesus, but they contain it. We have no means of recognizing thetas from the works of the authors except this: Wherever the authors say "Jesus said so or taught so and so," there the Injil begins and where they resume the narration, there it ends. According to the Qur'an, only such portions are the Injil and these alone are condensed by it. If these portions are compiled together and compared with the Qur'an, one will tied no serious difference between the two, and, if somewhere a trivial difference appears, it can be removed very easily with unbiased thinking.

3That is, "He has full, perfect and exact knowledge of the whole universe. Hence the Book revealed by Him will contain nothing but the Truth. As a matter of fact, one can learn pure Truth from that Book alone which has been sent down by the All-Knowing and All-Wise."

4This implies two important things here:

(1) Allah knows your nature better than yourself or anybody else: therefore, there is no other alternative for you but to trust in the Guidance sent down by Him.

(2) The Benevolent Allah Who has been providing for all your needs, great and small, throughout all the stages of your life, ever since your mothers conceived you, could not possibly have neglected to provide for your guidance, which is after all the greatest need of your life.

5"Muhkam" is that which is precise, exact, clear and decisive. Muhkamat are those verses of the Qur'an which have been so couched as to make their meaning quite plain without any shade of ambiguity. They have been purposely so worded as to make their meaning definite and precise leaving little room for misinterpretation. These verses constitute the fundamental principles of the Book, i. e.. they and they alone determine the aim and object for which the Qur'an has been sent down. They invite the world to Islam, teach morals and give warnings. They refute wrong beliefs and practices, and lay down the way of right living. They expound the fundamentals of religion and state beliefs and practices, morals and duties, commandments and prohibitions. Therefore a seeker after Truth should turn to these verses as these alone can satisfy his needs. Naturally such a person will concentrate on these verses and endeavour to derive the greatest benefit from them.

6Mutashabihat are those verses in which there is a possibility of more than one meaning. Their object is to give a certain minimum knowledge about the universe, its beginning and end, the position of man therein, and such other basic things, for these things are essential for the formulation of any system of life. It is obvious that no human language possesses words, expressions, idioms etc., to depict clearly those supernatural things, which have never yet been grasped by human senses, nor seen nor heard nor smelt nor touched nor tasted by human beings. That is why such supernatural things have to be described in terms of human life. That is why the Qur'an uses ambiguous verses in human language which are liable to give rise to more than one meaning. Thus it is clear that the main benefit of such verses is that they help one approach the Reality and form a conception of it. Hence the more one tries to determine their precise meanings, the more one gets involved in doubts and ambiguities. As a result of this, one will not be able to find the Reality but will be led further away from it and cause mischief. Therefore those, who seek after the Truth and do not hanker after superfluities, rest content with the simple idea of Reality they get from the ambiguous verses, which suffices thetas for an understanding of the Qur'an; they concentrate their whole attention on a fuller comprehension of the verses which are precise in meaning. On the other hand, those who love superfluities or seek after mischief, spend their tune and energies in giving arbitrary interpretations to the ambiguous verses.

7This might give rise to a question: how can one believe in the truth of the ambiguous verses, if one does not know their precise meaning? The answer is that a study of the precise verses, and not of the different interpretations of the ambiguous verses, confirms a sensible man in his belief that the Qur'an is the Word of Allah. When the study of the precise verses once convinces him that the Book is really from Allah, then the ambiguous verses do not create any doubt in his mind and he accepts the simple meanings which are within his comprehension and leaves alone any complicacies if and when they appear. Instead of hair splitting and probing into them, he believes in the Word of Allah as a whole and turns his attention to more useful things.

8Please see E.N. 161, Al-Baqarah.

9Although the actual ratio was three to one, yet even a casual observer could not have failed to notice that the number of the unbelievers was at least twice as great as that of the Muslims.

10A brief review of the Battle of Badr, which had recently taken place, is being made with a view to imparting lessons by snaking a reference to its events and its results. This Battle taught three important lessons:

It taught that even on the battlefield the Believers, who tight in the way of Allah, behave in quite a different manner from the disbelievers. The latter, like the Quraish, indulge in merry making and enjoying wine, women, music, dance etc., while the former, like the Muslims, practise piety, and fear Allah and absorb themselves in prayer.

(2) The victory of the Muslims, in spite of their smaller number and less equipment, over the disbelievers who had a larger number and better weapons was a clear proof that they had Allah's succour with them.

(3) The defeat was a shocking lesson for the disbelievers, who were neglectful of Allah's power and proud of their equipment and the large number of their helpers. By this, Allah taught that He can bestow power on a small number of poor migrants from Makkah arid the farmers of Al-Madinah, to inflict crushing defeat on the Quraish, the most influential and powerful clan of Arabia.

11Please see E.N. 27, Al-Baqarah.

12That is, "Allah dces not shower His favours erroneously nor whimsically nor dces He make cursory and superficial decisions. He is fully aware of the actions, deeds and intentions of His servants, and evaluates them correctly and knows full well who should deserve His favour and who should incur His displeasure."

13It means, "They stand steadfast for the sake of truth, are not daunted by losses or hardships, are not

disheartened by failures, and are not turned aside from the right path by temptations. They stick to the Truth even when there appears to be no chance of success." (Please see E.N. 60, Al-Baqarah also.)

14That is: This' is the testimony of Allah Himself that He alone in the whole universe possesses the attributes of God-head and the authority and the rights of God-head. This is His testimony, and who could be a more reliable Testifier than He Who has direct knowledge of all the realities of the universe? He sees His whole c: eation spread before Him, and from Him nothing is hidden in the heavens or in the earth.

15Next to Allah, the most trustworthy witnesses are angels, who are the managing agents of the affairs of His Kingdom of the Universe. Their evidence is based on their personal knowledge, that is,

"None but Allah wields command in this kingdom and none but He gives orders for the administration of the affairs of the earth and the heavens." Then all those people, who have been bestowed with the knowledge of the realities, have been unanimously bearing witness, since the beginning of the world to the present day. that Allah alone is the Master and the Designer of the whole universe.

16It implies that in the sight of Allah there is only one correct system and one right way of life for man. It is this: Man should worship Allah, acknowledge Him as his Master and surrender himself completely to Him in His worship and service. He should not invent his own way of worship but should faithfully follow that Guidance alone which Allah has revealed through His Messengers, without adding anything to or taking away anything from it. This way of thinking and behaving is called "Islam." And it is the absolute right of the Creator and the Master of the Universe that He should not accept as lawful from His subjects, His own creation, any way other than Islam. One might ignorantly think it to be one's right to follow any system, atheism, idolatry, etc., but the Ruler of the Universe will regard this behaviour as rebellious.

17It means that originally Islam and Islam alone was professed and preached by every Messenger who was sent by Allah at any time in any comer of the world. Hence any Scripture sent down to any community in any language taught the same Islam. Afterwards, the people distorted this original religion and added to it something to suit their interests or to gratify their lusts, and omitted those things from it which went against their interests. They invented new religions just because they wanted to transgress the prescribed limits and run after undue privileges and gains and distinctions. Thus they made changes in the beliefs, principles and injunctions of the true Faith to make it subservient to their own desires and lusts.

18The same thing may be expressed thus: "My followers and I have been convinced of this same pure Islam and have accepted the true religion of Allah; now tell us whether you also will give up the innovations which you and your elders have introduced into it and turn to the original true religion."

19This is an ironical way of bringing home to the disbelievers the consequences of those mischievous deeds in which they rejoice today, regarding them as "nice things."

20That is, "As they have spent all their energies and powers in evil ways, their works will bring them to ruin both in this world and in the Next World"

21That is, "There is no such power which can bring out good results from their wrongly directed efforts or at least make them harmless. All the various agencies, which they believe will help them in this world or in the Next World or in both, shall be absolutely of no avail to them anywhere."

22That is, "They are asked to acknowledge the Book of Allah as the final authority and bow before its decrees and accept as true whatever is proved to he true by it, and reject whatever is proved to be false by it. "It should be noted that here by the Book of God is meant the Torah or the Gospel and by "the people who have received a share of the knowledge of the Book" are meant the learned people of the Jews and the Christians.

23As such people regard themselves to be the favourites of God, they delude themselves that they are going to enter into Paradise anyhow, irrespective of the quality of their deeds. They foolishly believe that the fire of Hell dare not touch them because they are "true" believers and the children of such pious ancestors, and the followers of such and such prophets and the disciples of such and such saints, etc., etc. And if at all they are cast into Hell, they argue, they will be kept there only for a few days and that, too, to be cleansed of the impurity of sins and then will go into Paradise permanently. Such misleading ideas and conceptions have made them so bold that they commit the gravest crimes and the most heinous sins fearlessly: so much so that they openly disown the Truth without the least fear of Allah.

24Verses 26 and 27 fit in beautifully between the preceding and the subsequent verses. From verse 19 begins a warning and challenge to the opponents of Islam, and in verse 25, the Muslims have been consoled with the assurance that their enemies shall be paid in full on the Day of Judgment. But in order to reassure them, Allah has in these verses, answered an unasked question which arises when one sees that the disbelievers and the disobedient to Allah are prospering in the world, while the believers and the obedient servants of Allah are starving and suffering from hardships. The question is: What wisdom underlies this disparity in the prosperity and adversity of the two groups? At the time (A.H. 3) of the revelation of this discourse the Holy Prophet and his Companions were so hard pressed on all sides that the same question was arising in the people's minds. Its answer is contained in these verses: Allah to Whom belongs all authority, power, wealth, prosperity etc., etc., gives a portion of these to whomsoever He wills, and they should not feel uneasy and anxious about this disparity because He is All Wise and All-Knowing. Moreover Allah gives wealth to whomsoever He wills; therefore it is not to be made the criterion of honour and friendship. Hence in the subsequent verses, the Muslims have been prohibited from making the prosperous disbelievers their friends.

25That is, "If a believer falls into the hands of the enemies of Islam and is afraid of maltreatment and high-handedness, he may conceal his Faith, and live among them as if he were one of them. Or, if they come to know of his Faith, he may make a show of his friendship towards them to save his life. In case of extreme fear, he is permitted even to disown his Faith, if he feels that he is not strong enough to endure their oppression."

26This is the admonition: Let not the fear of the people dominate over you so much as to drive out the fear of Allah from your hearts. The greatest harm the people can do to you is confined to the worldly life only, but Allah has the power to inflict an everlasting torment on you. Therefore, if you are forced in a case of extremity to hide your Faith due to any danger to your life, you may save your own life and property, provided that you do not in any way harm the interests of the Islamic mission and the Islamic community or the life or property of any Muslim. At the same time you must remain on your guard against becoming the instrument in the hands of disbelievers so as to strengthen the evil forces against Islam and render any service to the disbelievers that might enable them to overpower the Muslims. Remember that, if to save your life you do any kind of harm to the religion of Allah or to the community of the faithful or even to the person of a single believer, or if you render any real service to the rebels against Allah, you will never be able to save yourselves on the Day of Reckoning, when you shall have at last to return to Allah

27That is, "It is simply out of His extreme compassion for you that Allah warns you beforehand of those things that might lead you to ruin."

28Here the first discourse ends. If We consider its theme, and especially its reference to the Battle of Badr, we come to the conclusion that the probable period of the revelation of this was some time after the Battle of Badr and before the Battle of Uhd, that is 3 A.H. A tradition of Muhammad bin Ishaq has generally misled people to fix the period of the revelation of the first 80 verses to 9 A.H., for according to that tradition it was sent down on the occasion of the deputation from Najran. But obviously, that is wrong for two reasons: first, the subject of this introductory discourse shows clearly that it was revealed much earlier. Second, the tradition of Mugatil-bin-Sulaiman is explicit on the point that on the occasion of the said deputation only those verses (33-63) were revealed which give an account of John the Baptist and Jesus (God's pe ace be upon them).

29From here begins the second discourse. It was sent down in 9 A.H. on the occasion of the visit of the deputation from the Christian State of Najran, which lay between Hijaz and Yemen. It is said that it comprised 73 villages and towns and was capable of raising an army of more than one hundred thousand strong. The population was wholly Christian and was governed by the "Aqib," who was the head of the community, and the "Sayyid," who was in charge of the social and political affairs and the Bishop, who looked after the religious affairs of the people. The above-mentioned deputation was one of the many who visited the Holy Prophet after the conquest of Makkah, when the whole of Arabia came to realize that

the future. of the country was now in his hands. This deputation from Najran to Al-Madinah consisted of 60 men and the three heads of the government. As they had no mind to go to war, the question before them was either to embrace Islam or to live as zimmi (proteges). On this occasion Allah sent down this discourse to the Holy Prophet to invite the members of the deputation to Islam.

30`Imran was the name of the father of Moses and Aaron and has been mentioned as "Amram" in the Bible.

31The main cause of the misguidance of the Christians is that they consider Jesus to be the son of God and a partner in God-head, instead of His Servant and Messenger. Therefore this basic error is being corrected with a view to making them understand the true and real Islam. That is why the introduction to the discourse begins with the assertion that Adam and Noah and the Prophets from the family of Abraham and from the family of `Imran, were all human beings and none of them was "God. " Their only distinction was that Allah had chosen them for the preaching of His religion and reforming the World.

32If by the "woman of `Imran" is meant the "wife of `Imran", then this must be a different 'Imran from the one mentioned above in v. 33. In that case one comes to the conclusion that the father of Mary was named 'Imran after that ancestor. But if by the "woman of `Imran" is meant a woman from the family of 'Imran, then it merely shows that Mary's mother was a descendant of `Imran. We possess no authentic knowledge of the basis on which one opinion may be preferred to the other. Though according to some Christian traditions the name of Mary's father was Iaachim, history does not say who the father of Mary was and to which family her mother belonged. But if the tradition that the mothers of Mary and Elisabeth, the mother of John, were cousins be taken as we, (Luke 1: 36), then the "woman of `Imran" will mean a woman from the family of `Imran. The Gospel of Luke (1:5) says that Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharias. "was of the daughters of Aaron", that is, 'Imran daughter or woman of `Imran; therefore it is clear that there is no anachronism of confounding Miriam, the sister of Aaron, with the virgin Mary. It is a common practice to call children by the names of their ancestors; so both the explanations are equally acceptable. Moreover, it does not make any difference whatsoever, in the line of argument adopted here to explain the miraculous birth of Jesus, whether 'Imran was really the name of Mary's father or has been called so in the ancestral sense.

33That is, "Thou hearest the prayers of Thy servants and art aware of their intentions."

34By this she meant, "Had it been a male, it would have been better because the female is handicapped by many natural frailties and social restrictions and cannot become a priest. A male child would, therefore, have served the purpose better for which I have dedicated my child in Thy way."

35This happened when Mary had reached the age of discretion and had been admitted into the sanctuary of the Temple (Jerusalem), where she was busy, day and night, in the worship of Allah.

Zacharias who had been made her guardian was probably the husband of her maternal aunt and was one of the keepers of the Temple. He was not the Prophet Zachariah, who was killed according to the Old Testament.

36The Arabic word "mihrab"usually reminds one of the arch (prayer niche) meant for the imam in the mosques. But here this word has been used for those cells which are built on comparatively raised ground adjoining the monasteries and churches. They are meant for the keepers and guardians of the places of worship, and for those who retire for worship in seclusion. In such a Cell Mary had retired for worship in seclusion.

37Zacharias was childless till that time. Seeing this pious young girl, he longed for a good child. Seeing how she was growing under the special protection of Allah, Who supplied her in her seclusion, with provisions from His vast sources, he began to cherish the hope that Allah should bestow upon him a child even in his old age, if He so willed.

38The Bible mentions him as John the Baptist. (Matthew: Chaps. 3, 11,14; Mark 1, 6; Luke 1, 3).

39"Command from Allah" here refers to Jesus Christ. The Holy Qur'an calls him a "Command from Allah" because the birth was brought about miraculously by an extraordinary Command from Allah.

40That is, "Despite your old age and the sterility of your wife, Allah will bestow upon you a son."

41That is, "Give me a token to assure me beforehand of the birth of a son to an old man and a barren woman."

42The main object of this discourse is to make the Christians realize the error of their belief in taking Jesus for the son of God, and making him an object of worship. The extraordinary birth of John has been mentioned in the Qur'an to serve as .introduction to the subsequent argument against their wrong belief. The miraculous birth of Jesus could no more entitle him to Divinity than the extraordinary birth of John, brought about in the same family in a different and unusual way could entitle the latter to Divinity.

43As Mary was a girl who had been dedicated by her mother to the Temple in the way of Allah, the question of her guardianship had become a problem for the keepers because of her sex. They were therefore casting lots to decide the delicate problem.

44That is, "Although no man has touched you, yet a son shall be born to you." It should be noted that the same word "kazalika, "meaning "so shall it be," had been used in response to Zacharias' prayer. It, therefore, carries the same sense here. Moreover, the whole context here corroborates the story that Mary was given the glad tidings of the birth of a son without any sexual intercourse, and the birth of

Christ, in actual fact, took place in that unusual way. If a son was to be born to her in the normal known way, and if the event of the birth of Jesus had taker. place in a natural way, then the whole discourse starting from verse 33 and ending with verse 63 would become absolutely pointless. Not only that but all other references to the unusual birth of Jesus in the Qur'an would lose their significance and meaning. The Christians had made Jesus the Son of God and worthy of worship simply because of his unusual birth without a father and the Jews had accused Mary because they had witnessed that she had given birth to a child, though she was not married. Had it been otherwise, then the two groups could have been told plainly that the girl was married to such and such a man and that Jesus was from his seed. In that case, one fails to see the reason why such a long introduction and a series of arguments should have been necessary to remove all doubts about his miraculous birth. Then Jesus could have been called the son of a particular man, instead of being called "the son of Mary". The position of those people who, on the one hand, profess to believe the Holy Qur'an to be the Word of Allah and on the other hand try to prove that Jesus was born after the natural coming together of a husband and wife, really try to show that Allah is not able to express Himself as clearly as these people. (May God protect us from blasphemy!)

45That is, "These Signs are clear enough to convince you that I have been sent by that Allah Who is the Creator and Absolute Ruler of this universe, provided that you are not obdurate but are willing to accept the Truth."

46That is, "This is yet another proof of the fact that I have been sent by Allah. If I had been a false prophet I would have invented my own religion and by virtue of these miracles striven to divert you from your previous Faith to the New creed. But I profess the same original religion to be true and confirm the same teachings which were brought by the Prophets before me."

The fact that Jesus taught the same religion that had been presented by Moses and the other Prophets is supported even by the existing Gospels. For example, according to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus declared in the Sermon on the Mount: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (5: 17).

One of the Pharisees, who was a lawyer, asked Jesus, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" He replied:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like. unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and Prophets." (Matthew 22: 37-40). On another occasion Jesus said to his disciples:

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." (Matthew 23: 2-3).

47That is, "I have come to efface and abolish the superstitions of your ignorant people, the hairsplitting of your jurists, the religious austerities of your ascetics and the restrictive additions made in the Law of Allah under the non-Muslim domination; I will make lawful or unlawful for you only those things which Allah has made lawful or unlawful."

48This shows that like all other Prophets, Jesus also based his teachings on the following three fundamentals:

(1) The Supreme Authority to which mankind should submit and surrender exclusively belongs to Allah and all the social and moral systems should be built entirely on it.

(2) Being a representative of the same Pararmount Power, a prophet must be obeyed unconditionally.

(3) Allah alone is entitled to prescribe laws and regulations for making things lawful or unlawful, pure and impure; consequently all laws imposed by others must be abolished.

Thus it is clear that Jesus, Moses, Muhammad and all other Prophets (Allah's peace be upon them all) had one and the same mission. Those people who aver that different Prophets were sent with different missions and to fulfil different aims, are gravely mistaken. Anyone, who is delegated by the Absolute Master of the Universe to His subjects, cannot have any other mission than to prevent the people, from becoming disobedient to and independent of Him, and to forbid them to set others to rank with Allah as partners in His Authority in any way. For, they are sent to invite the people to surrender and submit and be loyal to the Almighty God and worship Him alone.

It is a pity that the existing Gospels do not present the mission of Jesus so precisely and clearly as it has been presented above in the Holy Qur'an. Nevertheless all the three basic things mentioned above are found scattered over in these Books. For instance, the fact that Jesus believed exclusively in the worship of Allah is clear from the following:

(1) "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4: 10).

(2) Not only did he believe in this, but also made it the ultimate aim of all his activities and strove to make the people of the earth to submit to the revealed Law of Allah just as the whole universe submits to His physical Law.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6 :10).

Then the fact that Jesus always presented himself as a prophet and as a representative of the Kingdom of Heaven, and always invited the people to follow him in that capacity alone, is supported by a number

of his sayings. When he started his mission in his native place, Nazareth, the people of his own town and his own kinsfolk rose against him and according to an agreed tradition of Matthew, Mark and Luke, he said: "No prophet is accepted in his own country". And when his enemies were conspiring at Jerusalem to kill him and the people advised him to go to somewhere else, he replied: "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." (Luke 13: 33).

When he was entering Jerusalem for the last time, his disciples began to utter in a loud voice: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." At this the Pharisees felt offended and asked him to silence his disciples. He replied:

"I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would inunediately cry out." (Luke 19: 38-40).

On another occasion he said: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart ..... my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11: 28-30). Moreover the fact that Jesus wanted the people to obey the Divine Law rather than man-made laws becomes clear from that tradition of Matthew and Mark which says that when the Pharisees asked, why his disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders and took food without washing their hands,. he replied and said, "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written. This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, iet him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest he profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye." (Mark 7: 6-13).

49The Arabic word (havari) is almost the equivalent of "helper". In the Bible, they have been called "disciples" and at some places "apostles" because Jesus used to send them tc the people to deliver his message, and not because God had appointed them as His apostles.

50Those people who help establish Islam have been called Allah's helpers. In order to understand its significance, it should be kept in view that Allah has taken upon Himself to persuade human beings to adopt Islam of their free will, for He does not force His will on man in those spheres of his life in which He has granted him freedom of action but likes to convince him by reason and admonition. As it is the work of Allah to bring the people to the right way by admonition and advice, He calls those people who exert their utmost to establish Islam "His helpers and companions:" This is indeed the highest position that a servant of Allah can aspire to achieve. For man's position is merely that of a servant when he is engaged in praying, fasting and other kinds of worship, but he is elevated to the high and unique position of God's

companion and assistant when he is exerting for the establishment of the way of Allah. And this is indeed the loftiest position of spiritual attainment, to which a man can aspire in this world.

51The word (mutawaffi) in the Arabic text is from (tawaffa) which literally means "to take and to receive" and "to seize the soul" is not its lexical but metaphorical meaning. Here it means "to recall from mission." Allah recalled Jesus because the Israelites had rejected him in spite of the clear Signs he had brought. They had been disobeying God for centuries and, in spite of many a warning and admonition served to them, their national character was rapidly deteriorating. They had killed several Prophets, one after the other, and had grown so audacious as to demand the blood of any good man who ventured to invite them to the Right Way. In order to give them the last chance for turning to the Truth, God appointed among them two great Prophets, Jesus and John (God's peace be upon them), at one and the same time. These Prophets came with such clear signs of their appointment from Allah that only such people dared reject them as were utterly perverted and prejudiced against the Truth and were averse to following the Right Way. Nevertheless the Israelites lost their last chance also as they not only rejected their invitation but also had the head of a great Prophet like John cut off openly at the request of a dancing girl. 'And their Pharisees and Jurists conspired and sought to get Jesus punished with the death sentence by the Roman Government. Thus they had proved themselves to be so obdurate that it was useless to give the Israelites any further chance. So Allah recalled His Prophet Jesus and inflicted on them a life of disgrace up to the Day of Resurrection.

It will be useful here to bear in mind the fact that this whole discourse is meant to refute and correct the Christian belief in the God-head of Jesus. Three main things were responsible for the prevalence of this belief among the Christians:

(1) The miraculous birth of Jesus.

(2) His concrete and tangible miracles.

(3) His ascension to heaven about which their Scriptures were explicit.

The Qur'an confirmed the first thing and made it plain that the birth of Jesus without a father was only a manifestation of the infinite powers of Allah. He can create anybody in whatever manner He wills. His miraculous birth, therefore, is no reason why he should be made a god or a partner in Godhead.

The Qur'an also confirms the second thing and even recounts the miracles performed by Jesus, but makes it clear that all those miracles were performed by him, as a servant of Allah, by His leave and not as an independent authority. It is, therefore, wrong to infer that Jesus was a partner in Godhead.

Now let us consider the third thing. If the Christian belief in "Ascension" had been wholly baseless, it could have been refuted by pointing out that the object of their worship, the so-called "Son of God",

expired long ago and had become one with dust, and that they could see, for their full satisfaction, his grave at such and such a place. But the Qur'an does not declare this explicitly. On the other hand, it not only uses such words as give at least a vague suggestion of his "Ascension", but also denies that Jesus was crucified at all. According to it the one who gave a loud cry at his last hour, saying, "Eli" Eli, lama sabachthani?" and the one whose picture they carry on the cross, was not Messiah at all, because God had recalled to Himself the real Messiah before the crucifixion took place.

It is thus clear that those people who try to prove the death of Jesus from these verses, really try to show that God is not able to express Himself clearly and unambiguously. (May God protect us from such a blasphemy!)

52"Those who rejected" him were the Jews who were invited by Jesus to accept the Truth.

"Those who follow" him are really the Muslims only but if it may be taken to imply all those who believe in him, then the sincere Christians may also be included.

53That is, "If one's miraculous birth entitles one to become God or the Son of God, then Adam was better entitled to it because he was created without either a human father or a mother, while Jesus was born without a father only.

54The main points in the discourse presented before the Christians up to here are: First, they have been admonished to realize that their belief in the Godhead of Jesus is gravely ill-founded. He was only a man who was born in a miraculous way by the will of Allah and given the power to perform certain miracles as a clear proof of his Prophethood. As regards his "Ascension", Allah had arranged to recall him to Himself before the disbelievers could crucify him. In fact, the Master of the Universe has full powers to treat any of His servants in any special way He pleases. It is, therefore, wrong to infer from the exceptional treatment accorded to Jesus that he himself was the Master or the Master's Son or a partner in the authority of the Master.

Secondly, their attention has been drawn to the fact that Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) invites them to the same Truth that had been preached by Prophet Jesus (God's peace be upon him) in his own time and that the teachings of the two Prophets were basically identical.

Thirdly, the disciples of Jesus believed in and followed the same religion of Islam that is being presented in the Qur'an. However the Christians of the later age discarded the message of Jesus and digressed from the Faith of his disciples.

55This method of settling the dispute was proposed to show conclusively that the members of the deputation of Najran were behaving obdurately. As a matter of fact, they had no answer to the things

pointed out in the above discourse and could not bring any authority even from their own Scriptures to justify and support their beliefs under discussion. They could not, therefore, assert with full conviction that their beliefs conformed to the fact and were not false. Besides this, when they observed closely the character and the teachings and the works of the Holy Prophet, the majority of the members of the deputation were so impressed that they became convinced in their hearts of his Prophethood; or at least, they could not reject it boldly. That is why they did not accept the challenge: "If you really believe in the truth of your creed, you should pray with us to Allah and invoke His curse on those who say false things about Christ." The fact that they declined to accept the challenge showed plainly to the whole of Arabia that the religious leaders and priests of the Christians of Najran who were known far and wide for their piety, professed beliefs about which they themselves were not sure.

56From here begins the third discourse. Its subject-matter clearly shows that it was revealed in the period intervening the battles of Badr and Uhd. The contents of the three discourses are so closely interlinked that there is no incoherence anywhere between them. That is why some commentators have been misled to believe that this also formed part of the discourse addressed to the Najran deputation. But the tone of the discourse commencing from here clearly shows that it was addressed to the Jews.

57That is, "Join us in the creed which we have accepted and which you also cannot reject as false, for it is confirmed and supported by the teachings of your own Scriptures

58That is, "Your Judaism and Christianity came into existence long after the revelation of the Torah and the Gospel, whereas Abraham (God's peace be upon him) had passed away long before those Books were sent down. Now, even a man of ordinary common sense can easily understand that the religion of Abraham could in no sense be Judaism or Christianity. Thus, if Abraham was on the right way and had obtained salvation, as you also believe, then it becomes abundantly clear that one need not follow Judaism or Christianity to be on the Right Way and to obtain salvation." (Also see E.N. 135 and 141, Al-Baqarah.)

59The Arabic word (hanif) stands for a person who chooses to follow one particular way after rejecting all other ways. We have conveyed this meaning by "a Muslim, sound in the Faith."

60There may be another rendering of this sentence: "You yourselves testify these." But in neither case is the sense of the passage affected. The fact is that the pious life of the Holy Prophet and the marvelous effects which his precepts and example were producing on the lives of his Companions, and the high and sublime teachings of the Qur'an, were all such clear Signs of God that no one, who was familiar with the lives of the Prophets and with the nature of the heavenly Scriptures, could possibly doubt or deny his Prophethood. Thus, in fact, many a people of the Book (especially the learned among them) had realized that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was the same Prophet whose coming had been foretold by the former Prophets. So much so, that they were at times completely overpowered by the force of the

plain Truth, and would unwittingly admit and confirm that the teachings of the Holy Prophet were true. That is why, the Qur'an accuses them time and again of obduracy and deliberate rejection of the Truth after seeing clear Signs of God and being fully convinced of it in their hearts.

61This was one of those tricks which the leaders and the rabbis of the Jews, living in the suburbs of Al-Madinah used to play in order to weaken the force of the Islamic Movement. They feigned an interest in Islam only to detach some of the Muslims by some subtle arrangements. Their object was to dishearten the Muslims and create doubts among the masses about teachings of the Holy Prophet. For this purpose they began to send people to AI-Madinah to profess Islam openly and then become apostates and proclaim everywhere that they had come out of Islam because they had witnessed such and such evils among the Muslims and their Prophet.

61aThey were stirred to play this wicked game by their envy of Islam and bias in favour of the religion of their fore-fathers. They have been rebuked, as if to say, "God is not bound by your prejudices, but He bestows His Guidance on anyone He wills, and He has by His grace blessed the Muslims with the same Guidance that was once bestowed upon you. You must understand it well that your wily tricks will not succeed in snatching away that Guidance from them nor in changing it into misguidance but only in providing a strong argument against you before your Lord." By this, Allah willed to see whether they would give up their prejudice and accept the Guidance which had been given to another (Muhammad) or whether they would persist in their envy and reject it and provide the Muslims with a strong argument against themselves before their Lord that they rejected the Truth merely because of their prejudice and obduracy.

62The Arabic word "wase" (All-embracing) generally occurs on three occasions in the Qur'an:

(1)When a community of people is warned of their narrow-mindedness and told that Allah is not narrow-minded like them;

(2) When one is rebuked for miserliness and stinginess and is told that Allah is generous and not miserly like him:

(3) When people believe Allah to be finite because of the limitations of their own imagination, they are told that Allah is Infinite and Limitless. (Also see E.N. 116, Al-Baqarah.)

63That is, "Allah knows full well Who deserves honour and excellence."

64That is, "They were required to be fair only in their dealings with the Jews, and there was no harm in usurping the property of a non-Jew." This belief was not confined to the ignorant Jewish masses, but their whole religious system was so moulded as to allow differentiation between Israelites and non-Israelites in

their dealings. Their moral code disallowed a certain treatment towards the Israelites but allowed the same towards a non-Israelite; one and the same thing was right for an Israelite but the same thing was wrong for a non-Israelite. For instance, the Bible says: "At the end of every seven years...every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it...", but "Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again." (Deut. 15: 1-3). At another place the law about usury has been laid down like this: "Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury." (Deut. 23: 20). "If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die." (Deut. 24: 7).

65Although they were guilty of the blackest sins, yet they had taken it for granted that they would rise as the favourites of God on the Day of Resurrection and they alone would receive His blessings and favours, for they would be rescued from the consequences of the sins they committed in this world by the intercession of their saints in the Next World, but the fact is that they will be dealt with on that Day in quite a different manner.

66Taken figuratively the Arabic Text may also imply that they turn away from the right meaning of the Book or twist the words out of Context and pervert the meaning. But the real meaning of the Text is this: while reading the Book, they twist with their tongues certain words or sentences that are against their self interest or self-invented religious beliefs or theories. Thus they change the meanings so as to mislead people into mental errors or false judgments or wrong religious beliefs. It is an irony that some people sometimes treat the Qur'an itself in the same way. For instance, those people who believe in the Holy Prophet to be superhuman twist verse 110 of chapter XVIII with their tongues and read it The first and correct reading means, "Say, (O Prophet), I also am a man like yourselves," while the second reading perverts the meaning thus: "Say, (O prophet), indeed' 1 am not a man like yourselves. "

67Rabbani (rabbi) was the title of a religious functionary who guided the religious affairs of the Jews, established worship and expounded law.

68These two verses are a comprehensive refutation of all the wrong things that different people have ascribed to their Prophets and entered into their Books in order to make an angel or a Prophet a god and an object of worship. Here a fundamental formula has been laid down: anything that teaches the worship of anyone other than Allah and raises a servant of God to the high pedestal of Godhead can never be the teaching of any Messenger of God: therefore the very existence of such a thing in any book should be taken as a clear proof of its being a later insertion by some misguided people. Hence the claim "to be the son of God and equal with God," could never have been made by Jesus himself, but by some misguided followers of his.

69It implies this: "You people of the Book are bound by the Covenant of your own Prophets to believe in and help Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) for we entered into a compact with every Prophet to

the effect that they (and their followers by implication) must help every Prophet sent by Us for the preaching and the establishment of the way of life for which they had been appointed. Therefore you should not have any prejudice against him, nor consider religion as your own monopoly; you should not oppose the Truth but come under the banner of anyone who raises it for this purpose.

It is interesting to note that according to Palmer (The Koran), "the Talmudic sources confirm that God assembled all past, present, and future Prophets on Mount Sinai and entered into the compact mentioned in the text."

In this connection it should also be clearly understood that this compact was taken from every Prophet before the advent of Hadrat Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him); therefore every Prophet informed his followers about the Prophet coming after him and told them to follow him. But there is no mention in the Qur'an or in the Traditions that any such compact was taken from the Holy Prophet: nor did he inform his followers about the coming of any Prophet after him and believing in him. On the contrary, he categorically declared that he was the last in the line of Prophets.

70This implies that the people of the Book were breaking their covenant with Allah by rejecting Prophet Muhammad (God's peace be upon him) and opposing his mission; they were disregarding that covenant which their Prophets had made with Allah. Hence they were perverted transgressors who had gone beyond the limits imposed by Allah.

71That is, "When the whole universe and everything in it follow `Islam' and submit to Allah, what other way of life than Islam do these rejectors, who live in the same universe, seek to follow?"

72That is, "We do not have different ways of treatment for different Prophets: we accept each and everyone of them and do not reject any one of them and we treat all of them as truthful Prophets and none as a liar. We are free from prejudice and zeal for ignorance; we bear witness to the fact that each and every servant of Allah, who brought the Truth from Him to any place whatever in the world, was in the right.

73It has been reiterated here that the Jewish scholars, who lived in Arabia at the time of the Holy Prophet, had understood clearly and borne witness to it that he was a true Prophet of God and that his teachings were the same as those of the former Prophets. But in spite of this, they not only rejected but also opposed him because of their centuries-old prejudices, obduracy and antagonism to the Truth.

74"They persisted in their disbelief" : they did not stop at the rejection of the Faith but went on further and further in their opposition and antagonism to it: they did their very worst to hinder people from the way of Allah by creating doubts and suspicions in their minds and by devising secret plans and plots to make the mission a failure.

75It is meant to remove the misconception of the Jews about virtue. Their highest ideal of virtue was to put on that outward appearance which had been enjoined by the traditional and centuries-old heritage of their ancestors. Besides this they measured virtue by the standard of that elaborate legal system which had been evolved by their hair-splitting scholars. But in spite of their outward religiosity, even their `pious' people were narrow-minded, greedy and parsimonious. Moreover they did not hesitate to conceal the Truth or to sell it, and yet the common people took them for virtuous people. This is why they are being told here that they can attain to real virtue not by the mere outward observance of some rituals of their own invention but by loving God and by keeping His will above every worldly thing. As the door of virtue is shut against anyone who loves any worldly thing more than Allah, the one, who is not ready to sacrifice the beloved thing for the sake of God's love, cannot attain to real virtue. The observance of rituals without this spirit of love is like the paint on worm-eaten wood. It is possible that a human being might be deceived by such outward paint, but it is impossible to deceive God by such devices.

76Verse 93 answers an objection. When the Jews could not find fault with the basic teachings of the Qur'an and of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him), for there was absolutely no difference between these and the teachings of the previous Prophets, they began to raise legal objections. One of their objections was that the Holy Prophet had made lawful certain things which had been unlawful during the time of the previous Prophets.

77If Israel refers to the children of Israel, then it would mean that before the revelation of the Torah, they themselves had made certain things unlawful because these had been unlawful by custom. But if it refers to Jacob (and that is more probable), then it means that he did not eat certain things because he did not like them or abstained from them on account of some illness, but his children began to believe these to be unlawful. The subsequent verse shows that the law in the Bible which declared the camel and the hare etc., to be unlawful was not in the Torah, but was later on inserted in it by the Jewish scholars. (For details please refer to E. N. 122 of Al-An'am).

78It is meant to bring home to them this lesson: obedience to God alone is the root of the real Faith, which was taught by Abraham, but you have discarded that and associated other gods with Him. Besides this, you have , entangled yourselves in minor legal issues which had been raised by your scholars after you had deviated from the way of Abraham during the centuries of your degradation.

79Their objection was about the change of qiblah to the Ka`abah (Makkah) from the Temple (Jerusalem), which had been the qiblah of the previous Prophets. This objection had already been answered in Al-Baqarah, but as the Jews persisted in their criticism, it has again been answered here. It has been asserted that the Ka`abah was built by Abraham long before the Temple and therefore it had priority of time for being the qiblah. The Bible itself bears testimony to the fact that the Temple was built by Solomon some 450 years after Moses (I Kings, 6: 1) and made qiblah during his reign. (I Kings, 8: 29-30.) On the other hand, all the traditions of Arabia unanimously agree that the Ka`abah was built by Abraham

some 900 years before the advent of Moses. The fact that the Ka`abah has priority of time over the Temple is so obvious that none can deny it.

80There are such clear Signs in "the House:" to show that Allah has accepted it and approved it as "His House." Though it has been built in a barren place, Allah has provided the people of the neighbourhood with the best of provisions. Besides this, though there was chaos and disorder in the whole of Arabia for about 2500 years before the advent of Islam, yet there reigned peace and security in the Ka`abah and in its surroundings. Not only this: there was because of it, peace for four months every year in the whole of Arabia. Another Sign was the miraculous destruction of Abrahah and his army, when he attacked Makkah in order to destroy the Ka'abah. At the time of the Revelation of the Qur'an, every Arab knew well even the details of this incident and there wen even those who had actually beheld the occurrence.

81The inviolable sanctity of the Ka`abah was so much respected even in the dark days of ignorance that blood thirsty enemies dared not touch each other in it. In v. 97, the word kafara does not mean that the one, who disobeys this Commandment of Allah and does not perform Haj even if one can afford it, becomes a disbeliever in the technical sense. It means that the person has adopted the attitude of a disbeliever even after his profession of belief in Allah and His Prophet. This is obvious because the Commandment to perform Haj has not been addressed to the disbelievers but to those who profess to be Muslims. A Muslim judge, therefore, will not declare him to be a disbeliever and apostate for this reason, as if he had gone out of the pale of Islam.

"Allah does not stand .... world :" Allah does not stand in need of any help from the people, whether they be believers or dis-believers. It is for their own good if they become sincere believers. On the other hand, those people, who reject the Commandments of Allah by word or deed, will not be considered to be Believers by Allah, even if they professed to be Believers

82That is, "Be loyal and obedient to Allah up to your last breath."

83"Allah's cord" is the way of life prescribed by Him. It is a "cord" because it keeps intact the relations of the Believers with Allah and also binds and unites them into a community. "Hold fast together to Allah's cord" implies that the Muslims should give the greatest importance to Allah's Way, and should make it the centre of all their interests, and exert their utmost to establish it and co-operate with one another for its service. When and if they let loose this cord and deviate from its basic principles, they would inevitably suffer from disunity and would be divided into sections and sub-sections, like the communities of the former Prophets. As a consequence of this, they would mat with disgrace both in this world and in the Next.

84This refers to that horrible state of the Arabs from which they were rescued by Islam. Before Islam, their clans were divided into hostile camps, who went to war for frivolous reasons. Human life had lost its

sanctity and people were killed without any pangs of conscience. The fire of enmity would have burnt to ashes all the Arabs, if blessed Islam had not rescued them from it. This blessing had appeared in a tangible form at Al-Madinah at the time of the revelation of these verses. The two clans-Aus and Khazraj-who had been enemies for years and had been involved in bitter feuds and bloody battles, became brethren after they embraced Islam. Not only this: they also showed that spirit of sacrifice for the rehabilitation of the refugees from Makkah that has no parallel in history.

85That is to say, "If you have eyes to see, you can yourselves judge whether your welfare lies in holding fast to Allah's way or in discarding it and reverting to the old ways of ignorance, and whether your well-wishers are Allah and His Messenger or the Jews and the hypocrites and the polytheists who are trying to revert you to your former condition.

86This refers to those communities which received the Guidance and clear teachings from the Messengers of Allah but after some time discarded the basic principles of the Guidance and divided themselves into different sects on the basis of irrelevant and minor side-issues and were involved in useless and meaningless squabbles. They became so engrossed in these things that they totally forgot the mission which Allah had entrusted to them and lost interest even in the basic principles on which, in fact, depends the real success of humanity.

87As Allah, does not will to be unjust to the people of the world, He is showing them Guidance and warning them before-hand of those things of which they shall have ultimately to render an account. Thus, those who follow the crooked ways even after this and do not return to the Right Way are doing injustice to themselves

88This is the same declaration that has been' made in Al-Baqarah (v. 143). The followers of the Holy Prophet are being reminded that they have been appointed to the leadership of the world from which the children of Israel had been deposed on account of their incompetence. The Muslims have been appointed to that office because they possess those moral qualities which are essential for just leadership. These are to establish virtue and to eradicate evil practically and believe that there is no god other than Allah to put into practice the implication of this belief. They should, therefore, understand the responsibilities of the work which had been entrusted to them and avoid the errors into which their predecessors had fallen. (Please refer also to E. N. 123-144 of Al-Baqarah).

89Here the Jews are "The people of the Book. "

90That is, "The little security that they enjoy anywhere in the world has not been won by themselves but has been the result of the help and kindness of others. They have been getting this either from some Muslim states in the name of Allah or from some non-Muslim states for other reasons." And if sometimes they have succeeded in gaining even some political power, they have not accomplished this through their

own efforts but have owed it to others.

91In this similitude, "tillage" stands for human life, for one sows in it deeds or misdeeds which one shall have to harvest in the Next World. The "wind" refers to the superficial and hypocritical show of charity that impels the unbelievers to spend their wealth in charity and public works. And "frost" refers to the lack of faith and willingness to obey the Divine Law in its right spirit, which makes void the acts and deeds of one's life. By this similitude, Allah teaches this lesson; just as air is very useful for the growth of crops but it also destroys these if there is frost in it: in the same way charity helps nourish the harvest that is to be reaped in the Next World but it destroys the same, if it is poisoned with unbelief.

It is obvious that Allah is the Master of man as well as of the wealth that he possesses and of the kingdom in which he is acting. Now, if this slave of Allah does not acknowledge the Sovereignty of his Master or unlawfully sets up other objects of worship and does not obey His Law in his exploitation of His wealth and kingdom, he shall be guilty of a crime. Therefore, he will not be entitled to any reward for his charity, but shall be prosecuted for his unlawful exploitation. The charity of such a man maybe likened to the charity of a servant who steals a sum of money from the treasure of his master and spends it as he likes.

92Here Allah warns the Muslims to guard against the hypocritical attitude of the Jews who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madinah. The two clans, Aus and Khazraj, had been on friendly terms with them from very ancient times and kept sincere relations with them even after embracing Islam. In contrast to this, the Jews, who had turned into the enemies of the Holy Prophet and his mission, could not be friendly with anyone who had joined the new Movement. Accordingly, they kept up an outward show of friendship with the Ansar but in their heart of hearts they had become their bitter enemies. They, however, . exploited this outward friendship and tried to sow seeds of dissension and create chaos in the Muslim Community. They also tried to draw out secrets from the Muslims and pass them on to their enemies. That is why Allah has warned the Muslims that they should not take such people into their confidence.

93That is, "It is strange that the Jews, who themselves are guilty of rejecting your Book, whereas you believe in their Book, the Torah, along with your Book, the Qur'an, should have a grievance against you. There is no reason why they should complain against you: on the other hand, you have a cogent grievance against them for their disbelief in your Book."

94From here begins the fourth discourse, which was revealed after the battle of Uhd. It has been beautifully connected with the previous discourse which ended with the admonition that the machinations of their enemies could do them no harm, if they would show restraint, and fear Allah. This discourse is an apt continuation of the same theme, because the setback in the battle of Uhd was due to lack of restraint and lack of fear of Allah.

As a review has been made of all the important events of the battle in order to bring home the lessons, it will be very useful to keep in view their background, because in the discourse only passing references have been made to them without any details.

In the beginning of Shawwal (A.H. 3), the Quraish attacked Al-Madinah with an army of 3,000 men. They not only out-numbered the Muslims but were also much better equipped. Besides this, they were filled with passion to avenge their defeat at Badr. The Holy Prophet and his experienced Companions were of the opinion that they should defend Al-Madinah from within the walls, but some young men, who had not taken part in the battle of Badr, were so imbued with the spirit of martyrdom that they insisted on going out to meet the enemy. At last on their persistence, the Holy Prophet decided to go out to fight. So he led out an army of 1,000 men but at Shaut, `Abdullah bin Ubayy, the ring leader of the hypocrites, deserted him with his 300 men. Naturally this treacherous act produced much confusion in the Muslim army. So much so that two parties, Banu Salmah and Banu Harithah, were so disheartened that they began to waver in their minds and were about to turn back, but were dissuaded from this by those Companions who had remained firm and constant.

Then the Holy Prophet marched to Mount Uhd with the 700 men left with him after the desertion of `Abdullah bin Ubayy. He arrayed his men at the foot of the Mount so that the army of the Quraish was in their front and Mount Uhd at their back. Thus the only vulnerable point was a pass on one side, where he posted 50 archers under the command of `Abdullah bin Jubair, saying, " to let not any enemy come near us and do not leave your posts in any case whatsoever. Even if you see birds peck at our flesh, you should not abandon your posts at all. "

In the initial stage of the battle, the Muslim army had the upper hand and succeeded in creating great confusion in the army of the enemy. But instead, of pursuing this initial success to the final victory, they were so lured by their greed for booty that they began to loot the spoils. When the archers, who were guarding the pass, saw their comrades plundering the fleeing enemy, they also deserted their posts in order to join the looters. In vain did Hadrat `Abdullah bin Jubair remind them of the strict command of the Holy Prophet to dissuade them from this, but only a few of them listened to him. Khalid bin Walid, who was commanding the cavalry of the enemy, made full use of this opportune moment. He rode round the Mount and attacked the Muslims from behind through the pass. Hadrat `Abdullah . bin Jubair did his best to defend it with the few men left with him, but in vain, and Khalid fell upon the Muslims who were engaged in the plunder of spoils. They were so overwhelmed by this sudden attack from behind that they took to their heels in confusion. To add to their misery, the Quraish who were in flight before them also turned back to attack them from the front. This turned the scale of the battle against the Muslims who were put to rout by this unexpected situation. Still there were some brave Muslims who stood firmly in the battle-field. But then a rumour started that the Holy Prophet had been martyred, and his Companions were so stunned by this rumour that even those who were standing firm in the battle-field lost heart and only a dozen or so of the devoted ones were left with him. Thus it was about to turn into an utter rout, when his Companions heard that, though he was wounded, he was alive. Then they again rallied round

him and took him to a safe side of the Mount.

In this connection it is very important to note the strange thing that happened: the Quraish did not make full use of this opportunity but marched back to Makkah instead. This is an enigma, for, if they had pursued their success to complete victory, nothing would have checked them, because the Muslims had been so utterly routed that they could not have given them a battle.

95The two groups were Banu Salmah and Banu Harithah who had wavered in their minds at the desertion of `Abdullah bin Ubayy, the hypocrite, and his 300 followers.

96The Holy Prophet heartened the Muslims with this promise when they were disheartened to confront an army of 3,000 men with a small army of 1,000 which was further reduced to 700 men by the desertion of 300 hypocrites.

97These verses were an answer to the curse which the Holy Prophet called on his enemies: when he was wounded in the battle, he involuntarily invoked evil upon his enemies and said, "How can that community prosper which wounds the Prophet?"

98The main cause of the setback at Uhd was the greed for wealth shown by the Muslims. They were so overpowered by the lust for booty, that, instead of pursuing their initial success to victory, they got engaged in looting the spoils. This is why the All-Wise Allah has struck at interest, the root cause of the evils and prohibited it. For it is a common experience that those who lend money on interest become so absorbed in it that day and night they think of nothing but increasing their un-earned profits and this naturally increases their greed for money.

99The devouring of interest had created greed, avarice, parsimony and selfishness in those who took interest; hatred, anger, enmity and jealousy in those who had to pay it, and these moral evils contributed to some extent to the setback in the Battle of Uhd. Therefore Allah has condemned and prohibited interest and prescribed charity as an antidote to it. It is obvious that Paradise has been reserved for those who practise charity and spend money generously, and not for those greedy persons who practise money-lending on interest. (Please refer also to E. N. 320, Al-Baqarah.)

100God is encouraging the Muslims by mentioning the victory in the battle of Badr, saying, "When the disbelievers did not lose heart by the blow at Badr, why should you, the believers, lose heart by the blow at Uhd?"

101The original Arabic text may imply either of the two things: "Allah desired to give some of you the honour of martyrdom. " Or it may mean, "He willed to winnow the Believers from the hypocrites so that the true witnesses of the Truth, who may really be worthy of performing the mission that has been

assigned to the Muslim Community, may be distinguished from the false ones."

102This alludes to those who were so desirous of martyrdom that they had persuaded the Holy Prophet against his wish to go out of Al-Madinah to fight with the enemy.

103This is the answer to the mischievous talk of those hypocrites who had accompanied the Muslims in the battle of Uhd. When the rumour spread that the Holy Prophet had been slain, naturally the we Muslims lost heart, but the hypocrites began to say, "Let us go to `Abdullah bin Ubayy and request him to obtain amnesty for us from Abu Sufyan. " Others who were more impudent, went even so far as to say, "If Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) had been a true Prophet of Allah, he could not have been slain. Let us now turn to our ancestral Faith." Allah rebukes them as if to say, "Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is a Prophet, and is mortal like other Prophets who came before him: therefore, if your attachment to Islam is because of the person of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), and if it stands on such flimsy ground that with his death you will again return to disbelief, then Allah's religion does not stand in need of you."

This verse was also meant to impress that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was mortal like all other Prophets. According to a tradition, on the morning when the Prophet died, Abu Bakr came into the mosque at Al-Madinah and found the people all distracted, and `Umar telling them that it was a sin to say that he was dead. Abu Bakr went and ascertained the truth, and coming back into the mosque, cried, "Lo! as for him who worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is dead, but as for him who worships Allah, Allah is alive and does not die." Then he recited this verse "and it was as if the people had not known till then that such a verse had been revealed."

104This is meant to teach the Muslims that fleeing from fear of death will be of no avail, because none shall die a moment before the time ordained for death by Allah, nor can one live a moment after it. Therefore, what one should care for, is not how to escape from death but how best to spend the time that has been given in this world. The important question is this: Is it to be spent for the sake of this worldly life or for the Life-after-death?

105As the consequences of all actions follow them inevitably, the most important question from the Islamic point of view is whether one's struggle in life is to be directed towards the transitory interests and enjoyments of this world or towards the ever-lasting joys of the Next World. The answer to this will determine one's moral attitude in regard to good and evil.

106"Grateful servants" are those people who appreciate fully the blessings of Allah, which He has bestowed upon them by giving them the correct answer to the question posed in E. N. 105. He has informed them that there is a limitless life beyond the limited life of this world and that the consequences of the actions of this life are not confined to this life alone, but follow inevitably in the Life-after-death.

Hence he is really a grateful servant who trusts in God's promise of sure reward of good deeds in the Next World, and then goes on performing those deeds, disregarding whether his deeds flourish in this life or produce the reverse results. On the other hand, those people are ungrateful who are not ready and willing to spend their time or money or energy on anything that is not expected to produce immediate "good" results in this world. They are ungrateful because they do not appreciate the correct knowledge which has been bestowed by God about the consequences which inevitably follow in the everlasting life in the Next World.

107That is, "They did not surrender to the worshippers of falsehood, even though they were less in number and worse off in equipment than their enemies. "

108That is, "They will take you back to the state of un-belief from which you had come out." This warning was timely because after the reverse at Uhd, the hypocrites and the Jews tried to seduce the Muslims from their Faith. Their fallacious reasoning was like this: "Had Muhammad been a Prophet, he would never have suffered a defeat. It is obvious from this that he is an ordinary man who gets victory one day and suffers defeat another day. It is sheer propaganda that Allah had given him any promise of help and success."

108aThis refers to the conduct of the archers. When they were commanded to abstain from taking spoils, they argued with and disobeyed their leader and deserted their positions with the result that the scales of victory were turned against the Muslims.

109That is, "Your desertion was an act which would have resulted in your total destruction, if Allah had not pardoned you. It was God's grace and succour that saved you from its grave consequences, and the Quraish, in spite of their victory, retreated of their own accord without any apparent reason. "

110It was the courage and firmness of the Holy Prophet that saved the situation from utter ruin in the confusion caused by the sudden attack of the enemy who was charging from the front and from the rear. When some of the Muslims were fleeing towards Al-Madinah and the others were climbing up the Uhd, the Holy Prophet stood firm and resolute at his post with a dozen or so of his Companions who had stood the test. He was rallying those who were taking to flight, calling out, "O servants of Allah, come to me."

111Sorrow was caused by the reverse and by the rumour that the Holy Prophet had been martyred and by the loss of their companions and by the misery of their wounded and by the insecurity of their homes and by the fear that the victorious Quraish army, that out-numbered the total population of Al-Madinah, would crush the routed army, enter into .the town and reduce it to ruins.

112This was a favour shown to those Muslims who had remained firm in the battle. They experienced such a strange sense of security that in spite of their sorrow, they began to feel drowsy. Hadrat Abu

Talhah, who had taken part in the battle, says that they were so overpowered by drowsiness that even their swords began to fall from their hands.

113These were their vain regrets which were the result of their wrong thinking. The fact is that the decrees of God are inevitable. Such regrets produce only grief and anguish in the hearts of those who do not trust in Allah but in their own plans and designs. However, when their efforts also end in utter failure, they wring their hands, saying, "Oh! had it been thus and thus, the result would have been so and so."

114This is the answer to the suspicion of the archers about the honesty of the Holy Prophet in regard to the division of the spoils. When they saw their companions plunder the enemy, the archers feared that the former would get the whole of the spoil and they would be deprived of it at the time of division; just because they had not taken part in the plunder. That is why they spontaneously deserted their posts. When later on they put forward some lame excuses, these were not accepted. Then the Holy Prophet said, "The real thing is that you had no trust in me. You suspected that I would deal dishonestly with you and would not give you your due share." In this verse Allah has taken them to task for cherishing such wrong ideas about the Holy Prophet, by putting searching questions as if to say, "How is it that you suspected that your interests would not be safe in the hands of the Prophet of Allah? Can you ever expect that the Messenger of Allah would divide unjustly the wealth that is in his trusteeship."

115This verse is meant to remove the confusion caused in the minds of the common Muslims by the reverse at Uhd. Though the intimate Companions close to the Holy Prophet were under no delusion that his mere presence among them was a sure guarantee of success, yet the common Muslims were suffering from this misunderstanding. They thought that the disbelievers could in no way win a victory over them because the Holy Prophet was present among them and the help and succour of Allah was with them. Therefore, when contrary to their expectations, they met with a reverse at Uhd, they began to ask questions like this: why has this misfortune befallen us, who were fighting for the cause of Allah, and that, too, at the hands of the disbelievers, who had come to destroy Islam? Above all, they could not understand this because Allah had promised to help and succour them and the Holy Prophet was himself present in the battlefield. They have been told that they themselves were responsible for the disaster.

116In the battle of Uhd, 70 Muslims were martyred whereas in the battle of Badr, 70 disbelievers were killed and 70 taken as prisoners.

117That is, "It is the result of your own weakness and wrong acts: you did not show patience; you did things which were against piety; you disobeyed the order of your leader; you became victims of greed and you got engaged in disputes among yourselves: still you ask, "Where has this disaster come from?" defeat.

118That is, "Allah is able to give victory and is also able to bring about

119This was the pretext with which `Abdullah bin Ubayy returned to AlMadinah with his 300 men from his way to the battlefield. When the Muslims perceived that he was about to desert the Muslim army, they tried to persuade him to accompany them but he replied, "We are quite certain that there will be no battle today. That is why we are returning home; we would have most surely accompanied you, if we had expected any battle today."

120Please refer to E. N. 155', Al-Baqarah.

121It has been explained by the Holy Prophet in the Tradition cited in Musnad-i Ahmad. "One, who enters the Next World with good deeds, is blessed by Allah with such a cheerful and joyful life that he never wishes to return to this world, but the case of a martyr is different. He dces wish that he should again be sent to this world so that he may again enjoy the pleasure, joy and exultation that he felt at the time of laying down his life in the way of Allah."

122This verse alludes to those devoted servants of Islam who willingly accompanied the Holy Prophet in his pursuit of the Quraish at that critical juncture.

After the Battle of Uhd, the Quraish marched back towards Makkah. When they had covered a good deal of distance from Al-Madinah, they realized that they had not utilised the golden opportunity of crushing the power of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and they began to regret: what a folly have we committed by losing that excellent chance! Accordingly, they halted and held a council of war. Though they were in favour of returning to Al-Madinah and making a sudden attack, yet they could not muster up courage and continued their march towards Makkah. At the same time, the Holy Prophet surmised an attack from the enemy; so he assembled the Muslims on the next day after the battle of Uhd and said, "Let us go in pursuit of the Quraish." Although that was a very critical situation, yet the believers and the devoted servants of Allah responded to the call and willingly marched with the Holy Prophet to Hamra-ul-Asad, a place at a distance of 8 miles from Al-Madinah.

123VV. 173-175 were sent down a year after the Battle of Uhd, but have been included in this discourse because they deal with the events which are connected with the same.

124This refers to the terrifying rumours which were being spread in Al-Madinah. On the occasion of his return from Uhd, Abu Sufyan had challenged the Muslims to a fight the following year at Badr. But when the time approached, he could not fmd courage on account of the famine that was raging in Makkah. So in order to save face, he tried to shift on to the Muslims the responsibility for the postponement. Accordingly, he sent a special spy to Al-Madinah to terrify them by spreading rumours that the Quraish were making great preparations for war and collecting such a large army as could defeat any army in Arabia. This device of Abu Sufyan succeeded in producing the desired panic. When the Holy Prophet made an appeal to the Muslims to meet the Quraish in combat at Badr, it failed to produce any

encouraging response. So much so that the Messenger of Allah had to declare before the gathered assembly, "I will go to the combat all alone, if none else is willing to go." It was then that 1,500 devotees volunteered to accompany him, and he reached Badr with them. From the other side,Abu Sufyan left Makkah with an army of 2,000 men. But after two days' journey, he told his men that it did not appear to suit them to have a fight that year, and that they would come next year for it. Accordingly, he returned to Makkah with his men. The Holy Prophet, however, waited for him at Badr for eight days. During these days, his Companions did profitable business with a trading party. Then he came to know that the disbelievers had gone back to Makkah, and he returned to Al Madinah.

125That is, "Allah does not like to see the Believers remaining mixed up with the hypocrites in one and the same Muslim Community."

126That is, "Allah does not separate the believers from the hypocrites by informing the Muslims that, in their heart of hearts, such and such are hypocrites." He distinguishes true believers from hypocrites by creating such occasions as practically separate the two groups from each other.

127Everything shall ultimately return to God as His inheritance because it really belongs to God. Whatever is in the possession of any of His creatures is a temporary trust. Everyone in every case shall be dis-possessed of the property and wealth that he calls his own during the short life here and that shall ultimately return to God, the real Owner. Therefore the wise one is he who generously spends Allah's property in Allah's way and the foolish one is he who tries to hoard it.

128The Jews uttered these words on the occasion of the revelation of verse 245 of Al-Baqarah, "Who is there among you, who will lend to Allah a goodly loan..." They ridiculed this appeal, saying, "Oh, yes! God has been reduced to poverty, and now He is begging His servants for a loan."

129This was a lie invented and attributed to God by the Jews, for Allah never enjoined such a thing. Though burnt sacrifices have been mentioned in the Bible, these have not been held out as essential signs of true Prophethood. They were merely symbols of the acceptance of sacrifices by God. (Please refer to Judges, 6: 20-21, 13: 19-20, Leviticus, 9: 24, II Chronicles, 7: 1-2).

It is obvious that this demand was merely a pretext for rejecting the Prophethood of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). As a further proof of their insincerity, it may be recalled that these enemies of the Truth did not hesitate to slay even some of their own Prophets who showed to them this same Sign of the burnt sacrifice. The case of Elijah may be cited as an instance: "When Ahab did more to vex the Eternal than all the kings of Israel before him, Elijah went to him and remonstrated that He had ruined Israel by forsaking the Eternal. So Ahab gathered all Israel. Then Elijah told the people to have a couple of bullocks for the test of the burnt sacrifice. Of course, the "Prophets" of Baal failed in the test. Then God's lightning burnt the sacrifice and all Israel witnessed it but even after this they turned against Elijah who

had to flee for his life.' (For details please refer to 1 Kings, 18 and 19).

130The life of this world (as it appears) is a thing that deceives because it helps create false impressions which deceive one about me ultimate results of deeds and misdeeds. One may thus be misled to take apparent prosperity or adversity as the criterion of Truth or falsehood. If one is apparently prosperous in this life, it is wrong to conclude that the one is on the right side and high in God's favour. On the other hand, if another is suffering from misfortunes and is a victim of adversity, it does not necessarily mean that the one is on the wrong side and incurs the disfavour of God. For often the results in this world are just the opposite of those which are to be met with in the Next World. The latter are, however, real and therefore deserve one's greatest consideration.

131That is, "You should prove the strength of your high character even in the face of provocation by keeping your temper under control. Endure with patience their taunts, derision, accusations and improper words and false propaganda. Do not get exasperated even in the most trying circumstances so as to say or do false, unjust, uncivilized and immoral things."

132That is, "Remind them of the Covenant that God made with them and of the great mission that was entrusted to them because they had forgotten it, though they did remember the sign of the burnt sacrifices given to some of their Prophets. "

The Covenant referred to in this verse has been mentioned many times in the Bible, especially a has been repeated over and over again in Deuteronorny. Prophet Moses exhorted them not to "add unto the word" nor to "diminish aught from it" and to "keep the commandments of the Lord." (4: 2); and to "teach them diligently unto thy children", and to talk of them when thou sittest in their house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, write them upon the posts of thy house, and on the gates." (6: 7, 9) In his last will, he urged the elders of Israel to "set up great stones in mount Ebal after crossing the boundary line of Palestine". (27: 2-4).

Here is an instance of their negligence of the Book. Prophet Moses entrusted one copy of the Torah to the Levites and instructed them to recite it word . by word every seventh year on the occasion of the Pass-over Festival before a gathering of all Israel-men, women and children. But owing to their gross negligence of their duty, within seven hundred years of the death of Moses, they had even forgotten that there was such a Book as Torah. so much so that even the high priest of the Temple and the Jewish king of Jerusalem were ignoram of its existence. (11 Kings, 22: 8-13)

133For instance, such people wish to hear people praise them for being very pious, religious, God-fearing servants of the Faith and defenders of the law, when, in fact, they possess none of the characteristics, or they desire that propaganda should be made in their favour that such and such is an embodiment of self-sacrifice, sincerity and honesty and has rendered meritorious services w the

community, when in fact, he is quite the opposite of it.

134From here begins the concluding part of. the Surah and it has no direct connection with the preceding verses, but with the Surah as a whole. Therefore it is worth while to turn to the introduction to this Surah to understand this portion.

135That is, "These Signs can help one understand the Reality, provided that one is not unmindful of God and observes the phenomena of Nature like a thinking person and not like an animal."

136A close observation of the system of the Universe leads them to the right conclusion that most surely there is a life in the Hereafter with its rewards and punishments. The system itself speaks eloquently of the great wisdom that underlies it, so it follows that the All-Wise Creator must have a definite purpose in the creation of Man. Moreover, the very fact, that He placed everything at man's disposal and has endowed him with a moral sense to discriminate between good and bad, clearly shows that he must be accountable to Him as to whether he had fulfilled that purpose. Consequently he should be rewarded for the good he dces in this world and punished for the evil. This thinking leads one to the conclusion that there must be a life-after-death, where one will be accountable for his deeds. This realization fills man's heart with fear of punishment in the Hereafter, and he spontaneously prays to Him to save him from the Hell-fire.

137In the same way, this observation also convinces right thinking men that the point of view of the Messengers about the beginning and the end of the Universe and the purpose of its creation is the correct one; hence the way of life preached and prescribed by them is the only right way.

138It does not mean that they have any doubts about the promises of Allah, but this merely shows that they are anxious to know whether they themselves are entitled to the blessings that have been promised. That is why they pray to God, "Our Lord, forgive us-You do not break your promises," for they tear lest they should be ridiculed in the Hereafter by the disbelievers as they were here in this world by such taunts at these; "Look at these people-even their Faith in the Messengers has not saved them from disgrace."

139That is, "In My sight all of you are alike as human bungs and I have the same standards of justice and judgment for all, and men should not forget that women are of the same "human status as they themselves have. I do not discriminate between tnan and woman, master and slave, the black and the white, the high and the low."

140There is a Tradition that VV. 190-195 were recited by the Holy Prophet before some non-Muslims who came to him and said, "All the Prophets brought one Sign or the other with them. For instance, Moses had the miraculous staff and his bright hand to show, and Jesus healed the blind and the lepers.

Please tell us what sign have you brought us as a proof of your Prophethood." The Holy . Prophet recited these verses and said, "I have brought this."

141The word sabiru in the original Arabic Text implies two things: Show more valour in fighting for the right cause than that which the disbelievers are showing for a wrong cause." and "Vie with one another in showing valour in your fight with the disbelievers."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

4. Surah An Nisa (The Women)

Period of Revelation

This Surah comprises several discourses which were revealed on different occasions during the period ranging probably between the end of A.H. 3 and the end of A.H. 4 or the beginning of A.H. 5. Although it is difficult to determine the exact dates of their revelations, yet it is possible to assign to them a fairly correct period with the help of the Commandments and the events mentioned therein and the Traditions concerning them. A few instances are given below by way of illustration:

1. We know that the instructions about the division of inheritance of the martyrs and for the safeguard of the rights of the orphans were sent down after the Battle of Uhd in which 70 Muslims were killed. Then naturally the question of the division of the inheritance of the martyrs and the safeguard of the rights of their orphans arose in many families at Al-Madinah. From this we conclude that vv. 1 -28 were revealed on that occasion.

2. We learn from the Traditions that the Commandment about salat during war time was given on the occasion of Zat-ur-Riqa'a, an expedition which took place in A. H. 4. From this we conclude that the discourse containing v. 102 was revealed on that occasion.

3. The last warning (v. 47) to the Jews was given before the Banu Nadir were exiled from Al-Madinah in Rabi'-ulAwwal, A. H. 4. From this it may safely be concluded that the discourse containing v. 47 must have been revealed some time before that date.

4. The permission about *tayammum* (the performance of ablutions with pure dust, in case no water be available) was given during the Bani-al-Mustaliq expedition, which took place in A. H. 5.. Therefore the probable period of the revelation of the discourse containing v. 43 was A. H. 5.

Topics and Their Background

Let us now consider the social and historical considerations of the period in order to understand the Surah. All the discourses in this Surah deal with three main problems which confronted the Holy Prophet at the time. First of all, he was engaged in bringing about an all round development of the Islamic Community that had been formed at the time of his migration to Al-Madinah. For this purpose he was introducing new moral, cultural, social, economic and political ways in place of the old ones of the pre-Islamic period. The second thing that occupied his attention and efforts was the bitter struggle that was going on with the *mushrik* Arabs, the Jewish clans and the hypocrites who were opposing tooth and nail his mission of reform. Above all he had to propagate Islam in the face of the bitter opposition of these powers of evil with a view to capturing more and more minds and hearts.

Accordingly, detailed instructions have been given for the consolidation and strengthening of the Islamic Community in continuation of those given in Al-Baqarah. Principles for the smooth running of family life have been laid down and ways of settling family disputes have been taught. Rules have been prescribed for marriage and rights of wife and husband have been apportioned fairly and equitably. The status of women in the society has been determined and the declaration of the rights of orphans has been made laws and regulations have been laid down for the division of inheritance, and instructions have been given to reform economic affairs. The foundation of the penal code has been laid down drinking has been prohibited, and instructions have been given for cleanliness and purity. The Muslims have been taught the kind of relations good men should have with their Allah and fellow men. Instructions have been given for the maintenance of discipline in the Muslim Community.

The moral and religious condition of the people of the Book has been reviewed to teach lessons to the Muslims and to forewarn them to refrain from following in their footsteps. The conduct of the hypocrites has been criticized and the distinctive features of hypocrisy and true faith have been clearly marked off to enable the Muslims to distinguish between the two.

In order to cope with the aftermath of the Battle of Uhd, Inspiring discourses were sent down to urge the Muslims to face the enemy bravely, for the defeat in the Battle had so emboldened the *mushrik* Arab clans and the neighboring Jews and the hypocrites at home that they were threatening the Muslims on all sides. At this critical juncture, Allah filled the Muslims with courage and gave them such instructions as were needed during that period of war clouds. In order to counteract the fearful rumors that were being spread by the hypocrites and the Muslims of weak faith, they were asked to make a thorough inquiry into them and to inform the responsible people about them. Then they were experiencing some difficulties in offering their salat during the expeditions to some places where no water was available for performing their ablutions, etc. In such cases they were allowed to cleanse themselves with pure earth and to shorten the salat or to offer the "Salat of Fear", when they were faced with danger. Instructions were also given for the solution of the puzzling problem of those Muslims who were scattered among the unbelieving Arab clans and were often involved in war. They were asked to migrate to Al-Madinah, the abode of Islam.

This Surah also deals with the case of Bani Nadir who were showing a hostile and menacing attitude, in spite of the peace treaties they had made with the Muslims. They were openly siding with the enemies of Islam and hatching plots against the Holy Prophet and the Muslim Community even at Al-Madinah itself. They were taken to task for their inimical behavior and given a final warning to change their attitude, and were at last exiled from Al-Madinah on account of their misconduct.

The problem of the hypocrites, who had become very troublesome at that time, was involving the Believers in difficulties-- Therefore they were divided into different categories to enable the Muslims to deal with them appropriately.

Clear instructions were also given regarding the attitude they should adopt towards the non-belligerent clans. The most important thing needed at that time was to prepare the Muslims for the bitter struggle with the opponents of Islam. For this purpose greatest importance was attached to their character building, for it was obvious that the small Muslim Community could only come out successful, nay, survive, if the Muslims possessed high moral character. They were, therefore, enjoined to adopt the highest moral qualities and were severely criticized whenever any moral weakness was detected in them.

Though this Surah mainly deals with the moral and social reforms, yet due attention has been paid to propagation of Islam. On the one hand, the superiority of the Islamic morality and culture has been established over that of the Jews, Christians and mushriks; on the other hand, their wrong religious conceptions, their wrong morality and their evil acts have been criticized to prepare the ground for inviting them to the way of the Truth.

Subject: Consolidation of the Islamic Community

The main object of this Surah is to teach the Muslims the ways that unite a people and make them firm and strong. Introductions for the stability of family, which is the nucleus of community have been given. Then they have been urged to prepare themselves for defense. Side by side with these, they have been taught the importance of the propagation of Islam. Above all, the importance of the highest moral character in the scheme of consolidation of the Community has been impressed.

Topics and their Interconnection

Just, fair and equitable laws and regulations for the smooth running of family life have been laid down for the husband and wife. Detailed instructions have been given for the division of inheritance and due regard has been paid to the rights of orphans. 1 - 35

In order to inculcate the right spirit for the observance of rules and regulations, the Muslims have been enjoined to show generosity to all around them and to be free from meanness, selfishness, stinginess of mind, because this is essential for the consolidation of the Communities and helpful for the propagation of Islam. 36 - 42

The ways of the purification of mind and body for the offering of Salat have been taught because it plays the most important part in every scheme of moral and social reform. 43

After moral preparation, instructions for defense have been given. First of all, the Muslims have been warned to be on their guard against the cunning machinations and vile practices of the local Jews who were hostile to the New Movement. This caution was necessary for removing some possible misunderstanding that might have arisen on account of the pre-Islamic alliance between the people of Al-Madinah and the Jews. 44 - 57

Then they have been enjoined to place their trusts and offices of trust in the custody of honest and qualified persons, and to do what is just and right, and to obey Allah and His Messenger and those among themselves entrusted with the conduct of their affairs and to turn to Allah and His Messenger for the settlement of their disputes. As such an attitude and behavior alone can ensure consolidation, they have been strongly warned that any deviation from this path will lead to their disintegration. 58 - 72

After this pre-requisite, they have been exhorted to make preparation for defense and to fight bravely for the cause of Islam, without showing any kind of cowardice or weakness. They have also been warned to be on their guard against hypocrites. A line of demarcation has been drawn to distinguish the intentional shirkers from the helpless devotees. 73 - 100

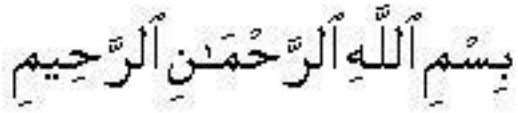
Here again instructions have been given for the offering of Salat during military campaigns and actual fighting. This is to impress the importance of Salat even at the time of fear and danger. 101 - 103

Before proceeding on to the next topic, the Muslims have been exhorted to persevere in their fight without showing any kind of weakness. 104

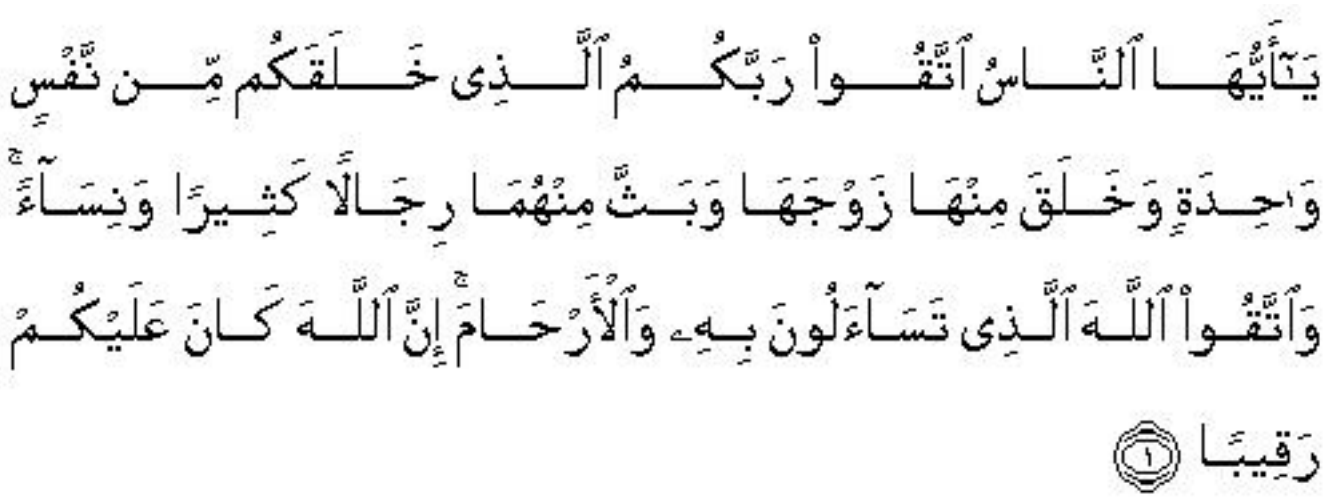
In order to make the Islamic Community firm and strong for defense, the Muslims have been enjoined to observe the highest standard of justice. The Muslims are required to deal out strict justice even in case of the enemy, with whom they might be involved in war. They should also settle disputes between husband and wife with justice. In order to ensure this, they should keep their beliefs and deeds absolutely free from every kind of impurity and should become the standard bearers of justice. 105 - 135

Resuming the theme of defense, the Muslims have been warned to be on their guard against their enemies. They have been admonished to take necessary precautions against the machinations of the hypocrites and the unbelievers and the people of the Book. As belief in Allah, and Revelation and Life-after-death is the only safeguard against every kind of enemy, they should sincerely believe in and follow His Messenger, Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). 136 - 175

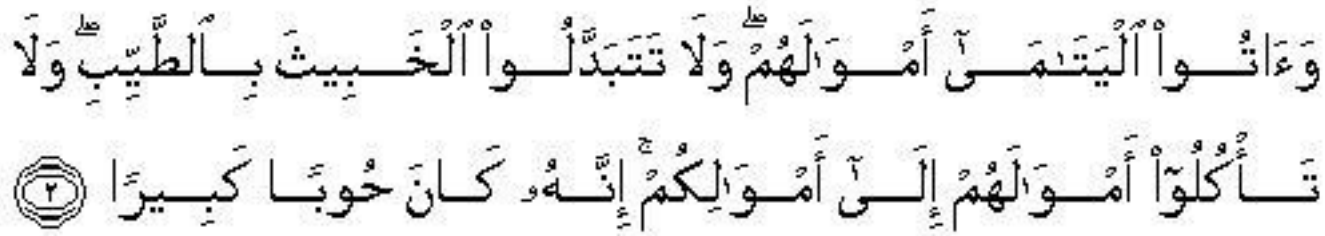
Though this verse also deals with the family laws contained in verses 1 - 35, it has been added as a supplement at the end of this Surah because it was revealed long after An-Nisa was being recited as a complete Surah. 176



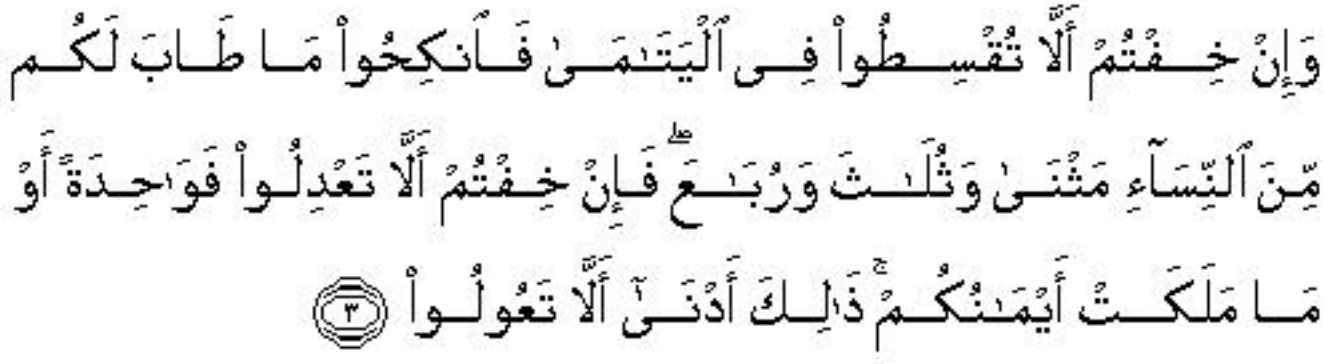
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.


يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ
وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَآءً ۚ
وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ
رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

[1] O mankind, fear your Lord, Who created you of a single soul, and of the same created his mate, and from that pair spread countless men and women over the earth;[1] fear that Allah in Whose name you demand your rights from one another, and abstain from violating relations between kinsfolk; note it well that Allah is watching you very closely.


وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا۟ ٱلْخَبِيثَ بِٱلطَّيِّبِ ۖ وَلَا
تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾

[2] Restore to the orphans their property,[2] and do not exchange your worthless things for their valuable things,[3] and do not devour their property by mixing it up with your own, for it is a great sin.


وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا۟ فِى ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ فَٱنكِحُوا۟ مَا طَابَ لَكُم
مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَٰثَ وَرُبَٰعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا۟ فَوَٰحِدَةً أَوْ
مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا۟ ﴿٣﴾

[3] And if you be apprehensive that you will not be able to do justice to the orphans, you may marry two or three or four women whom you choose.[4] But if you apprehend that you might not be able to do justice to them, then many

only one wife,[5] or marry those women who have fallen in your possession.[6] This will be the better course to avoid injustice.

وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ صَدُقَـٰتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ۚ فَإِن طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَن شَىْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ
هَنِيٓـًٔا مَّرِيٓـًٔا ﴿٤﴾

[4] And give their dowries willingly to women (as an obligation), but if they, of their own accord ,remit a portion of the dowry, you may enjoy it with pleasure.[7]

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا۟ ٱلسُّفَهَآءَ أَمْوَٰلَكُمُ ٱلَّتِى جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَـٰمًا وَٱرْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا
وَٱكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا۟ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٥﴾

[5] Do not give to the feeble-minded people that property which Allah has made the means of your maintenance: you should however, provide them with food and clothing and give them good advice.[8]

وَٱبْتَلُوا۟ ٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغُوا۟ ٱلنِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ ءَانَسْتُم مِّنْهُمْ رُشْدًا
فَٱدْفَعُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَآ إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَن يَكْبَرُوا۟ ۚ وَمَن
كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِذَا
دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فَأَشْهِدُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿٦﴾

[6] And go on observing and testing the orphans until they reach the marriageable age:[9] then if you perceive that they have become capable, deliver to them their property[10] Be on your guard against devouring their property unjustly and wastefully and hastily lest they should grow up to demand it. If the guardian of an orphan is rich, let him

abstain from the orphan's property, and if poor, let him eat of it fairly.[11] When you hand over to them their property, then have some people to witness it, and Allah suffices as Reckoner.

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
تَرَكَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ ۚ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿٧﴾

[7] There is a share for men in what has been left by parents and near relatives, and there is a share also for women in what has been left by parents and near relatives, whether it be little or much;[12] for this share has been prescribed (by Allah).

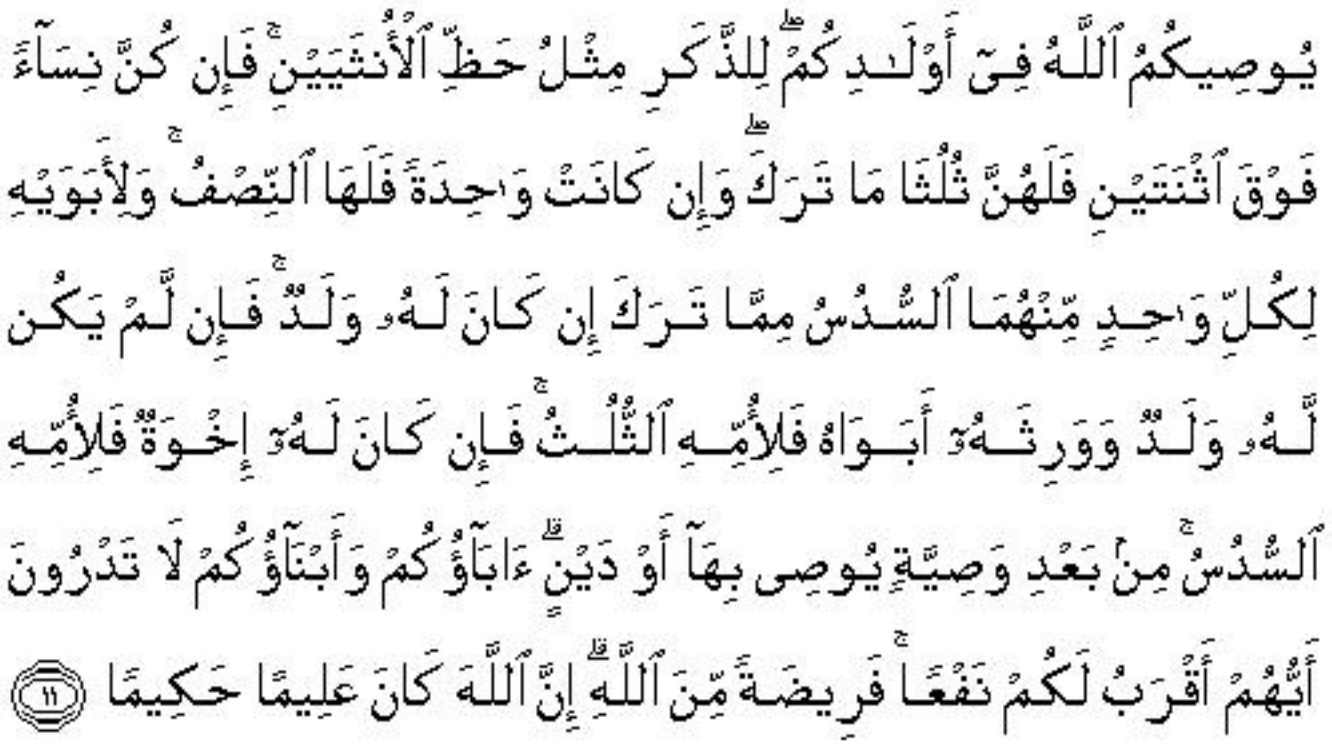
وَإِذَا حَضَرَ ٱلْقِسْمَةَ أُوْلُوا۟ ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينُ فَٱرْزُقُوهُم مِّنْهُ
وَقُولُوا۟ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٨﴾

[8] And if the people of the family, orphans and the poor be present at the division of the inheritance ,give them also something out of it and speak to them kind words.[13]

وَلْيَخْشَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكُوا۟ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَٰفًا
خَافُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٩﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِى بُطُونِهِمْ
نَارًا ۖ وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٠﴾

[9-10] Let the people apprehend and be afraid of this: how solicitous they would have been on the eve of their death about the helpless. children they would be leaving behind. They should, therefore, fear Allah and say the just and right thing. In fact, those who grab unjustly the property of the orphans, fill their bellies with fire, and most surely they shall be thrown into the burning fire of Hell.[14]


يُوصِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِىٓ أَوْلَـٰدِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۚ فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَآءً
فَوْقَ ٱثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۖ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَٰحِدَةً فَلَهَا ٱلنِّصْفُ ۚ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ
لِكُلِّ وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱلسُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُن
لَّهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُۥٓ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ ٱلثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُۥٓ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ
ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِى بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ
أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١﴾

[11] As regards inheritance, Allah enjoins you concerning your children that: The share of the male shall be twice that of the female.[15] In case the heirs be more than two females, their total share shall be two-thirds[16] of the whole and if there be only one daughter, her share shall be half of the whole. If the deceased has children, each of his parents shall get one-sixth of the whole,[17] but if he be childless and his parents alone are his heirs, the mother shall have one-third of the whole.[18] If the deceased has brothers and sisters also, the mother shall be entitled to one-sixth of the whole.[19] The division of all these shares shall take place only after fulfilling the terms of the will and after the payment of the debt[20] (if any). As regards your parents and your children, you do not know who is more beneficial to you. Allah has apportioned these shares and most surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[21]

۞ وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَٰجُكُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ ۚ
فَإِن كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمُ ٱلرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْنَ ۚ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِينَ بِهَآ
أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۚ وَلَهُنَّ ٱلرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّكُمْ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ
لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ ٱلثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُم ۚ مِّنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ
وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَٰلَةً أَوِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُۥٓ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ
وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا ٱلسُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ فِى ٱلثُّلُثِ ۚ

مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَآرٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

[12] And you will get half of what your wives leave behind, if they be childless; but if they leave children, then your share will be one fourth of what they have left, after the fulfillment of their will and the payment of their debt (if any). As for them, they will be entitled to one-fourth of the inheritance left by you, if you are childless; but in case you leave behind children, their share will be one-eighth[22] of the whole after the fulfillment of your will and payment of your debt (if any). And if the deceased whether man or woman (whose property is ' to be divided as inheritance) leaves no children and no parents behind but has one brother or one sister alive each of the two will be entitled to one-sixth of the whole but in case the brothers and the sisters are more than one then the total share of all of them will be one-third[23] of the whole after the fulfillment of the will and the payment of the debt (if any) provided that it is not injurious[24] (to the heirs). This is the Commandment of Allah and Allah is All-Knowing and Lenient.[25]

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

[13] These are the limits prescribed by Allah: whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will admit him into the Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein he will abide for ever; this is the great success.

وَمَن يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُۥ
عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٤﴾

[14] And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses the limits prescribed by Him, Allah will cast him into the Fire wherein he shall abide for ever, and shall have a disgraceful chastisement.[25a]

وَٱلَّٰتِى يَأْتِينَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ مِن نِّسَآئِكُمْ فَٱسْتَشْهِدُوا۟ عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً
مِّنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن شَهِدُوا۟ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِى ٱلْبُيُوتِ حَتَّىٰ يَتَوَفَّىٰهُنَّ ٱلْمَوْتُ
أَوْ يَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾

وَٱلَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَٰنِهَا مِنكُمْ فَـَٔاذُوهُمَا ۖ فَإِن تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا۟ عَنْهُمَآ ۗ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾

[15-16] If any of your women be guilty of indecency, call for four witnesses from among yourselves to testify against them: If they give evidence and prove the guilt, then confine them to their houses until death comes to them or Allah opens some other way out for them .And punish the two of you who commit this crime; then if they both repent and reform themselves, leave them alone,for Allah is generous in accepting repentance, and merciful in forgiving sins.[26]

إِنَّمَا ٱلتَّوْبَةُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِجَهَٰلَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِن
قَرِيبٍ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾

وَلَيْسَتِ ٱلتَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ
ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّى تُبْتُ ٱلْـَٰٔنَ وَلَا ٱلَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٨﴾

[17-18] However note it well that Allah's acceptance of repentance is for those people only, who commit an evil in ignorance, and then repent of it soon after this. Allah again turns kindly to such people, for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. But there is no repentance for those people who persist in their evil deeds until the dying hour comes to anyone of them; then he says, "Now I repent." Nor is repentance for them who die as unbelievers; for such people, We have prepared a painful torment.[27]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَن تَرِثُوا۟ ٱلنِّسَآءَ
كَرْهًا ۖ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا۟ بِبَعْضِ مَآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّآ أَن يَأْتِينَ
بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِن كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰٓ
أَن تَكْرَهُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَيَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا

﴿١٩﴾

وَإِنْ أَرَدتُّمُ ٱسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَءَاتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَىٰهُنَّ
قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا۟ مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ أَتَأْخُذُونَهُۥ بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿٢٠﴾

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُۥ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنكُم مِّيثَٰقًا
غَلِيظًا ﴿٢١﴾

[19-21] O Believers, it is not lawful for you to become the heirs of widows by force:[28] nor is it lawful that you should treat your wives harshly in order to deprive them of a part of the dowry you have given them. However (you have the right to treat them harshly), if they are guilty of adultery.[29] You should live with them in an honorable manner, even if you dislike them; it is possible that Allah may bring much good to you through that very thing you dislike.[30] And if you make up your mind to marry another wife in place of the one you already have, do not take back anything out of what you have given her. even though it may have been a heap of wealth. Will you take it back by slander and gross injustice? And how is it proper for you to take it, when both of you have enjoyed conjugal happiness and she received from you a solemn pledge of union?[31]

وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ مَا نَكَحَ ءَابَآؤُكُم مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً
وَمَقْتًا وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٢﴾

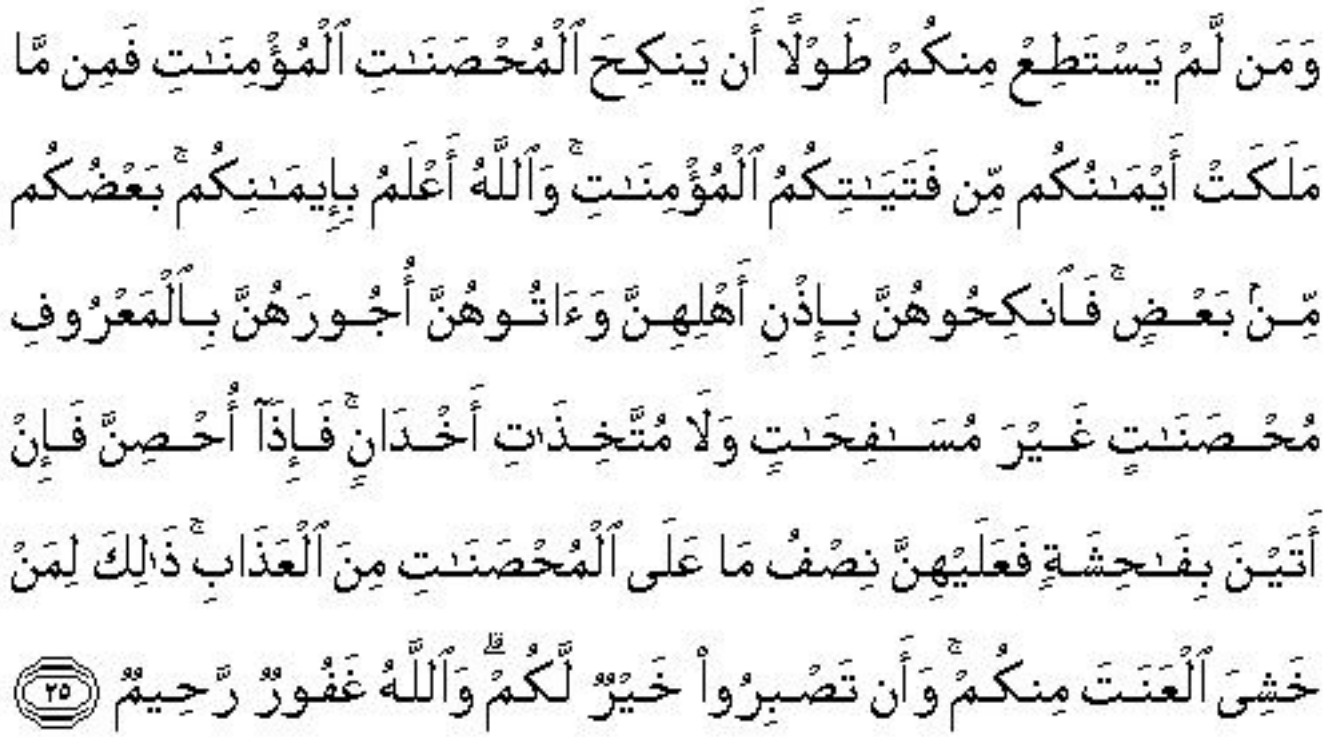
[22] And do not marry at all those women whom your father had married though what has happened in the past is excepted.[32] This is an indecent and abominable thing and an evil practice.[33]

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَٰتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُمْ وَعَمَّٰتُكُمْ وَخَٰلَٰتُكُمْ
وَبَنَاتُ ٱلْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ ٱلْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَٰتُكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِىٓ أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَٰتُكُم
مِّنَ ٱلرَّضَٰعَةِ وَأُمَّهَٰتُ نِسَآئِكُمْ وَرَبَٰٓئِبُكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِى فِى حُجُورِكُم
مِّن نِّسَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّٰتِى دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا۟ دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَٰٓئِلُ أَبْنَآئِكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَٰبِكُمْ وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا۟
بَيْنَ ٱلْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

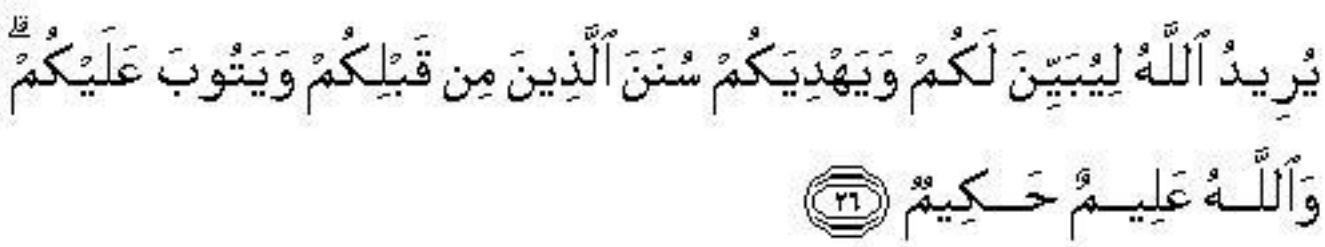
۞ وَٱلْمُحْصَنَٰتُ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ ۖ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ
وَأُحِلَّ لَكُم مَّا وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَن تَبْتَغُوا۟ بِأَمْوَٰلِكُم مُّحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ
مُسَٰفِحِينَ ۚ فَمَا ٱسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهِۦ مِنْهُنَّ فَـَٔاتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَٰضَيْتُم بِهِۦ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلْفَرِيضَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾

[23-24] Forbidden to you are your mothers,[34] daughters,[35] sisters,[36] paternal aunts, maternal aunts, brother's daughters, sister's daughters,[37] your foster mothers who have given a suckle to you, your foster sisters,[38] who have taken suckle with you, the mothers of your wives,[39] the daughters of your wives whom you have brought up,[40] the daughters of those wives with whom you have had conjugal relations, but not of those wives with whom you have had no conjugal relations, and it is not sinful for you to marry their daughters (after having divorced them); and also forbidden to you are the wives of your sons who are from your loins,[41] and it is unlawful for you to keep two real sisters as wives at one and the same time,[42] though what happened in the past is excepted, for Allah is indeed

Forgiving, Merciful.[43] And forbidden to you are the wedded wives of other people except those who have fallen in your hands (as prisoners of war[44]): this is the Law of Allah that has been prescribed for you. With the exception of the above, it has been made lawful for you to seek in marriage with your wealth any other women provided that you keep them in wedlock and not in licentiousness. Then you should pay them their dowries as an obligation for the enjoyment of conjugal relations with them. However, there is no harm if a compromise is made in the dower by mutual consent after an agreement about it; Allah is All-Knowing, All Wise.



[25] Whoever cannot afford to marry free Muslim women, should marry one of the Muslim slave-girls in your possession; Allah has full knowledge of your Faith. You all belong to one and the same community;[45] therefore, you may marry them with the permission of their guardians and give them their fair dowries so that they may live a decent life in wedlock and not in licentiousness nor may have secret illicit relations. Then if they are guilty of indecency, after they have been fortified by wedlock, they shall be given half the punishment prescribed for free women.[46] This concession[47] has been made for those of you who might apprehend a moral lapse without marriage, but it is better for you to practice self-restraint, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.



وَٱللَّـهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ
ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِ أَن تَمِيلُوا۟ مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾

يُرِيدُ ٱللَّـهُ أَن يُخَفِّفَ عَنكُمْ ۚ وَخُلِقَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٢٨﴾

[26-28] Allah desires to make clear to you and guide you to the ways that were followed by the righteous people before you, and to turn to you mercifully; for He is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[48] Yes. Allah desires to turn to you mercifully, but those who follow their lusts, want that you should swerve far away from the right path.[49] Allah wills to make your restrictions light, for Man has been created weak by nature.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَأْكُلُوٓا۟ أَمْوَٰلَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِٱلْبَـٰطِلِ إِلَّآ أَن
تَكُونَ تِجَـٰرَةً عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّـهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ
رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ عُدْوَٰنًا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى
ٱللَّـهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

[29-30] O Believers, do not devour one another's property by unlawful ways; (instead of this) do business with mutual consents[50] And do not kill yourselves;[51] believe it that Allah is Compassionate to you.[52] We shall throw into the Fire the one who commits such acts of aggression and injustice; and this is very easy for Allah.

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُم
مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

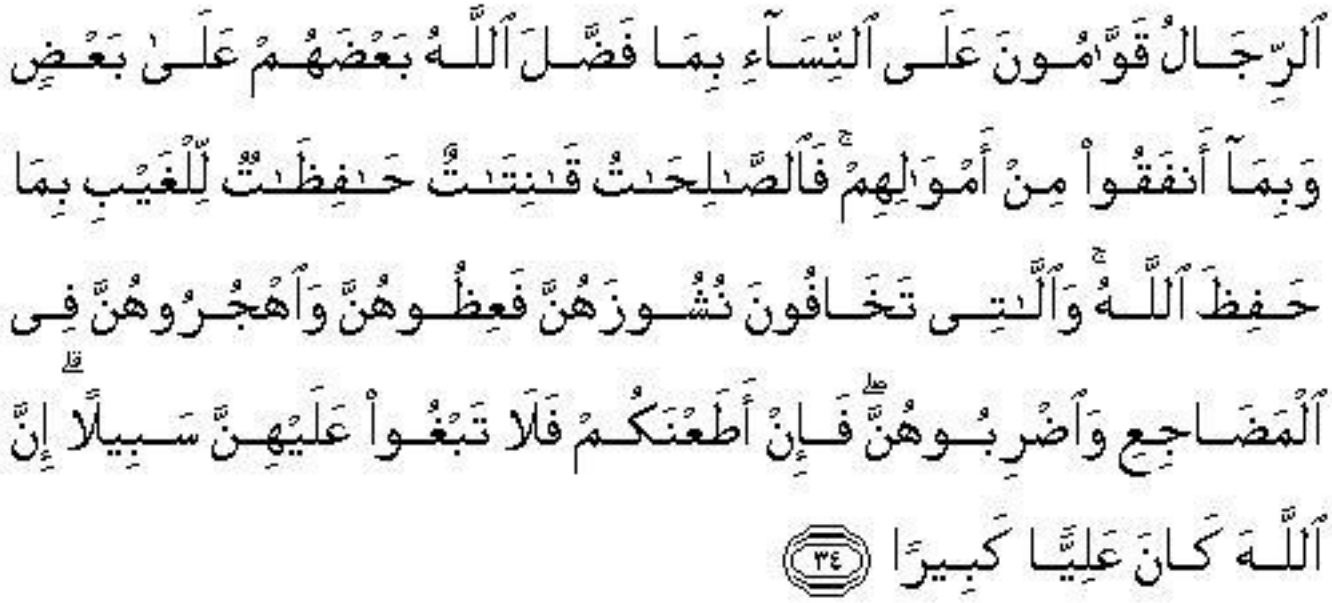
[31] If you abstain from the heinous sins from which you are being forbidden, We will remit your trivial offenses[53] and admit you to a place of honor.

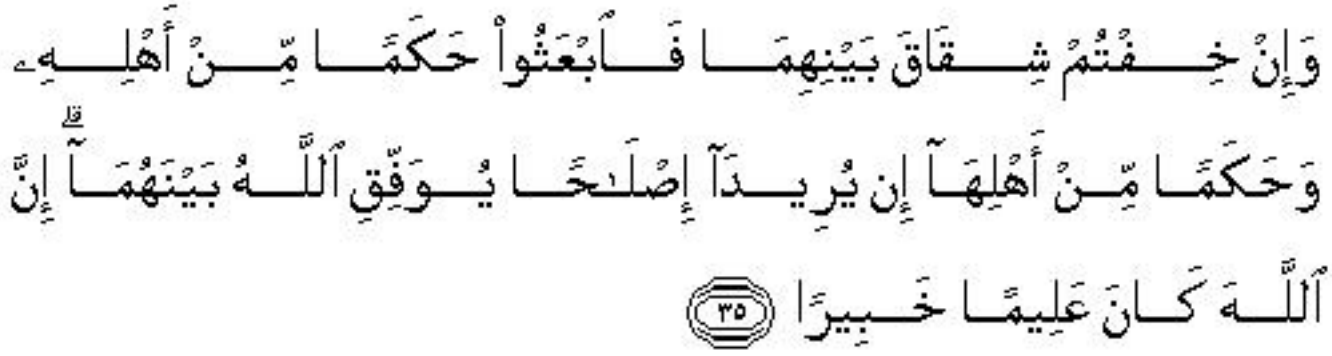
وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا۟ مَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ لِّلرِّجَالِ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا ٱكْتَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا ٱكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَسْـَٔلُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مِن
فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾

[32] And do not covet what Allah has given some of you more than others: the men shall have their due share according to what they have earned and the women shall have their share according to what they have earned. So pray to Allah for His bounty; most surely Allah has perfect knowledge of everything.[54]

وَلِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَٰلِىَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ ٱلْوَٰلِدَانِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبُونَ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ عَقَدَتْ
أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ فَـَٔاتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدًا ﴿٣٣﴾

[33] We have appointed rightful heirs to the inheritance which is left by parents and relatives. As for those with whom you have made a pledge, do give them their share: most surely Allah is watching over everything.[55]


ٱلرِّجَالُ قَوَّٰمُونَ عَلَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بَعۡضَهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ
وَبِمَآ أَنفَقُواْ مِنۡ أَمۡوَٰلِهِمۡۚ فَٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ قَٰنِتَٰتٌ حَٰفِظَٰتٞ لِّلۡغَيۡبِ بِمَا
حَفِظَ ٱللَّهُۚ وَٱلَّٰتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَٱهۡجُرُوهُنَّ فِي
ٱلۡمَضَاجِعِ وَٱضۡرِبُوهُنَّۖ فَإِنۡ أَطَعۡنَكُمۡ فَلَا تَبۡغُواْ عَلَيۡهِنَّ سَبِيلًاۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيّٗا كَبِيرٗا ٣٤


وَإِنۡ خِفۡتُمۡ شِقَاقَ بَيۡنِهِمَا فَٱبۡعَثُواْ حَكَمٗا مِّنۡ أَهۡلِهِۦ
وَحَكَمٗا مِّنۡ أَهۡلِهَآ إِن يُرِيدَآ إِصۡلَٰحٗا يُوَفِّقِ ٱللَّهُ بَيۡنَهُمَآۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرٗا ٣٥

[34-35] Men are the managers[56] of the affairs of women because Allah has made the one superior to the others[57] and because men spend of their wealth on women. Virtuous women are, therefore, obedient; they guard their rights carefully in their absences[58] under the care and watch of Allah. As for those women whose defiance you have cause to fear, admonish them and keep them apart from your beds and beat them.[59] Then, if they submit to you, do not look for excuses to punish them: note it well that there is Allah above you, Who is Supreme and Great. And if you fear a breach between spouses, appoint one arbiter from the relatives of the husband and one from the relatives of the wife. If the two[60] sides sincerely desire to set things right, Allah will create a way' of reconciliation between them, for surely Allah knows everything and is aware of everything.[61]

۞ وَٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُشۡرِكُواْ بِهِۦ شَيۡـٔٗاۖ وَبِٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ إِحۡسَٰنٗا وَبِذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ
وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلۡجَارِ ذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ وَٱلۡجَارِ ٱلۡجُنُبِ وَٱلصَّاحِبِ
بِٱلۡجَنۢبِ وَٱبۡنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُكُمۡۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ
مُخۡتَالٗا فَخُورًا ٣٦

ٱلَّذِينَ يَبۡخَلُونَ وَيَأۡمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلۡبُخۡلِ وَيَكۡتُمُونَ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن
فَضۡلِهِۦۗ وَأَعۡتَدۡنَا لِلۡكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٗا مُّهِينٗا ٣٧

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ رِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ
وَلَا بِٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِۗ وَمَن يَكُنِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ لَهُۥ قَرِينٗا فَسَآءَ قَرِينٗا
٣٨

[36-38] And all of you should serve God and associate none with Him; and show kindness and affection to your parents, and be kind to near relatives, and to orphans, and to the needy; and be considerate to your neighbors kinsmen and strangers and to the companions at your side[62] and to the wayfarer and to the slaves in your possession. Believe it that Allah does not like such persons as are self~conceited and are niggardly and bid others to be niggardly, and conceal the bounty of Allah that He has bestowed upon them;[63] We have prepared a disgraceful chastisement for such ungrateful wretches. And Allah does not like those who expend their wealth to be seen of people, for they do not believe sincerely in Allah and the Last Day. The fact is that whoever has Satan for a comrade, has a very evil company.

وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٩﴾

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِن لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍۭ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٤١﴾

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَعَصَوُا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّىٰ بِهِمُ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ ٱللَّهَ حَدِيثًا ﴿٤٢﴾

[39-42] Well, what harm would have come upon them, if they had believed in Allah and the Last Day and spent out of what Allah had given them? Had they done so, Allah would surely have had knowledge of their good deeds. Indeed Allah does not wrong anyone even by a jot: if one does a good deed, He doubles it, and then from Himself bestows a rich reward. Just imagine how they will fare, when We shall bring forward a witness from every community and raise you (O Muhammad) as a witness in regard to these people.[64] At that time, all those, who rejected the Messenger and disobeyed him, would wish the earth to split open and swallow them; for there they will not be able to hide anything from Allah.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَقۡرَبُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنتُمۡ سُكَٰرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعۡلَمُواْ مَا
تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغۡتَسِلُواْۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرۡضَىٰٓ أَوۡ
عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوۡ جَآءَ أَحَدٞ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡغَآئِطِ أَوۡ لَٰمَسۡتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمۡ تَجِدُواْ
مَآءٗ فَتَيَمَّمُواْ صَعِيدٗا طَيِّبٗا فَٱمۡسَحُواْ بِوُجُوهِكُمۡ وَأَيۡدِيكُمۡۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ
عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

[43] O Believers, do not offer the Prayer while you are intoxicated,[65] for Prayer should be offered only when you know what you are saying.[66] Likewise, do not offer the Prayer if you are "unclean"[67] until you take your bath, except when passing on the way:[68] and if you are sick or on a journey .or if any one of you has relieved himself or you have touched[69] women and can find no water, then cleanse yourselves with pure dust by rubbing it on your face and hands;[70] no doubt Allah is Lenient and Forgiving.

أَلَمۡ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ نَصِيبٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ يَشۡتَرُونَ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ
أَن تَضِلُّواْ ٱلسَّبِيلَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَٱللَّهُ أَعۡلَمُ بِأَعۡدَآئِكُمۡۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَلِيّٗا وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ نَصِيرٗا
﴿٤٥﴾

مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُواْ يُحَرِّفُونَ ٱلۡكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِۦ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعۡنَا وَعَصَيۡنَا
وَٱسۡمَعۡ غَيۡرَ مُسۡمَعٖ وَرَٰعِنَا لَيَّۢا بِأَلۡسِنَتِهِمۡ وَطَعۡنٗا فِي ٱلدِّينِۚ وَلَوۡ أَنَّهُمۡ
قَالُواْ سَمِعۡنَا وَأَطَعۡنَا وَٱسۡمَعۡ وَٱنظُرۡنَا لَكَانَ خَيۡرٗا لَّهُمۡ وَأَقۡوَمَ وَلَٰكِن
لَّعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُفۡرِهِمۡ فَلَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗا ٤٦

[44-46] Have you ever considered the case of those who have been given a portion of the scriptures?[71] They themselves purchase deviation and wish you, too, to go astray from the Right Way: Allah knows your enemies well and Allah suffices you for protection and for help. Some of those, who have become Jews,[72] pervert[73] words out of their context and twist their tongues in order to malign the true Faith and say "sami 'ina[74] wa 'asaina " and "Isma' ghaira musma `in[75] and "Ra 'ina[76] . But, if they had said instead, "sami `ina wa ata "ana, " "Isma '" and " Unzurna," it would have been better for themselves and a more upright way. As Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, they are little disposed to believe.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ ءَامِنُواْ بِمَا نَزَّلۡنَا مُصَدِّقٗا لِّمَا مَعَكُم مِّن
قَبۡلِ أَن نَّطۡمِسَ وُجُوهٗا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ أَدۡبَارِهَآ أَوۡ نَلۡعَنَهُمۡ كَمَا لَعَنَّآ
أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلسَّبۡتِۚ وَكَانَ أَمۡرُ ٱللَّهِ مَفۡعُولًا ٤٧

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغۡفِرُ أَن يُشۡرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغۡفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَمَن يُشۡرِكۡ
بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱفۡتَرَىٰٓ إِثۡمًا عَظِيمًا ٤٨

[47-48] O you to whom the Book had been given! Believe in the Book We have sent down now, confirming the Book you already have with you,[77] believe in it before We distort faces and set them backwards, or lay Our curse on them

as We laid Our curse on the Sabbath breakers:[78] and remember that Allah's Command is surely carried into effect. Shirk is the only sin that Allah does not forgive,[79] and He forgives whomsoever He pleases, other sins than this,[80] for whosoever associates any other partner with Allah, does indeed forge a big lie and commit the most heinous sin.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ بَلِ ٱللَّهُ يُزَكِّى مَن يَشَآءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ ۖ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦٓ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٠﴾

[49-50] Have you also marked those, who speak very highly of their own purity? However, Allah alone purifies whomever He pleases (and if they are not being purified), no injustice is being done to them in the least. Just behold! they do not hesitate to invent lies about Allah, and this sin alone suffices to show that they are manifest sinners.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ نَصِيبًا مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْجِبْتِ وَٱلطَّٰغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ سَبِيلًا ﴿٥١﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يَلْعَنِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ نَصِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُلْكِ فَإِذًا لَّا يُؤْتُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ نَقِيرًا ﴿٥٣﴾

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۖ فَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ ءَالَ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مُّلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾

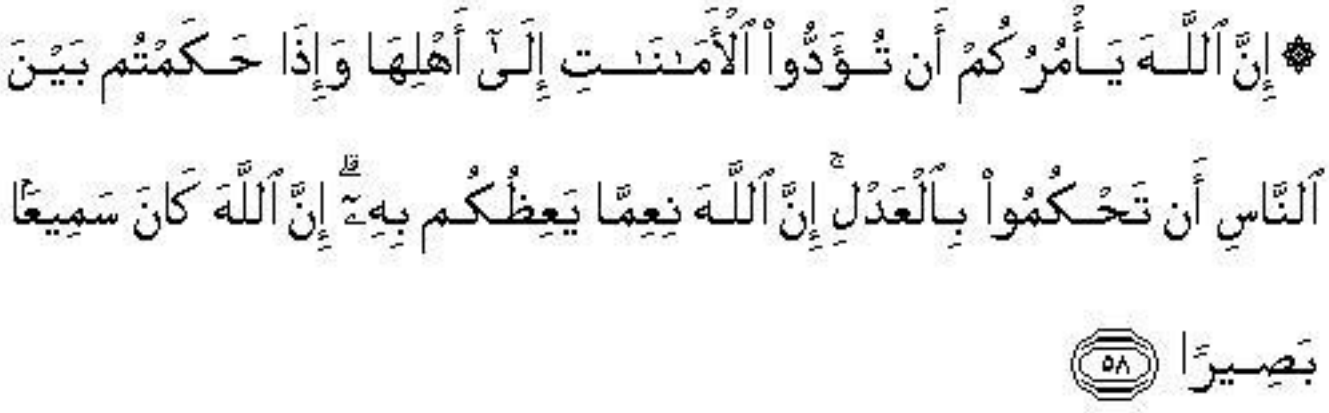
فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ ءَامَنَ بِهِۦ وَمِنْهُم مَّن صَدَّ عَنْهُ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُم
بَدَّلْنَٰهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

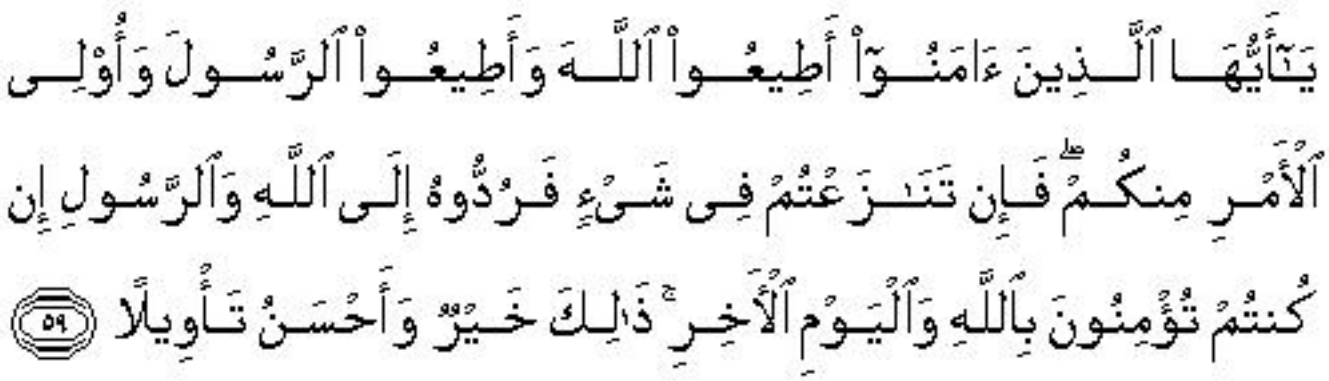
وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ لَّهُمْ فِيهَآ أَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ
ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

[51-57] Have you not observed those who have been given a portion of the Book? They believe in jibt[81] and taghut[82] and say of the disbelievers, "Even they are more rightly guided an the way[83] than the Believers." Such are the people whom Allah has cursed and you will find no helper to the one whom Allah curses. Have they any share in the Kingdom? If they had any, they would never have given even a farthing to anyone.[84] Or, are they jealous of

others, because Allah has blessed them with His bounty?[85] If so, let them know that We did bestow the Book and the Wisdom upon the descendants of Abraham and blessed them with the great kingdom.[86] But some of them believed in it and others turned away from it,[87] and the burning fire of Hell suffices for those who have turned away from it. Surely We will throw into the Fire those who have rejected Our Revelations; as often as their skins shall be consumed, We will replace them by other skins so that they may taste the torment in full, for Allah is All-Powerful and All-Wise to enforce His decrees. As for those, who have believed in Our Revelations and have done righteous deeds, We will admit them to Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein they will abide for ever, wherein they will have pure spouses, and We will admit them into thick shades.



[58] (O Muslims), Allah enjoins you to give the trusts into the care of those persons who are worthy of trust and to judge with justice,[88] when you judge between the people. Excellent is the counsel that Allah gives you, for Allah hears everything and sees everything.



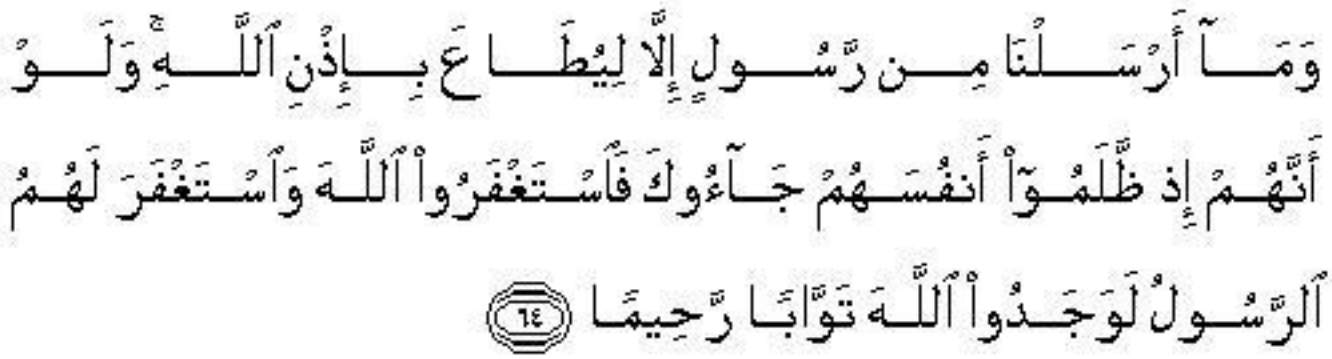
[59] O Believers, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those entrusted with authority from among you. Then if there arises any dispute about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger,[89] if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the only right way and will be best in regard to the end.[90]

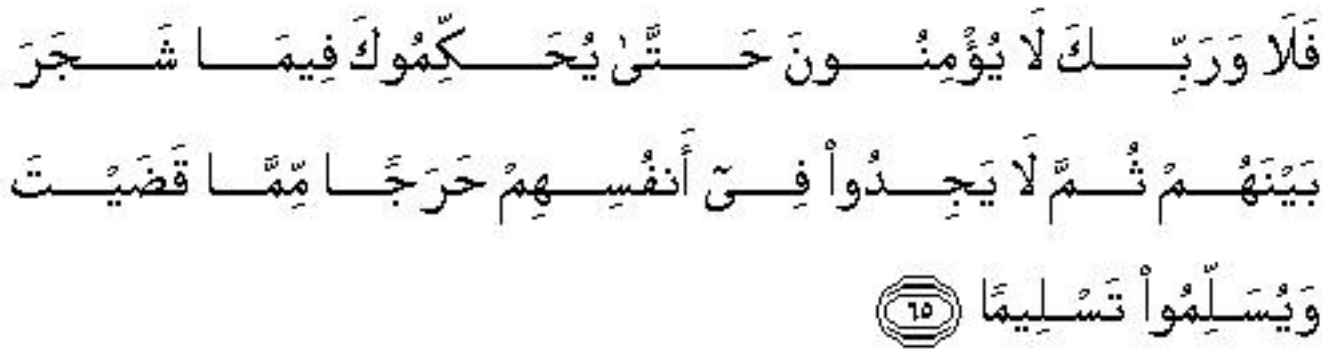
أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ
وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَحَاكَمُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوٓا۟
أَن يَكْفُرُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَيُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَن يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴿٦٠﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَإِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ
يَصُدُّونَ عَنكَ صُدُودًا ﴿٦١﴾

فَكَيْفَ إِذَآ أَصَٰبَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ
جَآءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَآ إِلَّآ إِحْسَٰنًا وَتَوْفِيقًا
﴿٦٢﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ مَا فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُل لَّهُمْ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًۢا بَلِيغًا ﴿٦٣﴾


وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِۚ وَلَوۡ
أَنَّهُمۡ إِذ ظَّلَمُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمۡ جَآءُوكَ فَٱسۡتَغۡفَرُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱسۡتَغۡفَرَ لَهُمُ
ٱلرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُواْ ٱللَّهَ تَوَّابٗا رَّحِيمٗا ٦٤


فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ
بَيۡنَهُمۡ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُواْ فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡ حَرَجٗا مِّمَّا قَضَيۡتَ
وَيُسَلِّمُواْ تَسۡلِيمٗا ٦٥

[60-65] Prophet, have you not marked those who profess to believe in the Book that have been sent down to you and in the Books that had been sent down before you, and yet want to turn to taghut for the judgment of their cases though they have been bidden to reject taghut?[91] Satan intends to lead them far astray from the right path. And when it is said to them, "Come to that thing which Allah has sent down and to the Messenger," you see that the hypocrites show hesitation in coming to you.[92] But how do they behave when a disaster befalls them as a consequence of their own doings? They come to you with oath,[93] saying, "We swear by God that we only meant to promote the good and bring about a reconciliation between the parties." Allah knows what really is in their hearts: therefore show forbearance towards them and admonish them and give them a piece of advice that may go deep into their hearts. (Tell them) "Every Messenger whom We have sent must be obeyed because Allah has enjoined this."[94] When they had wronged themselves, the best thing for them would have been to come to you and implore Allah's pardon, and if the Messenger had also asked Allah's forgiveness for them, most surely they would have found Allah Forgiving and Merciful. Nay, O Muhammad, by your Lord, they can never become Believers until they accept you as judge for the decision of the disputes between them, and then surrender to your decision with entire submission without feeling the least resentment in their hearts.[95]

وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنِ ٱقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ أَوِ ٱخْرُجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِكُم مَّا
فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا۟ مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِۦ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ
وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيتًا ﴿٦٦﴾

وَإِذًا لَّءَاتَيْنَٰهُم مِّن لَّدُنَّآ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٦٧﴾

وَلَهَدَيْنَٰهُمْ صِرَٰطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٦٨﴾

وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ
وَٱلصِّدِّيقِينَ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَضْلُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

[66-70] (As for them), only a few of them would have acted upon it, if We had enjoined them, "Kill yourselves," or "Leave your homes".[96] It would have been better for them and it would have made them firm.[97] (in their Faith), if they had done what they were commanded to do, for We would have given them a great reward from Ourselves and shown them the straight path.[98] And who-so-ever obeys Allah and the Messenger, shall be with those whom Allah has blessed-the Prophets, the truthful and the martyrs and the righteous:[99] what excellent companions these are that one may get![100] This is the real bounty which comes from Allah and Allah's knowledge suffices to know the Reality.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ خُذُواْ حِذۡرَكُمۡ فَٱنفِرُواْ ثُبَاتٍ أَوِ ٱنفِرُواْ جَمِيعٗا ٧١

وَإِنَّ مِنكُمۡ لَمَن لَّيُبَطِّئَنَّ فَإِنۡ أَصَٰبَتۡكُم مُّصِيبَةٞ قَالَ قَدۡ أَنۡعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيَّ إِذۡ لَمۡ أَكُن مَّعَهُمۡ شَهِيدٗا ٧٢

[71-72] Believers, be always prepared for encounter,[101] and advance in detachments or march in a body, as the occasion may require. Well, there are among you such as shirk fight;'[102] if a disaster befalls you, they say, "Allah has been very gracious to us that we did not accompany these people."

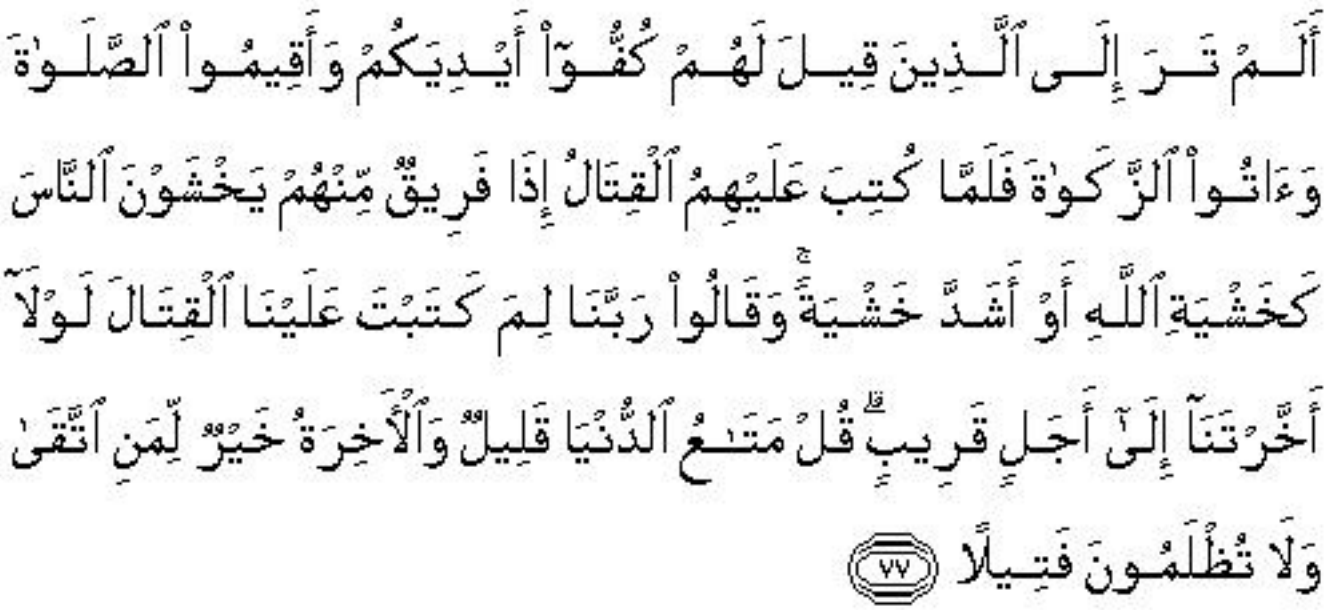
وَلَئِنۡ أَصَٰبَكُمۡ فَضۡلٞ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَن لَّمۡ تَكُۢنۢ بَيۡنَكُمۡ وَبَيۡنَهُۥ مَوَدَّةٞ يَٰلَيۡتَنِي كُنتُ مَعَهُمۡ فَأَفُوزَ فَوۡزًا عَظِيمٗا ٧٣

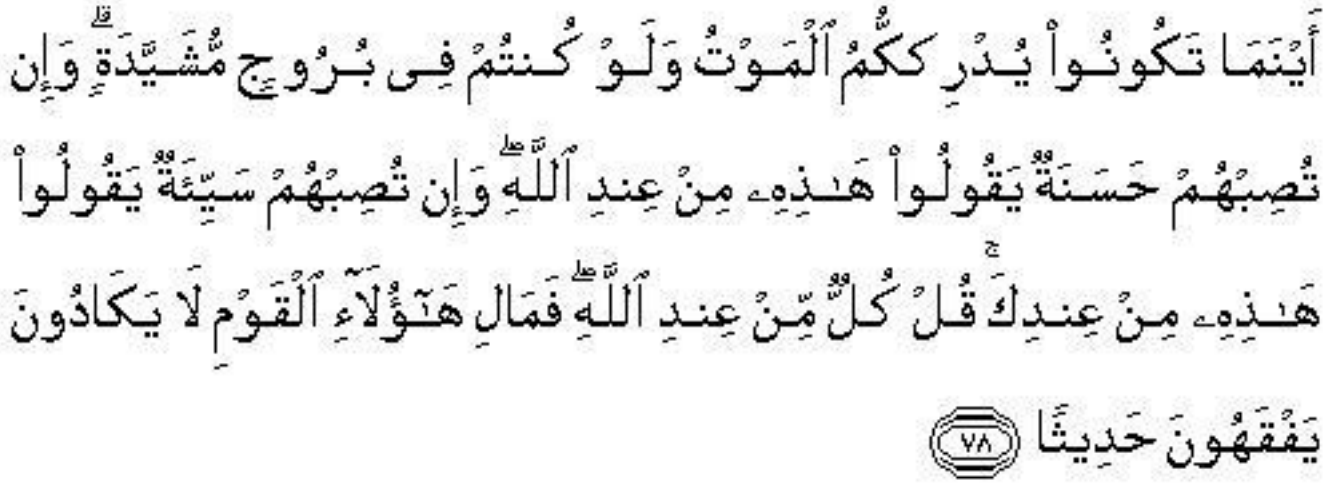
۞فَلۡيُقَٰتِلۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَشۡرُونَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۚ وَمَن يُقَٰتِلۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيُقۡتَلۡ أَوۡ يَغۡلِبۡ فَسَوۡفَ نُؤۡتِيهِ أَجۡرًا عَظِيمٗا ٧٤

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ
وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا
وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ
فِى سَبِيلِ ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ فَقَٰتِلُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۖ إِنَّ كَيْدَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ
كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٧٦﴾

[73-76] And if you are blessed with grace from Allah, they say, as though there never had been any friendly relations between you and them "We wish we had also accompanied them and thus would have gained our end." (Let such people understand that) those alone, who barter away this worldly life for that of the Hereafter,[103] should fight in the way of Allah; then We will bestow a great reward upon him who fights in the way of Allah whether he be slain or be victorious. Why should you, then, not fight in the way of Allah for the sake of those helpless men, women and children who, being weak, have been oppressed, and are crying out, "Our Lord, deliver us from this habitation whose inhabitants are unjust oppressors, and raise a protector for us by Thy grace and a helper from Thyself."[104] Those, who follow the way of Faith, fight in the way of Allah, and those who follow the way of disbelief fight in the way of taghut.[105] So fight against the helpers of Satan with this conviction that Satan's crafty schemes are in fact very weak.[106]


أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوٓاْ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَءَاتُواْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ ٱلنَّاسَ
كَخَشْيَةِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً ۚ وَقَالُواْ رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا ٱلْقِتَالَ لَوْلَآ
أَخَّرْتَنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ ۗ قُلْ مَتَٰعُ ٱلدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ
وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧٧﴾


أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُواْ يُدْرِككُّمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِى بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ وَإِن
تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُواْ هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُواْ
هَٰذِهِۦ مِنْ عِندِكَ ۚ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَمَالِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ
يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا ﴿٧٨﴾

[77-78] Have you also marked those to whom it was said, "Withhold your hands (a while from war) and establish the Salat and pay the Zakat.? Now that they have been commanded to fight, some of them fear the people as they should fear Allah, or even more than that;[107] they say, `Our Lord, why have You prescribed fighting for us? Why have You not given us further respite?" Say to them, "The pleasures of this worldly life are trifling and the life of the Hereafter is much better for a man who fears Allah, and you shall not be wronged in the least.[108] As to death, it will overtake you wherever you may be, even though you be in fortified towers" If they have good fortune, they say, "This is from Allah," and if they suffer a loss, they say, "This is because of you."[109] Say, "Everything is from Allah." What then has gone wrong with these people that they do not understand anything? Whatever good comes to you, O man, it is by Allah's grace, and whatever evil befalls you, it is the result of your own doings.

مَّآ أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَآ أَصَابَكَ
مِن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِن نَّفْسِكَ ۚ وَأَرْسَلْنَٰكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا
٧٩

مَّن يُطِعِ ٱلرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ ٱللَّهَ ۖ وَمَن تَوَلَّىٰ
فَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ٨٠

[79-80] We have sent you, O Muhammad, as a Messenger to mankind, and Allah's witness suffices for this. Whoever obeys the Messenger, in fact, obeys Allah and whoever turns away from him (is accountable for his deeds); anyhow We have not sent you to be keeper over them.[110]

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا۟ مِنْ عِندِكَ بَيَّتَ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ
غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى تَقُولُ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ ۖ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ
عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ٨١

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا۟ فِيهِ ٱخْتِلَٰفًا
كَثِيرًا ٨٢

[81-82] In your presence, they say, "We are obedient to you," but when they leave you, some of them meet together

secretly at night to plot against what you say; Allah writes down all their secret talks; so leave them alone and trust in Allah; Allah alone suffices for trust. Do they not ponder over the Qur'an? Had it been from any other than Allah, surely there would have been many contradictions in it.[111]

وَإِذَا جَآءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْنِ أَوِ ٱلْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَوْ
رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ
مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَٱتَّبَعْتُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

[83] Whenever these people hear any news concerning peace or danger, they make it known to all and sundry; instead of this, if they should convey it to the Messenger and to the responsible people of the Community, it would come to the knowledge of such people who among them are capable of sifting it and drawing right conclusions from it.[112] (Your weaknesses were such that) had it not been for Allah's grace and mercy towards you, all of you except a few, would have followed Satan.

فَقَٰتِلْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ ۚ وَحَرِّضِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن
يَكُفَّ بَأْسَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنكِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

مَّن يَشْفَعْ شَفَٰعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُن لَّهُۥ نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا ۖ وَمَن يَشْفَعْ شَفَٰعَةً سَيِّئَةً
يَكُن لَّهُۥ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّقِيتًا ﴿٨٥﴾

[84-85] O Prophet, fight in the way of Allah: you are accountable for none but your own person; you should, however, urge on the Believers to fight: it may be that Allah will soon break the strength of the disbelievers, for Allah

is the strongest in might and His punishment is most severe. Whoever pleads a good cause, will get a share from it, and whoever pleads an evil cause also shall get a share from it;[113] for Allah keeps strict watch over everything.

وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُم بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا۟ بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَآ أَوْ رُدُّوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَىْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۗ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ
مِنَ ٱللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

[86-87] And when anyone greets you in a respectful manner, greet him with a better salutation than his or at least return the same;[114] indeed Allah takes count of everything. Allah: there is no deity but He. He will gather you all together on the Day of Resurrection, the coming of which is beyond all doubt: and whose word can be truer than Allah's.[115]

۞ فَمَا لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِئَتَيْنِ وَٱللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوٓا۟ ۚ أَتُرِيدُونَ
أَن تَهْدُوا۟ مَنْ أَضَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾

وَدُّوا۟ لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا۟ فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَآءً ۖ فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ
حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَخُذُوهُمْ وَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ
وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍۭ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَٰقٌ أَوْ جَآءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ
صُدُورُهُمْ أَن يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَٰتِلُوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ
عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَٰتَلُوكُمْ ۚ فَإِنِ ٱعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَٰتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَمَ
فَمَا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾

سَتَجِدُونَ ءَاخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ كُلَّ مَا رُدُّوٓا۟
إِلَى ٱلْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوٓا۟ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَمَ
وَيَكُفُّوٓا۟ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ وَٱقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكُمْ
جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٩١﴾

[88-91] How is it with you that there are two opinions among you concerning the hypocrites,[116] whereas Allah has turned them back (to their former state) because of the evils they have earned?[117] Do you desire to show guidance

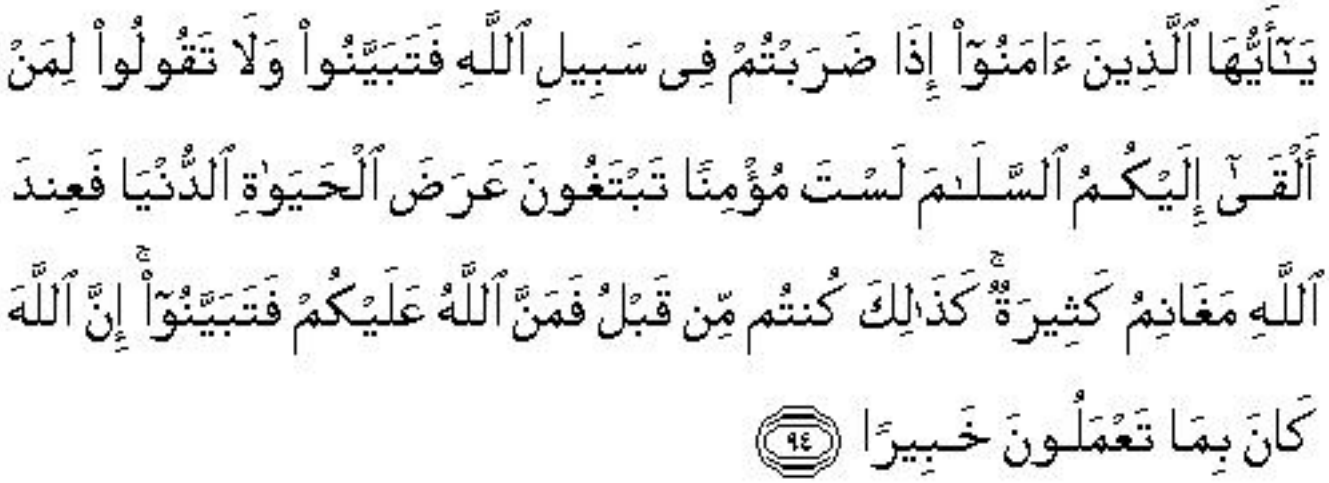
to him whom Allah has let go astray? You cannot find a path for him whom Allah has turned away from the right path. They really wish that you should also become disbelievers, as they themselves are so that both may become alike. So you should not take friends from among them unless they migrate in the way of Allah; and if they do not migrate, then seize them wherever you find them and slay[118] them and do not take any of them as friends and helpers. However, those hypocrites are excepted who join a people who are allied to you by a treaty.[119] Likewise, those hypocrites are excepted who come to you and are averse to fighting either against you of against their own people. Had Allah willed, He would have given them power over you and they also would have fought against you; therefore if they leave you alone and desist from fighting against you and make overtures for peace to you, in that case Allah has left you no cause for aggression against them. You will also find another kind of hypocrites, who wish to be at peace with you and also at peace with their own people but who would plunge into mischief, whenever they got an opportunity for it. If such people do not desist from your enmity nor make overtures for peace nor desist from fighting against you, then seize them and slay them wherever you find them, for We have given you a clear authority to fight against them.

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَن يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَـًٔا ۚ وَمَن قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَـًٔا فَتَحْرِيرُ
رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن يَصَّدَّقُوا۟ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ
لَّكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِن قَوْمٍۭ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم
مِّيثَـٰقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ فَمَن لَّمْ يَجِدْ
فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٩٢﴾

وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهُۥ جَهَنَّمُ خَـٰلِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَلَعَنَهُۥ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُۥ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

[92-93] It does not behoove a Believer to slay another Believer except by error,[120] and if one slays a Believer by

error, he must set free one believing slave as expiation[121] and pay blood-money to the heirs[122] of the slain person unless they charitably forego it. But if the murdered Muslim belonged to a people who are at enmity with you, then the expiation shall be the freeing of one believing slave; and if the slain person belonged to a non-Muslim ally of yours, then the blood-money must be paid to his heirs[123] and a believing slave has to be set free. But if one could not afford a slave, then he must fast two consecutive months.[124] This is the way enjoined by Allah for repentance;[125] Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. As regards the one who kills a Believer willfully, his recompense is Hell, wherein he shall live for ever. He has incurred Allah's wrath and His curse is on him, and Allah has prepared a woeful torment for him.



[94] O Believers, when you go to Jihad in the way of Allah, discern between friend and foe; and if one greets you with a salutation of peace, do not say to him abruptly, "You are not a believer."[126] If you seek worldly gain by this, Allah has abundant spoils for you. (Remember that) you yourselves were before this in the same condition; then Allah showed His grace on you;[127] therefore you should discern well, for Allah is fully aware of what you do.



دَرَجَٰتٍ مِّنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾

[95-96] Those people from among the Muslims who stay at home without any genuine excuse are not equal in rank with those who exert their utmost with their lives and wealth for the cause of Allah. For Allah has assigned a higher rank to those who exert their utmost with their lives and wealth than those who stay at home. Though Allah has promised a good reward for all, he has a far richer reward for those who fight for Him than for those who stay at home:[128] they have high ranks, forgiveness and mercy from Allah, for Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا۟ فِيمَ كُنتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ كُنَّا
مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۚ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾

إِلَّا ٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا
يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾

فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾

۞ وَمَن يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ مُرَٰغَمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً ۚ وَمَن
يَخْرُجْ مِنۢ بَيْتِهِۦ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ ٱلْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ
وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

[97-100] When the angels seized the souls of those who were ding wrong to their own souls[129] they asked them, "What was the matter with you?" They answered, "We were oppressed in the land." The angels replied, "Was not Allah's earth spacious for you to emigrate in it?"[130] Hell is the abode of such people and it is a very evil abode indeed. As regards those men, women and children who are really helpless and lack the means of migration and find no way out, Allah may pardon them, for Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing. The one who emigrates in the way of Allah, will find in the land enough room for refuge and abundant resources for livelihood.. As regards the one, who leaves his home to migrate towards Allah and His Messenger and death overtakes him on the way, Allah has taken upon Himself to give him his due reward, for Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[131]

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَقْصُرُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ إِنْ
خِفْتُمْ أَن يَفْتِنَكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ كَانُوا۟ لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا

﴿١٠١﴾

[101] When you go on a journey, there is no harm, if you shorten your Salat,[132] (especially) when you fear that the disbelievers might harass you,[133] for the disbelievers are openly bent upon enmity against you.

وَإِذَا كُنتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُم مَّعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوٓا۟
أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا۟ فَلْيَكُونُوا۟ مِن وَرَآئِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَآئِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ
يُصَلُّوا۟ فَلْيُصَلُّوا۟ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا۟ حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۗ وَدَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟
لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُم مَّيْلَةً وَٰحِدَةً ۚ وَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِّن مَّطَرٍ أَوْ كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَن تَضَعُوٓا۟
أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ ۖ وَخُذُوا۟ حِذْرَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

[102] And when you, O Prophet, are among the Muslims and are going to lead them in Salat[134] (in a state of war), let a party of them stand behind you,[135] carrying their weapons with them. When they have made their prostrations, they should fall back and let another party of them, who have not yet offered the Salat, say it with you and they, too, should be on their guard and keep their weapons with them.[136] For the disbelievers are always on the look-out for a chance to find you neglectful of your weapons and your baggage so that they may swoop down upon you with a surprise attack. If, however, you feel some inconvenience on account of rain, or if you are ill, there is no harm if you put aside your weapons, but you should still be on your guard. Rest assured that Allah has prepared a disgraceful torment for the disbelievers.[137]

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا
ٱطْمَأْنَنتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَٰبًا مَّوْقُوتًا

﴿١٠٣﴾

[103] When you have finished your Prayer, you should remember Allah, whether you are standing or sitting or reclining: then, as soon as you are secure, say your Salat in full. Indeed, the Salat is a prescribed duty that should be performed at appointed times by the Believers.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا۟ فِى ٱبْتِغَآءِ ٱلْقَوْمِ ۖ إِن تَكُونُوا۟ تَأْلَمُونَ
فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۖ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

[104] Show no weakness in pursuing these people:[138] if you are suffering hardship, they, too, are suffering hardship as you are suffering. Moreover, you are expecting to receive from Allah that which they are not expecting.[139] Allah knows everything and is All Wise.

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ
بِمَآ أَرَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُن لِّلْخَآئِنِينَ خَصِيمًا ﴿١٠٥﴾

وَٱسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

وَلَا تُجَٰدِلْ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ خَوَّانًا
أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا
لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ جَٰدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَمَن يُجَٰدِلُ ٱللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَم مَّن يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

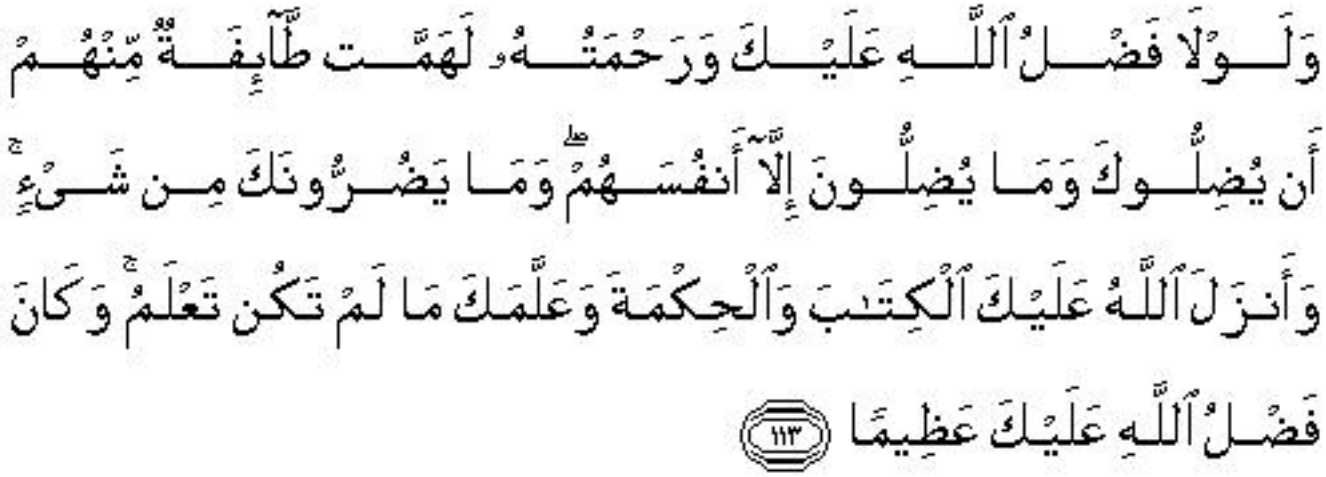
وَمَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُۥ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ يَجِدِ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿١١٠﴾

وَمَن يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُۥ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١١﴾

وَمَن يَكْسِبْ خَطِيٓـَٔةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِۦ بَرِيٓـًٔا فَقَدِ ٱحْتَمَلَ
بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٢﴾

[105-112] O prophet,"[140] We have sent this Book to you with the Truth so that you may judge between people in accordance with, the right way which Allah has shown you. So do not plead for the dishonest people: implore Allah's

forgiveness: for Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. You should not plead for those who are dishonest to themselves:[141] Allah does not like the one who is persistently dishonest and sinful. They might hide their evil deeds from the people but they cannot hide these from Allah: He is with them even when they hold at night such secret consultations as do not please Him; Allah encompasses all that they are doing. Well, you have argued on their behalf in this worldly life but who will argue their case with Allah on the Day of Resurrection? Or who will be their defender there? If one does a sinful thing or wrongs himself in any way and afterwards implores Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Forgiving and Compassionate. But if one earns some evil (and does not repent), this earning of his will bring due punishment on him, for Allah is All Knowing, All-Wise. But he who commits an error or a sin, and then lays the blame for it on an innocent person, surely burdens himself with the guilt of calumny and a heinous sin.


وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَهَمَّت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ
أَن يُضِلُّوكَ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ
وَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ۚ وَكَانَ
فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٣﴾

[113] O Prophet, had not Allah's grace been with you, and had not His .mercy safeguarded you from their mischief, a party from among them had decided to involve you in misunderstanding though they were involving no one but themselves in misunderstanding and could have done you no harm.[142] Allah has sent down the Book and the Wisdom to you and taught what you did not know; great indeed is His bounty to you.


۞ لَّا خَيْرَ فِى كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَىٰهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ
مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَٰحٍۭ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ ٱللَّهِ
فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ
ٱلۡهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعۡ غَيۡرَ سَبِيلِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِۦ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصۡلِهِۦ
جَهَنَّمَۖ وَسَآءَتۡ مَصِيرًا ١١٥

[114-115] There is nothing good in most of the secret counsels of the people: it is, however, a good thing if one secretly enjoins charity or righteousness or says something in order to set aright the affairs of the people; We will give a great reward to him who does so to please Allah. But as regards him who is bent on opposing the Messenger and is following a way other than that of the Believers after Guidance has become clear to him, We will turn such a one on the way to which he himself has turned,[143] and cast him into Hell which is the most wretched abode.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغۡفِرُ أَن يُشۡرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغۡفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَمَن
يُشۡرِكۡ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدۡ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلَۢا بَعِيدًا ١١٦

إِن يَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ إِنَٰثٗا وَإِن يَدۡعُونَ إِلَّا شَيۡطَٰنٗا مَّرِيدٗا ١١٧

لَّعَنَهُ ٱللَّهُۘ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنۡ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبٗا مَّفۡرُوضٗا ١١٨

وَلَأُضِلَّنَّهُمْ وَلَأُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ وَلَآمُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُبَتِّكُنَّ ءَاذَانَ ٱلْأَنْعَـٰمِ وَلَآمُرَنَّهُمْ
فَلَيُغَيِّرُنَّ خَلْقَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّخِذِ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنَ وَلِيًّا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ
خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٩﴾

يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ ۖ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢٠﴾

أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَحِيصًا ﴿١٢١﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقًّا ۚ وَمَنْ
أَصْدَقُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ قِيلًا ﴿١٢٢﴾

[116-122] Shirk[144] is the only sin that Allah does. not forgive. He may forgive whomever He will, other than this sin, for whoever associates partners with Allah does, in fact, go far astray into deviation. The mushriks invoke to goddesses instead of Allah: they invoke that rebellious Satan,[145] on whom Allah has laid His curse; (they obey that Satan) who said to Allah, "I will most surely take due share from your servants[146] and will mislead them; I will entice them by vain desires; I will command them and they will slit[147] the ears of the cattle by my order, and I will command them and they will make alterations and corrupt Allah's creation."[148] Therefore whoever makes this same Satan his patron, instead of God, becomes a manifest loser. Though he makes (false) promises with people and entices them by vain hopes[149] all his promises are nothing but deception. The abode of such people is Hell from where they will find no way of escape. As regards those, who believe and do good deeds, We will admit them into Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein they will abide for ever. This promise of Allah is true and who can be truer in

his word than Allah?

لَّيْسَ بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَآ أَمَانِيِّ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ۗ مَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا يُجْزَ بِهِۦ وَلَا
يَجِدْ لَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾

[123-124] The final result shall not be in accordance with your wishes nor in accordance with the wishes of the people of the Book. He who does evil shall be recompensed for it and he shall find no protector and no helper for himself against Allah. And the one who does good deeds, whether man or woman, provided that the one is a believer, will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged in the least of their rightful reward.

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُۥ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَٱتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
حَنِيفًا ۗ وَٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّحِيطًا ﴿١٢٦﴾

[125-126] Who can have a better way of life than the one who surrenders himself to Allah and does what is good and follows whole heartedly the way of Abraham whom Allah chose to be His friend? All that there is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah,[150] and Allah encircles everything.[151]

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ
فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ فِي يَتَٰمَى ٱلنِّسَآءِ ٱلَّٰتِي لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ
وَتَرْغَبُونَ أَن تَنكِحُوهُنَّ وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ وَأَن تَقُومُوا۟
لِلْيَتَٰمَىٰ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا۟ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِۦ عَلِيمًا ﴿١٢٧﴾

[127] They ask your verdict concerning women.[152] Say. `'Allah gives His verdict concerning them, and along with it reminds you of those Commandments which have already been told you in this Book,[153] that is, the Commandments concerning those orphan girls whom you do not give their lawful rights[154] and whom you do not wish to marry (or. whom you yourselves desire to marry for greed).[155] He also reminds you of the Commandments concerning those children who are weak and helpless.[156] Allah enjoins you to deal justly with orphans: Allah has full knowledge of whatever good you do.

وَإِنِ ٱمْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنۢ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَآ أَن
يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا ۚ وَٱلصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَأُحْضِرَتِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ ٱلشُّحَّ ۚ وَإِن
تُحْسِنُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾

وَلَن تَسْتَطِيعُوٓا۟ أَن تَعْدِلُوا۟ بَيْنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا۟ كُلَّ
ٱلْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوهَا كَٱلْمُعَلَّقَةِ ۚ وَإِن تُصْلِحُوا۟ وَتَتَّقُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٢٩﴾

[128-129] When[157] a woman fears ill-treatment or aversion from her husband, there is no harm if the two make peace between themselves(by means of a compromise); after all peace is the best thing.[158] Human souls are prone to narrow-mindedness,[159] but if you show generosity and fear Allah in your dealings, you may rest assured that Allah will be fully aware of all that you do[160] it is not within your power to be perfectly equitable in your treatment with all your wives, even if you wish to be so; therefore, (in order to satisfy the dictates of Divine Law) do not lean wholly towards one wife so as to leave the other in a state of suspense.[161] If you behave righteously and fear Allah, you will find Allah Forgiving and Compassionate.[162]

وَإِن يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ ٱللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّن سَعَتِهِۦ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٣٠﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا۟ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا ﴿١٣١﴾

[130-131] But if the spouses do separate, Allah will make each one of them independent of the other by His vast powers, for His resources are limitless and He is All-Wise and All-Knowing. And everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him. We enjoined those whom We gave the Book before you and now enjoin you also, to fear Allah in all your dealings. But if you reject this, (you will do so at your own peril, for) Allah is the owner of everything in the heavens and the earth: He does not stand in need of anyone and is worthy of all praise.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٣٢﴾

إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِـَٔاخَرِينَ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ قَدِيرًا

﴿١٣٣﴾

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا فَعِندَ ٱللَّهِ ثَوَابُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۚ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ سَمِيعَۢا بَصِيرٗا ١٣٤

[132-134] Yes, Allah is the Owner of all that is in the heavens and the earth, and He suffices for help and protection. If He will, He may put you away, O people, and replace you by others and He is All Powerful to do this. Whoso desires the reward of this world should know that Allah possesses the rewards of both this world and the Hereafter: He hears everything and sees everything.[163]

۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلۡقِسۡطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوۡ عَلَىٰٓ
أَنفُسِكُمۡ أَوِ ٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ وَٱلۡأَقۡرَبِينَۚ إِن يَكُنۡ غَنِيًّا أَوۡ فَقِيرٗا فَٱللَّهُ أَوۡلَىٰ بِهِمَاۖ
فَلَا تَتَّبِعُواْ ٱلۡهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعۡدِلُواْۚ وَإِن تَلۡوُۥٓاْ أَوۡ تُعۡرِضُواْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا
تَعۡمَلُونَ خَبِيرٗا ١٣٥

[135] O Believers, be you the standard-bearers of justice and witnesses for the sake of Allah,[164] even[165] though your justice and your evidence might be harmful to yourselves, or to your parents, or to your relatives. It does not matter whether the party concerned is rich or poor: Allah is their greater well-wisher than you; therefore, do not follow your own desire lest you should deviate from doing justice. If you distort your evidence or refrain from the truth, know it well that Allah is fully aware of what you do.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ ءَامِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَنزَلَ مِن قَبۡلُۚ وَمَن يَكۡفُرۡ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتِهِۦ
وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِ فَقَدۡ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلَۢا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ثُمَّ كَفَرُواْ ثُمَّ ءَامَنُواْ ثُمَّ كَفَرُواْ ثُمَّ ٱزۡدَادُواْ كُفۡرٗا
لَّمۡ يَكُنِ ٱللَّهُ لِيَغۡفِرَ لَهُمۡ وَلَا لِيَهۡدِيَهُمۡ سَبِيلَۢا ﴿١٣٧﴾

بَشِّرِ ٱلۡمُنَٰفِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمۡ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣٨﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ أَوۡلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَۚ أَيَبۡتَغُونَ
عِندَهُمُ ٱلۡعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ ٱلۡعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا
وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا۟ فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ
إِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ جَامِعُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا
١٤٠

ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ
وَإِن كَانَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوٓا۟ أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعْكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ فَٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ١٤١

[136-141] O you, who profess to have believed, believe sincerely in Allah[166] and His Messenger and the Book which He has sent down to His Messenger and in every Book that He sent down before this: for whoever disbelieves in Allah and His Angels and His Books and His Messengers and the Last Day,[167] most surely strays far away into deviation. As for those, who profess belief, then disbelieve, again profess belief and then disbelieve and then grow stubborn in their disbelief, [168] Allah will never forgive them and never show them the right way. And give the good tidings of a painful torment to the hypocrites who make the disbelievers their friends instead of the Believers. Do they go to the disbelievers to seek honor?[169] Whereas, in fact, all honor belongs to Allah alone. Allah has already sent down to you in this Book the Commandment: you should not sit in a company wherein you hear things of unbelief concerning the Revelations of Allah, and wherein these are being ridiculed, until those people are engaged in some other talk. Now if you remain here you shall be guilty like them.[170] Rest assured that Allah is going to gather the hypocrites and the disbelievers all together in Hell. The hypocrites are watching you closely to see how the wind blows. If victory comes to you from Allah, they will say to you, "Were we not with you?" And if the disbelievers gain the upper hand, they will say to them, "Were we not strong enough to fight against you? Yet we defended you from the Muslims.[171] Indeed, on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will judge between you and them, and (in this judgment) Allah has left no way for the disbelievers to overcome the Believers.

إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ يُخَٰدِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَٰدِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ قَامُوا۟
كُسَالَىٰ يُرَآءُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

مُّذَبْذَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ لَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَلَآ إِلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۚ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن
تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤٣﴾

[142-143] The hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, whereas, in fact, Allah has involved them in deception. When they rise up for the Salat, they go reluctantly to it, merely to be seen by people and they remember Allah but little.[172] They are wavering between belief and disbelief: they are neither wholly on this side nor wholly on that side. You cannot guide to the Way the one whom Allah lets go astray.[173]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ
أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَجْعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَٰنًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٤٤﴾

إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِى ٱلدَّرْكِ ٱلْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ﴿١٤٥﴾

[144-145] O Believers, do not take the disbelievers as your friends instead of the Believers: do you ant to furnish Allah with a clear proof against yourselves? Note it well that the hypocrites shall go to the lowest abyss of Hell, and you will not find any helper for them.

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ وَأَصْلَحُوا۟ وَٱعْتَصَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ
لِلَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾

مَّا يَفْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَءَامَنتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٧﴾

[146-147] As regards those of them, who repent and mend them ways and then hold fast to Allah and dedicate their religion sincerely to Allah,[174] such people are with the Believers, and Allah will most surely bestow a great reward on the Believers. And why should Allah punish you, if you are grateful[175] and behave like true Believers? For Allah fully appreciates worth[176] and knows everything about everyone.

۞ لَّا يُحِبُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْجَهْرَ بِٱلسُّوٓءِ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَن ظُلِمَ ۚ وَكَانَ
ٱللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٨﴾

إِن تُبْدُوا۟ خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا۟ عَن سُوٓءٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا
﴿١٤٩﴾

[148-149] Allah does not like that a person should utter evil words except when one has been wronged: Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Though you are allowed to give expression to evil words, if you have been wronged,) yet if you go on doing good openly and secretly or at least refrain from evil, you should know that Allah is Forgiving, whereas He is All-Powerful to punish.[177]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكۡفُرُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن يُفَرِّقُواْ بَيۡنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤۡمِنُ بِبَعۡضٖ وَنَكۡفُرُ بِبَعۡضٖ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن يَتَّخِذُواْ بَيۡنَ ذَٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا ١٥٠

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ حَقّٗاۚ وَأَعۡتَدۡنَا لِلۡكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٗا مُّهِينٗا ١٥١

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ وَلَمۡ يُفَرِّقُواْ بَيۡنَ أَحَدٖ مِّنۡهُمۡ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ سَوۡفَ يُؤۡتِيهِمۡ أُجُورَهُمۡۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٗا رَّحِيمٗا ١٥٢

[150-152] Those, who deny Allah and His Messengers and desire to draw a line between Allah and His Messengers, and say, "We will acknowledge some and deny others," they seek a midway between belief and disbelief. All those are confirmed disbelievers,[178] and We have prepared an ignominious punishment for such disbelievers. In contrast to them, We will most surely give their due reward[179] to those who believe in Allah and all His Messengers and do not discriminate against any of them; for Allah is very Forgiving and very Compassionate.[180]

يَسْـَٔلُكَ أَهْلُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ أَن تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَـٰبًا مِّنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۚ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا۟ مُوسَىٰٓ أَكْبَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ فَقَالُوٓا۟ أَرِنَا ٱللَّهَ
جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلصَّـٰعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ۚ ثُمَّ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ ٱلْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا
جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَن ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَـٰنًا مُّبِينًا

١٥٣

وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ ٱلطُّورَ بِمِيثَـٰقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمُ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْبَابَ
سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا۟ فِى ٱلسَّبْتِ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَـٰقًا غَلِيظًا ١٥٤

فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِم مِّيثَـٰقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِم بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ ٱلْأَنۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ
وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۚ بَلْ طَبَعَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

١٥٥

[153-155] If the people of the Book are today asking you to cause a Book to come down upon them from heaven,[181] they have already made even more monstrous demands from Moses. They said to him, "Make us see Allah with our own eyes." As a result of their wickedness, a thunder-bolt smote them all of a sudden.[182] Then they took the calf as the object of their worship, after they had seen clear signs:[183] but even after this, We forgave them. We bestowed upon Moses a clear Commandment and raised Mount Tur over them and took a Covenant from them (to obey it).[184] We enjoined them to enter the gate bowing down humbly.[185] We said to them, "Do not break the Sabbath," and took a solemn Covenant[186] from them to observe this law strictly. But they broke the Covenant, rejected the clear signs of

Allah and slew some Prophets of Allah unjustly and declared, "Our hearts are quite secure under cover"[187] Nay,[188] Allah has sealed their hearts because of their worship of falsehood and this is why they believe but little.

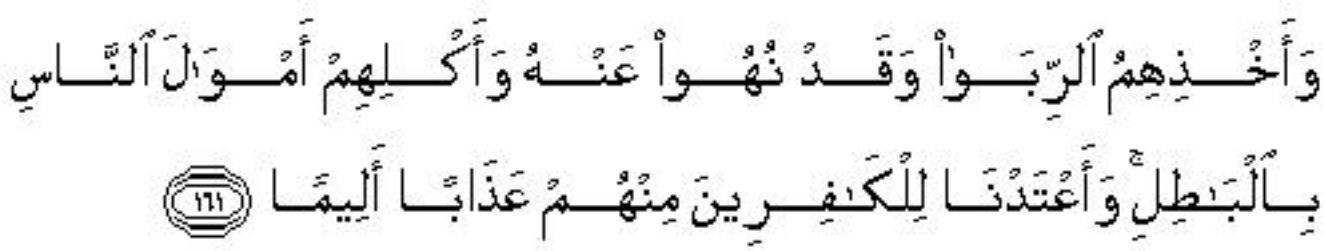
وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَٰنًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا ٱلْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا
صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِۦ
مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا ٱتِّبَاعَ ٱلظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًۢا ﴿١٥٧﴾

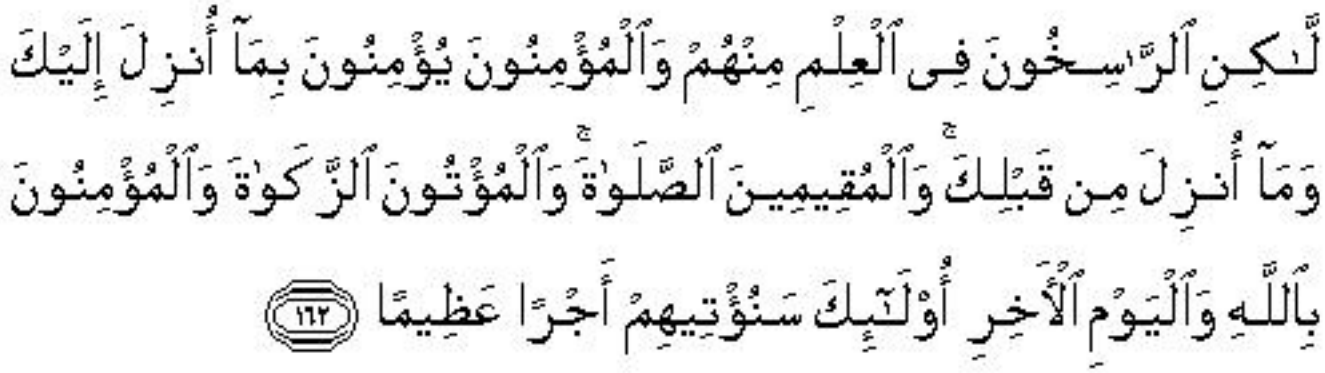
بَل رَّفَعَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾

وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِۦ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكُونُ
عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾

فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَٰتٍ أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ
عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾



وَأَخْذِهِمُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ وَقَدْ نُهُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ
بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ ۚ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦١﴾



لَّٰكِنِ ٱلرَّٰسِخُونَ فِى ٱلْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ
وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَٱلْمُقِيمِينَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ وَٱلْمُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ
بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٦٢﴾

[156-162] Then[189] they went so far in their unbelief that they uttered a monstrous calumny against Mary:[190] they themselves bragged, "We have slain Jesus, son of Mary, a Messenger of Allah."[191] Whereas[192] in fact, they did not slay him nor did they crucify him but the matter was made dubious for them.[193] And those who have differed about this matter are also in doubt concerning it. They have no knowledge of it but they follow mere conjectures,[194] for it is certain that they did not kill Jesus. Nay, the fact is that Allah had raised him to Himself,[195] for Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. There shall be none among the people of the Book but will believe in him before his death,[196] and he will be a witness against them on the Day of Resurrection.[197] In short,[198] it is because of these unjust things of those who became Jews and because they often stand in the way of Allah,[199] and because they take interest, which had been prohibited,[200] and because they devour unlawfully the property of others it is because of all these transgressions that We made unlawful many clean and pure things which were formerly lawful for them.[201] We have prepared a painful torment for those among them who disbelieve,[202] but most surely We will reward richly all those among them who have profound learning and who are honest and who believe in what has been sent down to you, and what was sent down before you,[203] and who establish the Salat, pay the Zakat dues and believe sincerely in Allah and the Last Day.

۞ إِنَّآ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ كَمَآ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰ نُوحٖ وَٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦۚ وَأَوۡحَيۡنَآ
إِلَىٰٓ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ وَٱلۡأَسۡبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ
وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَٰرُونَ وَسُلَيۡمَٰنَۚ وَءَاتَيۡنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورٗا ١٦٣

وَرُسُلٗا قَدۡ قَصَصۡنَٰهُمۡ عَلَيۡكَ مِن قَبۡلُ وَرُسُلٗا لَّمۡ
نَقۡصُصۡهُمۡ عَلَيۡكَۚ وَكَلَّمَ ٱللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكۡلِيمٗا ١٦٤

رُّسُلٗا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ حُجَّةُۢ بَعۡدَ
ٱلرُّسُلِۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمٗا ١٦٥

لَّٰكِنِ ٱللَّهُ يَشۡهَدُ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ إِلَيۡكَۖ أَنزَلَهُۥ بِعِلۡمِهِۦۖ وَٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَشۡهَدُونَۚ
وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ١٦٦

[163-166] O Muhammad, We have sent Revelation to you just as We sent it to Noah and other Prophets after him.[204] We also sent Revelation to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob, and the descendants of Jacob, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave the Psalms to David.[205] We also sent Revelation to those Messengers whom We have already mentioned to you and to those Messengers whom We have not mentioned to you; and We spoke directly to Moses as in conversation.[206] All these Messengers were sent as bearers of good news and warners,[207] so that, after their coming, people should have no excuse left to plead before Allah[208] Allah is, in any case All-Powerful, All-Wise. (People may or may not believe it) but Allah bears witness that what He has sent

down to you, He has sent that down with His knowledge and the angels also bear witness to it, though Allah's being a witness alone suffices.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَصَدُّواْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ قَدْ ضَلُّواْ ضَلَٰلًۢا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٦٧﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَظَلَمُواْ لَمْ يَكُنِ ٱللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا ﴿١٦٨﴾

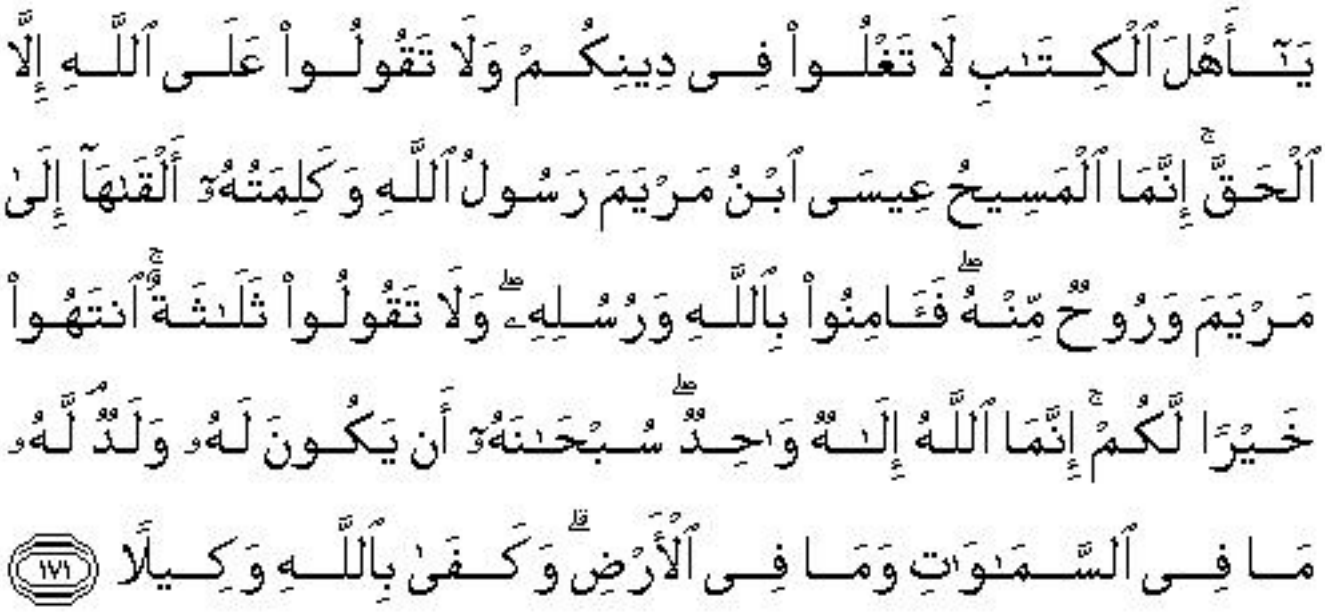
إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿١٦٩﴾

[167-169] Those, who disbelieve in it and hinder others from the way of Allah, have strayed far away in to deviation from the Truth. Allah will never forgive those who have thus adopted the way of disbelief and rebellion and committed gross injustice and iniquity, and He will not show them any other way than that of Hell, wherein they shall abide for ever: this is not difficult for Allah.

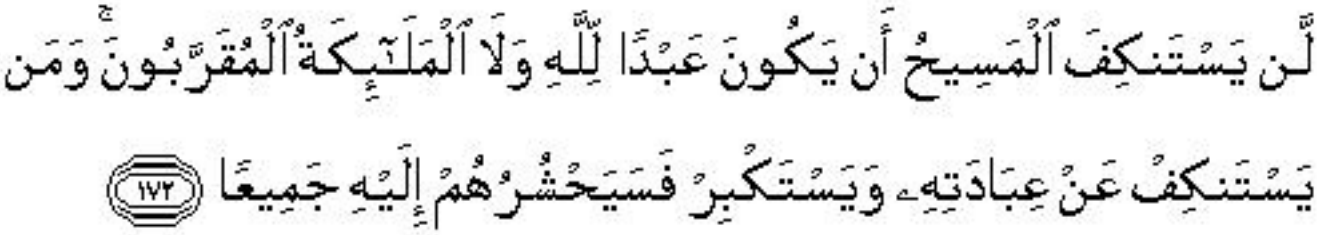
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِٱلْحَقِّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَـَٔامِنُواْ خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۚ وَإِن تَكْفُرُواْ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧٠﴾

[170] O people, this Messenger has come to you with the Truth from your Lord, so believe in him, for it will be better for yourselves; but if you disbelieve, you should know that all that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah,[209]

and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[210]


يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لَا تَغۡلُواْ فِي دِينِكُمۡ وَلَا تَقُولُواْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا
ٱلۡحَقَّۚ إِنَّمَا ٱلۡمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُۥٓ أَلۡقَىٰهَآ إِلَىٰ
مَرۡيَمَ وَرُوحٞ مِّنۡهُۖ فَـَٔامِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦۖ وَلَا تَقُولُواْ ثَلَٰثَةٌۚ ٱنتَهُواْ
خَيۡرٗا لَّكُمۡۚ إِنَّمَا ٱللَّهُ إِلَٰهٞ وَٰحِدٞۖ سُبۡحَٰنَهُۥٓ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُۥ وَلَدٞ لَّهُۥ
مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلٗا ١٧١

[171] O people of the Book, do not transgress the bounds in your religion,[211] and attribute nothing but the Truth to Allah. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger of Allah and His Command"[212] that was sent to Mary and a spirit[213] from Allah (that took the shape of a child in the womb of Mary). So believe in Allah and His Messengers,[214] and do not say, "There are `Three'."[215] Forbear from this: this will be better for you. Allah is only One Deity; He is far above this that He should have a son:[216] all the things in the heavens and in the earth belong to Him,[217] and He alone suffices for their sustenance and protection.[218]


لَّن يَسۡتَنكِفَ ٱلۡمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ عَبۡدٗا لِّلَّهِ وَلَا ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ٱلۡمُقَرَّبُونَۚ وَمَن
يَسۡتَنكِفۡ عَنۡ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَيَسۡتَكۡبِرۡ فَسَيَحۡشُرُهُمۡ إِلَيۡهِ جَمِيعٗا ١٧٢

فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمۡ أُجُورَهُمۡ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن
فَضۡلِهِۦۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسۡتَنكَفُواْ وَٱسۡتَكۡبَرُواْ فَيُعَذِّبُهُمۡ عَذَابًا أَلِيمٗا وَلَا
يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيّٗا وَلَا نَصِيرٗا ﴿١٧٣﴾

[172-173] The Messiah never disdained to be a servant of Allah nor do the angels who are nearest to Him disdain it. Whoever disdains the service of Allah and prides himself on it, (should know that) He will muster all of them before Him. Then He will give full reward to those who believed and did good deeds and out of His bounty bestow upon them even more than their dues; but He will inflict a painful chastisement on those who have disdained His service and prided themselves on it. And there they will find none of those on whom they rely to be their protectors and helpers beside Allah.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدۡ جَآءَكُم بُرۡهَٰنٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَأَنزَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡكُمۡ نُورٗا مُّبِينٗا
﴿١٧٤﴾

فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱعۡتَصَمُواْ بِهِۦ فَسَيُدۡخِلُهُمۡ فِي رَحۡمَةٖ مِّنۡهُ وَفَضۡلٖ
وَيَهۡدِيهِمۡ إِلَيۡهِ صِرَٰطٗا مُّسۡتَقِيمًا ﴿١٧٥﴾

[174-175] O mankind, a clear proof of the Truth has come to you from your Lord, and We have sent down to you the Light that shows the Way clearly to you. Now those who will accept Allah's Message and seek His protection, Allah will cover them with His mercy and grace and will show them the Right Way to Himself.



[176] People[219] seek your verdict on (the inheritance left by) a childless person.[220] Say, "Allah gives His verdict: if a person dies childless and leaves behind a sister,[221] she shall get half of his inheritance: and if the sister dies childless, her brother[222] shall inherit her property: and if the deceased leaves behind two sisters, they shall inherit two thirds of the inheritance:[223] and if the number of the brothers and sisters is more than two, the share of each brother shall be double that of each sister." Allah makes His Commandments plain to you lest you should go astray; Allah has perfect knowledge of everything.

1This introduction beautifully suits the subsequent laws and regulations about human rights, specially about the smooth running of the family life. On the one hand, the people have been urged to fear Allah so as to escape His displeasure; on the other, they have been reminded that all human beings have sprung from one and the same parents and are thus closely related to one another. "....He created you of a single soul".At first one human being was created and then from him the ttumatt race spread over the earth. Therefore they should strictly observe the ties and obligations of kin-ship. We learn from another part of the Qur'an that Adam was that "single soul." He was the first Man from whom the whole of mankind sprang up and spread over the earth. "....and of the same created his mate:" We have no definite detailed knowledge of how his mate was created of him. The commentators generally say that Eve was created from the rib of Adam and the Bible also contains the same story. The Talmud adds to it that she was created from the thirteenth rib of Adam. But the Qur'an is silent about it, and the Tradition of the Holy Prophet that is cited in support of this has a different meaning from what has been understood. The best thing, therefore, is to leave it undefined as it has been left in the Qur'an, and not to waste time in determining its details.

2That is, as long "As the orphans are under age, spend their property only in their interest; and when they come of age, return their rightful property to them."

3This is a comprehensive sentence, which may mean, "Do not make your Income unclean in any unlawful way." It may also mean, "Do not exchange your worthless things for the valuable things of the

orphans."

4The commentators ascribe three meanings to this:

(a) Hadrat 'A ' ishah says that this was revealed to remedy an evil that was prevalent in the days of "Ignorance." The guardians of the orphan girls used to marry them for their wealth and beauty, with the intention of keeping them under their power because they had no one to defend their cause; then they treated them unjustly without any fear. Therefore when they became Muslims, they had misgivings about marrying orphan girls. Accordingly, the Qur'an advised them to marry women of their choice other than orphan girls in their charge, if they feared that they would not be able to do justice to them. Verse 127 of this Surah also supports this comment.

(b) In commenting on this, Hadrat Ibn-i-`Abbas and his disciple `Ikrimah assert that this Commandment was given to eradicate an injustice that was prevalent at that time. In pre-Islamic days, there was no limit to the number of wives and some people would marry even a dozen of them but when they could not meet the increasing expenses, they were forced to grab the property of their orphan nephews and other helpless relatives. Therefore, Allah restricted the maximum number of wives to four, and enjoined that this too, was subject to the condition that one should do justice to all of them.

(c) SaÆid bin Jubair, Qatadah and some other commentators declare that this Command was given to safeguard the interests of wives. They say that even before the advent of Islam, injustice to the orphans was looked upon with disfavor, but in regard to wives, it was different; they would marry as many as they liked and would treat them cruelly and unjustly without any fear of the society or pangs of conscience. Therefore Allah warned them that they should refrain from doing injustice to their wives as they did in the case of the orphans. Therefore they should not marry more than four wives and that too, only if they would do justice to them.

The words of the verse bear all the three meanings and probably all three are meant. Another meaning also can be: "If you cannot treat the orphans justly as they normally should be, you may marry the women who have orphan children."

5The consensus of opinion of all the scholars of the Muslim law is that this verse limits the number of wives and prohibits the keeping of more than four at one and the same time. Traditions also support this. It is related that at the time when Ghailan, the chief of Ta`if, became a Muslim, he had nine wives. The Holy Prophet asked him to keep only four of them and divorce all the others. There is another instance of Naufal bin Mu`aviyah, who was ordered by the Holy Prophet to divorce one of his five wives.

It should also be noted that this verse restricts polygamy with the provision of justice to all the wives; therefore whoever abuses this permission without fulfilling the condition of justice and marries more wives than one tries to deceive Allah. The courts of an Islamic State are, therefore, empowered to enforce

justice in order to rectify the wrong done to a wife or wives. At the same time it is absolutely wrong to conclude from the proviso of justice, attached to this Commandment, that this verse was really meant to abolish polygamy. This is not the view of the Qur'an, but of those Muslims who have been overawed by the Christians of the West. They say that the Qur'an is also against polygamy but it did trot abolish it directly because it did not consider it expedient at the time for the custom had become very common. Instead of this, it allows polygamy provided that justice is done to all the wives. As this condition is most difficult to fulfill, the recommendation is towards monogamy. Obviously, this way of thinking is the result of mental slavery, because polygamy in itself is not an evil for in some cases it becomes a real cultural and moral necessity. There are Borne people, who, even if they wished, cannot remain content with one wife. Polygamy comes to their rescue and saves them and the society in general from the harms of unlicensed sexual indulgences. That is why the Qur'an allows polygamy to such people with the explicit condition of doing justice to all the wives.

As regards those who consider polygamy to be an evil, they are free to oppose the Qur'an and condemn polygamy, but they have no right to ascribe their own perverted views to the Qur'an, for it makes this lawful in very clear language without employing any words that might be stretched in any way to imply that the Qur'an means to abolish it. (For further explanation, please consult my book .Snnat ki A 'ini Hathiyyat, pp. 307-3161.

6"Those women": slave girls captured in war and distributed among the people by the government. It tray either mean: "If you cannot bear the expenses of a free woman, you may marry a slave girl as permitted in.v. 25," or it may mean: "If you need more wives than one but are afraid that you might not be able to do justice to your wives from among the free people, you may turn to slave girls because in that case you will be burdened with less responsibilities. (For details please refer to E.N. 44 below).

7Hadrat `Umar and Qadi Shuraih have ruled that if a wife remits the whole of her dowry or a part of it but later on demands it, the husband shall be compelled to pay it because the very fact that she demands it is a clear proof that she did not remit it of her own free will. (For further details, consult my book Huquq-uz-Zaujain, under the caption Dowry)

8This verse is very comprehensive in meaning. It teaches the Muslim ' Community the lesson that in no case should wealth, which is so important for the maintenance of life, be entrusted to such people as are feeble-minded and incapable of using or .managing it properly, for they might, by its wrong use, spoil its cultural and economic system and, in the long run, its moral system as well. ft is true that the rights of private ownership must be honored, but at the same time they are not to be so unlimited as to allow one to use them in any way one likes and create social chaos. As far as one's necessities of life are concerned, they must be fulfilled but none should be allowed to use these rights to the extent that is harmful to the collective moral, cultural and economic good of the Community. According to this verse, every owner of wealth should consider seriously before entrusting his wealth to anyone whether that person is capable of using it properly. On the larger scale, the Islamic State should take into its own

custody the property of those who are found incapable of using it properly, or of those who may be using it in wrong ways but should arrange for the provision of their necessities of life.

9That is, "When they are about to attain their puberty, keep an eye upon them and go on testing their intelligence in order to see how far they have become capable of looking after their own affairs."

10Two conditions of puberty and capability have been laid down for the return of their property to the orphans. As to the application of the first condition, there is consensus among the scholars of law, but in regard to the second condition there is some difference of opinion. Imam Abu Hanifah is of the opinion that if the orphan lacks capability when he reaches the age of puberty, his guardian may wait for a maximum period of seven years, and then he must return this property to him whether he shows signs of capability or not. But Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad and Imam Shaf'i are of the opinion that capability is a pre-requisite for .the return of his property to the orphan. Probably these latter scholars were inclined to the opinion that the case of such a person should be referred to a Muslim judge, who would himself arrange for the management of the property of the one who has not acquired capability of management.

11That is, "He should charge for his services only that much as may be considered fair by every unbiased person and that he should charge openly and keep an account of it."

12This verse contains five legal regulations about inheritance. First, that not only men but the women also have a share in the inheritance. Second, that it must be divided among all heirs, however little or insignificant it is; so much so that even if the deceased has left one yard of cloth and there are ten heirs, it must also be cut into ten parts. However, an heir may buy the shares of others by mutual consent. Third, that the verse also implies that this law applies to all sorts of property, transferable or non-transferable, agricultural or industrial, or of any other type. Fourth, that the right of inheritance becomes valid only when the deceased leaves some property behind him. Fifth, that when the nearest relatives are alive the distant relatives have no right in the inheritance.

13Here the heirs of the deceased have been enjoined to be generous towards distant and near relatives and the indigent members of the family and orphans who happen to be present on the occasion of the division of inheritance, though they might have no share in it. They should give them also something and speak gently to them and avoid using harsh and unkind words as the narrow minded people generally use on such occasions.

14According to a Tradition this verses were revealed in response to the request of the widow of Hadrat Sa'd bin Rubai'. She came to the Holy Prophet with her two daughters and said, "O Messenger of Allah, here are the daughters of Sa'd who has been martyred in the battle of Uhd. Their uncle has taken possession of the whole of his property and has not left a single penny for them. Now who is going to

marry them after this?

15The first guiding principle about the division of inheritance is that the share of the male shall be double that of the female, and this is very sound and just. As the Muslim law lays the major burden of the economic responsibility of the family on the male and keeps the female almost free from it, justice demands that her share of inheritance should be less than that of the male.

16The same applies to the case of two daughters as well. It means that if the deceased leaves no son but only daughters, whether they are two or more, they shall be entitled to two-thirds of the whole inheritance and the remaining one-third shall be divided among the other heirs. As a corollary of this, if the deceased leaves only one son, there is a consensus of opinion that he shall be entitled to the whole of the inheritance in the absence of other heirs and if there are other heirs too, he shall receive the whole of the retraining inheritance after the allotment of their shares.

17Each of the parents of the deceased shall be entitled to one-sixth of the inheritance, if he leaves behind a child or children whether they are only daughters or only sons or both sons and daughters, or only one son or only one daughter. As regards the remaining two-thirds, it shall be divided among the other heirs.

18The remaining two-thirds shall be given to the father, if there be no other heir; otherwise the father shall share two-thirds with the other heirs.

19If the deceased has brothers and sisters, the share of the mother has been reduced froth one-third to one-sixth. This reduced one-sixth will be added to the father's share, for in that case the father's responsibilities are increased. It should be noted that the brothers and sisters of the deceased are not entitled to any share if the parents are alive.

20The mention of the fulfillment of the will precedes the payment of the debt, for every deceased person may not owe a debt, but he must make his will. As regards the enforcement of the law, the consensus of opinion of the whole Muslim Community is that the payment of debt must have priority over the fulfillment of the will. That is, the debt, if any, must be paid first and then the terms of the will should be enforced and after this the inheritance should be divided. In E.N. 182 of Al-Baqarah, it has been stated that one has the right to bequeath by will one-third of the whole property. This has been permitted to enable a person to leave for a deserving relative or relatives, who are not entitled to inheritance, a part of the property. For instance, if there is an orphan grandson or a grand-daughter, or the widow of a son or an indigent brother or sister, or a brother's widow, or a nephew, or some other relative, who needs help, he may leave a part of the inheritance for such a one by means of his will. One is even allowed to leave by will a share for any deserving person or for public service. In short, the law regulates the distribution of two-thirds (or a little more) of one's inheritance and gives option for the disposal of the remaining (about

one-third) by the special circumstances of one's own family., (which obviously vary of each individual). At the same time provision has been made to wrong done by a will to the heirs in any way. The members of the rectify that wrong by mutual consent or take the case to the Muslim will to suit in the case redress any family may judge for redress. For further explanation, see my book: Yatim Potay Ki Warasat.

21This is the answer to all those foolish people who do not understand the wisdom of the Divine Law of inheritance, and in their folly propose amendments to it in order to make up for "the deficiency" in the Law.

22In case the deceased leaves behind children, his wife or wives will be entitled to only one-eighth of the inheritance, and if he dies childless, she or they will he entitled to one-fourth of the whole and this one-fourth or one-eighth will be divided equally among all of them.

23If there he any other heir, he shall get share out of the remaining 5/6 or 2/3, as the case may be; otherwise the deceased will have the right to make his will about the whole of the remaining 5/6 or 2/3.All the commentators are agreed that in this verse brothers and sisters refer to half-brothers and half-sisters from the side of the mother alone. The rule of inheritance about real brothers and real sisters and half-brothers and half-sisters from the side of the father is given at the end of the Surah.

24The will shall be considered as injurious if it affects adversely the rights of the lawful heirs and the debt will be injurious if the testator acknowledges a debt which he has not actually taken or plays some trick to deprive the rightful heirs of their due shares. Such a thing has been declared as one of the most heinous sins according to a Tradition. Another Tradition of the Holy Prophet says, "There may be a person, who, throughout his whole life, does deeds that deserve Paradise, but who on the eve of his death makes an injurious will and thus in the end he does an act that deserves Hell." Though such an injury is a heinous sin in any case, the warning has specially been given about it in connection with a person who has neither children nor parents to inherit his property. This is because such a one is more prone to squander his property in order to deprive comparatively distant relatives.

25The attribute of Allah that He is All-Knowing, has been mentioned here for two reasons. First, it is to warn the people that none can escape the consequences of a breach of His Law, for, He has knowledge of everything. Second, it is to convince people that the shares of inheritance appointed by Allah are absolutely right, for Allah knows better than they in what lies their good. The other attribute that He is Lenient has been mentioned to show that the Laws of .Allah are not harsh but are so lenient that they do not put the people to hardship.

25aThis stern warning has been given to save people from the eternal torture of Hell, which they will suffer if they change the law of inheritance or break other legal limits prescribed by Allah in His Book. It is a pity that in spite of this stern warning the Muslims changed and broke the Law of Allah with the same

impudence as shown by the Jews. The transgressions against this law of inheritance are an open rebellion against Allah. They deprive women of their share of inheritance; they discard the Law of Allah and adopt the Law of primo-geniture or of joint family system instead: whenever it suits their whims and interests they make the share of the male and the female equal in order to rectify the Law of Allah. The latest rebellion against the Law is that some Muslim States have followed the West and imposed "Death Duties" which implies that the State is also an heir whom Allah had forgotten to mention. As a matter of fact, the state is entitled to an inheritance only if the deceased leaves behind an unclaimed property or himself allots a portion of it to the state by his will.

26In both these verses (15-16j, punishment for fornication was prescribed for the first time in Islam. According to verse 15, the guilty women were to be kept in confinement till further order, and according to verse I G both the male and the female guilty of fornication were to be punished, that is rebuked. disgraced, beaten, etc. Afterwards this punishment was altered by verse 2 of Surah An-Nur (XXIV). Now both the male and the female are to be scourged with one hundred stripes each.

This gradual enforcement of the criminal law was based on sound practical wisdom. At that tithe the Arabs were not accustomed to live under a settled government with a regular system of law and judiciary. Therefore it might have unwise and too much for them, if the Islamic State had imposed on them its complete system of criminal laws all at once. That is why at first the sort of punishment contained in these two verses was enforced acid then gradually stricter punishments were prescribed for fornication. theft, slander, etc., and finally that complete system of law was evolved which was in force during the time of the Holy Prophet and his rightly guided successors.

The seeming difference in these two verses has misled commentator Suddi to the conclusion that verse I S prescribed the punishment for married women and verse I G for unmarried men and women. Obviously, this flimsy commentary is not supported by any sound argument. Likewise, the commentary of Abu Muslim Isfahani that verse 15 is about the un-natural crime between two females and verse I G about the un-natural crime between two males is also wrong. The Qur'an is concerned only with the fundamental principles of law and morality: therefore it only discusses those problems which are confronted in normal life and does not concern itself with the ones that are met with under abnormal circumstances. These latter problems, as they arise, are left for the people to decide according to their insight. That is why, when after the death of the Holy Prophet the case of unnatural crime between two males was brought before the Companions, none of them turned to these verses for its decision.

27The word taubah means 'to turn back' and 'to turn to'. When a person feels sorry for his sin and turns back from it, he may be likened to a runaway slave who comes back to his master. This is his taubah. When the master accepts his repentance, he turns to him kindly and forgives him. In Arabic this is his taubah to his servant. In this verse Allah has stated these two aspects of taubah. He says, "I turn only to those servants of Mine, who, if they commit some un-intentional sin through ignorance, turn to Me for forgiveness as soon as they realize their folly. For such repentance, the door of My forgiveness is ever

open. It is, however, not so for those who persist in sin throughout their lives without the least fear of Allah and offer repentance only when death confronts them". The Holy Prophet says that Allah accepts the repentance of a person only up to the time, when there appears no sign of death. It is obvious that after the time of test has expired, no chance is left for him to turn back from sin. Likewise, if a person is dying as a disbeliever and seeing with his own eyes the other world, contrary to his expectations, the question of his repentance does not arise at all.

28This means that the widow of the deceased should not be regarded as a part of his inheritance. After the death of the husband, his widow is quite free to live wherever she likes and to marry whomever she chooses after the expiry of her term.

29That is, "You may hurt them for immoral conduct but not for grabbing their wealth."

30If the wife is not beautiful or has some other defect that might not be to the husband's liking, it is not right that he should make up his mind to get rid of her at once without any further consideration. He should behave coolly and patiently. She may have some other redeeming qualities that may be more conducive to a happy married life than beautiful looks. It is just possible that the discovery of those qualities might change his repulsion at first sight into attraction. In the same way, sometimes it so happens that in the beginning of married life, the husband takes a dislike to something in the wife and feels a repulsion towards her but if he is patient with her and lets her show her better side fully, he himself realizes that her good qualities more than compensate for her shortcomings. "therefore it is not right for the husband to cut off his relations with his wife without a good deal of thinking. Divorce is the very last thing to which one may resort as a necessary social surgery and that, too, only when it becomes absolutely inevitable. The Holy Prophet says that of all the lawful things, divorce is the most reprehensible thing in the sight of Allah. In another Tradition, he admonishes, An-Nisa "Enter into marriage and divorce not, for Allah does not approve of such men and women as divorce and marry for mere sexual enjoyment."

31"Solemn pledge" is the marriage bond on the guarantee of which a woman gives herself up to a man. Therefore, if the man breaks that pledge of his own accord, he has no right to get back what he gave her as dower at the time of making that pledge. (Please see E.N.251, Al-Baqarah, also).

32While forbidding the wrong ways of `ignorance', the Holy Qur'an usually ends the instruction with such words as: "though what has happened in the past is excepted." It has two meanings in view. First, that no action will be taken in regard to those wrong things that one did in ignorance, provided that one mended ones ways and gave them up after the receipt of a particular Commandment. Second, that those words meant to give reassurance that the new instructions had no retrospective effect. For instance, if a person had married his step-mother before it was declared to be unlawful, according to these words, the offspring of all such previous marriages did not automatically become illegitimate by this newly declared

prohibition so as to deprive them of their share of inheritance. Likewise if some from of trade had been made unlawful, it did not mean that all the previous transactions in that form had become null and void, and that one would have to return all the wealth earned in that way or that it had become completely unlawful.

33According to the Islamic Law, it is a criminal offense and is within the jurisdiction of the police. Some Traditions related in Abu-Da'ud, Nasa'i and Musnad Ahmad are to the effect that the Holy Prophet confiscated their properties and sentenced to death those who married their step-mothers. According to another "Tradition, related by Ibn Majah from Ibn `Abbas, the Holy Prophet enunciated this fundamental law: "Anyone who commits fornication with any of the forbidden relations should be put to death." The experts on Muslim Law, however, differ in regard to this matter. While Imam Ahmad is of the opinion that such a criminal ,should be put to death and his property confiscated, Imam Abu Hanifah, (maw Malik and Imam Shafi 'i are of the opinion that if a person commits fornication with anyone of the prohibited relations, he should be punished for the offense of fornication and if he marries such a one, he should be given an exemplary punishment for this heinous sin.

34This prohibition applies both to the real mother and to the step-mother and both are unlawful. It also applies to the mother of the father and to the mother of the mother.

Experts have differed as to whether the woman with whom the father has had illicit relations is also unlawful for the son or not. Some of the earlier jurists do not consider her unlawful, but some others not only consider her unlawful for the son but also the woman whom the father has touched lustfully with the hand. There has also been a difference of opinion as to whether the woman with whom the son has had an illicit relation is unlawful for the father and whether the man with whom the mother or the daughter has had illicit relation becomes unlawful for both the mother and the daughter. There have been lengthy controversies concerning the legal niceties of this matter, but a little thinking will show that the existence of a wife who is also coveted by the husband's father or his son, or whose mother or daughter is also coveted by the husband himself, cannot bode well for a righteous society. Divine Law in this matter does not tolerate the legal hair splitting on the basis of which fine distinctions are made between marriage and after marriage, touching with the hand and casting of looks, etc. The simple thing is that in family life existence of sexual relations of the father and the son with one and the same woman, or of the mother and the daughter with one and the same man, is bound to corrupt the family, and the Divine Law cannot tolerate it. This is supported by the following two Traditions of the Holy Prophet:

(1) "The mother and the daughter of the woman become unlawful for the man who cast a look at her sexual organs."

(2) "God does not like even to look at a man who casts a gaze at the sexual organs of the mother and of her daughter."

35The prohibition about daughter also applies to the daughter of the son and the daughter of the daughter. There is, however, a difference of opinion in regard to a girl born of an illicit relationship. Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik and lmam Ahmad-bin-Hanbal (may Allah bless them all) are of the opinion that she too is unlawful like the lawful daughter, but Imam Shafi 'i does not consider an illegitimate daughter unlawful. But the very idea is repugnant that one should marry a girl about whom one has the knowledge that she is of one's own seed.

36This applies to the real sister as well as to the foster sisters from the father's and the mother's side.

37All these relations are prohibited, irrespective of whether they are real or step from the father's side or from the mother's side. The sister of the father or mother, whether real or step, is unlawful for the son. Similarly the daughters of the brothers and sisters whether they are real or step are unlawful for a person like his own real daughter.

38The consensus of opinion is that the woman who suckled a boy or a girl should be treated as the real mother and her husband as the real father with regard to this prohibition. All those relations that have been made unlawful in respect of the real mother and real father are also prohibited in respect of the foster mother who has suckled and in respect .of her husband. This is based on a Tradition of the Holy Prophet which is to this effect: "Suckling makes unlawful what blood makes unlawful. " There is, however, a difference of opinion as to the minimum quantity of milk that is suckled. According to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Malik, if the child suckles milk equal to that minimum quantity that breaks the fast, the woman shall be treated as its real mother for marriage relations. But Imam Ahmad is of the opinion that the prohibition shall take place if the child suckles the woman at least three times and according to Imam Shafi `i at least five times. There is also a difference of opinion as to the age of the child at the time of suckling that brings prohibition. Below are given the opinions of the jurists:

(1) Hadrat Umm Salamah, Ibn `Abbas, Zuhri, Hasan Basri, Qatadah, `Ikrimah, and Auza`i are of the opinion that if the child is suckled during the period when it has not yet been weaned and it lives only on suckling, the prohibition shall be effective; but if it is suckled after it has been weaned, it will not apply; for this is like drinking water. There is also a saying of Hadrat `Ali to the same effect.

(2) Hadrat `Umar, Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Hurairah and Ibn `Umar (Allah be pleased with them) are of the opinion that the prohibition will be effective if the child is suckled at any time up to the age of two. Imam Shaafi `i, Imam Ahmad, Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad and Sufyan Thauri from among the jurists also agree to this. There is also a saying of Imam Abu Hanifah to the same effect. Imam Malik also agrees to this, but he says that the prohibition shall apply even if a month or two exceeds the time limit of two years.

(3) According to a well-known saying of Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Zufar, the prohibition shall apply if

the child is suckled during the suckling period, which extends `up to the age of two years and a half

(4) Hadrat 'A' ishah is of the opinion that the prohibition shall apply, if one is suckled at any time whatsoever, irrespective of age. An authentic saying of Hadrat `Ali also supports the same and 'Urwah bin Zubair, 'Ata', Laith bin Sa'd and Ibn Hazm from among the jurists have adopted the same opinion.

39There is a difference of opinion as to whether the mere event of nikah (marriage ceremony) with a woman makes her mother unlawful or not. Imam Abu Hanifah, Malik, Ahmad and Shafi `i are of the opinion that this alone makes her mother unlawful but Hadrat "Ali is of the opinion that unless one has had any conjugal relation with her, her mother shall not become unlawful for him.

40The wife's daughter is unlawful in any case, whether she has been brought up in the house of the step-father or not. Allah has used these words only to show the great delicacy of the relation. There is almost a consensus of opinion among the jurists that the step-daughter is unlawful in any case whether one has brought her up or not.

41The significance of "who are from your loins" is that the widows or the divorced wives of those whom one has adopted as sons are not unlawful. The prohibition applies only to the wives of the sons who are of one's own seed. Likewise, the wives of the grandsons are also unlawful.

42Likewise it is unlawful to keep the aunt and her real niece as wives at one and the same time. The principle is that no two women who would have been unlawful for each other if one of them had been a man should be kept as wives at one and the same time.

43That is, "No action will be taken for the transgression committed during the days of 'ignorance', by keeping two sisters as wives at one and the same time." (Please also see E.N. 32 above). However, one shall have to divorce one of the two sisters thus married during the time of un-belief after one has become a Muslim.

44That is, those women who become prisoners of war, while their unbelieving husbands are left behind in the War Zone, are not unlawful because their marriage ties are broken by the fact that they have come from the War Zone into the Islamic Zone. It is lawful to marry such women, and it is also lawful for those, in whose possession they are, to have sexual relations with them. There is, however, a difference of opinion as to whether such a woman is lawful, if her husband is also taken a prisoner along with her. Imam Abu Hanifah and those of his way of thinking are of the opinion that the marriage tie of such a pair would remain intact but Imam Malik and Shafi 'i, are of the opinion that it would also break.

As there exist many misunderstandings in the minds of the people concerning the slave-girls taken as prisoners of war, the following should be carefully studied:

(1) It is not lawful for a soldier to have conjugal relations with a prisoner of war as soon as she falls into his hands. The Islamic Law requires that all such women should be handed over to the government, which has the right to set them free or to ransom them, or to exchange them with the Muslim prisoners in the hands of the enemy, or distribute them among the soldiers. A soldier can cohabit only with that woman who has been formally given to him by the government.

(2) Even then, he shall have to wait for one monthly course before he can cohabit with her in order to ensure whether she is pregnant or not; otherwise it shall be unlawful to cohabit with her before delivery.

(3) It does not matter whether the female prisoner of war belongs to the people of the Book or not. Whatever her religion, she becomes lawful for the man to whom she is formally given.

(4) None but the one to own the slave-girl is given has the right to "touch her." The offspring of such a woman from his seed shall be his lawful children and shall have the same legal rights as are given by the Divine Law to the children from one's loins. After the birth of a child she cannot be sold as a slave-girl and shall automatically become free after her master's death.

(5) If the master marries his slave-girl with another man, he forfeits his conjugal rights over her, but retains other rights such as service from her.

(6) The maximum limit of four has not been prescribed for slave-girls as in the case of wives for the simple reason that the number of female prisoners of war is unpredictable. The lack of limit does by no means provide a license for the well-to-do people to buy any number of slave-girls for licentious purposes.

(7) The proprietary rights over a slave, male or female, as given to a person by the government are transferable like all other legal proprietary rights.

(8) The handing over of the proprietary rights over a slave-girl to a man formally by the government makes her as much lawful for him as the giving of the baud of a free woman to a man by her parents or guardian through nikah (marriage ceremony). Therefore, there is no reason why a man who does not hold marriage in detestation should hold sexual intercourse with a slave-girl in detestation.

(9) When once the government hands over the female prisoner of war to someone, it has no right whatever to take her back from him, just as the parent or guardian has no right to take back a woman after she is handed over to a man through nikah.

(10) It should also be noted well that if a military commander temporarily distributes female prisoners of war among the soldiers for sexual purposes, or permits them to have sexual relations for the time being,

such an act shall be unlawful and there is absolutely no difference between this and fornication, and fornication is a crime according to the Islamic code. (For detailed discussion please refer to my books, Tafhimat II and Rasa `il-o-Masa 'il I).

45That is, "The social differences among the people are merely relative; otherwise all Muslims are equal. As a matter of fact, the thing that distinguishes one Muslim from another is the quality of his Faith, and that is not the monopoly of the higher ranks of society. It is just possible that a Muslim slave-girl is higher in rank in regard to belief and morality than a free woman of a high family.

46It should be kept in view that in this section (vv. 2425) the Arabic word muhsanat has been used in two different senses: (1) "wedded wives", enjoying the protection of their husbands; and (2) "free Muslim women" enjoying the protection of their families, even though they might not be married. This is important, because the lack of differentiation between these two meanings has given rise to a superficial complication. The Kharijites and those others who do not believe in the stoning of an adulterous woman have misconstrued this verse (25) to prove their own point of view. They argue that in this verse, the punishment prescribed for an adulterous married slave-girl is half of the punishment prescribed for a free "married" Muslim woman. If the punishment for an adulterous free married woman had been stoning to death, there could be no half of this punishment for a guilty slave-girl. Hence, this verse is, according to them, a conclusive proof that the punishment of stoning does not exist in Islam.

The fallacy of the above argument becomes obvious, if one uses common sense in the application of the appropriate meaning of muhsanat. In the case of the guilty slave-girl, it has been used in the sense of "married woman", enjoying the protection of the husband, as is plain from the subsequent clause; "after they have been fortified in wedlock". But in the case of the guilty Muslim woman, half of whose punishment is to be given, it means "free Muslim woman" enjoying the protection of her family, and does not mean a "free married Muslim woman", as has been misconstrued by the opponents of the punishment of stoning.

As regards the lighter punishment for an adulterous slave-girl than for a free Muslim woman, it is based on the fact that the latter enjoys double protection as compared with the former the protection of the family (even though she be unmarried) and the protection of the husband, which reinforces the protection of the family she already enjoys. In contrast to a free woman, a slave-girl does not enjoy any protection at all, if she is unmarried, and even after marriage her position does not become equal to that of an un-married free Muslim woman, for the latter enjoys the protection of her status, her family, her clan, etc. On the other hand, a slave-girl still remains, to some extent, under the bondage of slavery and has no protection of the family, clan, etc. Therefore, her punishment should be half of an un-married free woman and not half of a free married woman.

Furthermore this also shows that the punishment of one hundred stripes as prescribed in An-Nur, XXIV : 2, is for an un-married free Muslim woman guilty of fornication half of which has been prescribed here for

a slave married girl. As for an adulterous married free woman she deserves capital punishment for this heinous crime because she enjoys the double protection of the family and of the husband, and that punishment is "stoning her to death." Though the Qur'an does not explicitly mention the punishment of stoning to death, it does indicate it in a subtle manner, which the Holy Prophet understood and enforced. And who else could understand the Qur'an better?

47The "concession" is to marry one of the slave-girls with the consent of her master if one cannot afford to marry a free Muslim woman.

48The "way" refer to all those instructions that have been given from the beginning of the Surah to this point, and to those already given in Al-Baqarah about cultural and social problems. Allah is telling the believers that it is His bounty that He is taking them out of the ways of "ignorance" and guiding them to the moral ways of good people, that have always been followed by the Prophets of every age and their pious followers.

49Those who intended to turn the believers back from the Right Way to the ways of error were the hypocrites, the ignorant people of the old ways, and the Jews living in the suburbs of Madinah The first two groups strongly disliked the changes that were being made to reform their centuries old prejudices, rites and customs. They were opposed to (a) the share of the daughters in inheritance; (b) the freedom of the widow from the restrictions placed on her by her husband's people, and to marry the husband of her liking after the expiry of the term, (c) the prohibition of marriage with step-mother, and with two real sisters simultaneously. They were averse to the reform of the institution of adoption which abolished the share of the adopted sons in inheritance and removed the restriction on the marriage of their divorced wives or their widows with their adopted fathers. These and such other reforms so upset the worshipers of the old traditions and customs that they cried themselves hoarse with protests against them. The mischief mongers criticized bitterly the Holy Prophet and incited the people against his person and his invitation. For instance, if there was a person who was born as a result of a marriage which had become unlawful by the application of the reformed laws, they would incite him by saying that he had been declared illegitimate by the Holy Prophet. Thus the foolish people were opposing the work of reform which was being carried out under Divine Guidance.

Then there were the Jews who were engaged in vicious propaganda against this reformative work which went against their self-made laws. They demanded that the Qur'an should declare these laws to be the Divine Laws, even though they had changed their very character and substance, by making fine and unnecessary distinctions, by introducing into it their own superstitious customs as laws, by imposing their own restrictions and hard conditions and making many lawful things unlawful. They, therefore, could not appreciate the simple rules and regulations that were being presented by the Qur'an. That is why their rabbis, scribes and common people did not accept the Qur'an as the Book of Allah. They were so upset by its reformative laws that they made each and every Commandment of the Qur'an the target of their criticism and opposed and rejected it.

For instance, the Jews considered the women utterly unclean during the menses. They would not take the meals cooked by them nor drink water touched by their hands nor even sit on the same carpet with them. In short, the women were practically made untouchables in their homes. As the Ansar had also adopted the same customs when the Holy Prophet migrated to Madinah, they asked him about the monthly course. In answer to this question, v. 222 of Al-Bagarah was sent down; accordingly the Holy Prophet instructed that during the monthly course only cohabitation was prohibited and all other relations with the women would remain the same as before. At this, the Jews raised a great hue and cry, saying, "This man is bent upon opposing us in everything ants making lawful what is unlawful with us and unlawful what is lawful with us."

50"Unlawful ways" include all the ways that are against the Islamic law and principles and are false and immoral.

"Business" comprises all those transactions that are carried out for profit, benefit, etc., as in trade, commerce, industry, etc., by which one satisfies the needs of another who pays for the service rendered.

"Mutual consent" implies that those transactions should be carried out by mutual agreement and not by coercion or fraud. For instance, although apparently there is a mutual agreement in interest and bribery,. yet it is obvious that the needy party is compelled by circumstances to agree to such transactions. In gambling also each participant is deluded by the false hope of "winning". Neither would agree to gamble if he knew that he would lose. The same is true of every case of transaction which involves fraud. The defrauded one agrees under the misunderstanding that there is no fraud in it. If he knew that he was being deceived, he would never agree to this.

51"Do not kill yourselves" may be complementary to the preceding sentence t or may, in itself, be an independent sentence. In the first case, it would mean that the one who devours unlawfully the property of others; does in fact lead himself to his own destruction, for such an evil deed ruins the social order to such an extent that ultimately he himself cannot escape its evil consequences, and in the Here after most surely he incurs severe punishment.

In the second case, it would mean, "Do not kill each other", or "Do not commit suicide". Allah has used such comprehensive words that in the context they occur, they imply all the three senses, and all these are correct.

52That is, "Allah is your well-wisher and wishes you well: it is only His compassion that He forbids you such deeds as cause your ruin."

53That is, "We are not narrow-minded and prejudiced that We should take Our servants to task for each

and every trivial offense. But if you commit wicked and heinous sins, then you shall have to render an account of the trivial offenses as well. "

Here it will be worthwhile to understand the basic differences between the "heinous sins" and the "trivial offenses". As far as I have understood from a critical study of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (and the correct and right knowledge is only with Allah), I have .come to the conclusion that the following three things make a sin heinous:

(1) The violation of the rights of Allah, or of parents, or of other human beings, or one's own rights. The wickedness of the sin increases in proportion to the sanctity of the right that is violated. That is why the Qur'an calls a sin Zulm (iniquity) and declares shirk to be a gross iniquity.

(2) A sin becomes heinous, if it is committed to defy the Divine Laws. This is because the offender deliberately, boldly and shamelessly discards the Commandments and Prohibitions of Allah and intentionally does that which He prohibits, merely for the sake of disobedience, and impudently does not do that which He has commanded. The gravity of this sin increases in proportion to the impudence that is shown towards Allah in disobeying and discarding His Law. That is why the Qur'an calls sin fisq (disobedience) and ma` siyat (arrogance).

(3) The violation of those relations and the cutting off of those connections on the unification and integrity of which depends the peace of human life, makes a sin heinous whether these relations are between man and Allah or between man and man. The gravity of the sin of violation or the cutting off of a connection increases in proportion to the importance of the relation, and to the security contained in it. For instance, fornication in its different forms is in itself a heinous sin, for it corrupts human society. But in some forms it becomes far more heinous than in others. The sin of adultery committed by a married man is far more heinous than that committed by an unmarried man. Likewise, adultery with a married woman is a far greater sin than fornication with an unmarried woman. In the same way, sexual intercourse with the womenfolk of a neighbour is far more heinous than with others and incest with mother, sister or daughter become the most heinous sin conceivable because of the security and sanctity the relation provides. For the same reason the sin committed in the mosque is far more wicked than elsewhere. In the above instances, the difference in the gravity of the same sin is due to the difference in the nature of the sanctity of the relations and the security contained in them. This is why, sin is also called fujur (violation of relations).

54In this verse Allah has given a very important moral instruction, which, if observed, would bring great peace in the troubled social life of today. Allah has taught people not to be covetous for and be envious of the possessions of others, for He has not; in His wisdom, created all men alike. But for this disparity life would have become dull.

As Allah has perfect knowledge of everything, He has created one beautiful and another ugly. He has

given to one a melodious voice and to another a harsh voice. He has made one of strong physique and another of weak constitution. He has endowed one with some good qualities of mind and body and another with other qualities. He has created one in straitened and another in opulent circumstances. He has provided one with ample resources and another with scanty ones. A little thinking will convince a person that the variety in human culture is due only to those very differences and distinctions which are based on wisdom and perfect knowledge. That is why chaos of one sort or the other results whenever people artificially try either to aggravate these differences and distinctions or to eliminate them totally. The human tendency to envy others because of their superiority in anything generates jealousy, cut-throat competition, enmity, class struggle and the like with the resulting consequences. One who suffers from such a mentality tries to grab unlawfully that which Allah has not given him through His bounty. In this verse Allah has advised the Muslims to avoid such a mentality and keep themselves free from envying others. One should, however, pray to Allah for His bounty, for He will bestow upon him whatever He considers proper for him, because He has perfect knowledge of everything.

As regards "The men shall have their due share according to what they have earned, and the women shall have their share according to what they have earned," in my opinion it means that women should not envy men and men should not envy women because of any superiority the one has over the other because of Allah's bounty. They should make full use of whatever Allah has given them and rest assured that each one will get one's due share according to what good or evil one earns and of the same quality that one deserves.

55The Arabs would enter into agreements of friendship and brotherhood with each other and on that score were entitled to the inheritance of each other. Thus, a god-son became heir of his god-father. Here this custom of "ignorance" has been abolished, and it has been enjoined that the inheritance should be divided among the heirs according to the law prescribed by Allah. They are, however, allowed to give to such people, whatever they like during their lifetime.

56The Arabic word qawam or qawam stands for a person who is responsible for the right conduct, safeguard and maintenance of the affairs of an individual, an institution or an organization. Thus, than is governor, director, protector and manager of the affairs of women.

57Men are superior to women in the sense that they have been endowed with certain natural qualities and powers that have not been given to women or have been given in a less degree, and not in the sense that they are above them in honor and excellence. Man has been made qawam (governor) of the family because of his natural qualities and woman has been made his dependent for her own safety and protection because of her natural drawbacks.

58A tradition of the Holy Prophet is the best commentary on this, He said, "The best wife is the one who pleases you when you see her; who obeys your orders and who guards your property and her own honor when you are not at home. "

In this connection, it is necessary to give a warning. Obedience to Allah is of far greater importance than obedience to the husband and has precedence over it. 'therefore, it is the duty of the wife to refuse to obey her husband, if and when he orders her to do a thing which amounts to Allah's disobedience. In that case it shall be a sin to obey him. On the contrary, if the husband orders her not to observe a certain voluntary religious devotion, she must obey him, otherwise her devotion will not be accepted.

59If the wife is defiant and does trot obey her husband or does not guard his rights, three measures have been mentioned, but it does not mean that all the three are to be taken at one and the same time. Though these have been permitted, they are to be administered with a sense of proportion according to the nature and extent of the offense. if a mere light admonition proves effective, there is no need to resort to a severer step. As to a beating, the Holy Prophet allowed it very reluctantly and even then did not like it. But the fact is that there are certain women who do not mend their ways without a beating. In such a case, the Holy Prophet has instructed that she would not be beaten on the face, or cruelly, or with anything which might leave a mark on the body.

60"The two sides" refers both to the arbiters and to the spouses. Reconciliation can be effected in every quarrel, if the parties concerned desire it and if the arbiters try to effect it sincerely and justly.

61In this verse, a plan has been put forward for settling disputes between husband and wife within the family. An effort should be made to effect a reconciliation before resorting to a court of law or making the final breach. The plan is to appoint one arbiter from the family of each spouse for this purpose. The two should probe into the real cause or causes of the dispute and then try to find a way out of it. Of course, the relatives are best qualified for it, knowing as they do the true conditions of the spouses.

Allah has left it unanswered as to who should appoint the arbiters so that each spouse may appoint one arbiter from his or her relatives, if they desire to patch up their differences, or the leaders of the two families may take the initiative and entrust the work of reconciliation to two arbiters, or if the case goes to the court, it may appoint two arbiters before taking any action.

There is a difference of opinion regarding the powers of the arbiters. According to the Hanafi and the Shafi `i schools of thought, the arbiters are not authorized to pass any final decree but may recommend measures for reconciliation, which tray be accepted or rejected by the spouses. Of course, if the spouses themselves authorize them to effect divorce or khula' or take any other measure, then they shall be bound to accept their decision. Hasan Basri, Qatadah and some other jurists are of the opinion that the arbiters are authorized to enforce reconciliation but not separation. Ibn `Abbas, Said bin Jubair, Ibrahim Nakha 'i, Sha 'bi, Muhammad bin Sirin and some other jurists are of the opinion that the arbiters have full authority to enforce their decision about reconciliation or separation whichever they consider to be proper.

Caliph Uthman and Caliph 'Ali used to authorize the arbiters appointed by theta with full powers to effect reconciliation or separation as required by the circumstances. For instance, when the case of 'Aqil, son of Abu Talib, and his wife Fatimah, daughter of 'Utbah bin Rabi'ah, was brought in the court of Caliph Uthman, he appointed as arbiter Ibn 'Abbas from the family of the husband and Mu'aviyah bin Abi Sufyan from the family of the wife and told them that they ware authorized to cause separation between them, if required by circumstances. Likewise, Caliph `Ali appointed arbiters in a similar case and authorized them to effect reconciliation between the spouses or separate them. This shows that the arbiters as such do not possess judicial powers, but if at the tithe of their appointment, the authority concerned empowers them with judicial powers, their decision shall be binding and enforced like other judicial decisions.

62"Assahib-i-bil -janb" as used in the Text may imply an intimate friend and also a person who accompanies one at any time. For instance, he may happen to accompany one in the street, or be a fellow customer at a shop, or be a fellow passenger in the bus or in the railway train, etc. Even such a temporary neighborhood requires a civilized and noble person to treat the companion as far as possible kindly, and scrupulously avoid giving him any sort of trouble.

63"To conceal the bounty of Allah" is to live in a way as if Allah has not bestowed His bounty upon him. For instance, a rich person conceals Allah's bounty, if he lives below his standard: neither spends money on his own person nor on the members of his family nor on the needy nor for any other good work. In short, his appearance would show him to be in very straitened circumstances. Obviously that is gross ingratitude to Allah.

A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says, "When Allah bestows His bounty on anyone, He likes that he should show it". That is, he should live the life of a well-to-do person who spends money on food, dress, house, furniture, etc., according to his means, and also in the way of Allah in order to show the blessing on him.

64That is, the Prophet of every age will give evidence in the Court of Allah, saying: "Lord, I duly delivered Your message to my people and taught them the right way of life and the right mode of thought and practice which You taught me." Last of all, the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) will give this same evidence regarding the people of his term. and his term, according to the Qur'an extends from the time of his appointment as Prophet till Resurrection. (E.N. 69, Al-`Imran)

65This is the second Commandment about drinking. The first Commandment (Al-Baqarah: 219) was that drinking is an evil thing and Allah does not approve of it. Accordingly some of the Muslims began to refrain from it from that time. The majority of them, however, did not give it up and often offered the Prayer in a state of intoxication and made blunders in their recitations. Probably, this second Commandment came in the beginning of A.H. 4 and prohibited the offering of the Prayer while one was drunk. As a result they changed the timings of their drinking so as not to clash with the timings of the Prayers. Some time after this, the Commandment about total prohibition as contained in Al-Ma'idah: 90-

91 was sent down.

Incidentally, the word sukr (state of intoxication) as used in the Text also implies that this Commandment prohibits not only drinkig but every kind of intoxicant. Moreover, though every intoxicating thing is in itself unlawful, the offence of intoxication is doubled and becomes more heinous, when the Prayer is offered in such a state.

66For the same reason, the Holy Prophet has instructed that when one feels sleepy, and doses again and again during the Prayer, one should give up his Prayer and go to sleep.

Some people from this verse argue that the Prayer of the one who does not know the meaning of its Arabic Text, is no Prayer at all. But apart from the fact that it is an unnecessary hardship, the Arabic words of the Qur'an do not support this version. The Qur'an does not say, "unless you understand its meaning" or "unless you understand what you are saying" but it says "unless you know what you are saying". That is, one should be in his senses to know what he is uttering with his tongue lest he should recite, say, a poem, instead of the text of the Prayer.

67The Arabic word janabat literally means being far off and stranger, and the word ajnabi (stranger) is derived from the same root. As an Islamic term it refers to that state of uncleanliness and impurity that is caused by the emission of seed by sexual intercourse or in sleep because this makes a person stranger to cleanliness.

68A section of the jurists and commentators,such as 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Anas bin Malik, Hasan Basri and Ibrahim Nakha'i and others deduce from the words, "when passing on the way," that one should not enter a mosque in a state of "uncleanliness" except when one has to pass through it for some urgent piece of business. Another section of them, such as Hadrat 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbas, Said bin Jubair and some others conclude from this that if one becomes "unclean" when on a journey, one may cleanse oneself by wiping one's face and hands with pure dust, if water is not available. As regards entering a mosque in such a state of "uncleanliness", the latter section is of the opinion that one may sit in the mosque after performing his ablutions (wudu). But there is almost a consensus of opinion that if one becomes "unclean" on a journey and water is not available for a bath, one may cleanse oneself with pure dust and offer the Prayer. However, the former section derives this opinion from the Traditions and the latter bases this concession on this part of verse 43.

69There is a difference of opinion as to implication of "if you have touched women." Hadrat 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Mesa Ash'ari, Ubaiyy Ibn Ka`b, Said bin Jubair, Hasan Basri and several other jurists are of the opinion that here "have touched" means "have had sexual intercourse". Imam Abu Hanifah and those of his way of thinking and Imam Sufyan Thauri have adopted the same interpretation. On the contrary, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud and 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and (according to some traditions) Hadrat `Umar

also are of the opinion that the word "touched" actually means "touching with the hand" and Imam Shafi`i has adopted this version. Some jurists, such as Imam Malik, have adopted a middle course and expressed the opinion that if the touch between a man and a woman is of sexual nature, they shall have to make fresh ablutions for the Prayer but if. their bodies touch each others without any feeling of sensuality, there is nothing wrong in this.

70If one has to perform ablutions or take a bath before offering one's Salat and water is not available, one is allowed to resort to tayammum; or, if one is sick and there is a danger that the disease would worsen if one performs ablutions or takes a bath, one is allowed to resort to tayammum even if water is available.

Literally tayammum means "to turn to"; that is, one should turn to pure dust when water is not available, or if its use is harmful. There is a difference of opinion concerning the method of performing tayammum. The majority of the jurists, such as Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Shafi`i and Imam Malik, prescribe that one should strike one's hands on pure dust and wipe one's face with them; then one should again strike one's hands and wipe one's hands up to the elbows with them. This method has been prescribed by some Companions of the Holy Prophet and their followers such as Hadrat `Ali, `Abdullah bin `Umar, Hasan Basri, Sha'bi and Salim bin `Abdullah and others. But some jurists such as `Ata', Mak-hul, Auza`i and Ahmad bin Hanbal consider it enough to strike one's hands only once on pure dust and wipe the face and the hands up to the wrists and not up to the elbows. The Ahl-i-Hadith, in general, follow this method.

For the performance of tayammum, it is not essential only to strike one's hands on pure earth: any dusty thing or dry piece of earth suffices for this purpose. Some people object to this method of cleansing; they say, "How can one be cleansed by striking one's hands on dust and wiping the face and hands up to the elbows with these? Let them look upon this method from the psychological point of view. Tayammum helps keep alive the feelings of cleansing oneself and of the sanctity of the Prayer, even if one is not able to use water for a long time. Thus, a Muslim will always keep in view the rules of purity and cleanliness prescribed by the Islamic Code and will scrupulously be mindful of his state of cleanliness and purity for the observance of the Prayer.

71About the scholars of the people of the Book the Qur'an at many places has used words to the effect: "They have been given a part of the knowledge of the Scripture". These words have been used because the scholars had actually lost a portion of their Scriptures and had become strangers to the spirit and the real aim and object of the portion left with them. The only interest they took, in these was confined to polemical controversies, minor details of Commandments and philosophical subtleties of creed. That is why they were ignorant of the true nature of religion and were void of its essence, though they were called "Divines" and "Rabbis" and were the acknowledged leaders of their community.

72The words used are: "who have become Jews" and not "who are Jews," for originally they were "Muslims" just as the community of every Prophet is Muslim. Then afterwards they degenerated and

became merely "Jews".

73They were guilty of perversion in three ways: (1) They effected changes in the words of the Scriptures; (2) they distorted the meanings of the text with false interpretations, and (3) they would sit in the assemblies of the Holy Prophet and his Companions and afterwards make false reports of what they heard there in order to create mischief against them by distortion. They would thus spread misunderstandings about Islam and pervert people from joining the Islamic Community.

74That is, when the Commandments of Allah are recited to them, they 'say. sami`na (we have heard) aloud and `asaina (we have rejected) in a low voice, of they pronounce the word ata `na (we have obeyed) with such a twist of the tongue that it sounds as `asaina.

75During their talk with the Holy Prophet, they would invite his attention, saying, Isma `a (please listen to us), and would add ghaira musma ` in, which has several meanings. It may mean : "You are such a respectable man that one cannot utter any word before you against your will", but it may also imply : "You are not worthy that one may speak to you." Another meaning is : "May Allah make you deaf!"

76For this please refer to E.N. 105, Al-Baqarah.

77Please refer to E.N. 2, AI -i-`Imran.

78Please refer to E.N.'s 82 and 83, Al-Baqarah.

79The people of the Book have been admonished for being guilty of shirk, though they professed to believe in the Prophets and the revealed Books.

80This does not mean that if one refrains from shirk, then one may freely indulge in other sins. This is merely to bring home to them the gravity of this heinous sin, which they regarded as a trivial thing. That is why the warning has been given that shirk is the most heinous of all sins; so much so that this is the only sin for which forgiveness is not possible.

The Jewish Rabbis were very particular in the observance of minor laws;nay, they spent most of their time in measuring and weighing those regulations which were not explicitly mentioned in their Scriptures but were derived from them. On the contrary, they regarded shirk as a trivial matter: they not only themselves were involved in it but they did not try to save their community from .shirk and acts of shirk. Accordingly, they did not consider that there was anything wrong in entering into alliance with mushrik communities and helping them.

81Literally, jibt means an unreal, baseless and useless thing. In the Islamic terminology, sorcery, magic,

divination, omen-taking and the like superstitious practices are called jibt. A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says, "Taking omens from the sounds of the birds and the footmarks of the animals and all other methods of divination are jibt." Thus jibt is the equivalent of superstition.

82Please refer to E.N.'s 286 and 288, Al-Baqarah.

83The Jewish Rabbis had gone so low in their opposition to Islam that' they regarded the followers of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) as more misguided than even the Arab Mushriks, and declared the latter to be more rightly guided though it was quite obvious to them that on one side there was the worship of One God without any tinge of shirk, and on the other, idolatry white had been . thoroughly condemned in the Bible.

84That is, "Do they possess any portion of Divine Authority that they are sitting in judgment on the case to decide who is rightly guided and who is not?" "Had they any part in it, they would never have given a farthing to anyone else because they are so narrow minded that they are not even ready to acknowledge the Truth"

It may also imply: Do they possess the kingdom of a country from which others are demanding a share, and they are finding it hard to part with it? What is being demanded of them is merely the acknowledgment of the Truth, and this they are refusing on account of jealousy.

85Here they are being rebuked for showing jealousy against the Holy Prophet and his followers because they were blessed with Allah's Bounty (Prophethood) for which they themselves were looking forward in spite of being unworthy of it. Instead of showing regret for their own unworthiness which caused the loss of the Bounty, they were showing resentment against the Holy Prophet who had by His Bounty brought about the greatest spiritual, moral and intellectual revolution in Arabia with its resulting leadership and greatness. It was their jealousy that was urging them to side with the mushrik, and to Criticize the Muslims.

86"Mulk-i-azim " refers to the leadership and guidance of the world and to the superiority over other nations that is gained by putting into practice the knowledge and wisdom of the Divine Book.

87It must be kept in mind that this is the answer to the jealous talk of the children of Israel. It implies this: "Why do you feel jealous of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) and his followers? You are the descendants of the Prophet Abraham (upon whom be peace) and so are the children of Ishmael his descendants. We promised the Prophet Abraham that We would bestow leadership of the world upon those of his descendants who would follow the Book and the Wisdom sent dawn by Us. At first We sent down the Book and the Wisdom to you, who belong to one line of his descendants, but you proved incapable of this. Now We have sent down the same to the children of Ishmael the second line of .

Abraham's descendants. They have accepted it, believed in it and followed it practically. Now answer for yourselves whether you have any ground of jealousy and resentment against the children of Ishmael.

88Here the Muslims have been fore-warned that they should avoid those evils in which the children of Israel were involved. Their basic error was that during their degeneration they entrusted the positions of trust to incompetent people. They began to entrust positions of responsibility and religious and political leadership to inefficient, narrow-minded, immoral, dishonest and wicked people. As a result, the whole community became corrupt. The Muslims are being cautioned against this evil and enjoined to entrust positions of responsibility to qualified and competent people of good moral character.

Another evil that was prevalent among the Jews was injustice. They had lost the very sense and spirit of justice and become utterly unjust, openly dishonest, and sinfully obdurate and would commit acts of gross injustice without any pangs of conscience. The Muslims were personally having a bitter experience of this. The Jews were siding with the idolatrous Quraish against the Believers in one God though the lives of the two clearly showed "who was more rightly guided."On the one side, they saw the pure lives of the Holy Prophet and his followers; on the other, they witnessed the immoral lives of their enemies, who buried their daughters alive, married their step mothers and went round the Ka`bah in naked state. Still these "people of the Book" preferred the idolatrous people to the. Believers and brazen-facedly declared that the former were more rightly guided than the latter. Allah warns the Believers against this sort of injustice and enjoins them always to say what is just and right and judge between the people with justice whether they be friends or foes.

89This verse is the basis of the whole religious, cultural and political system of Islam and is the first and foremost article of the constitution of an Islamic State. It lays down permanently the following fundamental principles:

(1) In the Islamic system, Allah is the real Authority who must be obeyed. A Muslim is first of all the servant of Allah; all his other capacities come after this. Therefore, a Muslim as an individual and the Muslims as a community owe their first loyalty to Allah and they must subordinate all other loyalties to this. Allegiance and obedience to anyone else shall be acknowledged only if these are not opposed to the allegiance and obedience to Allah but are subordinate to it. All other allegiances that are opposed to this basic allegiance shall be broken asunder. The Holy Prophet has explained the same thing in a Tradition: "There is no obedience to any of His creatures in what involves disobedience to the Creator."

(2) The second fundamental principle of the Islamic system is allegiance and obedience to the Holy Prophet. This obedience is not inherent in Prophethood but is only practical shape of obedience to Allah. A Messenger is to be obeyed because he is the authentic means through which we can receive Commandments and instructions from Allah. Hence, we can obey Allah only by obeying His Messenger, for no other way of obedience is genuine. As a corollary of this, the breach of allegiance to the Messenger shall be a rebellion against the Sovereign, Whom he represents. A Tradition explains the

same thing thus: "Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah." The same thing has also been explicitly stated in v. 80 of this Surah.

(3) After the first and the second allegiance, and subordinate to these, the Muslims owe allegiance to those invested with authority from among themselves. The Arabic word ulil-amr is very comprehensive, which comprises all those persons who are in any way at the helm of the affairs of the Muslims-religious scholars, thinkers, political leaders, administrators, judges of law courts, tribal chiefs and the like. In short, all those, who are in any way invested with authority from among the Muslims, are to be obeyed, and it is not right to disturb the peace of the community life of the Muslims by entering into conflict with them, provided that (a) they are from among the Muslims, and (b) they are obedient to Allah and His Messenger. These two conditions are a pre-requisite for obedience to them, and these have been explicitly laid down in the verse and have also been fully explained by the Holy Prophet. In support of this some Traditions are cited below:

(a) "It is obligatory on a Muslim to listen to and obey orders of those invested with authority, whether he likes it or dislikes it, provided that it is not sinful. However, if he is ordered to do a sinful thing, he should neither listen to the rulers nor obey their orders." (Bukhari, Muslim).

(b) "Obedience to anyone in a sinful thing is forbidden. Obedience is obligatory only in what is right." (Bukhari, Muslim).

(c) The Holy Prophet said, "There will be rulers over you who will practice right things as well as wrong things: (In such a case) whoever protests against the wrong things, shall be absolved from the responsibility and whoever dislikes the wrong things, also shall escape (punishment). But whoever approves of and follows them, shall incur punishment." The Companions asked, "Should we not then fight against such rulers?" The Holy Prophet answered, "No, as long as they offer the Salat." (Muslim)

That is, if they discard the Salat, it will be a clear proof of their disobedience to Allah and His Messenger. Then it will be right to rise against them

(d) The Holy Prophet said, "Your worst rulers are those whom you hate and who hate you, whom you curse and who curse you." The Companions asked, "O Messenger of God, should we not rise against such rulers?" The Holy Prophet answered, "No, as long as they establish the Salat among you." (Muslim)

In this Tradition, the condition about the Salat laid down in the preceding one, has been made more explicit. One might have inferred from (c) that if they offered the Salat in their individual capacities, no rising should be organized against them. But Tradition (d) explicitly lays down that the condition for obedience to those in authority is the establishment of the system of Salat by them in the Muslim Community. The rulers should not only themselves offer the Salat regularly, but they should also establish the Salat in the system of government run by them. This is the minimum condition that ' makes

a government Islamic in principle. If a government lacks this, it will mean that such a government has discarded Islam, and the Muslims will be justified in overthrowing it. This same thing has also been stated in another Tradition thus: "The Holy Prophet took a covenant from us regarding certain things. One of these was that we would not engage in a dispute with those invested with authority unless we saw in them clear signs of disbelief, which may provide us with a cogent reason to present before Allah." (Bukhari, Muslim)

(4) The fourth thing that has been laid down as an absolute and permanent principle is that the Commandments of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger are the fundamentals of law and final authority in the Islamic system. Hence, if a dispute arises about any matter between the Muslims or between the rulers and the ruled, they should turn to the Qur'an and the Sunnah for a decision and they should all submit to the decision. Thus, the essential element in the Islamic system that distinguishes it from un-Islamic systems is to acknowledge the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger as the final authority and to turn to these and to submit to their decisions in all problems of life. Any system void of this is most surely an un lslamic system.

Some people doubt the soundness of this principle. They say that it fails in practical life for the simple reason that there are many aspects of life (e.g., Local Self department. Railway department, Postal department, etc. etc.,) for which there are no rules and regulations at all in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. How then can they find the solution of the problems they meet with in such aspects of life as concern such departments? This doubt arises because they do not, understand the fundamental principles of Islam. Islam allows freedom of action in all those things about which the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger are silent. What distinguishes a Muslim from a non-Muslim is that the latter claims absolute freedom but the former considers himself to be the servant of Allah and uses only that amount of freedom which Islam allows him. The non-Muslim judges all matters in accordance with the rules and regulations made by himself and does not believe that he stands in need of Divine Guidance. In contrast to him, the Muslim, first of all, turns to Allah and His Messenger for guidance about everything and abides by their decision. But if he does not find any commandment therein about a certain thing, only then he is free to act in a manner he considers to be right. The very fact that the Law is silent about a certain thing, is a proof that it allows freedom of action in that particular matter.

90In the first part of this verse, the Qur'an enunciates the tour fundamental principles of the Islamic Constitution, and in the second part teaches the wisdom that underlies them. The Muslims have been enjoined to follow the four fundamental principles if they are true believers; otherwise their profession of Islam will become doubtful. Then they have been taught to build their system of life on these because therein also lies their well-being; for this alone can keep them on the right path in this world and lead them to a happy life in the Hereafter.

It should also be noted that this piece of advice follows the critical review of the moral and religious

condition of the Jews and warns the Muslims in a subtle manner to learn a lesson from their deplorable condition. It says that whenever a community flings the Book of Allah and the guidance of His Messenger behind its back and follows such leaders as are disobedient to Allah and His Messenger, and blindly obeys its rulers and religious leaders without demanding from thetas the authority of the Book and the Sunnah, it can never escape those evils in which the children of Israel were involved.

91In this verse, Taghut clearly stands for the authority that makes decisions in accordance with laws other than Divine and the system of judiciary which acknowledges neither Allah as the Supreme Sovereign nor His Book as the final authority. Hence, this verse is explained that it is contrary to Faith to take one's case for decision to a law court which by its nature is, that of taghut Belief in Allah and His Book makes it obligatory on the Believer that he should refuse to acknowledge such a court as lawful. According to the Qur'an, belief in Allah and disbelief in taghut are correlatives; therefore to acknowledge both at one and the same time is nothing but hypocrisy itself.

92This shows that the hypocrites used to bring only such cases before the Holy Prophet as were likely to be decided in their favor, but would refrain from bringing such cases, which they feared, would be decided against them. The same is true of many hypocrites of today: they are ever ready to submit to the decisions of the Islamic Law if and whenever it goes in their favor; otherwise they resort to any law, any custom, and any law court which, they expect, will ensure their interests.

93Probably it means that when their hypocritical deeds are exposed and they fear that action will be taken against them; they take oaths to assure the Believers of their innocence.

94It clearly defines the position of the Messenger: the Messenger does not come from Allah so that the people should simply acknowledge him as a Messenger and then continue to obey anyone they like. The Messenger is sent with the sole object that the code of life brought by him only should be followed instead of all other codes, and the commandments brought by him from Allah only should be obeyed instead of all other commandments. If anyone does not acknowledge the Messenger in this sense, his acknowledging him merely as a Messenger would be meaningless.

95The commandment contained in verse 65 was not meant to be confined to the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, but it was to hold good up to the Last Day. Whatever the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) brought from Allah and whatever way of life he followed and practiced under His guidance and inspiration, shall remain the final authority among Muslims for ever and the acknowledgment of that authority alone determines whether one is a true Muslim or not. According to a Tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "None of you can claim to be a believer unless he subordinates his desires and lusts to the way that I have brought."

96In verse 65, they have been admonished to submit gracefully and sincerely to the way of life brought

by the Holy Prophet and to subordinate their desires and interests to his decision. In this verse they have been warned that if they cannot sacrifice even their small interests in following the Islamic Law, they can never be expected to make any bigger sacrifice. if they were asked to sacrifice their lives or leave their homes in the way of God, they would then discard totally the way of Faith and obedience and follow the ways of disbelief and disobedience instead.

97That is, "If they had given up doubt, hesitation and indecision and obeyed and followed the Messenger without any mental reservation, their position would have become firm and stable and their thoughts, their morals and their affairs would have secured a strong and permanent foundation. In short, they would have enjoyed all those blessings that are obtained by following steadfastly a straight royal road. On the contrary, the one who wavers in indecision and irresolution, and sometimes takes one road and then another, without faith in either, his whole life passes without any achievement and becomes an object lesson of failure."

98That is, if they had resolved to obey the Holy Messenger sincerely without harboring any doubts in their minds, the right way of life would have become very clear to them by the grace of Allah, and they would have clearly seen as to how they should employ their energy and effort so as to get further and further close to their real goal in life.

99Siddiq is one who is upright and just: who is always actuated by truth and righteousness; who is fair and equitable in all his dealings; who always sides with truth and justice from the core of his heart; who opposes tooth and nail all that is unfair, without showing the least weakness; who is so pure and so unselfish that both friends and foes expect nothing but impartiality from him.

The literal meaning of shahid is "a witness" .It implies the one who bears witness to the 'truth of his Faith by following it in all aspects of his life. A martyr also is a shahid because he willingly suffers death by fighting in the cause of Allah. By sacrificing his life for the cause he believes to be true, he gives a practical demonstration of the sincerity of his Faith. Those righteous people who are so trustworthy that their mere evidence for anything to be true is a sufficient proof of its genuineness are also shahid.

Salih is one who is upright in his beliefs, intentions, words and actions and adopts the right attitude in every aspect of life.

100That is, "Undoubtedly the person who enjoys the company of such people in this world and rises with them in the Hereafter is really very fortunate." Unless one's feelings are totally deadened, one is bound to feel that the company of evil and immoral people is a painful torment even in this world and it would be .

101It should be noted that this address was revealed at the time when the neighboring tribes had been emboldened by the defeat of the Muslims at Uhd. They were surrounded by danger on all sides and were

hearing persistent rumors about the active hostilities of, and imminent attacks from, different quarters. There were cases of treachery also. The Muslim missionaries were invited cunningly to the outskirts of Madinah. These circumstances urgently required that the Muslims should struggle hard to save the Islamic Movement from failure and destruction in the face of such overwhelming threats.

102The other meanings are that not only he himself shows lack of courage to face danger but also discourages and dissuades others from Jihad.

103That is, "Let them clearly understand that those people, who hanker after worldly benefits only, are not fit to fight in the way of Allah. On the contrary, only those people are worthy of fighting in the way of Allah who have no other desire or object than to please Him and who have perfect belief in Allah and the Hereafter and are, therefore, ready to sacrifice all interests and all chances of prosperity and enjoyment in this world for the sake of pleasing their Lord. They sincerely believe that their sacrifices will not go in vain in the Hereafter, even if they might not have been- "successful" in this life. Thus it is obvious that those who attach real importance only to their worldly interests cannot tread the path of Allah."

104This was the cry of the poor and helpless children, men and women who had accepted Islam at Makkah and at other places but had no means of migrating to Madinah, or defending themselves from persecution. They were being persecuted and oppressed in all sorts of manners and were invoking the help of Allah to deliver them from that horrible state.

105In the sight of Allah, there are two distinct parties of fighters. One party is that of the Believers who fight for the cause of Allah in order to establish his way on His earth, and every sincere Believer is bound to perform this duty. The other party is that of unbelievers who fight in the way of Taghut so as to establish the rule of the rebels against Allah on His earth and no Believer would side with them in this evil work.

106The Believers have been assured that they should not be cowed and terrified by the apparent grand preparations and evil designs of Satan and his companions: because ultimately they are bound to fail.

107This verse has three meanings, and all three are equally correct.

First, it means that those very people who were then showing cowardice were very impatient to fight before permission was given for this. They would repeat the tales of their persecution and oppression and say, "Give us permission to fight, for we have no more patience left to bear these wrongs. " At that time when they were advised to be patient for the time being and to purify themselves by means of Salat and Zakat, they would resent such pieces of advice. But when the Command to fight was given, some of those very people began to show cowardice when they confronted the enemy armies and the dangers of war.

The second meaning is that those people were very 'religious' as long as such harmless demands as the offering of Salat and the payment of Zakat were made; but no sooner was the demand to fight in the way of Allah made on them than they were filled with terror and fear for their lives, and they forgot all about their religiosity.

The third meaning is that during the pre-Islamic period, they were ready to fight for the sake of the spoils or for the gratification of their whims, and were engaged day and night in war. That is why, after embracing Islam, they were enjoined to desist a while from fighting and to reform their souls by means of the Salat and Zakat. But when they were enjoined to fight in the way of Allah, the same people who showed reckless bravery in fighting for the sake of false pride, were showing timidity, and those who were dare-devils turned into milksops and shirked fight.

The above mentioned three meanings apply to the three different categories of people and the words of the Arabic text are so comprehensive that they fit equally into all the three cases.

108That is, "You need not worry about your reward from Allah for the service you render to His cause. If you exert your utmost in His way, Allah will not let your work go waste. "

109They have been admonished for their attitude towards the Holy Prophet. When there was success and victory, they would attribute it to Allah's grace and forgot that Allah had blessed them with grace through him. But when they suffered a defeat or had a set-back because of their own errors and weaknesses, they would lay the whole blame on the Holy Prophet, and would absolve themselves from all responsibility.

110That is, "They themselves are responsible for their deeds and you will not be answerable for them. What you have been entrusted with, is to convey to them the commandments and instructions from God. And you have done that admirably well. Now it is not your obligation to force them to adopt the right way, and if they do not follow the Guidance they are receiving through you, you shall not be held responsible for their disobedience."

111The main cause of the wrong attitude of the hypocrites and the people of weak faith, who had been warned in the foregoing verses, was that they had doubts that the Qur'an was from Allah. They could not believe that it was being sent down by Allah to the Holy Prophet and that the Commandments contained in it were directly coming from Him. That is why they are being admonished to consider the Qur'an by giving close attention to it, and to verify whether their doubts are genuine and whether it is from Allah or not. The Qur'an itself bears witness to the truth that it is from none other than Allah, for none else, however wise and intelligent he might be, could have gone on delivering addresses under different circumstances about variant topics so as to form a connected, balanced and coherent Book at the end of twenty-three years and that too, without showing any contradiction whatever from the beginning to the

end, and without there arising any need to revise or make any change in it.

112During the period of excitement, rumors were on the air from many quarters. Sometimes baseless and exaggerated reports were received that caused alarm in Madinah and its outskirts. Then some cunning enemy would send news that all was quiet in the enemy camp, merely to conceal some impending danger and to keep the Muslims off their guard. Only those people who loved excitement, took keen interest in such rumors; who did not take the conflict between Islam and un-Islam to be a serious matter; and who did not realize the grave consequences of indulging in such baseless rumors. Whenever they heard any rumor, they would spread it from place to place, without considering the great harm their pastime was causing.

In this verse, such people have been warned of the gravity of their offense and strictly admonished to refrain from spreading rumors. They have been told to report any news they heard to the responsible people and then keep silent about it.

113Different people behave differently and with different results. Some urge on others to exert themselves for the cause of Allah and to exalt His Word and they get its reward. There are others who spread misunderstandings among the people about Allah's cause, discourage the Muslims and try to dissuade them from exalting the Word of Allah and thus incur punishment.

114The Muslims were specially exhorted to be very civil and polite to the non-Muslims because at that time their relations were strained on account of the conflict between them. In that state of tension, they were forewarned to be on their guard against incivility and impoliteness. They were, therefore, taught to be equally civil and polite to them when they greeted them respectfully. Nay, they should be even more civil and polite than their opponents.

Harsh behavior and harsh words do no good to anyone but they are specially unsuited to the work of those missionaries of Allah's Message, who have dedicated themselves to one day invite the world to the Truth and exerted themselves to reform the ways of the people. Such ill behavior may satisfy one's vanity, but it does great harm to one's mission.

115That is, "The misbehaviour of the unbelievers, atheists, polytheists and the like can do no damage to the Godhead of Allah, for they cannot alter the fact that He is the One and All-Powerful Sovereign, and that, one day He will assemble together all human beings and deal with them in accordance with their deeds and none will be able to escape from His retribution. Therefore, Allah does not stand in need of anyone to defend Him against His rebels by showing incivility and impoliteness to them.

That is the bearing of this verse on the preceding verse. But this verse also serves as an appendix to the passage that began from verse 60. In that case it means: Let any body follow any way he chooses and

work in any way he likes in this world but he should not forget that one Day everyone shall have to go in the presence of Allah Who is the sole Sovereign. Then everyone shall see the result of his actions and deeds.

116This passage deals with the problem of those hypocritical Muslims who had accepted Islam in Makkah and other parts of Arabia but had not emigrated, to Madinah. They lived as before with their people, and took more or less a practical part in all their hostile activities against Islam and the Muslims. They had become a very difficult problem for the Muslims who did not know how to deal with them. Some Muslims were of the opinion that they were after all "Muslim" because they recited the kalimah (the article of the Muslims' Faith), offered the Salat, observed the Fast and recited the Qur'an. Then how could they be dealt with like the disbelievers? Allah in this passage has removed that difference of opinion from among the Muslims and told them how to deal with them.

At this place one should clearly understand why those Muslims who did not emigrate to Madinah were declared to be hypocrites; otherwise one might not be able to interpret correctly this passage and the like passages of the Qur'an. The fact of the matter is that when the Holy Prophet migrated to Madinah and conditions were created there for the fulfillment of the requirements of Islam, a general order was given that all those Muslims who were oppressed in any place and in any tribe or clan and could not freely carry out their Islamic obligations, should migrate to Madinah, "the Abode of Islam." As a result, all those who could emigrate but did not do so because they loved their homes, their relatives and their interests more than Islam, were declared to be hypocrites. Only such of those as were really being prevented by impediments were declared to be helpless in verse 97 of this Surah.

It is obvious that the Muslims living in the "abode of unbelief" may be declared hypocrites for not migrating only if a general invitation is extended to them by the people living in "the Abode of Islam", or at least the doors of" the Abode of Islam" are kept open for them. In such a case all those Muslims who may be doing nothing to change "the abode of unbelief" into "the Abode of Islam", nor emigrate to "the Abode of Islam", even if they could, would be declared hypocrites.

117Allah turned the hypocrites back to their former unbelief because they followed a double-faced policy and were time-servers. As they preferred the life of this world to that of the Hereafter, they had entered the fold of Islam with some mental reservations. They were not prepared to sacrifice those interests which came into conflict with the requirements of the Faith and they did not have that firm belief in the Hereafter which makes one sacrifice with perfect peace of mind this world for the sake of the Next World: It has thus become obvious that the line of demarcation was so clearcut that there ought not to have been two opinions about hypocrisy.

118Here the Muslims have been asked to catch hold of those hypocrites who belonged to the belligerent disbelievers and were actually engaged in hostile activities against the Islamic State.

119The exception is only concerning the first part of the Command. Though the blood of such a hypocrite is lawful, he is not to be pursued and killed, if he has sought asylum in the territory of a non-Muslim State, which is an ally to the Islamic State. This is not because of the sanctity of the blood of the hypocrite but because of the sanctity of the treaty.

120This does not refer to the category of the above-mentioned hypocrites whose blood has been made lawful, but to the sincere Muslims who lived either in "the Abode of Islam", or in "the war zone" or "the abode of unbelief", against whom there was no proof that they had taken part in the hostile activities of the enemies of Islam: such a warning was necessary because there were many people who had accepted Islam sincerely but were still forced by circumstances to live among the foes of Islam; and there had been cases when some of them were accidentally killed by their Muslim brethren during an attack on an enemy clan. Therefore, Allah has enjoined what a Muslim, who kills a Muslim by mis-chance, must do to expiate such an accidental sin.

121As the slain person was a Believer, a believing slave is to be set free as expiation for his accidental murder.

122The Holy Prophet prescribed one hundred camels or two hundred cows or two thousand goats as blood-money to be paid to the survivors of the slain man. If one desired to pay it in any other form, he would have to calculate it in terms of the market price of these animals. For instance, the blood-money paid in cash during the time of the Holy Prophet was eight hundred gold dinars or eight thousand silver dirhams. During his Caliphate, Hadrat 'Umar declared, "Now that the price of a camel has gone up, one thousand dinars or twelve thousand dirhams should be paid as blood-money. " It should, however,, be noted that the blood money prescribed here is not for a willful murder but for an accidental one.

123In brief, the following are the Commandments contained in v. 92:

If the slain person is an inhabitant of "the Abode of Islam," his murderer shall have to pay blood-money as compensation and also to set free a slave to earn his forgiveness from God.

And if he is an inhabitant of a "war zone", the murderer shall have only to set free a slave and not to pay any blood-money.

And if he belongs to an "abode of unbelief" which is an ally of the Islamic State, the murderer shall have to set free a slave and also have to pay blood-money equal to the amount of the blood-money of a non-Muslim victim as contained in the treaty.

124These fasts must be consecutive without a single day's break; if there is a single break, except if it be in accordance with the Law, one shall have to begin the prescribed fasting anew for two full months.

125That is, "The freeing of a slave or the payment of blood-money or the fasting for two consecutive months is not a penalty but is repentance and kaffarah (cover) for the offense. The difference between the two is that in the case of penalty, there is no feeling of self-reproach, compunction, contrition and self-reform, but there is a feeling of disgust and aversion, and it leaves disgust and bitterness behind it. That is why Allah enjoins kaffarah and repentance so that the offender may be able to purify his soul by means of good deeds, devotion and fulfillment of the rights, and turn to Allah through self-reproach and compunction. in this way the sinner will not only atone for his present sin but will also refrain in future from such errors.

Kaffarah literally means a cover; a good deed that is performed as kaffarah for a sin, so to say, covers it just as a white-wash covers a blot on a wall.

126In the early days of Islam, Assalam-u-alaikum (peace be upon you) was a symbol of recognition for Muslims. When a Muslim met another Muslim, he greeted him with this salutation, as if to say, "I belong to your own community; I am your friend and well-wisher. I have nothing but peace and security for you; so you should not show enmity towards me nor fear enmity and harm from me." It was like a "pass-word" used in the army while passing through a line of guards at night so as to discern between friends and foes.

The importance of the salutation of peace as a symbol of recognition was specially great at that time because there was no apparent mark of distinction between a Muslim Arab and a non-Muslim Arab, as they wore the same kind of dress and spoke the semi language. Still a difficulty arose when the Muslims attacked some clan and a local Muslim also became the target of attack. Then he would cry out, Asalam-u-alaikum or La llaha illallah (there is no god but Allah). But the attacking Muslims would suspect him to be a disbeliever who was using the password as a trick merely to save his life. They would, therefore, often kill him and take possession of his belongings as spoils. Although the Holy Prophet would severely admonish the offenders on such occasions, yet there was a recurrence of such incidents. Then Allah solved the difficulty in this verse, which means, "You have no right to judge cursorily that the man, who is declaring himself to be a Muslim, is telling a lie merely to save his life. It is equally possible that he may be speaking the truth, or telling a lie, and one cannot know the reality without making a thorough investigation. Thus, while there is a chance of letting off a disbeliever by accepting his salutations of peace as genuine, there is also the more horrible chance of killing an innocent Believer. In any case, it is far better to let off a disbeliever by mistake than to kill a Reliever by error.

127That is, There was a time when you yourselves were scattered as individuals among different clans of disbelievers. You were then hiding your Islam for fear of oppression and persecution and you could offer no other proof of your Faith except by an oral expression. Now it is the bounty of Allah that you are enjoying community life and are able to raise the banner of Islam against the disbelievers. The right way of showing gratitude to Allah for this bounty is to show kindness and leniency to those Muslims who are

still in the same state in which you were before this.

128In this passage, the relative status of true Muslims has been assigned according as they behave when they are asked to go to Jihad on a voluntary basis, when the leader of the Islamic forces does not require the whole Muslim force. Those who offer themselves and their wealth and go to Jihad have been assigned a higher rank than those who stay at home, even though the latter might have been engaged in other good works; moreover, there is, for the former a `promise of a good reward.' As regards those who stay at home, when they are ordered to go to Jihad, by making excuses or even those who shirk Jihad, when a general order is given for Jihad and Jihad becomes an obligatory duty in these two cases those who are engaged in other works and do not go to Jihad are hypocrites and are not entitled to the benefit of the 'promise of a good reward' except that they stay behind for any genuine excuse.

129"Those who were doing wrong to their own souls" were the people who had accepted Islam but were still living among their own clans, which had not yet embraced Islam, without any genuine excuse or compulsion. They were doing wrong to their own selves by living in a state of semi-Islam, although "the Abode of Islam" had come into existence where they could migrate and live the full life of a Muslim. They were quite content to live such a wretched life of semi-unbelief, according to their faith because they preferred their comforts, their families, their properties and their interests to their Faith. That is why their excuse, "We were weak and helpless in the land", has not been accepted. (Please also see E.N.116).

130That is, "Why did you continue to live in a place which was oppressed by the rebels against Allah and where it was not possible to live in accordance with the Law of Allah? And why did you not migrate to a place where you could follow the Divine Law without any hindrance?"

131As regards "migration in the way of Allah", it is an obligation with two exceptions: one may remain there to struggle for the establishment of Islam and to change the system of life based on unbelief into the system of Islam; just as the Prophets and their immediate followers did in the initial stages of their mission; or one may remain there in a state of great disgust and repugnance as long as one is unable to find any way out of it. With the exception of the above two cases, it will be a life of continuous sin to live in an "abode of unbelief". The excuse that "We could not find any `Abode of Islam' for migration" shall not be accepted and will be met with the rebuff: "If there was no `Abode of Islam', was there no forest or mountain where you could live on the leaves of trees and the milk of goats in order to escape from submission to the laws of unbelief?"

In this connection, a misunderstanding about the Tradition, "No migration after the conquest of Makkah", may also be removed. This was not a permanent command concerning migration but only a temporary instruction that suited the changed conditions of Arabia after the conquest of Makkah. As long as the major portion of Arabia was the "abode of unbelief", the Muslims were enjoined to migrate to Madinah, which was the only "Abode of Islam" at the time. But when almost all the parts of Arabia came under Islam, the Holy Prophet so to say, merely canceled the first command under which migration was

compulsory, saying, "There is no more (compulsory) migration (to Madinah) after the conquest of Makkah." The Tradition was never meant to be a prohibitory command for all the Muslims of the world for all times to come up to the Last Day.

132The shortening of the obligatory part of the Salat during a journey in peace time is, `to reduce four rak'ats to two rak`ats"but there is no prescribed limit to the reduction during actual fighting. The Salat must be offered any-how in any form as the circumstances on the occasion permit. If it is possible to offer the Salat in congregation, it should be offered in congregation; otherwise the soldiers should say it individually. If it is not possible to turn the face to the qiblah, it may be offered facing any other direction. If it is not possible to remain stationary for the Salat, it may be offered while riding or walking. If it is not possible to bend down or prostrate, one should do so symbolically. If, during the Salat, it becomes necessary to move from that place, one may continue the Prayer even during the movement. There is no harm in offering the Salat, even if one's clothes become stained with blood. And even if in spite of all these concessions, it is not possible to offer it at all, it may then be reluctantly postponed, as was done during the course of the "Battle of the Trench."

There is a difference of opinion as to whether the obligatory parts (fara `id) only are to be offered in a journey or those parts (sunnats) also that were practised by the Holy Prophet in addition to the former. When on a journey the Holy Prophet used to offer without fail two rak`ats in addition to the obligatory rak`ats of Salat-ul-Fajr (Morning Prayers) and three rak`ats of witr with Salat-ul- 'Isha' (Night Prayer). At other times he only offered the obligatory parts; there is no proof of his offering the sonnet parts. He, however, used to offer "additional prayers" (nawafil), whenever he got time for these even while he was riding. That is why Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Umar prohibited the people from offering the sunnats during a journey except with the Morning Prayer. But the majority of the scholars leave it to the individual's option to offer or not to offer the sunnats on a journey. The Hanafis are of the opinion that it is better to leave them during the actual journey but one must offer them at a halting place, if one can get the necessary peace of mind.

As regards the nature of the journey in which the Salat may be shortened,some scholars (Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Mas'ud and 'Ata) have imposed the condition that it should he in the way of Allah, e.g., for Jihad, Hajj, `Umrah, or in quest of knowledge, etc. Imam Shafi'i and Imam Ahmad are of the opinion that the journey should be for some lawful purpose; otherwise one has no right of enjoying the concession of reduction in Salat. The Hanafi s are of the opinion that the Salat may be shortened during any kind of journey, irrespective of the purpose for which it is undertaken. As regards the nature of the journey, it may merit reward or punishment by itself, but it does not affect the concession of reduction in Salat.

Some of the Imams have interpreted words "there is no harm" to mean that "reduction in the Prayer" is not obligatory but merely optional. One may make use of the permission and shorten his Salat or may not. Imam Shafi'i holds the same view, though he considers it better to shorten it. He is of the opinion that one who does not make use of the "reduction", gives up the higher thing and adopts a lower thing. Imam

Ahmad is of the opinion that although "reduction" is not obligatory, yet it is improper not to make use of the concession. Imam Abu Hanifah considers "reduction" obligatory and there is also a tradition from Imam Malik to the same effect. All the traditions from the Holy Prophet show that in his Journeys he always shortened his Salat and there is no authentic Tradition to show that he ever offered four rak`ats on a journey. Ibn `Umar says, "During the journeys I accompanied the Holy Prophet, Abu Bakr, `Umar or ` Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them all), and I witnessed that they always shortened their Salat and never offered four rak`ats. " The same view is also supported by authentic traditions from Ibn `Abbas and several other Companions.

Once during Hajj, Hadrat `Uthman performed four rak ats while he was leading the Salat at Mina and the Companions objected to it. He satisfied them, saying, "I have taken a wife from Makkah and I have heard from the Holy Prophet that whoever marries at a place becomes a citizen of that place. Therefore I have . not shortened my prayer."

There are, however, two traditions against this from Hadrat `A'ishah which show that it is equally right to make a "reduction" in the Salat or to say it in full. But these traditions are weak in authenticity and contrary to her own practice, for she herself practiced "reduction".

In this connection, it may also be noted that sometimes one feels oneself to be "on a journey" as well as "at home" when one may shorten the Salat or offer it in full at one and the same halting place according to the circumstances. Most probably Hadrat `A'ishah referred to such a state, saying: "When on a journey, the Holy Prophet sometimes shortened his Salat and sometimes offered it in full. "

As regards the words, "There is no harm if you shorten your Prayer", it is not correct to conclude that the "Command" is optional. The same words have been used in connection with running between Safa and Marwa on the occasion of Hajj, in verse 158 of Al-Baqarah, although this is an essential part of Hajj. As a matter of fact, these words have been used in both the places to allay the fear that shortening of the Prayer or running between Safa and Marwa might entail a sin or lessen one's rewards.

As regards the length of the journey, the Zahirites are of the opinion that "reduction" may be made in any journey irrespective of the distance. According to Imam Malik, the minimum distance of the journey should be 48 miles, or its duration should be at least one day and one night. Hadrat Ibn `Abbas and Imam Ahmad are also of the same opinion and a saying of Imam Shafi`i also supports the same. But the minimum distance for "reduction" according to Hadrat Anas is 15 miles, while Imam Auza`i and Imam Zuhri follow the opinion of Hadrat `Umar that one day's journey suffices for "reduction" . According to Hadrat Hasan Basri and Imam Abu Yusuf, the minimum journey of two days entitles one to shorten one's Salat. Imam Abu Hanifah is of the opinion that "reduction" may be made in a journey of a minimum distance of 54 miles. The same is the opinion of Ibn `Umar, Ibn Mas`ud and Hadrat `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them all).

Opinions differ regarding the "reduction" in a halt during the course of a journey. Imam Ahmad is of the opinion that if one intends to halt at a place for four days, one will have to offer the Prayer in full. According to Imam Malik and lmam Shafe`i, "reduction" is not lawful at a place where one intends to halt for more than four days. Imam Auza`i extends it to 13 days and Imam Abu Hanifah to 15 days or more and enjoins offering of the full Prayer during such a halt. But there is no explicit command of the Holy Prophet about this. However, there is a consensus of opinion that if one is forced by circumstances to halt at a place but intends to leave it for home at any time, one may go on practising "reduction" for an indefinite period of time. There are instances when some Companions practiced "reduction" continuously even for two years for the same reason. Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal allows a prisoner to make "reduction" during the whole term of his imprisonment.

133The Zahirites and the Kharijites interpret this sentence to mean that reduction in the Salat may be made only during state of war and that reduction in a journey during peace time is against the Qur'an. But we learn from an authentic "Tradition that once when Hadrat `Umar presented the same objection before the Holy Prophet, he answered, "The concession of 'reduction' is a bounty from Allah; therefore, enjoy it". This is a well known fact that the Holy Prophet availed of the concession in every journey both during war time and during peace time.

Another tradition from Ibn `Abbas makes the position clear, saying, "The Holy Prophet went to Makkah from Madinah and there was no fear of anyone except of God but he reduced tour rak' ats of the Salat to two rak'ats ". That is the reason why the word "especially" has been added in brackets in the translation. "

134From the words. "And when you, O Prophet, are among the Muslims", Imam Abu Yusuf and Hasan bin Ziyad have concluded that the commandment about the "Salat of Fear" was meant to be in force only during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. But there are many instances in the Qur'an that a commandment has been addressed to the Holy Prophet and the same also holds good for his successors after him. Therefore, there is no reason why the commandment about the "Salat of Fear" be restricted to the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. Then there are instances that many of the great Companions offered the "Salat of Fear" after his death and no difference of opinion in this regard has been reported from any Companion.

135This Commandment about the "Salat of Fear" applies to that state when there is a threat of imminent attack from the enemy but no actual fighting is going on. As regards the state of actual fighting, according to the Hanfis the Salat will be postponed to a later time, and according to Imam Malik and Imam Thauri, if it is not possible to bow and to prostrate, it should be performed by symbolic gestures. According to Imam Shaf`i, one may even during the "Salat of Fear". remain engaged a little in the conflict, if need be.

We learn from authentic Traditions that the Holy Prophet postponed four consecutive Salats during the Battle of the Trench, and afterwards when he got respite, he performed these in the respective order although the Commandment about the "Salat of Fear" had been sent down before this.

136The form of the "Salat of Fear" mainly depends upon the conditions of war. As the Holy Prophet led it in various ways, according to the different conditions, the Muslim leader of the time has the option of adopting any of those ways, according as it suits a certain occasion.

One way is that one section of the army should offer the Salat with the leader and the other should remain engaged in fighting against the enemy. After the performance of one rak stand after bringing the prayer to an end formally that section should fall back to the fighting line and the second section should perform the second rak at with the Imam. Thus, the leader will perform two rak 'ats while the sections will perform one rak`at each.

The second way is that one section should perform one rak `at with the Imam and fall back, then the second section should offer one rak at with the Imam and tall back; then each section should come back, turn by turn, and complete the second (i. e. the missed) rak at individually. In this way each section will perform the first rak`at behind the Imam and the second individually.

The third way is that one section of the army should perform two rak`ats with the Imam and after salutation should fall back to the fighting line. Then the second section should join in the third rak at and complete the Prayer with the Imam. Thus, the Imam will perform four rak`ats and each section of the army two rak ats each. v The fourth way is that one section should perform one rak `at behind the lmam and when the Imam stands up for the second rak at the followers should complete the second rak`at by themselves and then join the ranks. As regards the Imam, he should prolong his second rak`at so that the other section tray join him and perform their first rak`at behind him and complete their second rak`at by themselves.

The first way has been related by Ibn `Abbas, Jabir bin `Abdullah and Mujahid, and the second by `Abdullah bin Mas`ud and the Hanafis give preference to this. The third way has been related by Hasan Basri from Abu Bakrah and the fourth by Sahl bin Abi Hathmah and accepted by Imam Shafi`i and lmam Malik with a little modification.

There are other ways of offering the "salat of Fear" details of which may be had froth any of the numerous books of the Islamic Law and Regulations.

137The Muslims have been reassured that Allah Himself will deal severely with the disbelievers who are opposing the Truth with their false machinations and will bring ignominy to them. The precautionary measures that are being enjoined are merely from the practical point of view to teach them that they should, in their turn, exert their utmost and leave the result to Allah, in Whose hands really lies victory or defeat.

138"These people": the disbelievers who were opposing the Islamic mission and doing their utmost to prevent the establishment of the Islamic system of life.

139That is, "It is really strange that the believers should not bear bravely as many hardships for the sake of Truth as the disbelievers were bearing for falsehood, though the latter have no other object than this world and its transitory benefits. Whereas the believers have the highest object of pleasing the Lord of the heavens and the earth and expect to get everlasting rewards from Him."

140In vv. 105-115, very important issues concerning an event that occurred at that time have been discussed.

There was in the Bani Zafar clan of the Ansar, a man known as Ta'mah or Bashir bin-Ubairiq. He stole the armor of another Ansari and hid it in the house of a Jew. When an investigation started into the theft, the owner of the armor placed the matter before the Holy Prophet and told him that he suspected Ta'mah of the theft. But the accused and his relatives and many other people of the Bani Zafar clan conspired and laid the guilt at the door of the Jew, who asserted that he was innocent of the thing. But Ta'mah's people went on pleading his case vehemently. They argued: "The statement of the Jew who is an enemy of the Truth and who disbelieves in Allah and His Messenger cannot be trusted; whereas we are Muslims, and, therefore, should be trusted." The Holy Prophet was naturally influenced by the seeming correctness of the argument and was about to acquit Ta'mah and give a warning to the plaintiff for bringing a false charge against a Muslim, and decide the case against the Jew, when this Revelation came and disclosed the reality of the matter.

It is true that even if the Holy Prophet had, as a judge, decided the case in the light of the evidence produced before him, he would not have incurred any blame, for judges have to give their decision according to the evidence that is presented before them and sometimes people do succeed in getting wrong judgments in their favor by misrepresentation. But the matter had another side: if the Holy Prophet had decided the case against the Jew at that time, when a bitter convict was raging between Islam and kufr, the enemies of Islam would have got a strong moral weapon against him, nay, against the Islamic Community and the Islamic Mission. They would have carried on a bitter propaganda against Islam, saying, "There is no justice among the Muslims; they practice prejudices and partisanship inspire of the fact that they preach against them as has been shown by this decision against the Jew". That is why, Allah directly intervened in the case to save them from this danger.

In this passage (vv. 105 - 115) on the one hand, those Muslims who tried to shield the guilty one of their own clan, have been strongly rebuked for their partisanship, and, on the other, the Muslims in general have been taught that they should not allow partisanship to stand in the way of justice. It is sheer dishonesty that one should plead the cause of one's own party man, even though he may he in the wrong, and oppose the man of the opposite party, even though he may he right.

141He who is dishonest to others is in reality dishonest to himself because he forces all his faculties of head and heart, which have been given to him as a trust, to help him in his dishonesty. Moreover, he suppresses his conscience, which Allah has given him to safeguard his morality, so as to disable it from functioning rightly and preventing him from being dishonest. Thus a man is dishonest to others only when at first he becomes unjust to himself.

142That is,'Even if they had succeeded in deceiving you by making a false report in regard to the case, and in getting your decision in their own favor, they would not have done any harm to you but to themselves, for even in that case they themselves would have been guilty in the sight of Allah, and not you". This is obvious because the real offender is the one who deceives the judge and gets a wrong judgment in his own favor, and not the judge who has to decide the case on the basis of the evidence presented before him. Moreover, such a one might delude himself that he has got "the right" on his side by his cunning devices, but in reality the "real right" remains the `right' in the record of Allah. (See also E. N. 192, Al-Baqarah).

143That is, "The dishonest 'Muslim' turned on the way of anti-Islam: so Allah also turned him on that way". It happened like this: when the facts of the case of theft were revealed by Allah and the innocent Jew was acquitted and Ta'amah was found guilty, this hypocrite left Madinah in anger and joined the enemies of the Holy Prophet at Makkah and began to oppose him openly.

144In continuation of the foregoing theme, it has been stated that the hypocrite, who had in his anger gone to the side of the mushriks, did not fully realize the consequences of his foolish action. For this purpose, evils of the way he adopted and the nature of the fellows he accompanied have been pointed out.

145Though none worships Satan by performing devotional ceremonies before him, the one who surrenders oneself entirely to him and follows him wherever he misleads, does act like a devotee of Satan. This also makes it plain that one who obeys any other blindly, in fact, worships him.

146That is, "I will mark off for myself a portion of their time, their labor and their efforts, their energies and their abilities, their wealth and their offspring, and will entice them by deception so that they will devote the major portion of these in my way."

147This alludes to one of the superstitious customs of the pagan Arabs. After a she-camel had given birth to five or ten young ones, they would slit her ears and dedicate her to their god and consider it unlawful to get any work from her. Likewise, if a camel had been a partner in the birth of ten young ones, his ears were also slit to mark that he had been dedicated to a god.

148This does not condemn the alterations that man makes in the creation of God for their right and

proper use, for in that case the whole of human civilization will stand condemned as a seduction of Satan. It is obvious that the civilization is nothing but the right and proper use of the things created by God. What the Qur'an describes as devilish alterations is to make wrong and improper use of things against human nature and against their natural functions. Hence, all those forms that are adopted as an escape from the designs of Nature are the results of the enticement of Satan e.g. sodomy, birth control, asceticism, etc. It is equally devilish that females should be made to give up their proper functions and to perform those duties which nature has assigned to males. Instances can be multiplied to show that the disciples of Satan consider the laws of the Creator of the Universe wrong and, therefore, are trying to "reform" them.

149The success of Satan depends entirely upon false promises and deceit In order to mislead individuals and communities, he presents very rosy pictures of his wrong ways to re-assure his victims. He tempts one by holding out the promise of pleasure and success. He allures some by giving the surety of national power and prosperity, while he deludes others by the prospect of the welfare of humanity. and deceives still others by telling them that his is the right way of arriving at the Truth. He also entices some by assuring them that there is no God and Hereafter and that life ends with death and others by giving them a guarantee that they would escape the consequences in the Hereafter, if there is Hereafter by the intercession of this or that saint.

150Since everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah, the best thing for man is to surrender his independence completely to Him, and to submit to Him unreservedly. He will come nearer to Nature, if he willingly becomes His servant and obeys Him without showing any kind of rebellion against him.

151That is, if man does not submit and surrender to Allah, he cannot escape His punishment, for Allah encircles him on all sides.

152It has not been stated here what the people were asking concerning women, but the answer given to it in verse 128 points out the nature of the question.

153This is not the answer to the question but a sort of reminder of the commandments that have already been enjoined in vv. i-14 of this Surah about orphan girls in particular and the orphans in general in order to stress the importance of this matter in any scheme of social reform. It is because of its importance in the solution of social problems that before giving a verdict concerning marriage problems which were raised, Allah has again laid emphasis on the rights of orphans.

154The allusion is to v.3 of this Surah: "If you are afraid of doing injustice to the orphans...."

155The words of the Text may also mean, "......whom you desire to marry." We learn from a Tradition of Hadrat 'A'ishah that the Text implies both the meanings. She says, "Those people who had the charge of the orphan girls who inherited wealth, employed different methods of doing injustice to them. If an orphan

girl was wealthy and also beautiful, they would desire to marry her so that they might exploit her wealth and enjoy her beauty without incurring any financial liability. If she was wealthy but ugly, they would neither themselves marry her no let anyone else marry her, so that she might not get a protector who might claim tor her right from the guardian."

156The allusion is to the Commandments concerning the rights of orphans, given in vv. 1-14 of the Surah.

157This verdict mentioned in v.127 as been given in this paragraph tw.l28-134). In order to understand it, one should grasp the nature of the problems to which this is the answer.

one liked without conceding any rights to them. But these verses limited the maximum number of wives to four and conceded the rights of dower to them and laid down the conditions of justice and equitable treatment for marrying more than one wife. As it appeared impossible to fulfill these conditions in certain cases, e.g.. if one's wife was barren or invalid or had lost attraction for him or was not fit for conjugal relationship, some problems arose when one married the second wife: was it a compulsory condition that one should show equal inclination towards both the wives or love them equally or show equality in the conjugal relations with them? Or, if this was not possible, did justice require that one should divorce the first wife before marrying the second? Or, if the first wife did not wish to part with her husband, would it be against the requirement of justice if she gave up some of her own rights to prevent her husband from divorcing her" This para answers such questions.

158That is, it is better for a woman to make a settlement with him by yielding some of her rights and live with the husband with whom she had lived a part of her life than to get a divorce and separate from him.

159Narrow-mindedness on the part of the wife is that even when she knows that she has lost those qualities that make a wife attractive to her husband, she should expect and demand the same kind of treatment that is shown only to a beloved wife. On the other hand, the husband shall be narrow-minded if he suppresses too much the rights of the wife who has lost attraction for him but who still wants to live with him, and reduces her rights to an unbearable point.

160Allah has again appealed to the husband as He generally does in such matters, 'to show generosity to the wife. He has urged him to be generous to her, for she has been his companion for years even though she might have lost charm for him. He should tear God and imagine how he would fare if God withheld His favors from him on account of some defects in him.

161Allah has made it clear that the husband cannot literally keep equality between two or more wives because they themselves cannot be equal in all respects. It is too much to demand from a husband that he should mete out equal treatment to a beautiful wife and to an ugly wife, to a young wife and to an old

wife, to a healthy wife and to an invalid wife and to a good natured wife and to an ill-natured wife. These and like things naturally make a husband more inclined towards one wife than towards the other. In such cases, the Islamic Law does not demand equal treatment between them in affection and love. What it does demand is that a wife should not be so neglected as to be practically reduced to the position of the woman who has no husband at all. If the husband does not divorce her for any reason or at her own request, she should at least be treated as a wife. It is true that under such circumstances the husband is naturally more inclined towards a favorite wife, but he should not, so to say, keep the other in such a state of suspense as if she were not his wife.

From this verse some people wrongly conclude that though the Qur'an allows more than one wife, it practically cancels this permission by asserting, ".:....it is not possible for you to be perfectly equitable in your treatment with all your wives...." They forget that this is only a part of the whole instruction and the Qur'an does not stop at this but adds, "....do not lean towards one wife...." As this Commandment takes into consideration the existence of more than one wife allowed by the Qur'an, it leaves no loophole of escape for the followers of Christian Europe from the fact that Islam does allow polygamy under certain conditions.

162As Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate, He will forgive any of the shortcomings that are unavoidable because of natural factors, provided that one is not guilty of deliberate injustice, and tries his best to be just as far as it is humanly possible

163In order to urge the Muslims to observe strictly the Commandments concerning justice to women and orphans, Allah has, as usual, in the conclusion (Ivv. 130-134) given a brief but effective address by way of admonition, and has impressed upon the Believers the following things:

(1) You should never be under the delusion that you can make or mar the fate of any one, and that if you withdraw or withhold your help and support from anyone, that person will become utterly helpless. As a matter of fact, your own fate and the fate of those whom you support, is entirely in the hands of Allah and you alone are not the only means by which He supports His servants or maid servants. The resources of the Owner of the earth and the heavens are vast and limitless and He is also All-Wise and has full power to adopt means for helping anyone He wills.

(2) Allah has enjoined you, as He always enjoined the communities of the former Prophets, to conduct your affairs with fear of God in your hearts. In this lies your own good and not of God. If you do not carry out these instructions, you can do no harm to Allah but you yourselves will go the way of the former disobedient communities. The Sovereign of the Universe has never stood in need of the people. If you will not behave properly, He will remove you from leadership and appoint another community in your place. And your removal will not in the least diminish anything from the greatness of His Kingdom.

(3) Allah has in His possession all the benefits and rewards of this world and of the Next World, benefits

which are temporary and transitory or permanent and ever-lasting. It is for you to make your choice from among these according to your own capacity and courage. If you are enamored of the temporary good things of this world and are even prepared to sacrifice the permanent blessings of the Hereafter, Allah will bestow upon you the same here and now, but in that case, you will have no portion in the permanent blessings of the Hereafter. You should not forget that owing to your own lack of capability and lack of courage, you have chosen to acquire only a drop out of the ocean of the blessings of God. Therefore it is better for you to adopt that way of obedience and submission which may enable you to acquire the vast benefits of this world and of the Hereafter.

The concluding words of this piece of admonition, "He hears everything and sees everything", have a very deep significance. As Allah is neither deaf nor blind, He makes a fine distinction between the good and the bad in the distribution of His blessings. He is fully aware of what is happening in the universe over which He is ruling and of the capabilities, efforts and intentions of everyone. Therefore, one who is disobedient to Him, should not expect those blessings which He has reserved for those who are obedient to Him.

164The words, " .....be you the standard-bearers of justice", are very significant. They imply, "You not only have to do justice but have also to bear the standard of justice in order to eradicate injustice and establish right and justice in its place. As Believers, you have to gird up your loins to support justice, whenever your support is needed."

165That is, "The sole aim of your testimony should be to please Allah, without any tinge of partiality, self-interest, fear or favor in it."

166To ask believers to believe might at first seem strange. The fact is, however, that belief as used here has two meanings. First, belief denotes that a man has preferred to acknowledge the soundness of true guidance, to distance himself from the fold of those who disbelieve, and to join the camp of the believers. Second, belief denotes faith, a man's believing in the truth with all his heart, with full earnestness and sincerity. It denotes man's sincere determination to mold his way of thinking, his taste and temperament, his likes and dislikes, his conduct and character, his friendship and enmity, and the direction of his efforts and striving, in conformity with the creed which he has resolved to embrace. This verse is addressed to all those who are 'believers' in the first sense of the term, and they are asked to change themselves into true believers, i.e. believers in the second sense.

167Here kufr implies two things:

(1) a person may reject Islam outright;

(2) one may pay lip service to Islam but may not (sincerely) believe in it or may show one's conduct that

one does not, in fact, believe in Islam, in spite of one's profession.

Here kufr implies both these things, and the verse warns that neither kind of kufr can go side by side with the fundamental articles of Islamic Faith and will mislead the one who adopts it, away from the Truth into the paths of deviation.

168These are the people who do not consider Faith a serious matter but play with it like a toy to gratify their whims and lusts. They adopt Islam, if and when they are swayed to it by some fanciful notion, and become disbelievers, if another notion moves them away to the opposite side. Or, they become Muslims when their interests demand it and become disbelievers, without the least hesitation, if their interests lie in disbelief. Obviously, for such people there is neither forgiveness nor guidance from Allah. They do not stop at their own disbelief but go much further in it. They strive to turn other Muslims also away from Islam, conspire against it and make open designs to harm it so as to raise the standard of kufr high up and to pull down the standard of Islam. As this is an addition to the sin of one's personal disbelief, it deserves much severe punishment than the offense of the one who disbelieves in Islam but is not antagonistic to it.

169The Arabic word 'izzat is more comprehensive than the English word honor, "the regard in which one is held by one's followers". Izzat refers to such a high regard and secure position as is inviolable.

170The Command to the Believers to quit the company of the disbelievers, as soon as they get engaged in ridiculing Islam, is contained in v. 68 of Al-An'am which was revealed earlier than An-Nisa'. If a Believer sits in the company of disbelievers and coolly listens to the ridicule of Divine Revelations he becomes a partner in that blasphemy, and there remains little difference between him and the disbelievers.

171The hypocrites of every age have always enjoyed all the benefits conferred by Islam, by professing it with their tongue, and nominally joining the Muslim Community. At the same time they enjoy all the benefits they can derive from the disbelievers, by mixing with them and assuring them, "We are not bigoted Muslims though we are nominally connected with them. We are akin to you in culture, in thoughts and in the way of life and our interests and loyalties are the same as yours. Therefore, you should rest assured that we will side with you in the conflict between Islam and kufr."

172The offering of the Salat in congregation has been held out as a test of one's being a sincere Believer or a hypocrite because during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet one could not be considered a member of the Islamic Community unless one offered the Salat regularly and punctually. Just as every association or organization considers the absence of a member without genuine excuse from its meetings a sign of his lack of interest, and expels him from it for continuous absence, so if a Muslim absented himself from the Salat in congregation, it was considered a clear sign of his lack of interest in Islam. And if he continuously absented himself from it, this was taken as a proof of his desertion from Islam. That is why even the

confirmed hypocrites of that time had to join the Salat in congregation five times a day; otherwise they could not be counted as members of the Islamic Community. But what distinguished them from the true Believers was that the true Believers went to the mosques with great enthusiasm before time and stayed there even after the Prayer was over which was a clear proof of their genuine interest in it. On the other hand, the very call to the Prayer sounded like a death knell to a hypocrite. He would rise up reluctantly to join the congregation, but his whole demeanor clearly showed that he was offering his Salat unwillingly. Then after the Prayer he would leave the mosque in haste as if he had been released from prison. Thus, all his movements showed that he had no interest in the remembrance of Allah.

173It declares that no human being has the power to guide to the right way the one who himself does not intend to get guidance from the Book of Allah and the excellent pattern of His Messenger; whom Allah turns to the wrong way to which he himself is inclined and shuts all the doors of guidance against him because of his own quest for deviation. And this happens in accordance with the Divine Law that man gets what he seeks and strives for. For instance, if one seeks to make one's provisions by lawful means and strives for the same, God provides lawful means for him and shuts unlawful doors against him, in proportion to the intensity of the sincerity of his intention. On the contrary, if one has the intention of making one's provisions by unlawful means and strives for the same, Allah provides him with the same through unlawful means. Allah alone has the power to guide any individual on any way whatsoever, and no one can take any course, right or wrong, without His permission and without His help, but He allows and helps every one to proceed on the way he chooses for himself. If one loves Allah and is a seeker after Truth and sincerely strives to follow His way, He allows him and helps him to think and act on the right lines leading to the right way and provides means for him to proceed on the same way. But if one chooses to follow wrong ways and strives to proceed on wrong ways, Allah shuts the way of guidance against him and opens before him evil ways which he chooses for himself. No one has the power to prevent such a one from evil thoughts and evil deeds and from spending his energies in evil ways. It is thus obvious that none can guide to the right way the wretched one who deliberately loses it and whom Allah leads astray in consequence of his intentional deviation.

174That person, who dedicates his Faith to Allah, devotes his whole life earnestly and faithfully for Him and reserves all his loyalties, interests, and affections for Him alone. In short, his attachment to Allah becomes so intense that he is ready to sacrifice anything for Him.

175That is, "If you show your sincere gratitude to Allah and do not adopt an attitude of ingratitude and treachery towards Him in regard to the benefits and blessings you have received from Him, there is no reason why He should punish you for nothing."

The right attitude of gratitude is that one should sincerely appreciate the kindness of the benefactor, acknowledge it with his tongue and show his gratitude by his conduct. This implies three things: First, the grateful person should attribute the kindness to the real benefactor and should not associate anyone else with him in gratitude and acknowledgment. Second, he should be full of the feelings of love and loyalty for

his benefactor and should not cherish any such feelings for the opponents of the benefactor. Third, he should be obedient to his benefactor, and should not in any way use or employ the benefits conferred on him against the will of the benefactor.

176The word shakir, when applied to Allah, means that He appreciates the worth of the services of His servant; and when applied to the servant, it means that he expresses his gratitude to his Lord for His blessings. Allah appreciates fully the quantity and the quality of the services that are rendered by His servants for His cause and deprives none of them of the due rewards: nay, He rewards their services most generously and gives much more than they deserve. Of course, His treatment of His servants is quite different from their own treatment of their fellow-men. They under-estimate the worth of the services rendered by a fellow- man and take him to task severely for an omission. Allah in His bounty rewards much more generously than His servant deserves for any service rendered by him in His cause, but is very lenient and forgiving for any omission or neglect of duty shown by His servants.

177The moral instructions contained in this verse are of the highest standard. The Muslims have been taught to practice virtue or at least to show forbearance even in the face of . revocation. At the time of its revelation, the hypocrites, the Jews and the idolaters were all engaged in opposing Islam by all possible means and were maltreating its followers in every conceivable way. Therefore it was but natural that the Muslims should be tilled with feelings of anger and hatred. When Allah noticed the storm of emotion rising in their hearts, he warned them that He did not like that they give vent to their feelings, though they were wronged and therefore justified, if in retaliation they gave expression to their bitter feelings. They were taught that they, as Muslims, were expected to go on doing good openly and secretly or at least refrain from doing evil for evil. They were instructed, "You should try to mold your character after that of your Allah, Who is so Forbearing that He does not withhold His provisions even from the most wicked culprits and shows forbearance to the most sinful offenders. You should, therefore, have a big heart and show forbearance even in the most critical and provocative situations."

178That is, there is absolutely no doubt that all those people are equally disbelievers, who deny Allah all His Messengers: who acknowledge Allah but deny His Messengers: who accept some of the Messengers and reject others: each and everyone of such people is a confirmed disbeliever.

179Full assurance has been given to those who acknowledge Allah as their sole Sovereign and Deity, and submit to and follow all His Messengers, that they deserve to be rewarded according to the quality of their good deeds. In contrast to them, there is ignominious punishment for those who do not acknowledge Allah as the sole Sovereign and Sustainer, or for those who adopted the rebellious way by accepting some of His representatives and rejecting others. Allah does not accept any of the apparently good deeds of such people because it has no legal status in His sight.

180As Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate, He will be very lenient in judging the deeds of those who

believe in Him and His Messengers and will not be hard on them.

181This was one of the strange demands of the Jews of Madinah. They said to the Holy Prophet, "We will not accept you as a Prophet unless you cause a written Book to come down to us from heaven before our very eyes or cause a written message to come down to each one of us to this effect: Muhammad (peace be upon him) is Our Messenger; so believe in him'."

182A mere mention of this incident has been made in the short list of the crimes of the Israelites to which reference has been made here to show how impertinent they had become. This incident has already been mentioned in v. 55 of Al-Baqarah (For details, please see E.N. 17, Al-Baqarah).

183"Clear signs": the signs which the children of Israel had seen, one after the other, since the time of the Prophet Moses appointment as a Messenger. They had also witnessed the drowning of Pharaoh and his army and many other signs during their exodus froth Egypt. Therefore, they knew full well that it was Allah, Lord of the Universe, and not a calf, Who had rescued them froth the tyranny of a powerful ruler like Pharaoh. Yet they were so enamored of false gods that they forsook God, their real Benefactor, and made the calf of gold the object of their worship.

184"Clear Commandment": the Commandments inscribed on the tablets which were given to the Prophet Moses. (See also Al-Baqarah 11:63 and Al-A'raf V11:171).

The "Covenant" was the pledge taken from the chiefs of Israel at the foot of Mount Tur. This has already been mentioned in Al-Baqarah,II: 63 and is also referred to in AI-A' raf VII:171.

185Please refer to vv. 58-89 and E.N. 75 of Al-Baqarah.

186Please see v. 65 and E.N.'s 82 and 83 of Al-Baqarah.

187Reference has already been made to such a saying of the Jews in Al Baqarah II:88. Just as all the worshipers of falsehood are proud of their obduracy against the truth, so were the Jews proud of their beliefs, prejudices, rituals and customs that they had inherited from their forefathers and could not be persuaded to give them up. That is why they always turned a deaf ear to the Message of the Prophets of Allah with the answer: "We are determined to reject your invitation, even though you bring strong arguments in support thereof. We will adhere strongly and faithfully to what we believe and practice." (Also see E.N. 94 of Al-Baqarah).

188This is a parenthetical statement.

189This is in continuation of the theme under discussion.

190The calumny against Mary concerning the birth of Jesus has been declared here as "disbelief" because it was not directed against the person of innocent Mary or her son but against Jesus Christ, the Messenger of God. The Jews had absolutely no ground for suspicion about his miraculous birth without father, because God had caused the whole Community to stand as witness to the miracle. When Virgin Mary, who belonged to the noble and well-known religious family of the Israelites, came home with the new-born child, a large crowd gathered there and demanded an explanation from her. But she simply pointed to the child. The crowd could not understand how a child in the cradle could speak, but to their utter astonishment, the child began to speak clearly and fluently and addressing the crowd, he declared, "I am Allah's servant: Allah has given me the Book and made me a Prophet." (Maryam, XIX : 30) Thus Allah cut at the very root of the slander about his birth. That is why none ever accused Mary of fornication nor taunted Jesus with being an illegitimate son until he stained his maturity. But when at the age of thirty, he started his mission to invite the people to the way of God and rebuked the Jews for their evil deeds and exposed the hypocrisies of their scholars and jurists and warned the whole community of the consequences of moral degradation, they turned against him. Instead of accepting his message and making sacrifices for the cause of God, and reforming their evil ways, these impudent and unscrupulous criminals resorted to all sorts of dirty tricks and devilish designs to suppress the voice of Truth. It was then that they made that monstrous calumny which they had never uttered before during the previous thirty years of his life, because they knew it for certain that Mary and her son were absolutely free from this taint. Thus their calumny, in fact, was not due to any real suspicion, which they might be harboring in their hearts, but it was a pure calumny, which they deliberately invented for opposing the Truth. That is why Allah declared it to be disbelief instead of wickedness and falsehood, for their real aim by this accusation was to hinder the people from the Way of God and not merely to slander an innocent lady.

191The fact that they bragged of slaying Jesus, knowing him to be a Messenger of God, shows how bold they had become in their crimes. We have shown in the previous Note that the miracle of his speech in the cradle had let no doubt whatsoever to remain in the minds of the Jews about his Prophethood. Then the clear signs that they witnessed from him (III : 49) were a conclusive proof that he was really a Prophet of God. Therefore their wicked behavior towards him was not the result of any misunderstanding about his Prophethood, but was an intentional crime against the one who had been appointed by Allah as Messenger.

Though it appears very strange that a community should slay a person whom they know to be and acknowledge a Prophet of Allah, yet it is so, for the ways of wicked communities are strange. They cannot and do not tolerate a person who criticizes them for their evil ways and prohibits unlawful things. Such people, even though they be the Prophets of Allah, have always been persecuted, imprisoned and slain by their own wicked people.

As a proof thereof, the following is quoted from the Talmud: "When the city (Jerusalem) had been captured, Nebuchadnezzar marched with the princes and officers of the Temple..... On one of the walls

he found the mark of an arrow's head as though somebody had been killed or hit nearby, and he asked who was killed there.

"Zachariah, the son of Yehoyadah, the high priest", answered the people. "He rebuked us incessantly on account of our transgressions and we were tired of his words and put him to death."

Even according to the Bible, when the Prophet Jeremiah rebuked the Jews on account of their transgressions, they accused him of being in conspiracy with the Chaldeans and traitor against his people and sent him to prison. Likewise had the Jews treated John the Baptist a couple of years before the crucifixion of the Prophet Jesus. They counted John as a Prophet and acknowledged him as one of the most righteous men of their community, but when he criticized Herod (the ruler of Judea) for his evil ways, he was not tolerated. He was first sent to prison, then beheaded on the demand of Herod's beloved, the dancing girl.

It is, therefore, obvious from their record that when they presumed that they had crucified Jesus Christ, they bragged: "We have slain a Messenger of Allah. "

192This is another parenthesis.

193This verse is explicit on the point that the Prophet Jesus Christ was rescued from crucifixion and that the Christians and the Jews are both wrong in believing that he died on the cross. A comparative study of the Qur'an and the Bible shows that most probably it was Jesus himself who stood his trial in the court of Pilate, who sentenced him to death, but they could not kill or crucify him, for Allah raised him to Himself.

This is what happened, Pilate knew fully well that Christ was innocent and had been brought in his court out of jealousy. So he asked the crowd whether Jesus Christ should be released on the occasion of the Festival or Barabbas, a notorious robber. But the high priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask for the release of Barabbas and for the crucifixion of Jesus. After this, God, Who can do any and everything He wills, raised Jesus to Himself and rescued him from crucifixion and the one who was crucified afterwards was somehow or other taken for Chris. Nevertheless, his miraculous escape does not lessen the wicked crime of the Jews, because they knew it well that the one, whom they crowned with a crown of thorns, and on whose face they spat and whom they crucified with disgrace was Christ, the son of Mary. As regards the matter how "it was made doubtful for them" that they had crucified Jesus, we have no means of ascertaining. Therefore it is not right to base on mere guess-work and rumors an answer to the question how the Jews were made to believe that they had crucified him, whereas in fact, Jesus, the son of Mary, had escaped from them.

194"Those who have differed": the Christians. They do not agree in their versions of crucifixion. The very fact that they offer so many different accounts of the matter is by itself a proof that they possess no definite knowledge of it and are, therefore, in doubt about it. One version is that the person who was

crucified was not Jesus but someone who bore his likeness, whom the Jews and the Romans had disgracefully put on the cross, while Jesus was standing nearby and laughing at their folly. Another version is that the one who was nailed to the cross was Jesus, but he did not die on the cross and was alive when he was taken down from it. Some others say that he died on the cross but came to life afterwards and met his disciples more than ten times and talked to them. Still others say that death due to crucifixion occurred on the physical body of Jesus and he was buried but the Divine Spirit within him was raised. There are still others who say that after his death Jesus came to life with his body and was raised with his body. Obviously, if the Christians had any knowledge of the truth, they would not have given so many different versions of it.

195Here Allah has told the fact of the matter. The Qur'an explicitly states that the Jews did not succeed in putting Jesus to death and that Allah raised him to Himself, but it is silent about the nature and details of the matter and does neither say explicitly whether Allah raised him body and soul together from the earth to some place in heaven, nor that he died like other mortals and only his soul was raised to heaven. Therefore, on the basis of the Qur'an neither aspect can be definitely denied or affirmed. But a study of the style clearly shows that whatever be the nature of being raised in any case Allah certainly treated the Prophet Jesus in an extraordinary way. The following considerations lead to the conclusion that the incident was extraordinary:

First, the belief in the ascension of the Prophet Jesus, body and soul together, was already prevalent among the Christians, and was one of the causes which misled a large section of them to believe in his divinity. But, in spite of it, the Qur'an not only has not clearly refuted it but has used the same word "ascension" for the incident that the Christians use for it. Had it not been an extraordinary incident factually the Qur'an would not have used such ambiguous words as help support a doctrine of the divinity of Jesus.

Second, had Allah meant by the words used in verse 158 that "Allah caused his death", or that "Allah raised him in rank", more explicit words would have been used. In the first case, more appropriate words would be: "No doubt they did not slay him nor crucified him but Allah rescued him alive from them and then gave him natural death", and in the second: "The Jews intended to dishonor him by crucifixion, but Allah raised him very high in rank", as have been used in tire case of the Prophet Idris: "And We raised him to a high position". (Maryam, XlX : 57).

Third, if the incident related here meant merely the natural death of Christ, the words, "And Allah is All-Powerful and All-Wise", after it would be meaningless. These words can be appropriately used only in connection with some extraordinary manifestation of the power and wisdom of Allah.

The only argument that can be cited in support of the interpretation of verse 158 that Jesus died a natural death is the use of the word mutawaffika in verse 55 of A1-`Imran, in connection with the incident. But as we have explained in the corresponding E.N. 51, the word is not explicit in the meaning of natural death

but can be applied both to take the soul and to take the body and soul together. As there is scope for both the interpretations in this word, its use cannot refute the above mentioned arguments against the meaning: "Allah caused his death". Those who insist on this interpretation argue that there is no other instance in which tawaffa might have been used for the seizure of both body and soul together. This is meaningless, for this is the only incident of its kind in the whole human history. The only thing to be considered is whether this word may lexically be used in this sense or not. If it can be used, we have to face the question: Why does the Qur'an not use a direct word for death instead of a word which is liable to support the doctrine of Ascension, which its turn, has given rise to the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus'? The use of this word is a clear proof that there was something extraordinary about the incident. Above all, the doctrine of Ascension is further strengthened by the Traditions according to which the Prophet Jesus, son of Mary, will come again to the earth before the Resurrection and fight the Dajjal. (These Traditions have been cited in the Appendix to the commentary of Surah Al Ahzab). These categorically prove the second coming of Jesus. Therefore, it would be snore rational to believe that he is living somewhere in the universe before this second coming than that he lies dead and buried somewhere before his advent.

196This has been interpreted in two ways and both are likely. (Here by the people of the Book are meant the Jews and may also be the Christians). According to the first interpretation, as adopted in the Translation, it means: "All the people of the Book, alive at the time of the natural death of Christ, will have believed in him, that is, in his Prophethood." The second interpretation of "There shall be none among the people of the Book but will believe in him before his death" is that all the people of the Book before their death do realize and believe that Christ is really a Messenger of God, though that belief will be of no avail at the time. Both these interpretations have been put forward by several Companions and their followers and renowned commentators, but its real meaning is only known to Allah.

197That is, "In the court of God, Christ will give testimony against the Jews and the Christians that they rejected, neglected and distorted the Message brought by him." Some details of this testimony are given in vv. 116-117 of Al Ma'idah.

198The main theme that was broken by the parenthesis, which ends here, has been resumed

199It is an irony that the Jews, who possessed a Divine Book and the heritage of the Prophets, should not only have themselves discarded the way of God but also frequently stood in the way of God. It is a fact that they have always been opposing and placing obstacles in the way of those movements that have ever been started for the promulgation of the Truth and have been starting or helping start movements against the way of God. Their latest crime in this connection is Communism which has for the first time in history based a system of life and a system of government on the deliberate and explicit denial of God in open opposition to His Law for the eradication God-worship as its declared aims. The author of another perverted doctrine of the modern age, Freudianism, which has helped mislead the people from the way of Allah, is also a Jew.

200Here is the Biblical law that clearly prohibits interest: "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury."

"If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that time the sun goeth down:

For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear: for I am gracious." (Exodus 22 : 25-27).

Besides this, interest has also been prohibited at several other places in the Torah, but in spite of these prohibitive decrees, the Jews, who profess to believe in the same Torah, are the biggest usurers in the world and have become proverbially notorious for their narrow-mindedness and hard-heartedness.

201Probably this refers to the same thing that occurs in Al-An`am, V 1:146, that is, all animals with claws, and the fat of sheep and oxen were forbidden to the Jews. Besides this, possibly it may also refer to the restrictions and hardships which are contained in the law books composed by their own Jurists. Indeed, it is a great punishment that the bounds of life should be narrowed for any community. (For details please see E.N. 122, Al-An`am).

202History bears witness to the exemplary punishment that Allah has prepared for those Jews who have discarded the Divine Faith and given up obedience to Allah and adopted the attitude of disbelief and rebellion. For the last two thousand years, they have never possessed a place where they could live with honor. They have been scattered all over the world and are treated like foreigners and disgracefully, cruelly and oppressively in one country or the other, and there is no place in the world, where they are sincerely respected, in spite of their great wealth. Above all, this community has remained a living object lesson for the other nations, for it has been kept in existence in spite of its degradation, whereas other nations are exterminated when they become worthless. Thus Allah is causing them to taste in this very world a bit of the torment of Hell where the evil-doers "will neither be in a state of death nor in a state of life." This is because they have been showing the audacity of rebelling against Allah while they were at the same time carrying the Book of Allah with them. As regards punishment in the Hereafter, it may safely be predicted that it shall be much more painful than this. In order to remove any misunderstanding that might arise regarding the existence of the State of Israel, it will be worthwhile to refer to v. 112 of Al-`Imran, and the corresponding E.N.90.

203The reference is to those learned Jews who are fully acquainted with the real nature of the Divine Books, who are just, fair and free from every kind of prejudice, obduracy and self-worship, who do not blindly follow their fore-fathers but readily accept the Truth that they learn from the revealed Books. Therefore they are able to recognize easily that the teachings of the Qur'an are the same as were taught by the former Prophets, and then sincerely believe in both.

204This is to emphasize the fact that the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) has not come with a new thing and that he does not claim to present something for the first time, but he has, in fact, received Guidance from the same source of knowledge from which all the Prophets before him had received, and that he too is presenting the same Truth and Reality that has always been presented by the Prophets, who were raised from different corners of the Earth.

The literal meaning of wahi is: (1) to give hint of, (2) to communicate to the mind, (3) to convey by covert suggestion, and (4) to send a message.

205Only a part of the Book of Psalms in the existing Bible consists of the Psalms of the Prophet David, and they bear his name. Its remaining constituent parts are the psalms of other people, and have been attributed to their authors. It should also be noted that the study of the real Zabur, the Psalms of David, shows that it is a Revelation of God. Likewise, additions have been made in the Book of the Proverbs of Solomon and the last two chapters were obviously added afterwards. But, in spite of this, the major portion of the Proverbs contains gems of Truth and Wisdom. The same is true of the Book of Job. A study of this reveals that, though it contains gems of wisdom, it is wrong to attribute the whole of it to the Prophet Job. Whereas the Qur'an and the introductory chapters of this very Book bear witness to the great fortitude shown by the Prophet Job, its subsequent chapters show that he was an embodiment of grievance against God, and that, in vain, did his companions try their best to convince him that God was not unjust.

Besides these, the major portions of the seventeen Books of the Israelite Prophets in the Old Testament are evidently genuine Revelations; especially the Books of Joshua, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos and some others contain many such passages that show the grandeur of Divine Revelation and move one to ecstasy. Their high moral teachings, their campaign against idolatry and their sound arguments prove the Oneness of God, and their strong criticism of the degeneration of Israel clearly shows that these and the sermons of Jesus Christ in the New Testament and the Qur'an came from one and the same source.

206The way Revelation was communicated to the Prophet Moses was different from that of the other Prophets. They heard either a voice or a Message from an angel, but the Prophet Moses had this privilege that Allah Himself had a direct talk with him as in a dialogue, e.g., the dialogue cited in Ta Ha, XX :11-48 in the Qur'an. This privilege has also been mentioned in the Bible: "......And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." (Exodus 33:11).

207That is, all the Prophets had one and the same mission. They gave good news to those who believed in the Divine Message and mended their ways in accordance with it and warning to those who adopted wrong ways of thought and action that they would meet with serious sequences in the end.

208The Prophets were sent with the sole object that they should set forth before mankind the Right Way,

both theoretically and practically, so that on the Day of Judgment no evil-doer should be in a position to offer the excuse that he was ignorant of the Truth. That is why Allah appointed Messengers in different parts of the world and sent down Books. These Messengers imparted the knowledge of the truth to a large number of people and left behind them Books of which one or the other has always existed for the guidance of mankind. Now if one goes astray in spite of this arrangement, one cannot throw the blame on Allah and His Messengers. He himself is responsible for this because he did not accept the Truth when it came to him, or the responsibility is of those who had the knowledge of it but did not impart it to others who had gone astray.

209That is, "You will harm none but yourselves by your disbelief and disobedience, for you can do no harm to the Master of the heavens and the earth."

210That is, "Your Allah is fully aware of everything: you cannot do mischief with impunity in His Kingdom; He is also Wise: He knows how to deal with those who disobey His Commands."

211Here "The people of the Book" refers to the Christians who went beyond the bounds in their religion and regarded Jesus as God in their exaggerated reverence and love of him. This was a contrast to the Jews (the other people of the Book) who had gone to the other extreme in their denial of an enmity against Jesus.

212The Prophet Jesus has specially been called God's "Command" (Kalimah) because he was born without the usual agency of a father. God sent a Command that Mary should become pregnant without the semen of a man and she conceived. Although in the very beginning, the Christians were told that Christ had been born without a father by the Command of God, yet they were so misled by the Alexandrian Philosophy of Philo that they first mistook Kalimah (Command) for the "Divine Word"; then changed the "Divine Word" into the "Logos"; then they built on the Logos Doctrine which misguided them to the false belief in the divine nature of Jesus Christ. That is how they came to believe that God had revealed Himself or His eternal attribute of speech in the person of Jesus. (See John I : 1, 14).

213Here Jesus has been called "A spirit from God" and in Al-Baqarah, 11 : 253, it is stated that God supported him (Jesus) with the "Holy Spirit". In both cases, it means that Allah had bestowed upon the Prophet Jesus a Holy Spirit that .was imbued with high moral values and was a perfection of truth and righteousness without any tinge of evil. The Christians were taught this very thing, but they exaggerated the notion: they took "a spirit from God" for "the Spirit of God" and perverted the meaning of the Holy Ghost into "the Spirit of God Himself" which had entered into Jesus Christ. Thus, a third god, "the Holy Ghost", was created along with God and Christ. This was their second transgression which led the Christians astray.

The perversion of "a spirit from God" into "the Spirit of God" (Holy Ghost) has been made in spite of the

fact that according to the Gospel of Matthew, "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him (Joseph) in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost," and not the Holy Ghost (1 : 20).

214That is, "As Jesus is only a spirit from God and has no part of Godhead in him, do not go beyond the bounds but believe in Allah as One God and accept all His Messengers including the Messiah." This was what the Prophet Jesus himself really taught and this is the truth which a true Christian should believe.

215The Christians have been rebuked for their wrong belief in the doctrine of the Trinity and advised to refrain from transgression. Strange though it may appear, the fact is that the Christians believe both in the Oneness of God and in the Trinity at one and the same time; for no Christian can deny that according to the clear sayings of Jesus in the Gospels, God is One Being and there is no other god than He. They cannot but admit that Unity of God is the real basis of religion. But the introduction of the doctrine of the Logos at an early stage of Christianity misled them into believing in the Godhead of Christ in union with God and the Holy Ghost. Since then it has always remained an enigma for them to reconcile these two contradictory doctrines and for the last eighteen hundred years or so the Christian scholars have been vainly engaged in solving this self-created baffling puzzle. Not only this, many Christian denominations have been founded upon different interpretations of this doctrine and it has given rise to many religious disputes in which one denomination accuses the other of blasphemy. In short, their scholars and interpreters have been spending all their efforts and energies in solving this enigma which was neither created by God nor by Christ. It is also obvious that there is no solution to it, because no one can prove that three persons share Godhead and also that God is One Being and has no partners in His Godhead. As this enigma is the result of their own transgression beyond the Divine limits, it can only be solved if they refrain from going beyond the limits and give up the belief of the Godhead of the Messiah and of the Holy Ghost, and acknowledge Allah as the sole object of worship, adoration and devotion and believe in the Messiah as a Messenger of God and not as a partner in the Godhead of Allah.

216This refutes the fourth transgression of the Christians who believed that Christ was the Son of God. In this belief they had gone beyond the limits of their own religion. According to the first three Books of The New Testament (even if the traditions therein be accepted as authentic), the Prophet Jesus merely likened the relationship between Man and Allah to the relationship between father and son, and used the word father for God metaphorically, just as it was in vogue among the Israelites. There are many instances of this in the Old Testament the Prophet Jesus also used the word "father" in the sense it was used by his people. He called God not only his father but the father of all human beings. But, the Christians again went beyond the limits and declared Jesus to be the only Son of God. They based this strange belief on the assumption that Messiah was the manifestation of God and the incarnation of His Word and His Holy Ghost. They also transgressed in believing that God had sent His only Son to the earth so that he might take the burden of the sins of mankind on his own shoulders and go to his crucifixion and atone for the sins of Man with his own blood. Obviously, this belief is the creation of their own imagination, for there is no saying of Christ to support this.

Here, Allah has not refuted the doctrine of the "Atonement" because it is not a fundamental article of the Christian religion, but is a mere bye-product of (a) the belief that Christ is the Son of God and (b) a philosophical and mystical explanation of the objection that if Christ was the Son of God, why did he die a cursed death of crucifixion? It is thus obvious that this doctrine is refuted automatically, if it is shown that Christ was not the Son of God and that he did not die on the cross.

217As all things in the heavens and the earth belong to Allah, none of them has any such relation with Him as of father and son, but only that of Master and slave.

218Allah suffices for the management of His Kingdom and does not stand in need of the help of a son for this purpose.

219Verse 176 was sent down long after the revelation of this Surah; so much so that according to some traditions this was the last verse of the Qur'an. Anyhow, according to most authentic traditions, it was revealed in A.H. 9 when An-Nisa' was already being recited as a complete Surah. That is why this verse was not included in the verses about inheritance contained in the first portion of the Surah, but was added to it as an appendix.

220There is a difference of opinion about the meaning of kalalah. According to some scholars, kalalah is the person who dies childless and whose father and grandfather also are dead. But according to others, kalalah is one who dies childless irrespective of whether his father and grandfather are alive or dead. Hadrat `Umar also could not come to any definite decision about its meaning till the last. The majority of the jurists, however, have accepted the opinion of Hadrat Abu Bakr that kalalah is the person who dies childless and whose father and grandfather had died before his death. This opinion is also supported by the Qur'an which awards half of the inheritance of the kalalah to the sister who cannot be entitled to any share at all if the father is alive.

221There is a consensus of opinion that this refers to the inheritance of sisters and brothers who have the relation of common parents or only common father with the deceased. Once Hadrat Abu Bakr gave this- explanation and none of the Companions differed from it.

222The brother will inherit the whole inheritance in case there is no other heir to it. For instance, if the husband of the childless woman is alive her brother will be entitled to the whole of the remaining inheritance after the payment of the share of the husband.

223The same also applies to the case of more than two sisters.

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5. Surah Al Maidah (The Table Spread)

Name

This Sarah takes its' name from verse 112 in which the word *mai'dah* occurs. Like the names of many other surahs, this name has no special relation to the subject of the Surah but has been used merely as a symbol to distinguish it from other surahs.

Period of Revelation

The theme of this Surah indicates, and traditions support it, that it was revealed after the treaty of Hudaibiyah at the end of 6 A. H. or in the beginning of 7 A. H. That is why it deals with those problems that arose from this treaty.

The Holy Prophet with 1400 Muslims went to Makkah in Zil-Qaadah 6 A.H. to perform `*Umrah*, but the Quraish spurred by their enmity, prevented him from its performance, though it was utterly against all the ancient religious traditions of Arabia. After a good deal of hard and harsh negotiations, a treaty was concluded at Hudaibiyah according to which it was agreed that he could perform `*Umrah* the following year. That was a very appropriate occasion for teaching the Muslims the right way of performing a pilgrimage to Makkah with the true Islamic dignity, and enjoining that they should not prevent the disbelievers from performing pilgrimage to Makkah as a retaliation for their misbehavior. This was not difficult at all as many disbelievers had to pass through Muslim territory on their way to Makkah. This is why the introductory verses deal with the things connected with pilgrimage to Makkah and the same theme has been resumed in vv. 101-104. The other topics of this Surah also appear to belong to the same period.

The continuity of the subject shows that most probably the whole of the Surah was revealed as a single discourse at one and the same time. It is also possible that some of its verses were revealed at a later period and inserted in this Surah at different places where they fitted in. But there appears to be not the least gap anywhere in the Surah to show that it might have comprised two or more discourses.

Occasion of Revelation

This Surah was revealed to suit the requirements of the changed conditions which were now different from those prevailing at the time of the revelation of Al-i-'Imran and An- Nisa. Then the shock of the set-back at Uhd had made the very surroundings of Al-Madinah dangerous for the Muslims, but now Islam had become an invulnerable power and the Islamic State had extended to Najd on the east, to the Red Sea on the west, to Syria on the north and to Makkah on the south. This set-back which the Muslims had suffered at Uhd had not broken their determination. It had rather spurred them to action. As a result of their continuous struggle and unparalleled sacrifices, the power of. the surrounding clans, within a radius of 200 miles or so, had been broken. The Jewish menace which was always threatening Al-Madinah had been totally removed and the Jews in the other parts of Hijaz had-become tributaries of the State of Al-Madinah. The last effort of the Quraish to suppress Islam had been thwarted in the Battle of the Ditch. After this, it had become quite obvious to the Arabs that no power could suppress the Islamic movement. Now Islam was not merely a creed which ruled over the minds and hearts of the people but had also become a State which dominated over every aspect of the life of the people who lived within its boundaries. This had enabled the Muslims to live their lives without let or hindrance, in accordance with their beliefs.

Another development had also taken place during this period. The Muslim civilization had developed in accordance with the principles of Islam and the Islamic viewpoint. This civilization was quite distinct from all other civilizations in all its' details, and distinguished the Muslims clearly from the non Muslims in their moral, social and cultural behavior. Mosques had been built in all territories, prayer had been established and' Imam (leader) for every habitation and clan had been appointed. The Islamic civil and criminal laws had been formulated in detail and were being enforced through the Islamic courts. New and reformed ways of trade and commerce had taken the place of the old ones. The Islamic laws of marriage and divorce, of the segregation of the sexes, of the punishment for adultery and calumny and the like had cast the social life of the Muslims in a special mold. Their social behavior, their conversation, their dress, their very mode of living, their culture etc., had taken a definite shape of its own. As a result of all these changes, the non-Muslims could not expect that the Muslims would ever return to their former fold.

Before the treaty of Hudaibiyah, the Muslims were so engaged in their struggle with the non-Muslim Quraish that they got no time to propagate their message. This hindrance was removed by what was apparently a defeat but in reality a victory at Hudaibiyah. This gave the Muslims not only peace in their own territory but also respite to spread their message in the surrounding territories. Accordingly the Holy Prophet addressed letters to the rulers of Iran, Egypt and the Roman Empire and the chiefs of Arabia, inviting them to Islam. At the same time the missionaries of Islam spread among the clans and tribes and invited them to accept the Divine Way of Allah. These were the circumstances at the time when Al-Ma'idah was revealed.

Topics

It deals with the following three main topics:

1. Commandments and instructions about the religious, cultural and political life of the Muslims.

In this connection, a code of ceremonial rules concerning the journey for Haj has been prescribed; the observance of strict respect for the emblems of Allah has been enjoined; and any kind of obstruction or interference with the pilgrims to the Kaabah has been prohibited. Definite rules and regulations have been laid down for what is lawful and unlawful in the matter of food, and self-imposed foolish restrictions of the pre-Islamic age have been abolished. Permission has been given to. take food with the people of the Book and to marry their women. Rules and regulations for the performance of Wudu (ablutions) and bath and purification and *tayammum* (ablutions with dust) have been prescribed. Punishment for rebellion, disturbance of peace and theft have been specified. Drinking and gambling have absolutely been made unlawful. Expiation for the breaking of oath has been laid down and a few more things have been added to the law of evidence.

2. Admonition to the Muslims.

Now that the Muslims had become a ruling body, it was feared that power might corrupt them. At this period of great trial, Allah had admonished them over and over again to stick to justice and to guard against the wrong behavior of their predecessors, the people of the Book. They have been enjoined to remain steadfast to the Covenant of obedience to Allah and His Messenger, and to observe strictly their commands and prohibitions in order to save them- selves from the evil consequences which. befell the Jews and the Christians who had violated them. They have been instructed to observe the dictates of the Holy Quran in the conduct of all their affairs and warned against the attitude of hypocrisy.

3. Admonition to the Jews and the Christians.

As the power of the Jews had been totally weakened and almost all their habitations in north Arabia had come under the rule of the Muslims, they have been warned again about their wrong attitude and invited to follow the Right Way. At the same time a detailed invitation has also been extended to the Christians. The errors of their creeds have been clearly pointed out and they have been admonished to accept the guidance of the Holy Prophet. . Incidentally, it may be noted that no direct invitation has been made to the Majusis and idolaters living in the adjoining countries, because there was no need for a separate address for them as their condition. had already been covered by the addresses to the *mushrik* Arabs.

Subject:Consolidation of the Islamic Community

In continuation of the instructions about the consolidation of the Islamic Community given in Surah An-Nisa, the Muslims have been directed to observe and fulfill all their obligations: further regulations have been prescribed to train the Muslims for that purpose.

They have also been particularly warned as rulers to guard against the corruption, of power and directed to observe the Covenant of the Quran. They have also been exhorted to learn lessons from the failings of their predecessors, the Jews and the Christians, who in their turn have been admonished to give up their wrong attitudes towards the Right Way and accept the guidance taught by Prophet Muhammad (God's peace be upon him).

Topics and their Interconnection

The Believers have been exhorted to fulfill scrupulously all of their obligations and follow the regulations prescribed by the Divine Law about food, sex, Salat, justice, etc. 1 - 10

The Muslims have been warned to guard against the errors of their predecessors; they should follow the Right Path and avoid the bad example of the Jews and the Christians, who broke their Covenants and went astray into evil ways. They, in their turn, have been admonished to give up their wrong ways and accept Islam. 11 - 26

The story of the two sons of Adam has been related to reproach the Jews for their plot to kill the Holy Prophet and his Companions. (v. 11 & E.N. 30). The story has also been used to emphasize the sanctity of human life. 27 - 32

To achieve this object, punishments have been prescribed for those who create chaos in the Islamic State, and the Believers have been urged to exert their utmost to establish the Right Way; the sanctity of property has also been emphasized. 33 - 40

The Holy Prophet (and through him the Muslims) has been reassured that he should not mind the enmity, the evil designs and the machinations of the Jews, but continue exerting his utmost to establish the Right Way in accordance with the Guidance of the Quran; for nothing better could be expected from those who had forsaken their own Torah. He should deal with the Christians likewise, for they, too, had forsaken their Gospel. 41 - 50

In view of the degenerate moral condition of the Jews and the Christians, the Believers have been warned not to make them their friends and confidants. Likewise they should be on their guard against the evil designs of the hypocrites, the disbelievers and the like and should rely on the true Believers alone. The people of the Book have, in their turn been exhorted to give up their enmity and adopt the right attitude, for they cannot get salvation without this. 51 - 69

The theme of the corruptions of the Jews and Christians has been resumed. The Christians especially have been reproved for their errors in regard to the doctrine of *Tauhid*. At the same time they have been preferred to the hard hearted Jews, for there are among them some who are more inclined towards the Truth. 70 - 86

In this portion of the Surah, further regulations about the lawful and the un-lawful, in addition to those contained in vv. 1 - 10, have been given. 87 - 108

At the end of the Surah, the mention of the conversation that will take place between Allah and His Prophets on the Day of Judgment, has been made for the benefit of the erring people to serve as a corrective to their creeds. The conversation with Prophet Christ has been cited as a specimen to warn particularly the Christians, who profess to believe in him, and generally all those people who put false hopes in their Prophets, etc. 109 - 119

Conclusion: "O man-kind! The Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah: therefore you should become His true servants and fear Him, for He has full powers over everything." 120

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

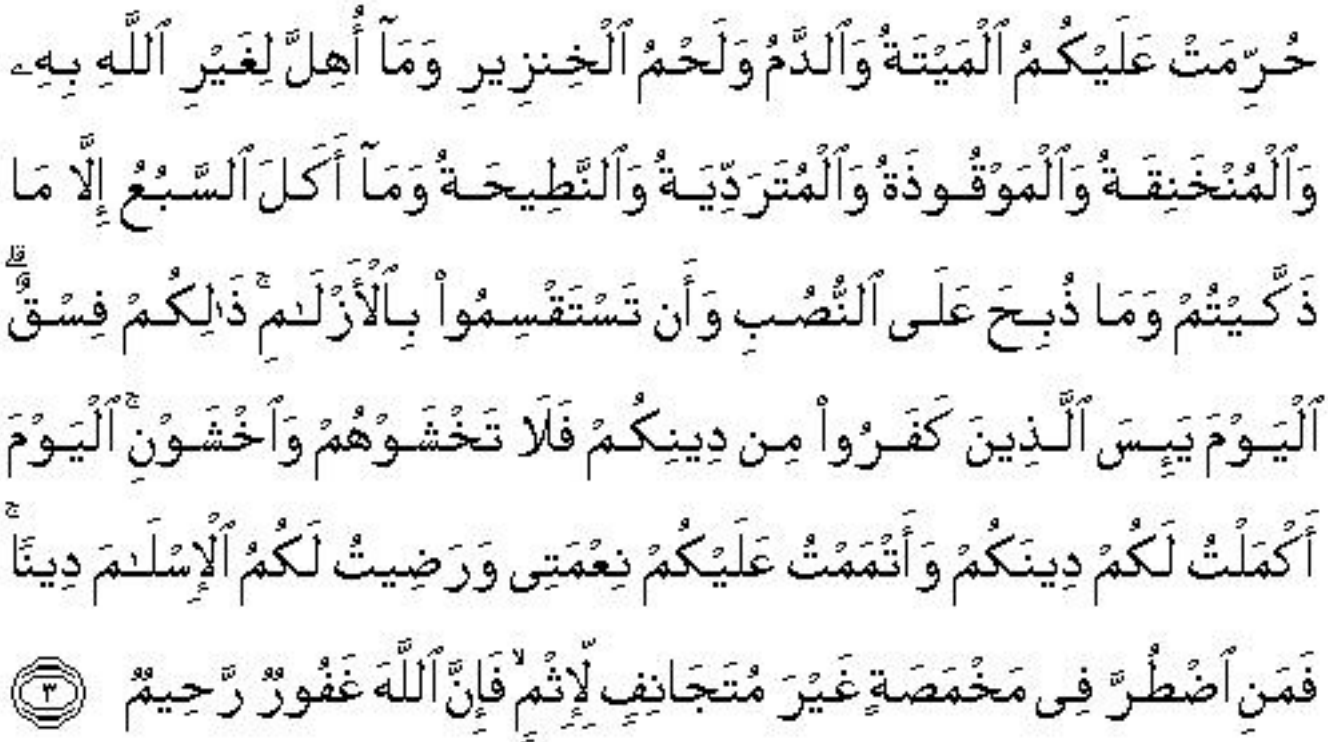
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَوۡفُواْ بِٱلۡعُقُودِۚ أُحِلَّتۡ لَكُم بَهِيمَةُ ٱلۡأَنۡعَٰمِ إِلَّا مَا يُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡكُمۡ غَيۡرَ مُحِلِّي ٱلصَّيۡدِ وَأَنتُمۡ حُرُمٌۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحۡكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ١

[1] O Believers, observe strictly the prescribed limits.[1] All kinds of cattle-like animals have been made lawful for you[2] except the ones which will be told you here-in-after, but you should not make hunting lawful for yourselves during the state of ihram[3] : indeed Allah ordains whatever He pleases.[4]

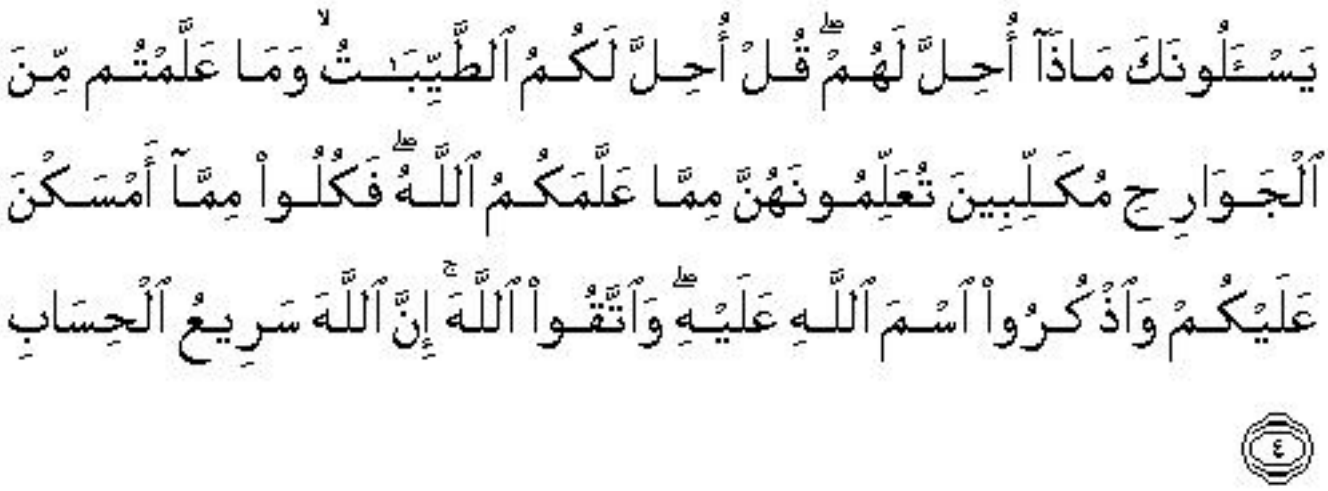
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُحِلُّواْ شَعَٰٓئِرَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا ٱلشَّهۡرَ ٱلۡحَرَامَ وَلَا ٱلۡهَدۡيَ وَلَا ٱلۡقَلَٰٓئِدَ وَلَآ ءَآمِّينَ ٱلۡبَيۡتَ ٱلۡحَرَامَ يَبۡتَغُونَ فَضۡلٗا مِّن رَّبِّهِمۡ وَرِضۡوَٰنٗاۚ وَإِذَا حَلَلۡتُمۡ فَٱصۡطَادُواْۚ وَلَا يَجۡرِمَنَّكُمۡ شَنَـَٔانُ قَوۡمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمۡ عَنِ ٱلۡمَسۡجِدِ ٱلۡحَرَامِ أَن تَعۡتَدُواْۘ وَتَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلۡبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقۡوَىٰۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلۡإِثۡمِ وَٱلۡعُدۡوَٰنِۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡعِقَابِ ٢

[2] O Believers, do not violate the emblems[5] of God-worship. Do not make lawful for yourselves any of the forbidden

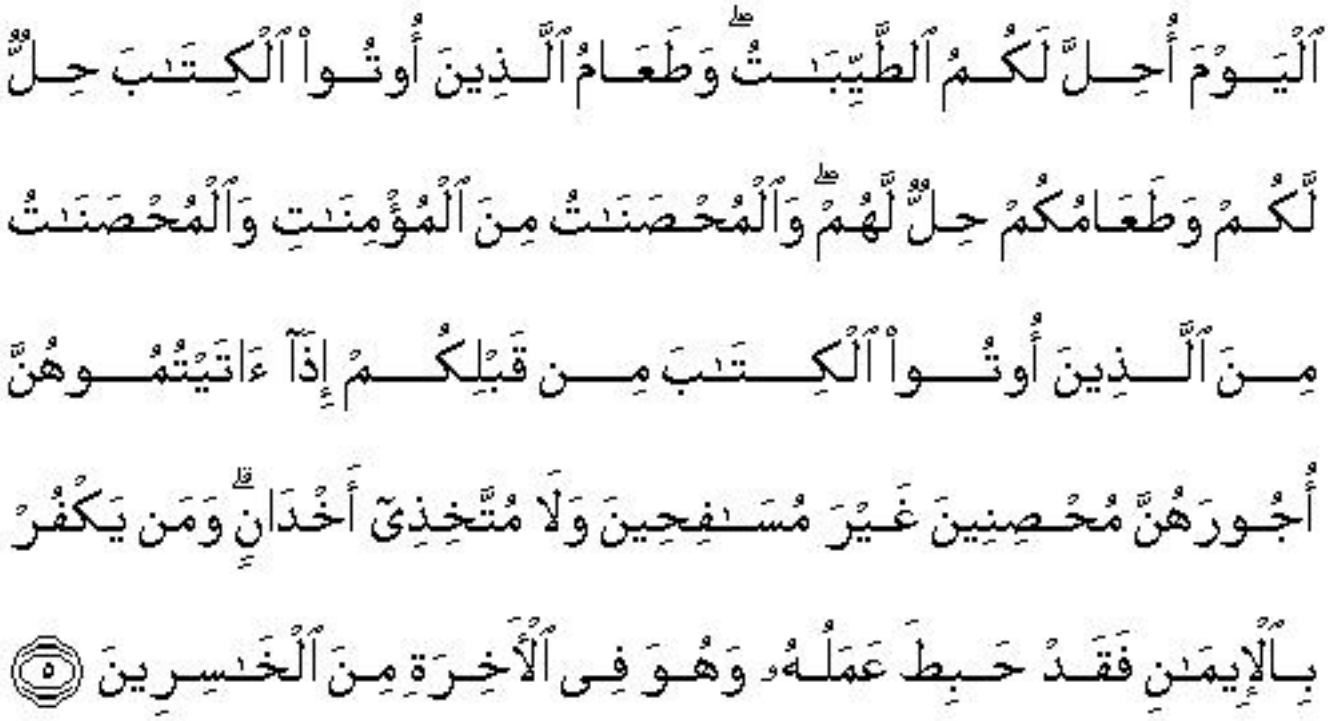
months nor catch hold of the animals dedicated to sacrifice nor lay hands on those animals which are collared as a mark of their dedication to God, nor molest the people repairing to the Inviolable Mosque (the Ka`abah), seeking their Lord's bounty and pleasure.[6] You are, however, allowed to hunt after you have put off ihram.[7] -And be on your guard : let not your resentment against those, who have barred you from visiting the Ka`abah, incite you so much as to transgress the prescribed limits.[8] Nay, cooperate with all in what is good and pious but do not cooperate in what is sinful and wicked. Fear Allah: for Allah is severe in retribution.


حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَيْتَةُ وَٱلدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ ٱلْخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ بِهِۦ
وَٱلْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَٱلْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَٱلْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَٱلنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَآ أَكَلَ ٱلسَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا
ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى ٱلنُّصُبِ وَأَن تَسْتَقْسِمُوا۟ بِٱلْأَزْلَٰمِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ ۗ
ٱلْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَٱخْشَوْنِ ۚ ٱلْيَوْمَ
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِى وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَٰمَ دِينًا ۚ
فَمَنِ ٱضْطُرَّ فِى مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرَ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِّإِثْمٍ ۙ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾

[3] You are forbidden carrion[9] and blood, the flesh of swine and of that animal which has been slaughtered in any other name than that of Allah,[10] and of the strangled animal, and of that beaten to death or killed by a fall or gored to death or mangled by a beast of prey -save of that you duly slaughtered while it was still alive[11] -and of that which is slaughtered at (un-godly) shrines.[12]- [13] It is also unlawful for you to try to find your fortune by means of divining devices,[14] for all these things are sinful acts, Today the disbelievers have despaired of (vanquishing) your religion; therefore do not fear them but fear Me. Today[15] I have perfected your religion for you and completed My blessing on you and approved Islam as the way of life for you,[16] (Therefore observe the limits prescribed by the Law); if, however, one, dying of hunger, eats of any of these forbidden things, provided that he is not inclined towards sin, he will find Allah Forgiving and Compassionate.[17]



[4] They ask you what has been made lawful for them. Say, "All the good and pure things have been made lawful for you.[18] You may also eat of what the hunting animals, which you have trained to hunt in accordance with the knowledge Allah has given you, catch and hold for you,[19] you should, however, mention Allah's name over it,[20] and fear to violate the Law of Allah. for Allah is swift at reckoning."

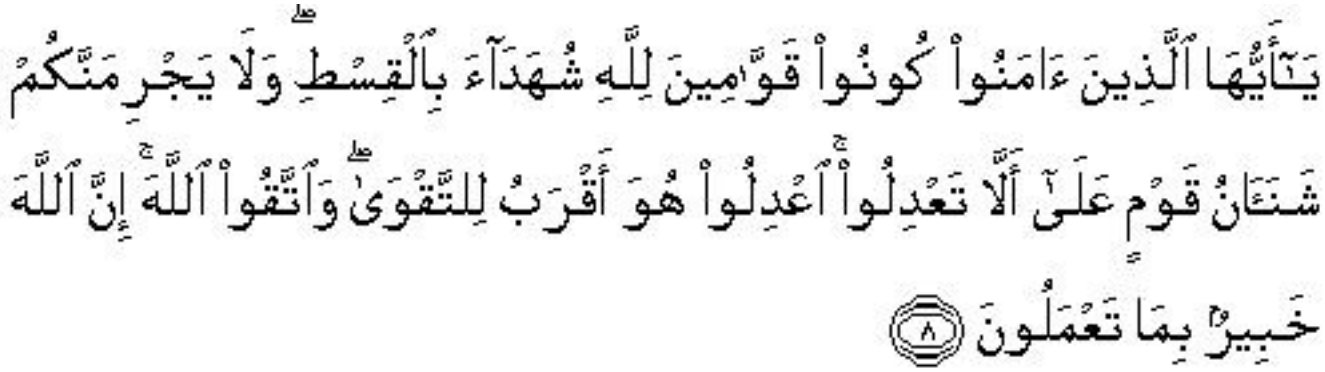


[5] All the good and pure things have today been made lawful for you; the food of the people of the Book is lawful for you, and your food for them,[21] Likewise you are permitted to marry chaste believing women or chaste women from among the people who were given the Scripture before you[22] provided that you give them their dowries and become their protectors in wedlock; this permission is not for sensual license or secret illicit relations; whoever rejects the way of Faith, all the deeds of his life shall become vain and he shall be a bankrupt in the Hereafter.[23]

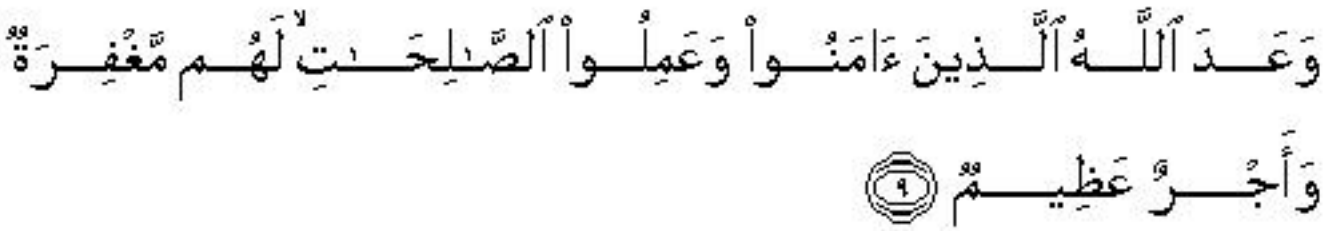
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَٱغْسِلُواْ وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ
إِلَى ٱلْمَرَافِقِ وَٱمْسَحُواْ بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْكَعْبَيْنِ ۚ
وَإِن كُنتُمْ جُنُبًا فَٱطَّهَّرُواْ ۚ وَإِن كُنتُم مَّرْضَىٰٓ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ
جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنكُم مِّنَ ٱلْغَآئِطِ أَوْ لَٰمَسْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُواْ
مَآءً فَتَيَمَّمُواْ صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَٱمْسَحُواْ بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُم مِّنْهُ ۚ
مَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَٰكِن يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ
نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

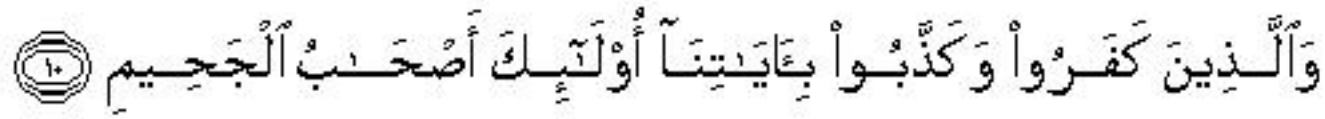
[6] O Believers, when you rise to offer the Salat, you must wash your faces and hands and arms up to the elbows and wipe your heads with wet hands and wash your feet up to the ankles;[24] and if you have become unclean, cleanse yourselves with a full bath;[25] if, however, you are sick or are on a journey, or if any of you has relieved himself or if you have "touched" women and you can find no water, then cleanse yourselves with pure dust: strike your palms on it and wipe your hands and faces with it.[26] Allah does not will to make life hard for you, but He wills to purify you and complete His blessing upon you[27] so that you may show gratitude.

وَٱذْكُرُواْ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَٰقَهُ ٱلَّذِى وَاثَقَكُم بِهِۦٓ إِذْ
قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾



[7-8] Keep in mind the blessing[28] Allah has bestowed upon you and do not forget the solemn covenant which He made with you (and which you confirmed), when you said, "We have heard and submitted," Fear Allah for Allah knows the very secrets of the hearts. O Believers, be steadfast in righteousness and just in giving witnesses for the sake of Allah;[29] the enmity of any people should not so provoke you as to turn you away from justice. Do justice for it is akin to piety. Fear Allah (in your affairs): indeed He is fully aware of what you do.



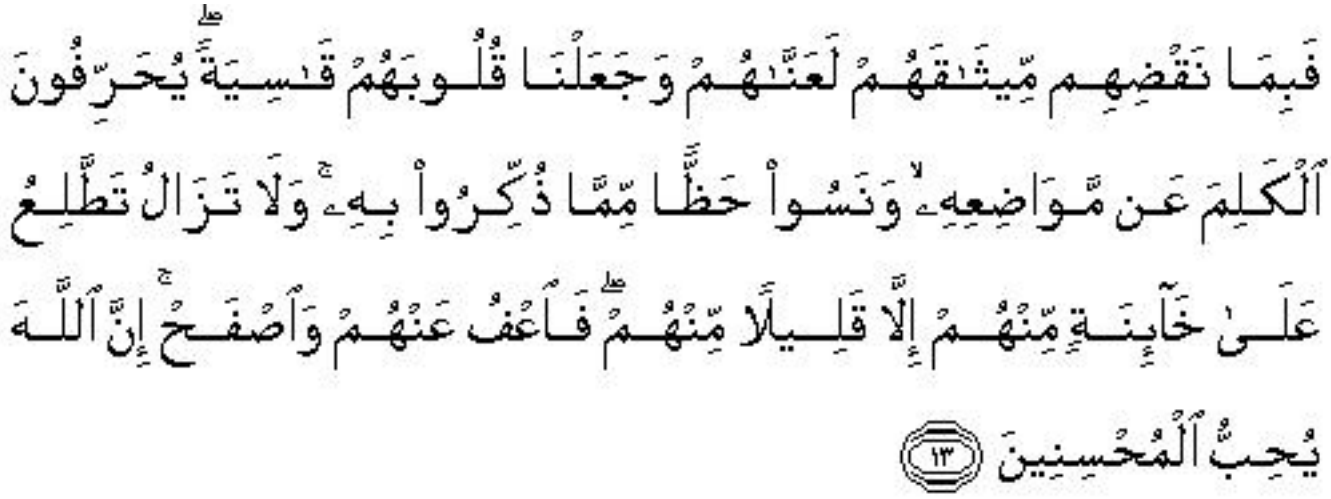


[9-10] Allah has promised that He will pardon the errors of those who believe and do good deeds, and will give them a rich reward. As for those who disbelieve and treat the Revelations of Allah as false, they shall go to Hell.

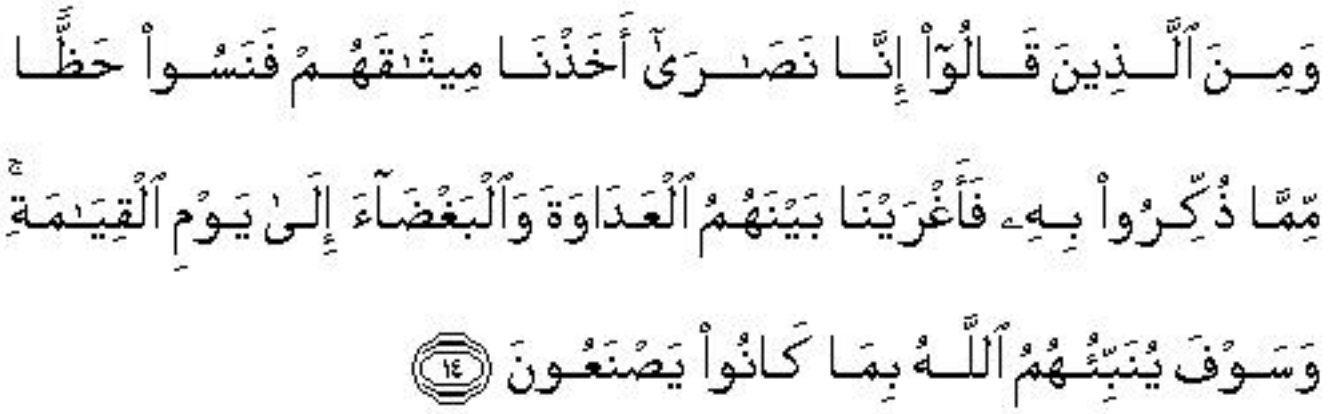
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيۡكُمۡ إِذۡ هَمَّ قَوۡمٌ أَن يَبۡسُطُوٓاْ
إِلَيۡكُمۡ أَيۡدِيَهُمۡ فَكَفَّ أَيۡدِيَهُمۡ عَنكُمۡۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ
ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

[11] O Believers, recall to mind the favor which Allah has (recently) shown to you: when some people intended to do harm to you, Allah restrained their hands from you.[30] Fear Allah in whatever you do for the Believers should put their trust in Allah alone.

۞ وَلَقَدۡ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَبَعَثۡنَا مِنۡهُمُ ٱثۡنَيۡ عَشَرَ نَقِيبٗاۖ
وَقَالَ ٱللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمۡۖ لَئِنۡ أَقَمۡتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَيۡتُمُ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَءَامَنتُم
بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرۡتُمُوهُمۡ وَأَقۡرَضۡتُمُ ٱللَّهَ قَرۡضًا حَسَنٗا لَّأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنكُمۡ
سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمۡ وَلَأُدۡخِلَنَّكُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُۚ فَمَن كَفَرَ
بَعۡدَ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمۡ فَقَدۡ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾



[12-13] Allah had bound the Israelites by a solemn covenant, and appointed twelve supervisors[31] from among them and said, "I am with you; if you establish the Salat, pay the Zakat and believe in My Messengers,[32] and support them and give a generous loan to Allah,[33] I shall surely wipe out your evils from you,[34] and admit you into gardens under which canals flow, But after this whoever from among you adopted the way of disbelief, has indeed gone astray from the Right Way."[35] Then they broke their covenant and because of this We deprived them of Our mercy and hardened their hearts. Now they have become so degenerate that they distort the words of the Scriptures so as to change their meanings completely: moreover, they have forgotten the major portion of the teachings given to them and every now and then you find out one act or the other of their dishonesty. There are only a few of them who are free from this vice: (so whatever mischief they do is to be expected of them). Yet pardon them and connive at what they are doing: Allah likes those who show generosity in their dealings.



[14] Likewise We bound by a covenant those people, who said,"We are Nasara."[36] But they too, forgot much of what had been taught to them. So We sowed among them seeds of discord, enmity and hatred that shall last up to the Day of Resurrection, and surely the time will come when Allah will tell them of what they had been contriving in the world.

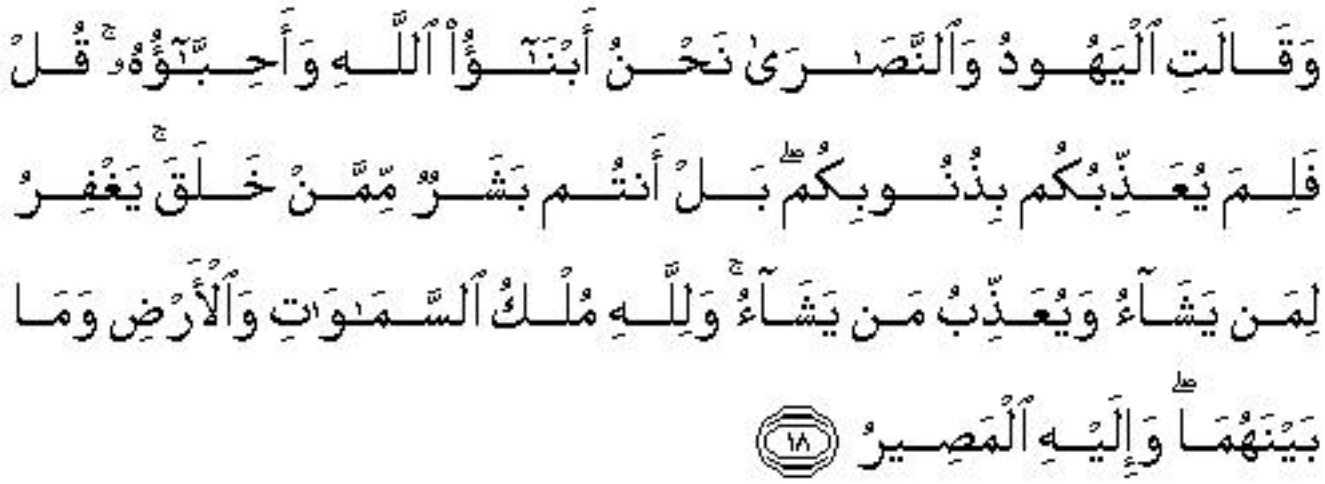
يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمۡ كَثِيرٗا مِّمَّا كُنتُمۡ تُخۡفُونَ
مِنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَيَعۡفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٖۚ قَدۡ جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ نُورٞ وَكِتَٰبٞ مُّبِينٞ
١٥

يَهۡدِي بِهِ ٱللَّهُ مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ رِضۡوَٰنَهُۥ سُبُلَ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَيُخۡرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ
إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ بِإِذۡنِهِۦ وَيَهۡدِيهِمۡ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ١٦

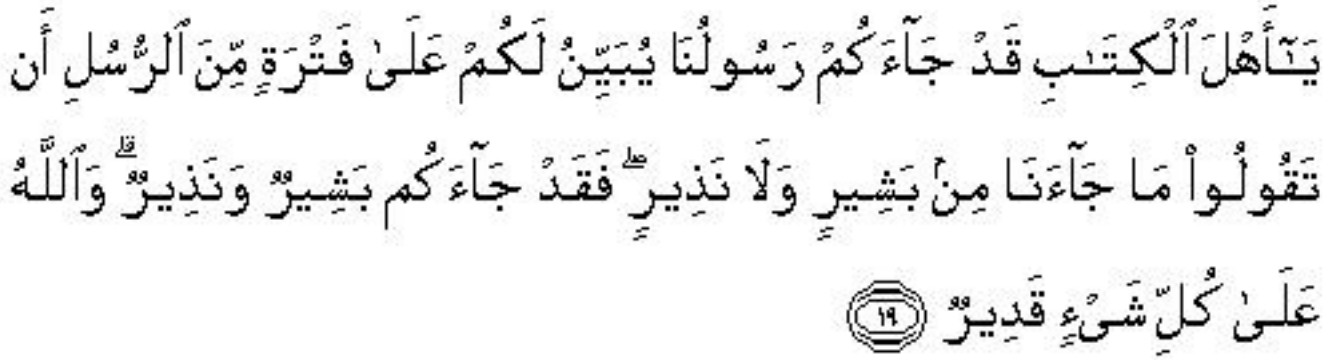
[15-16] O People of the Book, Our Messenger has come to you; he makes manifest to you many things of the Book which you were concealing, and passes over many others.[37] Light has come to you from Allah and the Book which guides to the Truth, whereby Allah leads to the paths of peace[38] those who seek His pleasure and brings them out of the depths of darkness into the Light by His grace and guides them towards the Right Way.

لَّقَدۡ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡمَسِيحُ ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَۚ قُلۡ فَمَن يَمۡلِكُ مِنَ
ٱللَّهِ شَيۡـًٔا إِنۡ أَرَادَ أَن يُهۡلِكَ ٱلۡمَسِيحَ ٱبۡنَ مَرۡيَمَ وَأُمَّهُۥ وَمَن فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
جَمِيعٗاۗ وَلِلَّهِ مُلۡكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَاۚ يَخۡلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ١٧

[17] Indeed they committed blasphemy, who said, "The Messiah, son of Mary, is verily God."[39] O Muhammad, say to them, "If Allah chose to destroy the Messiah, Mary's son, and his mother, and all the dwellers of the earth, who has the power to prevent Him from this? For, to Allah belongs the Kingdom of the earth and the heavens and all that is between them: He creates whatever He wills[40] and has power over everything."


وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ نَحْنُ أَبْنَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّٰٓؤُهُۥ ۚ قُلْ
فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُم بِذُنُوبِكُم ۖ بَلْ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ۚ يَغْفِرُ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾

[18] The Jews and the Christians say, "We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones." Ask them, "Why then does He punish you for your sins? In fact, you are also human beings like the other human beings He has created. He forgives whomever He wills and punishes whomever He wills. To Allah belongs the Kingdom of the earth and the heavens, and all that is in it and all shall return to Him."


يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَىٰ فَتْرَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ أَن
تَقُولُوا۟ مَا جَآءَنَا مِنۢ بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ ۖ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُم بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

[19] O People of the Book, this Messenger of Ours has come to you and is making clear to you the teachings of the Right Way after a long interval during which there had come no Messengers, lest you should say, "No bearer of good news nor Warner came to us. Lo, now the bearer of the good news and Warner has come.- And Allah has power over everything."[41]

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنۢبِيَآءَ وَجَعَلَكُم مُّلُوكًا وَءَاتَىٰكُم مَّا
لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

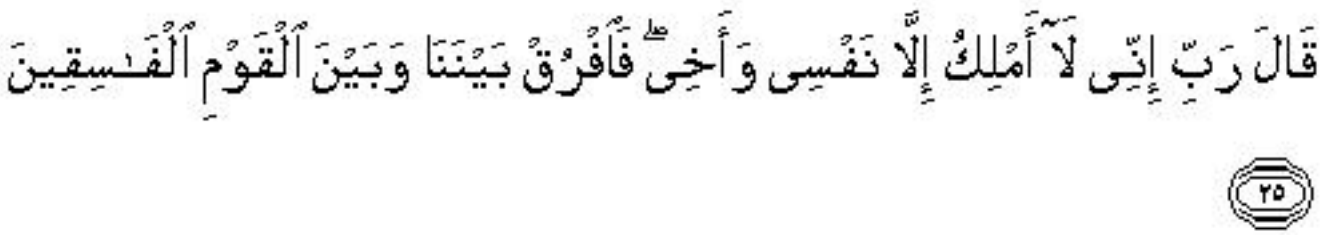
يَٰقَوْمِ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ ٱلْمُقَدَّسَةَ ٱلَّتِى كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ
وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَٰرِكُمْ فَتَنقَلِبُوا۟ خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

قَالُوا۟ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَن نَّدْخُلَهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا۟ مِنْهَا
فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا۟ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَٰخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

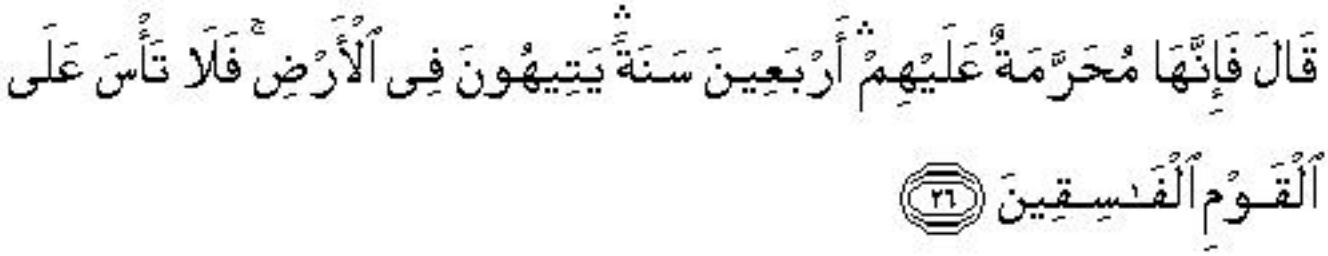
قَالَ رَجُلَانِ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا ٱدْخُلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْبَابَ
فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ غَٰلِبُونَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوٓا۟ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ
﴿٢٣﴾



قَالُوا۟ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّا لَن نَّدْخُلَهَآ أَبَدًا مَّا دَامُوا۟ فِيهَا ۖ فَٱذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَٰتِلَآ إِنَّا هَٰهُنَا قَٰعِدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾



قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى لَآ أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِى وَأَخِى ۖ فَٱفْرُقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾



قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً ۛ يَتِيهُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[20-26] Call to mind the time when Moses said to his people, "O my people, remember the favor which Allah bestowed upon you. He raised up Prophets from among you and made you rulers and gave you that which had not been given to anyone in the world.[42] O my people, enter the Holy Land that Allah has destined for you,[43] and, do not turn your backs or you will turn about losers,"[44] They replied, "O Moses, in that land dwell mighty people; therefore we are never going to enter it till they leave it; if, however, they leave it we are ready to enter it. " Among those, who were filled with fear, there were two persons[45] whom Allah had blessed with His favor: they said, "Make your way into the gate against those mighty people; when you enter it, you will surely be victorious. Trust in Allah, if you are true believers." But even then they replied, "O Moses, we are never going to enter it so long as they remain therein. Therefore, go, both you and your Lord, and fight: we will stay here," At this Moses cried. "My Lord, I have no power over anyone but myself and my brother: so set us apart from these disobedient people." Allah replied, "Very well, they are forbidden this land for forty years, during which period they shall wander homeless on the earth:[46] so do not grieve at all for these disobedient people.[47]

۞ وَٱتۡلُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ نَبَأَ ٱبۡنَيۡ ءَادَمَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ إِذۡ قَرَّبَا قُرۡبَانٗا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنۡ أَحَدِهِمَا
وَلَمۡ يُتَقَبَّلۡ مِنَ ٱلۡأٓخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقۡتُلَنَّكَۖ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلۡمُتَّقِينَ
٢٧

لَئِنۢ بَسَطتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقۡتُلَنِي مَآ أَنَا۠ بِبَاسِطٖ يَدِيَ إِلَيۡكَ لِأَقۡتُلَكَۖ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ
ٱللَّهَ رَبَّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٢٨

إِنِّيٓ أُرِيدُ أَن تَبُوٓأَ بِإِثۡمِي وَإِثۡمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنۡ أَصۡحَٰبِ ٱلنَّارِۚ وَذَٰلِكَ
جَزَٰٓؤُاْ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٢٩

فَطَوَّعَتۡ لَهُۥ نَفۡسُهُۥ قَتۡلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُۥ فَأَصۡبَحَ مِنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ
٣٠

فَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُۥ كَيْفَ يُوَٰرِى سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ ۚ قَالَ
يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰٓ أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَٰذَا ٱلْغُرَابِ فَأُوَٰرِىَ سَوْءَةَ أَخِى ۖ
فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ ٱلنَّٰدِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

[27-31] And tell them accurately the story of the two sons of Adam. When the two offered their sacrifices, the offering of the one was accepted but that of the other was not accepted. The latter said, "I will kill you. " The other answered, "Allah accepts the offerings of the pious people only.[48] Even if you stretch your hand to kill me, I shall not lift my hand to kill you,"[49] for I fear Allah, the Lord of the Universe; I would rather prefer that you should bear the burden of my sin as well as of your own sin,[50] and become a dweller of hell; this is the just retribution of the iniquity of the aggressors." Even after this his evil soul prompted him to slay his brother without the slightest compunction; so he killed him and became one of the losers. Then Allah sent a raven which began to scratch the ground to show him how he might hide the corpse of his brother. Seeing this, he cried, "Woe be to me! I have not been able to do even as this raven has done and so devise a plan of hiding the corpse of my brother."[51] After this he became very remorseful of what he had done.[52]

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنَّهُۥ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًۢا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ
فَسَادٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا ٱلنَّاسَ
جَمِيعًا ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[32] That was why We prescribed this for the children of Israel:[53] "He who killed any person, unless it be a person guilty of manslaughter, or of spreading chaos in the land, should be looked upon as though he had slain all mankind, and he who saved one life should be regarded as though he had saved the lives of all mankind."[54] But the majority of them went on committing excesses in the land even after Our Messengers came to them one after the other with clear directions.

إِنَّمَا جَزَٰٓؤُاْ ٱلَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَسۡعَوۡنَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
فَسَادًا أَن يُقَتَّلُوٓاْ أَوۡ يُصَلَّبُوٓاْ أَوۡ تُقَطَّعَ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَأَرۡجُلُهُم مِّنۡ خِلَٰفٍ أَوۡ
يُنفَوۡاْ مِنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ ذَٰلِكَ لَهُمۡ خِزۡيٞ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَاۖ وَلَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ ٣٣

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ تَابُواْ مِن قَبۡلِ أَن تَقۡدِرُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡۖ فَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ
٣٤

[33-34] The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and run about to spread mischief in the land[55] is this; they should be put to death or crucified or their alternate hands and feet should be cut off, or they should be banished from the land.[56] This is the disgrace and ignominy for them in this world and there is in store for them a harsher torment in the Hereafter, except those, who repent before you have power over them for you should know that Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate.[57]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱبۡتَغُوٓاْ إِلَيۡهِ ٱلۡوَسِيلَةَ وَجَٰهِدُواْ فِي
سَبِيلِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ٣٥

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَوۡ أَنَّ لَهُم مَّا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ جَمِيعٗا وَمِثۡلَهُۥ مَعَهُۥ
لِيَفۡتَدُواْ بِهِۦ مِنۡ عَذَابِ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ مَا تُقُبِّلَ مِنۡهُمۡۖ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٞ ٣٦

[35-36] O Believers, fear Allah and seek the means of winning His pleasure[58] and exert your utmost in His way[59] so that you may attain true success. Note it well that those, who have adopted the way of disbelief, shall not escape retribution, for even if they possessed all the wealth of the earth and the like of it with it and offered it as ransom to redeem themselves from the torment of the Day of Resurrection, that will not be accepted from them and they shall receive a painful punishment.

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يَخۡرُجُواْ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَمَا هُم بِخَٰرِجِينَ
مِنۡهَاۖ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ مُّقِيمٞ ٣٧

[37] They will wish to get out of the fire of Hell but shall not be able to come forth from it and theirs shall be an everlasting torment.

وَٱلسَّارِقُ وَٱلسَّارِقَةُ فَٱقۡطَعُوٓاْ أَيۡدِيَهُمَا جَزَآءَۢ بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَٰلٗا
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٞ ٣٨

فَمَن تَابَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ ظُلۡمِهِۦ وَأَصۡلَحَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيۡهِۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

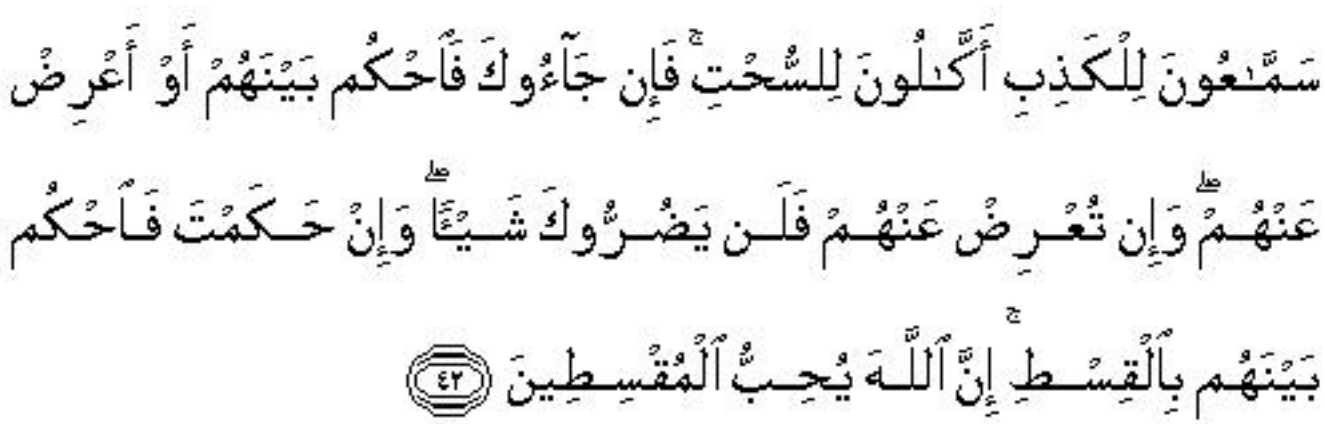
أَلَمۡ تَعۡلَمۡ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُۥ مُلۡكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَغۡفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ﴿٤٠﴾

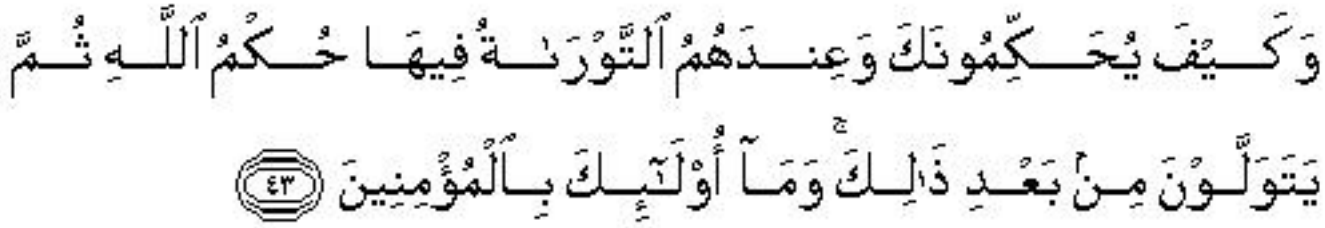
[38-40] As for the thief, whether man or woman, cut off the hand[60] of either of them: it is the recompense for what they have earned, and an exemplary punishment from Allah; Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. But whoever repents after his iniquity and reforms himself, Allah will surely turn towards him with His favor;[61] Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. Do you not know that Allah is the Sovereign of the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth? He may punish whom He wills and may pardon whom He wills; He has power over everything.

۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرَّسُولُ لَا يَحۡزُنكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِي ٱلۡكُفۡرِ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ
ءَامَنَّا بِأَفۡوَٰهِهِمۡ وَلَمۡ تُؤۡمِن قُلُوبُهُمۡۛ وَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُواْۛ سَمَّٰعُونَ لِلۡكَذِبِ
سَمَّٰعُونَ لِقَوۡمٍ ءَاخَرِينَ لَمۡ يَأۡتُوكَۖ يُحَرِّفُونَ ٱلۡكَلِمَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَوَاضِعِهِۦۖ
يَقُولُونَ إِنۡ أُوتِيتُمۡ هَٰذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِن لَّمۡ تُؤۡتَوۡهُ فَٱحۡذَرُواْۚ وَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ
فِتۡنَتَهُۥ فَلَن تَمۡلِكَ لَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيۡـٔٗاۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَمۡ يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُطَهِّرَ
قُلُوبَهُمۡۚ لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا خِزۡيٞۖ وَلَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

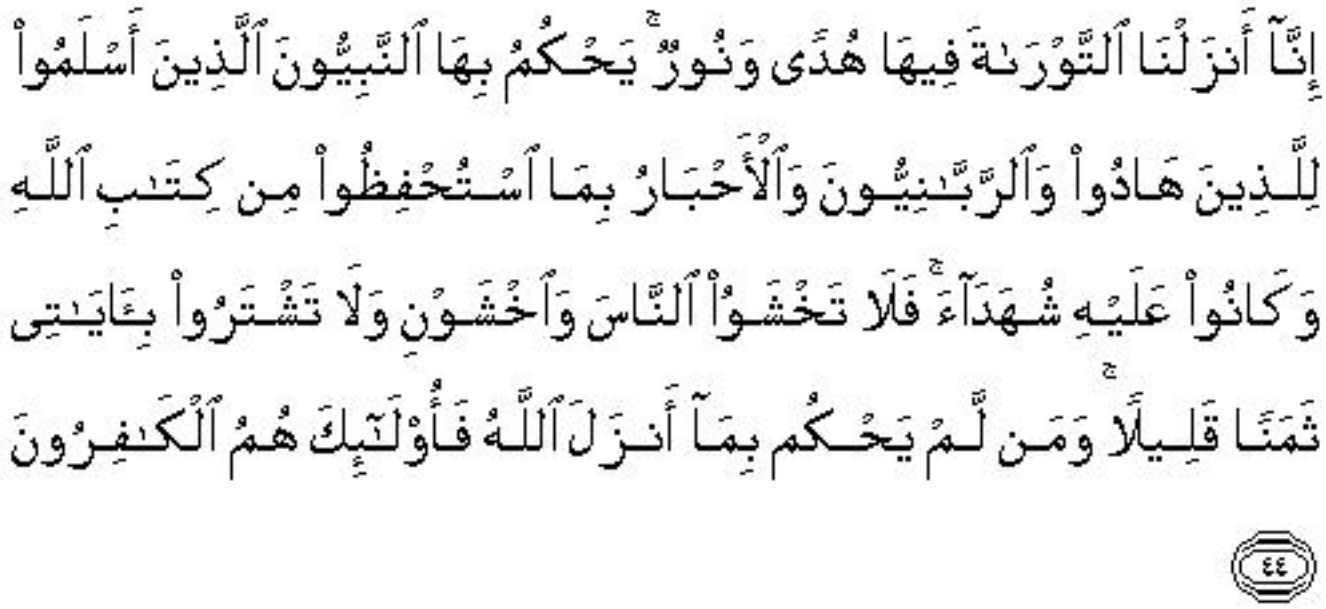
[41] O Messenger, let not those who are striving hard in the way of disbelief,[62] grieve you, whether they be from

among those who say with their mouths, "We believe," but their hearts do not believe, or from among those who have become Jews; for the latter eagerly listen to lies.[63] They spy for other people who have never had any chance of coming to you:[64] they twist the words of Allah's Book out of their context in order to distort their proper meaning:[65] they say to the people, "If you are enjoined to observe such and such teaching, accept it; if it is other than this, reject it."[66] You can do nothing to save from Allah's punishment a man whom Allah wills to put to trial.[67] They are those, whose hearts Allah does not will to purify;[68] there is ignominy for them in this world and a grievous punishment in the Hereafter.

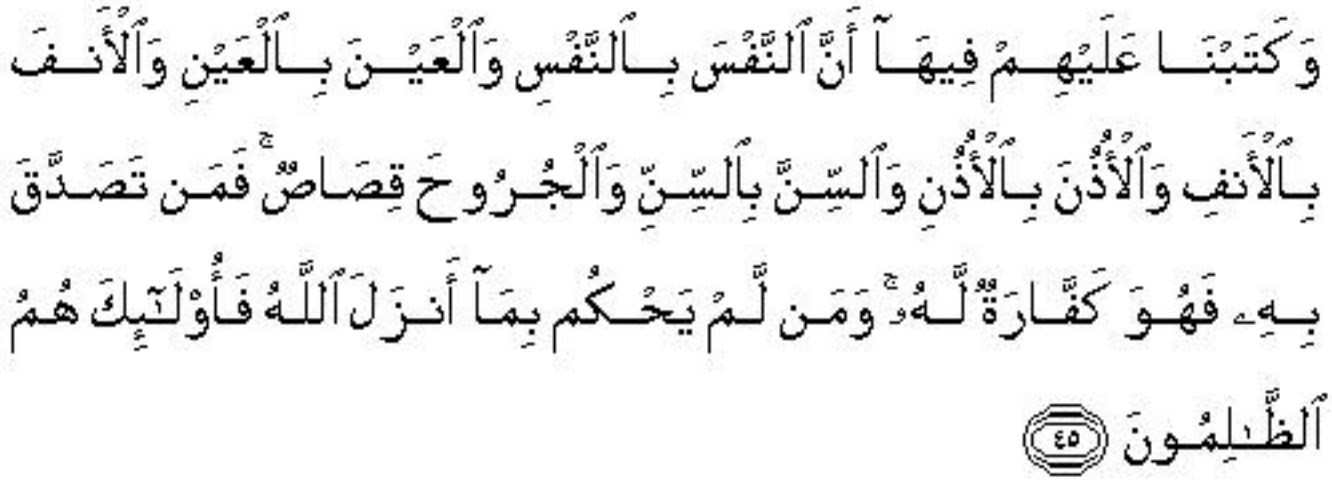

سَمَّٰعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَّٰلُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ ۚ فَإِن جَآءُوكَ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ
عَنْهُمْ ۖ وَإِن تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَن يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَٱحْكُم
بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾


وَكَيْفَ يُحَكِّمُونَكَ وَعِندَهُمُ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ
يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَآ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[42-43] They are listeners to falsehood and greedy devourers of the forbidden.[69] If, therefore, they come to you (with their cases), you may judge between them or refuse to do so: for even if you refuse, they will not be able to do any harm to you; but if you judge between them, then judge with justice, for Allah loves those who act justly.[70] Yet, how ' is it that they make you their judge, when they themselves possess the Torah, in which there is Allah's judgment, and even then they are turning away from it?[71] In fact, these people have no faith.



[44] Indeed, We sent down the Torah wherein was Guidance and Light: thereby All the Prophets, who were Muslims, judged the cases of those who had become Jews.[72] Likewise the Rabbanis and the Ahbar[73] (based their judgment on it), for they were made the guardians of the Book of Allah and witnesses to it. So, (O Jews), do not fear the people but fear Me and do not sell My revelations for paltry worldly gains: those, who do not judge by the Law which Allah has sent down, are indeed the disbelievers.



[45] We had prescribed this decree in the Torah for the Jews: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and for all wounds equal retaliation."[74] However, whoever forgoes retaliation as charity, it shall be expiation for him:[75] those, who do not judge by the Law which Allah has sent down, are indeed the unjust people.

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم بِعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْإِنجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى
وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً
لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَلْيَحْكُمْ أَهْلُ ٱلْإِنجِيلِ بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

[46-47] Then after those Prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary; he confirmed whatever had still remained intact of the Torah in his time. And We gave him the Gospel wherein was Guidance and Light; that too, confirmed what was intact of the Torah[76] at the time; moreover, it was guidance and admonition for the God-fearing people. We had enjoined that those who were given the Gospel. should judge by the Law which Allah has sent down in it: those, who do not judge by the Law which Allah has sent down, are the transgressors.[77]

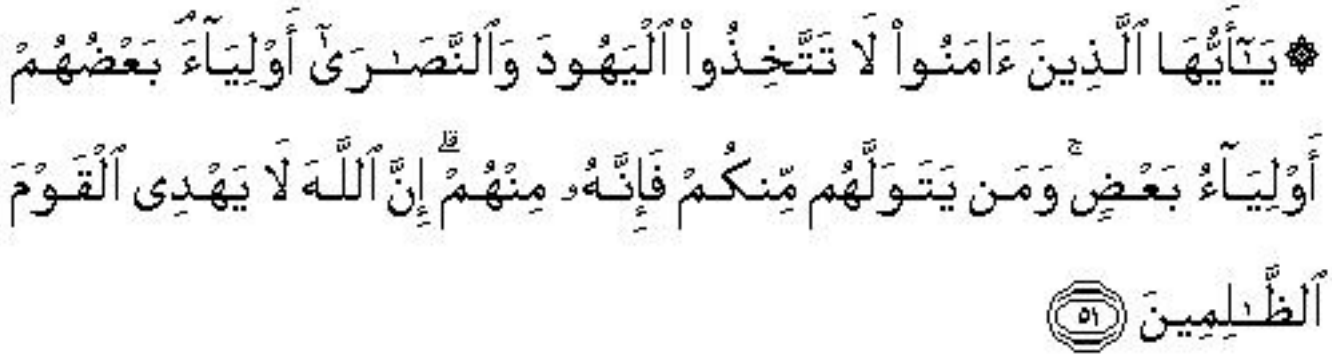
وَأَنزَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ مُصَدِّقٗا لِّمَا بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡهِ مِنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَمُهَيۡمِنًا
عَلَيۡهِۖ فَٱحۡكُم بَيۡنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعۡ أَهۡوَآءَهُمۡ عَمَّا جَآءَكَ
مِنَ ٱلۡحَقِّۚ لِكُلّٖ جَعَلۡنَا مِنكُمۡ شِرۡعَةٗ وَمِنۡهَاجٗاۚ وَلَوۡ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمۡ
أُمَّةٗ وَٰحِدَةٗ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبۡلُوَكُمۡ فِي مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمۡۖ فَٱسۡتَبِقُواْ ٱلۡخَيۡرَٰتِۚ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَرۡجِعُكُمۡ جَمِيعٗا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمۡ فِيهِ تَخۡتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَأَنِ ٱحۡكُم بَيۡنَهُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعۡ أَهۡوَآءَهُمۡ وَٱحۡذَرۡهُمۡ أَن
يَفۡتِنُوكَ عَنۢ بَعۡضِ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيۡكَۖ فَإِن تَوَلَّوۡاْ فَٱعۡلَمۡ أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن
يُصِيبَهُم بِبَعۡضِ ذُنُوبِهِمۡۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرٗا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

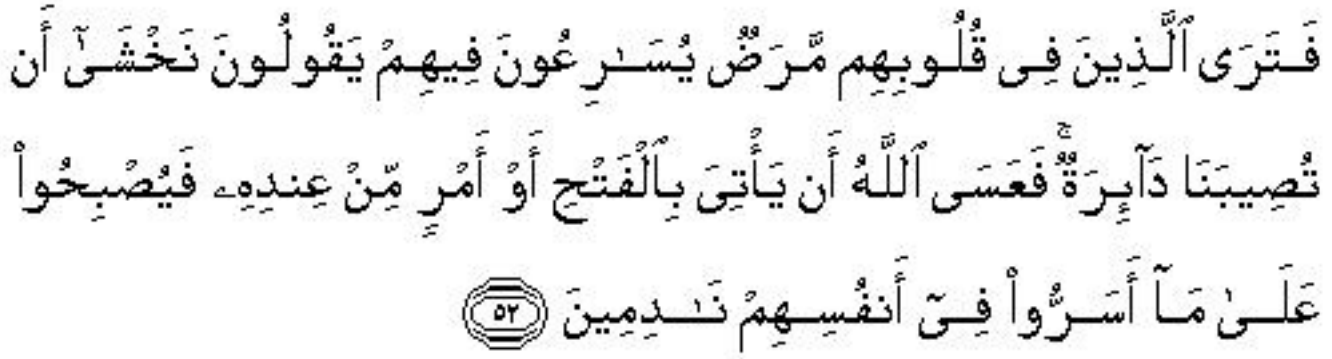
أَفَحُكۡمَ ٱلۡجَٰهِلِيَّةِ يَبۡغُونَۚ وَمَنۡ أَحۡسَنُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ حُكۡمٗا لِّقَوۡمٖ يُوقِنُونَ
﴿٥٠﴾

[48-50] Then, O Muhammad, We sent this Book to you which has brought the Truth: it confirms whatever has remained intact from the Book[78] at the time of its revelation and safeguards[79] and protects it. Therefore you should judge between the people by the Law sent down by Allah and do not follow their desires by turning aside from the Truth that has come to you.[80] We prescribed a law and a way of life for each of you, though your Lord could have made all of you a single community, if He had so willed. But (He willed otherwise) in order to test you in what He

has bestowed upon each of you: therefore try to excel one another in good deeds. Ultimately, you shall all return to Him; then He will let you know the truth about that in which you have been differing[81] So,[82] O Muhammad, judge between these people by the Law that has been sent down to you and do not follow their wishes: be on your guard lest these people should tempt you away, even in the least, from the Guidance that has been sent down to you by Allah. If they turn away from it, then know that Allah wills to involve them in trouble in consequence of some of their sins. And the fact is that the majority of these people are transgressors. (If they turn away from the Divine Law, then) do they desire to be judged by the laws of ignorance?[83] Yet there is no better judge than Allah for those who believe in Him.


۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّخِذُواْ ٱلۡيَهُودَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰٓ أَوۡلِيَآءَۘ بَعۡضُهُمۡ
أَوۡلِيَآءُ بَعۡضٖۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمۡ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنۡهُمۡۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهۡدِي ٱلۡقَوۡمَ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٥١

[51] O Believers, do not take the Jews nor the Christians as your friends: they are one another's friends only. If anyone of you takes them as friends, surely he shall be counted among them; indeed Allah deprives the wrong-doers of His Guidance.


فَتَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٞ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِيهِمۡ يَقُولُونَ نَخۡشَىٰٓ أَن
تُصِيبَنَا دَآئِرَةٞۚ فَعَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَأۡتِيَ بِٱلۡفَتۡحِ أَوۡ أَمۡرٖ مِّنۡ عِندِهِۦ فَيُصۡبِحُواْ
عَلَىٰ مَآ أَسَرُّواْ فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡ نَٰدِمِينَ ٥٢

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلَّذِينَ أَقۡسَمُواْ بِٱللَّهِ جَهۡدَ
أَيۡمَٰنِهِمۡ إِنَّهُمۡ لَمَعَكُمۡۚ حَبِطَتۡ أَعۡمَٰلُهُمۡ فَأَصۡبَحُواْ خَٰسِرِينَ
٥٣

[52-53] You see that those, who have the disease of hypocrisy in their hearts, are always moving among them. They say, "We fear lest we should get involved in some disaster."[84] But it may be that these people will feel ashamed of the hypocrisy they are hiding in their hearts; when Allah will give you a decisive victory or show something else from Himself.[85] At that time the Believers will say, "Are these the same people who stated upon solemn oaths by Allah that they were with you?" - All their deeds became vain and they ended in utter failure.[86]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَن يَرۡتَدَّ مِنكُمۡ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَسَوۡفَ يَأۡتِي ٱللَّهُ بِقَوۡمٖ
يُحِبُّهُمۡ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ يُجَٰهِدُونَ
فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوۡمَةَ لَآئِمٖۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضۡلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤۡتِيهِ مَن
يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥٤

[54] O Believers, whoever turns away from Islam, (let him); Allah will raise many such people ' whom He will love and who will love Him; who will be lenient towards the Believers but stern towards the disbelievers;[87] who will exert their utmost in the way of Allah and will not fear the censure of anyone who censures them.[88] This is Allah's bounty: He bestows it on whomever He wills, for Allah's resources are boundless and He is All-Knowing.

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَيُؤۡتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُمۡ رَٰكِعُونَ ٥٥

وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ فَإِنَّ حِزۡبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ

٥٦

[55-56] Your friends, indeed, are Allah and His Messenger and the Believers who establish the Salat, pay the Zakat and bow down before Allah. And whoever makes Allah and His Messenger and the Believers his friends, let him know that Allah's party will surely come out victorious.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّخِذُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُواْ دِينَكُمۡ هُزُوٗا وَلَعِبٗا مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ وَٱلۡكُفَّارَ أَوۡلِيَآءَۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ٥٧

وَإِذَا نَادَيۡتُمۡ إِلَى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ٱتَّخَذُوهَا هُزُوٗا وَلَعِبٗاۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ قَوۡمٞ لَّا يَعۡقِلُونَ

٥٨

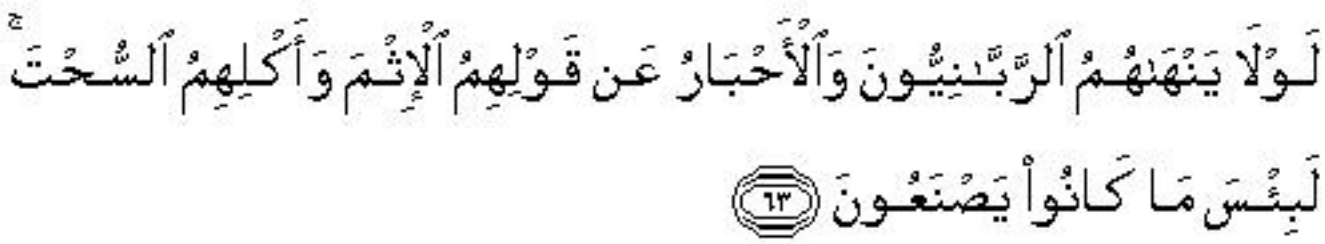
قُلۡ يَٰٓأَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ هَلۡ تَنقِمُونَ مِنَّآ إِلَّآ أَنۡ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡنَا وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن قَبۡلُ وَأَنَّ أَكۡثَرَكُمۡ فَٰسِقُونَ ٥٩

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُم بِشَرٍّ مِّن ذَٰلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ مَن لَّعَنَهُ
ٱللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمُ ٱلْقِرَدَةَ وَٱلْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ
ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ عَن سَوَآءِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿٦٠﴾

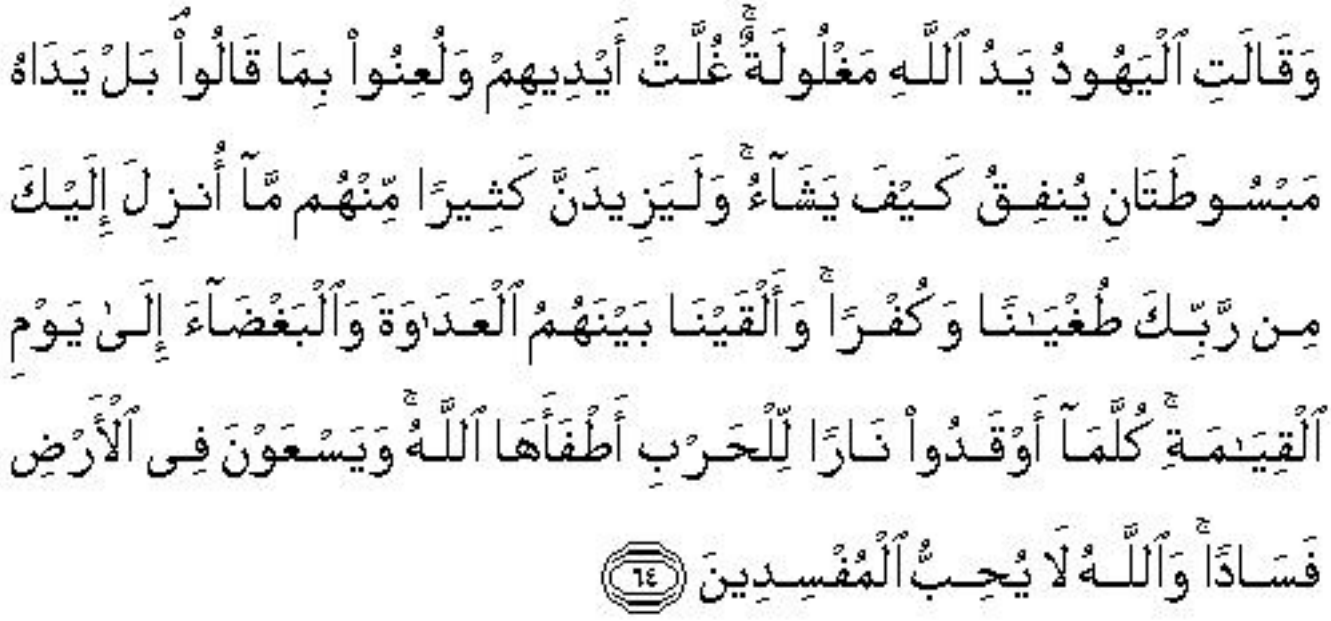
[57-60] O Believers, do not take your friends from among the people, who were given the Book before you and such as make a jest and pastime of your Faith; and (likewise ,do not take for your friends) the other disbelievers; fear Allah, if you are true Believers. When you make a call for the Prayer, they make it an object of jest and sport;[89] this is because they are devoid of understanding.[90] Say to them, "O people of the Book, what is there that gives you offense against us other than that we believe in Allah and what has been sent down to us and what was sent down before us? And the fact is that most of you are transgressors." Then say, "Should I inform you of those, who will have even worse recompense from Allah than the transgressors?" They are those whom Allah has cursed; who have been under His wrath; some of whom were turned into apes and swine; who worshiped taghut; those are the people who are in a far worse plight and who have turned farthest away from the Right Way."[91]

وَإِذَا جَآءُوكُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَقَد دَّخَلُوا۟ بِٱلْكُفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

وَتَرَىٰ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْعُدْوَٰنِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ ٱلسُّحْتَ ۚ
لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾



[61-63] When they come to you, they say, "We have believed," but in fact they had come in a state of un-belief and departed with disbelief; Allah knows full well what they were concealing in their hearts. You see most of them are striving for sinful and wicked deeds and eating what is unlawful: evil indeed are the things they have been doing. Why do their rabbis and divines not forbid them to say sinful words and to eat unlawful things? It is indeed an evil record of their lifework which they are preparing!



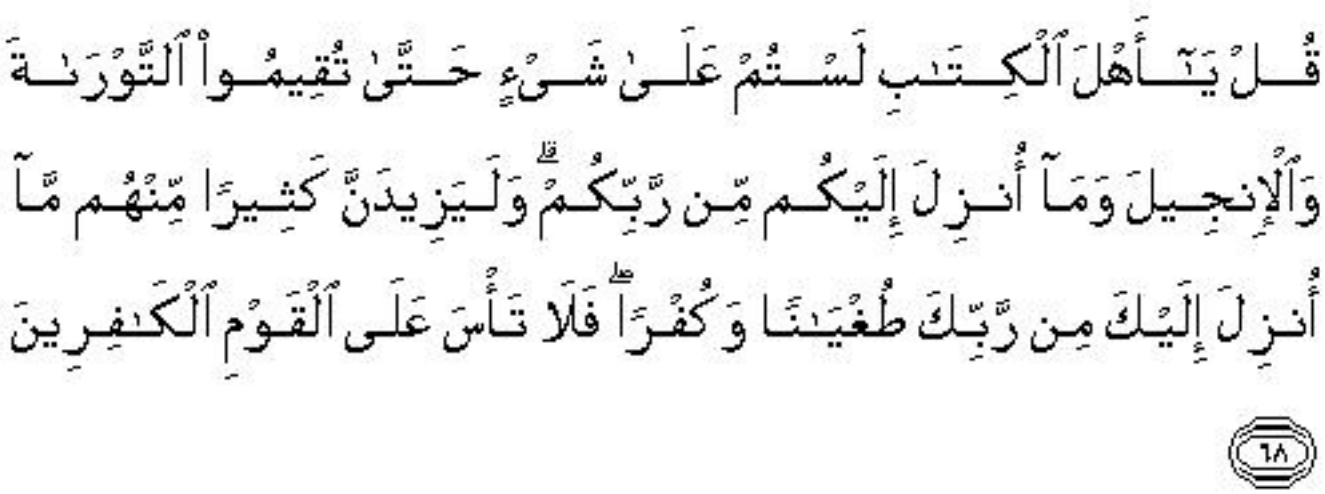
[64] The Jews say that the hands of Allah are chained[92] Nay chained indeed are their own hands[93] and accursed they have become because of the blasphemy they utter[94] Allah's hands are free and He expends in whatever way He wills. The fact is that the Message which has been sent down to you from your Lord has rather increased the rebellion and disbelief of many of them:[95] (as a consequence of this) We have cast between them enmity and hatred till the Day of Resurrection. Whenever they kindle the fire of war, Allah extinguishes it; now they are striving to spread mischief in the world but Allah does not like the mischief makers.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّقَوْا۟ لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَأَدْخَلْنَٰهُمْ
جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

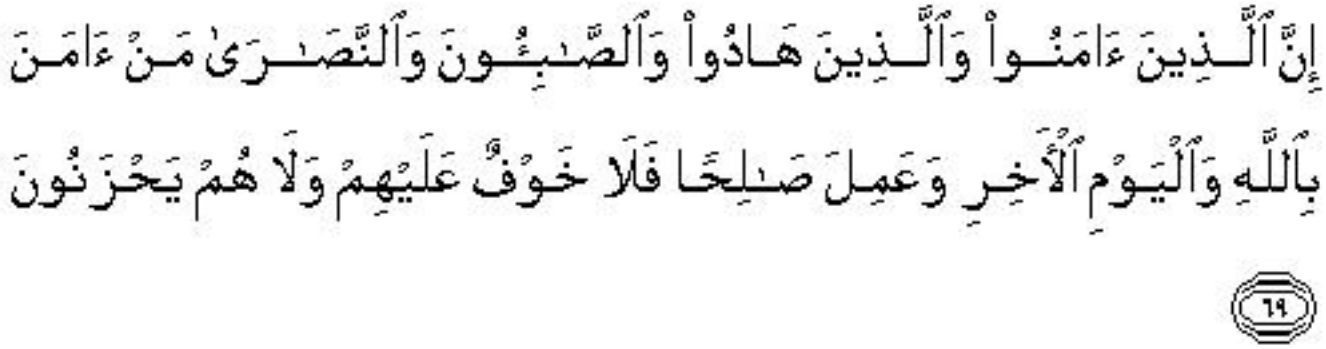
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِم مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
لَأَكَلُوا۟ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ ۚ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ
مِّنْهُمْ سَآءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[65-66] If (instead of this rebellion), the people of the Book had believed and adopted the way of God-fearing, We would have removed their evils from them, and admitted them into the gardens of bliss. Had they observed the Torah and the Gospel and the other Books which had been sent down to them by their Lord, abundance would have been given to them from above and from beneath.[96] Though there are some among them who are righteous, most of them are evil-doers.

۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۖ وَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ
رِسَالَتَهُۥ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾



[67-68] O Messenger, convey to the people whatever has been sent down to you from your Lord; for, if you do not do this, you will not be doing justice to His Message. Allah will protect you from the mischievous deeds of the people. Rest assured that He will not show the disbelievers the way to success (against you). Tell them plainly, "O people of the Book, you have no valid ground to stand on unless you observe the Torah and the Gospel and the other Books which have been sent down to you from your Lord."[97] It is certain that the foregoing decree which has been sent down to you from your Lord, will increase all the more the rebellion and disbelief of many of them,[98] but you should not grieve for the disbelievers.



[69] (Believe it that none enjoys any privilege): whoever from among the Muslims or the Jews or the Sabaeans or the Christians believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds will have no cause of fear or grief or sorrow.[99]

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَأَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ رُسُلًا ۖ
كُلَّمَا جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌۢ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰٓ أَنفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا۟
وَفَرِيقًا يَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

وَحَسِبُوٓا۟ أَلَّا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ فَعَمُوا۟ وَصَمُّوا۟ ثُمَّ تَابَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
ثُمَّ عَمُوا۟ وَصَمُّوا۟ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بَصِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

[70-71] We made a solemn covenant with the children of Israel and sent many Messengers to them; but whenever any Messenger came to them with a thing which was against their desires, they either treated him as a liar or slew him: yet they presumed that no mischief would come of it: they, therefore, became blind and deaf: after this Allah forgave them but again most of them went on behaving even more like the blind and the deaf;.Allah has been watching all the evil things they have been doing.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَقَالَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ
يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبَّكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ
حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ ٱلنَّارُ ۖ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾

[72] Most certainly they committed blasphemy, who said, "Allah, He is indeed the Messiah, Mary's son"; whereas the Messiah had said, "O children of Israel, `worship Allah alone, Who is my Lord and your Lord as well"[99a] Whoever joins a partner with Allah, Allah shall forbid him the Garden, and Hell shall be his abode: and such workers of iniquity shall have no helpers.

لَّقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَٰثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّآ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۚ وَإِن
لَّمْ يَنتَهُواْ عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُۥ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿٧٤﴾

[73-74] Most certainly they committed blasphemy, who said, "God is one of the three": whereas there is no deity other than the One Deity. And if these people do not desist from uttering such words, a painful chastisement shall be inflicted on all those from among them who have been guilty of blasphemy. Will they not, then, turn to Allah and ask His pardon? Allah is very Forgiving and Compassionate.

مَّا ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ
مِن قَبْلِهِ ٱلرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُۥ صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ ٱلطَّعَامَ ۗ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ
لَهُمُ ٱلْأَيَٰتِ ثُمَّ ٱنظُرْ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

[75] The Messiah, son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger: many Messengers had already passed away before him. His mother was a righteous woman and they both ate food. Behold! how We make clear to them the signs leading to the Reality, and, again behold, how they are perverted.[100]

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ۚ وَٱللَّهُ هُوَ
ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٦﴾

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوا۟ فِى دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوٓا۟ أَهْوَآءَ قَوْمٍ
قَدْ ضَلُّوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا۟ كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا۟ عَن سَوَآءِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿٧٧﴾

[76-77] Say to them, "Do you worship instead of Allah that which has no power to harm nor benefit you'? In fact, it is Allah alone Who hears everyone and knows everything." Say, "O people of the Book, do not transgress the bounds of truth in your religion, and do not follow the fancies of those who themselves went astray before you and led astray many others and strayed away from the Right Way."[101]

لُعِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُۥدَ وَعِيسَى ٱبْنِ
مَرْيَمَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا۟ وَّكَانُوا۟ يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

كَانُوا۟ لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَن مُّنكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

تَرَىٰ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ أَن
سَخِطَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِى ٱلْعَذَابِ هُمْ خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

وَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلنَّبِىِّ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ
مَا ٱتَّخَذُوهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ وَلَٰكِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

[78-81] Those who adopted the way of disbelief from among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and of Jesus. Mary's son, because they had grown rebellious and become transgressors: they would not forbid one another to do the wrong deeds they committed;[102] evil was the way they had adopted. Today you see many of them who take the side of the disbelievers (against the Believers). Indeed it is an evil end to which their souls have prompted them: for they have incurred the wrath of Allah and they are going to suffer eternal torment. Had they believed in Allah and the Prophet and in what was revealed to him, they would never have made friends with the disbelievers"[103] (against the Believers), but many of them have become disobedient to Allah.

۞ لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ ٱلنَّاسِ عَدَٰوَةً لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ ۖ
وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا نَصَٰرَىٰ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ
مِنْهُمْ قِسِّيسِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا۟ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰٓ أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ
ٱلدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ ۖ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا فَٱكْتُبْنَا مَعَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ
﴿٨٣﴾

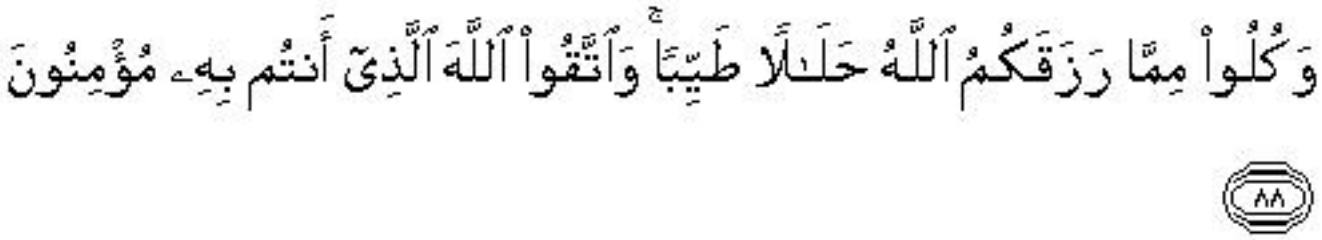
وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَنَطْمَعُ أَن يُدْخِلَنَا
رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

فَأَثَابَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

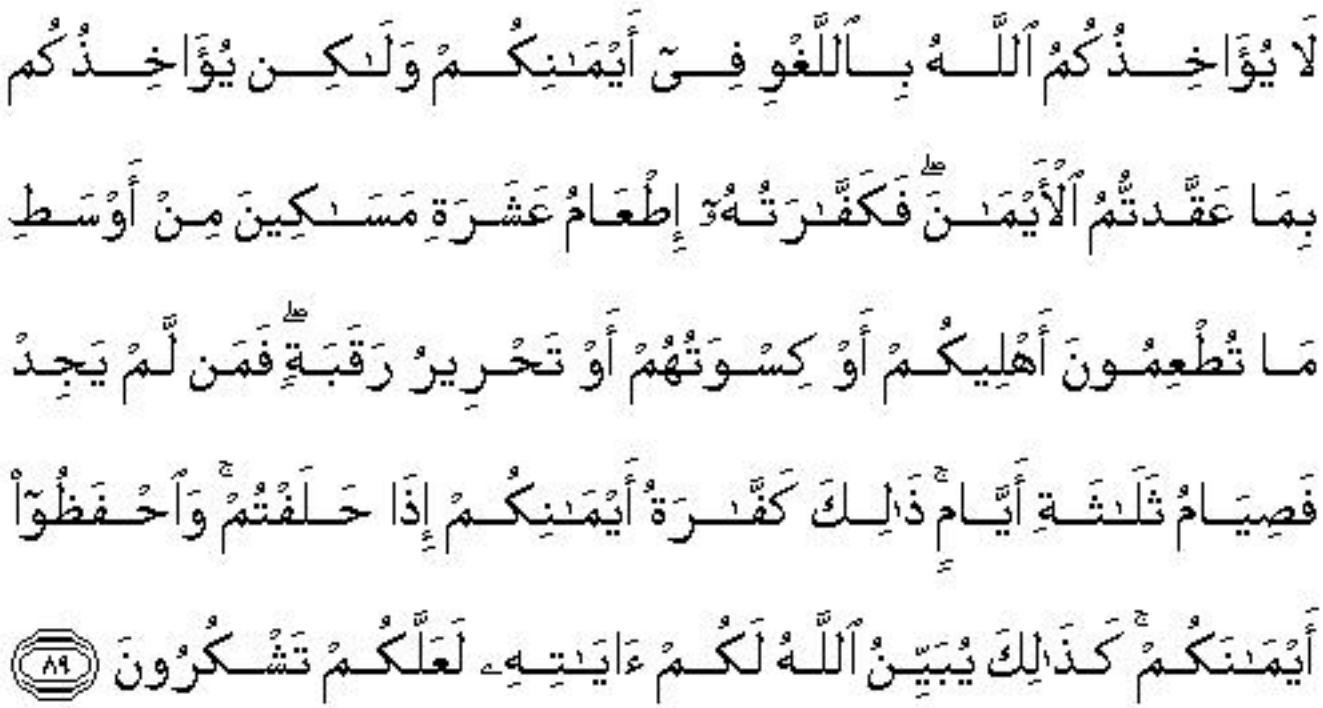
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

[82-86] You will find that the most hostile of all people in their enmity to the Believers are the Jews and the mushriks; and you will find that the nearest in friendliness to the Believers are those, who say, "We are Christians. " This Is because there are among them some pious scholars and monks and because they are free from pride. When they listen to that which has been sent down to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflow with tears because of the Truth they recognize therein. They spontaneously say, "Our Lord, we have believed; therefore, write down our names with those who bear witness to it." And they say, "Why should we not believe in Allah and accept the Truth that has come to us, when we are eager that our Lord may count us with the righteous people?" And, for these words of theirs, Allah rewarded them with the Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein they will live for ever. This is the reward of the righteous people. As for those who rejected Our Revelations and treated them as false. they deserve Hell.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾



[87-88] O Believers, do not make unlawful those pure things which Allah has made lawful for you,[104] and do not go beyond the limit;[105] indeed Allah does not like the transgressors. Eat easefully of the lawful and pure things which Allah has provided you, and refrain from disobeying Allah in Whom you have believed.



[89] Allah does not take you to task for the inadvertent oaths you swear, but He will surely call you to account for the intentional and deliberate oaths you make. The expiation (of breaking such an oath) is to feed ten indigent persons with the normal food you serve in your own family, or to give them clothes, or to free one slave, and the one who cannot afford any of these let him fast three days. This is the expiation of breaking the solemn oaths you have taken;[106] be mindful of your oaths.[107] Thus Allah makes His Commandments plain to you so that you may show gratitude.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّمَا ٱلۡخَمۡرُ وَٱلۡمَيۡسِرُ وَٱلۡأَنصَابُ وَٱلۡأَزۡلَٰمُ رِجۡسٞ مِّنۡ
عَمَلِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِ فَٱجۡتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ٩٠

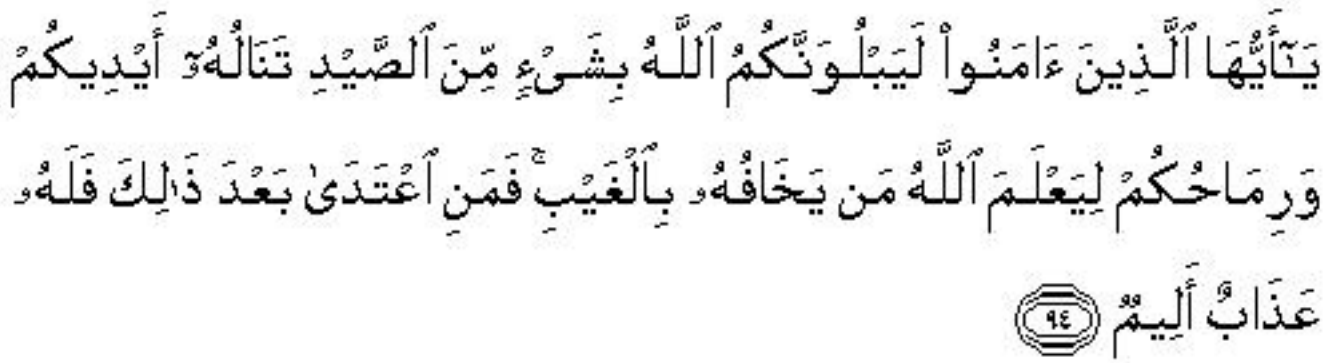
إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ أَن يُوقِعَ بَيۡنَكُمُ ٱلۡعَدَٰوَةَ وَٱلۡبَغۡضَآءَ فِي ٱلۡخَمۡرِ
وَٱلۡمَيۡسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمۡ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ وَعَنِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِۖ فَهَلۡ أَنتُم مُّنتَهُونَ ٩١

وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَٱحۡذَرُواْۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّيۡتُمۡ فَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّمَا عَلَىٰ
رَسُولِنَا ٱلۡبَلَٰغُ ٱلۡمُبِينُ ٩٢

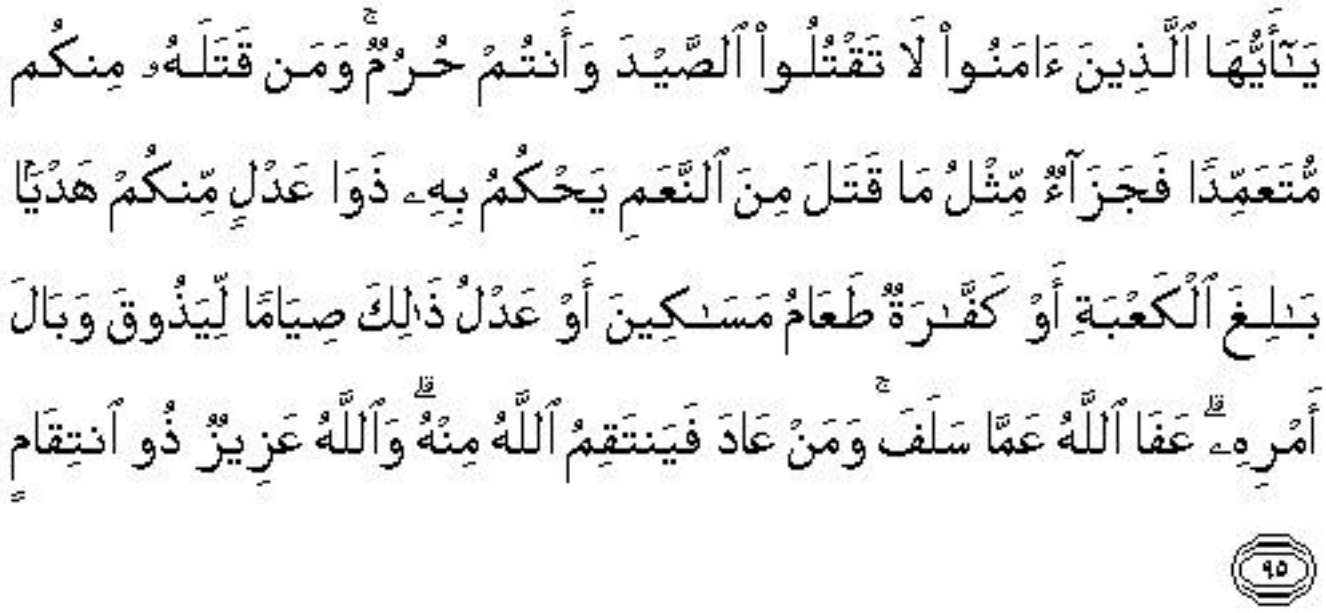
[90-92] O Believers, wine, gambling, (ungodly) shrines and divining devices are all abominable works of Satan:[108] therefore refrain from these so that you may attain to true success.[109] Indeed Satan intends to sow enmity and' hatred among you by means of wine and gambling, and to prevent you from the remembrance of Allah and from Salat. Will you not, , therefore, abstain from these things? Obey Allah and His Messenger and abstain from these things; but if you disobeyed, note it well that Our Messenger's only responsibility was to convey the Message clearly.

لَيۡسَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جُنَاحٞ فِيمَا
طَعِمُوٓاْ إِذَا مَا ٱتَّقَواْ وَّءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ ثُمَّ ٱتَّقَواْ وَّءَامَنُواْ
ثُمَّ ٱتَّقَواْ وَّأَحۡسَنُواْۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ٩٣

[93] Those, who have believed and done good deeds, shall not be called to account for whatever they might have eaten in the past, provided that they abstain in future from those things that have been made unlawful, and remain steadfast in their Faith, and do good works: then restrain themselves from whatever they are forbidden and believe in the Divine Law: then fear Allah and adopt the righteous attitude, for Allah likes those who do righteous deeds.



يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَيَبۡلُوَنَّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِشَيۡءٖ مِّنَ ٱلصَّيۡدِ تَنَالُهُۥٓ أَيۡدِيكُمۡ وَرِمَاحُكُمۡ لِيَعۡلَمَ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُۥ بِٱلۡغَيۡبِۚ فَمَنِ ٱعۡتَدَىٰ بَعۡدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُۥ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ٩٤



يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَقۡتُلُواْ ٱلصَّيۡدَ وَأَنتُمۡ حُرُمٞۚ وَمَن قَتَلَهُۥ مِنكُم مُّتَعَمِّدٗا فَجَزَآءٞ مِّثۡلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ ٱلنَّعَمِ يَحۡكُمُ بِهِۦ ذَوَا عَدۡلٖ مِّنكُمۡ هَدۡيَۢا بَٰلِغَ ٱلۡكَعۡبَةِ أَوۡ كَفَّٰرَةٞ طَعَامُ مَسَٰكِينَ أَوۡ عَدۡلُ ذَٰلِكَ صِيَامٗا لِّيَذُوقَ وَبَالَ أَمۡرِهِۦۗ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَۚ وَمَنۡ عَادَ فَيَنتَقِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِنۡهُۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٞ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٖ ٩٥

[94-95] O Believers, Allah will put you to a hard trial by that game which will come within the very reach of your hands or lances, in order to see who fears Him even though He is invisible: there shall, therefore, be a painful punishment for those who transgress the limits after this warning. O Believers, do not kill game while you are in the state of ihram.[110] And, whoever of you kills an animal intentionally, he small have to make an offering of a head of cattle equivalent to it, which will be decided by two just men from among you. This offering shall have to be sent to the Ka`bah or, failing this, he shall have to feed indigent people by way of expiation or compensate for it by equivalent fasting,[111] so that he may taste the evil consequence of what he did. Allah has forgiven what has gone before, but if anyone repeats the same, Allah will inflict retribution on him: Allah is All-Mighty and All-Powerful to inflict retribution.

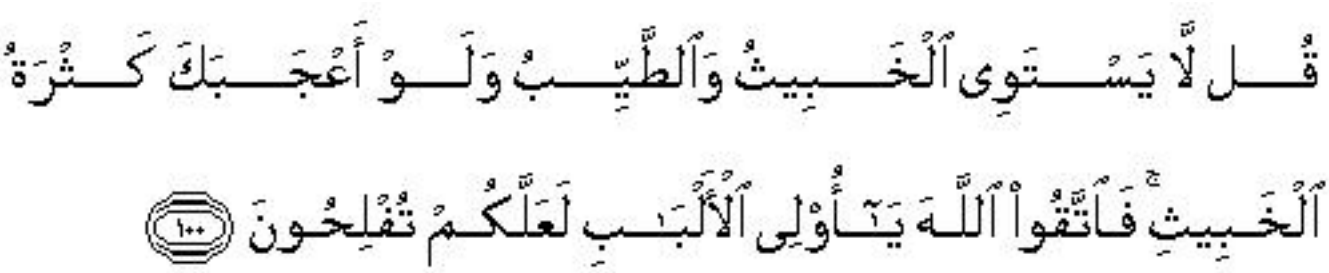
أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ ٱلْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُۥ مَتَٰعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ ۖ وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
صَيْدُ ٱلْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا ۗ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِىٓ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

[96] Game of the sea and its use as food has been made lawful for you:[112] you may eat it at your halting place and also use it as a provision for the caravan, but the game of the land has been prohibited so long as you are in the state of ihram. So refrain from the disobedience of that Allah before Whom you shall all be mustered together.

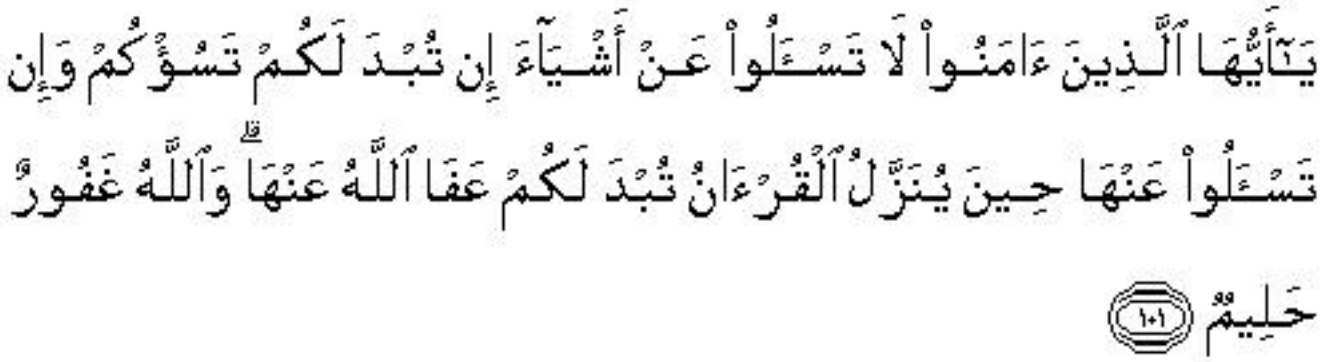
۞ جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْكَعْبَةَ ٱلْبَيْتَ ٱلْحَرَامَ قِيَٰمًا لِّلنَّاسِ وَٱلشَّهْرَ ٱلْحَرَامَ وَٱلْهَدْىَ
وَٱلْقَلَٰٓئِدَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ
ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٧﴾

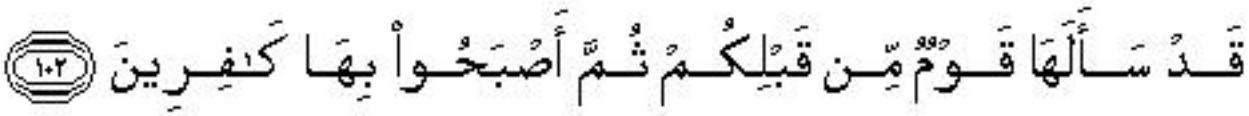
ٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٩٨﴾

مَّا عَلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ
﴿٩٩﴾



[97-100] Allah has made the sacred House of the Ka'bah a means of stabilizing the (community) life of the people ; the sacred month and the animal offerings and the animals which are collared as a mark of dedication (have also been made conducive to the same object)[113] so that you may know that Allah is fully aware of all that is in the heavens and the earth and that He has perfect knowledge of everything.[114] Note it well that Allah is very severe in punishing. and at the same time He is very Forbearing and Merciful. The only duty of the Messenger is to convey the Message ; Allah knows whatever you disclose and whatever you hide.. Tell them, O Messenger, that the pure and the impure cannot be alike anyhow, although the abundance of the impure may allure you much.[115] So, O people of understanding, refrain from the disobedience of Allah : it is expected that you will attain to true success.





[101-102] O Believers, do not ask questions concerning such things, which, if made known to you, would only vex you[116] but, if you will ask such questions at the time when the Qur'an is being sent down, they will be made known to you. Allah has forgiven what you have done so far : for He is Forgiving and Forbearing. Some people before you asked such questions : then they were involved in disbelief because of those very things.[117]

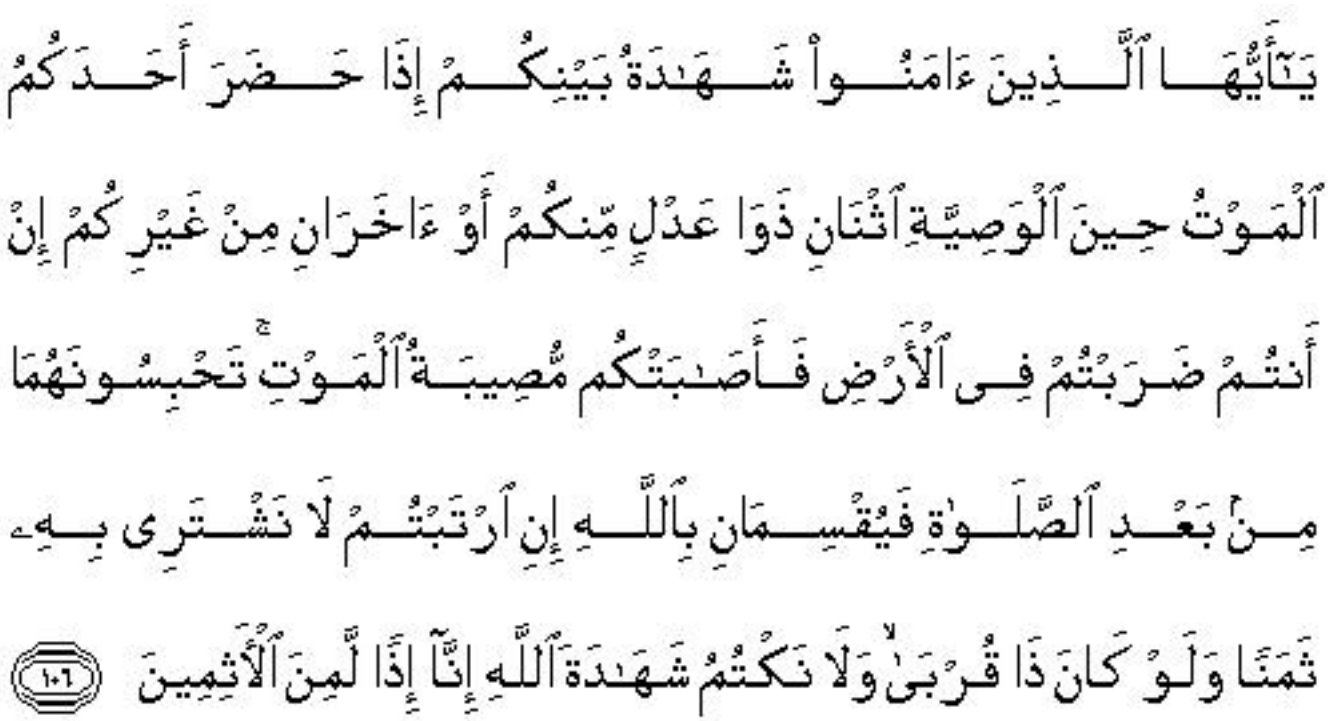
مَا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنۢ بَحِيرَةٍ وَلَا سَآئِبَةٍ وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ وَلَا حَامٍ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ ۖ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ وَإِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ قَالُوا۟
حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَآ ۚ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ ءَابَآؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا
يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

[103-104] Allah has ordained neither Bahirah nor Sai bah nor Wasilah nor Ham[118] but the unbelievers have invented a falsehood against Allah, and most of them lack understanding (so they believe in such superstitions). And when it is said to them, "Come to the Law which Allah has sent down and to the Messenger," they reply, "Sufficient for us is the way on which we found our forefathers.' What! will they go on following their forefathers, even if they knew nothing, and were quite ignorant of the Right Way?

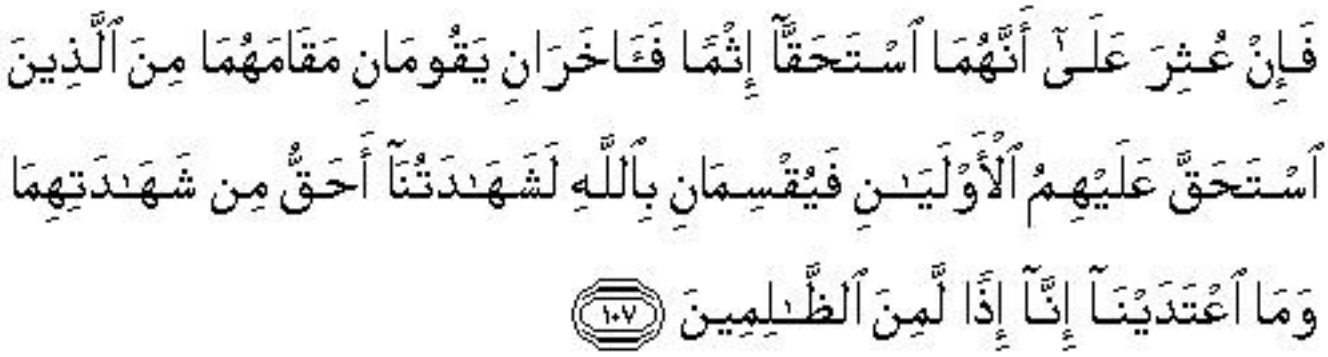
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا ٱهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۚ
إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[105] O Believers, look after your own souls ; it can do no harm to you, if anyone else goes astray, provided that you yourselves are on the right path.[119] To Allah shall you all return :then He will let you know what you have been doing.



يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ شَهَٰدَةُ بَيۡنِكُمۡ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ
ٱلۡمَوۡتُ حِينَ ٱلۡوَصِيَّةِ ٱثۡنَانِ ذَوَا عَدۡلٖ مِّنكُمۡ أَوۡ ءَاخَرَانِ مِنۡ غَيۡرِكُمۡ إِنۡ
أَنتُمۡ ضَرَبۡتُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَأَصَٰبَتۡكُم مُّصِيبَةُ ٱلۡمَوۡتِۚ تَحۡبِسُونَهُمَا
مِنۢ بَعۡدِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ فَيُقۡسِمَانِ بِٱللَّهِ إِنِ ٱرۡتَبۡتُمۡ لَا نَشۡتَرِي بِهِۦ
ثَمَنٗا وَلَوۡ كَانَ ذَا قُرۡبَىٰ وَلَا نَكۡتُمُ شَهَٰدَةَ ٱللَّهِ إِنَّآ إِذٗا لَّمِنَ ٱلۡأٓثِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[106] O Believers, when the time of death approaches anyone of you,and he is going to make his will, the principle of evidence is that two just men[120] from among you should act as witnesses. Or, if you are on a journey and the calamity of death befalls you there, the two witnesses may be taken from among the non Muslims.[121] Then, if you have any doubt, both the witnesses should be detained (in the mosque) after the Prayer, and they should testify upon oath by Allah, "We are not going to sell our evidence for any personal benefit, and even though he be our own relative, (we will not be partial to him) ; we are not going to hide evidence which we are giving for the sake of Allah for we shall be sinners if we do so"



فَإِنۡ عُثِرَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنَّهُمَا ٱسۡتَحَقَّآ إِثۡمٗا فَـَٔاخَرَانِ يَقُومَانِ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ
ٱسۡتَحَقَّ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡأَوۡلَيَٰنِ فَيُقۡسِمَانِ بِٱللَّهِ لَشَهَٰدَتُنَا أَحَقُّ مِن شَهَٰدَتِهِمَا
وَمَا ٱعۡتَدَيۡنَآ إِنَّآ إِذٗا لَّمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

ذَٰلِكَ أَدۡنَىٰٓ أَن يَأۡتُواْ بِٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ عَلَىٰ وَجۡهِهَآ أَوۡ يَخَافُوٓاْ أَن تُرَدَّ أَيۡمَٰنُۢ
بَعۡدَ أَيۡمَٰنِهِمۡۗ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱسۡمَعُواْۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهۡدِي ٱلۡقَوۡمَ ٱلۡفَٰسِقِينَ
١٠٨

[107-108] But if it is discovered that the two had been guilty of the same sin, then two other better qualified witnesses than the former, from among those who were deprived of their right, should come forward and testify upon oath, by Allah, "Our testimony is truer than their testimony, and we have not made any transgression in our testimony: we shall be among the unjust, if we do so." It is expected that in this way the people will give only true evidence: or, at least, they will fear lest their oaths should be contradicted by subsequent oaths. Fear Allah and listen: Allah does not show His Guidance to those who are disobedient.

۞ يَوۡمَ يَجۡمَعُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَآ أُجِبۡتُمۡۖ قَالُواْ لَا عِلۡمَ لَنَآۖ إِنَّكَ
أَنتَ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلۡغُيُوبِ ١٠٩

إِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ٱذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِى عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَتِكَ إِذْ
أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ ٱلنَّاسَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا ۖ وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ۖ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ ٱلطِّينِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ ٱلطَّيْرِ
بِإِذْنِى فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًۢا بِإِذْنِى ۖ وَتُبْرِئُ ٱلْأَكْمَهَ وَٱلْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِى ۖ
وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِى ۖ وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَنكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم
بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى ٱلْحَوَارِيِّـۧنَ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِى وَبِرَسُولِى قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا وَٱشْهَدْ
بِأَنَّنَا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

إِذْ قَالَ ٱلْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَن
يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۖ قَالَ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

قَالُوا۟ نُرِيدُ أَن نَّأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَن قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ
عَلَيْهَا مِنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ ٱللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَآ أَنزِلۡ عَلَيۡنَا مَآئِدَةٗ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا
عِيدٗا لِّأَوَّلِنَا وَءَاخِرِنَا وَءَايَةٗ مِّنكَۖ وَٱرۡزُقۡنَا وَأَنتَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ١١٤

[109-114] On the Day,[122] -- when Allah will assemble all the Messengers, He will ask, "What was the response you received?"[123] They will answer, "We have no knowledge:[124] You alone have the full knowledge of all that is hidden." Just imagine the occasion, when Allah will say[125] "O Jesus, son of Mary, recall to mind My favor I bestowed upon you and upon your mother: I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit; you talked to the people even in the cradle as you talked when you were grown up; I taught you the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel: by My leave you made from clay the likeness of a bird, and breathed into it, and by My leave it became a living bird; by My leave you healed the born-blind and the lepers; by My leave you brought forth the dead.[126] Also remember that I protected you from the Israelites, when you came to them with clear signs, and the disbelievers among them said, `These signs are nothing but obvious sorcery" and remember also that I inspired the Disciples to believe in Me and My Messenger; then they said, `We have believed and bear witness that we are Muslims."[127] (In regard to the disciples),[128] this incident may also be kept in mind: They said, "O Jesus, son of Mary, can your Lord send down to us from heaven a tray of food?" Jesus said, "Fear Allah, if you are true Believers." They replied, "We only wish to eat of this tray so that our hearts may be re-assured and we may know it for certain that what you have said to us is true, and that we may bear witness to it." At this, Jesus, son of Mary, prayed, "O Allah, our Lord, send to us from heaven a tray of food that it may become a recurring festival to us, to the first of us and to the last of us, and that it may be a Sign from You. Provide for us and You are the best of providers."

قَالَ ٱللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيۡكُمۡۖ فَمَن يَكۡفُرۡ بَعۡدُ مِنكُمۡ فَإِنِّيٓ أُعَذِّبُهُۥ عَذَابٗا لَّآ
أُعَذِّبُهُۥٓ أَحَدٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ١١٥

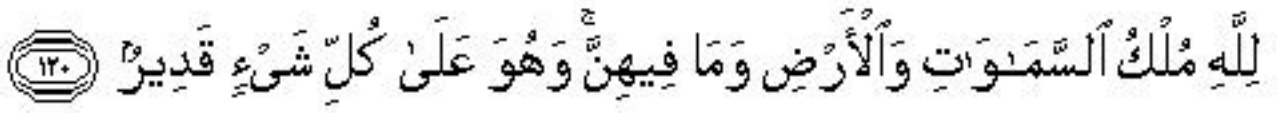
وَإِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ ٱتَّخِذُونِى وَأُمِّىَ
إِلَٰهَيْنِ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِىٓ أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِى
بِحَقٍّ ۚ إِن كُنتُ قُلْتُهُۥ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُۥ ۚ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِى نَفْسِى وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِى
نَفْسِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَآ أَمَرْتَنِى بِهِۦٓ أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبَّكُمْ ۚ وَكُنتُ
عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِى كُنتَ أَنتَ ٱلرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ
وَأَنتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۖ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ
﴿١١٨﴾

قَالَ ٱللَّهُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنفَعُ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾

[115-119] Allah answered, "I am going to send it down to you,[129] but whoever among you shall disbelieve after that, I will surely give him such a chastisement wherewith I will not have chastised any other creature in the world." (After reminding him of these favors), Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary, did you ever say to the people, 'Make me and my mother deities besides Allah'?"[130] He will say. "Glory be to You! It did not behoove me to say that which I had no right to say. Had I ever said such a thing, You would most surely have known it, for You know all that is in my mind, but I do not know what is in Your mind: indeed You have full knowledge of all the hidden things. I never told them anything other than what You bade me. I said, `Worship Allah, Who is my Lord as well as your Lord.' I was a witness to their conduct as long as I remained among them but when You recalled me, You watched over them; for You keep watch aver everything. Now, if You punish them, they are your own servants, and if You forgive them, You are All-powerful and All Wise. " Then Allah will declare, "This is the Day when the truthfulness of the truthful benefits them; there are such Gardens for them underneath which canals flow; they will dwell therein for ever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him; this is the Greatest success."



[120] The Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and whatever is therein belongs to Allah and He has power over everything.

1The Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and whatever is therein belongs to Allah and He has power over everything.

2The Arabic word an `am applies to camel, cow (ox), sheep and goat and bahimah to all kinds of grazing quadrupeds. The combination of the two words has made the meaning more comprehensive by including all the grazing quadrupeds that resemble those four contained in the word an'am. It also implies that the carnivore that kill other animals for food are unlawful. The Holy Prophet made this explicit in a Tradition declaring the carnivore unlawful. Likewise he also declared unlawful those birds that have claws and kill other animals for food or eat dead bodies According to Ibn `Abbas, the Holy Prophet prohibited the eating of the flesh of the carnivore and of the birds with claws. Other Traditions from several Companions also support the same.

3Ihram is the pilgrim's robe which has to be put on at fixed boundaries at the known distances from the Ka'abah. It is not lawful for any pilgrim to proceed to the Ka`abah until he puts off his usual dress and puts on the pilgrim's garb. This consists of two pieces of cloth without seam or ornament, one of which is wrapped round the loins and the other thrown over the shoulders. The instep, heel and head must be bare. This is called the state of Ihram because it makes unlawful even some of the things that are ordinarily lawful. For instance, one should not have a shave or a hair-cut and should not wear other clothes or ornaments nor use perfumes nor indulge in sensual desires and the like. Another restriction is

the prohibition against killing any animate object or against hunting or against directing any one else to help hunt an animal. (Please refer also to E.N. 213, Al-Baqarah).

4This means that Allah has absolute authority to issue any decree He wills, and that the servants have no right at all to question it. Though all His Decrees and Commands are based on wisdom and are full of excellence, yet a Muslim, His servant, does not obey these just because they are proper and conducive to his good, but obeys them because they are commandments from his Sovereign. If He declares anything to be un-lawful, it becomes un-lawful for no other reason than that it has been made unlawful by Him. Likewise if He makes anything lawful, it becomes lawful for no other reason than that its Owner and the Owner of everything permits His servants to use it. That is why the Qur'an establishes with full force the fundamental principle that the only basis which makes a thing lawful or unlawful is whether there is the permission of the Owner for its use or not. Likewise there is no other basis for the servant to consider a thing to be lawful or un-lawful except that it is lawful if Allah makes it lawful and un-lawful if He prohibits it.

5Sha a-ir is the plural of shi- ar (emblem). Every object or a representation of it, that symbolizes a way or a creed or a mode of thought or action or a system is called its shi'-ar because it serves as an emblem of it. Official flags,police and army uniforms, coins, currency notes, stamps etc., are the sha "a-ir of governments which demand due respect for these from all under them, and, as far as possible, from others as well. For instance, Temple. Altar, Cross etc., are the .sha'a-ir of Christianity. the Hammer and Sickle is the shi-'ar of the Communist Party, and- the Swastika of the Nazi Party. AII of them demand reverence and respect for their emblems from their followers. If anyone shows disrespect for any of the emblems of any system, it is an indication that he has enmity with that system and it the offender belongs to the same system, this act will be tantamount to apostasy and rebellion against it.

The Sha a-ir-Allah (Emblems of Allah) are those signs and symbols that represent the pure way of God-worship as against the ways of idolatry, unbelief, paganism and atheism. The Muslims are required to show respect to the emblems of Allah wherever they find them in any way or system, provided that their psychological background is purely attributed to God-worship and has not in any way been polluted by any association with idolatry or unbelief. Therefore, if a Muslim comes across anything in the creed and deed of a non-Muslim which has an element of God-worship in it, he will show due respect to that element and to the emblems connected with God-worship. There will be no dispute with the non Muslims on that account: a dispute arises only when he pollutes God-worship with the worship of others.

In this connection, it should be noted that the command to show due respect to the emblems of Allah was given at a time when the Muslims were at war with the pagan Arabs who were in possession of Makkah. This was necessitated because some of the pagan Arabs had to pass on their way to the Ka'abah through places where the Muslims could strike at them easily. Therefore the Muslims were enjoined not to molest them when they were proceeding to the House of Allah, even though they were idolaters and at war with them. Like wise, the Muslims should not attack them during the months of Hajj nor snatch from

them those animals, which they were taking to the House of Allah as offering. This is to ensure that the element of God-worship, which had .remained intact in their corrupt religion, should be respected and not violated

6Immediately after this Command, a few emblems of Allah have been specially mentioned because there was an imminent danger of their violation by the Muslims owing to the state of war. This does not, however, mean that these emblems alone are to be respected.

7Incidentally the command about ihram has been given here because this is also one of the emblems of Allah. Hunting during the state of ihram is prohibited, because it is the violation of one of the emblems of Allah. But when the restrictions of ihram come to an end according to the law, one is permitted to hunt, if one desires to do so.

8This prohibition was laid down to check the Muslims from preventing the pagan Arabs from proceeding to Hajj and attacking them when they were passing through their territories. The Muslims had been so enraged when their enemies had prevented them from visiting the Ka'abah and from the performance of Hajj in contravention of their old custom that they were prone to retaliate, but Allah warned them not to transgress the bounds.

9That is, the flesh of the animal that dies a natural death.

10That is, the flesh of the animal which has been slaughtered in the name of another than Allah or has been slaughtered with the intention of dedicating. it to a saint or a god or a goddess etc. (Please also see E.N. 171 of Al-Baqarah).

11That is, "If an animal falls a victim to any of these accidents but is still alive and is duly slaughtered, it is lawful to eat its flesh". This also implies that the flesh of a clean animal becomes lawful only when it is slaughtered in the prescribed way and that there is no other way of making it lawful. In the prescribed way only that much of the throat is cut that enables the blood to flow out freely. This cannot happen if the whole of the neck is cut off or if the animal is strangled or killed in any other way because in that case most of the blood remains in the body and congeals at different places and sticks to the flesh. But when it is slaughtered in the prescribed way, the whole of the body remains connected with the brain for a sufficiently long time to allow the blood to flow totally out of the body and the flesh is cleansed of the blood which in itself is unlawful. Therefore it is essential that the flesh should be cleansed of blood in order to become lawful.

12The Arabic word nusub applies to all those places which have been specifically dedicated to any saint or god, etc., for making offerings to them or for any other kind of ungodly worship whether there is or is not any sort of stone or wooden idol therein.

13In this connection, it should be understood well that the limits prescribed by the Law for making eatables lawful or unlawful are not laid down from the point of view of physical health but from the moral and spiritual points of view. As regards the matters concerning physical health, these have been left to man's own judgment and discretion, It is his own business to find out what things are useful or harmful for his physical health and nourishment and the Law does not take any responsibility for his guidance in this respect. Had it done so, poison would have been the first thing to be made unlawful, but there is absolutely no mention of this or other deadly things in the Qur'an or the Traditions. The Law is only concerned about what is morally or spiritually harmful or beneficial and also about the right or wrong means for obtaining lawful things. It is obvious that man has no means of finding out these things by himself and is consequently liable to commit errors in this matter without the guidance of the law. For whatever has been prohibited, has been prohibited because it is harmful from the point of view of cleanliness or morality or belief. On the contrary, whatever has been made lawful, has been made so because it is free from all these evils.

One might ask why Allah has not explained the philosophy underlying the prohibition of certain things for the clear understanding of the people. This is because it is not possible for mankind to comprehend this. For instance, it is not possible for us to make a research into the nature of moral evils that are produced by eating carrion, blood or the flesh of swine, nor is it easy to find out how they are produced and to what extent, because we have no means of measuring or weighing morality, It is, therefore, obvious that, even if their evil effects had been explained, the position of the skeptic would have remained the same as before for the lack of means of testing their veracity.

This is why Allah has declared the observance of the limits prescribed for the lawful and the unlawful as a matter of belief. One, who believes in the Qur'an as the book of God and in the Holy Prophet as His Messenger and in Allah as All Knowing and All-Wise, will observe the prescribed limits whether one understands their philosophy or not. On the other hand, if one does not believe in this basic creed, one will avoid only those things which are harmful according to human knowledge and will go on suffering from the consequences of those which man has not learned to be harmful.

14This verse comprises three categories of prohibitions:

(1) It prohibits the pagan ways of taking omens from a god or a goddess and the like, about one's fortune or getting indications as to the future or deciding disputes. For instance, the pagan Quraish of Makkah had specified the idol of Hubal at the Ka`abh for this purpose and kept near it seven divining arrows. They would, after presenting the offering to the priest and performing certain ceremonies, pull out an arrow and regard the words engraved on it as the verdict of Hubal.

(2) The second category consists of the superstitious ways and irrational methods of taking decisions about the daily problems of life for anything regarded as portending good or evil regardless of reason or

knowledge, or of finding out future events blindly by the ominous significance of particular things, circumstances, occurrences or proceedings or the like. In short, it included all the so-called arts of prediction and prophetic significance.

(3) The third category includes all kinds of gambling in which the distribution of things etc., is based on mere chance and not on merit, right, service or other rational considerations. For instance, all the schemes of lottery which entitle a certain holder of a ticket to a prize merely on chance, and at the expense of a large number of other holders of such tickets, or the award of prizes for cross-word puzzles in which a certain answer out of a large number of correct ones corresponds, by mere chance, to the answer that has been ear-marked as correct for the purpose - all these things are unlawful.

However, one simple form of casting lots is lawful in Islam, when there are two equally lawful things or rights and there is no rational method of deciding between them. Supposing two persons have equal rights, in every respect, to something and the judge finds no rational justification to give preference to either of the disputants, neither of whom is willing to forgo his rights. In such a case, if they mutually agree, the matter may be decided by casting lots, or if one has to choose one of the two lawful things and is in difficulty in regard to the choice, one is allowed to cast lots for it. The Holy Prophet adopted this method on such occasions as required a choice to be made between two persons with equal rights, whenever he thought that if he himself decided in favor of one, the other might be grieved.

15"Today" does not mean a particular day or date but the time when this verse was revealed.

"The disbelievers have despaired of your religion" means: "After along systematic resistance and opposition, they have lost hope of defeating your religion. Now they do not expect that you wilt ever return to the former way of "ignorance" because your religion has become a permanent way of life and has been established on a firm footing. Therefore. "Do not fear them but fear Me." That is, there is no longer any danger of interference from the disbelievers that they will prevent you from the performance of your religious obligations. You should, therefore, fear God and observe His commands and instructions because no ground for fear has been left for you. Now your disobedience of the Law will mean that you do not intend to obey Allah."

16"I have perfected your religion" means: "I have provided it with all the essential elements of a permanent way of life which comprises a complete system of thought and practice and civilization and have laid down principles and given detailed instructions for the solution of all human problems. Hence there is no need for you to seek guidance and instructions from any other source."

The completion of "the blessing" is the completion of the blessing of guidance.

"I have approved Islam as the way of life for you" because you have practically proved by your obedience and devotion to it that you sincerely believe in Islam which you have accepted. As I have practically set

you free from every kind of subjection and servitude there is no compulsion for you to submit to any other than Me in your practical life." It also implies, "As a gratitude for these blessings of Mine, you should show no negligence in the observance of the prescribed limits."

Authentic traditions show that this declaration was revealed on the occasion of the last Hajj performed by the Holy Prophet in A.H. 10. I am however of the opinion that it was at first revealed in A.H. 6 close after the treaty of Hudaibiyah as a part of this discourse, but was again sent down to the Holy Prophet for its declaration on that suitable occasion. This is because this verse is so well knit in this context that it would be incomplete without it, Therefore it cannot Be imagined that it was inserted here afterwards when it was revealed in A.H. 10. I believe (and the real knowledge is with Allah) that at the time of its revelation in this context its real significance was not realized, therefore in A.H. 10, when the whole of Arabia was subdued and the power of Islam reached its zenith, Allah again sent down these sentences to His Prophet for their declaration on the occasion of his last Hajj.

17Please refer to E.N. 172 of Al-Baqarah.

18A subtle point is hidden in this answer. It is meant to set right the doubting attitude of some "religious persons," who regard everything as unlawful unless it is explicitly declared to be lawful. There was a need to remove this doubt because it makes people very fastidious. So much so that such people begin to demand a complete list of lawful things in every sphere of life and look at everything with a doubting attitude. Those who asked the question did so with the intention of obtaining a detailed list of the lawful things so that they might consider all other things as unlawful. However, the Qur'an did the opposite of it and gave a detailed list of the forbidden things and made all other good things lawful. This was a great reform, for it set human life free from many bondages and opened wide the doors of the vast world for mankind. Before its revelation only a limited number of things were lawful and the remaining vast world was unlawful, but this verse declared a limited number of things unlawful and made the remaining vast world lawful.

"Lawful" has been qualified with "pure"so that impure things might not be made lawful just because they have not been included in the list of prohibition. As regards the criterion for judging whether a thing is pure or not, it should be noted that all those things are pure which are not unclean according to any principle of the Islamic Law, or which are not offensive to good taste or have not universally been regarded as repugnant by cultured people.

19Hunting animals are dogs, leopards, falcons, hawks and other beasts and birds of prey which are trained to chase wild animals and catch them for their masters, without mangling them. The game of the trained hunting animals is lawful because they do not mangle it and that of the untrained beasts and birds of prey is unlawful because they mangle it.

There is, however, a difference of opinion among the jurists about this matter. Imam Shafi`i and those of

his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting beast or bird eats a part of what it catches, it becomes unlawful, for this means that the animal had caught the game for itself and not for its master. Imam Malik and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting bird or beast eats less than one-third of the game, the remaining two-thirds or so is lawful for the master. Imam Abu Hanifah and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting beast eats a part of what it catches, the remaining game will become unlawful, but if the hunting bird eats a part of it the remaining game will not become unlawful because the hunting beast can be trained to catch and hold the game for its master without eating anything of it, but the hunting bird cannot be so trained. In contrast to these views, Hadrat `Ali is of the opinion that the game of the hunting bird is absolutely unlawful, because it cannot be trained to catch and hold the game for its master without eating something of it. But in case it is not found alive, it will be lawful if the name of Allah was mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal. The same also applies to hunting with arrows.

20That is one should recite bismillah ("In the name of Allah,"), when letting loose the hunting animal for game. According to a Tradition, `Adi-bin Hatim asked the Holy Prophet whether he could hunt a game with a hunting dog. The Holy Prophet replied, "You may eat of the game if you recited the name of Allah at the time of letting loose the hunting dog, provided that he did not eat of it. In the other case you should not eat it because that would mean that the dog had actually caught it for himself." Then `Adi-bin-Hatim further asked, "If 1 let loose my own dog, on the game but afterwards find another dog there, what should I do in that case'?" The Holy Prophet replied, "Do not eat it because you mentioned the name of Allah in relation to your own dog and not the other dog."

The verse enjoins that the name of Allah must be mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal in order to make the game lawful. If, however, the hunted animal is found alive, it should be duly slaughtered in the name of Allah. But in case it is not found alive, it will be lawful if the name of Allah was mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal. The same also applies to hunting with arrows.

21"The food of the People of the Book" also includes what has been slaughtered by them.

"The food of the People of the Book is lawful for you and your food for them" means that there are no restrictions either on us or on them to take food together. The Muslims are permitted to take meals with the People of the Book and they with the Muslims. But the repetition of the sentence "all good and pure things have been made lawful for you" is very significant. It shows that the Muslims should not partake of their food, if the people of the Book do not observe those rules which are essential from the point of view of the Islamic Law, or if they include unlawful things in their food and drink. For instance, if they do not mention the name of Allah over the animal they slaughter or mention any other name than that of Allah over it, the flesh would be forbidden for the Muslims. Likewise if liquor or pork or any other forbidden things is served, the Muslims are not permitted to sit at the same table with them.

The same rule also applies to the food and drink of other non-Muslims except that the Muslims are not

permitted at all to eat the flesh of the animals slaughtered by non-Muslims. They are permitted to eat the flesh of the clean animals, slaughtered by the People of the Book only, if they duly pronounced the name of Allah over it.

22This refers to the Jews and the Christians. Permission to marry only their women has been given, and that , too, with the provision that they should be chaste (muhsanat). There is a difference of opinion in the details of the application of this permission. According to Ibn 'Abbas, a Muslim may marry from among the women of the People of the Book who are the subjects of the Islamic State, but is not permitted to marry from among the women of the People of the Book living in the regions which are at war with the Islamic State or are living in a territory of the unbelievers. The Hanafis differ a little from this and consider it undesirable, though not unlawful, to marry women from among the People of the Book living in a foreign territory. On the contrary, Said bin Musayyib and Hasan Basri are of the opinion that the Command is of a general nature; therefore there is no need to make any kind of distinction between the People of the Book whether they are subjects of an Islamic State or living in a foreign territory.

Besides this there also is a difference in the interpretations of the word muhsanat. According to Hadrat `Umar, it refers to virtuous and chaste women. That is why he excludes characterless women of the People of the Book from this permission. Hasan, Sha`bi and Ibrahim Nakha`i are of the same opinion and the Hanafis also approve of this. On the other side, Imam Shafi`i takes it to mean free women of the people of the Book as opposed to the slave-girls from among them.

23The warning that immediately follows the permission given to marry women from among the People of the Book is very significant. The Muslim who makes use of this permission has been warned to guard his faith and morality very cautiously against the influence of his unbelieving wife. There is a genuine danger that his deep love might -tender him a prey to wrong creeds and acts of his unbelieving wife and he might lose both his Faith and morality, or he might adopt a wrong moral and social attitude which might be against the spirit of his faith.

24According to the practice and instructions of the Holy Prophet, washing of the face includes the inside washing and cleaning of the mouth, throat and nose. It is also essential to wipe the ears from outside and inside as they form part of the head. The hands should be cleansed first because the other parts are to he cleansed with them.

25A full bath is essential in case one becomes "unclean" by cohabitation or by a discharge of semen during sleep etc. It is forbidden to touch the Qur'an or to offer the Prayer while one is "unclean". (For further details please refer to E.N.`s 67, 68, 69 of An-Nisa).

26Please refer to E.N.'s 69 and 70 of An-Nisa.

27Cleanliness of the body is a blessing like the purity of the soul. The blessing of Allah becomes complete only when one gets full guidance for the purity of both the body and the soul.

28The blessing is that Allah has made the right way of life clear for the Muslims and appointed them to the high position of the leadership of the world to guide it on the straight path.

29Please refer to E.N.'s 164 and 165 of An-Nisa.

30This refers to the incident that has been related by Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas. Some Jews plotted to kill the Holy Prophet and some of his eminent Companions in order to give a crushing blow to Islam. Accordingly, they invited him to a dinner. But right in time the Holy Prophet by the grace of God came to know of the plot and did not go to the dinner. This incident has been mentioned here by way of introduction, as the address onward is directed towards the Israelites.

The address, which begins from here, has two objects. First, it is meant to warn the Muslims to guard against the attitude which the Jews and the Christians had adopted towards the covenant they had made with God: they had broken the covenant and swerved into wrong and evil ways. Second, it warns the Jews and the Christians of their error and invites them to the Right Way.

31The Arabic word nagib means one who guards and keeps a protecting and restraining watch. Allah commanded Moses to appoint twelve supervisors one each from the twelve tribes of Israel to keep watch over their affairs in order to protect them from irreligious and immoral ways. The Bible mentions twelve "princes of the tribes of their fathers" (Numbers, 1:16) as "heads of thousands in Israel" but not as supervisors of religion and morality as is implied in the word nagib.

32That is, "If you accept the invitation of the Messengers who come from Me and help them in their mission....."

33"..... a good loan to God" is the money spent in His Way. Such money has been called a good loan in the Qur'an at several places and Allah has very graciously promised to return every farthing of the loan after increasing it manifold, provided that it is a "good loan" which has been lawfully earned and spent in accordance with the Divine Law with good intentions.

34Allah "wipes out" evils in two ways: (1) When a person adopts the Right Way and follows the Divine Guidance in thought and action, his soul begins to purify itself and his life begins to be clean of many evils. (2) But if, in spite of this. he does not attain to the high rank of perfection as a whole, and still has some evils left in him, Allah, by the exercise of His grace, will not take him to task and will "wipe out" these from his account. This is because Allah is not hard and strict in taking account of minor evils, provided that the person sincerely accepts the fundamental Guidance and begins to reform himself

accordingly.

35The significance of ".....he has indeed gone astray from the Right Way" is that at first he found the Right Way and then lost it and strayed into paths of ruin.

"The Right Way" does not fully express the meaning of "sawa-'as-sabil". It is that way of life which enables a man to develop harmoniously all his powers, faculties, and abilities: which satisfies all his cravings, urges and feelings and the demands of his body and soul in a congenial manner: which guides him rightly to keep balanced the multi fold complex relations with other human beings: which leads him individually and collectively to exploit and use equitably the natural resources for his own good and that of humanity. In short, it is that way of life which enables the individual and the society to solve spiritual, moral, social, physical, economic, political and international problems in a straight, smooth, even and just manner.

It is obvious that man with his limited powers and intellect cannot by himself solve these problems, as he is simply incapable of comprehending at one and the same time all the aspects of human problems so as to weigh and estimate their relative importance and judge between the different courses before him. That is why, whenever he has tried to plan a way of life for himself, he has utterly failed to do justice to his own self or tiffs society, and made a mess of all his affairs and problems, and created a state of chaos everywhere. This is because with his narrow vision he becomes so absorbed in one basic need out of many and one problem out of many that he loses sight of all others and neglects them intentionally or un-intentionally. As a result of this, life loses its balance and begins to rush towards one extreme. When this state of affairs becomes unbearable, one of the neglected needs or problems takes hold of man and life begins to rush towards another extreme with the same destructive result. In this way, life goes on running from one extreme to the other and man never finds the balanced middle way which is "The Right Way", because all the ways planned by him keep him running in wrong directions from one extreme to the other.

As has been pointed out, man cannot plan that right way which may lead him clear of the pitfalls of the myriad wrong and crooked ways; so Allah has very graciously made arrangements for showing the Right Way to mankind. He sent His Messengers with Guidance to lead mankind to the Right Way to real success in this world and in the Hereafter; and the one who loses this way will go wrong here and act wrongly, and inevitably go to Hell in the next world, for all the wrong ways lead to Hell.

In this connection it will be pertinent to point out the blunder that has been committed by some so-called philosophers. When they noticed that human life was continually running between two extremes, they came to the wrong conclusion that the Dialectical process was the natural way of the evolution of human progress. According to them, internal contradictions are inherent in all things and the struggle between these opposites and their synthesis constitutes the contents of the process of development. They apply the Dialectical methods to the study of social life and come to the wrong conclusion that the same is the right way of evolution. Accordingly they start with a thesis of an extreme nature for the solution of a

problem and go on rushing away from the Right Way towards one extreme till they discover, to their dismay, that in this process gross injustice has been done to some other equally important problems. Then they turn back with the antithesis of the first theory and presume that the synthesis of the two will help evolve its right solution. Though it is true that the struggle between the two opposite theories helps them approach the Right Way, yet they cross it rapidly towards the other extreme because they do not believe in Divine Guidance which alone can make one firmly adhere to it. Then they do gross justice to same other problems and the same process is repeated over and over again. If such short-sighted philosophers had not rejected God and religion and trade an impartial study of the Qur'an, they would have discovered to their joy that the Right Way is the straight path, leading to the human evolution, and not the myriad crooked and curved paths. Thus they would have saved mankind from continually rushing aimlessly between extremes.

36It is wrong to presume that the title Nasara pertains to Nazareth, the home of Jesus. In fact, its root is nusrat (help). The Christians have been called ,Nasara (helpers) for the reason that when Jesus asked, "Who will be my ansar (helpers) in the cause of Allah'?" his disciples answered, "We are ansar in the cause of Allah." (LXI : 14). The Christian writers got the wrong impression that the Qur'an contemptuously calls the Christians Nasara because of the apparent similarity between Nasara and Nazarenes, a sect of early Christians who were contemptuously called Nazarites. But the Qur`an makes it clear here that the Christians themselves said, "We are Nasara." It is obvious that the Christians never called themselves Nazarites.

In this connection, it may be noted that Jesus Christ never called his disciples "Christians" or "Messiahites," for he had not come to found a new religion after his own name but to revive the same religion that Moses and the other Prophets before and after him had brought. Therefore he did not form any new community other than that of the Israelites; nor they lived like a new one; nor adopted a distinctive name or symbol for themselves. They used to go to the Temple (Jerusalem) for prayer along with the other Jews and considered themselves to be bound by the Mosaic Law. (Please refer to the Acts, 3: 1, 10: 14,15: 1 & 5, 21: 22).

Later on the process of separation began froth two sides. On the one side St. Paul, a follower of the Prophet Jesus, put an end to the observance of the law and declared that the only thing needed for salvation was belief in Messiah. On the other side, the Jewish rabbis cut off the followers of Christ by declaring theta to be a misguided sect. But in spite of this separateness, at first the sect bore no distinctive name. The followers of Christ called themselves by different names, such as disciples, brethren, believers, saints etc. (Please refer to the Acts, 2 : 44, 4: 32, 9 : 26, 11 : 29, 13 : 52, IS : 1 & 23; Romans, 15 : 45, and Corinthians, 1:12). But the Jews called them Galileans or the sect of the Nazarenes contemptuously and tauntingly (Luke, 13 : 2, The Acts, 24 : 5) because of the Roman Province of Galilee in which Nazareth, the birth place of Jesus, was situated. These satirical names, however, did not become current as the permanent names of the followers of Christ.

As a matter of fact, the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch, when Barnabas and Paul went there in 43-44 A.D. to preach the Gospels. (The Acts, 11: 26). Though this name was also given to them contemptuously by their enemies, yet, by and by, their leaders accepted this, saying, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye,.....if any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." (I Peter, 4: 16). At long last, they lost the feelings that the name "Christian" was a bad title that had been given to them by their enemies.

Thus it is clear that the Qur'an has not called them Christians because of the contempt associated with it, but has called them Ansar (helpers) in order to remind them that they were the name-sake of those disciples of Jesus who had responded to his invitation and said, "We are helpers of Allah." Is it not an irony that instead of being grateful to the Qur'an for giving them their name, the Christian missionaries of today should bear a grievance against it for not calling them "Christians"?

37That is, "He makes known many things which you were dishonestly keeping back from the Scripture, for these are essential for the establishment of the true Faith, but disregards many other such things for there is no real need to disclose them."

38"Allah leads to the paths of peace" those who intend to walk in the Light of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet. They remain safe from wrong notions, wrong thoughts and wrong acts and their consequences, because at every cross-road they come to know the safe way with the help of that light.

39The Christians were guilty bf blasphemy in regarding Jesus as God and worshiping him as such. This was the result of the error they committed in regarding Jesus as the union of man and God, for it made his personality an enigma, which their scholars have not been able to solve in spite of their verbosity and argumentations. The more they tried to solve it the more complicated it became. Those who were impressed by the human aspect of this complex personality made him the son of God and one of the Trinity, while others, who were impressed by the Divine aspect of his personality, declared him to he the incarnation of God and worshiped him as such. There were still others who tried to adopt the middle course between the two extremes and spent all their abilities to prove the impossibility that Jesus was both man and God at one and the same time and that God and the Messiah were two separate beings, but at the same tune a single being. (Please refer to E.N.'s 212,213,215 of An-Nisa).

40"He creates whatever He wills" implies that the miraculous birth of Jesus was merely' one of God's countless wonderful manifestations, and that this and his moral excellences and his perceptible miracles should not mislead the Christians to regard the Messiah as God. It was their shortsightedness that they did not consider the other creations of God which were even more wonderful than the creation of Jesus and foolishly made him God. They forgot that His power has no bounds and seeing the miracles performed by a wonderful creation of the Creator they began to regard him as a creator; whereas wise men see the All-Powerful Creator in the wonders of His Creation and get the light of Faith from them.

41In this context, this sentence is very comprehensive and significant and has double meanings. One meaning is that God Who had the power of sending bearers of good news and Warner before, has now appointed the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for the same mission and He has the power to do so. The other meaning is that if they do not obey the bearer of good news and warner they should bear in mind that Allah is All-Powerful and is able to inflict on them any punishment He likes without any hindrance.

42This refers to the past glory of the Israelites that they enjoyed at a much earlier period before the advent of Moses. On the one hand, Prophets of the high rank of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph were raised among them; on the other, they won great political power in Egypt during the time of the Prophet Joseph and after him. For a long time they remained the greatest rulers of their time in the then civilized world, and their currency was in circulation not only in Egypt but also in the countries around it.

In contrast to the general belief that the glory of the Israelites begins with the advent of the Prophet Moses, the Qur'an makes it clear here that the period of their real glory and greatness had passed long before him and he himself was holding that period before his people as an instance of their glorious past.

43By the Holy Land is meant Palestine, which had been the home of the Prophets Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When the Israelites left Egypt for good, God allotted this land to them and commanded them to conquer it.

44This speech was made by the Prophet Moses when two years after their exodus from Egypt, the Israelites were encamping in the desert of Paran which lies in the Sinai Peninsula contiguous to the northern boundary of Arabia and the southern boundary of Palestine.

45It may mean that the two persons were from among those who were tilled with the fear of the mighty people, or they were from among those who were God-fearing people.

46The details of their homeless wandering can be had from the books, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua, of the Bible. In brief, it is this: The Prophet Moses dispatched twelve chiefs of Israel from the desert of Paran to spy out the Holy Land. Accordingly, they spied it out and returned after forty days and made a report before all the congregation of Israel. They said, "Surely it floweth with milk and honey ..... Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land: (and) We be not able to go up against (them) ..... and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers and so we were in their sight." At this, all the community wailed aloud and said, "Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt: or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to

return into Egypt? But Joshua and Caleb, who had been among the twelve spies, rebuked the community for its cowardice. Caleb said, "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." Then both declared, "If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us.....Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land.....and the Lord is with us: fear them not. But all the congregation stoned them with stones." At last God became wrathful at their continuous misbehavior and decreed, "Doubtless ye shall now wander in the wilderness forty years until all that were numbered of you.....from twenty years old and upward shall fall as carcasses in this wilderness, (and) your little ones (grow young).....then will I bring in and they shall know the land...." According to this Divine decree, they took 38 years to reach Jordan from the desert of Paran. During this period all those who were young at the time of the exodus from Egypt died and after the conquest of Jordan the Prophet Moses also died. After this, during the time of Joshua, son of Nun, the Israelites were able to conquer Palestine.

47The incident contained in vv. 20-26 has been cited here with the special object to warn the Israelites. They have been reminded that they disobeyed Moses and swerved from the right path and showed cowardice and were consequently condemned to wander homeless for forty years but if they persisted in their attitude of rebellion against the mission of the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), the chastisement would be much more severe than that.

48That is, "It is no fault of mine if your sacrifice has not been accepted; it is because you lack piety. You should, therefore, try to foster piety in yourself instead of making an attempt at slaying me."

49It does not mean: "If you attempt to kill me, 1 will sit with folded hands before you, ready to be killed without any resistance." What it means is: "You may cherish evil intentions of murdering me, but I will not you may make schemes for my murder but I will do nothing to forestall you, even after knowing that you are making preparation for my murder." In this connection, it should be understood clearly that it is not virtue to offer oneself for murder, nor is it a virtue to refrain from resisting an aggressive attack. True virtue is that one should not plan the murder of an enemy though he might be in search of an opportunity to kill the one. A virtuous man would rather prefer, like the noble son of Adam, that the enemy might be the aggressor and not he.

50That is, "I would rather prefer that you alone should be guilty of the sin of cherishing evil intentions of slaying me than that I should also be guilty of the same. Thus you shall bear the burden of your own sin of aggression as well as of the injury that I might inflict on you in self-defense."

51Thus Allah warned the erring son of Adam of his ignorance and folly through a raven. And when once he became aware of the fact that the raven was better equipped for hiding the dead body, he was not only filled with remorse on this account but also began to feel that he had done an evil deed by slaying his brother. This is implied in: "After this he became very remorseful of what he had done "

52The story of the two sons of Adam has been related here to reproach the Jews in a subtle manner for their plot to kill the Holy Prophet and some of his eminent Companions. (Please refer to E.N.30 of this Surah).

The similarity between the two incidents is quite obvious. The Jews plotted against the Holy Prophet and his Companions for the same reason for which the erring son of Adam had slain his pious brother. The Jews became jealous of the Holy Prophet and his Companions because God withdrew His Favor from them and bestowed it upon the un-lettered Arabs just because the former lacked piety and the latter were God-fearing. Instead of considering the matter coolly and considering why they had been condemned and making up for their error which had brought God's wrath on them, they plotted to kill those whom God had blessed with His favors. And they did so in spite of the fact that they knew it well that their evil reaction could not win the favor of Allah but would make them even more condemnable than before.

53That is, "Allah enjoined the Israelites to refrain from murder because they were showing the same murderous symptoms as had been shown by the cruel son of Adam. That is why such strict checks on murder were applied." But the pity is that these precious instructions are not found in the present Bible. The Talmud, however, says, "To him who kills a single individual of Israel, it shall be reckoned as if he had slain the whole race and he who preserves a single individual of Israel, according to the Book of Allah, he preserves the whole world." It also says that a judge of the Israelites in a case of murder would warn the witness saying, "To him who kills a single individual of Israel, it shall be reckoned as if he has slain the whole race."

54This is to emphasize the sanctity of human life: it is essential for the preservation of human life that everyone should regard the life of the other as sacred and help to protect it. The one who takes the life of another without right, does not commit injustice to that one alone, but also proves that he has no feeling for the sanctity of human life and of mercy for others. Hence he is most surely the enemy of the whole human race, for if every individual suffered from the same kind of hard-heartedness, the whole human race would come to an end. On the contrary, if one helps to preserve a single human life, he is indeed a helper of all mankind for he possesses those qualities upon which depends the survival of the whole human race.

55Here "the land" refers to that country or. territory in which the maintenance of law and order is the responsibility of the Islamic State and "to wage war against Allah and His Messenger" is to wage war against the righteous system of government established by the Islamic State. As Allah likes that such a system of government should be established, He sent His Messenger to establish an equitable system of government, which should guarantee peace and justice to human beings, animals, trees, vegetation and everything in the earth, which may enable human beings to develop to -the fullest their natural capabilities; which should exploit natural resources of the earth for the true progress and improvement of humanity and not for its destruction. It is obvious that any attempt, big or small, to undermine or

overthrow such an established system, is in reality a war against Allah and His Messenger. It does not make any difference whether that mischief is created by criminals and murderers who cause disorder in the settled and peaceful society, or by armed forces who attempt to overthrow the Islamic State and establish some corrupt un-Islamic system instead. And every sovereign treats such a violation directed against his authority or against any of his officials as war against himself.

56An abstract of these alternative punishments has been given so That the judge or the ruler may exercise his discretion and award punishment according to the nature and extent of the crime. The real object is to show that any attempt by any person residing in the Islamic State, to overthrow its government is high treason and a most heinous crime, and that the offender is liable to be awarded any of these capital punishments according to the circumstance.

57This implies that if they have refrained from creating mischief and from making any attempt at overthrowing the righteous system, and have shown by their conduct that they are peace-loving and law-abiding good citizens, none of the above mentioned punishments will be inflicted upon them, even if they might have committed any of the crimes before their repentance. They would, however, be liable to be called to account in a court of law for any offense against any individual, such as murder, theft, etc., but they will not be tried for any previous offense of treason or rebellion or war against Allah and His Messenger.

58That is, You should seek all those means that help obtain Allah's nearness and His pleasure.

59"Exert your utmost" does not fully convey the meaning of Jahidu. It implies that the Believers should struggle against all the forces that stand in the way of Allah, as if to say, "You can please Allah and win His favor only if you exert your utmost in the way of Allah: struggle hard against all the persons, parties and forces which stand in Allah's way, which hinder you from Allah's way to turn you away from it, which do not let you follow Allah's way as His servants and force you to become their servants or servants of others. Such exertion and struggle will lead you to true success and become the means of obtaining your nearness to Allah.."

Thus, this verse exhorts the Believer to fight his enemies on all fronts. On one side, he confronts Satan and a host of his followers, and on the second, his own self and its alluring' temptations. On the third side, he has to fight many people who have swerved from the way of God, and with whom he is bound by close social, cultural and economic relations. On the fourth side, he is required to oppose all those religious, cultural and political systems that are founded on rebellion against God and force people to submit to falsehood instead of the Truth. Though these enemies employ different weapons, they all have one and the same object in view, that is, to subdue their victims and bring them under their own subjection. It is obvious that true success can only be achieved if one becomes wholly and solely a servant of God and obeys Him openly and also secretly, to the exclusion of obedience to all others. Thus there is bound to be a conflict with all the tour enemies: Therefore the Believer cannot achieve his object

unless he engages himself with all these hostile and opposing forces at one and the same time and at all events, and removing all these hindrances marches onwards on the way of Allah.

60One hand of the thief (and not both hands) is to be cut off, and the consensus of opinion is that the right hand should be cut off for the first theft.

The Holy Prophet has excluded an act of breach of trust from theft and decreed that the hand of the one guilty of this is not to be cut off. An act of theft is committed only when a person wrongfully takes away goods from the custody of another and brings them into his own possession.

The Holy Prophet has also decreed that a hand is not to be cut off for the theft of a thing whose value is less than that of a shield. At that time the price of a shield according to (a) 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas was ten dirhams, (b) Ibn 'Umar three dirhams, (c) Anas bin Malik five dirhams, and (d) Hadrat `Aishah one-fourth of a dinar. That is why there has been a difference of opinion among the Jurists in regard to the minimum limit for theft for the cutting off of a hand. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, it is ten dirhams and according to Imams Malik, Shafi'i and Ahmad it is one-fourth of a dinar. (At that time a dirham was equal to the value of three mashas and one ands half rattis of silver, and one-fourth of a dinar was equal to three dirhams).

Moreover, there are many things for the theft of which the hand is not to be cut off. For instance, the Holy Prophet directed that hand should not be cut off for the theft of fruits and vegetables, and that there should be no cutting off of hand for the theft of eatables. According to a Tradition from Hadrat `A'ishah, "Hands were not cut off for the theft of paltry things during the time of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him)." Caliphs 'Uthman and 'Ali decreed, and no Companion disagreed, that a hand is not to be cut off for the theft of a bird. Moreover, Caliphs 'Umar and 'Ali did not cut off a hand for a theft from the Public 'treasury and there is no mention of any kind of disagreement among the Companions about this also.

That is why the Jurists have not included certain things in the list of those for the theft of which hands should be cut off. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, hands should not be cut off for the theft of vegetables, fruits, flesh, cooked food, grain which has not yet been gathered together, articles used for sports and music. Besides these, he is of the opinion that the hand should not be cut off for the theft of animals grazing in forests and for theft from the Public Treasury. Likewise the other Imams also have excluded the theft of certain things from this punishment, but this does not mean that there is no punishment at all for those thefts. These crimes should be punished in other ways than this.

61This does not mean that if the thief repents, his hand should not be cut off. It only means that if a person repents after his hand has been cut off and reforms himself and becomes a true servant of God, he will save himself from the wrath of Allah, Who will cleanse him of his sin. On the contrary, if a person does not repent and reform himself even after his hand has been cut off, but goes on nurturing evil thoughts, this clearly shows that he has not cleansed his heart even after this severe punishment.

Therefore he shall deserve the wrath of Allah as he did before his hand was cut off. That is why the Qur'an exhorts such a person to beg for the forgiveness of Allah and reform himself. The hand is cut off for the preservation of society. The punishment does not necessarily purify the soul. This can only be achieved by repentance and' turning to God. It is reported in the Traditions that once the hand of a thief was cut off by the order of the Holy Prophet. After this he sent for him and asked him to say, "I beg for Allah's forgiveness and turn to Him." Accordingly, the thief uttered these words. Then the Holy Prophet invoked Allah's forgiveness for him.

62This refers to the people who were using all their intellectual powers and energies to preserve the previous state of ignorance against the reformative efforts of Islam. They were planning all sorts of shameless schemes against the Holy Prophet; they were distorting the Truth knowingly and doing their worst to defeat his holy mission by lies, deceit, cunning and the like, though he was selflessly working for the good of humanity and their own good. Naturally it grieved him to see that those mean and ignoble people were employing mean tactics to defeat his noble mission. Of course Allah does not mean to ask the Holy Prophet to suppress that grief which is felt over such a state but consoles him not to be disheartened by their evil machinations and advises him to go on working patiently for the reform of the people who cannot be expected to behave otherwise.

63It implies two things: (1) These people are the slaves of their lusts and are not interested at all in the Truth but in falsehood only. They eagerly listen to lies because that alone can gratify their lust for falsehood. (2) They attend the meetings of the Holy Prophet and his followers so that they might spread false reports about them in order to malign them.

64This also implies two things: (1) They come as spies to the meetings of the Holy Prophet and his followers in order to obtain some secret information for the benefit of the enemies of Islam. (2) They come with hostile intent to gather material for bringing false accusations and slander against the Holy Prophet and his followers so that they may cause misunderstandings among those who had no opportunity of making direct contacts with him and the Muslims.

65Allah consoles the Holy Prophet that he should not be disheartened by the behavior of those people who do not hesitate to twist the words of the Torah out of their context and change their meanings to suit their lusts.

66That is, "The Jewish scholars tell their illiterate people to accept any teaching of the Holy Prophet only if it agrees with theirs; if it does not, they should reject it."

67Allah puts to trial a man who cherishes evil inclinations by putting temptations before him to test whether he has any good left in him or not. If he has no goodness left in him, he takes each temptation as an "opportunity," and the evil in him overcomes him and renders him an easy prey to further temptations.

In a degenerate case like this, it is not in the power of any well-wisher to save such a person from falling into temptation. Allah puts to trial not only individuals but communities as well.

68Allah did not will to purify such a person because he himself did not wish to purify himself. It is not the way of Allah to deprive a man of purification, if he desires it and tries for it. He does not will to purify only that person who does not intend to purify himself.

69This particularly refers to their jurists and judges who accepted false evidence and unjustly decided cases in favor of those from whom they took bribes or from whom they expected unlawful gains.

70At that time the Jews had freedom in their internal affairs and their cases were decided by their own judges according to their own law, for they had not as yet become subjects of the Islamic State, but had only entered into treaties with it. Therefore they were not bound to bring their cases to the Holy Prophet or to the judges appointed by him. Nevertheless, sometimes, when their own law did not suit them, they would take their cases to the Holy Prophet in the hope that they might obtain a more favorable decree from him than they could from their own law.

Here it refers to a case of illicit relationship between a man and a woman who belonged to respectable families of the Jews of Khaibar. According to the Torah (Deut. 22 : 23-24), their punishment was that both of them should be stoned to death. As the Jews did not want to inflict this punishment, they decided that the case should be taken to the Holy Prophet and that they would accept his decision only if it was other than stoning to death. When the Holy Prophet had heard the case he decreed that they should be stoned to death, but the Jews rejected it. Then the Holy Prophet asked them what the punishment was according to the Torah. They replied that it was to flog the culprits and to blacken their faces and to mount them on a donkey. The Holy Prophet asked their rabbis to declare on oath whether that was the punishment for adultery committed by a married couple. They all but one answered that it was so. The one who had kept quiet was Ibn surya, who was considered to be the greatest scholar of the Torah by the Jews themselves. The Holy Prophet pointedly addressed him and asked, "I want you to swear by that God Who saved your people from the Pharaoh and gave you the Law on the Tur and answer whether it is this same punishment for adultery in the Torah that these people tell." He said, "I would never have confessed that the punishment for adultery is stoning the culprits to death, if you had not laid upon me such a heavy oath. The fact is that when adultery became common among us, the judges would let the offenders go, if they happened to be big people. But as this differentiation caused a great discontent among the common people, we made a change in the Law that instead of stoning the culprits to death they should be flogged and mounted on a donkey with blackened faces." After this, no other course was left for the Jews and the culprits were stoned to death by the order of the Holy Prophet.

71In this verse Allah has fully exposed the dishonesty of these "religious people" who had established their authority for piety and knowledge of the Book throughout Arabia. The very fact that they had discarded the Book they themselves believed to be the Book of Allah and brought their case to the Holy

Prophet whom they did not believe to be a Prophet, showed that their claim of belief in the Book was hollow. This also showed that they did not sincerely believe in anything but their lusts. They discarded the Book which they believed to be the Book of God, just because its decree was against their lusts and they went to the one whom they considered to be a false prophet in the hope that they might get a decree that might suit their lusts.

72Here the fact that all the Prophets were Muslims and that the Jews had given up "Islam" and turned "Jews", has also incidentally been stressed.

73The Rabbani's were the doctors and the Ahbar the jurists of the Law.

74Compare this with Exodus, 21 : 23-27.

75It implies that if one forgoes retaliation with the intention of doing a good turn, this good act will atone for many of his sins. The Holy Prophet explained this, saying, "If one receives a wound in one's body and forgoes its retaliation, then one's sins will be forgiven in proportion to the degree of forgiveness."

76This means that Jesus did not bring any new religion but followed the same way that was followed by all the Prophets before him and invited the people to the same. He believed in what was intact in his time from among the original teachings of the Torah, and the Gospel also testified to the same.(Matthew, 5: 17-18). The Qur'an reiterates the fact that each and every prophet, who was sent by Allah to any part of the world, confirmed the Message of all the Prophets who had gone before him and exerted his utmost to complete the work which they had left as a holy heritage, for he did not come to refute them or efface their religion and establish his own religion instead. Likewise Allah did not send down any of His Books to refute any of His own previous Books, but to support and confirm them.

77In this passage (vv. 44-47) Allah has shown that those who do not judge by the Law sent down by Him are: (1) disbelievers, (2) unjust people and (3) transgressors. As a corollary to this, the person who discards the Law of Allah and judges by the law formulated by himself or by others is guilty of three crimes. First, he practices disbelief by his rejection of the Law of Allah. Secondly, he becomes guilty of injustice because he violates the Law of Allah which is perfectly just and equitable. Thirdly, he became a transgressor (Fasiq against Allah, because, in spite of being Allah's servant, he transgressed against his Master's Law and adopted his own law or that of another. Thus practically he broke away from the allegiance and subjection of his Master and denied His Authority: this is risq.

This disbelief, injustice and transgression are Inherently part and parcel of the violation of Divine Law. It is, therefore, not possible to avoid these three crimes where there is such a violation. They, however, vary in their relative guilt in accordance with the nature and extent of the rejection of the Law. If one gives judgment against the Divine Law on the basis that he considers that Law to be wrong and his own or

someone else's law to be right, such a person shall be a disbeliever, an unjust person and transgressor, in the fullest sense of the words. However, if one holds the belief that the Law of Allah is right, but in practice gives judgment against it, such a one shall not be outside the Muslim community, but shall be considered to be mixing his belief with disbelief, injustice and transgression. Likewise, if one rejects the Law of Allah in all affairs of life, he shall be considered to be a disbeliever, unjust person and transgressor in every aspect of life and if one accepts the Law in certain matters and rejects it in others, One shall have a mixture of belief and Islam, disbelief, injustice and transgression all mixed together in one's life, exactly in the proportion one obeys the Law or violates it.

Some commentators are of the opinion that the above-mentioned verses apply only to the People of the Book, but the words of the Qur'an do not support this at all. Hadrat Hudhaifah refuted this version very aptly. Someone said to him that these verses applied to the children of Israel only, that is, if one of the Jews judged against the Law sent down by Allah, he would be a disbeliever, transgressor and rebel but not a Muslim. Hadrat Hudhaifah replied. "What good brethren the children of Israel are to you: all that is bitter is for them and all that is sweet is for you! By God, you will follow their way step by step (and shall be dealt with like them)."

78The use of the word Al-Kitab (the Book) here is very significant. Instead of saying, "The Qur'an confirms whatever has remained intact from the former Books," it says, "from the Book." This is to show that the Qur'an and all the Books that were sent down by Allah in different languages and in different ages are in reality one and the same Book which has one and the same Author and one and the same object and aim: they impart one and the same knowledge and teaching to mankind with the only difference that they are couched in different languages and employ different methods to suit the various addresses. Therefore the fact that these Books support and do not refute, confirm and do not contradict, one another, shows that they are all different versions of one and the same Book (Al-Kitab) .

79The Arabic word Muhaimin is very comprehensive in meaning. It means one who safeguards, watches over, stands witness,.preserves, and upholds. The Qur'an safeguards "the Book," for it has preserved within it the teachings of all the former Books. It watches over them in the sense that it will not let go waste then true teachings. It supports and upholds these Books in the sense that it corroborates the Word of God which has remained intact in them. It stands a witness because it bears testimony to the Word of God contained in those Books and helps to sort it out from the interpretations and commentaries of the people which were mixed with it; what is confirmed by the Qur'an is the Word of God and what is against it is that of the people.

80"We prescribed..... to differ" is a parenthesis, which answer a perplexing question that might arise from the preceding passage. The question is: Why are there differences in the details of their Laws, if all the Prophets and all the Books taught the same way of life and all of them confirmed and supported one another ? For instance , how is it that there are some differences in the details of the form of worship, in the limits of the lawful and the unlawful and in cultural and social regulations taught by different Prophets

and Books?

81Here is the answer to the above-mentioned question:

(1) It is wrong to infer from the above-mentioned differences in the details of the different Laws that they have been derived from different sources and have different origins. As a matter of fact, they all have come from Allah, Who prescribed different regulations to suit different communities and different ages.

(2) No doubt Allah could have prescribed one and the same Law for all human beings from the very beginning and made them a single community but He did not do so for many good reasons. One of these reasons is to test people whether they obey or not what is given to them by Allah. Those people, who understand the real nature and spirit of the Divine Way and the position of the regulations in it and are not prejudiced, will recognize and accept the Truth in whatever form it comes. Such people will never hesitate to submit to the new regulations sent by Allah to replace the former ones. On the contrary, those, who do not understand the true spirit of the Way, but consider the regulations and their details alone to be the Way and who have become static and prejudiced because of their own additions to it, will reject every new thing that comes from Allah to replace what they already possess. And such a test was essential to distinguish the two above-mentioned kinds of people; therefore different laws and regulations were prescribed.

(3) As the real object of all the laws is the cultivation of virtues, Allah has commanded the people to excel one another in virtues, without paying heed to the apparent differences in different Laws. This is why those people, who keep in view the real aim of the Law, should advance towards it on the lines indicated by the Divine Laws and regulations.

(4) As regards the differences, which have been produced by the prejudices, obduracies and wrong mental attitudes, these can neither be resolved in polemical symposiums nor on the battlefield, but will be decided by Allah Himself in His Final Judgment. Then the Reality will be revealed and the people will come to know the amount of truth or falsehood that lay hidden in the arguments in which they were engaged throughout their lives.

82From here the same subject has been resumed that was interrupted by the parenthesis.

83The word Jahiliyyat (ignorance) is the antonym of Islam. The way of Islam is entirely based on the knowledge imparted by Allah Who possesses the knowledge of all realities. On the contrary, every way different from and opposed to the way of Islam is the way of ignorance. The pre-Islamic period of Arabia is called the period of ignorance in the sense that the people had invented their own ways of life that were based on mere guess-work or lusts. Therefore whenever any of these ways will be adopted, that period will be called the period of "ignorance". Likewise the knowledge which is imparted in Schools and Universities today is only a partial knowledge end cannot in any way suffice for the right guidance of

mankind. That is why all the systems of life that are based on fancies and and lusts with the help of such partial knowledge, in utter disregard of knowledge, shall likewise be the ways of "ignorance" like the ways of the pre-Islamic period. conjectures the Divine.

84This refers to the condition of the hypocrites during the period when the conflict between Islam and kufr had not yet come to any decisive conclusion. Although Islam had become a power by dint of the sacrifices of its followers, the opposing forces were also very powerful and there were equal chances of the victory of either side. The hypocrites, while living among the Muslims, wanted to keep good relations with the Jews and the Christians so that if the conflict ended in the defeat of the Muslims, they might safely take refuge with their enemies. Then there was also the economic factor; at that time the Jews and the Christians were economically the most powerful people in Arabia. The money-lending business was almost entirely in their hands and they had a strong economic hold upon the people. Moreover, the most fertile regions of Arabia were in their possession. This also led the hypocrites to preserve their old relations with them. In short, they considered it very dangerous to break relations with these people because of the conflict between Islam and kufr, for they feared that it might ruin them economically and politically.

85That is, something short of a decisive victory that might convince the people that it was Islam that was ultimately going to win in the conflict.

86All the good acts that they did as Muslims were lost because they lacked sincerity. The Prayers they offered, the Fast they observed, the Zakat dues they paid, and other things they did in obedience to the Islamic Law became null and void because there was no sincerity in them. They did not dedicate themselves wholly to Allah but had divided their loyalties equally between Allah and His rebels for the sake of their worldly interests.

87"Who will be lenient towards the Believers" means that they will never use force against the Believers and will never employ their intelligence, ability, influence, wealth, power or anything else to suppress or oppress them or inflict loss on them. The Muslims will always find such persons to be mild, kindly, amiable and sympathetic.

".....but stern towards the disbelievers" means that a Believer will be firm, strict, uncompromising and militant towards the opponents of Islam by virtue of his firm faith, sincere religious sense, strict principles, strong character and God-given intelligence. Whenever the disbelievers will come in conflict with him, they will find that a Believer can neither be bought nor coerced because he is so uncompromising in his Islamic principles that he would rather die than yield.

88That is, they will fearlessly follow the Way of Allah and act upon His commandments, and declare to be right what is right, and wrong what is wrong, according to it, and will not mind in the least the opposition,

the censure, the criticism, the objections, the derision and ridicules of their opponents. They will boldly follow the Way of Islam which they sincerely believe to be right, even if the popular opinion is against Islam and they are exposed to the ridicule, derision and taunts of the world.

89They make the call to the Prayer an object of ridicule by mimicking and deriding it and by perverting its words.

90'This very fact of their making the call to the Prayer an object of ridicule is a clear proof of their lack of understanding. Had they not been involved in folly and ignorance, they would never have indulged in such frivolous things in spite of their religious difference with the Muslims, because no sensible person would ever think of ridiculing the call to the worship of Allah made by any people whatsoever

91Verse 60 contains a subtle reference to the shamefaced impudence of the Jews in opposing the Muslims in spite of the fact that they had often been under the curse and wrath of Allah for their evil deeds. According to their own history they broke the Sabbath and many of them were turned into apes and swine. They had become so degraded that they began to worship taghut. Therefore they were warned to desist from their opposition to the Muslims who sincerely believed in Allah and followed the Right Way, whereas they themselves were involved in disobedience and indecency and other moral sins of the worst type.

92According to the Arabic idiom, one whose hands are `chained' is an excessively parsimonious person. What the Jews meant by this was that Allah had ceased to be bounteous. When they had fallen into the lowest state of degradation for centuries and lost all hope of their national recovery, they used to lament their lost glory and blame Allah for showing niggardliness towards them. The foolish people from among them went so far as to say, "God has become so stingy that He has shut the doors of His treasures against us. He has now nothing left with Him for us except calamities and misfortunes."

This attitude is not peculiar to the Jews alone. The foolish people of other communities also instead of turning to Allah, utter insolent words like these when a calamity befalls them.

93That is, they themselves have become so niggardly as to become a proverb for parsimony and narrow-mindedness.

94If they meant to provoke Allah to bounty by their taunts, they miserably failed in their object. On the contrary, they became subject to the curse of Allah in consequence of their insolent and impudent words and were deprived of His blessing and clemency.

95Instead of producing the desired effect on the Jews, the Word of God fell on deaf ears. So they did not learn any lesson from it but in their obduracy began to oppose the Truth. Instead of redressing their

wrong doings and evil deeds and mending their ways, they strove hard to suppress that Voice so that no one else might listen to it. Thus the Word of God that was sent down to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) for their own good and the good of humanity produced no good effect upon them but increased the rebellion and disbelief of many of them.

96This concise sentence refers to a speech of the Prophet Moses contained in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. In this he warned the Israelites in detail: "If you will carefully carry out all His Commands....., then your God will lift you high above all the nations of the earth and all His blessings shall come Upon you", but "If you do not listen to the voice of God and are not mindful of all His commands and rules,..... then shall all sorts of curses, calamities and plagues come upon you.....The Eternal will have you routed in front of your foes . "

97"To observe the Torah and the Gospel" means to follow their teachings sincerely and to follow the code of life laid down in them.

In this connection, one must keep in mind that the Bible contains two kinds of writings. Some portions in it have been interpolated by the Jewish and the Christian scholars. It is obvious that the Qur'an does not demand the observance of these parts. But there are other portions that have been put down as the Commandments of God or as the sayings of Moses, Jesus and other Prophets (Allah's peace be upon them all). The Qur'an demands the observance of the latter parts only, for there is no marked difference between the teachings contained in them and those !;f the Qur'an. Though even these parts of the Bible have not remained wholly intact and have been tampered with by the translators, the commentators etc., nevertheless, one does feel that they teach the same fundamental principle of Tauhid that the Qur'an teaches, present the same creed which the Qur'an presents, and guides man to the same way of life that has been laid down in the Qur'an. Thus it is clear that if the Jews and the Christians had been following those teachings which have been attributed to God and their Prophets in the Bible, must surely they would have been a community of righteous people at the time when Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was sent as a Messenger and would have readily recognized that the Qur'an contained the same Message that was contained in the former Books. In that case they would have felt no difficulty in following the Holy Prophet, for, then, there would have been no question of changing their religion: this would have been a continuation of the same way that they were following before.

98The foregoing decree enjoined by Allah will increase their rebellion and disbelief .because they will not consider it with a cool mind but in their obduracy oppose it more vigorously.

99Please refer to verse 62 and E.N. 80 of Al-Baqarah.

99a"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4 : 10).

100This verse repudiates very clearly the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus. If one sincerely wishes to know what he really was, one can judge very easily with the help of the signs given herein that he was no more than a man. The Gospel itself bears witness that he was a human being, and subject to the usual wants and necessities of ordinary persons: he was born of a woman (Mary): he had a genealogical tree like all other human beings: he had a human body which had all the characteristics and limitations of other human bodies: he slept, he ate food and he felt heat and cold: he was even tempted by the devil. These things clearly show that he could not be God nor could he have been a partner with God in His Godhead.

But it is a strange feat of mental perversion that the Christians insist on ascribing Godhead to Jesus in spite of the fact that their own Gospels depict him purely as a human being. This is a clear proof of the fact that they do not believe in the Gospels but in an imaginary Christ whom they themselves have invented and raised to Godhead.

101This refers to the mis-guided nations from whom the Christians picked up wrong creeds and false ways. The reference is especially to the Greek philosophers whose fancies misled the Christians from the Right Way which had been shown to them at the start. The beliefs of the first followers of the Messiah conformed to .a great extent to the reality they themselves had witnessed and to what had been taught to them by their Prophet. But later on the Christians went so much beyond the limits in showing reverence and veneration to the Messiah and were so influenced by the fancies and philosophical interpretations of their beliefs that they invented a new religion that had nothing in common with the real teachings of the Messiah. In this connection, the following extracts from Jesus Christ, by the Rev. Charles Anderson Scott (Encyclopedia Britannica, Fourteenth Edition) are worth reading :-

"Apart from the Birth stories at the opening of Matthew, Mark and Luke (the exact significance of which in this respect is ambiguous) there is nothing in these three Gospels to suggest that their writers thought of Jesus as other than human, a human being specially endued with the spirit of God and standing in an unbroken relation to God which justified His being spoken of as the "Son of God". Even Matthew refers to him as a carpenter's son and records that after Peter had acknowledged Him as Messiah he "took him and began to rebuke Him" (Matt. XVI. 22). And in Luke the two disciples on the way to Emmaus can still speak of Him as "a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Luke, XXIV. 19). It is very singular that inspite of the fact that before Mark was composed, "the Lord" had become the description of Jesus common among Christians; he is never so described in the second Gospel (nor yet in the first, though the word is freely used to refer to God). All three relate the Passion of Jesus with a fullness and emphasis of its great significance, but except the "ransom" passage (Mark, X. 45) and certain words at the Last Supper. there is no indication of the meaning which was afterwards attached to it. It is not even suggested that the death of Jesus had any relation to sin or forgiveness. Had the "ransom" saying been suggested by Paul, it would not stand as it does in its isolated vagueness."

The same author says, "That He ranked Himself as a Prophet appears from a few passages such as `I

have to go on my way today, tomorrow or day after tomorrow, because it cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem." (Luke, 13 : 33) He frequently referred to himself as "the Son of Man. '..... "Jesus never refers to Himself as the "Son of God", and the title when bestowed upon Him by others probably involves no more than the acknowledgment that He was the Messiah. But He does describe himself "as the Son" absolutely.....Moreover, he uses the word "Father" in the same absolute way to define His relationship to God. It is conceivable that He did not always realize the uniqueness of this relationship, that in early life He thought of the privilege as one which He shared with other men, but that experience of life and deeper knowledge of human nature forced upon Him the discovery that in this He stood alone.

"Certain words of Peter spoken at the time of Pentecost, `A man approved of God,' describe Jesus as He was known and regarded by His contemporaries.....The Gospels leave no room for doubt as to the completeness with which these statements are to be accepted. From them we learn that Jesus passed through the natural' stages of development, physical and mental, that He hungered, thirsted, was weary and slept, that He could be surprised and require information, that He suffered pain and died. He not only made no claim to omniscience, He distinctly waived it. Indeed any claim to omniscience would be not only inconsistent with the whole impression created by the Gospels, it could not be reconciled with the cardinal experiences of the Temptation, of Gethsemane and of Calvary. Unless such experiences were to be utterly unreal, Jesus must have entered into them and passed through them under the ordinary limitations of human knowledge. subject only to such modifications of human knowledge as might be due to prophetic insight or the sure vision of God. There is still less reason to predicate omnipotence of Jesus. There is no indication that He ever acted independently of God, or as an independent God. Rather does He acknowledge dependence upon God, by His habit of prayer and in such words as "this kind goeth not forth save by prayer". He even repudiates the ascription to Himself of goodness in the absolute sense in which it belongs to God alone. It is a remarkable testimony to the truly historical character of these Gospels that though they were not finally set down until the Christian Church had begun to look up to the risen Christ as to a Divine Being, the records on the one hand preserve all the evidence of His true humanity and on the other nowhere suggest that He thought of Himself as God..... "

"It may not be possible to decide whether it was the primitive community or Paul himself who first put fully religious content into the title "Lord" as used of Christ. Probably it was the former. But the Apostle undoubtedly adopted the title in its full meaning and did much to make that meaning clear by transferring to "the Lord Jesus Christ" many of the ideas and phrases which in the Old Testament had been specifically assigned to the Lord Jehovah. He gave unto him that name that is above every name the name of "Lord." At the same time by equating Christ with the Wisdom of God and with Glory of God, as well as ascribing to Him Sonship in an absolute sense, Paul claimed for Jesus Christ a relation to God which was inherent and unique, ethical and personal, eternal. While, however, Paul in many ways and in many aspects, equated Christ with God, he definitely stopped short of speaking of him as God....." (Pages 22-25, Enc. Britt., Vol. 13, 1946).

The molds of thought (of Trinity) are those of Greek philosophy and into these were run the Jewish

teachings. We have thus a peculiar combination the religious doctrines of the Bible, as culminating in the person of Jesus, run through the forms of alien philosophy....."

For the Doctrine of Trinity, "The Jewish source furnished the terms Father, Son and Spirit. Jesus seldom employed the last term and Paul's use of it is not altogether clear. Already in Jewish literature it has been all but personified. Thus the material is Jewish, though already doubtless modified by Greek influence: but the problem is Greek; it is not primarily ethical nor even religious but it is metaphysical. What is the ontological relationship between these three factors'? The answer of the Church is given in the Nicene formula, which is characteristically Greek....."

(Enc. Britannica, Vol. 5, page 633 last line, Article "Christianity"')

In the same connection, the following passage from "Church History" (Enc. Britannica, Vol 5, Copy Right 1946) is also worth reading:

"The recognition of Christ as the incarnation of the "logos" was practically universal before the close of the 3rd century, but His deity was still widely denied and the Arian controversy which distracted the Church of the 4th century concerned the latter question. At the council of Nicaea in 325 the deity of Christ received official sanction and was given formulation in the original Nicene creed. Controversy continued for some time, but finally the Nicene decision was recognized both in East and West as the only orthodox faith. The deity of the Son was believed to carry with it that of the Spirit, who was associated with Father and Son in the baptismal formula and in the current symbols and so the victory of the Nicene Christology meant the recognition of the doctrine of the Trinity as a part of orthodox faith.

"The assertion of the deity of the Son incarnate in Christ raised another problem which constituted the subject of dispute in the Christological controversies of the 4th and following centuries. What is the relation of the divine and human natures in Christ? At the council of Chalcedon in 451 it was declared that in the person of Christ are united two complete natures, divine and human, which retain after the union all their properties unchanged. This was supplemented at the third council of Constantinople in 680 by the statement that each of the natures contains a will, so that Christ possesses two wills. The Western Church accepted the decisions of Nicaea, Chalcedon and Constantinople and so the doctrines of the Trinity and of the two natures in Christ were handed down as orthodox dogma in West as well as East.....

"Meanwhile in the Western Church the subject of sin and grace and the relation of divine and human activity in salvation, received special attention and finally, at the 2nd Council of Orange in 529, after both Pelagianism and semi- Pelagianism had been repudiated, a moderate form of Augustinianism was adopted, involving the theory that every man as a result of the Fall is in such a condition that he can take no steps in the direction of salvation until he has been renewed by the divine grace given in baptism, and that he cannot continue in the good thus begun except by the constant assistance of that grace which is

mediated only by the Catholic Church". (Page 677-678).

It has become very clear from the above quotations from Christian Scholars that the first thing which misled the Christians was their exaggerated credulity. Accordingly, they went beyond the limits in their reverence and love of Christ. That is why they began to apply epithets like "Lord" and "Son of God" to Jesus Christ (Allah's peace be upon him) and to ascribe Divine Attributes to him and to invent the Doctrine of Atonement, when, in fact, there was absolutely no room, for such things in his teachings. Afterwards when they came under the influence of philosophy, they began to put forward interpretations to justify the errors of their former religious leaders and went on inventing new creeds, one after the other, in utter disregard of the real teachings of Jesus Christ, merely on the strength of Philosophy and Logic, whereas the right thing for them would have been to turn to the real teachings of Christ. It is against such wrong beliefs that the Qur'an warns in vv. 72-77.

102The corruption of the children of Israel took place according to the universal process. At first some individuals of a community become corrupt, and if the collective conscience of the community is alive, the public opinion keeps them suppressed, and the community, as a whole, is saved from corruption. But, on the other hand, if the community connives at their evil ways, and leaves them free to do as they like, by and by, that corruption which was at first confined only to some individuals, spreads in the whole community. The same thing happened in the case of the children of Israel.

As to the curse by the tongue of the Prophets David and Jesus, please refer to Psalms 10 and 50 and Matthew 23.

103If the Jews had been sincere believers in God, Prophethood and Revelation, they would naturally have taken the side of the Muslims, who were believers in these teachings. But the Jews were a strange sort of believers in the Book: they sided with the mushriks against the Believers in the battle between the Unity of God and shirk Moreover, they professed to believe in Prophethood, but took the side of those who did not believe in it. Still they shame-facedly declared that they were believers in God, Prophets and the Books.

104This Divine Commandment implies two things. First, "You have no authority to make certain things lawful and others unlawful. Lawful is only that which Allah has made lawful and unlawful is that which Allah has made unlawful. Therefore if you make a lawful thing unlawful, and vice versa, you will be following your own law and not the Divine Law." Secondly, "You should not adopt the way of asceticism like the Christian monks or the Hindu friars or the Buddhist mendicants and the like." This was meant to warn the Muslims against the general tendency, which has always existed among the religious-minded people, to consider even the normal satiation of the desires of the body and mind to be against spiritual progress. They imagine that self-torture, self-denial and abstinence are virtues in themselves and that one could not approach God without these austerities. As a matter of fact, there were some Companions, who had developed such tendencies. When the Holy Prophet came to know that some of his

Companions had taken vows that they would always observe fast during the day and would not go to bed for sleep but keep awake and worship God the whole night, and would abstain from flesh, fat and women, he forbade them from such practices. He said, "I have not ordained such things; your own self has rights on you; therefore observe fast and also eat easefully. Stand in worship at night and also go to sleep. I myself sometimes observe fast and at others I do not. I eat flesh and butter. (This is my way) and the one who does not like my way, is not of me."

According to another 'Tradition, he emphasized the same and said, "Now is it that some people have made unlawful for themselves women, good food, scents and perfumes, sleep and other good things of the world? As for me I have not taught you to become monks and hermits. The way of life taught by me does neither allow abstention from women nor from eating flesh nor retirement and seclusion from the world. The Law has prescribed Fasting for self-discipline, and Jihad for the same benefits that might be obtained from asceticism. Worship Allah and associate none with Him as partner, perform Hajj and `Umrah, establish the Salat and pay Zakat and observe the Fasts during the month of Ramadan. The people who were doomed before you, were doomed because they practiced austerity of their own accord, and when they did so, Allah also prescribed the same for them. Those are of them whom you now see in the Monasteries.

In the same connection, we learn from some Traditions that when the Holy Prophet came to know that a certain Companion had been abstaining from having conjugal relations with his wife for a long time and had been devoting himself to worship, he immediately sent for him and ordered, "Go to your wife instantly. " The Companion replied, "I am with fast" The Prophet again said, "Break the fast and go to your wife. "

There is another instance of the same kind. A woman came to Caliph 'Umar and complained, "My husband observes fast during The day and passes the night in worship and does not have conjugal relations with me." Hadrat `Umar ordered Ka`b bin Saur al-Azdi to hear the case. He decreed that the husband was permitted to pass three nights in worship but he must go to his wife on the fourth night.

105"To go beyond the limits" has very extensive meanings. One goes beyond the limits, if one makes lawful things unlawful or abstains from things which Allah has declared to be pure as if they were impure or if one is extravagant in the use of pure things, or if one makes use of unlawful things as if they were lawful. Allah does not like such acts of transgression.

106The Commandment about oaths has been laid down here in connection with instructions about food, because some people had taken oaths of making some lawful things unlawful for themselves. The Commandment is that if one uttered a word of oath without any Intention behind it, one shall not be bound to observe it, for there is no punishment or expiation for this. But if one has deliberately taken such an oath, one must break it and expiate the violation because one must abrogate such a sinful oath. (Please also refer to E.N.'s 243 and 244 of Al-Baqarah and E.N. 125 of An-Nisa).

107"Being mindful of an oath" implies three things. First, one should make the right use of an oath and should not take it for useless and sinful things. Secondly, when one takes an oath for anything, one should remember it lest one should forget' it and violate it. Thirdly, if one takes a deliberate oath to do aright thing, one must fulfill it, and if one violates it, one should expiate the sin.

108Please refer to E.N.'s 12 and 14 of this Surah for the meaning of ansab (ungodly shrines), azlam (methods of divination) and maisar (gambling). Though azlam, divination, is in its very nature a form of gambling, there is a slight difference between it and maisar. Azlam applies to those forms of divination and casting of lots, which are tinged with shirk and superstition and maisar applies to all those forms by which wealth is acquired or divided by devices of chance.

109In this verse four things have been made absolutely unlawful. They are wine, gambling, ungodly shrines (which are dedicated, to the worship of others than Allah and in which sacrifices are made and offerings given in the name of others than Allah) and divining devices. The nature of the last three has already been explained. Here are the details of the Commandment about wine.

Before making wine absolutely unlawful in this verse, two other Commandments concerning its prohibition had already been given in Al-Baqarah, II: ? 19 and An-Nisa, IV: 43. Before this last Commandment was given, the Holy Prophet addressed the people in order to prepare them for its absolute prohibition. He warned and said, 'Allah does not like at all that people should drink wine. Probably absolute prohibition will soon be prescribed: therefore those who possess wine are advised to sell it. " Some time after this, when verse 90 was sent down he declared. "Now those who possess wine, can neither drink it nor sell it; they should, therefore, throw it away." Accordingly it was spilt in the streets of Madinah to run wastefully. Some people, however, asked the Holy Prophet, "May we give it as a present to the Jews?" He replied, "The One Who has trade it unlawful has also forbidden to give it as a present." Others asked, "May we convert it into vinegar?" He replied, "No, you must spill it." Another asked again and again, "Is one permitted to use wine as medicine?" The Holy Prophet emphatically rejected this also and said, "No, it is not a medicine but a disease." Yet another asked, "Sir, we live in a place, which is very cold, and we have to do tiresome labor. So we drink wine to refresh ourselves from fatigue and to keep warm in the cold." He asked, "Is what you drink intoxicant?" The man replied, "Yes." The Holy Prophet replied, "Then refrain from it." At this the man said, "The people of our part of the country will not submit to this." He replied, "If they do not submit to this, then go to war with them."

According to a Tradition related by Ibn 'Umar, the Holy Prophet declared, "Allah has cursed wine and the one who drinks it and the one who serves it and the one who sells it and the one who buys it and the one who extracts it and the one who has it extracted and the one who carried it and the one for whom it is carried. "

According to another Tradition the Holy Prophet prohibited the Muslims from eating the food which is

served along with wine. In the initial stage of the prohibition, he forbade even the use of those utensils which were employed for extracting wine or for drinking it. Afterwards when the prohibition had become thoroughly effective, the use of such utensils was permitted.

Though originally the Arabic word khamr meant only wine made from grapes, and it was also applied to the liquors made from wheat, barley, dried grapes, dates and honey, the Holy Prophet applied the prohibition to all the intoxicants, and there are Traditions that clearly support this. For instance, "Every intoxicant is khamr and is unlawful." "Every drink that intoxicates is unlawful." "I prohibit every intoxicant." In one of his Friday sermons, the Caliph `Umar defined khamr as everything that dulls the faculty of thinking.

In this connection, the Holy Prophet laid down the general principle : if a large dose of something is intoxicant, then its smallest dose also is unlawful, and if a cup of anything is intoxicant, then a drop of it also is unlawful.

During the time of the Holy Prophet. ,there was no fixed punishment for a drunkard. The culprit, who was arrested and brought for trial, was beaten with shoes, kicked, given blows and thrashed with sticks and ropes. Forty stripes were the maximum punishment given for this crime. The same was the punishment during the time of Hadrat Abu Bakr and the early days of Caliph 'Umar. But when the latter saw that the crime was on the increase, he in consultation with the other Companions laid down eighty stripes for this.

Imam Malik and Imam Abu Hanifah and, according to a Tradition, Imam Shafi`i also, were of the same opinion. But Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and, according to another Tradition, Imam Shafi'i also, were of the opinion that forty stripes should be inflicted for the crime of drinking. Hadrat `Ali also considered forty stripes to be the punishment for it.

According to the Shari `at, it is the duty of the Islamic State to enforce prohibition. That is why during the time of Hadrat 'Umar, the shop of a man, named Ruvaishid, who belonged to the clan of Bani- Thaqif, was burnt by his order, because wine was secretly sold there. On another occasion a whole village was burnt down on the orders of Hadrat `Umar, for the crime that wine was secretly extracted and sold there.

110It is forbidden to hunt game or to help another to hunt it in any way whatsoever, while one is in the pilgrim's garments or in the sacred precincts. It is also unlawful for one in this state to eat of the game that has been specifically killed for him. If, however, someone else, not in this state, kills a game for himself and then gives a part of it to a pilgrim as a present, there is no harm for the latter to eat it. Of course, the harmful animals are an exception to this prohibition. One is permitted to kill a snake, scorpion, mad dog or any other harmful animal, even when one is under the restrictions imposed on a pilgrim.

111Those two just men will also decide how many indigent persons are to be fed, or how many fasts are to be observed, for killing a certain animal.

112Game from the sea has been made lawful because sometimes when provisions run short on a sea journey, there is nothing else close at hand to eat.

113For Arabia, the Ka`bah was not merely a sacred place of worship, but it occupied a central position in the country and because of this and of its sanctity, it was the means of stabilizing its economy and culture. The people from all over the country came there to perform Hajj and `Umrah and the huge gathering helped to create the feeling of unity among the Arabs who were otherwise torn by clannish strifes. The pilgrims who came from different clans and places met together and established cultural relations. Poetic contests helped to make their language and literature rich. Trade and commerce which were transacted on the occasion helped to satisfy the economic needs of the people. The sacred months provided peace to the Arabs for four months and this was the only period during which their caravans could travel in security from one part of the country to the other. The animals dedicated to sacrifice and the collars round their necks proved very helpful to the movements of the caravans, for the Arabs showed so much reverence for them that none dared touch them with the intention of robbery.

114That is, "If you just think deeply about the wisdom contained in the sanctity of the Ka`bah and the restrictions laid down for the pilgrimage to it and the benefits accruing from it, you yourselves would be convinced that Allah, Who has prescribed these, has deep and perfect knowledge of the welfare and needs of His creatures. You will realize that each one of His Commandments is very beneficial for different aspects of human life. Even during the centuries of chaos before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), Allah had made the Ka`bah a means of security and stability for your national life though you yourselves were senselessly bent upon destroying it. In the same way, Commandments of Allah guaranteed your own security and welfare; therefore you should, for your own good observe these, for there are hidden benefits in them that you can neither foresee nor obtain by your own devices."

115This verse sets up a new standard of values, which is quite different from the standard of those who look only at the outward aspect of things. Such people usually judge things by their quantity and not by their quality. For instance, one hundred rupees are always considered greater in value than five rupees by one who does not attach any value to the means by which these might have been obtained. But contrary to this evaluation, this verse declares that if these one hundred rupees have been obtained by unfair means and those five rupees earned by fair means, then the former are less in worth because of their impurity than the latter because of their purity. According to this standard, it is not the number or the quantity of a thing that increases or decreases its true worth but the question whether it has been obtained by fair means or foul. Obviously, a drop of rose scent has greater value than a heap of filth and a cup of pure water is tar greater in worth than a cistern full of impure urine. Therefore one who is really wise will always remain content with the lawful, though it may appear to be very insignificant and worthless, and will never try to grab the unlawful, though it might appear to be very alluring and grand.

116This verse forbids people to ask useless and unnecessary questions because some people used to put such questions to the Holy Prophet as were of no practical good for mundane affairs nor for spiritual up-lift. For example, once a certain person while sitting in a gathering asked him, "Who is my real father?" Likewise, sometimes, some people put unnecessary questions concerning legal matters so as to get these defined, whereas they had been purposely kept undefined for the good of the people. Far example, when Hajj was made obligatory by a commandment in the Qur'an a certain person heard it, and instantly asked. "Has it been made obligatory to perform Hajj every year"' The Holy Prophet did not make any reply. The man repeated the question, but he again kept quiet. When the man put the question for the third time, he replied, "Woe to you! If I had said: 'Yes', the performance of Hajj every year would have become obligatory and people like you would have been unable to perform it and been guilty of disobedience. "

The Holy Prophet himself forbade people to ask questions for the sake of it and to probe into things aimlessly. In a Tradition he warned, "The worst offender against the Muslims is the person who asked a question about something that had not been made unlawful but was made so because of his question." In another Tradition he said, "Allah has prescribed some obligatory duties for you; let not these go unfulfilled, and He has made certain things unlawful, so do not go near them. He has prescribed certain limits, do not transgress them. He has been silent concerning certain things, but not because He has forgotten them; so do not try to probe into such things."

In these two Traditions a warning has been served against a very serious matter. There are certain things and commandments which have been left vague and without details. This is not because the Law-giver had forgo ten to give details or to make them specific but because He did not intend to limit these in order to leave a wide scope for the people. Therefore if a person goes on creating one issue after the other, by putting unnecessary and useless questions and thus creates limitations and specifications, he puts the people to unnecessary trouble. Likewise if he tries to deduce the details by the force of his "reasoning". and does trot rest content till .he has made the vague things specific and the indefinite definite. he in reality puts the Muslims in a very awkward position. This is because the more details we otter for the Unseen and the Next World, the more will be the chances for creating doubts about them and, likewise, the more limitations are imposed concerning the Commandments, the greater will be the chance for their violation.

117The people, who were involved in disbelief because they asked useless and unnecessary questions, were the Jews. At first they were involved in hairsplitting, which led them to put unnecessary questions about the details of the Faith and the Commandments. Consequently, they helped to impose upon themselves such restrictions as they could not observe and so became guilty of disobedience and disbelief, What a pity that the Muslims are following the Jews, step by step, in spite of these warnings by the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet!

118In this verse the superstitious practice of dedicating animals to idols, graves, gods or saints, and leaving them to roam about and graze at liberty has been condemned. In the pre-Islamic Arabia, they gave different names to such animals and marked them off, and considered it unlawful to take any service from them or slaughter them for food or derive any benefit from them in any way. Bahirah was the name given to a she-camel which had five young ones, the last of which was a he-camel. Her ear was then split and she was turned loose to roam at liberty. After this, none would ride her nor drink her milk nor slaughter her nor shear her hair. She was allowed to graze in any field and pasture and drink from any watering place.

Sa'ibah was the name given to that he-camel or she-camel which was let loose as a mark of gratitude in fulfillment of a vow taken for recovery from some illness or safety from some danger. Sa ibah was also the name given to the she-camel which had ten young ones, each of which was a she-camel. Wasilah was the name given to a special he-goat which was one of the first born twins, the other of which was a she-goat. The practice about the first born young ones was that they used to sacrifice, in the haute of their deities, the first horn young one if it happened to be a he-goat. But if they happened to be twins the: would not sacrifice the he-goat and would call it Wasilah and set it at liberty in the name of deities. Ham was the name given to a he-camel as soon as his "grandson" became grown up and fit for riding: it was then set at liberty. The same name also was given to a he-camel which begot ten young ones and was set at liberty.

119This is a warning against a common human weakness. Some people are always on the look-out to find out and criticize errors in others. Here such people have been admonished against this evil and asked to concentrate their attention on their own acts, deeds, morals and beliefs instead of probing into and criticizing the conduct and beliefs of others. If a man himself is obedient to Allah and fulfills his obligations to Him and man, and treads the path of truth and righteousness, which also includes the establishment of virtue and the eradication of vice, then most surely the crookedness and deviation of any other can do him no harm.

This verse however, does not mean that a person should think only of his own salvation and leave alone the reform of others. Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq refuted this misconception in an address, saying, "O people, you recite this verse and put on it a wrong interpretation. I myself heard the Holy Prophet say, `When the people become so indifferent that they see evil and do not try to eradicate it and see an unjust person doing an injustice and do not prevent him from it, Allah may punish all of them.' I swear by Allah that it is obligatory on you to enjoin virtue and forbid evil; (if you neglect this) Allah will place you under the worst people who will inflict hardships on you. Then your good people will offer prayers but He will not accept these."

120That is, pious, righteous and trustworthy Muslims.

121This shows that the Muslims are permitted to make the non-Muslims their witnesses only in case the

Muslim witnesses are not available.

122The Day of Resurrection.

123That is, "What was the response of the world to the invitation that you gave towards Islam?"

124That is, "We know only of that outward response which was made to our invitation during our lifetime. As regards the real practical response, we have no correct knowledge of it for that is known to You alone."

125At first this question will be put collectively to all the Messengers. Then each of the Messengers will stand as a witness individually. Here that question, which will be put to Jesus Christ (Allah's peace be upon him), has been specially mentioned because it fits into the context.

126That is, "You brought them back to life after death. "

127That is, "It was a favor upon you that the Disciples believed in you, by Our Grace; otherwise you had no power by yourself to convert even a single person out of the disbelievers."

Incidentally, the use of the word Muslims for the Disciples is meant to show that their religion was Islam and not Christianity.

128This incident has been inserted here as a parenthesis to show that even his Disciples, who had received his teachings from him directly, considered Jesus a man and servant of God. Therefore, they could never conceive to make their master a god or a partner of God or son of God. This also shows that Jesus also presented himself as a servant without having any authority of his own.

It may be asked, "What was the occasion of inserting this parenthesis here to interrupt the conversation that was being cited?" The answer is that the conversation that would take place on the Day of Resurrection has been quoted here for the benefit of the Christians so that they may learn the lesson and adopt the right way. It is, therefore, quite pertinent to insert the incident mentioned in the parenthesis to impress the same lesson. "

129The Qur'an is silent as to whether the `tray' was sent down or not and there is no other authentic source of information. Possibly it was sent down, but it is equally possible that the Disciples themselves might have taken back their request after the warning in verse 115.

130This refers to another error of the Christians. They had made Mary an object of worship along with

Christ and the Holy Ghost, though there is not a word or hint in the Bible about this doctrine. During the first three centuries after Christ, the Christian world was totally unaware of this creed. Towards the end of the 3rd century, the words "Mother of God" were used for the first time by some theologians of Alexandria. Though the response which these words found in the popular heart was great, yet the Church was not at first inclined to accept the doctrine and declared that the worship of Mary was a wrong creed. Then at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D., the words `Mother of God' were officially used by the Church. As a result `Mariolatry' began to spread by leaps and bounds both inside and outside the Church. So much so that by the time the Qur'an was revealed, the exaltation of the 'Mother of God' had eclipsed the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Her statues were set up in Churches and she was worshiped, implored and invoked in prayers. In short, the greatest source of reliance of a Christian was that he should obtain the help and protection of the `Mother of God.' Emperor Justinian in the preamble to one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the empire and his general, Narses, looks to her directions on the battlefield. Emperor Heraclius, a contemporary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, bore her image on his banner and believed that because of its auspicious nature it will never be lowered. Though the Protestants after the Reformation did their best to fight against Mariolatry, yet the Roman Catholic Church still adheres to it passionately. Al-Ma `idah493 but it is equally possible that the Disciples themselves might have taken back their request after the warning in verse 115. 130. This refers to another error of the Christians. They had made Mary an object of worship along with Christ and the Holy Ghost, though there is not a word or hint in the Bible about this doctrine. During the first three centuries after Christ, the Christian world was totally unaware of this creed. Towards the end of the 3rd century, the words "Mother of God" were used for the first time by some theologians of Alexandria. Though the response which these words found in the popular heart was great, yet the Church was not at first inclined to accept the doctrine and declared that the worship of Mary was a wrong creed. Then at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D., the words `Mother of God' were officially used by the Church. As a result `Mariolatry' began to spread by leaps and bounds both inside and outside the Church. So much so that by the time the Qur'an was revealed, the exaltation of the 'Mother of God' had eclipsed the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Her statues were set up in Churches and she was worshiped, implored and invoked in prayers. In short, the greatest source of reliance of a Christian was that he should obtain the help and protection of the 'Mother of God.' Emperor Justinian in the preamble to one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the empire and his general, Narses, looks to her directions on the battlefield. Emperor Heraclius, a contemporary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, bore her image on his banner and believed that because of its auspicious nature it will never be lowered. Though the Protestants after the Reformation did their best to fight against Mariolatry, yet the Roman Catholic Church still adheres to it passionately.

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http://www.quran411.com

Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

6. Surah Al Anaam (The Cattle)

Name

This Surah takes its name from vv. 136, 138 and 139 in which some superstitious beliefs of the idolatrous Arabs concerning the lawfulness of some cattle (*an`am*) and the unlawfulness of some others have been refuted.

Period of Revelation

According to a tradition of Ibn Abbas, the whole of the Surah was revealed at one sitting at Makkah. Asma, a daughter of Yazid and a first cousin of Hadrat Mu'az-bin Jabl, says, "During the revelation of this Surah, the Holy Prophet was riding on a she-camel and I was holding her nose-string. The she-camel began to feel the weight so heavily that it seemed as if her bones would break under it." We also learn from other traditions that the Holy Prophet dictated the whole of the Surah the same night that it was revealed.

Its subject-matter clearly shows that it must have been revealed during the last year of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah. The tradition of Asma, daughter of Yazid, also confirms this. As she belonged to the *Ansar* and embraced Islam after the migration of the Holy Prophet to Yathrib, her visit to the Holy Prophet at Makkah must have taken place during the last year of his life there. For before this, his relations with those people were not so intimate that a woman from there might have come to visit him at Makkah.

Occasion of Revelation

After determining the period of its revelation, it is easier to visualize the background of the Surah. Twelve years had passed since the Holy Prophet had been inviting the people to Islam. The antagonism and persecution by the Quraish had become most savage and brutal, and the majority of the Muslims had to leave their homes and migrate to Habash (Abyssinia). Above all, the two great supporters of the Holy Prophet. Abu Talib and Hadrat Khadijah, were no more to help and give strength to him. Thus he was deprived of all the worldly support. But in spite of this, he carried on his mission in the teeth of opposition. As a result of this, on the one hand, all the good people of

Makkah and the surrounding clans gradually began to accept Islam ; on the other hand, the community as a whole, was bent upon obduracy and rejection. Therefore, if anyone showed any inclination towards Islam, he was subjected to taunts and derision, physical violence and social boycott. It was in these dark circumstances that a ray of hope gleamed from Yathrib, where Islam began to spread freely by the efforts of some influential people of Aus and Khazraj, who had embraced Islam at Makkah. This was a humble beginning in the march of Islam towards success and none could foresee at that time the great potentialities that lay hidden in it. For, to a casual observer, it appeared at that time as if Islam was merely a weak movement it had no material backing except the meager support of the Prophet's own family and of the few poor adherents of the Movement. Obviously the latter could not give much help because they themselves had been cast out by their own people who had become their enemies and were persecuting them.

Topics

These were the conditions, when this discourse was revealed. The main topics dealt with in this discourse may be divided under seven headings:

1. Refutation of *shirk* and invitation to the creed of *Tauhid*.

2. Enunciation of the doctrine of the "Life-after- death." and refutation of the wrong notion that there was nothing beyond this worldly life.

3. Refutation of the prevalent superstitions.

4. Enunciation of the fundamental moral principles for the building up of the Islamic Society.

5. Answers to the objections raised against the person of the Holy Prophet and his mission.

6. Comfort and encouragement to the Holy Prophet and his followers who were at, that time in a state of anxiety and despondency because of the apparent failure of the mission.

7. Admonition, warning and threats to the disbelievers and opponents to give up their apathy and haughtiness. It must, however, be noted that the above topics have not been dealt with one by one under separate headings, but the discourse goes on as a continuous whole and these topics come under discussion over and over again in new and different ways.

The Background of Makki Surahs

As this is the first long Makki Surah in the order of the compilation of the Quran, it will be useful to explain the historical background of Makki Surahs in general, so that the reader may easily understand the Makki Surahs and our references to its different stages in connection with our commentary on them.

First of all, it should be noted that comparatively very little material is available in regard to the background of the

revelation of Makki Surahs whereas the period of the revelation of all the Madani Surahs is known or can be determined with a little effort. There are authentic traditions even in regard to the occasions of the revelation of the majority of the verses. On the other hand, we do not have such detailed information regarding the Makki Surahs. There are only a few Surahs and verses which have authentic traditions concerning the time and occasion of their revelation. This is because the history of the Makki period had not been compiled in such detail as that of the Madani period. Therefore we have to depend on the internal evidence of these Surahs for determining the period of their revelation: for example, the topics they discuss, their subject. matter, their style and the direct or indirect references to the events and the occasions of their revelation. Thus it is obvious that with the help of such evidence as this, we cannot say with precision that such and such Surah or verse was revealed on such and such an occasion. The most we can do is to compare the internal evidence of a Surah with the events of the life of the Holy Prophet at Makkah, and then come to a more or less correct conclusion as to what particular stage a certain Surah belongs.

If we keep the above things in view, the history of the mission of the Holy Prophet at Makkah can be divided into four stages.

The first stage began with his appointment as a Messenger and ended with the proclamation of Prophethood three years later. During this period the Message was given secretly to some selected persons only, but the common people of Makkah were not aware of it.

The second stage lasted for two years after the proclamation of his Prophethood. It began with opposition by individuals: then by and by, it took the shape of antagonism, ridicule, derision,, accusation, abuse, and false propaganda then gangs were formed to persecute those Muslims who were comparatively poor, weak' and helpless.

The third stage lasted for about six years from the beginning of the persecution to the death of Abu Talib and Hadrat Khadijah in the tenth year of Prophethood. During this period, the persecution of the Muslims became' so savage and brutal that many of them were forced to migrate to Habash. Social and economic boycott was applied against the Holy Prophet and the members of his family, and those Muslims who continued to stay in Makkah were forced to take refuge in Shi'b-i-A'bi Talib which was besieged.

The fourth stage lasted for about three years from the tenth to the thirteenth year of Prophethood. This was a period of hard trials and grievous sufferings for the Holy Prophet and his followers. Life had become unendurable at Makkah and there appeared to be no place of refuge even outside it. So much so that when the Holy Prophet went to Ta'if, it offered no shelter or protection. Besides this, on the occasion of Haj, he would appeal to each and every Arab clan to accept his invitation to Islam but met with blank refusal from every quarter. At the same time, the people of Makkah were holding counsels' to get rid of him by killing or imprisoning or banishing him from their city. It was at that most critical time that Allah opened for Islam the hearts of the *Ansar* of Yathrab where he migrated at their invitation.

Now that we have divided the life of the Holy Prophet at Makkah into four stages, it has become easier for us to tell, as far as possible, the particular stage in which a certain Makki Sarah was revealed. This is because the Surahs

belonging to a particular stage can be distinguished from those of the other stages with the help of their subject matter and style. Besides this, they also contain such references as throw light on the circumstances and events that form the background of their revelation. In the succeeding Makki Surahs, we will determine on the basis of the distinctive features of each stage, and point out in the Preface, the particular stage in which a certain Makki Surah was revealed.

Subject :Islamic Creed.

This Surah mainly discusses the different aspects of the major articles of the Islamic Creed: *Tauhid*, Life-after-death, Prophethood and their practical application to human life. Side by side with this, it refutes the erroneous beliefs of the "opponents and answers their objections, warns and admonishes them and comforts the Holy Prophet and his followers, who were then suffering from persecution.

Of course, these themes have not been dealt with under separate heads but have been blended in an excellent manner.

Topics and their Interconnection

These verses are of introductory and admonitory nature. The disbelievers have been warned that if they do not accept the Islamic Creed and follow the 'Light' shown by the Revelation from the All-Knowing and All-Powerful Allah, they would go to the same doom as the former disbelievers did. Their arguments for rejecting the Prophet and the Revelation sent down to him have been refuted and a warning has been given to them that they should not be deluded by the respite that is being granted to them. 1 - 12

These verses inculcate *Tauhid*, and refute *shirk* which is the greatest obstacle in the way of its acceptance. 13 - 24

In these verses, a graphic scene of the life in the Hereafter has been depicted in order to warn the disbelievers of the consequences of the rejection of the Articles of Faith. 25 - 32

Prophethood is the main theme which has been discussed from the point of view of the Holy Prophet, his Mission, the limitations of his powers, the attitude towards his followers and also from the point of view of the disbelievers. 33 - 73

In continuation of the same theme, the story of Prophet Abraham has been related to bring home to the pagan Arabs that the Mission of Prophet Muhammad, which they were opposing, was the same as that of Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon them). This line of argument was adopted because they considered themselves to be his followers, especially the Quraish who were proud of being his descendants as well. 74 - 90

Another proof of his Prophethood is the Book, which has been sent down to him by Allah, for its teachings show the right guidance in regard to creed and practice. 91 - 108

Divine restrictions have been contrasted with the superstitious restrictions of the pagan Arabs in order to show the striking differences between the two and thus prove the Quran to be a Revealed Book. 109 - 154

The Jews, who were criticized in vv. 144 - 147 along with the pagan Arabs, have been urged to compare the teachings of the Quran with those of the Torah so that they might recognize their similarity and give up their lame excuses against it, and adopt its Guidance to escape the retribution on the Day of Resurrection. 155 - 160

This is the conclusion of the discourse: the Holy Prophet has been instructed in a beautiful and forceful manner to proclaim fearlessly the articles of the Islamic Creed and their implications. 161 - 165

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ وَٱلنُّورَ ۖ
ثُمَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن طِينٍ ثُمَّ
قَضَىٰٓ أَجَلًا ۖ وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِندَهُۥ ۖ ثُمَّ أَنتُمْ تَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٢﴾

وَهُوَ ٱللَّهُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَفِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا
تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] Praise is only for Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and ordained light and many kinds of darkness; in spite of this, those who have rejected the Message of their Lord have set up equal partners with Him[1] It is He Who has created you from earth[2] and decreed a fixed term of life for you, and with Him there is another settled[3] term also yet you have doubts thereof. He is the same One Allah in the heavens as well as on the earth: He knows all that you make known and all that you keep secret and is fully aware of the good or evil that you earn.

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِم مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ مِّنْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا
مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٤﴾

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِٱلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ أَنۢبَٰٓؤُا۟ مَا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٥﴾

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّن قَرْنٍ مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّن لَّكُمْ وَأَرْسَلْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيْهِم مِّدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرَ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَٰهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَنشَأْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ
قَرْنًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٦﴾

[4-6] Yet the reaction of the people has been that whenever a Sign from the Signs of their Lord has come to them, they have turned away from it: accordingly, they have rejected as false the Truth that has come to them now. Well, they will receive some news[4] about what they have been ridiculing so far. Do they not see that We destroyed before them many a people who were dominant in the world during their time? We had given them such power in the land as We have not given you. We sent down for them abundant rains from heavens and made canals flow beneath them. But (when they showed ingratitude), We destroyed them because of their sins and raised up other people in their place.

وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتَٰبًا فِى قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ لَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟
إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ ۖ وَلَوْ أَنزَلْنَا مَلَكًا لَّقُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنظَرُونَ
﴿٨﴾

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَٰهُ مَلَكًا لَّجَعَلْنَٰهُ رَجُلًا وَلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّا يَلْبِسُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[7-9] O Messenger, even if We had sent down to you a Book written on paper, and even if they had touched it with their own hands, the disbelievers would have said, "This is nothing but manifest sorcery." And they say, "Why has no angel been sent down to him?"[5] If We had sent down an angel, their fate would have been decided long before this and they would have been given no respite after this;[6] for if We had sent an angel, We would have sent him in human form and thus involved them in the same doubt in which they are involved now.[7]

وَلَقَدِ ٱسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِٱلَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا۟
مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

قُلْ سِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ ٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١١﴾

[10-11] O Muhammad, many Messengers before you have also been ridiculed, but in the long run those who mocked were overpowered by the very thing they had mocked. Say to them, "Just travel in the land and see the end

of those who treated the Truth as false."[8]

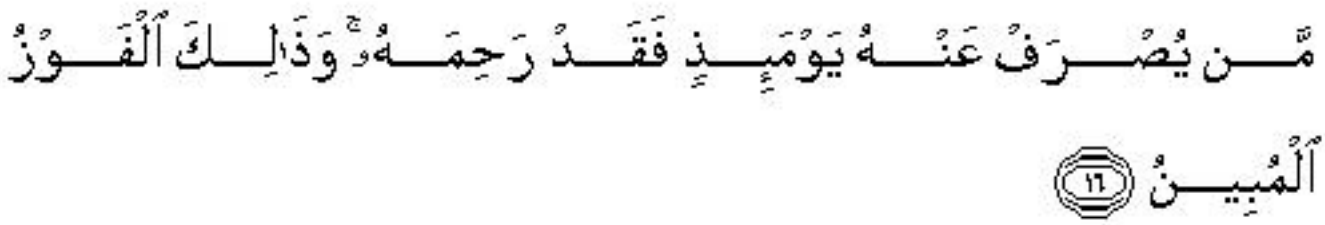
قُل لِّمَن مَّا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ قُل لِّلَّهِ ۚ كَتَبَ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ ٱلرَّحْمَةَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

[12] Ask them, "To Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth?" Say, "To Allah,[9] Who has prescribed mercy and generosity for Himself: (that is why He does not catch hold of you immediately at your first disobedience). He will, however, certainly muster all of you on the Day of Resurrection. There is no doubt about this; yet those who have made themselves liable to ruin, do not believe in this."

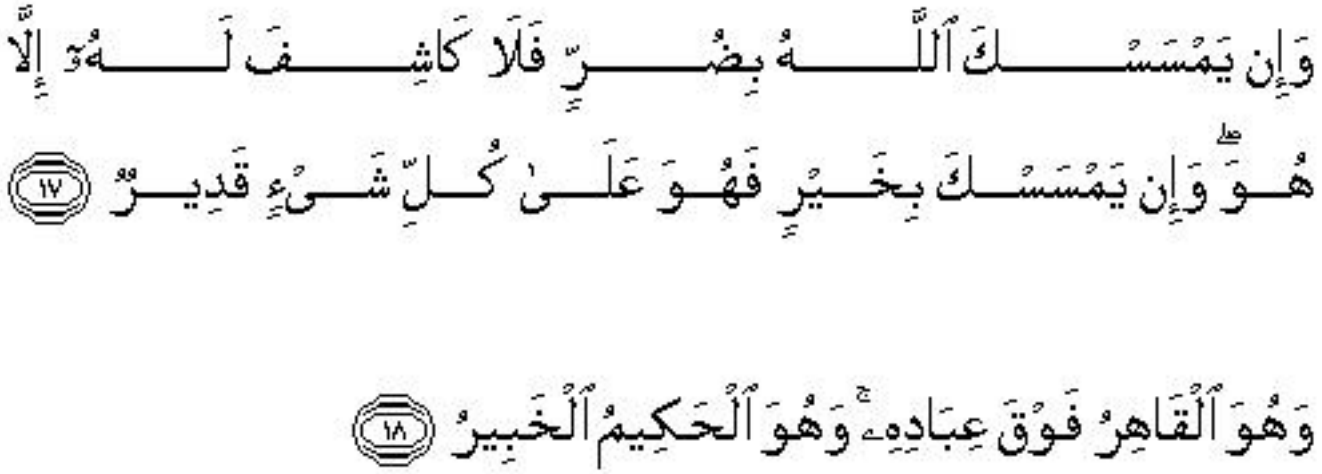
۞ وَلَهُۥ مَا سَكَنَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ ۗ قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ ۖ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّى عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥﴾



[13-16] All that lies in the darkness of the night and in the light of the day belongs to Allah, and He hears and knows everything. Say, "Should I take as my guardian any other than Allah? Should I forsake that Allah Who is the Creator of the earth and the heavens and Who nourishes all and does not stand in need of nourishment from anyone?"[10] Say, "I have been enjoined to be the first of those who surrender to Him, (and I have been urged) not to be of those who commit shirk" Say, "I do fear the torment of a (dreadful) Day, if I should disobey my Lord." He, who will be delivered from the torment of that Day, will have received Allah's mercy, and this is a great success.



[17-18] If Allah afflicts you with an evil, there is none other than Him to relieve you from this, and if He bestows some good on you, (know that) He has power over everything. He has supreme authority over His servants and He is All-Wise, All-Aware.

قُلْ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَٰدَةً ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۖ شَهِيدٌۢ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَأُوحِىَ إِلَىَّ
هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانُ لِأُنذِرَكُم بِهِۦ وَمَنۢ بَلَغَ ۚ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ
ءَالِهَةً أُخْرَىٰ ۚ قُل لَّآ أَشْهَدُ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ وَإِنَّنِى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا
تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَعْرِفُونَهُۥ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَآءَهُمُ ۘ ٱلَّذِينَ
خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِـَٔايَٰتِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ
ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

[19-21] Ask them, "Whose testimony is the most reliable?" Say "Allah is witness[11] between me and you (that I am His Messenger), and this Qur'an has been revealed to me so that I should thereby warn you and all whom it may reach. What, will you really testify that there are other deities besides Allah?"[12] Say, "As for me, I will never testify such a thing."[13] Say, "Indeed, He alone is the Deity and I feel disgusted with the shirk you practice." Those, to whom We have given the Book, recognize this with as much certainty as they recognize their own sons.[14] But those, who have made themselves liable to perdition, do not believe in this. And, who can be more unjust than the one who brings false allegations against Allah[15] or denies Allah's Signs?[16] Indeed, such unjust people can never attain to true success.

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآؤُكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ
كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُن فِتْنَتُهُمْ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ وَٱللَّهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[22-24] On the Day, when We muster them all together, We shall ask the mushrikin, "Where are now your associates whom you had taken for your deities?" Then they shall not be able to play any other trick (than make this false statement): "We swear by You, our Lord, we were not at all mushrikin." Behold, how they will invent a lie against themselves and how all the false gods, they had forged, will forsake them!

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِىٓ
ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۚ وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ كُلَّ ءَايَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهَا ۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوكَ
يُجَٰدِلُونَكَ يَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَهُمْ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَيَنْـَٔوْنَ عَنْهُ ۖ وَإِن يُهْلِكُونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ
﴿٢٦﴾

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ وُقِفُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ فَقَالُوا۟ يَٰلَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلَا نُكَذِّبَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ
رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

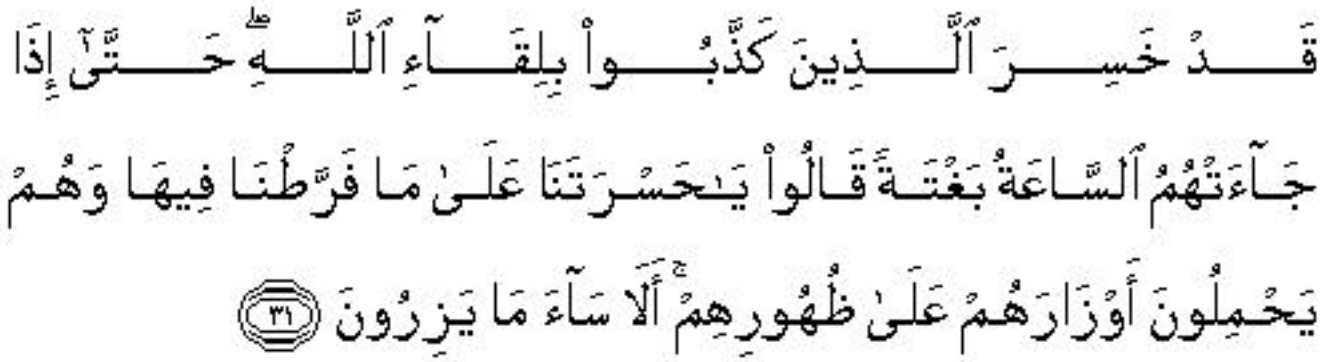
بَلْ بَدَا لَهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يُخْفُونَ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَلَوْ رُدُّوا۟ لَعَادُوا۟ لِمَا نُهُوا۟ عَنْهُ
وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

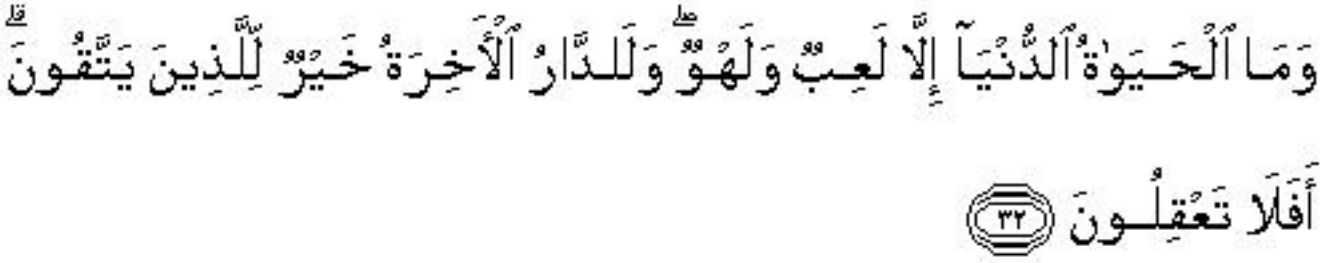
وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ هِىَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ وُقِفُوا۟ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ قَالَ أَلَيْسَ هَٰذَا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ
وَرَبِّنَا ۚ قَالَ فَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

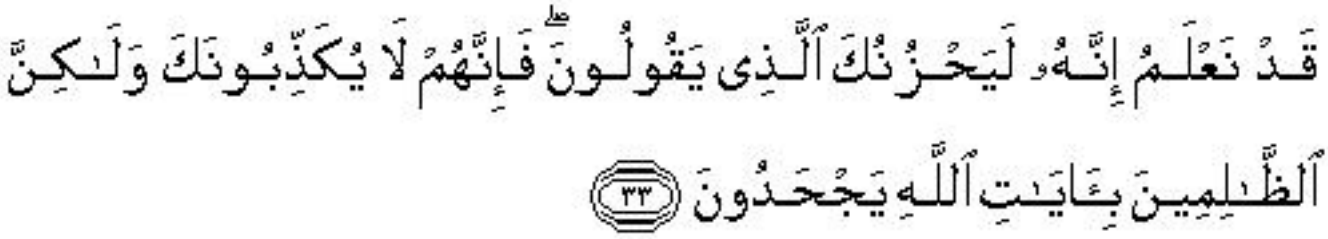
[25-30] There are some among them, who (pretend to) listen to what you say, but they do not understand it, as We have cast veils over their hearts; We have made them hard of hearing (so they are deaf[17] to what they hear). Even if they see any Sign, they will not believe in it; so much so that when they come and contend with you, those, who have already made up their minds not to believe (after hearing all), say, "This is nothing but the same old story."[18] They forbid other people to believe in this Truth, and themselves turn away from it. (They imagine that in this way they are doing you some harm), whereas they are preparing their own perdition, though they do riot perceive it. Would that you could see their condition at the time, when they will be made to stand before Hell! They will say, "Would that we could somehow return to the earthly life again: then we would not deny the Signs of our Lord, and would join the Believers." As a matter of fact, they will say this because the Reality which they had concealed before this, will have appeared manifest before them.[19] But the fact is that even if they were sent back to the earthly life, they would do all that they had been forbidden to do. They are liars (that is why they will give vent to such a false wish). Today they say, "There is no other life than this our worldly life, and we shall never be raised back to life after our death." Would that you could witness the scene, when they will be brought before their Lord: then their Lord will

ask them, "Is this not the Reality?" They will say, "Yes, our Lord, this is the Reality." Then He will declare, "Well, taste the torment for denying this Reality."





[31-32] Losers indeed are those who consider it a lie that they will ever have a meeting with Allah. When the Hour overtakes them unawares, they will exclaim, "Alas! how negligent we have been of this matter!" and they will be carrying the burdens of their sins on their backs: behold, how heavy is the burden they are carrying! This worldly life is but a sport and pastime.[20] In fact, the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who desire to be safe from harm. Will you not, then, use your commonsense?



وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا۟ وَأُوذُوا۟ حَتَّىٰٓ أَتَىٰهُمْ
نَصْرُنَا ۚ وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكَ مِن نَّبَإِى۟ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَإِن كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ فَإِنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتَ أَن تَبْتَغِىَ نَفَقًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتَأْتِيَهُم بِـَٔايَةٍ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ ۚ فَلَا
تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

۞ إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ ۘ وَٱلْمَوْتَىٰ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ
إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

[33-36] O Muhammad, We know that what they say, grieves you, but it is not you whom they charge with falsehood; these wicked people are, in fact, denying the Revelations of Allah.[21] Many Messengers before you have also been treated as impostors, but they bore with fortitude the charge of imposture and persecution (by the disbelievers), till Our help came down to them. None has the power to change the Law of Allah[22] and you have already received the news of what happened to the Messengers before you. However, if you find it hard to bear their aversion, then seek out, if you can, an opening into the earth, or set up a .ladder to the sky so that you may bring them a Sign.[23] Had Allah willed, He would have gathered them all on guidance; so do not behave like the ignorant people.[24] Only those, who listen to it, accept the Message; as for the dead,[25] Allah will raise them from the graves only and they shall be brought back (to be produced in His Court).

وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يُنَزِّلَ ءَايَةً
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

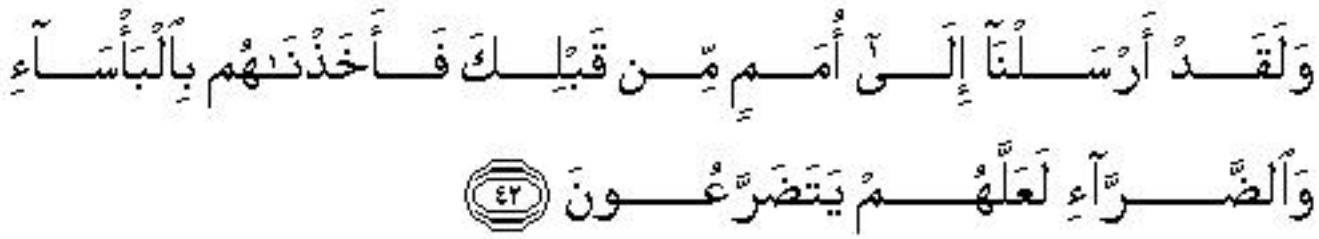
وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَٰٓئِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّآ أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُم ۚ مَّا
فَرَّطْنَا فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا صُمٌّ وَبُكْمٌ فِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ ۗ مَن
يَشَإِ ٱللَّهُ يُضْلِلْهُ وَمَن يَشَأْ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

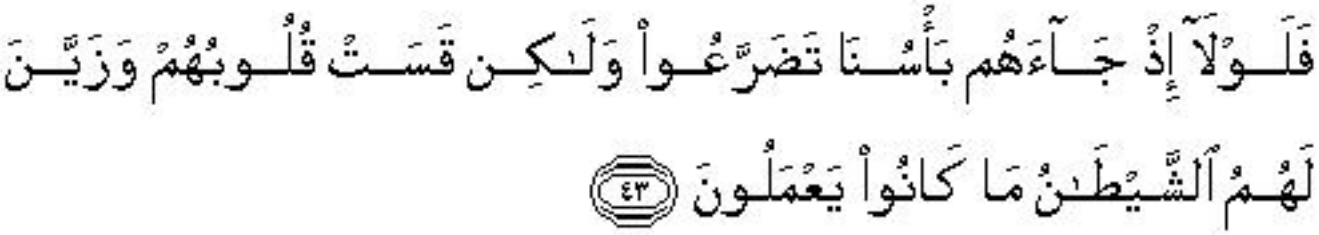
قُلْ أَرَءَيْتَكُمْ إِنْ أَتَىٰكُمْ عَذَابُ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ أَتَتْكُمُ
ٱلسَّاعَةُ أَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ تَدْعُونَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ إِن شَآءَ وَتَنسَوْنَ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ
﴿٤١﴾

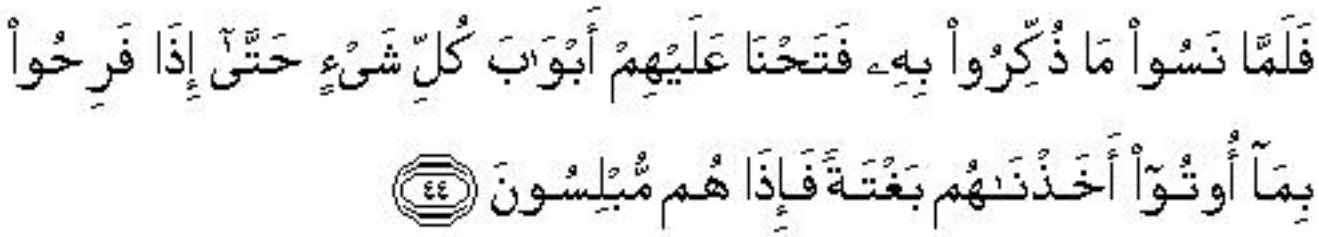
[37-41] These people ask, "Why has no Sign been sent down to this Prophet from his Lord?" Say, "Allah is able to send down a Sign, but most of these people do not understand the wisdom underlying it."[26] As regards Signs, just have a look at any of the beasts that move upon the earth and at any of the birds that fly in the air: they too are species like you. We have left out nothing in pre-determining the courses of their lives: then ultimately they are all gathered to their Lord. But those, who deny Our Signs, are deaf and dumb, dwellings in many sorts of darkness;[27] Allah lets go astray whom He wills and guides to the Right Way whom He pleases.[28] Ask them to consider deeply and answer, "When some great misfortune befalls you, or the last hour approaches you, do you invoke any other than Allah? Answer, if you be in the right." At that time you invoke Allah alone: then, if He pleases, He averts the affliction from you, and on such occasions, you forget those whom you had set up as His partners.[29]



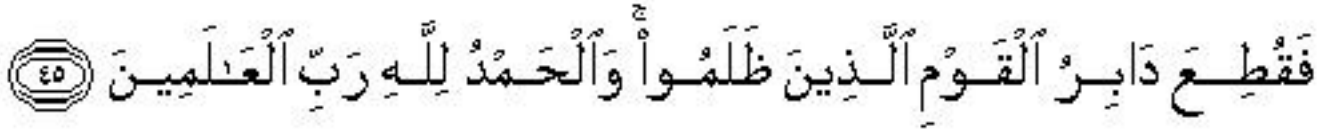
وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَأَخَذْنَٰهُم بِٱلْبَأْسَآءِ
وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾



فَلَوْلَآ إِذْ جَآءَهُم بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا۟ وَلَٰكِن قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ
لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾



فَلَمَّا نَسُوا۟ مَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَٰبَ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَرِحُوا۟
بِمَآ أُوتُوٓا۟ أَخَذْنَٰهُم بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾



فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ ۚ وَٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[42-45] We sent Messengers before you to many peoples and afflicted them with calamities and misfortunes so that they might bow down before Us with humility. Why did they not then humble themselves when Our scourge

overtook them? Instead of this, their hearts were hardened all the more and Satan made, what they were doing, seem fair to them. After this when they forgot the Admonition that was given them, We opened the gates of every kind of prosperity for them; so much so that they were deeply absorbed in enjoying what was given to them. Then We seized them all of a sudden, and they were in a state of utter despair. Thus the transgressors were totally uprooted, and Allah, the Lord of the universe, be praised (that He uprooted them).

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ سَمْعَكُمْ وَأَبْصَـٰرَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُم مَّنْ إِلَـٰهٌ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِهِۗ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ ٱلْـَٔايَـٰتِ ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْدِفُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

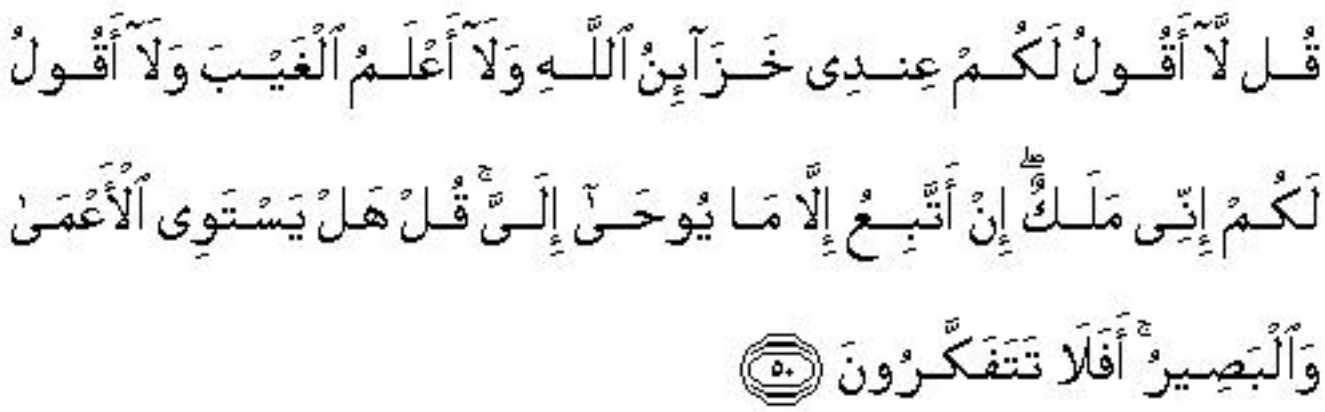
قُلْ أَرَءَيْتَكُمْ إِنْ أَتَىٰكُمْ عَذَابُ ٱللَّهِ بَغْتَةً أَوْ جَهْرَةً هَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلَّا ٱلْقَوْمُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَۖ فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

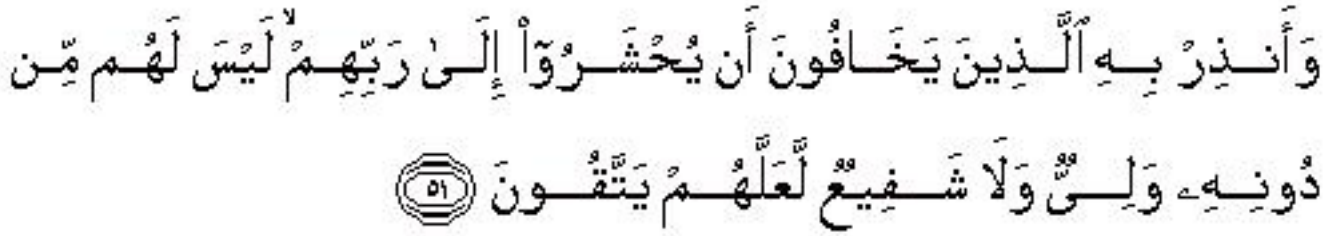
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

[46-49] O Muhammad, ask them, "Have you ever considered this: If Allah were to take away your hearing and your

sight and set a seal upon your hearts,[30] is there a deity other than Allah to restore them to you?" Behold! how We present Our Signs before them over and over again, and how they turn away from them in disdain. Say, "Have you also ever considered this: If the scourge of Allah comes upon you suddenly or openly, shall any but the transgressors be destroyed? For We send Our Messengers only to give good news to the righteous people and to warn the evil-doers: then those, who accept their Message and reform their own conduct, will have no cause for fear and sorrow and those who treat Our Revelations as false, shall have to suffer punishment in consequence of their evil deeds.



[50] Tell them, O Muhammad, "I do not claim that I possess the treasures of Allah nor that I know the "unseen", nor do I claim that I am an angel. I only follow the Revelation that is sent down to me."[31] Then ask them, "Can the blind man and the seeing man be alike?[32] Do you not consider this thing?"



وَلَا تَطۡرُدِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدۡعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلۡغَدَوٰةِ وَٱلۡعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجۡهَهُۥۖ
مَا عَلَيۡكَ مِنۡ حِسَابِهِم مِّن شَيۡءٖ وَمَا مِنۡ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيۡهِم مِّن شَيۡءٖ
فَتَطۡرُدَهُمۡ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٥٢

وَكَذَٰلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعۡضَهُم بِبَعۡضٖ لِّيَقُولُوٓاْ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِم مِّنۢ
بَيۡنِنَآۗ أَلَيۡسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَعۡلَمَ بِٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ٥٣

[51-53] And, O Muhammad, admonish with this (knowledge based on Revelation) those, who fear that one Day they shall be brought before their Lord in such a state that they will find none other than Allah (with competent powers) as protector or intercessor: it may be that (by this admonition) they adopt the God-fearing attitude.[33] And do not drive away those who invoke their Lord morning and evening and are engaged in seeking His favor.[34] You are not in any way accountable for them, nor are they in any way accountable for you: so, if you should drive them away, you shall be counted among the unjust.[35] As a matter of fact, in this way We have made some of them a means for testing the others,[36] so that, seeing them, they should say, "Are these the people from among us upon whom Allah has showered His blessings?" Yes: does not Allah know His grateful servants better than they?

وَإِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَقُلۡ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيۡكُمۡۖ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمۡ عَلَىٰ
نَفۡسِهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَةَۖ أَنَّهُۥ مَنۡ عَمِلَ مِنكُمۡ سُوٓءَۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٖ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦ
وَأَصۡلَحَ فَأَنَّهُۥ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٥٤

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْأَيَٰتِ وَلِتَسْتَبِينَ سَبِيلُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[54-55] When those, who have believed in Our Revelations, come to you, say to them, "Peace be upon you: your Lord has prescribed for Himself mercy and compassion. (It is His compassion that) He forgives and treats with leniency anyone who commits an evil through ignorance and then repents and mends his ways."[37] In this way, We make Our Signs clear and plain so as to expose the way of the guilty ones.[38]

قُلْ إِنِّى نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُل لَّآ أَتَّبِعُ أَهْوَآءَكُمْ
قَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذًا وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

قُلْ إِنِّى عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّى وَكَذَّبْتُم بِهِۦ ۚ مَا عِندِى مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ
بِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنِ ٱلْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ ۖ يَقُصُّ ٱلْحَقَّ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلْفَٰصِلِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

قُل لَّوْ أَنَّ عِندِى مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِهِۦ لَقُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
أَعْلَمُ بِٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

۞ وَعِندَهُۥ مَفَاتِحُ ٱلْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَآ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ ۚ وَمَا
تَسْقُطُ مِن وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِى ظُلُمَٰتِ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا
يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِٱلنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ
لِيُقْضَىٰٓ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ
﴿٦٠﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّىٰٓ
إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

ثُمَّ رُدُّوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَوْلَىٰهُمُ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ ٱلْحَٰسِبِينَ
﴿٦٢﴾

[56-62] O Muhammad, say, "I have been forbidden to worship those, whom you invoke beside Allah. " Say, "I will not follow your wishes for if I did that I should have gone astray, and would not be of the right guided. " Say, "I take my stand on a clear proof from my Lord, and you have rejected it. Now, that which you demand to be hastened is

not in my power,[39] for Allah alone has the sole authority of passing judgment: He declares the Truth and He is the best of arbiters" . Say, "Had I the power to hasten that which you are demanding, the dispute between you and me would have been settled long before this, but Allah knows best how to deal with evil-doers. He alone has the keys of the "unseen", of which none has the knowledge but He. He knows all that is in the land and in the sea; there is not a leaf that falls from a tree but He knows about it; there is not a grain in the darkest bowels of the earth of which He is not aware; everything fresh and dry has been recorded in an open Book. It is He Who recalls your souls at night and knows what you do during the day; then next day He returns you to your usual work to complete the fixed term of your life. At long last, you shall all return to Him and He will let you know what you had been doing. He reigns supreme over His servants and appoints those, who keep watch over you[40] till the time the death of anyone of you approaches; then the angels sent by Him take away his soul and do not show the least negligence in the performance of their duty. Then all are brought back to Allah, their real Master. Beware of it that the sole authority of passing judgment rests with Him alone and He is the swiftest at reckoning."

قُلۡ مَن يُنَجِّيكُم مِّن ظُلُمَٰتِ ٱلۡبَرِّ وَٱلۡبَحۡرِ تَدۡعُونَهُۥ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفۡيَةً لَّئِنۡ
أَنجَىٰنَا مِنۡ هَٰذِهِۦ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يُنَجِّيكُم مِّنۡهَا وَمِن كُلِّ كَرۡبٖ ثُمَّ أَنتُمۡ تُشۡرِكُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[63-64] O Muhammad, ask them, "Who rescues you from perils in the darkness of the land and sea? Who is He Whom you implore humbly and invoke secretly (at the time of affliction)? To whom do you make this promise: `We will be grateful if you rescue us from this affliction'." Say, "Allah delivers you from that and every other affliction; yet you associate other partners with Him."[41]

قُلۡ هُوَ ٱلۡقَادِرُ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَبۡعَثَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ عَذَابٗا مِّن فَوۡقِكُمۡ
أَوۡ مِن تَحۡتِ أَرۡجُلِكُمۡ أَوۡ يَلۡبِسَكُمۡ شِيَعٗا وَيُذِيقَ بَعۡضَكُم
بَأۡسَ بَعۡضٍۗ ٱنظُرۡ كَيۡفَ نُصَرِّفُ ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَفۡقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

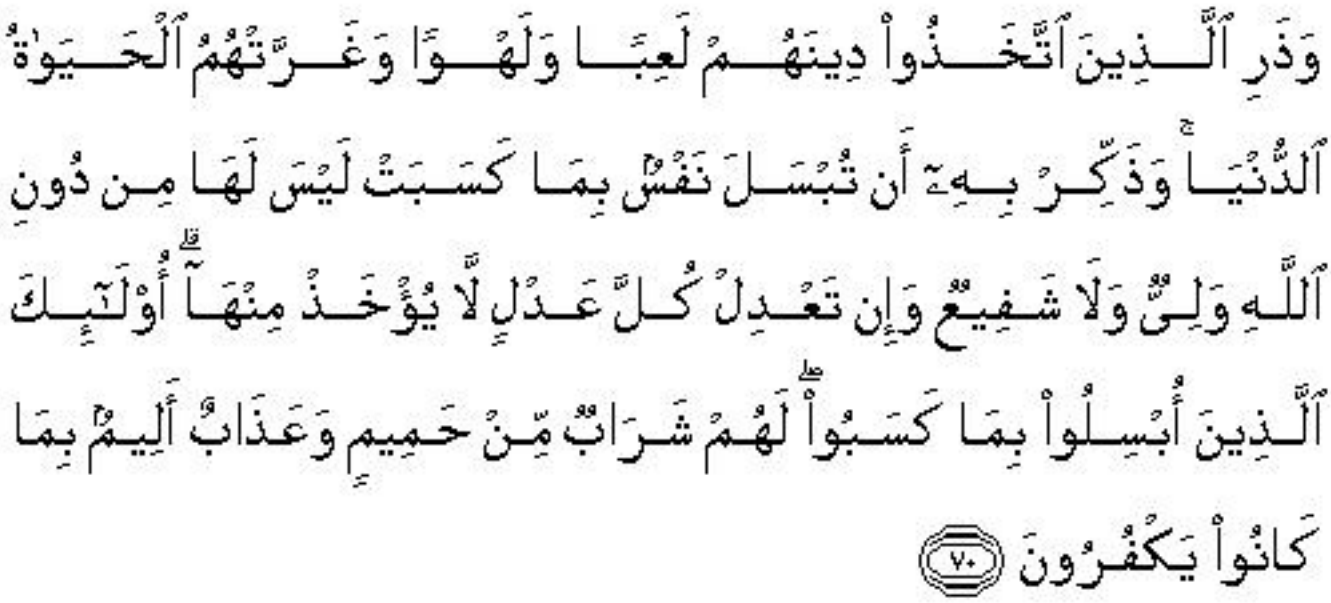
وَكَذَّبَ بِهِۦ قَوۡمُكَ وَهُوَ ٱلۡحَقُّۚ قُل لَّسۡتُ عَلَيۡكُم بِوَكِيلٖ ٦٦

لِّكُلِّ نَبَإٖ مُّسۡتَقَرّٞۚ وَسَوۡفَ تَعۡلَمُونَ ٦٧

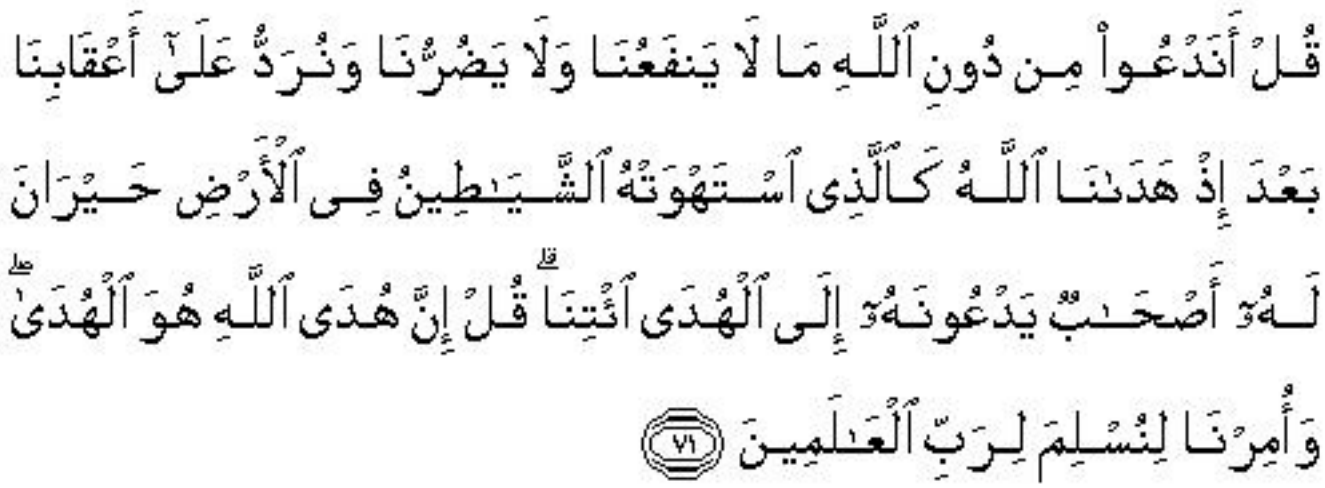
[65-67] Say, "He has the power to bring a scourge on you from above you or from beneath your feet or to split you into discordant factions to make you taste the violence of one another. " Behold! how We present Our Signs over and over again in different ways before them so that they should understand the Reality.[42] Your people are rejecting it (the Qur'an), although it is the Truth. Say, "I have not been made a supervisor over you.[43] Every event takes its prescribed time to appear; and, by and by, you yourselves shall see the consequences."

وَإِذَا رَأَيۡتَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَأَعۡرِضۡ عَنۡهُمۡ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُواْ فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيۡرِهِۦۚ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ فَلَا تَقۡعُدۡ بَعۡدَ ٱلذِّكۡرَىٰ مَعَ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٦٨

وَمَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنۡ حِسَابِهِم مِّن شَيۡءٖ وَلَٰكِن ذِكۡرَىٰ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَّقُونَ ٦٩



[68-70] And, O Muhammad, when you see that people are finding fault with Our Revelations, withdraw from them till they get engaged in some other talk; and, if ever Satan causes you to forget this,[44] quit the company of such unjust people when you realize your mistake. Though the pious people are not in any way accountable for them, yet it is their duty to admonish them; perhaps they may refrain from their evil ways.[45] And leave alone those who have taken their faith as a sport and pastime and have been deluded by the life of this world; nevertheless, go on admonishing them by reciting the Qur'an to them lest any person should be seized because of his own deeds, and that too at the time, when there would be no protector, no helper and no intercessor to rescue him from Allah, and when no conceivable amount of ransom would be accepted from him; this is because such people shall be seized in consequence of what they themselves had earned; they shall get boiling water to drink and a painful torment to suffer for their rejection of the Truth.



وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ۚ قَوْلُهُ
ٱلْحَقُّ ۚ وَلَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِى ٱلصُّورِ ۚ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ۚ وَهُوَ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿٧٣﴾

[71-73] O Muhammad, ask them, "Should we invoke, instead of Allah, those, who can neither benefit us nor harm us? And should we turn upon ow heels after Allah has shown us the Guidance? Should we put ourselves in the sad plight of the man, whom the satans have misled to wander over the desert in a bewildered state of mind, while his companions are calling aloud, `Come to us: here is the right way'?" Say, "In fact, the right guidance is the Guidance of Allah and He has enjoined us to surrender to the Lord of the universe and establish the Salat and refrain from His disobedience; you shall all be gathered unto Him. It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in all truth,[46] and there shall be Resurrection the day He says, "Be." His word is the very truth and on the Day, when the Trumpet[47] is blown, His shall be the sole Sovereignty.[48] He has full knowledge of the visible and the invisible[49] and He is All-Wise, All-Knowing."

۞ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ ءَازَرَ أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا ءَالِهَةً ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰكَ وَقَوْمَكَ
فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

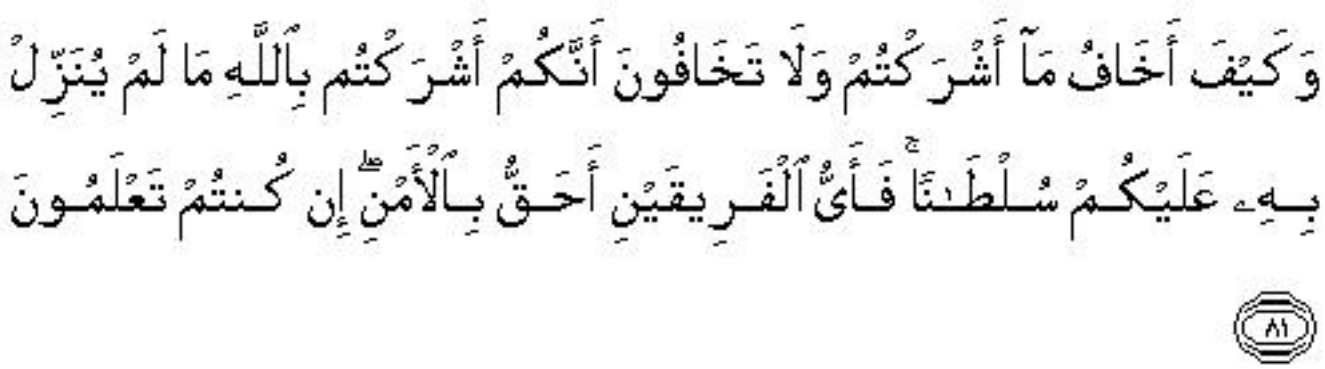
فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلَّيْلُ رَءَا كَوْكَبًا ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَآ أُحِبُّ ٱلْأَفِلِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

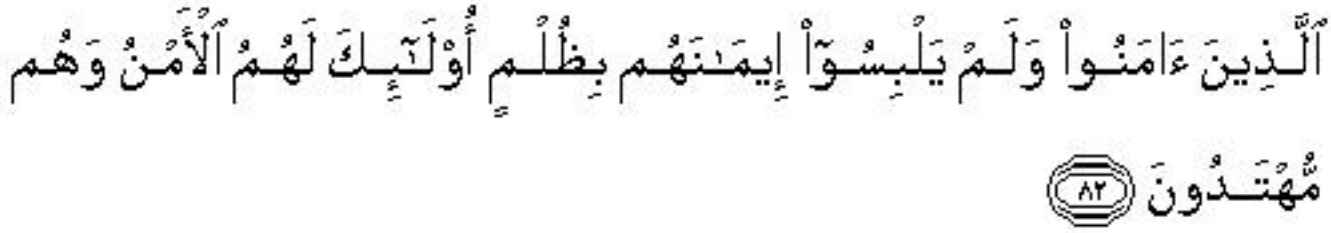
فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِى رَبِّى لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى هَٰذَآ أَكْبَرُ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

وَحَآجَّهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ ۚ قَالَ أَتُحَٰٓجُّوٓنِّى فِى ٱللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَىٰنِ ۚ وَلَآ أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ رَبِّى شَيْـًٔا ۗ وَسِعَ رَبِّى كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا ۗ أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾





[74-82] And remember the incident when Abraham said to his father, Azar, "Do you take idols for deities?[50] I see that you and your people are in manifest deviation." And We showed[51] to Abraham the phenomena of the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth in the manner (that follows) so that he may become one of the firm believers.[52] Accordingly when the night outspread over him, he saw a star and said, "This is my Lord." But when it set, he declared, "I cannot love those that set." Afterwards when he saw the moon shining, he said, "This is my Lord." But when it also set, he cried, "If my Lord had not guided me, I, too would have been of those who had gone astray." Then, when he saw the sun shining brightly, he said, "This is my Lord. This is the largest of all." But when this also set, he exclaimed. "O my people, I have nothing to do with those whom you set up as partners with God.[53] As regards me, I have turned my face in exclusive loyalty and worship towards that Being Who has created the earth 'and the heavens and I am not at all of those who associate partners with Allah." And when his people began to argue with him, he said to them, "Do you argue with me in regard to Allah, whereas He has shown Guidance to me? And I do not fear those whom you have taken for gods: except that it be my Lord's will, for if my Lord wills anything it must happen. The knowledge of my Lord embraces everything. Will you not, then, remember this and come to your senses?[54] And there is no reason why I should fear those whom you have made partners with Allah, when you are not afraid of setting up those things as partners in Godhead for which He has sent no authority to you. Then tell me, if you have any knowledge: which of the two parties merits peace and freedom from fear? As a matter of fact, they alone, who have believed and not polluted their Faith with shirk,[55] have peace and are rightly guided."

وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَآ ءَاتَيْنَـٰهَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ ۚ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَـٰتٍ مَّن نَّشَآءُ ۗ إِنَّ
رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٨٣﴾

[83] This was Our argument which We bestowed upon Abraham against his people. We raise whom We will to exalted ranks; indeed your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَـٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۚ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا ۚ وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَمِن
ذُرِّيَّتِهِۦ دَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَـٰنَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَهَـٰرُونَ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ
نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

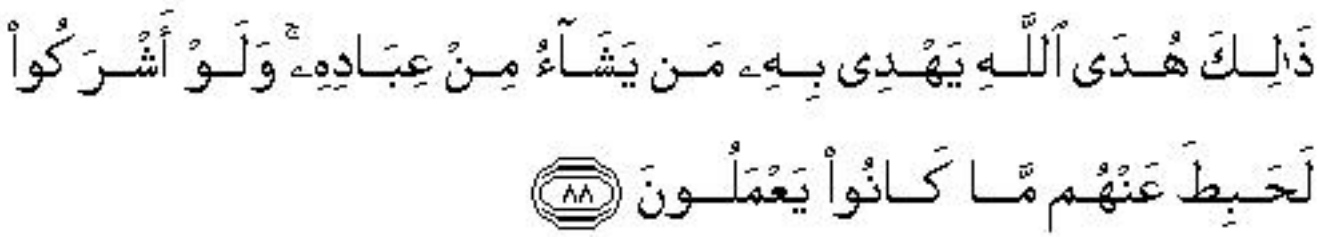
وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَإِلْيَاسَ ۖ كُلٌّ مِّنَ ٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

وَإِسْمَـٰعِيلَ وَٱلْيَسَعَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا ۚ وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

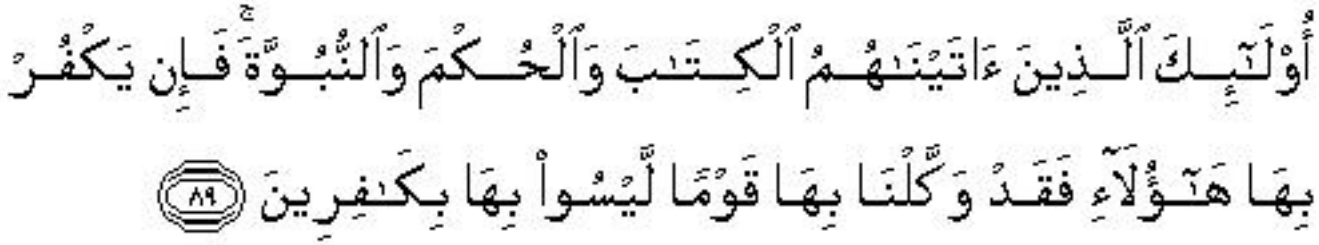
وَمِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّـٰتِهِمْ وَإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ ۖ وَٱجْتَبَيْنَـٰهُمْ وَهَدَيْنَـٰهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٨٧﴾

[84-87] Then We bestowed upon Abraham descendants like Isaac and Jacob, and showed each of them the Right Way, (the same Right Way that) We had shown to Noah before them; and (We bestowed Guidance upon) David,

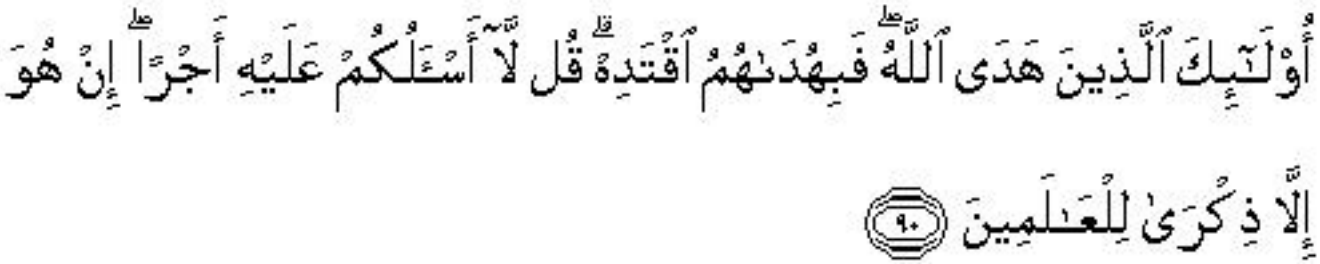
Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron from among his descendants. Thus, We reward the righteous people for their good deeds. And (from among his descendants, We showed Guidance) to Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elias, each of whom was an upright man. And (We showed the Right Way) to Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah and Lot (who were his offspring). And We exalted everyone of them over all the people of the world and showed favors to many of their forefathers and their descendants and their brethren and chose them for Our service and guided them aright.



ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ يَهْدِى بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۚ وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا۟
لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾



أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحُكْمَ وَٱلنُّبُوَّةَ ۚ فَإِن يَكْفُرْ
بِهَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ فَقَدْ وَكَّلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَّيْسُوا۟ بِهَا بِكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾



أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَدَى ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَبِهُدَىٰهُمُ ٱقْتَدِهْ ۗ قُل لَّآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ۖ إِنْ هُوَ
إِلَّا ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

[88-90] This is Allah's Guidance by which He guides anyone of His servants He pleases: but if any of His people had ever practiced shirk, all the good deeds they had done would have been rendered vain.[56] Such were the people on whom We bestowed the Book, the Judgment and the Prophethood.[57] Now, if these people do not believe in it (it does not matter); We have bestowed this favor upon others who are not ungrateful to it[58] - O Muhammad, those were the people who were rightly guided by Allah; so you should also follow their way and say, "I ask no recompense from you for showing this (Guidance); this is an admonition to all the people of the world."

وَمَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ بَشَرٍ مِّن
شَىْءٍ ۗ قُلْ مَنْ أَنزَلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ٱلَّذِى جَآءَ بِهِۦ مُوسَىٰ نُورًا وَهُدًى
لِّلنَّاسِ ۖ تَجْعَلُونَهُۥ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا ۖ وَعُلِّمْتُم مَّا
لَمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنتُمْ وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ ۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ ۙ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِى خَوْضِهِمْ
يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

وَهَٰذَا كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مُبَارَكٌ مُّصَدِّقُ ٱلَّذِى بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ
وَلِتُنذِرَ أُمَّ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۖ
وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِىَ إِلَىَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ
إِلَيْهِ شَىْءٌ وَمَن قَالَ سَأُنزِلُ مِثْلَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ فِى غَمَرَٰتِ ٱلْمَوْتِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ بَاسِطُوٓا۟ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوٓا۟
أَنفُسَكُمُ ۖ ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ غَيْرَ
ٱلْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَٰدَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُم مَّا خَوَّلْنَٰكُمْ
وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا نَرَىٰ مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَآءَكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ
شُرَكَٰٓؤُا۟ ۚ لَقَد تَّقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنكُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

[91-94] Those people formed quite a wrong estimate of Allah, when they said,[59] "Allah has not sent down anything to any man." Ask them: "Then who sent down the Book, which Moses brought: which was Light and Guidance for mankind: which you have divided into fragments, a part of which you show to the people and most of it you hide from them: by which you were given that knowledge which neither you nor your forefathers possessed?"[60] -- Just say, "Allah", and then leave them alone to play with their useless arguments. (Like that Book) this is a Book which We have sent down; it is a blessed Book, it confirms that which was sent down before it, and this has been sent down so that you should warn the people of this central place (Makkah) and those who dwell around it. Those, who believe in the Hereafter, believe in this Book, and observe their prescribed Prayers punctually.[61] And who could be more wicked than the one who invents a falsehood about Allah or says, "A Revelation has come to me," whereas no Revelation has come to him, or says, "I will also send down the like of what God has sent down?" Would that you could see these wicked people, when they are in the agonies of death, and the angels are out-stretching their hands and saying, "Come, yield up your soul; today you shall be awarded a disgraceful torment for the false things you attributed to Allah and for the rebellion you showed against His Revelations." (And Allah will add,) "So, you have come before Us all alone, as We created you at first. Now, you have left behind all that We gave to you in the world; and now We do not see with you those intercessors who, you believed, had a share in molding your destinies: all the relations between you have been cut off, and all those, in whom you trusted, have left you in the lurch."

۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ فَالِقُ ٱلْحَبِّ وَٱلنَّوَىٰ ۖ يُخْرِجُ ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتِ
مِنَ ٱلْحَىِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

فَالِقُ ٱلْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ ٱلَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْعَلِيمِ ﴿٩٦﴾

[95-96] Allah is the splitter of the seed grain and the fruit stone;[62] it is He Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living.[63] It is Allah Who does all these things: where, then, are you being misled? He causes the dawn to appear out of the curtain of the night; it is He Who has ordained the night for rest and determined the time of the rising and the setting of the moon and the sun: all these things have been determined by the same All Powerful and the All Wise One.

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلنُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا۟ بِهَا فِى ظُلُمَٰتِ ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ ۗ
قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ ۗ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا
ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا
مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُّخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُّتَرَاكِبًا وَمِنَ ٱلنَّخْلِ مِن طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ
وَجَنَّٰتٍ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَٱلزَّيْتُونَ وَٱلرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَٰبِهٍ ۗ ٱنظُرُوٓا۟
إِلَىٰ ثَمَرِهِۦٓ إِذَآ أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكُمْ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

وَجَعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ ٱلْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ ۖ وَخَرَقُوا۟ لَهُۥ بَنِينَ وَبَنَٰتٍۭ بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

بَدِيعُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ
تَكُن لَّهُۥ صَٰحِبَةٌ ۖ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
﴿١٠١﴾

ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ
كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾

لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱللَّطِيفُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٠٣﴾

[97-103] And it is He Who has set up the stars for you so that you may find your way in the deep darkness of the land and sea. Behold! We have made Our Signs clear for those who possess knowledge.[64] And it is He Who created you from one single soul[65] and provided for each of you a dwelling place and a repository. We have made these Signs clear for those who are men of understanding[66] And it is He Who sent down rain-water from the sky and thereby caused every kind of vegetation to grow, and then with it produced green fields and trees and from them brought forth close growing grain and from the blossoms of palm-trees brought forth laden sheaths of clustering dates and vineyards and olive groves and gardens of pomegranates : though their fruits resemble each other yet each has its distinctive quality. Behold how they bring forth fruit and how their fruits ripen. for there are indeed Signs in these things for those who believe. Yet they set up the Jinn as partners with Allah,[67] whereas He is their Creator;

they have also invented for Him sons and daughters without having any knowledge[68] whereas He is absolutely free from and exalted far above the things they say. He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth: how should He have a son, when He has no consort? He has created everything and He has the Knowledge of everything. This then is, Allah, your Lord; there is no deity but He is the Creator of everything : so worship Him alone, for He is the Guardian of all things, No sight can comprehend Him but He comprehends all sorts of sight, for He is All-Comprehensive and All-Aware.

قَدْ جَآءَكُم بَصَآئِرُ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ عَمِىَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۚ
وَمَآ أَنَا۠ عَلَيْكُم بِحَفِيظٍ ﴿١٠٤﴾

[104] Behold: Lights of discernment have come to you from your Lord: now, whoever makes use of his sight, will do so to his own good, and whoever behaves like a blind person will do so to his own harm; I am not a keeper over you.[69]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ وَلِيَقُولُوا۟ دَرَسْتَ وَلِنُبَيِّنَهُۥ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿١٠٥﴾

ٱتَّبِعْ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ
﴿١٠٦﴾

وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَآ أَشْرَكُوا۟ ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ عَلَيْهِم
بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَدْوًۢا
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِم مَّرْجِعُهُمْ
فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

[105-108] Thus do We state Our Revelations over and over again indifferent ways so that the disbelievers might say, "You have learned these (not from Allah but) from someone else;" and so that We may make the Reality plain to those who have knowledge.[70] Therefore, O Muhammad, go on following what has been sent down to you from your Lord, for there is no god besides that One Lord, and leave these mushrikin alone. Had Allah willed (He Himself could have so arranged that), they would not have committed shirk. And We have not appointed you a keeper over them, nor have you been made their guardian.[71] And (O Believers), do not revile those whom they invoke besides Allah lest they should, in their ignorance, revile Allah[72] (besides committing shirk). We have thus made the deeds of every people seem fair to them.[73] Ultimately, they shall have to return to their Lord; then He will let them know what they have been doing.

وَأَقْسَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ لَئِن جَآءَتْهُمْ ءَايَةٌ لَّيُؤْمِنُنَّ
بِهَا ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْـَٔايَٰتُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَآ إِذَا جَآءَتْ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْـِٔدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَٰرَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِى
طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

۞ وَلَوْ أَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَآ إِلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ
كُلَّ شَىْءٍ قُبُلًا مَّا كَانُوا۟ لِيُؤْمِنُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ
يَجْهَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِىٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَٰطِينَ ٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلْجِنِّ يُوحِى بَعْضُهُمْ
إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ ٱلْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ ۖ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا
يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

وَلِتَصْغَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ أَفْـِٔدَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ
وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا۟ مَا هُم مُّقْتَرِفُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

[109-113] They declare with solemn oaths by Allah that if a Sign[74] (i.e. a miracle) comes before them, they will believe in it (your Prophethood). O Muhammad, tell them, "Allah alone can show Signs."[75] And what will make you (O Muhammad) realize that, even if the Signs come, they would not believe?[76] And We are turning away their hearts and eyes from the Truth because of that attitude of theirs which prompted them to disbelieve in the first instance,[77] so We leave them to wander about in their rebellion. Even if We had sent down angels to them and made the dead to speak with them and ranged all the things of the world before them (as a proof thereof), they would still not have believed unless it were Allah's will that they should believe,[78] but most of them talk nonsense. And so have we always set against every Prophet enemies from among satans of men and satans of jinns who have been inspiring one another with charming things in order to delude the minds.[79] But, had your Lord willed, they would never have done so.[80] So leave them alone to continue their false allegations. (We have been allowing them to do all this) so that the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter might be allured (by this charming delusion) and they be well pleased with it, and that they might earn the evils they wish to earn.

أَفَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ أَبْتَغِى حَكَمًا وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُۥ مُنَزَّلٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ
ٱلْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا ۚ لَّا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ
﴿١١٥﴾

[114-115] This being so, should I seek a judge other than Allah. whereas He has sent down to you the Book with full details?[81] And the people whom We gave the Book (before you) know that this Book has been sent down to you with the Truth from your Lord; so you should not be of those who have doubts[82] The Word of your Lord is perfect in regard to Truth and justice; there is none who can make any change in His decrees for He hears everything and knows everything.

وَإِن تُطِعْ أَكْثَرَ مَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا
ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مَن يَضِلُّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١١٧﴾

[116-117] And O Muhammad if you obey most of the dwellers of the earth, they will lead you astray from Allah's Way, for they follow nothing but guess-work and indulge in mere conjectures.[83] In fact, your Lord knows best those who have gone astray from His Way and also He knows those who are on the Right Path.

فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا ذُكِرَ ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُم بِـَٔايَـٰتِهِۦ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا ذُكِرَ ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُم مَّا حَرَّمَ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا ٱضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَّيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَآئِهِم بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

[118-119] Then you should eat the flesh of the animal over which Allah's name has been mentioned, if you sincerely believe in His Revelations.[84] And why should you not eat that thing over which Allah's name has been mentioned when He has already given you explicit knowledge of those things which He has forbidden for you, except in a case of extreme helplessness?[85] as As regards the majority of the people, they, following their caprices, say misleading things without any knowledge. Your Lord best knows these transgressors.

وَذَرُوا۟ ظَـٰهِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ ٱلْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا
كَانُوا۟ يَقْتَرِفُونَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَفِسْقٌ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينَ
لَيُوحُونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآئِهِمْ لِيُجَـٰدِلُوكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ
﴿١٢١﴾

[120-121] And refrain from open sins as well as secret sins: surely those who earn sin shall get the recompense of

what they have earned. And do not eat the flesh of the animal over which Allah's name has not been mentioned at the time of slaughter; this indeed is sinful. The satans put doubts and objections into the minds of their friends, so that they should dispute with you,[86] but if you obey them, you are surely mushrikin.[87]

أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ نُورًا يَمْشِى
بِهِۦ فِى ٱلنَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُۥ فِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ
مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

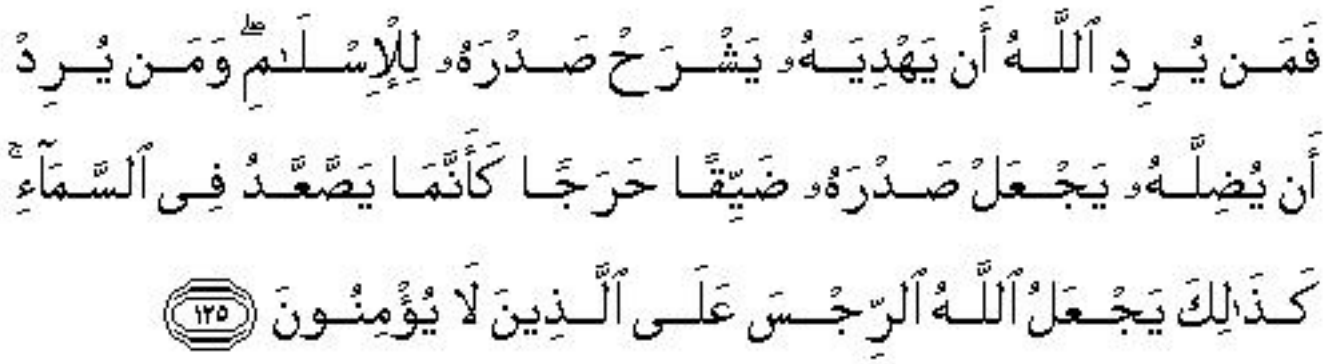
وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِى كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكَٰبِرَ مُجْرِمِيهَا لِيَمْكُرُوا۟ فِيهَا ۖ وَمَا
يَمْكُرُونَ إِلَّا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

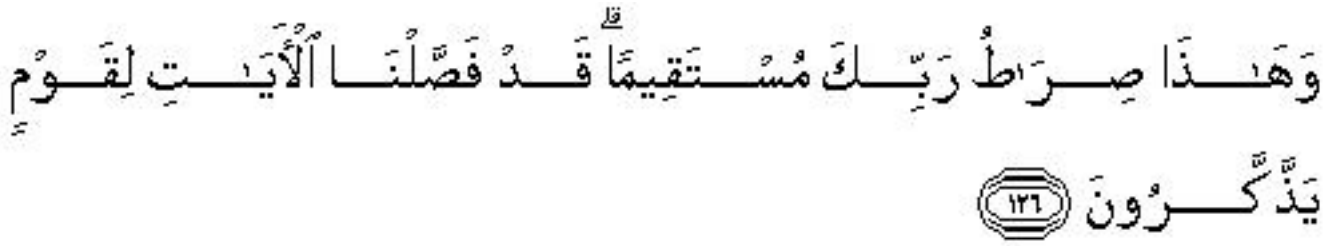
[122-123] Can that person, who was first dead, then We gave him life[88] and bestowed upon him the light by which he is able to walk on the right way among the people, be regarded like the one who is blundering about in deep darkness[89] and will not come out of it? Thus have been made seem fair[90] to the disbelievers their deeds and thus have We placed in every habitation the ringleaders of the wicked people to spread the snare of their vile schemes; in fact, they themselves get entangled in the snare of their vile devices but they do not perceive it.

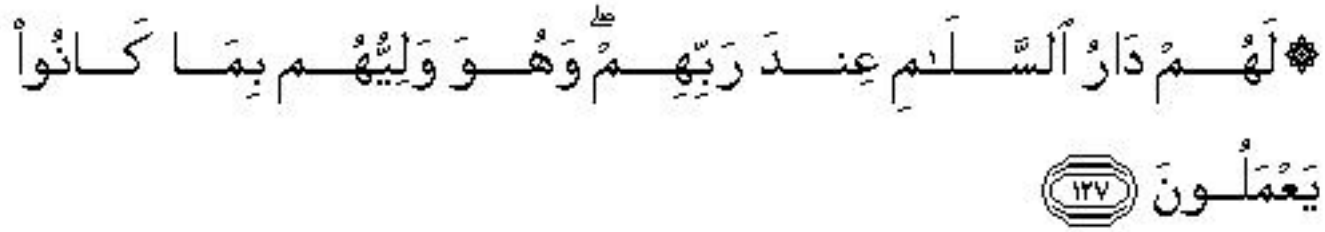
وَإِذَا جَآءَتْهُمْ ءَايَةٌ قَالُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ حَتَّىٰ نُؤْتَىٰ مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ رُسُلُ ٱللَّهِ ۘ ٱللَّهُ
أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُۥ ۗ سَيُصِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا۟ صَغَارٌ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

[124] When a Revelation comes before them, they say, "We will not believe in it unless we are given the like of what has been given to the Messengers of Allah."[91] Allah knows best whom to entrust with His Mission and how to get it conducted. - Near is the time when these criminals shall meet with disgrace and a grievous torment from Allah for

the evil schemes they were devising.


فَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَهۡدِيَهُۥ يَشۡرَحۡ صَدۡرَهُۥ لِلۡإِسۡلَٰمِۖ وَمَن يُرِدۡ
أَن يُضِلَّهُۥ يَجۡعَلۡ صَدۡرَهُۥ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ يَجۡعَلُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّجۡسَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ١٢٥


وَهَٰذَا صِرَٰطُ رَبِّكَ مُسۡتَقِيمٗاۗ قَدۡ فَصَّلۡنَا ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِ لِقَوۡمٖ
يَذَّكَّرُونَ ١٢٦


۞لَهُمۡ دَارُ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡۖ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُم بِمَا كَانُواْ
يَعۡمَلُونَ ١٢٧

[125-127] So (the fact is that) whomsoever Allah wills to guide aright, He makes his breast wide open to Islam,[92] and whomsoever He wills to let go astray, He makes his breast narrow and squeezes it so tight that (at the very idea of Islam) he begins to feel as if his soul were climbing up towards the sky. Thus Allah sets the impurity (caused by their deviation from the Way of Islam) over those who do not believe, whereas this Way is the Straight Way of your Lord, and We have made its signs quite clear for those who are amenable to advice. There is an abode of peace[93] for them with their Lord, and He is their Protector because of the good works they are doing.

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ قَدِ ٱسْتَكْثَرْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ ۖ وَقَالَ
أَوْلِيَآؤُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ رَبَّنَا ٱسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَغْنَآ أَجَلَنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَجَّلْتَ لَنَا ۚ قَالَ ٱلنَّارُ مَثْوَىٰكُمْ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُوَلِّى بَعْضَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

[128-129] On the Day when He will encircle and muster them all together, addressing the jinn,[94] He will say, "O race of jinn, you have exploited fully the human race." And their associates from among the human race will answer, "Our Lord, we both have exploited each other fully,[95] and now we have reached the end of our term which You had fixed for us." Then Allah will say, "Well! now the Fire is your abode wherein you shall abide for ever." Only those, whom Allah will deliver, shall escape from it. No doubt your Lord is All Wise, All-Knowing.[96] Behold, in this way We will make (in the Hereafter) the wrongdoers the comrades of one another because of what they earned (in the world with mutual co-operation).[97]

يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِى
وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا ۚ قَالُوا۟ شَهِدْنَا عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِنَا ۖ وَغَرَّتْهُمُ
ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَشَهِدُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

ذَٰلِكَ أَن لَّمْ يَكُن رَّبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلُهَا غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٣١﴾

[130-131] (On that occasion Allah will ask them this question also:) "O race of jinn and men, did not the Messengers come to you from among yourselves, who recited My Revelations to you and warned you of the consequences you shall meet with on this Day?" They will reply, "Yes, they did. We bear witness against ourselves. "[98] Today this worldly life has deluded them, but at that time, they will themselves bear witness against their selves that they were disbelievers.[99] (This testimony will be taken from them in order to prove that) your Lord would not destroy the habitations unjustly, while their dwellers were ignorant of the Reality.[100]

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا۟ ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

وَرَبُّكَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ذُو ٱلرَّحْمَةِ ۚ إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنۢ بَعْدِكُم مَّا يَشَآءُ كَمَآ أَنشَأَكُم مِّن ذُرِّيَّةِ قَوْمٍ ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

إِنَّ مَا تُوعَدُونَ لَءَاتٍ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

قُلْ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّى عَٰمِلٌ ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن تَكُونُ لَهُۥ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلدَّارِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

[132-135] The grade of everyone (for recompense) is determined in accordance with his deeds: and your Lord is not unaware of the deeds of the people. Your Lord is All-Sufficient and is full of compassion.[101] If He wills, He may remove you and replace you by whomever He wills, just as He raised you from the offspring of other people.

Indeed, the thing which you are being promised shall most surely come;[102] and you have no power to frustrate Allah. O Muhammad, say, "O people, you may do whatever you like in your own way and I am doing whatever I deem right;[103] but you shall soon know who comes out successful in the end; anyhow the fact is that the workers of iniquity can never attain true success."

وَجَعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ مِمَّا ذَرَأَ مِنَ ٱلْحَرْثِ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ نَصِيبًا فَقَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا لِلَّهِ
بِزَعْمِهِمْ وَهَٰذَا لِشُرَكَآئِنَا ۖ فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَآئِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا كَانَ
لِلَّهِ فَهُوَ يَصِلُ إِلَىٰ شُرَكَآئِهِمْ ۗ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

[136] These people[104] have assigned a portion to Allah out of the tillage and the cattle He Himself has created, and say, "This is for Allah," so presume they "and this is for the partners[105] we have set up with Him." Then the portion assigned to the partners of their own making does not reach Allah, but that assigned to Allah reaches the partners set up by them.[106] What evil decisions they make!

وَكَذَٰلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ قَتْلَ أَوْلَٰدِهِمْ شُرَكَآؤُهُمْ لِيُرْدُوهُمْ
وَلِيَلْبِسُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَا فَعَلُوهُ ۖ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا
يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

[137] And likewise, those whom the mushrikin believe to have a share in Allah's Godhead have made the killing of their own children seem fair to them[107] in order to lead them to ruin[108] and confuse them in their religion.[109] Had Allah willed, they would not have done so; therefore, leave them busy in their false accusations.[110]

وَقَالُوا۟ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أَنْعَٰمٌ وَحَرْثٌ حِجْرٌ لَّا يَطْعَمُهَآ إِلَّا مَن نَّشَآءُ بِزَعْمِهِمْ
وَأَنْعَٰمٌ حُرِّمَتْ ظُهُورُهَا وَأَنْعَٰمٌ لَّا يَذْكُرُونَ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا ٱفْتِرَآءً
عَلَيْهِ ۚ سَيَجْزِيهِم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

[138] They say, these cattle and crops are reserved; only those people can eat them, whom we allow. In fact, this is a restriction they themselves have imposed.[111] Then there are some animals which have been forbidden for riding and carrying loads, and there are other animals over which they do not pronounce the name of Allah.[112] They have falsely attributed all this to Allah[113] before long Allah will recompense them for all that they have falsely attributed to Him.

وَقَالُوا۟ مَا فِى بُطُونِ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ خَالِصَةٌ لِّذُكُورِنَا وَمُحَرَّمٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَزْوَٰجِنَا ۖ
وَإِن يَكُن مَّيْتَةً فَهُمْ فِيهِ شُرَكَآءُ ۚ سَيَجْزِيهِمْ وَصْفَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ

﴿١٣٩﴾

[139] And they say, "Whatever is within the bellies of these cattle is reserved for our males and forbidden to our females, but if it is dead, both may partake of it.[114] Allah will surely recompense them for the things they have fabricated; indeed, He is All Wise, All Knowing.

قَدْ خَسِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَتَلُوٓا۟ أَوْلَٰدَهُمْ سَفَهًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَحَرَّمُوا۟
مَا رَزَقَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱفْتِرَآءً عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ قَدْ ضَلُّوا۟ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ مُهْتَدِينَ

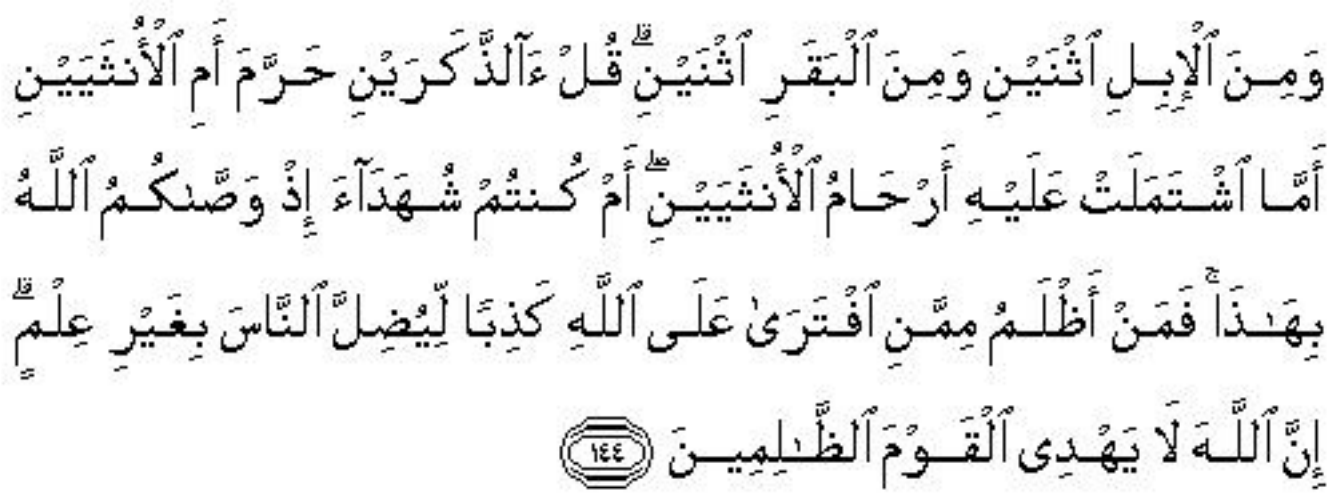
﴿١٤٠﴾

[140] Most surely they became losers, who, in their folly and ignorance killed their own children, and made unlawful what Allah had provided them as sustenance falsely ascribing prohibitions to Allah. Surely they went astray and were not at all rightly guided.[115]

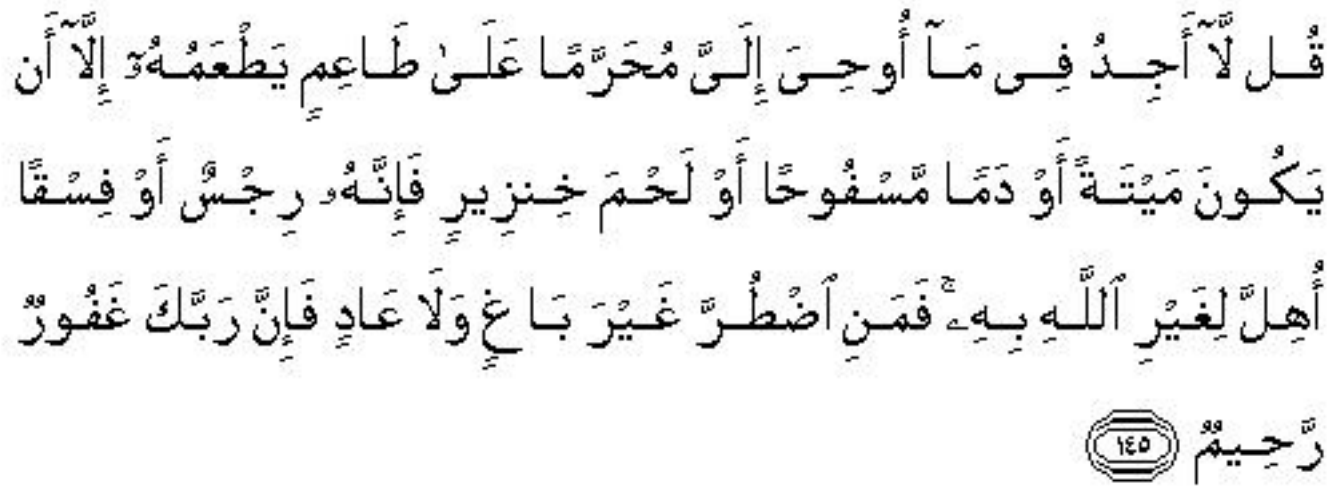
۞ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَ جَنَّٰتٍ مَّعْرُوشَٰتٍ وَغَيْرَ مَعْرُوشَٰتٍ وَٱلنَّخْلَ
وَٱلزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا أُكُلُهُۥ وَٱلزَّيْتُونَ وَٱلرُّمَّانَ مُتَشَٰبِهًا وَغَيْرَ
مُتَشَٰبِهٍ ۚ كُلُوا۟ مِن ثَمَرِهِۦٓ إِذَآ أَثْمَرَ وَءَاتُوا۟ حَقَّهُۥ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِۦ ۖ
وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ حَمُولَةً وَفَرْشًا ۚ كُلُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾

ثَمَٰنِيَةَ أَزْوَٰجٍ ۖ مِّنَ ٱلضَّأْنِ ٱثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ ٱلْمَعْزِ ٱثْنَيْنِ ۗ قُلْ ءَآلذَّكَرَيْنِ
حَرَّمَ أَمِ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ أَمَّا ٱشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ ٱلْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۖ نَبِّـُٔونِى
بِعِلْمٍ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾



[141-144] It is Allah, Who has produced gardens of upright trees and vineyards[116] and date-palm trees; Who has made the crops to grow, which yield different kinds of edibles; Who has produced olive and pomegranate trees, whose fruits are similar in shape yet differing in taste. Eat of their fruits, when they bear fruit, and give away Allah's due at the harvest time, but do not transgress the limits, for Allah does not like the transgressors. And it is He Who has created from among the cattle, beasts of burden and beasts for riding, and also those whose flesh you eat and whose skins you use for making beds;[117] therefore eat of those provisions that Allah has given you and do not follow in the footsteps of Satan for he is your open enemy.[118] Here are eight kinds of cattle - males and females. Take first a pair of the sheep family and a pair of the goat family, and O Muhammad, ask them, "Has He of these forbidden you (to partake of) the males or the females or the young ones that are in the wombs of the sheep and the goats? Tell me with knowledge, if you are men of truth.[119] Likewise, take a pair of the camel family and a pair of the cow family, and ask them, "Has He of these forbidden the males or the females or the young ones that are in the wombs of the she-camel and the cow?"[120] Were you present at the time when Allah prescribed these prohibitory laws? (If not), who can then be more wicked than the one, who invents a falsehood and ascribes it to Allah so that he should, without knowledge, mislead the people? Indeed, Allah does not show guidance to such transgressors.



وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُواْ حَرَّمۡنَا كُلَّ ذِي ظُفُرٖۖ وَمِنَ ٱلۡبَقَرِ وَٱلۡغَنَمِ حَرَّمۡنَا
عَلَيۡهِمۡ شُحُومَهُمَآ إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتۡ ظُهُورُهُمَآ أَوِ ٱلۡحَوَايَآ أَوۡ مَا ٱخۡتَلَطَ
بِعَظۡمٖۚ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَيۡنَٰهُم بِبَغۡيِهِمۡۖ وَإِنَّا لَصَٰدِقُونَ ١٤٦

فَإِن كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُل رَّبُّكُمۡ ذُو رَحۡمَةٖ وَٰسِعَةٖ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأۡسُهُۥ عَنِ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ
ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ١٤٧

[145-147] O Muhammad, say to them, "I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to an eater to eat except that it be carrion or the blood that has been shed or the flesh of swine, for it is unclean, or flesh of an animal that has become profane because of having been slaughtered in any other name than that of Allah.[121] But if one is forced in a case of certain helplessness.(to eat any of these) without any intention of disobedience, and without transgressing the limit of absolute necessity, (he will find that) your Lord is Forgiving and Merciful." And We prohibited to those people, who had adopted Judaism, all animals with claws and the fat of oxen and goats except what is on their backs or their entrails or what sticks to their bones; this was the punishment We had inflicted on them for their rebellion.[122] And We are telling the truth. Now if they belie you, say to them, "Your Lord has limitless mercy: but His punishment cannot be warded off from the criminals."[123]

سَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشۡرَكُواْ لَوۡ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَآ أَشۡرَكۡنَا وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمۡنَا مِن
شَيۡءٖۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ حَتَّىٰ ذَاقُواْ بَأۡسَنَاۗ قُلۡ هَلۡ عِندَكُم مِّنۡ
عِلۡمٖ فَتُخۡرِجُوهُ لَنَآۖ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنۡ أَنتُمۡ إِلَّا تَخۡرُصُونَ ١٤٨

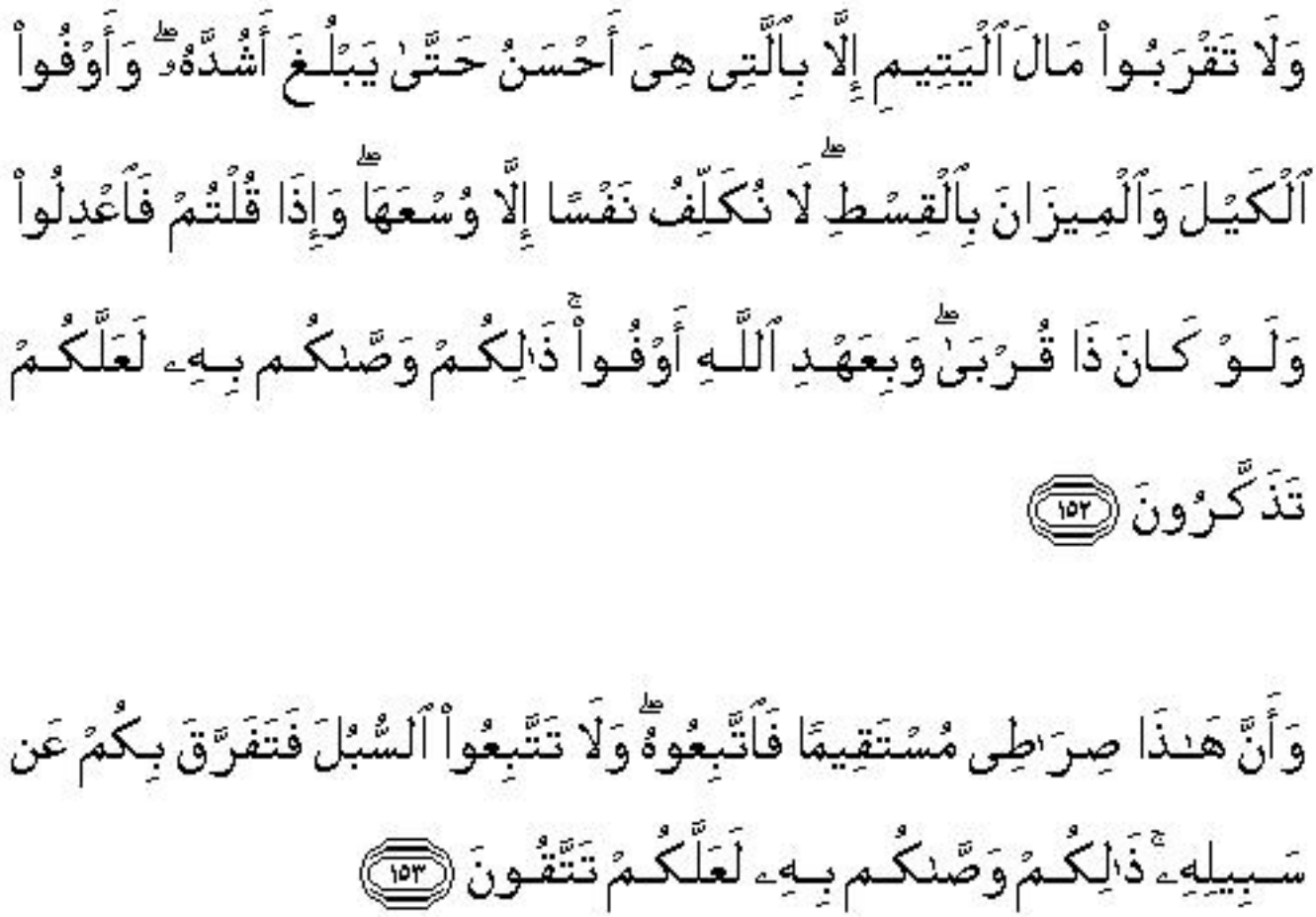
قُلْ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْحُجَّةُ ٱلْبَٰلِغَةُ ۖ فَلَوْ شَآءَ لَهَدَىٰكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

[148-149] (In reply to these things of yours) the mushrikin will surely say, "Had Allah willed, neither we nor our forefathers would have committed shirk, nor would have we made anything unlawful.[124] Likewise the people before them had treated the truth as falsehood by such (absurd) excuses until they tasted Our scourge. Say to them, "Have you any knowledge that you can produce before Us in support thereof? You are following nothing but conjecture and making false presumptions." Then say, ("In contrast to your lame excuse,) Allah's argument is conclusive: had Allah so willed, He would surely have shown guidance to all of you."[125]

قُلْ هَلُمَّ شُهَدَآءَكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَرَّمَ هَٰذَا ۖ فَإِن شَهِدُوا۟ فَلَا تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَهُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

[150] Say to them, "Produce your witness who can testify that Allah has forbidden all this." But, even if they testify, you should not bear witness with them.[126] And you should never follow the desires of those, who have treated Our Revelations as false and who do not believe in. the Hereafter and who set up others as equals with their Lord.

۞ قُلْ تَعَالَوْا۟ أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا ۖ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَوْلَٰدَكُم مِّنْ إِمْلَٰقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ ۖ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾



وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ مَالَ ٱلْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ ۖ وَأَوْفُوا۟
ٱلْكَيْلَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۖ وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَٱعْدِلُوا۟
وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۖ وَبِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْفُوا۟ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطِى مُسْتَقِيمًا فَٱتَّبِعُوهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلسُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن
سَبِيلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

[151-153] O Muhammad, say to them, "Come, I will recite what limits your Lord has set for you."[127] (He has enjoined:) (1) That you should not set up anything as a partner with Him,[128] (2) and you should treat your parents kindly,[129] (3) and you should not kill your children for fear of poverty, for We provide sustenance for you and will provide sustenance for them also, (4) and you should not go near indecent things[130] whether they be open or hidden, (5) and you should not kill any living being whom Allah has forbidden to kill except by right.[131] These are the things which He has enjoined on you: it may be that you use your common sense. And He has enjoined:(6) that you should not go near the property of an orphan except in the best way,'[132] until he reaches his maturity.(7) and you should use a full measure and a just balance. We charge one only with that much responsibility that one can bear,[133] (8) and whatever you say should be just, even if it is concerning your own relatives,(9) and you should fulfill your covenant with Allah.[134] Allah has enjoined these things on you so that you may follow the admonition.(10) And Allah also enjoins: "This way alone is My Right Way; therefore you should follow this Way and should not follow other ways lest they should lead you astray from His Way. [135] This is what Allah has enjoined on you so that you may avoid crooked ways.

ثُمَّ ءَاتَيۡنَا مُوسَى ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ تَمَامًا عَلَى ٱلَّذِيٓ أَحۡسَنَ وَتَفۡصِيلٗا
لِّكُلِّ شَيۡءٖ وَهُدٗى وَرَحۡمَةٗ لَّعَلَّهُم بِلِقَآءِ رَبِّهِمۡ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ١٥٤

وَهَٰذَا كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ مُبَارَكٞ فَٱتَّبِعُوهُ وَٱتَّقُواْ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُرۡحَمُونَ
١٥٥

[154-155] Then,We had given to Moses the Book to complete the blessing for those who adopted the righteous attitude; it contained details about all important things, and was a perfect guidance and mercy. (And it had been given to the children of Israel so that) the people might believe in the (ultimate) meeting with their Lord.[136] And likewise have We sent down this Book, which is a perfect blessing; so follow this and adopt the God fearing attitude so that mercy may be shown to you.

أَن تَقُولُوٓاْ إِنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ عَلَىٰ طَآئِفَتَيۡنِ مِن قَبۡلِنَا وَإِن كُنَّا
عَن دِرَاسَتِهِمۡ لَغَٰفِلِينَ ١٥٦

أَوۡ تَقُولُواْ لَوۡ أَنَّآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيۡنَا ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ لَكُنَّآ أَهۡدَىٰ مِنۡهُمۡۚ فَقَدۡ جَآءَكُم بَيِّنَةٞ
مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَهُدٗى وَرَحۡمَةٞۚ فَمَنۡ أَظۡلَمُ مِمَّن كَذَّبَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَصَدَفَ
عَنۡهَاۗ سَنَجۡزِي ٱلَّذِينَ يَصۡدِفُونَ عَنۡ ءَايَٰتِنَا سُوٓءَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُواْ
يَصۡدِفُونَ ١٥٧

هَلۡ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَن تَأۡتِيَهُمُ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوۡ يَأۡتِيَ رَبُّكَ أَوۡ يَأۡتِيَ بَعۡضُ ءَايَٰتِ
رَبِّكَۗ يَوۡمَ يَأۡتِي بَعۡضُ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنفَعُ نَفۡسًا إِيمَٰنُهَا لَمۡ تَكُنۡ ءَامَنَتۡ
مِن قَبۡلُ أَوۡ كَسَبَتۡ فِيٓ إِيمَٰنِهَا خَيۡرٗاۗ قُلِ ٱنتَظِرُوٓاْ إِنَّا مُنتَظِرُونَ ١٥٨

[156-158] Now you cannot say, "The Book was sent down to the two communities before us,[137] and we were unaware of what they studied and taught. " And now you cannot put forward even this excuse: "If the Book had been sent down to us, we would have proved ourselves more righteous than they." Now that a clear proof and Guidance and Blessing, has come to you from your Lord, who can be more unjust than the one who treats Our Revelations as false and turns away from them?[138] We will inflict the severest torment on those who turn away from Our Signs because of their aversion. Do the people now wait that the angels should come down before them, or that your Lord may Himself come down, or that manifest Signs[139] of your Lord should appear? On the Day when some clear Signs of your Lord will appear, his faith shall not profit the man who did not believe before or who, while professing to believe, did not do good deeds.[140] O Muhammad, say to them, "Well, you may wait if you will: We, too, will wait."

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُواْ دِينَهُمۡ وَكَانُواْ شِيَعٗا لَّسۡتَ مِنۡهُمۡ فِي شَيۡءٍۚ إِنَّمَآ
أَمۡرُهُمۡ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُواْ يَفۡعَلُونَ ١٥٩

مَن جَآءَ بِٱلۡحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ عَشۡرُ أَمۡثَالِهَاۖ وَمَن جَآءَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجۡزَىٰٓ إِلَّا
مِثۡلَهَا وَهُمۡ لَا يُظۡلَمُونَ ١٦٠

[159-160] You have nothing to do with those who have split up their religion and become sects.[141] Their case rests with Allah, and He Himself will let them know what they have done. He, who will bring a good deed before Allah, will receive a tenfold reward for it, and he, who will bring an evil deed, shall receive only that much punishment which

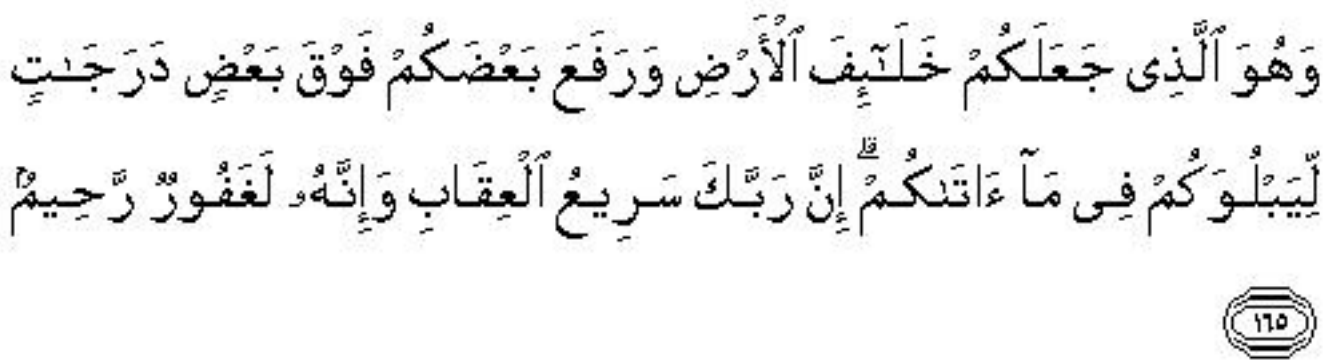
he deserves, and no one will be treated unjustly.

قُلْ إِنَّنِي هَدَىٰنِي رَبِّيٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيَمًا مِّلَّةَ
إِبْرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًاۚ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿١٦٢﴾

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُۥۖ وَبِذَٰلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ أَبْغِي رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍۚ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا
عَلَيْهَاۚ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم
بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾



[161-165] O Muhammad, say, "As for me, my Lord has most certainly guided me on the Straight Way, the ever True Faith, Abraham's Way[142] which he had adopted exclusively and whole-heartedly and he was not of mushrikin." And declare, "My Salat and my rites of worship[143] and my life and my death, all are for Allah, the Lord of the universe, Who has no partner with Him. This is what I have been enjoined, and I am the first to surrender to Him." Say, "Should I seek another Lord beside Allah when He is the Lord of everything?[144] Every person is himself accountable for what he earns, for no bearer of burden bears the burden of another.[145] Ultimately, you shall all have to return to your Lord: then He will tell you the reality of that about which you differ. It is He, Who has made you the vicegerents on the earth, and raised some of you above others in ranks so that He may test you in what He has given you.[146] Indeed your Lord is swift in inflicting punishment: yet He is also very Forgiving and Merciful."

1It should be noted that the addressees were the mushrik Arabs, who acknowledged that the Creator of the earth and heavens and of the sun and the moon is Allah, who brought about the day and night. None of them believed that these were the works of Lat or Hubal or `Uzza or of any other god or goddess. Therefore Allah admonished them, saying (so to speak), "O foolish people, when you yourselves admit that the Creator of the heavens and earth and of the night and day, is Allah, why do you, then, make others your gods, and prostrate before them, make offerings to them, present your needs before them and invoke them for help`" (Refer to E.N.2 of Al-Fatihah and E.N. 163, Al-Baqarah).

It may be noted that Zulumat (plural of Zu1mat) has been used in contrast to nur (light, singular form). It is because 'darkness is merely the absence of light and may be of many kinds.

2Allah says that He has created man from "earth" because each and every particle of the human body comes from the earth and from nowhere else.

3"The other settled term" is the "Day of Resurrection", when all human beings will be brought back to life and presented before Allah for rendering the account of their life on the earth.

4The reference is to the "news" of the successes that were to follow the emigration of the Holy Prophet to Madinah. At the time of this revelation, neither the disbelievers nor the Believers could ever imagine the nature of the "news" they were going to receive. So much so that even the Holy Prophet himself was

unaware of the kind of successes the Muslims were going to achieve in the near future.

5The ignorant objectors argued that if Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was really a Messenger from Allah, an angel ought to have come down from heaven to declare to the people: "This is the Messenger of Allah, so obey him; otherwise you shall be punished".

The ignorant objectors did not understand how the Creator of the heavens and earth could leave His Messenger in such a plight as to be maligned and stoned by his enemies. They argued that the Messenger of such a Supreme Sovereign ought to have come with a large retinue or at least an angel in attendance on him, to protect him from his enemies and to fill the people with awe and to convince them of his Prophethood and to carry out his orders in some supernatural ways.

6The first answer to their objection is that in case Allah had sent down an angel, no respite would have been given them for reforming themselves and mending their ways. They have been given a chance because no angel has been sent to make the Reality so naked as to leave no alternative for them but to believe. It is obvious that this would have defeated the very purpose of their life in the world to undergo their test. That is why no angel has been sent. Man should undergo his test and discover the unseen Reality without actually seeing it, merely by the right use of his reasoning and thinking powers, and then bring under control his own self and its lusts in accordance with the dictates of that Reality. It is thus obvious that the "Unseen" must remain unseen for the sake of that test.

The worldly life, the period of that test, will remain so only as long as the "Unseen" remains unseen. No sooner will the "Unseen" become evident than that "Period" will automatically come to an end, and instead of test, it will be the time of the result of the test. Therefore Allah is not granting your demand for an angel to appear before you because Allah does not like to end the term of your test before the expiry of the period of the test. (Refer also to E.N. 228, Al-Baqarah).

7The only other alternative was to send an angel in human form. Allah says that if He had sent an angel in human form, they would have felt the same difficulty in recognizing him as they were feeling in recognizing Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). This, too, would have involved them in doubts. Therefore it was for their own good that Allah had not sent an angel in attendance on His Messenger.

8That is, those, who ridicule the Message, should travel through the land and see the remains, and study the history of the former peoples. These will bear witness to the horrible end of those who behaved in the way they are behaving towards Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

9It is a nice way of cornering the mushrikin. At first Allah tells His Messenger to ask them, "Whose is all that is in the heavens and the earth?" The questioner put the question and waited for an answer. But they kept silent because their answer could neither be in the negative nor in the affirmative. They could not

deny this because they themselves believed that `all belongs to Allah.' But they could not affirm this because in that case, they themselves would have supplied the adversary with an argument against their own creed of shirk. After putting them in this critical position, Allah enjoined His Messenger to say, "All belongs to Allah."

10This contains a subtle argument: all those, whom the mushrikin have made their gods besides Allah, stand in need of nourishment from their devotees, not to speak of giving nourishment to them. No Pharaoh can set up his grandeur unless his subjects pay taxes and make offerings to him; no saint becomes worthy of worship, unless his worshipers build a grand mausoleum for him; no god becomes a god unless his devotees make his idol and set it up in a grand temple and decorate it with ornamentation. Thus, all the artificial gods stand in need of their servants. It is the Lord of the universe alone, Who does not stand in need of anyone's help but all others stand in need of Him, and it is His Godhead alone that does not stand in need of any prop from anyone whatsoever, but supports itself.

11That is. "Allah is a witness that I have been appointed a Messenger by Him and whatever I say is from Him."

12Mere guess-work or speculation does not suffice for testifying to anything: none can testify to a thing with certainty without the necessary knowledge about it. The question implies: "Do you really have the knowledge that there is any other Sovereign with authority than Allah, Who is worthy of service and worship?"

13That is, "You may, if you so like, give false testimony without any knowledge, but, as for me, I cannot give such a testimony."

14It means that those, who possess the knowledge of revealed Books, know it for certain that there is only One God, Who has no partner in His Godhead. Therefore they can discern the right creed about Allah from among many different kinds of other creeds' and theories about Godhead, just as any person can identify his own child from among many thousands of other children.

15"False allegation" is the claim that there are many other partners with Allah in His Godhead who have divine attributes and powers and are thus worthy of worship. It is also false to allege that Allah Himself has made such and such His special courtiers and has enjoined (or at least approved) that Divine attributes should be ascribed to them and that they should be treated with reverence, like Allah.

16"Allah's Signs" are all those signs that point to the fact that there is only One God in the universe and that all others are His servants. These signs are spread all over the universe. They are found in the person of man himself and in the character and the great achievements of the Prophets and in the revealed Books. That is why the one, who, in the presence of all these "Signs," ascribes Divine attributes

to others and considers them worthy of Divine rights, is in fact guilty of gross iniquity. It is indeed a great injustice that one should ascribe such Divine attributes to others without any evidence, knowledge, observation and experience merely on the basis of guess-work or the traditions of the forefathers. As a result of this false creed, he does injustice to Truth, to Reality, to his own self and to everything and everyone he deals with in this universe.

17Here Allah has ascribed to Himself the cause of the defects produced in their faculties of understanding, hearing and seeing, for everything that takes place in the world under the Natural Law does, in fact, take place by the command of Allah because He is the Author of that Law. Therefore the resultant effects of the working of that Law, in fact, take place by the will and order of Allah. The obdurate disbelievers do not understand, do not hear and do not see the Truth, even though they seem to listen to the Message of the Messenger, because their obduracy, their prejudice and their unwillingness have, according to the law of Nature, dulled their faculties. The law is that if one is bent upon obduracy and does not adopt the attitude of a righteous person, all the doors of his heart automatically get locked against every kind of trth that goes against his lusts. When this natural process is described in the human language, it will be said, "The doors of the heart of such and such a person are locked." But God, without Whose Command and Leave nothing whatsoever can happen, will describe the same like this, "We have locked the doors of the heart of such and such a person." This is because a human being will describe the thing as it seems to happen, whereas Allah states the true nature of the happening.

18This is the excuse that the foolish people put forward for rejecting the Message. They say, "There is nothing new in the Message towards which the Messenger is inviting us. This is the same old Message that we have been hearing before." According to these foolish people, in order to be true, a Message must also be new because according to them that which is old cannot be we. Whereas the fact is that the Message has always been one and the same and will ever remain so. The Messengers of Allah, who had been coming from the earliest times for the guidance of mankind, have always been communicating the same Message; likewise, the Holy Prophet was also presenting the same old Message. Of course, only those, who being devoid of Divine Light, cannot see the aforesaid eternal reality, might invent something new and by forging some theories present them as truth, saying, "We have a new Message, which has never been given by anyone before us."

19Their desire, that, if they could return to this world again, they would believe in the Message, will not be the outcome of any right thinking and reasoning or any real change of their hearts and minds, but will be the result of witnessing the Reality after which even the most obdurate disbeliever dare not deny it.

20This does not mean that the life in this world is not real and earnest and has been created merely for sport and pastime without any serious purpose. What it means is that compared with the everlasting life in the Hereafter, the short transitory life in this world is like sport and pastime, which are diversions from serious work, to which one has to return after recreation. Moreover, this worldly life has been likened to sport and pastime, because here are many things of deceptive appearances that are liable to involve in

misunderstanding those people, who lack common-sense and vision, and help them assume false positions so as to make life mere sport and pastime. For instance, the role of a ruler in this worldly life is, in fact, not any different from that of an actor who plays the role of a king on the stage, wears a crown and gives commands which are obeyed like those of a real king; whereas, in fact, he has no powers of a real king and is deposed, imprisoned and killed by the order of the director; likewise many other such dramas are being performed on the stage of this world day and night all around us. There is `the court' of a `saint' or a goddess, where the needs are being "fulfilled", whereas, in fact, that `court' has no such power. Then there is another actor who performs the feats of divining the unseen and the future; whereas, in fact, none possesses such knowledge. Still another poses to be the nourisher of others, when in fact, he himself stands in need of obtaining provisions from others. There is still another who poses as if he has the power of bestowing honor and benefit or of inflicting disgrace and loss and behaves arrogantly as if he were the absolute master of all around him. In fact, he himself is utterly powerless and helpless, for a little turn of fortune can dethrone him from the high pedestal of greatness to the lowest depths of disgrace. So much so that he might even be at the feet of those very people, over whom he was ruling as a despot. All these dramas that are being played on the stage of life are abruptly brought to an end by death. Then everyone will cross over to the other world and see for himself everything in its true color; then all the misunderstandings of the life of this world shall be removed and everyone will be shown the real worth of what he had earned for the Life-after-death

21The fact is that all the people of his tribe regarded the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) truthful and honest up to the time he had not begun to recite the Revelations of Allah before them. They falsified him only when he began to deliver to them the Message of Allah. Even then, there was none who dared charge Muhammad, the Man, with falsehood; nay, even his bitterest enemies never accused him of having ever told a lie concerning any worldly matter. It was Muhammad, the Prophet, whom they charged with falsehood. So much so that even Abu Jahl, who was the bitterest of all his enemies never accused him of falsehood. According to a tradition related by Hadrat 'Ali, Abu Jahl himself declared during a conversation with the Holy Prophet, "We do not call you a liar; but regard as false what you are presenting. " On the occasion of the Battle of Badr, Akhnas bin Shariq asked Abu Jahl in private, "There is no third person here besides us two. Tell me the truth whether you regard Muhammad as a truthful man or as a liar." He answered, "By God, Muhammad is a truthful person and has never told a lie in his life, but if Bani Qusayy, who have already the privilege of being the bearers of the national flag and the providers of water to the pilgrims and the keepers of the keys of the Ka bah, should also be acknowledged as the recipients of Prophethood, what would then be left for the rest of the Quraish?" For this very reason Allah is comforting His Prophet, saying, "It is not you whom they are rejecting as an impostor but it is Our Message which they are rejecting; when We are forbearing everything and giving them respite after respite, why should you show any kind of anxiety'?"

22The "Law" referred to here is the Law of Allah concerning the conflict between the right and the wrong. According to this Law, it is essential that the righteous should be tried for along period to stand their test in order to prove their fortitude, their righteousness, their spirit of sacrifice and their fidelity, their limn

belief in their Faith and their complete trust in Allah. For this they must pass through afflictions and hardships in order to develop those high moral qualities which can be learned only by going through this hard and tough course, for with these weapons alone, they are required to win the battle against falsehood. When, according to this Law, they prove their competence, then will Allah's help come at the right moment to support them and this help cannot be brought about before its time by anyone.

23Whenever the Holy Prophet felt that his people did not accept the Message in spite of his continuous preaching, he cherished the desire that Allah Might send such a clear Sign that they should have no alternative left but to accept his Message. In this verse Allah has admonished His Messenger against cherishing any such desire, so as to say, "Do not show impatience at their obduracy, but go on performing your mission persistently in the way and order We are laying down for it. If this mission had to be performed by means of miracles, could We not Ourselves have done so? But We know that this method is not suitable for bringing about that intellectual and moral revolution and for the establishment of that righteous society for which you have been appointed a Messenger. If, however, you cannot endure the heart-burning caused by their indifference and rejection and if you imagine that a tangible Sign, that might appeal to them, is required to break this inert state of their minds, then you should yourself try to bring about such a Sign: you may, if you can, go deep down into the bowels of the earth or ascend up to the heavens for this purpose, but you should not expect from Us that We would fulfill this desire of yours, for there is no room for it in Our scheme."

24This is to impress that it is not the purpose of Allah that all human beings should be forced to accept the Guidance somehow or other. Had it been so, He would have created them in such a way that they would have been righteous by birth like angels. Then there would have been no need of sending the Prophets and the Books and of making the Believers enter into a conflict with the disbelievers for the gradual establishment of the Way of Allah. But Allah does not desire this. On the contrary, He intends that the Truth should be presented to the people in a rational way so that those, who are convinced of it, may adopt it without any coercion, and then mold their characters in accordance with it to prove their moral superiority over the disbelievers. In this way they would go on attracting the best among the people towards it till they succeeded in establishing the Way by virtue of their high ideals, best principles of life, pure characters and strong arguments and with resolute struggle with the disbelievers. Then Allah assures them of the guidance and help they need and deserve at any stage. But if one wishes that, instead of this natural process, Allah should adopt some supernatural method and eradicate false ideas from the minds of the people and bring in pure ones instead and establish the righteous civilization in place of the evil ones, he should know that Allah will not do this for this will be against the wisdom of the scheme of His creation of Man. He has created Man as a responsible being granted him powers to exploit the things of the world and given him the freedom of action-both good and evil-and granted him a definite term for the preparation of the test and fixed the time for the declaration of the result of the test to punish or reward him according to his efforts.

25"Those, who listen to it... " are the people whose conscience is alive, who try to judge rationally

between right and wrong, and who do not deliberately and obdurately lock the doors of their hearts. "Those who are dead..." are the people who blindly follow a way and are not ready to leave it and follow any other way even though that may manifestly be the Right Way.

26"Sign" means a tangible miracle. Allah says that the reason why he is not showing a Sign is not that He is unable to do so but for another reason whose wisdom they do not understand. (See E.N. 6).

27That is, "If you are really serious in your demand of seeing a Sign in order to judge whether the Message of this Prophet is true or false, you should see and ponder over the innumerable Signs that are found in abundance all around you. For instance, if you consider animal life, you will see that the structure of the bodies of each species of birds and beasts suits its functions immensely well; the qualities and characteristics that have been ingrained in its nature help to fulfill all its needs; the provision of its nourishment has been arranged in a wonderful way; and the course of its life has been so predetermined that it cannot transgress its limits in any way whatever. Allah also sees that each and every animal, nay, even the smallest insect, is being looked after, protected and guided, wherever it be, for the performance of the functions pre-destined for it. In short, you will find that its structure suits it well; it has been given inherent powers that help provide its needs: excellent provisions have been made for its food. The process of its birth, procreation and death has been going on according to a regulated fixed scheme. If you give a careful consideration to this Sign alone, you will realize that the teachings of this Prophet about the Oneness of God and His attributes and the way of life based on these to which he invites you are absolutely we. Yet you neither try to see with open eyes these Signs nor listen to the Message this Prophet is conveying to you. As a result, you have been involved in ignorance and, therefore, desire to see some wonderful miracle for mere pastime. "

28This is how Allah lets them go astray: (1) He holds back the opportunity for observing His Signs from the one who chooses to remain in ignorance; (2) He keeps hidden the pointers to the Reality from the one who is a victim of prejudices, even though he should see His Signs, and lets him remain involved in misunderstandings and move farther and farther away from the Reality. On the contrary, He guides the seeker after truth to the Right Way by affording him the opportunity to make use of his knowledge for the purpose of discovering the Reality, and showing him the signs guiding towards it. We daily notice instances of these types. There are millions of people before whose eyes countless Signs are spread in their own persons and in the universe, but they see them like animals and do not learn any lessons from them. Then there are the physicists, chemists, zoologists, botanists, biologists, geologists, astronomers, physiologist, anatomists, historians, archaeologists, social scientists, etc., who observe such Signs as may enlighten the minds and the hearts with Faith, but they seem to see no "Sign" to lead them to the Reality, just because they begin their study with prejudiced minds, merely for the sake of material gains. Not only this, but every Sign leads them to atheism, disbelief, materialism and nature worship. In contrast to them, there are those, who observe the wonders of the universe and the phenomena of Nature with open eyes and open hearts, and find the Signs of God all round them: SO much so that they can see His Sign in each and every green leaf.

29In answer to the demand of the disbelievers for a Sign, they were told that there was not one Sign, but innumerable Signs scattered all around them and their attention has been drawn in v. 38 to study the mystery of the life of any bird or beast and they would find Sign of God. Now in v. 40-42, they have been directed to another Sign that they can fmd in their own selves. When some affliction befalls a man or death confronts him with all its dreads, then he sees no refuge in any other than Allah. On such occasions even the most confirmed polytheists forget their gods and invoke Allah's help. Likewise the most obdurate atheists, in their utter helplessness, involuntary pray to Allah for rescue, this Sign-man's own state of mind is being presented here as a pointer to the Reality, for this is a clear proof of the existence of One God, and of the urge of God-worship that has been embedded deep in the heart of every human being. Though it might have been kept suppressed by negligence and ignorance, sometimes it comes to the surface under the stimulus of some misfortune.

Ikrimah, son of Abu Jahl, who was an arch enemy of Islam, was led towards Islam by witnessing such a Sign. When the Holy Prophet conquered Makkah, 'Ikrimah fled to Jaddah and sailed for Abyssinia. During the voyage, there came a furious storm which threatened to sink the boat. At first the passengers began to invoke their gods and goddesses for help. But when the storm became so violent that they feared that the boat was going to sink. they all cried out, "This is not the time to call any open except Allah, because He alone can save us. " This opened the eyes of `Ikrimah and the locked doors of his heart: "If there is none here except Allah to help us, how can there be any to help us in any other place? This is what Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) has been teaching us for the last twenty years any we have been fighting it out with him". That as the most decisive moment in the life of `Ikrimah. He made a solemn pledge with Allah to this effect: "If I escape from this storm, I will directly go to Prophet Muhammad Allah's peace be upon him) to become a follower of his." Allah rescued him from that storm and he fulfilled his pledge. He not only became a Muslim, but spent the rest of his life in the service of Islam by performing Jihad.

30"... and set a seal upon your hearts" means" ...deprive you of the powers of thinking and understanding.

31This verse removes the silly notions about Prophethood and answers the absurd objections raised against the claim of Prophethood by Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). The foolish people have always had the silly notion that a Prophet of Allah must be supernatural and capable of performing wonderful miracles. For instance, they expected that a whole mountain should turn into a mass of gold at his bidding: that the earth should throw out treasures by his orders: that he should be able to tell the people all about their past and future: that he should be able to locate a lost thing and foretell whether a sick person will get well or die and whether a pregnant woman will give birth to a male or a female. They also believed that such a person should be above the common human limitations. They could not conceive anyone to be a prophet, if he suffered from hunger or thirst and needed sleep, or, if he had wife and children and went to the bazaar to buy and sell the necessities of life, or, if he was sometimes forced

to borrow money or was involved in poverty and indigence.

When Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) put forward the claim that he was a Messenger of Allah, his contemporaries wanted to test his claim with the touch-stone of such silly notions. They would ask him questions about the unseen things and demand supernatural miracles from him. They would also raise the objection that he was merely a common man, who needed food and drank water like them: who had wife and children and who moved about in the bazaars. In answer to these things, Allah told His Prophet to inform them that he never claimed to be supernatural; his only claim was that he was following the Revelations he received from Allah and that he should be judged by that standard only.

32The question is meant to bring home to them this fact: "I have seen with my own eyes and experienced directly the realities I am presenting to you, and I have gained their accurate knowledge through Revelation; therefore my evidence is that of an eye witness. On the contrary, you are blind with regard to those realities: all your notions concerning them are based on guess-work and speculation or on the blind following of others. Therefore the difference between you and me is the same as of the man who is able to see and the one who is blind. That is what gives me superiority over you and not that I possess the treasures of God or have the knowledge of the unseen or that I am free from the common human limitations."

33That is, "You should pay special attention only to those who believe that One Day they shall have to go before Allah to render an account of their deeds and who do not cherish any such false hopes that somebody's intercession and help will save them. It is because this "Admonition" can produce good effect only on such people and not on those who are so absorbed in the enjoyment of the pleasures of this world that they never think of their death or of going before Allah. Likewise, this "Admonition" will fall flat on those who are making merry in this world, deluding themselves into believing that no harm will come to them in the Hereafter because of their `spiritual' relation with such and such a saint or because such and such a holy person will intercede with Allah in their behalf or because such a one has already made atonement for them. Obviously, no admonition can be beneficial to such people."

34In this passage Allah has answered one of the objections that me big chiefs of the Quraish used to raise in regard to the followers of the Holy Prophet. They would say that none but the lowest stratum of society, consisting of slaves, menials and the like, had accepted Islam: they would taunt him of having such companions as Bilal, `Ammar, Suhaib, Khabbab, etc., and ask in a jeering way, "Are these the only (honorable) people from amongst us, upon whom Allah has showered His blessings?" They did not rest content with making fun of their poor condition, but also passed stinging remarks about their past shortcomings, saying. "Just have a look at the past history of such and such people, who are today forming the "pious" group of the believers." Allah has advised His Prophet not to be disheartened by their unkind remarks.

35That is, "If they had done something wrong in the past, they themselves shall be accountable for it and

not you, for everyone shall get the reward of the good or evil one has done. Therefore, no good deed of yours will be put to their credit, nor will you be burdened with any evil deed of theirs. They come to you merely as seekers after truth and it will be injustice to look down upon them and drive them away."

36That is, "By bestowing the blessing of Islam at the outset on the poor and indigent and those who held a low position in society, We have involved the upper rich and proud class in trial."

37Allah has told his Messenger to console those of His followers who had committed heinous sins during the days of "ignorance" by inspiring them with the assurance that He forgives and treats leniently those who repent and mend their ways and, therefore, the taunts of the enemies of Islam need not worry them about what they had done in the past.

38In order to understand the significance of v. 55, we should keep in view v. 37 in which the disbelievers asked, "Why has no Sign been sent down to this Prophet from his Lord?" In the subsequent passage (vv. 38-54) several manifest Signs have been cited to show that there is no lack of Signs but the disbelievers do not want to see them. Then in v. 55 such people have been warned, as if to say, "In this way We make Our Signs clear, plain and manifest so that those, who persist in their disbelief inspire of those Signs, should prove themselves to be guilty ones. For they choose the way of deviation deliberately, not because there is a lack of Signs to show the Right Way but because they do not want to see the Signs."

39This alludes to the demand of the opponents for the scourge of Allah with which they were being threatened. They said, "Why does a scourge not come down upon us, when we are openly denying and defying you? If you have been really sent by Allah, then anyone, who denied and insulted you, would have been swallowed by the earth or stricken dead by lightning. How is it that the Messenger of Allah and his followers are undergoing untold afflictions and sufferings, while their tormentors are enjoying their lives merrily?"

40Angels who keep strict watch over each and everything a man does or thinks of and maintain a complete record of all this.

41That is, "You yourselves are a witness that Allah alone is All-Powerful: He alone has the sole authority and your prosperity and adversity wholly lie in His power and He alone is the maker of your destinies. That is why you turn to Him in your affliction, when you find that no other means of rescue has been left for you. In the face of this clear Sign, you have set up, without any reason or rhyme, others as partners in His Godhead. You live on His provisions but treat others as your providers: you get help from Him in your need, but set up others as your helpers and protectors: He rescues you from your distress, yet you regard others (besides Him) as your rescuers: it is He Whom you humbly invoke in your affliction, yet you take your offerings to others when he removes it. In short, you witness the proofs of His Godhead, day and night, yet you serve and bow down before others.

42It is a warning to those who had become very bold in their enmity with the Truth because no scourge from Allah was in sight. They are being warned that the scourge of Allah does not take long to come. A gust of wind can destroy them all at once. A sudden shake of an earthquake can sink their Habitations under ground. A spark can set on fire the magazines of enmity and involve clans, nations and countries in endless blood feuds. Therefore, "If no scourge is coming on you, this should not make you so bold and neglectful as to go on treading blindly the way you are following without discerning whether it is right or wrong. Instead you should take advantage of the respite that is being given and of the Signs that are being presented to you and recognize the Reality and follow the Right Way."

43That is, "It is no part of my duty to make you see what you would not see and to make you understand what you would not understand; nor am I responsible for bringing down a scourge on you, if you would not see or understand it. The only duty that has been assigned to me is to make plain to you the distinction between Truth and falsehood. Now that I have done my duty and you have rejected the Truth, the evil consequences of which I have been warning you will appear in due course."

44That is, "If you ever forget this instruction and keep sitting in the company of such people."

45Here very important practical instructions have been given to the pious people. Their first and foremost duty is to save themselves from any disobedience of Allah; they should not worry unnecessarily about the disobedient people, for they are not responsible for their disobedience. They should not, therefore, impose it upon themselves as an obligation that they have to convince them anyhow by argument and to refute their absurd objections. Their only duty is to present the Truth before them. Then, if they do not accept it, the pious people should not waste their time and energy by entering into useless polemical disputes, discussions and argumentations with the disbelievers. Instead, they should spend their time and energy in educating and training and reforming those who are sincere seekers after the Truth.

46Here very important practical instructions have been given to the pious people. Their first and foremost duty is to save themselves from any disobedience of Allah; they should not worry unnecessarily about the disobedient people, for they are not responsible for their disobedience. They should not, therefore, impose it upon themselves as an obligation that they have to convince them anyhow by argument and to refute their absurd objections. Their only duty is to present the Truth before them. Then, if they do not accept it, the pious people should not waste their time and energy by entering into useless polemical disputes, discussions and argumentations with the disbelievers. Instead, they should spend their time and energy in educating and training and reforming those who are sincere seekers after the Truth. grand purpose behind it. It must, therefore, come to an end at the appointed time and then be resurrected so that the Creator may take account of all that has been done in it and ultimately build the Next World on the results of that reckoning.

That this world has been created for a purpose has also been mentioned at other places in the Qur'an in

different ways:

(a) "Lord, You have not created all this in vain....." (Al-`Imran, III: 91).

(b) "We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for mere fun." (Al-Anbiya', XXI: 16).

(c) "Do you think that We have created you without any purpose and that you will never be brought back to Us?" (Al-Mu'minun, XXIV: 115).

(2) The whole universe has been built on the solid foundations of the Truth. Everything in it is based on just, wise and right laws and there is no room for injustice and folly and falsehood to take root and bear fruit in it. One should not, however, be misled by the partial and temporary successes of falsehood. At times Allah may allow the worshipers of falsehood opportunity to try their worst for the success of falsehood and injustice and wrong ways in order to show that all their efforts shall ultimately fail and every worshiper of falsehood will see at the Last Reckoning that all the efforts made for the success of this unholy cause had gone utterly waste.

(3) Allah has created the universe in truth and is ruling over it by His own personal right. He wields authority here because of His personal right as its Creator; one should not, therefore, be misled by seeing others holding authority over the affairs of the world. In fact, no one has, nor can have, any right to rule here, for no one has any right whatever over anything in the universe.

47It is beyond our comprehension to understand the real nature of the blowing of the Trumpet. What we learn from the Qur'an is that on the Day of Resurrection when the first Trumpet shall be blown by the Command of Allah, everyone and everything shall perish. Then after this (Allah alone knows how long after this) the second Trumpet shall be blown; then everyone from the beginning of the creation to its end, shall be brought back to life and mustered in the Plain of Resurrection. In short, on the first blowing of the Trumpet, the present system of the universe shall be destroyed and on its second blowing the new system, different in form and with different laws, shall be created.

48It does not mean that today Sovereignty is not His. What it means is this: "On that Day the curtain, that is covering the Reality today, will be lifted and it will become apparent that all those who seemed to wield authority or were supposed to wield it, had absolutely no authority, and that Sovereignty wholly belongs to Allah alone, Who is the Creator of the universe

49Ghaib is all that is hidden from the naked eye and cannot be seen and Shahadat is all that is visible to it.

50Ghaib is all that is hidden from the naked eye and cannot be seen and Shahadat is all that is visible to it. peace be upon him) and deprived them of the satisfaction they had with the creed of shirk. This meant to show that the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and his followers were in the position of Prophet Abraham and their opponents were in that of the ignorant people who had a dispute with him. The argument was so subtle that it took, so to speak, the wind out of their sails and put them in such an awkward position that they did not know what to answer. This showed beyond all doubt that they were following a way opposed to that of Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) whom they held in great reverence and regarded as their ancestor and Prophet. Thus they were placed in the awkward position of his opponents.

51That is, "Just as the phenomena of Nature are daily before your eyes and the Signs of God are being shown to you, so were these before Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him). But you, like blind men, do not see anything inspite of looking at them. The same stars, the samemoon and the same sun rise and set before your eyes, but they leave you, as far away from the Reality at the time they set as you were at the time they rose. But when Abraham saw with his mind's eyes these very phenomena of Nature, he reflected upon them and came to know of the Reality.

52In order to understand the true nature of the dispute between the Prophet Abraham and his people mentioned in this passage and others in the Qur'an, one should keep in view the religious and social conditions of his time. Now that Ur, the brith place of the Prophet Abraham, has been unearthed by modern archaeologists, it has helped reveal the real conditions prevailing in that land during that age. Sir Leonard Woolley has published the results of this research in this regard in his book, "Abraham", London, 1935. A resume of the same, (which has been translated into English from the Tafhim-ul-Qur 'an, is given below:

It has been estimated that round about the year 2100 B.C. which is now generally regarded by scholars as the period of Prophet Abraham, the population of Ur was nearly 250,000; it might even have been 500,000. It was a flourishing industrial and business center. On the one side, it attracted trade goods from as far off places as Pamir and Nilgiri, and on the other, it had trade relations with Anatolia. The State, whose capital it was, extended a little less to the north and a little more to the west of modern ' Iraq. The people were mostly craftsmen and merchants by profession. The inscriptions of the age that have been deciphered from the archaeological remains show that they had a materialist outlook on life; their main object of life was to amass wealth and make merry. They practiced usury and were wholly absorbed in business. They regarded one another with suspicion and resorted to litigation on minor grounds. Their prayers to their gods generally consisted of supplications for long life, prosperity and flourishing business. The population was divided into three classes:

(1) The Amelu : This was the highest class which consisted of the priests, state officials and military officers, etc.

(2) The Mushkenu : These were the merchants, craftsmen, and farmers.

(3) The Ardu : The slaves.

The Amelu class enjoyed special distinctions and privileges: they had greater rights both in the criminal and in the civil law than those of other people and their life and property were held sacred and precious.

Such was the city and the society in which the Prophet Abraham opened his eyes. According to the Talmud, he was a member of the Amelu class, and his father was the chief official of the state (Please see also Al-Baqarah: E.N. 290).

The tablets excavated at Ur mention the names of about 5,000 gods. Each city had its own god and also a special deity, who was regarded as the chief god or the city god and was entitled to greater reverence than the others. The city god of Ur was "Nannar" (the moon god) and scholars of the later ages have also called this city "Qamrinah" after that god. The other big city was "Larsah" which afterwards became the seat of government instead of Ur; its chief god was "Shamash" (the sun god). Under these chief gods there were many minor gods also, most of whom had been adopted from among the stars and planets and a few from among the earthly objects. People thought that their prayers for less important things were granted by these minor gods. The symbols of all these heavenly and earthly gods and goddesses had been formed in the shape of idols and all rites of worship were performed before them.

The idol of "Nannar" had been kept in a grand shrine built on the highest peak at Ur and near it the sanctuary of his wife "Ningil" had been built. The shrine of "Nannar" was just like a royal palace where every night a different female worshiper would go and become his bride. Thus there lived a large number of women in the shrine who had been dedicated to the god and their position was no better than religious prostitutes. The woman who would sacrifice her virginity in the name of the "god" was regarded very respectable. The common belief was that a women must surrender herself at least once in her lifetime to another man "in the way of god" in order to attain salvation. It is obvious that the people to benefit most from this religious prostitution were the male priests themselves.

"Nannar" was not merely a god; he was the biggest landlord of the country, the biggest merchant, the biggest craftsman and the chief executive of the country's political life, for a very large number of gardens, houses and fields had been dedicated to his shrine. Besides the income from these sources, farmers, landlords and merchants also brought their offerings of corn, milk, gold, cloth, etc., to the shrine. Naturally there was a big staff to look after these offerings.

Many factories were run and business on a large scale was done on behalf of the Temple. The highest court of justice had been established in the shrine and the priests acted as judges and their judgments were regarded as from "God". The royal dynasty also derived its sovereignty from "Nannar", who was the real sovereign. The king ruled over the country on his behalf and was, therefore, himself raised to the

rank of a deity and worshiped like the other gods.

The dynasty which was ruling over Ur in the time of the Prophet Abraham had been founded by Ur-Nammu who in 2300 B.C. had established a vast empire, which extended to Susa in the east and to Lebanon in the west. It was from him that the dynasty received the title of Nammu which became Namrud in Arabic. After the emigration of the Prophet Abraham this dynasty and this nation were visited by continuous disasters. Their downfall was hastened by the destruction of Ur and the capture of Namrud along with the idol of Nannar by the people of Elam. Then the Elamis established their rule at Larsah which dominated over the land of Ur also. The last blow was dealt by Babylon, which had grown powerful under an Arab dynasty and brought both Larsah and Ur under its control. As a result of this downfall, the people of Ur lost their faith in Nannar who had failed to protect them from humiliation, shame and ruin.

Nothing can be said with certainty about the response the people of this !and made to the teachings of the Prophet Abraham after his emigration, but the law promulgated in 1910 B.C. by Hamurabi (Amraphel of Gen. xiv), king of Babylon, bears evidence that it had been influenced directly or indirectly by the Guidance of Prophethood. A pillar inscribed with this complete Code was discovered by a French archaeologist in 1902 A.D. and its English version was published in 1903 A.D. by C. H. W. John under the title, "'The Oldest Code of Law." Most of the principles and details of this Law and the Law of the Prophet Moses, are, in general, alike.

If the results of the archaeological research, which has been carried out so tar, are correct, one thing that clearly stands out is that shirk was not merely a religious belief and basis of polytheistic rituals with the people of Abraham but it was indeed the very basis of their economic, cultural, political and social system of life. In contrast to this, the Message of the Prophet Abraham not only clearly struck at the root of idol-worship, but also hit hard upon the sovereignty and worship of the royal dynasty and the social, economic and political status of the priests and nobles and the collective life of the whole country. Therefore, the acceptance of his invitation had far-reaching implications: It called for a complete metamorphosis of the prevailing social pattern and demanded its re-construction on the basis of Tauhid. That is why, as soon as the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) began to deliver the Message, the common people and the nobles, the priest class and Nimrod, all stood up together to suppress his voice which gave rise to the bitter dispute, mentioned in the Qur'an.

53In vv. 76 - 78, the way of thinking which led the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) to the Reality before his appointment as a Messenger of Allah has been stated. It teaches that if a person uses his brain and eyes rightly, he can reach the Reality, even if he is born and bred, like Prophet Abraham, in surroundings surcharged with shirk in which one might have had no chance of learning anything about the Oneness of God. The only condition is that one makes the right sort of observation of the phenomena of Nature and reflects upon them carefully and exercises one's reasoning to reach the truth by a connected, logical train of thought. It appears from the preceding verse that the Prophet Abraham, from the beginning of his conscious life, was surrounded by the people, who worshiped the stars, the moon

and the sun. It was, therefore, natural that the starting point of his search for the truth should be the question: Can any of these objects really be the Lord and Sustainer? That is why his thinking centered round this question and when he discovered that all the gods of his people were bound tightly by an un-alterable law and were revolving in accordance with it, he came to the inevitable conclusion that none of these gods possessed, in the least, any quality that might entitle it to be the Lord. The Lord and Sustainer is only that One, Who has created them and bound them to His own obedience.

The wording in which the event has been couched, has generally given rise to an objection. "When the night outspread over him, he saw a star and said.... I am not one of those who set up partners with God. " The question arises in the mind of the common reader: Did the night not outspread over Prophet Abraham every day of his life ever since he was a child and did he not see the stars, the moon and the sun rise and set before this particular occasion? Though he saw them every night, it is obvious that he began to deliberate like this only when he had attained his maturity. Why has then the event been described in such a way (“..... When the night outspread over him) as to give rise to the doubt as if he had never seen the stars and the moon and the sun ever before this? As such an assumption cannot hold good in ordinary circumstances, some people have had to invent an extraordinary story to remove this seeming anachronism. They say that the Prophet Abraham was born and brought up in a cave, where it was arranged that he should not see the stars, the moon and the sun before he attained his maturity. The matter, however, is so simple that it does not need the invention of a fantastic story to explain it. It can be easily understood by a well-known incident in the life of Newton. One day when he saw an apple fall down from the tree to the ground, his mind suddenly turned to the problem: Why do things fall down to the ground? At last his deliberation led him to formulate and prove the law of gravity. Here, too, the question might arise: Had not Newton ever seen anything falling to the ground before this incident? it is obvious that he must have seen many things fall to the ground many times before this. How is it then, that the fall of that particular apple on that particular day stirred up that particular mental activity which the daily fall of hundreds of things to the ground had not roused before this? The simple answer is that the minds are not always excited in the same way by the same kind of observations. Many a time, it so happens that one sees a thing over and over again but that does not stir up one's mind to any mental activity; then there comes a moment when the sight of that very thing diverts the mental activity towards a particular problem. Or, if one's mind is engaged in the solution of a problem and one suddenly catches sight of a particular thing which had always been before one's eyes, it excites the mind to a mental activity that helps solve the problem. The same thing happened in the case of the Prophet Abraham. Nights came and passed away, the stars, the moon and the sun rose and set for years, but on one particular night the observation of one particular star excited that mental activity which led him to the central Reality of the Oneness of God. It may be that ever since he attained maturity, he might have been thinking over the problem of the worship of the stars, the moon and the sun, because this was the religion of his people and on this was based the whole system of the life of that community. Then one night the observation of the star suddenly excited the mental activity that helped him solve the problem. It is also possible that the observation of the star was the starting point of that mental activity.

In this connection, there is another possible doubt that must also be removed. Was the Prophet Abraham guilty of shirk (even though temporarily), when seeing the star and the moon and the sun severally, he said, "This is my Lord." A little thinking will convince one that he was not at all guilty of shirk for in his search for Reality, a seeker-after-truth has, inevitably, to pass through several stages of deliberations about shirk. Therefore, what determines his creed is not the temporary deliberation but the direction of one's research and the ultimate destination where he stops. These intervening stages of deliberation have to be made by every seeker-after-truth in his search for Reality. These are made for the sake of research and should not be taken as the final decision. The deliberation about any form of shirk is in a questioning manner and is not its practice. When a seeker-after-truth stops to deliberate about anything and says, "It is so," it is not his final judgment. What he means to say is, "Is it so?¦ That is why he proceeds further in his research as soon as he gets a negative answer at any of these stages.

54The Prophet Abraham asked the mushrikin to remember the fact that his Lord, whom they also acknowledged as their Lord, had the knowledge of everything and was fully aware of what they were doing. Then he posed the question in order to rouse them from their heedlessness towards the Message and use their common-sense to consider the reality.

The Arabic word tadhakkur contains this sense.

55Some commentators are of the opinion that the people of Prophet Abraham did not believe in Allah or were ignorant of His existence and regarded their gods as the sole masters of the universe. Accordingly, they have based their comments of this passage and others about Prophet Abraham on this assumption. Obviously, they are wrong because the whole passage clearly shows that those people did not deny Allah as the Creator of the earth and heavens, but were guilty of associating others with Allah in His Godhead and Sovereignty. This is clear from these and other words of the Prophet Abraham:

"there is no reason why I should fear those whom you have made partners with Allah." Moreover, the manner, in which he mentions Allah, while addressing his people, shows that they also believed in Allah but associated other partners with Him as well.

The word zulm that occurs in v. 82 stands for shirk as translated. When some Companions mistook it for sinfulness, the Holy Prophet himself removed their misunderstanding saying, "Here it means shirk."

In . this connection, it will also be interesting to note that this most important event of the life of Prophet Abraham which has been described in this para and which was the starting point of his great Mission, has not been mentioned at all in the Bible. The Talmud, however, mentions it, but it differs from the Qur'an in two things:

(1) In it the order is "from the sun to the stars and to God" but it is the other way round in the Qur'an.

(2) It states that, when he said about the sun, "This is my Lord," he worshiped it also at the same time and did the same with the moon.

56That is, "Even if the above-mentioned people had been guilty of shirk like you, they would never have been exalted to such high ranks. This is because shirk is such a heinous sin that it destroys good works. It is just possible that any such person might have won fame as a great conqueror by ruthless destruction, or might have amassed fabulous wealth by foul means and become a notorious wealthy man like Korah or done some infamous thing and won name for himself but he could never have won the exalted position of being the leader of the pious and the right guided. They won the unique distinction of being the source of virtue and guidance for the whole world because they scrupulously avoided shirk and steadfastly followed the way of God-worship.

57Here it has been stated that three things had been bestowed on the Prophet: (1) The Book, Divine Guidance. (2) The Judgment the good sense to understand that Guidance and the capability to apply its principles to the affairs of life and the God-given ability to form correct opinions about the problems of life. (3) The Prophethood the office of guiding the people in accordance with the Divine Guidance.

58That is,it does not matter at all, if these disbelievers and mushrikin have rejected the Guidance of Allah. We have raised a Community of the Believers, who appreciate fully the worth of this blessing.

59The context in which the words, "Allah has not sent down anything to any man," occur and their refutation clearly show that these were the words of the Jews. They uttered these words when the disbelievers and the mushrikin of Arabia asked them, "Tell us whether the Word of Allah has really been sent down to this man, Muhammad," This question had arisen because the Holy Prophet claimed, " I am a Prophet and the Book is being sent down to me." The Quraish and the mushrik Arabs turned to the Jews because they possessed the Book and believed in the Prophets and could speak with authority. Therefore, their answer provided the opponents with a strong weapon against Islam and they repeated the answer as an argument to dissuade the people from it. That is why their answer has been cited here and refuted.

Here a possible doubt should also be removed: How can a Jew, who believes that the Torah had been sent down by God, say, "Allah has not sent down anything to any man?" A little thinking will show that a person in his obduracy often utters such things as are against his fundamental principles merely to refute his opponent. As the Jews were bent upon refuting his claim to Prophethood, they had been so blinded by their opposition to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace), that in denying his Prophethood they even denied the very office of Prophethood.

"Those people formed quite a wrong estimate of Allah ... "means that they committed a grave error in evaluating His powers and wisdom. For the person who says: "Allah has not sent down the knowledge of

the Truth and Guidance for life," makes either of the two wrong estimates: (1) He believes that Allah has not power to send down Revelation to any man, and this is a wrong estimate of the powers of Allah; (2) He thinks that though Allah has given man intelligence and authority to exploit the resources of nature, He has made no arrangement for his right guidance, but has left him to act indiscriminately in the world, and this is a wrong estimate of the wisdom of Allah.

60This answer is meant for the Jews, who had furnished the disbelievers and the mushrikin with the arguments that "Allah has not sent down anything to any man..." To refute their objection it has particularly been pointed out that the Torah was sent down to Moses by Allah, for they themselves believed and could not deny that the Torah had been sent down to Moses by Allah . Thus, it was by itself a refutation of their assertion that "Allah has not sent down anything to any man.." It also proved at least that the Word of God can be sent down to a man, as it had been sent down to Moses.

61After showing in the preceding verse (91) that the Word of God can be sent down to a man and that it had actually been sent down to Moses, a man, the Qur'an in this verse proceeds to prove that the Word, which has been sent down to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), is actually the Word of God. Four things have been put forward as a proof thereof:

(1). It is a blessed Book: it presents the best principles for the welfare and true success of man; it teaches the right creeds and inculcates all kinds of virtues and exhorts the people of follow a high standard of morality for leading a pure life. At the same time, it does not teach in any way whatsoever any vice selfishness, narrow-mindedness, cruelty, obscenity and the like, which you have interpolated in abundance in your sacred Books.

(2). It does not present anything different form the Guidance contained in the former Scriptures: nay, it testifies to the same teaching that had been presented in them.

(3). This Book aims to fulfill the very object for which the former Books had been sent, that is, to shake up and rouse those people who had become forgetful of the noble object for which they had been created, and to warn them of the evil consequences of their wicked ways.

(4). The Message of this Book has not attracted those from among mankind who are the worshipers of this world and slaves of their lusts, but only such people as are able to see the higher things of life beyond the narrow bounds of their worldly life. Then the most obvious characteristic of the revolution that this Book has brought about in their lives is that they stand out conspicuously among the people around them for their piety and God-worship. Is it possible for any book invented by an impostor, who has the audacity to say that it is from Allah, to produce such excellent results?

62That is, it is Allah Who splits open the seed and the fruitstone under ground and causes those to grow into plants or trees.

63It means that Allah creates living creatures out of lifeless matter and discharges lifeless matter out of living creatures.

64That is, "We have made clear the Signs which show conclusively that there is only One Allah and that none else has the Divine attributes or powers and none else is entitled to any of the Divine rights. However, those who lack knowledge cannot reach the Reality by means of these Signs; only those who observe the phenomena of Nature in a rational way can attain this precious wealth. "

65That is, Allah has created the whole human race from one single being, Adam, who was the first man.

66That is "Only Men of understanding can find clear Signs of the Reality in the creation of human race and in the different functions allotted to man and woman for its reproduction at the different stages of human life from birth to death. But those, who live like animals and hanker after the fulfillment of the lusts of the flesh, can see nothing worthwhile even in these Signs."

67That is, in spite of these clear Signs, some people have set up as His partners some hidden beings that are merely the creations of their own imagination and whims. They have gone so far in their ignorance as to allot different powers and duties to them in the management of the universe and in determining the destiny of man. For instance, one has been made the good of rain and another of vegetation; one is the goddess of wealth and another of disease, etc. Such absurd beliefs have been prevalent among all polytheistic peoples about spirits, devils, monks, gods and goddesses.

68The pagan Arabs called the angels "daughters" of God. Likewise some mushrik communities have invented even a genealogical tree of gods and goddesses descending from God.

69In the sentence, "I am not a keeper over you," Allah is speaking in the first person on His Prophet's behalf. Just as the second person in the Qur'an denotes different people at different places, so the first person also denotes different beings at different places. As is well known, in some places, the second person is the Holy Prophet or the Believers or the people of the Book, and at other places it is the disbelievers or the mushrikin or the Quraish or the Arabs or the human beings in general, though the Qur'an is meant to be the guidance for all mankind, Likewise at some places, the first person is Allah Himself and at others it is the angel, the bearer of the Revelation, or a group of angels, or the Prophets or the Believers, though, in every case, the Words are of Allah. However, one can determine the real "person" with the help of the context.

The meaning of the sentence. "I am not a keeper over you," is : "My only duty is to present the guidance before you. Then it is for you to open your eyes to see it or to keep your eyes shut like a blind man. It is not my duty to force open the eyes of those, who deliberately keep them shut and to make them see what

they do riot see."

70The different ways of expression, in which the Revelation has been couched, are a test for the people, because they help to discriminate the counterfeit from the genuine. The same thing has already been stated in Al-Baqarah, II: 26, in connection with the mention of insignificant things like flies, gnats, etc. in the parables of the Qur'an. Just as the mention of these insignificant things helps the seekers in finding the Truth, in the same way the different ways of expression help those, who have knowledge and make use of it, to think deeply about their aims and objects and learn lessons for their own good. On the contrary, those people, who are bigoted, pay no attention to the subject-matter, but begin to think on other lines. For instance, they begin to conjecture how this illiterate man can compose such excellent discourses. Thus, instead of judging the Qur'an from its excellent themes to be the Revelation from Allah, they turn to every other possible source and say, "You have learned this from such and such a one." Then in the "light" of this so-called successful "Research" into the source of the Qur'an, they conclude that it could not be the Book of God.

71It means: "You have been appointed to invite the people to the Message and not to keep watch over them like a police inspector. Therefore your only duty is to present the Message to the people and try, your best to convince them of the Truth. After that, if someone does not accept the Truth, leave him alone. You have not been appointed to force the people to accept it so as to leave no worshiper of falsehood within the range of your Prophethood. Therefore you should not worry yourself and try to make them open their eyes which they have deliberately shut. If Allah had, in His Wisdom, willed that there should remain no worshiper of falsehood, He would not have entrusted you with this task. He could have made each and every human being a follower of the Truth, merely by a single word of His Command. But this is not the object of the creation of man. The real object is that man be given the freedom of choice between the Truth and falsehood: And then by presenting the light of the Truth before him, he be tested which one of the two he chooses. Now the right course for you is to follow the Right Way yourself and to invite others to follow it. Then you should make those, who accept it, your friends and not to forsake them in any case, even though they are very insignificant in the eyes of the worldly people. On the other hand, you should leave those alone who do not accept it and let them go to the evil end to which they themselves want to go and persist in doing so."

72The followers of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) have been advised not to lose their balance in zeal for preaching but to remain within proper limits when engaged in discussions and polemics with the non-Muslims and to refrain from offending against their creeds and from vilifying their leaders and objects of worship, for this will repel and alienate them all the more from the Truth.

73Allah has ascribed their deeds to Himself, for everything that takes place in accordance with the Laws of Nature does, in fact, happens by the command of Allah. (Please refer to E.N. 17 above). As Allah is the Author of all the Laws of Nature, everything happens by His Command: therefore, Allah says, "We have made the deeds of every people seem fair to them." The human beings would, however, express

the same thing, saying, "This has happened according to the Law of Nature. "

74Here "Sign" stands for such a tangible miracle seeing which they should have no alternative left but to acknowledge that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was a true Prophet appointed by Allah.

75That is, "I have no power to bring about and present Signs, for these are entirely in the power of Allah and He may or may not show them."

76These words are addressed to those Muslims, who ardently wished (and sometimes even expressed their wish) that their misguided brethren should be shown such a Sign as might bring them to the Right Way. To this Allah has answered, 'You should realize that they would not believe even if a Sign were shown to them, for this demand is merely a pretext for their disbelief.

77That is, there has been no change in their mentality since the first time they heard and rejected the Message of the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). They are still following the same crooked and perverted way of looking at the Message and, therefore, are unable to see and understand it rightly.

78That is, "As they are not going to reject falsehood and accept the Truth by making a free and deliberate choice, the only alternative left for making them follow it is that Allah should force it upon them: He should change their nature so as to deprive them of the freedom of thought and action like other species which have not been made responsible for what they do. But this is against the wisdom of the object for which Allah has created man. You should not, therefore, expect that Allah would make them believers by His supernatural intervention."

79Allah is consoling His Messenger, so as to say, "You should not worry at all about the united and active antagonism of the satans from among men and jinn against your Mission. This is not a new thing only happening to you for it has always been happening like this to the Messengers. Whenever a Messenger came to show the Right Way, all the satanic powers girded up their loins to make his Mission a failure.

"Charming things" are all those devices, schemes, suspicions, objections, etc., that are employed by the satans to excite and incite the common people against the Message and the Messenger who invites them to the Truth. Then all these things have been called the means of deceit and delusion as a whole, for all the weapons that the opponent use against the Truth are, in fact, deceptions not only for others but also for the deceivers themselves, though they appear to be very useful and effective weapons.

80We have already explained in E.N. 73 above the fact of this matter, but the fine distinction between Allah's "will" (mashiyat) and His approval (rada) should also be kept in mind; otherwise there might arise very serious misunderstandings. It must be clearly understood that nothing whatsoever can happen

without the "will" and permission of Allah, for no incident can happen, unless Allah makes room for it in His vast scheme and provides means for its happening. But it does not necessarily mean that Allah also. approves of and is pleased with that incident. For instance, no thief can commit theft, no murderer can kill, no tyrant can be tyrannical, no breaker of peace can cause disorder, no unbeliever can disbelieve and no mushrik can commit shirk, etc., etc., without the "Will" of Allah. Likewise, no believer can have Faith and no pious person can be pious unless it be the "Will" of Allah; yet He is not pleased with the first kind of bad deeds, whereas He is pleased with and approves of and likes the second kind of good deeds. It is true that the "Will" of Allah is working for an ultimate great good, but that can only come about by means of a conflict between light and darkness, good and bad, peace and disorder. Therefore, He allows, for the sake of His great good designs, the necessary freedom both to the powers of obedience and to those of disobedience, of piety and sin, of Prophethood and the forces of evil, so that both might be allowed to perform the deeds of their own choice and to those of His creatures (men and jinn) who have been delegated with a limited authority and the consequent responsibility. Everyone is free to make a choice of good deeds or of bad deeds for himself in this world. Both the good and the bad people are allowed to have the necessary means, as far as it suits and fits into the Divide Design, but only those who make a choice of good works merit His pleasure and approval, for Allah likes that His servants should make the right use of their freedom of choice and adopt good instead of evil.

In this connection, it will be worthwhile to understand why Allah mentions over and over again that it is by His "Will" that the enemies of Truth have been allowed to carry on their nefarious activities. This is to impress upon the Holy Prophet, and through him on his followers, that the nature of their work is different from that of the angels, who carry out the Commands of Allah without meeting with any resistance. Their Mission, requires that in their conflict with the wicked and rebellious people, they should exert their utmost to make the Way of Allah dominant over their ways. That is why it is the "Will" of Allah to allow such people as have deliberately chosen the way of rebellion against Allah to exert their worst in pursuance of their choice. Likewise, He allows the` Believers also full opportunity to exert their utmost in the service and obedience of Allah that they have deliberately chosen. Though He is pleased with and gives His help and succor to the Believers and guides them to the Right Way because they do the deeds He likes them to do, yet they should not expect that Allah will force, by His supernatural intervention, the unbelievers to believe, if they do not want to believe by their free choice; or that He will remove by force from their way those satans amongst men and jinn who have deliberately chosen to use all the powers of their hearts and minds and bodies against the Truth in order to block its way. They should note it well that, if they sincerely intend to work for the cause of truth, virtue and righteousness, they will have to prove this by putting up hard struggle and exerting their utmost in their conflict with the worshipers of falsehood. If Allah had willed to demolish falsehood and make the Truth dominate by miracles, there was no need to entrust this work to the Believers for in that case He Himself could have arranged the things so as to leave no satan in the world and no room for shirk and disbelief to make their appearance.

81The `speaker' in this sentence is the Holy Prophet and the addressees are his followers, who desired that a Sign should be shown for the conversion of the disbelievers. They have been told that no Sign will

be shown, for Allah had made all the realities plain in the Qur'an. As regards their conflict with falsehood, He has decreed that the followers of the Truth will have to exert for its domination in the natural way without expecting any supernatural intervention from Him. The Holy Prophet has, therefore, been asked to declare, "Should I, then, seek some authority higher than Allah to revise His decree and to send down such a miracle as should force them to believe?" (Please refer also to E.N. 76).

82That is, "These principles, that have been laid down for the domination of the Truth, are not new ones which might have been invented today to explain away the difficulties and obstacles of the Way. All those people, who possess the knowledge of the Divine Books and are acquainted with the Mission of the Prophets, will bear testimony that whatever is being stated in the Qur'an is the very Truth, which is eternal and has never changed. "

83The right thing for a seeker-after-truth is not to consider what way the majority of the people are following because that is based on guess-work instead of knowledge. Their beliefs, theories, philosophies, principles of life and laws are the result of guess-work and are, therefore, sure to mislead. In contrast to that, the way of life with which Allah is pleased, can only be the Way which Allah Himself has taught. Therefore, the seeker-after-truth should adopt that way and steadfastly follow it, even though he is left alone on it.

84Among the many wrong things which the people have adopted as religious laws without any Divine sanction are also the restrictions they have imposed on the articles of food. That is why some people have made certain things lawful whereas they are unlawful in the sight of God, and certain other things unlawful, though Allah has declared them to be lawful. In this connection, the most absurd thing on which some of the former people insisted and on which some of the modern people also insist, is that if Allah's name is pronounced at the slaughter of an animal, it is unlawful and if it is slaughtered without mentioning Allah's name over it, it is quite lawful. In this verse Allah has refuted such ideas and commanded the Muslims to discard all such whims and superstitions which have been invented by the unbelievers and the mushrikin and break all such restrictions which the people have imposed on themselves against the Guidance of Allah, if they sincerely believe in it. They should, therefore, make unlawful only that which Allah has made unlawful and vice versa.

85Please see vv. 114-116, An-Nahl. Incidentally, this reference also shows that Surah An-Nahl was revealed before Al-Anam.

86This is with reference to the different kinds of doubts and objections with which the Jewish scholars used to poison the minds of ignorant Arabs against Islam. According to a tradition of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, one of the objections taught by the Jews against the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was: "How is it that the one killed by Allah (by natural death) should be unlawful, while the other which is killed by us (by mentioning the name of Allah) should be lawful?" This is an instance of the

crooked attitude of those so called people of the Book. They would invent and pose questions like this before the common people so as to poison their minds with doubts and to arm them with weapons to fight with the Truth.

87It is also shirk to acknowledge the Godhead of Allah and at the same time follow the decrees and ways of those who have turned away from Allah. The acknowledgment of the Oneness of Allah demands that one should obey Allah in all aspects of one's life. So much so that if a person believes that someone else also should be obeyed along with Allah, he would be guilty of committing shirk in his creed. And if a person obeys such people as arrogate to themselves the authority of making things lawful and unlawful, in utter disregard of the Guidance of Allah, he would be guilty of practical shirk.

88Here ".... who was first dead" means, "..... who was first in a state of ignorance and lacked understanding;" likewise, ".... then (he) was given life" means "then he was given knowledge and understanding and was restored to that mental state which can recognize the Truth." And the fact is that one who cannot distinguish between right and wrong and does not know the Right Way, might be regarded as alive from the physical point of view, but he does not enjoy that life which makes him a real human being. He is no doubt a living animal, but he is not a living man. A living man is only he who can distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, righteous and unrighteous.

89That is, "How can you expect that a man, who has got real understanding of life and recognizes clearly, by the light of Knowledge, the Straight Way from among the countless crooked ways, would live a life like those who lack understanding and blunder blindly into the darkness of ignorance and folly?"

90It is the Law of Allah that He makes their deeds seem fair to those who refuse to be guided by the Light which is offered to them and who prefer to tread the crooked paths, even though they are invited to the Right Way. Then they begin to love darkness and like groping their way through it like the blind and to be knocked about throughout their lives. Accordingly, every vice appears to them worth enjoying and every piece of folly a gem of wisdom. After the failure of such an experiment that produces mischief, they get ready for another in the hope that the first failure was due to some "accidental" mistake that will be avoided in future experiments.

91What they meant was: "We are not going to believe in the claim of the Messengers that an angel came to them with a Message from God, unless the angel comes directly to us to deliver the Message of Allah."

92"He makes his breast wide open to Islam" means: "Allah makes him fully convinced of the truth of Islam by removing from his mind and heart every kind of doubt, suspicion, hesitation and indecision about Islam."

93"Abode of peace": Heaven, the place of perfect peace and happiness, where the dwellers will be immune from every kind of calamity and misery.

94Here by the "jinn" are meant the "satans of jinn."

95That is, "Every one of us made an unfair use of the other and cheated him for selfish ends."

96As Allah is All-Wise and All-Knowing, both punishment and forgiveness will be based on wisdom and knowledge and, therefore, will be reasonable and just. He will forgive only that wrongdoer, whom He knows not to be personally responsible for his crime and liable to punishment.

97That is, just as they were accomplices in their sins and crimes in the world, so they shall also share the punishment in the Hereafter.

98That is, "We confess that one Messenger after the other came from You and informed us of the Truth but it was our own fault that we did not believe in what they said."

99They themselves would confess that they were not ignorant of the Truth: it did reach them but they deliberately rejected it.

100It means that Allah does not desire to allow the guilty ones the opportunity to protest and say, "You did not inform us of the Truth, nor did You send anyone to show us the Right Way. But now when, in our ignorance we have adopted the wrong way, You are going to punish us for it." In order to refute this argument, Allah sent His Messengers and Books to fore-warn mankind and jinn, prior to the execution of His Judgments. If, in spite of this, the people choose wrong ways and are punished for this, they themselves are to blamed and not Allah.

101"Your Lord is All-Sufficient": "He does not stand in need of any kind of help from you, nor does He need anyone to look after His interests. Therefore, you can do him no harm by your disobedience, nor can you do Him any good by your obedience. Even if all of you rebel against Him, you cannot detract an iota from His Kingdom; nor can you add an iota to it, if all of you decide to obey and worship Him. He needs neither your obedience nor your offering. As a matter of fact, he is showering His countless blessings on you without desiring anything in return from you."

In the context in which the sentence, "He is All-Compassionate", occurs, it implies two things. First, "It is only out of compassion for you that Allah is showing you the Right Way and not for His own interest. It will not serve any interest of His if you follow the Right Way and keep away from the wrong ways: nor will it do Him any harm if you swerve from it. As a matter of fact, you will be serving your own interest and avoiding harm to yourselves by following it. Therefore, it is His kindness that He teaches you the right

conduct to enable you to attain higher ranks and restrains you from wrong behavior that will throw you to the lowest depths of degeneration." Second, "Your Lord. is not ruthless: He does not enjoy punishing you for trifling offenses and errors. As a matter of fact; He is very kind and sympathetic to all His creatures and rules over them with great compassion. That is why He' forgives and forbears your shortcomings over and over again and shows compassion and leniency to you even though you become guilty of disobedience, sins and crimes. You impudently discard His Commandments, knowing well that He is your Providence; yet He forgives and forbears and gives you respite after respite, so that you may understand the Reality and mend your ways. Had He been ruthless He could have destroyed you instantly and raised up another people to replace you, or destroyed the whole human race and created another species. "

102That is, "Resurrection," when all human beings, from the first to the last, shall be brought back to life and presented before their Lord for final judgment.

103That is, "If you do not take the warning from Me and do not give up your wrong ways, then you may go on following the ways of your choice, and let me follow my way. Ultimately, both you and I will see the consequences."

104The preceding discourse (v. 135) ended with these words: "If these people are not willing to accept your Admonition and insist on their ignorance, tell them to act in their own way and that you will act according to your own way. The Day of Judgment will surely come one day when they will know the consequences of their conduct. Anyhow, this is certain that the workers of iniquity will not be successful there." Now from here (vv. 136-146), instances of their ignorance are being cited to tell them what their "iniquity" was in which they persisted and from which they could not expect any success.

105They assigned a portion of the agricultural produce to Allah as a mark of their gratitude because they believed that all land belonged to Allah Who caused the crops to grow; likewise they set apart for Allah a portion of the animals which were of great use to them because He was their Creator as well. But at the same time, they also assigned a portion as offerings to the patron gods of their family or clan, for they believed that Allah showed His kindness to them, because their gods, goddesses, angels, jinn, stars and the souls of their dead ancestors interceded with Him in their behalf. They also expected that in this way they would continue their kindness to them. That is why Allah is first of all taking them to task for the iniquity they were committing, so as to say, "It is sheer ingratitude that you are making offerings to others of the things that I have created and given you with My own mercy and grace. How is it, then, that you are making others partners in the offerings of your gratitude to Me? Do you think that I give these things to you because of the intercession of others?" Then, by implication, Allah has rebuked them for dividing the shares between Him and the partners set up by them with Him in accordance with their own presumptions .This is because they have become their own law-makers and assign to Allah and to others whatever share they deem proper , when in fact ,Allah is the real giver of everything. Therefore, the portion to be assigned to Him in gratitude should be determined by His Law, which should also decide the shares of the other rightful claimants to it. It is thus clear that even that share, which they arbitrarily set

apart for Allah and distribute in the poor and indigent, does not merit any worth and there is no reason why is should be accepted by Allah.

106This implies a fine sarcasm. They have been rebuked for the evil practices to which they resorted in order to reduce even that portion which they themselves ear-marked for Allah, so as to increase the portion set apart for their gods. This showed that they were far more interested in their self-made gods than God. For instance, they would not mind if any fruit or grain out of the share assigned to Allah happened to go to the other side, but would return it, if anything happened to go to the share of Allah from the share of their gods. In case of drought, if they were forced to make use of the consecrated grain, they would use the share ear-marked for Allah but would not touch the share of their gods for fear lest any misfortune should befall them on account of its desecration. If there happened to be a deficiency in the share of their gods, they would make it up from that of Allah's share, but in the reverse case, they would not take even the smallest thing from the share of their gods to make up for the deficiency in Allah's share. Obviously they would invent very plausible excuses for this. For instance, they would say, "God is rich and can afford to forgo any decrease in His share, but the case of gods is different because they are not rich like Allah: therefore they inflict punishment even at the slightest decrease in their share."

The root cause of these superstitious practices was the different uses to which the two consecrated shares were put. Allah's share was given to the beggars, the indigent, the wayfarers, the orphans, etc., but the share consecrated to the gods went to the priests directly or indirectly when it was offered to the gods in their temples. That is why their selfish religious leaders had been, for centuries, impressing on their ignorant followers that there was no harm, if any decrease occurred in the share of Allah, but on no account should there be any decrease in the share of their gods, "the beloved of God." On the contrary, it was rather commendable that their share should continue to swell.

107Here the word shuraka (associates) has been used in a different sense from the one employed in verse 136. There the ¦associates" meant the deities whose intercession they regarded as a means of attaining to the blessings and made them partners with Allah in offerings. But, on the contrary, in this verse "associates" implies the men and devils, who had made the killing of their own children lawful and praiseworthy for them. In the preceding verse they were guilty of shirk because they associated others with Allah in His worship and devotion. Here they were guilty of shirk because they accepted others besides Allah as law-givers and made them Judges for deciding the lawful and the unlawful. According to Islam, a person who accepts any law made by another than Allah as authoritative and follows it and considers himself subject to the limits prescribed by it, is guilty of making that being partner with Allah. Both these are acts of .shirk. one is guilty of shirk whether or not one gives the title of lord or god to those to whom one consecrates offerings or accepts and obeys the laws made by them.

As regards the killing of their children, the Arabs committed this sin with three objects in view and the Qur'an has condemned all the three:

(1) They killed their daughters in order to avoid the disgrace of having a son-in-law, or lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy during the clannish wars, or they should become a cause of disgrace for them in any other way.

(2) They killed their children for economic reasons. They feared lest the burden of their nourishment should become unbearable for them.

(3) They sacrificed their children at the altar of their gods to please them.

108The word "ruin" here is very meaningful. On the one hand, it implies moral ruin, for the man who becomes so hard-hearted and cruel as starts killing his own children, loses not only the tender qualities of humanity but also those of animality; on the other, it also implies destruction of the human race and one's own nation, for the inevitable result of the killing of children is reduction of the population of one's own nation and consequently of the world as a whole. Obviously, the nation which prevents the birth of its future supporters and builders of its civilization and heirs of its heritage, or kills them as soon as they are born, most surely falls into the abyss of destruction. Above all, this inhuman cruelly to innocent children destroys all the chances of success in the life-after-death because such a one who kills his own humanity, nay, even his own animal instinct of love for offspring, and shows such enmity with the human race and with one's own nation, most surely incurs the most painful torture from Allah.

109Their religious leaders, their chiefs and the elders of the clans and others who exercised any influence on them and who claimed to be the followers of the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael, had been adding different creeds, rites and practices to the pure religion taught by the Prophets and causing confusion in the minds of the people about it. Yet the common Arabs of the pre-Islamic period believed that they were following the religion of their Prophets, which was the chosen religion of Allah, though it had been utterly polluted. This was because no record of the real religion of the Prophets had been preserved in their traditions or history or in any other book and none could sift it from the additions and changes that had been made in it afterwards.

110That is, "O Messenger, you need not worry about them, if, in spite, of your admonitions, they insist on following the false ways they have invented. All this has come to pass because it is the will of God that they should be allowed to follow the way of their choice; otherwise they would not have been able to do what they are doing."

111Here another self-made religious regulation of the mushrik Arabs has been refuted. They used to make vows to reserve certain cattle or the products of certain fields for some particular temple or saint or deity and had made set rules for their use. Accordingly, the right of the use of different kinds of offerings was reserved for a particular kind of people. Allah has declared these to be acts of shirk and warned them against these self-made laws, as if to say, "We will punish you for making vows concerning

offerings to others from provisions provided by Us, because We have neither commanded you to make such vows nor prescribed restrictions for their use. All these things have been invented by the rebellious and arrogant people who shall be dealt with severely."

112We learn from traditions that in certain forms of vows and offerings, it was not considered right to pronounce the name of Allah over cattle. It was also forbidden to ride on them during the Hajj journey, because one has to pronounce: Labbaik, Allahumma labbaik: "I am present, O my Allah, I am present," during it. Likewise, they insisted that Allah's name should not be mentioned while milking them or riding them or slaughtering them or eating them.

113That is, "These regulations were not prescribed by Allah, but they were following these with the conviction that they had been prescribed by Allah. though they had no authority from Allah for this thing. The only authority, they had, was that it had been the practice of their forefathers."

114According to another article of the self-made law of the Arabs about the cattle, consecrated by vows and offerings, the males alone were allowed to eat of the flesh of the young ones born from their wombs and the females were forbidden to eat of it. However, if the young one was born dead or it died immediately after its birth, both the males and the females could partake of it.

115That is, "Although those people, who invented these rituals and customs, were your forefathers, your religious leaders and your chiefs, yet the fact is that they were wrong and had gone astray. Also it is a fact that those ways were wrong and they cannot become right and sacred simply because these were invented by your forefathers and your religious leaders, who permitted the inhuman slaughter of one's own children, who made unlawful, without rhyme or reason, the pure provisions given by Allah and who introduced innovations in religion and ascribed them to Allah. They cannot be regarded as rightly guided by any stretch of imagination even though they be your forefathers and leaders; they were certainly misguided and shall bear the consequences of their evil ways."

116The original Arabic words Jannat-im-ma iushat-in literally mean gardens of creepers, trellised, and has been translated into vineyards; wa ghaira ma 'rushat-in literally mean gardens of plants that are un-trellised and has been translated into gardens of up-right trees.

117The original Arabic word farsh refers to animals (like sheep etc.,) in the sense that they are of small size and almost touch the ground while they are moving about, or in the sense that they are laid on the ground at the time of slaughter, or in the sense that beds are made of their skins and hair.

118From the context in which this verse (142) occurs, it is obvious that Allah wills to impress three things: (1) "The gardens, the fields and the animals you possess, have all been bestowed by Allah, and none else has any share in this favor and, therefore, none else is entitled to any gratitude for this." (2) "As none

else has any share in this favor, these should be used in accordance with the Law of Allah, and none else has any right to prescribe limits for their use; therefore the one who observes the rituals prescribed by any one other than Allah, transgresses the limits prescribed by Allah and follows the ways of Satan." (3) "All these things have been created by Allah for food and other uses for mankind and none has any right to make these unlawful without "knowledge." Therefore Allah does not approve of the restrictions that have been imposed on these things, as a result of superstitions and presumptions.

119That is, "Your answer should be based on knowledge and not on mere presumptions, superstitions or the traditions of your forefathers."

120The question whether some animals of the same family are lawful and others unlawful, has been posed with such a detail so that the absurdity of their superstitions may become obvious even to them. It is absurd on the face of it that the male of the same family should be lawful and the female unlawful, or conversely, the female should be lawful and the male unlawful, or the animal should be lawful, but the young one of the same be unlawful: This is such a nonsensical thing that no right thinking person, nay, no man in his senses, can imagine that Allah could ever impose such unreasonable restrictions. It should be noted that the method applied by the Qur'an to show the absurdity of the superstitious practices of the Arabs can also be applied with equal force to expose the folly of the superstitious practices of the other nations of the world, which have imposed unreasonable restrictions on food and adopted inhuman indiscriminations against other human beings.

121This subject has already been dealt with in v. 173, Al-Baqarah, and in v. 3, Al-Ma`idah, and will be further discussed in v. 115, An-Nahl below.

There appears to be a little difference in the wording of this verse and that of v. 173, Al-Baqarah. In the latter verse it is simply `blood' that is forbidden, but in this verse it is the `blood' that has been shed, when an animal is wounded or slaughtered. The addition of the word masfuh (that has been shed) merely explains the nature of the `blood' and does not make any difference in the "Commandment" itself. Likewise in v. 3 of Al-Ma'idah, some other things besides these four have also been mentioned-the animals that have been strangled or beaten to death, or killed by a fall, or mangled by a beast of prey. This, too, does not make any difference in the "Commandment" in the two verses, because this is an explanation which shows that the animals which are killed in that way should also be considered as "carrion."

Now let us consider the various opinions of the Jurists. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas and Hadrat `A'ishah were of the opinion that, out of the animal food, only these four were unlawful and all others were lawful. But there are several Traditions to the effect that the Holy Prophet prohibited other animals besides these four or held them in detestation, e.g., domestic donkeys and fanged beasts of prey and birds with claws. Therefore most jurists do not consider the prohibition to be confined to these four things only, but extend it to others; then there is also a difference of opinion among the jurists about the prohibition or otherwise

of certain animals. For instance, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik and Imam Shafi`i declare the domestic donkey to be unlawful, but there are others who assert that the domestic donkey, is not unlawful and say that it was prohibited by the Holy Prophet on one occasion only for some special reason. The Hanafi s consider the carnivorous beasts and birds of prey and the animals that live on dead flesh to be absolutely unlawful, but according to Imam Malik and Auza`i, the birds of prey are lawful and Laith considers the cat to be lawful. According to Imam Shafi i. only those carnivorous beasts are unlawful that (like the lion, wolf, tiger) attack man. According to ' Ikrimah, the crow and the badger are both lawful. Then according to the Hanafi s, all crawling creatures are unlawful, whereas Ibn AbiLaila, Imam Malik and Auza' i consider the snake to be lawful.

A careful and critical study of the above makes it quite clear that, in reality, only these four things mentioned in the Qur'an are unlawful and that there are certain other animal foods that are detestable in various degrees. Therefore those things, which according to authentic Traditions were held in detestation by the Holy Prophet, are almost unlawful, but those things about which there is a difference of opinion among the jurists, their detestation is doubtful. As far as personal detestation of certain things by some people is concerned, the Islamic Law does not compel anyone to eat what one dislikes. The same applies to the detestation of certain things by some groups or nations. Conversely, the Law does not allow any person or community or nation to force others to consider as unlawful anything that they detest, or to .prohibit its use to those who consider them unlawful.

122That certain things were made unlawful for them as punishment for their rebellion has been mentioned in the Qur'an at three places:

(1) "All the articles of food, which are lawful in the Muhammadan Law, were also lawful for the children of Israel, except those which Israel had forbidden for himself before the Torah was sent down. Say to them, Bring the Torah and read out any passage from it (in support of your objection), if you are in the right. " (Al- `Imran, 111):

(2) "It is because of the criminal attitude of those who became Jews..... that We had made unlawful many pure things which were formerly lawful for them". (An-Visa' IV:160)

(3) Here in this Surah, in verse 146.

From the above three verses, we conclude that the difference between the Muhammadan and the Jewish Laws in regard to the legality or otherwise of animal food is based on two things. First, centuries before the revelation of the Torah, the Prophet Jacob (Israel) had given up the use of several things, and after him, his offspring also did the same. This went on for such a long time that the jurists of the Jewish Law began to believe that those things were unlawful in their religion. Accordingly, they inserted in the Torah the prohibition of those things, the three of which were the camel, the hare and the Coney. That is why the Torah, as contained in the existing Bible prohibits their eating. (Levit. 11: 4-6 and Deut. 14:7). But, the

open challenge of the Qur'an to them to bring the Torah in proof thereof shows that the commandments referred to above did not exist in the Torah at that time and were inserted afterwards; otherwise the Jews would have at once accepted the challenge of the Qur'an and presented the commandments thereof.

The second difference between the two laws was caused by the rebellious attitude of the Jews against the Divine Law. They became their own law-makers and made many things unlawful by their hair-splitting and Allah let them remain involved in that misunderstanding as a punishment. These things comprise two categories : (1) Animals with claws such as the ostrich, the cuckoo, the swan, etc., and (2) the fat of the cow and the goat, etc. Afterwards both kinds of "prohibitions" were incorporated in the existing Torah. (Levit. 11 : 16-18, Deut. 14 : 14-17, Levit. 3 : 17, 7 : 22-23). But it is obvious from An - Nisa, IV : 160 that at first these things were not unlawful i the Torah, but were made so after the Prophet Jesus Christ. History also bears evidence that the existing Jewish Law was formulated by Rabbi Judas at the end of the second century of the Christian Era.

Now let us consider the objection that might arise regarding the above explanation. If these things were made unlawful in the manner explained above, why has, then, Allah used the word harramna ("We prohibited") here in verse 130 and in verse 160 of An-Nisa In considering the objection, we should keep in mind the two ways in which things are made unlawful by Allah. (1) He prohibits a thing through a Messenger and a Book, and this is the blessing from Him. (2) He sets false religious law-givers and counterfeit law-makers over His rebellious servants and they declare pure things as unlawful. As such a prohibition' is the curse of God and a punishment from Him, it has been attributed to Him.

123That is, "Your Lord has limitless Mercy and if even now you repent of your disobedience and adopt the right way of obedience, He will forgive you. But if you persist in your criminal and rebellious attitude, you should note it well that none will be, able to ward off His wrath and punishment from you. "

124That is "The mushrikin will put forward the same old excuses to justify their crime and wrong conduct which have always been put forward by the criminals and wrong-doers of every age: they will say, `It is the will of Allah that we should commit shirk and make some lawful things unlawful; for, if Allah had not so willed, it would not have been possible for us to commit such acts. As we are doing these things in accordance with the will of Allah, we are doing the right thing. And if what we are doing is not right, Allah is to blame for it and not we. We are bound by the will of Allah to do what we are doing because anything other than this is beyond our power."

125In order to understand the significance of this decisive answer to their lame excuse, let us analyze it: (1) It warns: "The `will of God' has always been made an excuse by the criminals of all ages to justify their wicked acts and erroneous conduct. This misled them so much that they rejected the Truth and consequently met with ruin that overtakes those who fight against the Truth." (2) "The excuse which you are putting forward is not based on knowledge but on conjecture and guess-work. The whole of your argument is based on hearsay about the will of Allah. You do not understand the meaning of `the will of

Allah' in regard to man. Therefore you wrongly believe that if a thief commits theft he is not to be regarded as a thief, because he had done this under `the will of Allah. Its real meaning is that Allah will open for a man whatever way he would choose for himself -- the way of gratitude or ingratitude, guidance or deviation, obedience or disobedience. Then Allah will let the man do anything, good or bad, he chooses, and will provide for its fulfillment the means that fit in His vast universal designs. Therefore if you and your forefathers were allowed to commit shirk and declare lawful things unlawful under the will of Allah, they had to bear its consequences, for it does not mean that Allah approved of these things. Likewise you shall be responsible and accountable for your wrong choice and for your evil intentions and wicked deeds."

The last sentence, "..... had Allah so willed, He would have shown guidance to all of you," settles the issue decisively. It implies: "Your argument, `had Allah willed, we would not have committed shirk,' is incomplete. The complete thing will be this: `Had Allah willed, He would have shown guidance to all of us." In other words, "You yourselves do not intend to choose the right way, but you desire that Allah should make you inherently righteous like angels. You should, however, note it well, that Allah could have done so if He had so willed. But this is not His will. Therefore He will let you go astray on the wrong way that you yourselves have chosen to follow."

126That is, "If they understand the grave responsibility of bearing witness and realize that one should bear witness only to that thing of which one has knowledge, they will never testify that all their self-imposed restrictions on food, that are current among them and according to which such and such a one should not eat such and such a thing, have been prescribed by Allah. But if these people do not realize the responsibility of bearing witness and impudently give false evidence in the name of Allah, you should not associate yourself with their falsehood. As a matter of fact, the real object of challenging them to bear witness is to sort out the righteous people, if any, from among them, and not that you should accept their false testimony. It is expected that in response to the challenge to bear witness, those, who have any righteousness left in them, will consider very seriously whether the rituals they were following were really prescribed by Allah and if they find no proof that these were sent down by Allah, they will give them up."

127That is, "The limits set by your Lord are not those which you have imposed on yourselves, but they are the following which Allah has set for the regulation of human life and which have always been the fundamental basis of all Divine Laws." (Please compare these precepts with those contained in Exodus chapter 20).

128One is guilty of shirk if: (a) one sets up another besides Allah as god, or (b) one attributes to another any of those attributes that naturally and exclusively belong to Allah, or (c) one sets up a partner with Allah in His powers, or (d) in His rights.

According to (a), all those creeds which set up partners with Allah in the essence of His Godhead shall be shirk, e.g., the creed of Trinity of the Christians, the creed of musrhik Arabs to believe in the angels to be

daughters of God and to attribute "Godhead" to their gods and goddesses and the members of the royal families.

According to (b), all those, who believe that someone other than Allah also possesses one or some or all of the attributes which exclusively belong to Allah, shall be guilty of shirk. For instance, it will be shirk if one believes that someone knows all about everything including the "unseen" or hears everything or is completely free from each and every defect and weakness, and is infallible like Allah.

According to (c), one shall be guilty of shirk, if one believes that someone else besides Allah is able to wield any one or all of those powers that exclusively belong to Him. For instance, one shall be committing shirk, if one believes that someone else besides Allah can, in a supernatural way, benefit or harm or fulfill heeds or help or protect or defend, or hear prayers, or make or mar destinies, or set the limits of lawful or unlawful, proper or improper, or prescribe laws (shar a) for human life. These shall be shirk, for all these things are the exclusive characteristics of Godhead.

It shall be shirk under (d) if one surrenders to another any or all of those rights to which Allah alone is entitled. For instance, Allah alone has the right that man should stand with bound hands, bow and prostrate before Him, or he should make vows and give offerings in His name alone or make sacrifices as a mark of gratitude in acknowledgment of His greatness; He alone has the right that He should be invoked to ward off troubles etc. Likewise, Allah alone is entitled to all forms of worship, devotion and glory and He alone has the right to be loved more than anyone or anything else and all other affections should be sacrificed for His love. He alone should be feared so that one would not dare displease or disobey Him openly and secretly. He alone has the right to be obeyed unconditionally and unreservedly; and His Guidance alone should be made the sole standard of judging right from wrong and none else should be obeyed except in accordance with the obedience to Allah. If ever one of these rights is surrendered to someone other than Allah, it will be setting that one as a partner with Him, whether that one is given the title of god or not.

129"Kind treatment" includes respect and honor, obedience and desire to please and serve parents etc. , This right of the parents has been stated in the Qur'an at several places immediately after the rights of Allah. This is a clear proof that this right of the parents is only next to the right of Allah and has priority over all human rights.

130The Arabic word fawahish applies to all kinds of impure acts, whose obscenity is absolutely obvious. The Qur'an declares adultery, sodomy, nudism, calumny, marriage with father's wife as "indecencies." Besides these, theft, drinking and beggary have also been included in the list of indecencies in the Traditions. Likewise, all other obscene acts are also indecencies and the Divine Commandment demands that such acts should neither be committed openly nor secretly.

131This is the declaration of the sanctity of human life by Allah Who has made it inviolable as a basic principle. As regards its destruction "by right", the Qur'an allows this in three cases and the Holy Prophet added two more to these. The Qur'an makes it lawful to take the life of the one:

(1) who is proved guilty of the intentional murder of another person.

(2) who opposes Islam and obstructs its establishment so as to leave no other alternative than to fight with him,

(3) who spreads disorder within the Islamic territory or exerts to overthrow the established Islamic government.

Besides these, the Holy Prophet has made it lawful to .take the life of the one:

(4) who, in spite of being married, is proved guilty of adultery,

(5) who becomes an apostate and deserts the Islamic Community.

These five are the only cases in which it becomes lawful to take human life and there is no other case in which it becomes lawful to take human life and there is no other case besides these in which human life may be taken, be it that of a Muslim, or of a dhimmi, or of an unbeliever.

132"The best way" will be the one which is based on selflessness, good intentions and the welfare of the concerned orphan, and which is not objectionable in the sight of God or man.

133"You shall use full measure and a just balance," is a fundamental principle of the Divine Law: Allah has added, "We charge one.....one can bear," to assure people that whoever tries his very best to be just and right in measuring, weighing and carrying out other trade transactions, will be absolved from his responsibility and will not be taken to account, if in spite of his best efforts, there happens to be an unintentional error.

134"Covenant with Allah" is: (i) The solemn agreement which man makes with Allah, (i!) the solemn pledge which he makes with another man in the name of Allah, and (iii) the natural compact that comes into force as soon as one is born in the human society on Allah's earth.

The first two kinds of covenants are intentional and optional, but the third one is a moral and natural obligation. Though man has no option in the choice of the third compact, yet it is as binding as the first two and should be honored as 'much. This is because Allah has given him life with extraordinary physical and mental faculties and furnished the earth for his habitation and provided nourishment, and limitless

resources etc., for him. Naturally all this entails some rights of Allah on him. Likewise it entails some, rights of the mother who gives birth to and nourishes him and of the father who brings him up and of the society that affords him many kinds of facilities and opportunities. All these rights become, by their very nature, obligatory on him in varying degrees. It is true that this "Covenant" of man with God and society has not been written in any statute book, nevertheless it has been ingrained by Nature in each and every particle of his body, which itself owes its very existence to this Covenant. A reference to this has been made in Al-Baqarah, ti: 27: "....who break Allah's Covenant after ratifying it: who cut asunder what Allah has ordered to be joined and who produce chaos on the earth." It has again been mentioned in Al-A'raf, VII: 172 to this effect: At the time of the creation of Adam, Allah brought forth all his would-be descendants up to the Last Day, from the loins of mankind, and trade them stand witnesses to the Covenant that He is their Lord.

135"..... you should follow this way because this is the Right Way." This "Natural Covenant" demands that man should follow the Way shown by Allah, because any deviation from it into the paths of rebellion or independence or in the worship of another than Allah will be the first violation against that Covenant, and will mislead one into other violations one after the other. Besides, no man can fulfill the obligations of this most delicate, vast and intricate Covenant unless one accepts Divine Guidance and follows it in every aspect of life. "..... you should not follow other ways" because they will turn you away from His Right Way which is the only Way which leads to His nearness, pleasure and approval. Moreover, when the people deviate from His High Way, each man has to make his own choice out of the hundreds of other ways. Thus the people are scattered in all directions and there is bewilderment, confusion and disorder among all mankind and this becomes a hindrance in the way of its real progress and development (Please see also E.N. 35, Al-Ma'idah).

136"..... to believe in meeting with one's Lord" means that one should believe that one shall have to render an account of one's deeds to one's Lord; therefore one should live a life of responsibility. Here it may imply that the Torah was sent (1) to produce a sense of responsibility among the Israelites themselves and (2) to induce the other people to make a study of its high moral system of life, and to observe the noble effects of its guidance and blessing on those who adopted its teachings so that they may be convinced that a life of responsibility based on the belief in the life of the Hereafter is far better than an irresponsible life based on its rejection and this observation may convince them to believe in the Hereafter.

137That is, to the Jews and the Christians.

138Here "Ayat" are Allah's Revelations presented in the Holy Qur'an as well as His Messenger's noble character and the pure lives of the Believers which clearly distinguished them from the unbelievers, and also those wonderful phenomena of Nature which the Qur'an was putting forward as proofs of the truth of its Message.

139"Manifest Signs" are the signs of the Day of Resurrection or some imminent scourge or some other Sign that tray unveil the Reality in such a way as to leave no doubt about it and after which no more chance for test and trial might be left.

140That is, if after seeing these "Manifest Signs" a disbeliever repents of his disbelief and professes faith, such a conversion shall be meaningless; likewise the one who professes to believe but adopts the way of disobedience, shall be deemed to have no faith at all, because Faith and Obedience can have any value only up to the time that the reality remains hidden behind the curtain, and the prospect of a long life is ahead and the world with all its allurements is deluding one into believing that there is no Allah and no Hereafter; therefore, one should "Eat, drink and be merry."

141Though the address is directed to the Holy Prophet, yet all the followers of the True Religion are, through him, included in it. It means that the righteous people should not follow the ways of those who became sects by causing divisions in the True Religion, which has always been the same and is the same today. Its basic principles are that Allah alone is the Deity and Lord of the whole Universe. that none should be set up as His equal or partner in His attributes, powers or rights, that there shall be the next world, in which all human beings shall have to render the account of what they do in this world, and that they should mold their lives in accordance with those broad fundamental principles that have been taught by Allah through His Messengers and Books. This is the True Religion that had been given to mankind from the very first day of its creation. As regards the different religions and sects that came into existence afterwards, they were the result of the changes that were made in the True Religion by different people at different times. Some of them introduced new things into it, others made changes in it to suit their lusts; still others mixed things in it because of their exaggerated reverence. Then they tampered with its creed by mixing with it their whims, their speculations and their philosophies. They changed it also by adding to its commandments their innovations and their self-made laws and by corrupting its regulations by hair-splitting and exaggerating the differences in its details and by rendering important things unimportant and vice versa. They went to two extremes: they adored some Prophets too much and opposed and rejected others. In this way numerous new religions and sects came into existence and divided humanity into fighting groups. Therefore it is essential for a follower of the True Religion to have nothing to do with any of these sects and to keep his own path clear of them.

142"Abraham's Way": This is another distinctive characteristic of "the ever-True Faith." This has been given preference to "Moses' Way" or "Christ's Way" because the followers of Moses and Christ had applied the misnomers of "Judaism" and "Christianity" to that "Way." Moreover, the term "Abraham's Way" has been used because both the Jews and the Christians acknowledged Abraham as a true Prophet. They also knew it well that he died long before the births of Judaism and Christianity. The Arab mushrikin also could not deny that his "Way" was the Right Way, for they believed that he was a righteous man and in spite of their ignorance, they had to acknowledge that the founder of the Ka'bah was a pious worshiper of Allah and not an idolater.

143The Arabic word nusuk ("rites of worship") may mean animal sacrifice as well as all other forms of prayer and worship.

144That is, "When, in fact, Allah is the Lord of everything in the universe, how can any other be my Lord? When I see that the whole of the universe submits to His Law and I, too, being a part of the universe, have to submit to Him in my physical life, how can then it be rational that I should seek another Lord for the guidance of that part of my life for the conduct of which I have been given common sense and option?"

145It means that everyone is responsible and accountable for his own deeds and this responsibility can, on no account, be shifted from one to the other.

146In this verse three realities have been stated;

(1) That each and every thing in the universe belongs to Allah and all human beings are His vicegerents on the earth in the sense that He has entrusted many of His things to them and delegated powers to exploit them.

(2) That Allah has ascribed different ranks to His vicegerents in regard to the trusts. He has entrusted some with a large number of His things, while others with a small number and endowed some with a greater capacity for work than others. Likewise there is a difference in the powers He has delegated to them: nay, he has even given powers to some human beings over other human beings.

(3) That this worldly life is merely a test and all the things and powers that have been given as trusts are the means of the test. An accurate record is being kept of how each man is making use of his trust and how far he is exploiting these things in accordance with the terms of the trust and how he is using or abusing his abilities, capabilities, etc. in this regard. The result of his test will determine man's rank in the Next World.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

7. Surah Al Aaraf (The Heights)

Name

This Surah takes its name from vv. 46-47 in which mention of A'araf occurs.

Period of Revelation

A study of its contents clearly shows that the period of its revelation is about the same as that of Al-An'am, i. e., the last year of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah, but it cannot be asserted with certainty which of these two was sent down earlier. Anyhow the manner of its admonition clearly indicates that it belongs to the same period. As both have the same historical background the reader should keep in view the preface to Al-An'am.

Topics of Discussion

The principal subject of this surah is "invitation to the Divine Message sent down to Muhammad" (Allah's peace be upon him), which is couched in a warning. This is because the Messenger had spent a long time in admonishing the people of Makkah without any tangible effect on them. Nay, they had turned a deaf ear to his message and become so obdurate and antagonistic that, in accordance with the Divine Design, the Messenger was going to be commanded to leave them and turn to other people,. That is why they are being admonished to accept the Message but, at the same time, they are being warned in strong terms of the consequences that followed the wrong attitude of the former people towards their Messengers. (Now that the Holy Prophet was going to" migrate from Makkah the concluding portion of the address has been directed towards the people of the Book with whom he was going to come into contact. This meant that the time of migration was coming near and the "invitation" was going to be extended to mankind in general, and was not to be confined to his own people in particular as before.

During the course of the address to the Jews, the consequences of their hypocritical conduct towards Prophethood have also been pointed out clearly, for they professed to believe in Prophet Moses but in practice opposed his teachings, disobeyed him and worshiped falsehood and consequently were afflicted with ignominy and disgrace.

At the end of the Surah, some instructions have been given to the Holy Prophet and his followers for carrying out the work of the propagation of Islam with wisdom. The most important of these is that they should show patience and exercise restraint in answer to the provocations of their opponents. Above all, they have been advised that under stress of the excitement of feeling, they should not take any wrung step that might harm their cause.

Subject: Invitation to the Divine Message

Topics and their Interconnection

In this passage, the people have been invited to follow the Message sent down to them through Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and warned of the consequences of its rejection. 1 - 10

The story of Adam has been related with a view to warning his descendants against the evil devices of Satan who is ever ready to mislead them as he did in the case of Adam and Eve. 11 - 25

This passage contains some Divine instructions, and contrasts these with Satan's instructions, and depicts a graphic picture of the results and the consequences of the two. 26 - 53

As the Message has been sent down by Allah (Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and everything in them), it should be followed, for it is like the rain He sends down to give life to the dead earth. 54 - 58

Events from the lives of some well-known Prophets - Noah, Hud, Salih, Lot, Shu`aib, Moses (Allah's peace be upon them all) -- have been related to show the consequences of the rejection of the Message, and the addressees of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) have been admonished to accept and follow the Message in order to escape perdition. 59 - 171

As the Covenant with the Israelites was mentioned at the end of the preceding passage, the whole mankind has been reminded very appropriately of the Covenant that was made at the time of the appointment of Adam as the Vicegerent of Allah so that all of his descendants should remember it and accept and follow the Message that was delivered by the Holy Prophet. 172 - 174

The example of the one who had the knowledge of the Message but discarded it, has been cited as a warning to those who were treating the Message as false; they have been exhorted to use their faculties to recognize the Message; otherwise Hell would be there abode. 175 - 179

In this concluding portion of the Surah, some deviations of those who do not use their faculties properly to understand the Message have been dealt with and they have been admonished, reproved and warned of the serious consequences of their antagonistic attitude towards the Message of the Holy Prophet. 180 - 198

In conclusion, instructions have been given to the Holy Prophet, and through him to his followers, about the attitude they should adopt towards those who reject the Message and deviate from it. 199 - 206

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓمٓصٓ ١

كِتَٰبٌ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ فَلَا يَكُن فِي صَدۡرِكَ حَرَجٞ مِّنۡهُ لِتُنذِرَ بِهِۦ وَذِكۡرَىٰ لِلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٢

[1-2] Alif. Lam. Mim Sad. This is a book which has been sent down to you:[1] so, O Muhammad let there be no hesitation[2] in your mind about it; this has been sent down that you may thereby warn (the disbelievers) and that it may be an admonition to the Believer.[3]

ٱتَّبِعُواْ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُواْ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوۡلِيَآءَۗ قَلِيلٗا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ٣

[3] O people, follow what has been sent down to you from your Lord and do not follow other patrons beside Him.[4] But you seldom take admonition

وَكَم مِّن قَرۡيَةٍ أَهۡلَكۡنَٰهَا فَجَآءَهَا بَأۡسُنَا بَيَٰتًا أَوۡ هُمۡ قَآئِلُونَ ٤

فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوَىٰهُمْ إِذْ جَآءَهُم بَأْسُنَآ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥﴾

[4-5] There leave been many habitations which We destroyed. Our scourge came upon them all of a sudden at night or at a time during the day where they were taking rest. When Our scourge overtook them, the only cry they could utter was "Indeed we were transgressors!"[5]

فَلَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٦﴾

فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِم بِعِلْمٍ ۖ وَمَا كُنَّا غَآئِبِينَ ﴿٧﴾

وَٱلْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨﴾

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[6-9] Thus (on the day of Judgment) We will most certainly call to account[6] all those to whom We sent Our Messengers, and We will also ask the Messengers (how far they conveyed the Message and how the people responded to it).[7] Then We Ourself will recount to them with Knowledge (all their doings); for We were not absent from them. On dear Day the weight will be identical with the Truth:[8] accordingly those whose scales will be heavy will alone come out successful. And those whose scales will be light will be the ones who will have incurred loss[9] upon themselves because they had been unjust to Our Revelations.

وَلَقَدۡ مَكَّنَّٰكُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَجَعَلۡنَا لَكُمۡ فِيهَا مَعَٰيِشَۗ قَلِيلٗا مَّا تَشۡكُرُونَ ١٠

[10] We established you on the earth entrusting you with power and providing you with sustenance, but you are seldom grateful.

وَلَقَدۡ خَلَقۡنَٰكُمۡ ثُمَّ صَوَّرۡنَٰكُمۡ ثُمَّ قُلۡنَا لِلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسۡجُدُواْ لِأٓدَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓاْ إِلَّآ إِبۡلِيسَ لَمۡ يَكُن مِّنَ ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ١١

قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسۡجُدَ إِذۡ أَمَرۡتُكَۖ قَالَ أَنَا۠ خَيۡرٞ مِّنۡهُ خَلَقۡتَنِي مِن نَّارٖ وَخَلَقۡتَهُۥ مِن طِينٖ ١٢

قَالَ فَٱهۡبِطۡ مِنۡهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَن تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَٱخۡرُجۡ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰغِرِينَ ١٣

قَالَ أَنظِرۡنِيٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ يُبۡعَثُونَ ١٤

قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنظَرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

قَالَ فَبِمَآ أَغْوَيْتَنِى لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَٰطَكَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٦﴾

ثُمَّ لَءَاتِيَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ وَعَن شَمَآئِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

[11-17] Indeed We planned your creation, then We shaped you, and there We said to the angels, "Bow yourselves before Adam"[10] Accordingly all bowed save Iblis who did not join those who bowed themselves. Allah said. "What prevented you from bowing down, when I commanded you?"He replied. "I am better than he; Thou created me of fire and created him of clay."

Allah said. "Well, get down from here. You have no right to brag here of your greatness. Get out; indeed you are of those who wish themselves ignominy."[11]

Satan requested, "Give me respite till the Day when they shall all be raised from the dead."

Allah replied, "You are granted respite."

He said, "Well for that Thou hast led me into deviation, now I will also lie in ambush for mankind on Thy Right Way. I will come upon them from all sides-froth the front and from the rear, and from their right and from their left: then Thou wilt not find most of them to be grateful"[12]

قَالَ ٱخْرُجْ مِنْهَا مَذْءُومًا مَّدْحُورًا ۖ لَّمَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَيَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسۡكُنۡ أَنتَ وَزَوۡجُكَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنۡ حَيۡثُ شِئۡتُمَا وَلَا تَقۡرَبَا
هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

[18-19] Allah said, "Get out from here-despised and disowned. Note it well that I will fill the Hell with you and with all those who will follow you. As for you, O Adam, you and your wife should dwell in this Paradise; you may eat of anything from anywhere, but do not even go near this tree or you shall become transgressors."

فَوَسۡوَسَ لَهُمَا ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ لِيُبۡدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُۥرِيَ عَنۡهُمَا مِن سَوۡءَٰتِهِمَا
وَقَالَ مَا نَهَىٰكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنۡ هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَا مَلَكَيۡنِ
أَوۡ تَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلۡخَٰلِدِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَقَاسَمَهُمَآ إِنِّي لَكُمَا لَمِنَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

فَدَلَّىٰهُمَا بِغُرُورٖۚ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا ٱلشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتۡ لَهُمَا سَوۡءَٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخۡصِفَانِ
عَلَيۡهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلۡجَنَّةِۖ وَنَادَىٰهُمَا رَبُّهُمَآ أَلَمۡ أَنۡهَكُمَا عَن تِلۡكُمَا ٱلشَّجَرَةِ
وَأَقُل لَّكُمَآ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَ لَكُمَا عَدُوّٞ مُّبِينٞ ﴿٢٢﴾

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا
وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

قَالَ ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ
حِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

قَالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

[20-25] Then Satan tempted them so that he might reveal to them their shameful parts which had been hidden froth each other. He said to them, "Your Lord has forbidden you to go near this tree only lest you should become angels or become immortals." He swore an oath and assured them, "I am your true well-wisher." Thus he beguiled them and gradually molded them to his design. So, when they tasted (the fruit of the tree, their shameful parts became visible to each other and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of the Garden.

Then their Lord called out to them, saying, "Did I not forbid you to go near this tree, and warn you that Satan was your open enemy?"

Both of them at once replied, "O Lord, we have wronged ourselves gravely; if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we shall be totally ruined."[13]

Allah commanded, "Go down;[14] you are enemies to each other: the earth shall be a dwelling place for you for a fixed term and there you will get your livelihood". He added, "There you shall live and there you shall die and from there you shall be brought forth at last."

يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ قَدۡ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكُمۡ لِبَاسٗا يُوَٰرِي سَوۡءَٰتِكُمۡ وَرِيشٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُ
ٱلتَّقۡوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيۡرٞۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ٢٦

يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ لَا يَفۡتِنَنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ كَمَآ أَخۡرَجَ أَبَوَيۡكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ يَنزِعُ
عَنۡهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوۡءَٰتِهِمَآۗ إِنَّهُۥ يَرَىٰكُمۡ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُۥ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ لَا
تَرَوۡنَهُمۡۗ إِنَّا جَعَلۡنَا ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ أَوۡلِيَآءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٢٧

[26-27] O children of Adam,[15] We have sent down to you clothing in order to cover the shameful parts of your body, and to serve as protection and decoration; and the best garment is the garment of piety. This is one of the signs of Allah; it may be the people learn a lesson from this. O children of Adam, let not Satan seduce you in the same way that he caused your first parents to be driven out of the Garden and stripped them of their garments in order to expose their shameful parts before each other. He and his party see you from where you cannot see them. We have made these satans the guardians of those who do not believe.[16]

وَإِذَا فَعَلُواْ فَٰحِشَةٗ قَالُواْ وَجَدۡنَا عَلَيۡهَآ ءَابَآءَنَا وَٱللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَاۗ قُلۡ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَا يَأۡمُرُ بِٱلۡفَحۡشَآءِۖ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ٢٨

قُلۡ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِٱلۡقِسۡطِۖ وَأَقِيمُواْ وُجُوهَكُمۡ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسۡجِدٖ وَٱدۡعُوهُ
مُخۡلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَۚ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمۡ تَعُودُونَ ٢٩

فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةُ ۗ إِنَّهُمُ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ
أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[28-30] Whenever these people commit a shameful deed, they say. "We found our forefathers doing this, and Allah Himself has enjoined us to do this."[17] Say to them, "Allah never enjoins a shameful thing.[18] Do you attribute to Allah's name and say things which you know not to be from Him?" O Muhammad, say to them, "My Lord has enjoined justice and righteousness; (He has also enjoined that) you should keep aright your direction during every act of worship and invoke Him alone, dedicating your faith sincerely and exclusively to Him; you shall be created again just as He has created you now.[19] He has shown the Right Way to some but has justly left others to go astray. This is because, instead of Allah, they have made satans their guardians, and yet think that they are on the Right Way."

۞ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُوا۟ زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا۟
وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

[31] O children of Adam, dress yourselves fully, properly and decently at the time of every worship;[20] eat and drink, but do not transgress, for Allah does not like the transgressors.[21]

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلرِّزْقِ ۚ قُلْ
هِىَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[32] O Muhammad, ask them, "Who has forbidden[22] the decent garments that Allah brought forth for His "servants and (Who has forbidden) the good and pure things of life bestowed by Him?" Say, "All these things are for the Believers in this world but on the Day of Resurrection, these shall be exclusively for them."[23] Thus We make quite plain Our Revelations to those who possess knowledge.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَٱلْإِثْمَ وَٱلْبَغْىَ بِغَيْرِ
ٱلْحَقِّ وَأَن تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا
لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[33] O Muhammad, say to them, "The things which my Lord has forbidden are: shameful deeds whether open or secret,[24] sinful[25] things and transgression against the Truth,[26] He has also forbidden to associate partners with Allah since He has sent down no authority therefor; (He has also forbidden) to attribute to Allah's name the thing which you know not He has said."

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ
سَاعَةً ۖ وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ إِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ
ءَايَٰتِى ۙ فَمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
﴿٣٥﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ عَنْهَآ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا
خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِـَٔايَٰتِهِۦٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُم مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا يَتَوَفَّوْنَهُمْ
قَالُوٓا۟ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا۟ ضَلُّوا۟ عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوا۟
عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

قَالَ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ فِىٓ أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُم مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ فِى
ٱلنَّارِ ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَّعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا ٱدَّارَكُوا۟ فِيهَا جَمِيعًا
قَالَتْ أُخْرَىٰهُمْ لِأُولَىٰهُمْ رَبَّنَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَـَٔاتِهِمْ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا مِّنَ
ٱلنَّارِ ۖ قَالَ لِكُلٍّ ضِعْفٌ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَقَالَتْ أُولَىٰهُمْ لِأُخْرَىٰهُمْ فَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِن فَضْلٍ فَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[34-39] Every community has been given a fixed term; when the term expires, it can neither be put back nor put forward by a single hour.[27] (Allah declared it clearly at the very beginning of human life,) "O children of Adam! If Messengers from among you should come to you and recite to you My Revelations, whoever will refrain from disobedience and mend his ways, will have no cause of fear nor of sorrow; as for those who will treat Our

Revelation as false and show pride in regard to them, shall be the dwellers of Hell, wherein they shall remain for ever."[28] Then who can be more wicked than the one who invents falsehoods about Allah and then attributes these to Him or than the one who treats the true Revelations of Allah as false? Such people will go on receiving their destined shares[29] till that hour comes when the angels, appointed by Us, will arrive to capture their souls. Then the angels will ask them, "Where are those now whom you worshiped instead of Allah ?" They will answer "All of them have forsaken us." And they will give evidence against themselves that they had indeed denied the truth. Allah will say, "Go into Hell, where those who went before you from among jinns and men have gone. " As each generation will be entering Hell it will curse its preceding generation till all generations shall be gathered there: then each succeeding generation will say regarding the preceding one, "O Lord, these were the people who led us astray; therefore give them double chastisement of the Fire." Allah will reply, "There is a double chastisement for every one but you know it not."[30] And the preceding generation will say to the succeeding, "(If we were to blame) you, too, were no better than we. Now taste the torture for what you earned."[31]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا وَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ عَنْهَا لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَٰبُ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ ٱلْجَمَلُ فِى سَمِّ ٱلْخِيَاطِ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى
ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

لَهُم مِّن جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ وَمِن فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاشٍ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَآ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ
أَصْحَـٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَـٰلِدُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

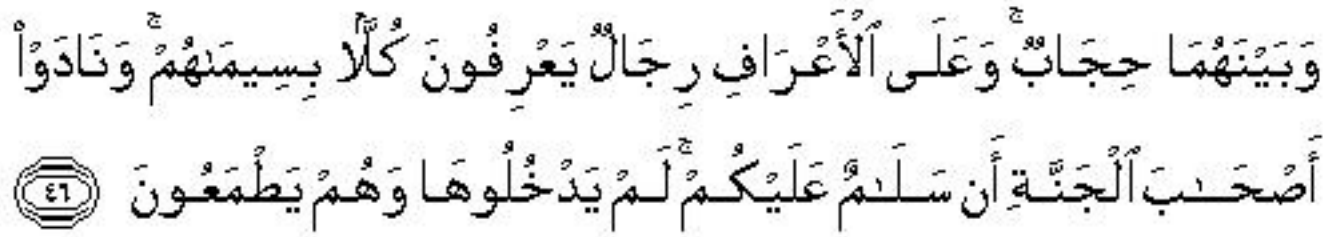
وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ
وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا أَنْ
هَدَانَا اللَّهُ ۖ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ ۖ وَنُودُوا أَن تِلْكُمُ الْجَنَّةُ
أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

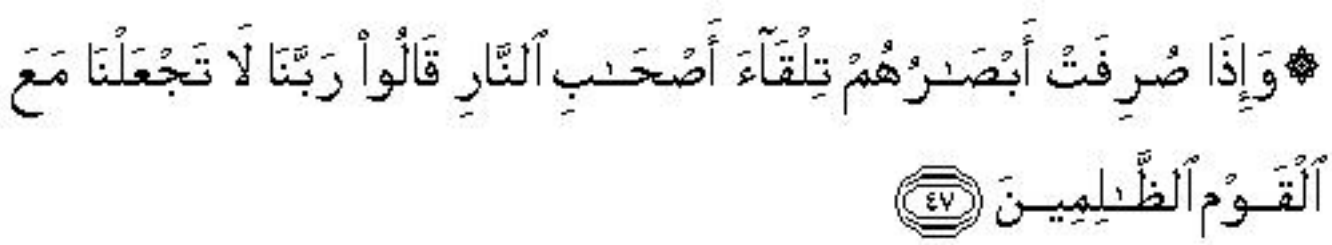
[40-43] Believe it that the doors of heaven will not be opened for those who have treated Our Revelations as false and have shown pride in regard to them: their admission into Paradise is as impossible as the passing of the camel through the eye of the needle, so do We recompense the guilty ones. Hell shall be their bed and Hell shall be their covering: this is the chastisement We award to the workers of iniquity. But as to those who have believed in Our Revelations and done good deeds,- and in this way We lay not on anyone a burden beyond one's capacity-they are worthy of Paradise, wherein they will abide for ever. And We will remove whatever ill-feeling would have been in their hearts against one another;[32] canals will be flowing underneath theta and they will say, "Praise be to Allah, Who has guided us to this Way: by ourselves we would not have been able to find the Way, if Allah had not guided us. The Messengers sent by our Lord had really come, with the Truth. " At that time a voice will be heard saying, "This is the Paradise, of which you have been made heirs; it has been given to you for the good works you did.[33]

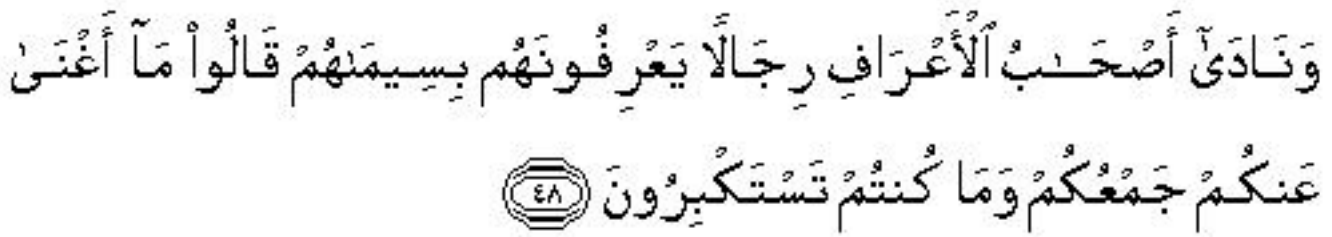
وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ أَن قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا
رَبُّنَا حَقًّا فَهَلْ وَجَدتُّم مَّا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا ۖ قَالُوا نَعَمْ ۚ فَأَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ
بَيْنَهُمْ أَن لَّعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

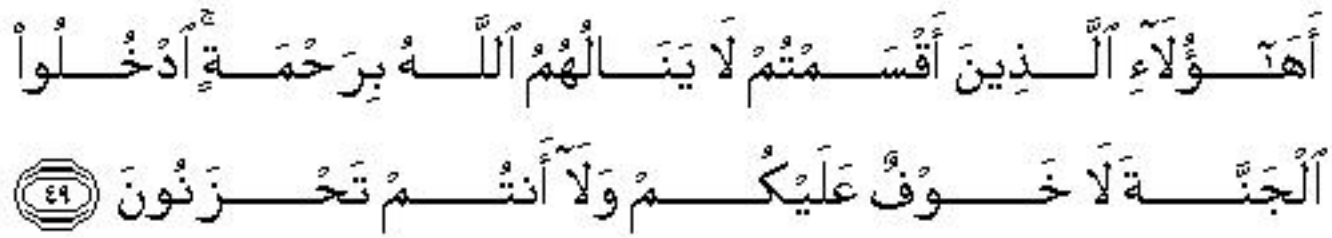
الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُم بِالْآخِرَةِ كَافِرُونَ
﴿٤٥﴾

[44-45] Then the inmates of Paradise will call out to the inmates of Hell, "We have found all the promises made to us by our Lord to be true: have you, too, found the promises trade to you by your Lord to be true?" They will say, "Yes". Then a herald in their midst will announce: "The curse of Allah be upon those evil-doers who debarred others from the Way of Allah and sought to make it crooked, and did not believe in the Hereafter."



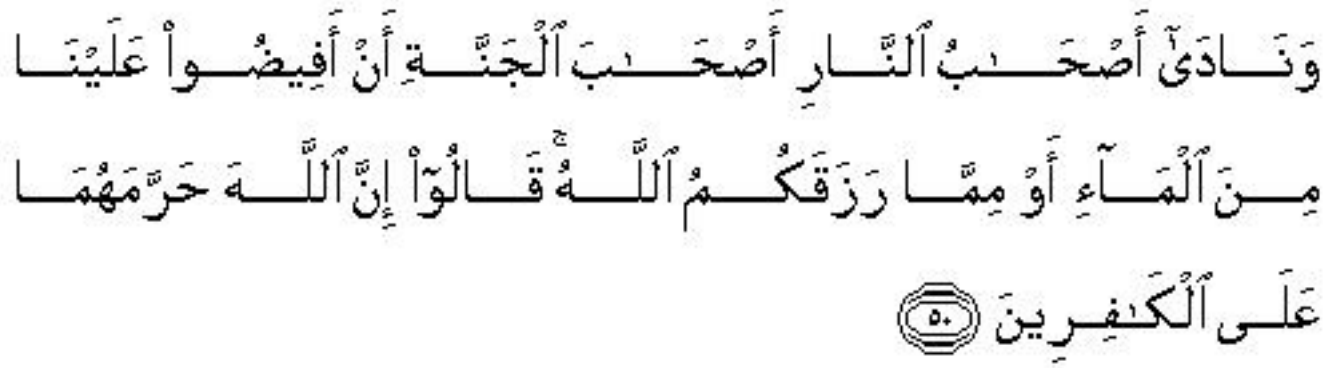


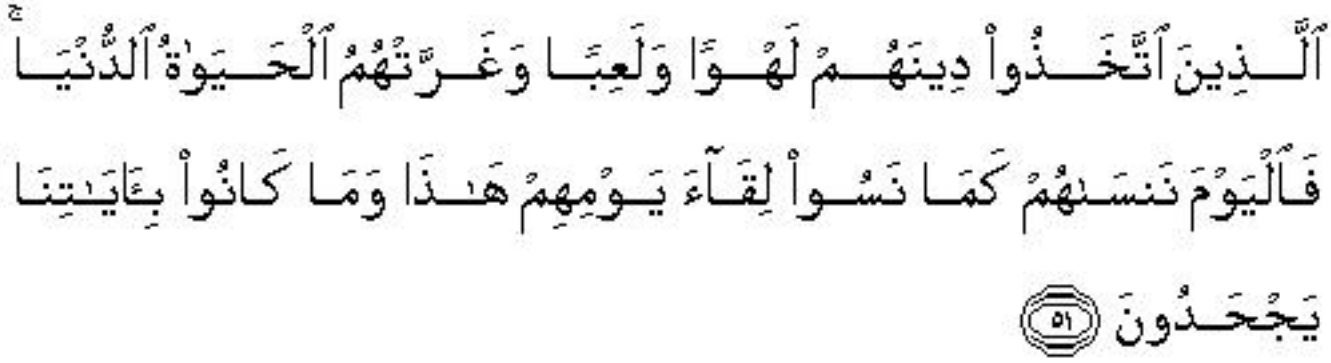




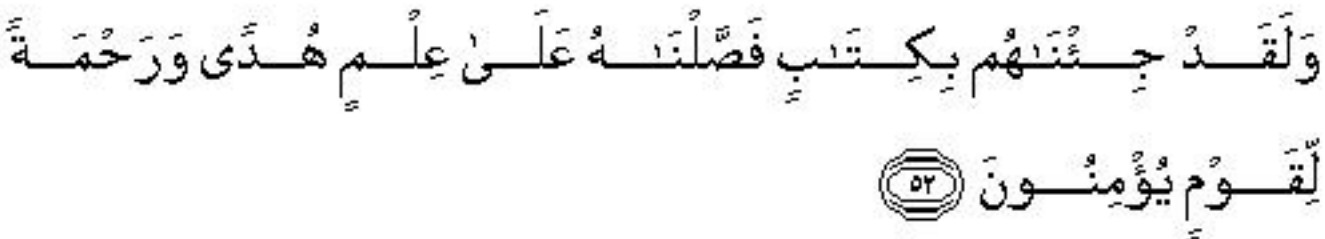
[46-49] Between these two groups, there shall be a barrier, on `the Heights,' on which will be some other people, who will recognize everyone of them by his countenance. They will call out to the inmates of Paradise, "Peace be upon you! "-They will not have yet entered Paradise, though they will be expecting to do so.[34]-And when their eyes will be turned towards the inmates of Hell, they will say, "O our Lord, do not include us in these wicked people."

Then these people on `the Heights' will recognize by their characteristics some `big' personalities from among the inmates of Hell and will call out to them, "You have seen that today neither your followers have availed you anything nor your wealth and property, of which you were very proud. And, are not these inmates of Paradise the same people about whom you swore that Allah would not give them any portion of His blessings? Today the same have been welcome with the words `Go into Paradise where you will have neither fear nor grief'."





[50-51] And the inmates of Hell will cry out to the inmates of Paradise: "Pour upon us a little water or throw down a bit of the provisions Allah has bestowed upon you." They will reply, "Allah has forbidden both the things to the disbelievers, who had made their religion a pastime, sport and enjoyment, and who had been deluded by the worldly life. Allah says. `Today We will forget them just as they forgot the meeting of this Day and rejected Our Revelations'."[35]



هَلۡ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأۡوِيلَهُۥۚ يَوۡمَ يَأۡتِي تَأۡوِيلُهُۥ يَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِن قَبۡلُ
قَدۡ جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِٱلۡحَقِّ فَهَل لَّنَا مِن شُفَعَآءَ فَيَشۡفَعُواْ لَنَآ أَوۡ نُرَدُّ
فَنَعۡمَلَ غَيۡرَ ٱلَّذِي كُنَّا نَعۡمَلُۚ قَدۡ خَسِرُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمۡ وَضَلَّ عَنۡهُم مَّا كَانُواْ
يَفۡتَرُونَ ٥٣

[52-53] We have brought to these people a Book which gives details based on knowledge[36] and which is a guidance and blessing for those who believe.[37] Now, are these people waiting for anything other than the consequence (of which they have been) warned in this Book?[38] When the consequence will come before them, those very people who afore time had disregarded it, will say, "Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord had come with the Truth. Shall we have, then, any intercessors who will intercede for us? Or could we be sent back that we might do deeds different from those we did before?"[39] They have, indeed, incurred heavy loss upon themselves and all the false things they had invented have forsaken them today.

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَوَىٰ عَلَى
ٱلۡعَرۡشِۖ يُغۡشِي ٱلَّيۡلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ يَطۡلُبُهُۥ حَثِيثٗا وَٱلشَّمۡسَ وَٱلۡقَمَرَ وَٱلنُّجُومَ
مُسَخَّرَٰتِۭ بِأَمۡرِهِۦٓۗ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلۡخَلۡقُ وَٱلۡأَمۡرُۗ تَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٥٤

ٱدۡعُواْ رَبَّكُمۡ تَضَرُّعٗا وَخُفۡيَةًۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُعۡتَدِينَ ٥٥

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَٰحِهَا وَٱدْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ
ٱللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

[54-56] In fact, your Lord is Allah alone, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days,[40] and then sat upon the Throne of His Kingdom;[41] Who makes the night cover the day and then the day follows the night swiftly; Who created the sun, the moon and the stars, all of which are under His Command. Note it well: His is the creation and His the Sovereignty.[42] Full of blessings is Allah, the Lord of the worlds.[43] Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret; indeed He does not like the transgressors. Do not spread chaos on the earth after it has been set in order,[44] and call your Lord with fear and with hope.[45] Surely, the mercy of Allah is near to the righteous people.

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُرْسِلُ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ رَحْمَتِهِۦٓ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ
أَقَلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُقْنَٰهُ لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَنزَلْنَا بِهِ ٱلْمَآءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ مِن
كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَٱلْبَلَدُ ٱلطَّيِّبُ يَخْرُجُ نَبَاتُهُۥ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِۦ ۖ وَٱلَّذِى خَبُثَ لَا يَخْرُجُ إِلَّا
نَكِدًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

[57-58] And it is Allah, Who sends winds as harbingers of the good tidings of His mercy; when they gather up heavy clouds He drives them on to some dead land, and makes the rain fall upon it and brings forth many kinds of fruit (from the same dead land). Look! This is how We bring forth the dead from the state of death; it may be that you learn a lesson from this observation. The soil which is rich, yields rich produce by Allah's permission and the soil which is poor yields nothing but poor produce.[46] Thus We present Our Signs over and over again for those people who intend to be grateful.

لَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦ فَقَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنۡ إِلَٰهٍ
غَيۡرُهُۥٓ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ عَذَابَ يَوۡمٍ عَظِيمٖ ٥٩

قَالَ ٱلۡمَلَأٞ مِن قَوۡمِهِۦٓ إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ فِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ ٦٠

قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ لَيۡسَ بِي ضَلَٰلَةٞ وَلَٰكِنِّي رَسُولٞ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٦١

[59-61] We sent Noah to his people;[47] he said, "O my people, worship Allah; you have no deity other than He.[48] I fear lest the chastisement befall you on a dreadful day." The chiefs of his people answered, "We clearly see that you are in obvious deviation." Noah replied, "O my people, I am not in any kind of deviation; on the contrary, I am a messenger from the Lord of the worlds."

أُبَلِّغُكُمۡ رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّي وَأَنصَحُ لَكُمۡ وَأَعۡلَمُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ٦٢

أَوَعَجِبۡتُمۡ أَن جَآءَكُمۡ ذِكۡرٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٖ مِّنكُمۡ لِيُنذِرَكُمۡ
وَلِتَتَّقُواْ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تُرۡحَمُونَ ٦٣

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ وَأَغْرَقْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا عَمِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[62-64] "I convey to you the Messages of my Lord and am your well-wisher for I know from Allah what you do not know. Do you think it strange that admonition from your Lord should come to you through a man from among your own people so that he may warn you and you may guard against error and be graced with mercy?"[49] But they treated him as an impostor. Ultimately, We rescued Noah and those with him in the Ark and drowned those who rejected Our Revelations as false.[50] Indeed they were a blind people!

۞ وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ
مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ فِى سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ
مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِى سَفَاهَةٌ وَلَٰكِنِّى رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿٦٧﴾

أُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّى وَأَنَا۠ لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

أَوَعَجِبْتُمْ أَن جَآءَكُمْ ذِكْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ ۚ
وَٱذْكُرُوٓاْ إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَزَادَكُمْ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ
بَصْۜطَةً ۖ فَٱذْكُرُوٓاْ ءَالَآءَ ٱللَّهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

قَالُوٓاْ أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَعْبُدَ ٱللَّهَ وَحْدَهُۥ وَنَذَرَ مَا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا ۖ فَأْتِنَا بِمَا
تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

قَالَ قَدْ وَقَعَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ رِجْسٌ وَغَضَبٌ ۖ أَتُجَٰدِلُونَنِى فِىٓ
أَسْمَآءٍ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّا نَزَّلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۚ
فَٱنتَظِرُوٓاْ إِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَقَطَعْنَا دَابِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ۖ
وَمَا كَانُواْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

[65-72] And to `Ad[51] We sent their brother Hud: he said ,"O my people, worship Allah: you have no deity other than He. Will you not, then, refrain from wrong ways?" The chiefs of his people who rejected his Message, answered, "We clearly see that you are of unsound mind and we think that you are a liar." He replied, "O my people, I am not

of unsound mind, but in fact, I am a Messenger from the Lord of the world. I convey the Message of my Lord to you and I am a trustworthy well-wisher of yours. Do you think it strange that admonition from your Lord should come to you through a man among your own people so that he may warn you? Do not forget that after Noah's people your Lord made you his successors and made you very robust. So remember the wonderful manifestations of Allah's power:[52] it is expected that you will attain success." They replied, "Have you come to us (with the demand) that we should worship Allah alone and discard those whom our forefathers have been worshiping?[53] Well, bring on us the scourge with which you have been threatening us, if you are truthful." To this, he replied, "You have already incurred the curse of Allah and His wrath. Do you dispute with me about mere names which you and your forefathers have invented,[54] and for which Allah has sent down no authority?[55] Well, you may wait and I, too, will wait with you." Ultimately, We saved Hud and his companions with Our Mercy, and We cut off the roots of those who treated Our Revelations as lies, and did not intend to believe.[56]

وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَٰلِحًا ۘ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم
مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةُ ٱللَّهِ لَكُمْ
ءَايَةً ۖ فَذَرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِىٓ أَرْضِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

وَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ عَادٍ وَبَوَّأَكُمْ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِن سُهُولِهَا قُصُورًا وَتَنْحِتُونَ ٱلْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا ۖ
فَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ ءَالَآءَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

[73-74] And to Thamud,[57] We sent their brother Salih. He said, "O my people, worship Allah for you have no other deity save Him. A clear proof has come to you from your Lord: here is Allah's she-camel, a sign[58] for you, so let her graze at will in Allah's land; do not touch her with any evil intention, lest a woeful scourge from your Lord seize you. And remember the time when Allah made you successors of `Ad and established you in the land with dignity and enabled you to make castles on the plains and hew out houses in the hills.[59] So do not be neglectful of the manifestations of Allah's powers, and do not spread disorder on the earth."[60]

قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ لِمَنْ ءَامَنَ مِنْهُمْ
أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ صَٰلِحًا مُّرْسَلٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلَ بِهِۦ مُؤْمِنُونَ
٧٥

قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِٱلَّذِىٓ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ٧٦

[75-76] The chiefs of his tribe, who were full of pride, said to those who had believed from among the oppressed people, "Do you know it for certain that Salih is a Messenger from his Lord?" They replied, "Indeed we believe in the Message with which he has been sent." But those who had arrogant assumption of superiority said, "We deny that thing which you believe. "

فَعَقَرُوا۟ ٱلنَّاقَةَ وَعَتَوْا۟ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقَالُوا۟ يَٰصَٰلِحُ ٱئْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن
كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ٧٧

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ فِى دَارِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ ٧٨

فَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّى وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ
وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُحِبُّونَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

[77-79] Then they killed the she-camel,[61] and very insolently defied their Lord's command, and challenged Salih, "Bring that scourge with which you threaten us, if you really are one of the Messengers." Consequently a shocking catastrophe[62] overtook them and they lay lifeless on their faces in their dwellings. So, Salih left their habitations, saying. "O my people! I conveyed the Message of my Lord to you and I did my very best for your good, but I am helpless because you do not like your well-wishers."

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَتَأْتُونَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ
مِّنَ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّن دُونِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ
﴿٨١﴾

وَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓا۟ أَخْرِجُوهُم مِّن قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ
أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ كَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَأَمۡطَرۡنَا عَلَيۡهِم مَّطَرٗاۖ فَٱنظُرۡ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ٨٤

[80-84] And We sent Lot as a Messenger: Remember that he said to his people,[63] "Have you become so shameless that you commit such indecent acts as no one committed before you in the world? You gratify your lust with men instead of women:[64] indeed you are a people who are transgressors of all limits!" But the only answer of his people was no other than to say, "Turn out these people of your habitations for they pose to be very pious."[65] At last We delivered Lot and the members of his household-except his wife, who was of those who stayed ' behind[66] and We rained a rain upon his people[67] then behold what happened in the end to the guilty ones![68]

وَإِلَىٰ مَدۡيَنَ أَخَاهُمۡ شُعَيۡبٗاۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنۡ إِلَٰهٍ غَيۡرُهُۥۖ قَدۡ جَآءَتۡكُم بَيِّنَةٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡۖ فَأَوۡفُواْ ٱلۡكَيۡلَ وَٱلۡمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبۡخَسُواْ ٱلنَّاسَ أَشۡيَآءَهُمۡ وَلَا تُفۡسِدُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ بَعۡدَ إِصۡلَٰحِهَاۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ٨٥

وَلَا تَقۡعُدُواْ بِكُلِّ صِرَٰطٖ تُوعِدُونَ وَتَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ مَنۡ ءَامَنَ بِهِۦ وَتَبۡغُونَهَا عِوَجٗاۚ وَٱذۡكُرُوٓاْ إِذۡ كُنتُمۡ قَلِيلٗا فَكَثَّرَكُمۡۖ وَٱنظُرُواْ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡمُفۡسِدِينَ ٨٦

[85-86] And to Madyan[69] We sen t their brother Shu`aib: he said, " O my people, worship Allah: you have no other deity than He. A clear guidance has come to you from your lord: you should, therefore, give full measure and weight, and do not defraud the people of their goods,[70] nor spread disorder on the earth after it has been set aright:[71] this is better for you, if you are true Believers.[72] And do not lie in ambush by every path (of life) as robbers, in order to frighten the people nor debar from Allah's Way those who believe in it, nor seek to snake the Right Way crooked.

Remember the time, when you were a few in number: then Allah multiplied you: and behold with open eyes what happened to the spreaders of corruption!

وَإِن كَانَ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنكُمْ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱلَّذِىٓ أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِۦ وَطَآئِفَةٌ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُواْ
فَٱصْبِرُواْ حَتَّىٰ يَحْكُمَ ٱللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا ۚ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلْحَـٰكِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

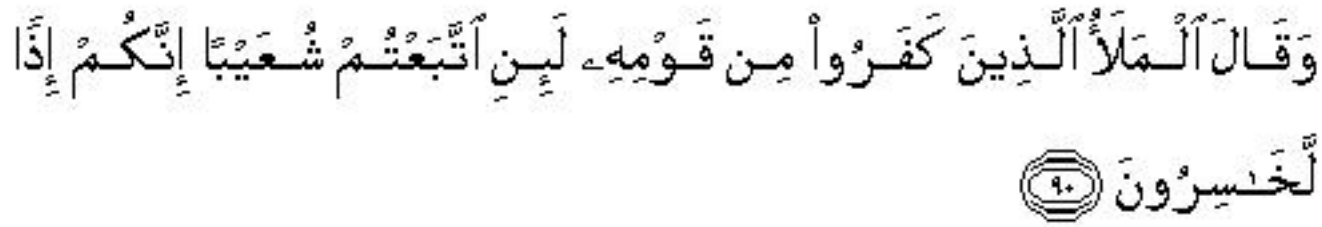
[87] If there are among you some who believe in the teachings with which I have been sent and there are others who believe not, wait and see till Allah judges between us, for He is the best of all judges.

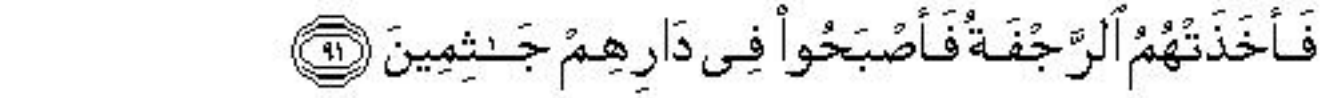
۞ قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُواْ مِن قَوْمِهِۦ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَـٰشُعَيْبُ
وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَعَكَ مِن قَرْيَتِنَآ أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِى
مِلَّتِنَا ۚ قَالَ أَوَلَوْ كُنَّا كَـٰرِهِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

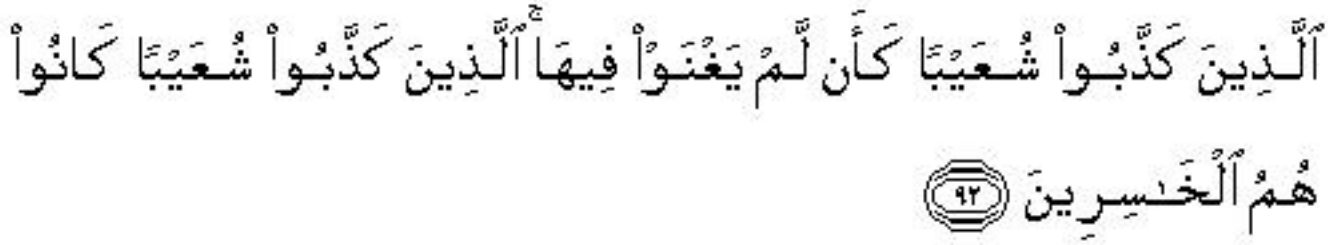
قَدِ ٱفْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا إِنْ عُدْنَا فِى مِلَّتِكُم بَعْدَ إِذْ نَجَّىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ مِنْهَا ۚ
وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَآ أَن نَّعُودَ فِيهَآ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّنَا ۚ وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَىْءٍ
عِلْمًا ۚ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا ٱفْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَنتَ
خَيْرُ ٱلْفَـٰتِحِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

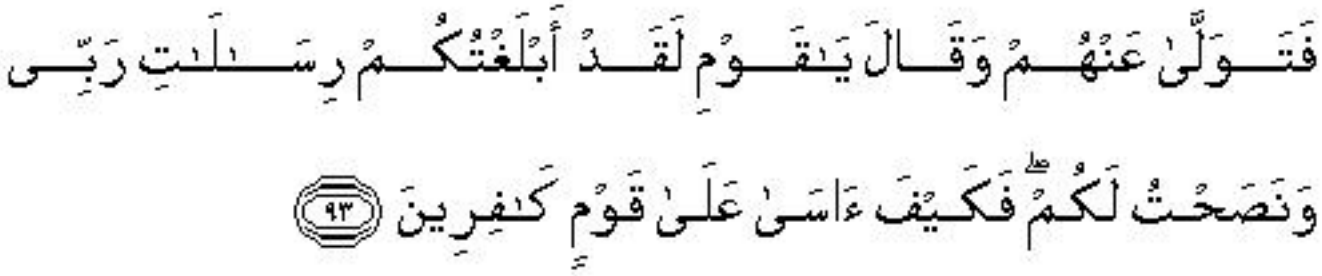
[88-89] The chiefs of his tribe, who were puffed up with pride, said to him, "O Shu`aib, we will banish you and those who have believed with you from our city, or you shall have to return to our fold." Shu`aib replied,"What! Will you turn us back forcibly to it, even if we abhor it? We shall be guilty of attributing a lie to Allah, if we return to your creed, after Allah has delivered us from it; nor can we now return to your creed, except that Allah, our Lord, wills it;[73]

the knowledge of our Lord embraces everything; in Allah we put our trust, Our Lord, judge with truth between us and our people, and Thou art the best of judges."









[90-93] The chiefs of his tribe, who had rejected his Message, said to one another, "If you follow Shu`aib, you will be utterly ruined."[74] It, however, so happened that a shocking catastrophe overtook them and they remained lying prostrate in their dwellings. Those who treated Shu`aib as an impostor were so wiped out as if they had never lived in those dwellings. Ultimately the very people, who treated Shu`aib as an impostor, were utterly ruined.[75] Then Shu`aib left the place, saying, "O my people! I conveyed the Messages of my Lord to you and I did my best for you as your well-wisher. Now, how should I be grieved for the people who reject the Truth!"[76]

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا فِي قَرۡيَةٖ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ إِلَّآ أَخَذۡنَآ أَهۡلَهَا بِٱلۡبَأۡسَآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَضَّرَّعُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

ثُمَّ بَدَّلۡنَا مَكَانَ ٱلسَّيِّئَةِ ٱلۡحَسَنَةَ حَتَّىٰ عَفَواْ وَّقَالُواْ قَدۡ مَسَّ ءَابَآءَنَا ٱلضَّرَّآءُ وَٱلسَّرَّآءُ فَأَخَذۡنَٰهُم بَغۡتَةٗ وَهُمۡ لَا يَشۡعُرُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

وَلَوۡ أَنَّ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡقُرَىٰٓ ءَامَنُواْ وَٱتَّقَوۡاْ لَفَتَحۡنَا عَلَيۡهِم بَرَكَٰتٖ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُواْ فَأَخَذۡنَٰهُم بِمَا كَانُواْ يَكۡسِبُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

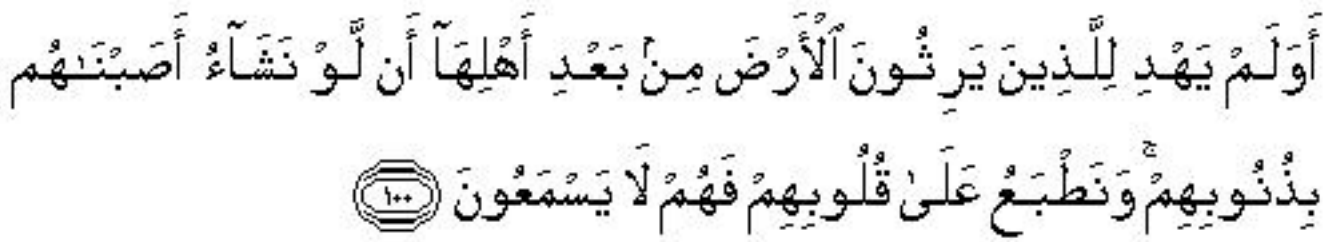
أَفَأَمِنَ أَهۡلُ ٱلۡقُرَىٰٓ أَن يَأۡتِيَهُم بَأۡسُنَا بَيَٰتٗا وَهُمۡ نَآئِمُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

أَوَأَمِنَ أَهۡلُ ٱلۡقُرَىٰٓ أَن يَأۡتِيَهُم بَأۡسُنَا ضُحٗى وَهُمۡ يَلۡعَبُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

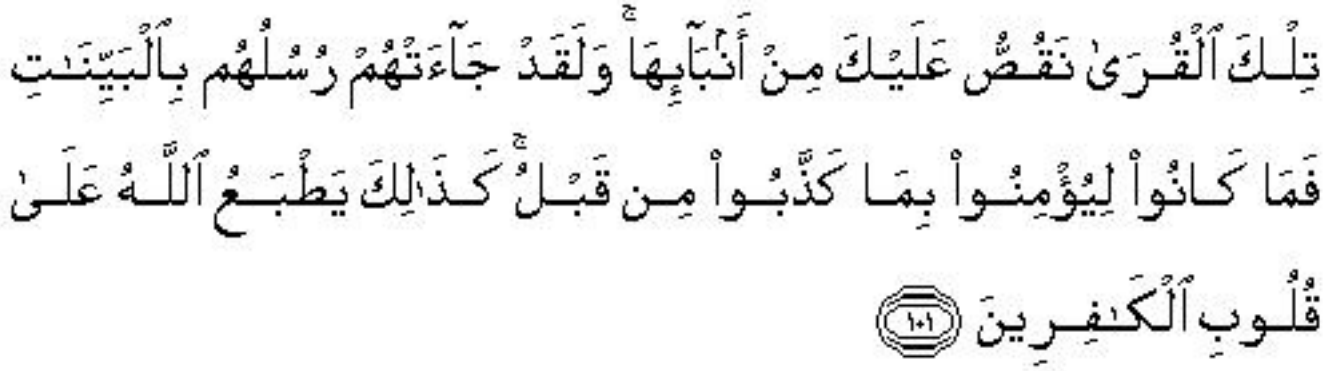
أَفَأَمِنُواْ مَكۡرَ ٱللَّهِۚ فَلَا يَأۡمَنُ مَكۡرَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلۡقَوۡمُ ٱلۡخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

[94-99] Whenever We sent a Prophet to a habitation, We first afflicted its people with adversity and calamity so that they should humble themselves. Then We changed their adversity for good fortune till they became very prosperous

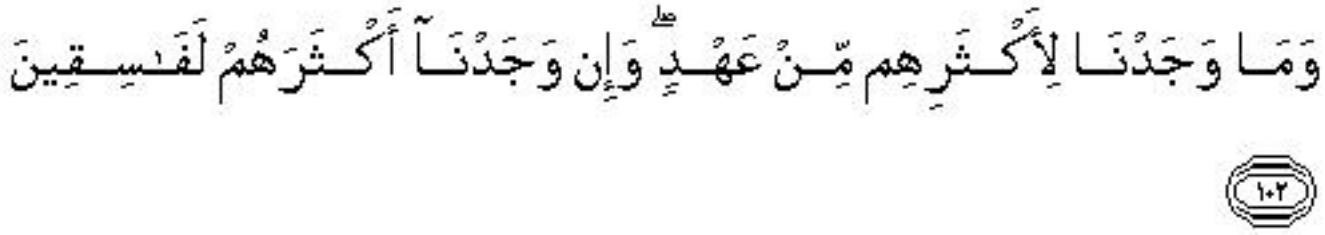
and said, "Our forefathers also had their adversity and prosperity". At last We seized them all of a sudden when they were quite unaware.[77] Had the people of the habitations believed and adopted the way of piety, We would have opened the doors of blessings from the heavens and the earth, but they denied the Truth; so We seized them for the evil they had earned. Do the people of the habitations now feel secure. that Our punishment will not come to them all of a sudden at night, while they might be fast asleep? Or, do they feel secure that Our punishment will not smite them all of a sudden during the day while they might be engaged in pastime? Are these people not afraid of Allah's secret plan?[78] In fact, only those people are doomed to destruction, who are not afraid of Allah's secret plan.



أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لِلَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَهْلِهَآ أَن لَّوْ نَشَآءُ أَصَبْنَٰهُم
بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۚ وَنَطْبَعُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾



تِلْكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآئِهَا ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ
فَمَا كَانُوا۟ لِيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِمَا كَذَّبُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
قُلُوبِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٠١﴾



وَمَا وَجَدْنَا لِأَكْثَرِهِم مِّنْ عَهْدٍ ۖ وَإِن وَجَدْنَآ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفَٰسِقِينَ
﴿١٠٢﴾

[100-102] And, have not those people, who inherit the earth after its former occupants, learned a lesson from the fact that, if We please, We can seize them for their sins?[79] (But they neglect the realities that teach a lesson) and We seal their hearts: then they do not listen to anything.[80] These people whose stories We recount to you (can serve as examples to you). Their Messengers came to them with clear Signs, but they would not believe in what they had once denied. Behold, this is how We seal the hearts of the disbelievers.[81] And We found in most of them no respect for any Covenant; nay, We found that most of them were transgressors.[82]

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِم مُّوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَآ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ فَظَلَمُوا۟ بِهَا
فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَـٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

[103] Then after the (above mentioned) communities, We sent Moses with Our Signs to Pharaoh and the chiefs of his nation,[83] but they also treated Our Signs unjustly.[84] Then behold, what happened in the end to the mischief-makers.

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَـٰفِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّى رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

حَقِيقٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَن لَّآ أَقُولَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْحَقَّ ۚ قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
فَأَرْسِلْ مَعِىَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[104-105] Moses said, "O Pharaoh![85] I am a Messenger from the Lord of the universe. It behooves me to say in the name of Allah nothing but the truth. I have come to you from your Lord with clear Signs of my appointment: so send the children of Israel with me."[86]

قَالَ إِن كُنتَ جِئْتَ بِـَٔايَةٍ فَأْتِ بِهَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[106] Pharaoh answered, "If you have brought a Sign, and, if what you say is true, produce it"

فَـَٔأَلْقَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِىَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٧﴾

وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُۥ فَإِذَا هِىَ بَيْضَآءُ لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

[107-108] Thereupon, Moses threw down his staff, and behold, it became a real serpent all of a sudden. Then he drew his hand out of his pocket, and lo, it was shining before the beholders![87]

قَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِن قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَٰحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾

يُرِيدُ أَن يُخْرِجَكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ ۖ فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

قَالُوٓا۟ أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَرْسِلْ فِى ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿١١٢﴾

وَجَآءَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا إِن كُنَّا نَحْنُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

قَالُوا۟ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِمَّآ أَن تُلْقِىَ وَإِمَّآ أَن نَّكُونَ نَحْنُ ٱلْمُلْقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

قَالَ أَلْقُوا۟ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَلْقَوْا۟ سَحَرُوٓا۟ أَعْيُنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَٱسْتَرْهَبُوهُمْ وَجَآءُو بِسِحْرٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١١٦﴾

[109-116] At this the chiefs of Pharaoh's people said to one another, "Indeed this man is an expert magician. He intends to drive you out of your land;[88] now what do you propose to do?" Then they all advised Pharaoh: "Put him and his brother off for a while, and send heralds to all the cities so that they should bring to you every expert magician".[89] Accordingly, the magicians came to Pharaoh and said, "Shall we surely get great magic. Our reward, if we win ?" Pharaoh answered, "Yes, indeed, and you shall get a position close to me"

Then they said to Moses, "Will you throw down first, or should we throw down?" Moses answered, "You should throw down first".

When they threw down their devices, they bewitched the eyes of the people and terrified their hearts: for they had, indeed, produced a great magic.

۞ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَإِذَا هِىَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

[117] Then We inspired Moses to throw down his staff. No sooner did he throw it down than it began to swallow their false magic.[90]

فَوَقَعَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

فَغُلِبُوا۟ هُنَالِكَ وَٱنقَلَبُوا۟ صَٰغِرِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

وَأُلْقِىَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾

رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[118-122] Thus the Truth was established, and the falsehood which they had wrought proved vain. Pharaoh and his people were vanquished in the combat and (instead of being triumphant) they became humiliated. As regards the magicians, they were compelled to fall prostrate by something from within. hey said, "We have acknowledged the Lord of the worlds,- the Lord whom Moses and Aaron acknowledge."[91]

قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَمَكْرٌ مَّكَرْتُمُوهُ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ لِتُخْرِجُوا۟ مِنْهَآ أَهْلَهَا ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ ثُمَّ لَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

[123-124] Pharaoh said, "Do you dare believe in Him before I permit you? Indeed, it was a plot you conspired in the capital to deprive the rightful owners of their power. Well, you shall soon know its consequences. I will have your hands and feet cut off on opposite sides and then will I have you all crucified."

قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

وَمَا تَنقِمُ مِنَّآ إِلَّآ أَنْ ءَامَنَّا بِـَٔايَـٰتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَآءَتْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَآ أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

[125-126] They answered, "At any rate, we have to return to our Lord; (as for you,) you want to take vengeance upon us only because we believed in the Signs of our Lord, when they came before us. O our Lord, bestow fortitude upon us, causing us to die as those who have surrendered to Thee".[92]

وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِن قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ أَتَذَرُ مُوسَىٰ وَقَوْمَهُۥ لِيُفْسِدُواْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَيَذَرَكَ وَءَالِهَتَكَ ۚ قَالَ سَنُقَتِّلُ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ وَنَسْتَحْىِۦ نِسَآءَهُمْ وَإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ قَـٰهِرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

[127] Then the chiefs of Pharaoh's nation said to him, "Will you leave Moses and his people free to spread disorder in the land, and let them discard your service and that of your deities?" Pharaoh answered, "Well, I will have their sons slain and let their women live:[93] we have a strong hold over them."

قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ ٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱصْبِرُوٓا۟ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَن
يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

قَالُوٓا۟ أُوذِينَا مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنۢ بَعْدِ
مَا جِئْتَنَا ۚ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

[128-129] Moses said to his people, "Invoke Allah's help, and show fortitude. The land belongs to Allah. He gives it as a heritage to those of His servants whom He pleases: and the final success is for those who fear Him in all their doings." His people answered, "We were oppressed before you came to us and now also we are being oppressed since you have come to us." He said, "In the near future, your Lord will destroy your enemies, and make you vicegerents in this land; then He will see how you conduct yourselves. "

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِٱلسِّنِينَ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ
﴿١٣٠﴾

فَإِذَا جَآءَتْهُمُ ٱلْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوا۟ لَنَا هَٰذِهِۦ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَطَّيَّرُوا۟ بِمُوسَىٰ
وَمَن مَّعَهُۥٓ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّمَا طَٰٓئِرُهُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿١٣١﴾

وَقَالُواْ مَهۡمَا تَأۡتِنَا بِهِۦ مِنۡ ءَايَةٖ لِّتَسۡحَرَنَا بِهَا فَمَا نَحۡنُ لَكَ بِمُؤۡمِنِينَ ١٣٢

فَأَرۡسَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلطُّوفَانَ وَٱلۡجَرَادَ وَٱلۡقُمَّلَ وَٱلضَّفَادِعَ وَٱلدَّمَ ءَايَٰتٖ
مُّفَصَّلَٰتٖ فَٱسۡتَكۡبَرُواْ وَكَانُواْ قَوۡمٗا مُّجۡرِمِينَ ١٣٣

وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلرِّجۡزُ قَالُواْ يَٰمُوسَى ٱدۡعُ لَنَا
رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِندَكَ لَئِن كَشَفۡتَ عَنَّا ٱلرِّجۡزَ لَنُؤۡمِنَنَّ لَكَ وَلَنُرۡسِلَنَّ
مَعَكَ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ١٣٤

[130-134] Indeed We afflicted Pharaoh's people with several years of famine and scarcity of food so that they should come to their senses. But they responded like this: whenever a good time came; they would say, "This is but our due" and when there was a hard time, they would ascribe their calamities to Moses and those with him. Whereas, in fact, their misfortune was in the hand of Allah; but most of them did not know this. They said to Moses, "We are not going to believe in you, whatever Sign you may bring to enchant us."[94] At last We let loose upon them the storm,[95] the locusts, the lice,[96] and the frogs, and rained blood upon them. Though We showed these Signs, one by one, they persisted in their rebellion; for they were steeped in crime. Whenever a plague befell them, they would say, "O Moses! Pray for us to Allah in the name of the office you hold from Him. If you help remove the plague from us this time, we will believe in you, and send the Israelites with you."

فَلَمَّا كَشَفۡنَا عَنۡهُمُ ٱلرِّجۡزَ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ هُم بَٰلِغُوهُ
إِذَا هُمۡ يَنكُثُونَ ١٣٥

فَٱنتَقَمۡنَا مِنۡهُمۡ فَأَغۡرَقۡنَٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡيَمِّ بِأَنَّهُمۡ كَذَّبُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَكَانُواْ عَنۡهَا
غَٰفِلِينَ ١٣٦

وَأَوۡرَثۡنَا ٱلۡقَوۡمَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَانُواْ يُسۡتَضۡعَفُونَ مَشَٰرِقَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَغَٰرِبَهَا ٱلَّتِي
بَٰرَكۡنَا فِيهَاۖ وَتَمَّتۡ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُواْۖ
وَدَمَّرۡنَا مَا كَانَ يَصۡنَعُ فِرۡعَوۡنُ وَقَوۡمُهُۥ وَمَا كَانُواْ يَعۡرِشُونَ ١٣٧

[135-137] But as soon as We removed the plague from them after the expiry of the term that had been fixed for them, they would at once break their promise. Then We took Our vengeance on them and drowned them in the sea because they had treated Our Signs as false and had grown heedless of them. And after them We gave as heritage to those who had been abased and kept low, the eastern and western parts of that land, which had been blessed bountifully by Us.[97] Thus the promise of prosperity that your Lord had made with the Israelites was fulfilled, because they had shown fortitude. And We destroyed all that Pharaoh and his people had constructed and raised up.

وَجَٰوَزۡنَا بِبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱلۡبَحۡرَ فَأَتَوۡاْ عَلَىٰ قَوۡمٖ يَعۡكُفُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَصۡنَامٖ لَّهُمۡۚ
قَالُواْ يَٰمُوسَى ٱجۡعَل لَّنَآ إِلَٰهٗا كَمَا لَهُمۡ ءَالِهَةٞۚ قَالَ إِنَّكُمۡ قَوۡمٞ تَجۡهَلُونَ
١٣٨

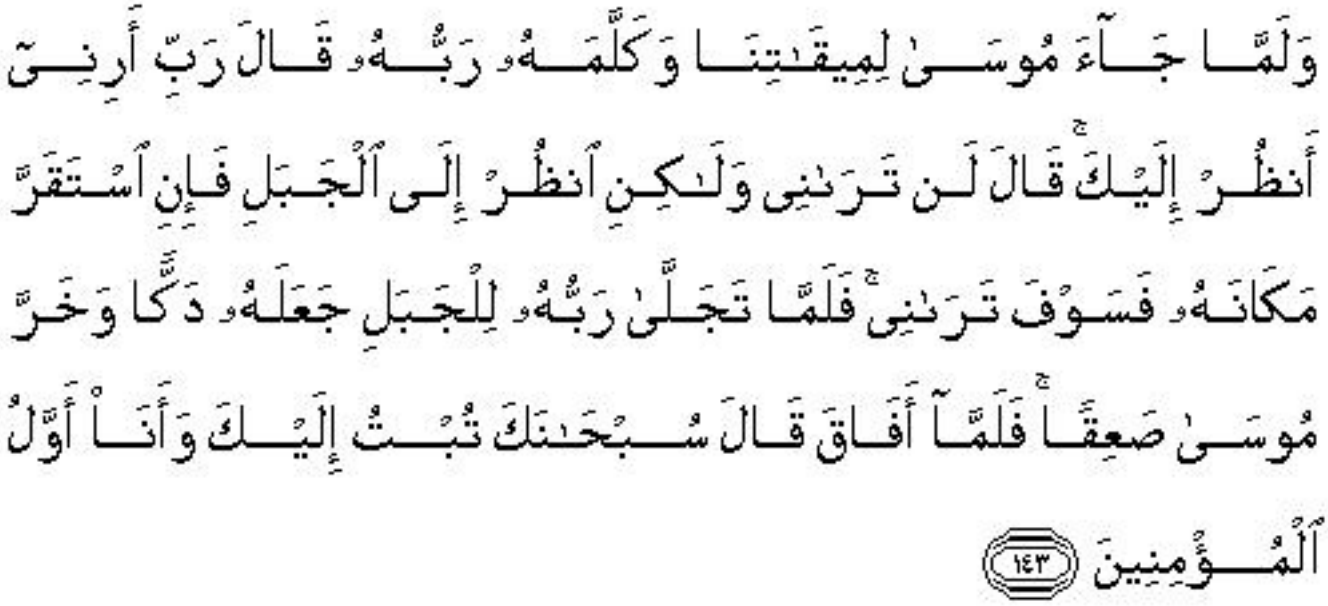
إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مُتَبَّرٞ مَّا هُمۡ فِيهِ وَبَٰطِلٞ مَّا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ١٣٩

قَالَ أَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ أَبْغِيكُمْ إِلَٰهًا وَهُوَ فَضَّلَكُمْ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

وَإِذْ أَنجَيْنَٰكُم مِّنْ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوٓءَ ٱلْعَذَابِ يُقَتِّلُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ وَفِى ذَٰلِكُم بَلَآءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤١﴾

[138-141] We led the Israelites across the sea; then they started on their journey, and came upon a people who were zealously devoted to their idols. They said, "O Moses, make a god also for us like the gods these people have."[98] Moses replied "Indeed, you are a people who are behaving very foolishly. The way these people are following is doomed to destruction and the works they are performing are absolutely vain. " Then he further said, "What! should I seek a god for you other than Allah: when it is He Who has exalted you above all the nations of the world? And (Allah says), "Recall the time when We rescued you from the people of Pharaoh, who afflicted you with a dreadful torment; they slew your sons and let your women live and in this was a great trial for you from your Lord!"

۞ وَوَٰعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ ثَلَٰثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتْمَمْنَٰهَا بِعَشْرٍ فَتَمَّ مِيقَٰتُ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ۚ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَخِيهِ هَٰرُونَ ٱخْلُفْنِى فِى قَوْمِى وَأَصْلِحْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾


وَلَمَّا جَآءَ مُوسَىٰ لِمِيقَٰتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِيٓ
أَنظُرۡ إِلَيۡكَۚ قَالَ لَن تَرَىٰنِي وَلَٰكِنِ ٱنظُرۡ إِلَى ٱلۡجَبَلِ فَإِنِ ٱسۡتَقَرَّ
مَكَانَهُۥ فَسَوۡفَ تَرَىٰنِيۚ فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُۥ لِلۡجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُۥ دَكّٗا وَخَرَّ
مُوسَىٰ صَعِقٗاۚ فَلَمَّآ أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ تُبۡتُ إِلَيۡكَ وَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ
ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾


قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنِّي ٱصۡطَفَيۡتُكَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ بِرِسَٰلَٰتِي وَبِكَلَٰمِي فَخُذۡ مَآ
ءَاتَيۡتُكَ وَكُن مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

[142-144] We summoned Moses to Mount Sinai for thirty nights and days, and We added to them ten, thus the term appointed by his Lord became full forty nights and days.[99] Before leaving, Moses said to his brother Aaron, "After me take my place among my people and do the right, and do not follow the way of the mischief-makers."[100] When Moses arrived there at the appointed time and his Lord spoke with him, he beseeched, "Lord, give me power of sight so that I may look upon Thee. " He answered, "You cannot see Me. Well, you may just look towards the yonder Mountain; if it remains firm in its place, then you shall behold Me." Accordingly, when his Lord manifested His glory on the Mountain; that turned it into fine dust, and Moses fell in a swoon. when he came to himself, he said, "Glory be to thee! I repent before Thee, and I am the first of those who believe." He said, "O Moses! I have chosen you from among all the people to deliver My Message and to have conversation with Me: so take whatever I give you and be grateful."

وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَلْوَاحِ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مَّوْعِظَةً
وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَأْخُذُوا۟ بِأَحْسَنِهَا
سَأُو۟رِيكُمْ دَارَ ٱلْفَـٰسِقِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ ءَايَـٰتِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَإِن
يَرَوْا۟ كُلَّ ءَايَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهَا وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ سَبِيلَ ٱلرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوهُ
سَبِيلًا وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ سَبِيلَ ٱلْغَىِّ يَتَّخِذُوهُ سَبِيلًا ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا غَـٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا وَلِقَآءِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَـٰلُهُمْ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا
كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

[145-147] After this, We inscribed upon the tablets[101] admonitions concerning every branch of life and clear instructions about all its aspects and gave these to Moses and said to him, "Hold fast to the precepts steadfastly, and enjoin your people to follow them according to their best sense.[102] In the near future, I shall show you the abode of the wicked people.'[103] I will turn away from My Signs the eyes of those who without any sight behave haughtily on the earth.[104] Whatsoever Sign they might see they will never believe in it. If they see the Right Way before them, they will not follow it; but if they see a crooked way, they will follow it. That is because they treated Our Signs as false and were heedless of them. Whoever treated Our Signs as false and denied the meeting in the Hereafter their deeds became vain.[105] Can the people get any recompense except according to what they have wrought?"

وَٱتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُۥ خُوَارٌ ۚ أَلَمْ
يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّهُۥ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا ٱتَّخَذُوهُ وَكَانُوا۟ ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾

وَلَمَّا سُقِطَ فِىٓ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا۟ أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا۟ قَالُوا۟ لَئِن لَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا
وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

وَلَمَّا رَجَعَ مُوسَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ غَضْبَٰنَ أَسِفًا قَالَ بِئْسَمَا خَلَفْتُمُونِى مِنۢ
بَعْدِىٓ ۖ أَعَجِلْتُمْ أَمْرَ رَبِّكُمْ ۖ وَأَلْقَى ٱلْأَلْوَاحَ وَأَخَذَ بِرَأْسِ أَخِيهِ يَجُرُّهُۥٓ
إِلَيْهِ ۚ قَالَ ٱبْنَ أُمَّ إِنَّ ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱسْتَضْعَفُونِى وَكَادُوا۟ يَقْتُلُونَنِى فَلَا تُشْمِتْ
بِىَ ٱلْأَعْدَآءَ وَلَا تَجْعَلْنِى مَعَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَلِأَخِى وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِى رَحْمَتِكَ ۖ وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ
ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ ٱلْعِجْلَ سَيَنَالُهُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَذِلَّةٌ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُفْتَرِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ثُمَّ تَابُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِهَا وَءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ
رَبَّكَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٥٣﴾

[148-153] In his absence[106] the people of Moses made from their ornaments the image of a calf which made sound like lowing. Did they not see that it could neither speak to them nor guide them in any matter? Yet they took it for a god, for they were wrong-doers.[107] But when the enchantment of self delusion was broken and they realized that they had, in fact, gone astray, they said, "If our Lord does not have mercy on us and does not forgive us we shall be losers." In the meanwhile when Moses full of anger and sorrow returned to his people, he said, "Very evil is it that you have done in my place after me! Could you not patiently wait for the Commandment of Allah?" And he threw down the tablets, and, seizing his brother by the hair of his head, dragged him. Aaron said, "Son of my mother, these people overpowered me and were going to kill me: so, let not the enemies gloat over me: do not count me among the people who have done wrong."[108] Then Moses said, "O Lord, forgive me and my brother, and admit us to Thy mercy; Thou art the Most Merciful of all." (In response to this Allah said,) "Allah's wrath shall surely overtake those who made the calf a god, and they shall be abased in the life of this world, that is how We punish those who invent falsehood. But those who do evil deeds, then repent after this and believe, will after this repentance and belief most surely find your Lord Forgiving and Merciful."

وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَن مُّوسَى ٱلْغَضَبُ أَخَذَ ٱلْأَلْوَاحَ ۖ وَفِى نُسْخَتِهَا هُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ
لِّلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

وَٱخۡتَارَ مُوسَىٰ قَوۡمَهُۥ سَبۡعِينَ رَجُلٗا لِّمِيقَٰتِنَاۖ فَلَمَّآ أَخَذَتۡهُمُ
ٱلرَّجۡفَةُ قَالَ رَبِّ لَوۡ شِئۡتَ أَهۡلَكۡتَهُم مِّن قَبۡلُ وَإِيَّيَۖ أَتُهۡلِكُنَا
بِمَا فَعَلَ ٱلسُّفَهَآءُ مِنَّآۖ إِنۡ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتۡنَتُكَ تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَن تَشَآءُ وَتَهۡدِي
مَن تَشَآءُۖ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَٱغۡفِرۡ لَنَا وَٱرۡحَمۡنَاۖ وَأَنتَ خَيۡرُ ٱلۡغَٰفِرِينَ

١٥٥

۞ وَٱكۡتُبۡ لَنَا فِي هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا حَسَنَةٗ وَفِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُدۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَۚ
قَالَ عَذَابِيٓ أُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَنۡ أَشَآءُۖ وَرَحۡمَتِي وَسِعَتۡ كُلَّ شَيۡءٖۚ فَسَأَكۡتُبُهَا
لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤۡتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ

١٥٦

[154-156] When Moses' anger was allayed, he took up the tablets in whose writing was guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord. And Moses chose from among his people seventy men (to accompany hall) to attend a meeting appointed by Us.[109] When a severe earthquake seized them, Moses prayed, "My Lord, if Thou hadst willed, Thou could have destroyed them and me before this: wouldst Thou destroy rill of us for the offense committed by some foolish people from among us? This was a trial set by Thee, whereby Thou leads astray whom Thou wilt and guides whom Thou wilt.[110] Thou alone art our Protector; so forgive us and have mercy on us for Thou art the best of all forgivers! And ordain for us what is good in this world as well as in the world to come; we have turned to Thee". He replied, "As to punishment, I inflict it on anyone I will, but My mercy embraces everything.[111] So I will prescribe it for those who will refrain from disobedience, pay the Zakat, and believe in My Revelations."

ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلرَّسُولَ ٱلنَّبِىَّ ٱلْأُمِّىَّ ٱلَّذِى يَجِدُونَهُۥ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ فِى
ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَىٰهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ
ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ ٱلَّتِى
كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلنُّورَ ٱلَّذِىٓ
أُنزِلَ مَعَهُۥٓ ۙ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۖ فَـَٔامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ٱلنَّبِىِّ ٱلْأُمِّىِّ
ٱلَّذِى يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَٱتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

[157-158] (So. now mercy has been assigned to those) who follow this Messenger, the Ummi Prophet[112] whose mention they shall find in the Torah and the Gospel with them.[113] He enjoins them to follow virtue and forbids them from evil: he makes pure things lawful for them and impure things unlawful.[114] He relieves them of their burdens and frees there from the shackles that bound them.[115] For this reason those alone who believe in him and support hire and succor him and follow the light that has been sent down with him, shall attain "success". O Muhammad, say, "O mankind, I am a Messenger to all of you from Allah to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and tire earth. There is no deity but He. He bestows life and ordains death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the Ummi Prophet, who believes in Allah and His Commandments. Follow him: it is expected that you will be guided aright."

وَمِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰٓ أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَبِهِۦ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

وَقَطَّعْنَٰهُمُ ٱثْنَتَىْ عَشْرَةَ أَسْبَاطًا أُمَمًا ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱسْتَسْقَىٰهُ قَوْمُهُۥٓ أَنِ ٱضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلْحَجَرَ ۖ فَٱنۢبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ ٱثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۖ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ۚ وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْغَمَٰمَ وَأَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَنَّ وَٱلسَّلْوَىٰ ۖ كُلُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ ۚ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

[159-160] Among,[116] the people of Moses there were some who guided (others) with tire Truth and judged the affairs with the Truth.[117] And We had divided them into twelve clams and made them distinct Communities.[118] When his people asked him tar water. We inspired Moses to strike a certain rack with his staff. Consequently, twelve springs gushed forth from it and each community specified its drinking place: We caused the cloud to cast shadow over them, and We sent down manna and salva for their food.[119] saying. "Eat of the clean and pure things We have provided for you." However, by doing what they did afterwards, they did no wrong to Us but they wronged themselves.

وَإِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱسْكُنُوا۟ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةَ وَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ وَقُولُوا۟ حِطَّةٌ وَٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْبَابَ سُجَّدًا نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطِيٓـَٰتِكُمْ ۚ سَنَزِيدُ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

فَبَدَّلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنْهُمْ قَوْلًا غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزًا
مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

[161-162] And[120] call to mind the time when it was said to them, "Go and dwell in this town, and get therefrom provision for yourselves out of its produce, according to your liking, and say "hittatun, hittatun," and enter the gate of the town, bowing down with humility. We shall pardon your sins and increase all the more the rewards of the doers of good" . But those from among them who were bent on wrongdoing changed that word which had been said to them. Consequently, We sent down scourge upon them[121] from heaven because of the wrongs they were doing.

وَسْـَٔلْهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلَّتِى كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ ٱلْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ فِى ٱلسَّبْتِ إِذْ
تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّعًا وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ ۙ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
نَبْلُوهُم بِمَا كَانُواْ يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِّنْهُمْ لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا ۙ ٱللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ
عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ قَالُواْ مَعْذِرَةً إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

فَلَمَّا نَسُواْ مَا ذُكِّرُواْ بِهِۦٓ أَنجَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلسُّوٓءِ وَأَخَذْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُواْ بِعَذَابٍۭ بَـِٔيسٍۭ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

فَلَمَّا عَتَوۡاْ عَن مَّا نُهُواْ عَنۡهُ قُلۡنَا لَهُمۡ كُونُواْ قِرَدَةً خَٰسِـِٔينَ ١٦٦

[163-166] And ask them about the township which was situated on the sea shore.[122] Remind them of what befell its people who used to break the Sabbath (Saturday). Each Sabbath-day the fish appeared in abundance before them on the surface of the water[123] but did not appear at all on other days than Sabbath. This was because We were putting them to test on account of the acts of disobedience they did.[124] Also remind them that when some people from among them asked the others the answer that was given by some of them, "Why do you admonish those people whom Allah is about to destroy or punish severely?" they replied, "We admonish them in order to be able to offer an excuse before your Lord and we also hope that they might refrain from disobedience to Him." However, when they totally forgot the teachings they were reminded of, We saved those who used to forbid evil, and seized with a severe scourge all others who were transgressors, because of the acts of disobedience they did.[125] But when even after this they disdainfully persisted in that from which they were forbidden, We said to them, "Become apes--despised and disgraced!"[126]

وَإِذۡ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكَ لَيَبۡعَثَنَّ عَلَيۡهِمۡ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ مَن يَسُومُهُمۡ
سُوٓءَ ٱلۡعَذَابِۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَسَرِيعُ ٱلۡعِقَابِۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَغَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ١٦٧

[167] And recall the time when your Lord declared,[127] "I will set over the Israelites over and over again up to the Day of Resurrection, people who should inflict upon them the severest torment."[128] Your Lord, indeed, is swift in retribution, and He is indeed also Forgiving and Merciful.

وَقَطَّعۡنَٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أُمَمٗاۖ مِّنۡهُمُ ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ وَمِنۡهُمۡ دُونَ ذَٰلِكَۖ
وَبَلَوۡنَٰهُم بِٱلۡحَسَنَٰتِ وَٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡجِعُونَ ١٦٨

فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٞ وَرِثُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ يَأۡخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَٰذَا ٱلۡأَدۡنَىٰ
وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغۡفَرُ لَنَا وَإِن يَأۡتِهِمۡ عَرَضٞ مِّثۡلُهُۥ يَأۡخُذُوهُۚ أَلَمۡ يُؤۡخَذۡ عَلَيۡهِم
مِّيثَٰقُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ أَن لَّا يَقُولُواْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلۡحَقَّ وَدَرَسُواْ مَا فِيهِۗ وَٱلدَّارُ
ٱلۡأٓخِرَةُ خَيۡرٞ لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَۖ أَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُونَ ١٦٩
وَٱلَّذِينَ يُمَسِّكُونَ بِٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَأَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ
أَجۡرَ ٱلۡمُصۡلِحِينَ ١٧٠

[168-170] And We divided them into many separate communities all over the earth: some of these people were righteous and some of them were different from this: We tested them with prosperity and with adversity so that they might turn back. Then after the following generations, unworthy people succeeded them: they inherited the Book, but in spite of this they grab the fleeting good things of this low world, and say. "We expect to be forgiven." Yet if similar worldly things again come before them. they again grab them.[129] Has not the Covenant of the Book been taken from them that they should ascribe to Allah nothing but the truth? And they themselves have studied well that which is written in the Book.[130] And the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who fear Allah.[131] Do you not understand even this thing? As for those who strictly observe the Book and establish Salat, surely We will not let go waste the reward of such righteous people.

۞ وَإِذۡ نَتَقۡنَا ٱلۡجَبَلَ فَوۡقَهُمۡ كَأَنَّهُۥ ظُلَّةٞ وَظَنُّوٓاْ أَنَّهُۥ وَاقِعُۢ
بِهِمۡ خُذُواْ مَآ ءَاتَيۡنَٰكُم بِقُوَّةٖ وَٱذۡكُرُواْ مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ١٧١

[171] Do they also remember the time when We shook the Mountain and spread over them as though it were an

umbrella, and they thought that it was going to fall upon them; (then We said to them), "Hold fast the Book We are giving you, and keep in mind what it contains: it is expected that you will refrain from wrong ways."[132]

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ مِن ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ
عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَآ ۛ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ
إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَٰذَا غَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

أَوْ تَقُولُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَشْرَكَ ءَابَآؤُنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ۖ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا
بِمَا فَعَلَ ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿١٧٣﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٧٤﴾

[172-174] And, O Prophet,[133] remind the people of the time, when your Lord brought forth from the loins of the Children of Adam, their descendants and made them bear witness about themselves. He asked them, "Am I not your Lord?" They replied, "Most certainly, Thou alone art our Lord; we bear witness to this. "[134] This We did lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "We were unaware of this thing," or lest you should say, "Our forefathers started the practice of shirk before us and we were born after them to their descendants: dost Thou. then, punish us for the sin that was committed by the wrongdoers?"[135] Behold, this is how We make Our Signs clear[136] so that these people return to the right way.[137]

وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ٱلَّذِىٓ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَٱنسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْغَاوِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَٰهُ بِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱتَّبَعَ
هَوَىٰهُ ۚ فَمَثَلُهُۥ كَمَثَلِ ٱلْكَلْبِ إِن تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَث أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَث ۚ
ذَّٰلِكَ مَثَلُ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ۚ فَٱقْصُصِ ٱلْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

[175-176] And, O Muhammad, relate to them the story of the person whom We had given the knowledge of Our Revelations,[138] but he turned away from their observance. Then Satan pursued him until he became one of those who had gone astray. If We had willed We would have exalted him by means of those revelations, but he clung on to the earth and followed his own lusts. Therefore he began to behave like a dog: it lolls out its tongue if you chase it away and it lolls out its tongue if you leave it alone.[139] Such is the likeness of those who treat Our Revelations as false.

سَآءَ مَثَلًا ٱلْقَوْمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَأَنفُسَهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

مَن يَهْدِ ٱللَّهُ فَهُوَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِى ۖ وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا
وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ
بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

[177-179] You should go on relating these stories to them: it may be that they consider them seriously. Very bad is the example of those who treated Our Revelations as false and they have been doing wrong to their own selves. Only he whom Allah guides is rightly guided, and they whom Allah deprives of His guidance become losers. And this is a tact that there are many jinns and human beings whom We Dave created (as if) for Hell.[140] they have hearts but they do not think with them; they have eyes but they do not see with them; they have ears but they do not Hear with them. They are like animals; nay.,even worse, for they are the people who have become utterly heedless.

وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ فَٱدْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ وَذَرُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِىٓ أَسْمَٰٓئِهِۦ ۚ
سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَآ أُمَّةٌ يَهْدُونَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَبِهِۦ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٨١﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُم مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٢﴾

وَأُمْلِى لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ كَيْدِى مَتِينٌ ﴿١٨٣﴾

[180-183] Allah is entitled to most excellent names:[141] so call Him by excellent names only and leave alone those who deviate froth the Truth in giving names to Him; they shall be recompensed for what they have been doing.[142] From among those We have created, there are some who guide with the truth and do justice therewith. As regards those who have treated Our Revelations as false, We will gradually lead them on to ruin in a way they will not know. Though I am giving them a respite, My plan is infallible.

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ ۗ مَا بِصَاحِبِهِم مِّن جِنَّةٍ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨٤﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا۟ فِى مَلَكُوتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ
مِن شَىْءٍ وَأَنْ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ قَدِ ٱقْتَرَبَ أَجَلُهُمْ ۖ فَبِأَىِّ حَدِيثٍ
بَعْدَهُۥ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

مَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِىَ لَهُۥ ۚ وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِى طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ
﴿١٨٦﴾

[184-186] And have they never reflected on this matter? There is no tinge of unsoundness of mind in their companion; he is a Warner, who is warning plainly (beforehand of the evil consequence). Have they never considered the functioning of the heavens and the earth, and have they never observed closely anything that Allah has created?[143] And has it never occurred to them that their life might have come near to its end?[144] Then what else can there be in which they will believe after this warning of the Messenger? Whomever Allah deprives of guidance has no guide, for Allah leaves such people wandering about blindly in their contumacy.

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَىٰهَا ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ
رَبِّى ۖ لَا يُجَلِّيهَا لِوَقْتِهَآ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ ثَقُلَتْ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ
إِلَّا بَغْتَةً ۗ يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ كَأَنَّكَ حَفِىٌّ عَنْهَا ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

قُل لَّآ أَمۡلِكُ لِنَفۡسِي نَفۡعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۚ وَلَوۡ كُنتُ أَعۡلَمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبَ
لَٱسۡتَكۡثَرۡتُ مِنَ ٱلۡخَيۡرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ ٱلسُّوٓءُۚ إِنۡ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٞ وَبَشِيرٞ
لِّقَوۡمٖ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ١٨٨

[187-188] These people ask you: "Well, when is the Hour of Resurrection coming?" Say, "Its knowledge is with my Lord alone: He Himself will disclose it at the proper time: that Hour will weigh heavily on the heavens and the earth. It will come on you all of a sudden. " They ask you about it as though you have been in search for it. Say; "Its knowledge is with Allah alone, but most of the people do not know this. " Tell them, O Muhammad, "I have not the power to bring any good to or avert any harm from myself: only that happens which Allah wills. Had I the knowledge of the unseen, I would have acquired many benefits for myself and would never have suffered any harm.[145] I am merely a Warner, and a bearer of good news to those who believe in what I say."

۞ هُوَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفۡسٖ وَٰحِدَةٖ وَجَعَلَ مِنۡهَا زَوۡجَهَا لِيَسۡكُنَ إِلَيۡهَاۖ
فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّىٰهَا حَمَلَتۡ حَمۡلًا خَفِيفٗا فَمَرَّتۡ بِهِۦۖ فَلَمَّآ أَثۡقَلَت دَّعَوَا ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا
لَئِنۡ ءَاتَيۡتَنَا صَٰلِحٗا لَّنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ١٨٩

فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُمَا صَٰلِحٗا جَعَلَا لَهُۥ شُرَكَآءَ فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمَاۚ فَتَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَّا
يُشۡرِكُونَ ١٩٠

أَيُشۡرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخۡلُقُ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُمۡ يُخۡلَقُونَ ١٩١

وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا وَلَآ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ ﴿١٩٢﴾

وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ لَا يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ ۚ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدَعَوْتُمُوهُمْ أَمْ أَنتُمْ صَـٰمِتُونَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ ۖ فَٱدْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَآ ۖ أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَآ ۖ أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَآ ۖ أَمْ لَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۗ قُلِ ٱدْعُوا۟ شُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيدُونِ فَلَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

[189-195] It is Allah Who created you from one being, and of the same species He made his mate, so that he may have a tranquil life with her. Then when a man covered a woman, she bore a light burden with which she moved about. But when she became heavy with it, both of them prayed together to Allah, their Lord: "If Thou givest us a sound child, we will be grateful to Thee. " But when Allah gave them a child of sound body and sound mind, they both began to associate partners with Allah in His favor, but Allah is exalted far above what they associate with Him.[146] How foolish are these people! They associate with Him partners who do not create anything but are themselves created, who cannot help them nor have power to help themselves. If you invite them to follow the Right Way, they will not follow you; it will be all the same for you whether you call them or keep silent.[147] Those whom you invoke besides Allah are mere servants of Allah like you: just invoke them, and, if what you say of them be true, they will answer your prayers. Have they feet that they should walk with them? Or have they hands that they should

hold with them? Or have they eyes that they should see with them? Or have they ears that they should hear with them?[148] Tell them, O Muhammad. "Call up the partners you have set up; then all of you sit down together and plot against me and give me no respite."

إِنَّ وَلِيِّيَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِي نَزَّلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۖ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٩٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلَآ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ ﴿١٩٧﴾

وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ لَا يَسْمَعُوا ۖ وَتَرَىٰهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٩٨﴾

[196-198] My Protector and Helper is Allah who has sent down this Book, and Who protects the righteous people.[149] On the contrary, those whom you call beside Allah, cannot help you nor can they help themselves. Nay, if you call them to the Right Way, they cannot even hear what you say; though it would appear to you that they are looking at you, in fact, they do not see anything."

خُذِ ٱلْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِٱلْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿١٩٩﴾

وَإِمَّا يَنزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَٱسْتَعِذْ بِٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَٰٓئِفٌ مِّنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ تَذَكَّرُوا۟ فَإِذَا
هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠١﴾

وَإِخْوَٰنُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِى ٱلْغَىِّ ثُمَّ لَا يُقْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

[199-202] O Prophet, adopt the way of leniency and forbearance; enjoin what is good and avoid useless discussions with the ignorant people. If Satan ever excites you to anger, seek refuge in Allah: He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. The fact is that if ever an evil suggestion from Satan so much as touches those, who are God fearing people, they immediately get alerted and clearly see the right course they should adopt. As regards their (that is, Satan's) brethren,[149a] they drag theta on and on in their crooked ways and leave nothing undone to seduce them.[150]

وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِم بِـَٔايَةٍ قَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا ٱجْتَبَيْتَهَا ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَتَّبِعُ مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ مِن
رَّبِّى ۚ هَٰذَا بَصَآئِرُ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥ وَأَنصِتُوا۟ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

[203-204] O Prophet, when you do not show them a Sign (miracle), they say, "Why have you not chosen a sign for yourself?"[151] Tell them "I follow only the Revelation, which my Lord has sent down to me: this contains lights of insight from your Lord, and is guidance and mercy for those who believe in this.[152] When the Qur'an is recited to you. listen to it with attention and keep silence: it tray be that you also are blessed with mercy."[153]

وَٱذۡكُر رَّبَّكَ فِى نَفۡسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ ٱلۡجَهۡرِ مِنَ ٱلۡقَوۡلِ بِٱلۡغُدُوِّ وَٱلۡأَصَالِ وَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡغَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لَا يَسۡتَكۡبِرُونَ عَنۡ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُۥ وَلَهُۥ يَسۡجُدُونَ ۩ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

[205-206] O Prophet, remember your Lord morning and evening, deep in your heart with humility and with fear, and also in a low voice with your tongue: do not be of those who are heedless.[154] Indeed the angels, who are near to your Lord in rank, do not turn away in pride from His service.[155] They glorify Him.[156] and bow down before Him.[157]

1Here by `book' is meant this Surah, Al-A`araff.

2That is, "Convey this to the people without any fear and hesitation and without minding in the least how the opponents react to it. Let them be offended, let them ridicule, let them talk derisively and let them show more and snore enmity, if they like, but you should deliver the Message and propagate it without any fear and hesitation. "

Literally, the Arabic word harajun (translated into hesitation) means a thick bush, through which it is hard to pass. Figuratively the Text will mean, "There should be no indecision, doubt or unwillingness in your mind in the face of opposition and obstacles about proceeding further on the way of your Mission". The same thing has been expressed in XV: 97: "O Muhammad, We know that you feel depressed in your heart by what they say (against your Mission)", and in XI: 12 " .... lest you should leave out a part of what is being revealed to you and be depressed in your heart by the fear that they should say, in answer to your invitation, 'Why has no treasure been sent down to him and why has no angel come along with him'?"

3It means that the main object of this Surah is to warn people of the consequences of the rejection of the Message of the Prophet and to rouse the neglectful. Incidentally it also reminds the Believers of the implications of the Message while administering a warning to the disbelievers.

4This is the main theme of this Surah. It invites the people to accept the Guidance that has been sent down by Allah through His Messengers, for this alone can impart the true knowledge to man about himself and the universe, and tell him the aim and object of his life and teach him the principles on which to build his morality, social life, culture and civilization. Man should acknowledge Allah alone as his Guide and follow only His Guidance that has been sent down through His Messengers. 'The discourse warns that it is basically wrong to turn to anyone other than Allah for guidance, for this has always resulted in utter ruin and will inevitably lead to ruin.

Here the word "patrons" has been used for all those beings whom a man follows instead of Allah, whether he praises them as saints or curses them as satans. (For further explanation see E.N. 6 of XLII).

5That is, "You can learn a lesson from those communities that discarded the Guidance of Allah and followed the guidance of others, and consequently became so degenerate as to be a curse for the earth, which was cleansed of their filth by a scourge of Allah."

The words "Indeed we were transgressors" have been cited here to serve as a warning about two things. First, "It is absolutely useless to be sorry for and to confess one's error after the expiry of the term of respite given for its recompense." It is obvious that the individual and the community show utter lack of sense, if they waste the period of respite in negligence and turn a deaf ear to the warning and admonition of those who invite them to the Truth, and realize the horror of their conduct only when the scourge of Allah overtakes them. Secondly, "You yourselves have seen so many instances of individuals and communities. who were suddenly overtaken by the scourge of Allah, when they transgressed the bounds and reached the end of the term of their respite. You have also seen that after the scourge came upon them, there was no way of escape from it. When this has been the repeated verdict of history, why should a man repeat the same error over and over again, and wait for the ultimate end to offer repentance, when it cannot benefit in the least and can produce only grief and regret?

6The repeated occurrence of scourge in v. 3 is a conclusive proof of the fact that people will be called to account in the Hereafter, because in this life full punishment is not possible for the crimes committed by wicked individuals and communities. Here it comes merely to put a stop to their further crimes, just as a criminal at large is arrested and deprived of the opportunity for committing further iniquities. The real punishment will be in the Hereafter. The numerous instances of scourge in human history are a clear proof of the fact that man has not been left free to do what he likes. There is the Sovereign above him Who allows him to transgress only up to a certain limit and before he reaches that limit, administers warnings one after the other so that he may give up his wicked ways. But if he does not pay heed, then he is all of a sudden overpowered by a scourge that puts an end to his nefarious activities. If we consider the matter seriously in the light of these inevitable occurrences, we will come to the conclusion that the Sovereign of the universe has most surely appointed a time for calling to account those criminals and doing full justice to them. As the warning in this verse (6) is based on the preceding verses (4-5), it begins with "so" to show that this is a sequel to vv. 4-5.

7This shows that Prophethood will be the sole criterion of judgment in the Hereafter. On the one hand, the Messengers will be asked about what they did in conveying the Message to mankind; on the other, those to whom the Message was sent, shall be questioned regarding their response to it. As regards the individuals or communities to whom the Message did not reach, the Qur'an is silent as to the criterion by which they will be judged and there is no need for us to probe into this because Allah Himself has not deemed it necessary. But in regard to those individuals and communities who have received the Message, the Qur'an is quite explicit that they shall be unable to put forward any excuse whatsoever for their disbelief and rejection, their evil deeds and disobedience, and they will be wringing their hands when they shall be driven to Hell with ignominy.

8"On that Day weight will be identical with the Truth". On the Day of Judgment in the just scales of Allah, nothing but Truth will have any weight and vice versa; all that will have weight will be nothing but Truth. The weight of one will increase or decrease in proportion to the Truth one will have with oneself and that one will be judged solely by the measure of that weight and by nothing else. The life of falsehood, irrespective of its longevity and apparent grand deeds, will have absolutely no weight in those scales of justice. When the deeds of the worshipers of falsehood will be weighed in these scales, they will see with their own eyes that the `grand' deeds of their lives have no weight at all. This thing has also been states in v v. 103-105 in Surah Al-Kahf "Those who spent all their endeavors in wrong ways during their life in the world with the presumption that what they were doing was all right, are the losers. These are the people who disbelieved in the Revelations of their Lord and their meeting with Him. Therefore all their deeds have got lost; so We will cause these to lose weight on the Day of Resurrection."

9In other words, all human deeds will be divided into two categories, the positive and the negative. To know the Truth, to acknowledge it, to follow it and to exert in its cause, will be on the positive side; for in the Hereafter these alone will have any weight and value. On the contrary, to neglect the truth or to reject it or to tallow one's lusts or other human beings or satans or to exert in the way of falsehood. will be on the negative side. The deeds on this side will not only be valueless in themselves but will also decrease the weight of the positive deeds.

From the above it is quite obvious that success in the Hereafter will depend entirely on this that a man's good deeds should outweigh his evil deeds. The case of the one whose evil deeds far outweigh the good deeds, will be like that of a bankrupt who gives away all his possessions to pay off his debts but still has some outstanding liabilities.

10Please see also vv. 30-36, Al-Baqarah, for comparison.

The wording of v. 34, Al-Baqarah, might have given rise to the doubt that the command given to the angels to bow before Adam was meant for the person of Adam, but the wording of this verse clears that

doubt. Here the words preceding the Command show that the angels were to bow before Adam as representative of the whole of mankind.

As regards the creation of mankind, first of all, Allah made a plan for it; then He got ready the necessary material for this purpose; then He gave it the human shape, and when Adam carne into being in the shape of a living man, then the angels were commanded to bow before him, who was the representative of the whole human race.

The above explanation of the verse is based on some other passages of the Qur'an. For instance, let us examine vv. 71-72 of Surah sad:

"Just recall the time when your Lord said to the angels, 'I am going to create a man of clay when I perfect it in every way, and blow into it of My Spirit, all of you should bow down before hire'."

Here, too, the same three stages, the creation, the perfection and bringing to life, have been mentioned in a different way. First of all, a man of clay was created, then he was given a shape and proportionate limbs and faculties and then he was brought to life as Adam by the blowing of His Spirit into it.

Let us also examine vv. 28-29 of Al-Hijra

"Just recall the time when your Lord said to the angels, 'I am going to create a man out of clay of molded mud W hen I perfect it in every way and blow into it of My Spirit, then all of you should bow down before hint' . "

It is very difficult for us to understand the exact nature of the creation of the first man, for we cannot comprehend fully how man was made from the material of the earth, how he was shaped and perfected and how the Spirit was blown into him. However, it is quite clear that the story of man's creation as stated in the Qur'an is quite different from Darwinism. According to this doctrine, the evolution of man has taken place from a non-human and semi-human state by a continuous process of elimination, selection and adaptation, and in this there is no line of demarcation to denote the end of the non-human state and the beginning of the species of `man' as such. On the contrary, the Qur'an says that man started his life as man; that in the entire history he has absolutely no connection whatsoever with any non-human state. Allah created him as man from the very first day of his life on the earth and endowed him with wisdom and enlightenment from the very start of iris life.

The above two points of view of the story of man lead to two opposite conceptions in regard to man. The adoption of the Darwinian conception reduces man to one of the species of animals: therefore all the principles of human life (including the moral principles) will be based on the principles governing animal life and any animal-like behavior of his will be regarded as natural. Then the only difference between human beings and animals will be the ability of the former to make use of instruments for the provision of

their necessities and luxuries. On the contrary, the adoption of the Divine conception raises him from the low position of animal to the high position of man, His noblest creation. Then he is no longer a mere talking animal or a social animal but the vicegerent of Allah on this earth. Then what will distinguish him from all other creatures will not be his faculty of speech and his social life, but his moral responsibilities and the trust of the power delegated to him by Allah and his accountability for these to Him. This will change man's entire outlook about his life on this earth and will demand a different philosophy of life and system of morality, law and civilization. Then man will, of his own accord, look upwards in search of the principles of life and not downwards.

Now let us consider an objection to the Divine conception of man howsoever high sounding this may be from the moral and psychological points of view: how can we reject the scientific Darwinian conception merely on this account? In answer to this, we put a counter question: has the Darwinian theory of the `Origin of Species' been scientifically proved? Only those people who have a cursory knowledge of science may be suffering from this misunderstanding that the theory of evolution has been scientifically proved to be true, but the majority of the scientists know that it is merely a theory in spite of its high-sounding technical terms, and that the arguments in favor of this are not conclusive, but merely hypothetical. The most that can be said in this connection is that both the theories of the creation of the species may be equally possible. Their creation might have taken place according to the Darwinian theory of evolution, or each of the species might have been brought into existence individually.

11That is, "It is obvious that you invite your own disgrace because you have formed too high an opinion of yourself, though you are merely a creation and a servant of your Lord. You have arrogantly disobeyed the Command of your Creator, thinking it to be below your dignity. The mere fact that you have shown pride, conceit and haughtiness without airy personal claim or title to any excellence of your own, cannot make you great and respectable. It will make you mean, low and disgraceful and you yourself will be responsible for this ignominy . "

12This (vv. 16-17) is the challenge that was given by Satan to Allah. It. means, "During the respite Thou hast granted me till the Day of Resurrection, I will exert my utmost to show that man does not deserve the superiority Thou hast bestowed upon him over me. I will show how ungrateful, thankless and disloyal he is!

The respite that was asked by Satan and granted by Allah was not merely for time but also for opportunity to do what he intended (to do). What he meant was that he should be given the opportunity for exploiting man's weaknesses to prove that he was unfit for the viceregency. Allah granted his request and this has been elaborated in XVII: 61-65. According to this Allah granted leave to Satan to do whatever he liked to mislead Adam and his offspring from the Right Way. He was allowed to practice whatever devices he thought to misguide man. In short, all the ways would remain open for him to mislead men with this proviso: "Indeed you shall have no power over My servants." (XVII: 65). This means, "You will be allowed to make attempts to involve them in misunderstandings and allure them by

false hopes, and by making evil look fair to them, and to invite them to evil ways by the allurements of lusts and vain hopes. But you shall gave neither any power to force them to your ways nor to prevent them from following the Right Way, if they intend to follow it." The same thing has also been stated in XIV: 22: "When on (the Day of) Resurrection, Allah will pass His judgment on His followers, Satan will say to them, `I had no power to force you to follow me. The only thing I did was to invite you to my way; therefore do not blame me now, but blame yourselves . . . . ' . "

Now let us consider the charge of Satan against Allah: "Thou hast involved me in deviation." What he meant was this: "You are responsible for my deviation for You commanded me to bow down before Adam, who is inferior to me in position. As this has injured my self-respect, I have disobeyed You. " It is obvious that Satan desired that Allah ought not to have exposed the feelings of pride and rebellion he was nurturing in his heart but ought to have let him go unchecked on the way he was going. As his charge was absurd, Allah did not take any notice of it.

13In this story the Qur'an has brought to light the following important facts:

(1) The feelings of shyness and modesty are natural and instinctive. Their first expression is the natural shyness one feels in exposing one's shameful parts before anyone else. The Qur'an tells us that this shyness has not been artificially created in man by the evolution of civilization nor has it been acquired by him as has been asserted by some disciples of Satan. This is an instinct that has been inherent in man from the first day of his creation.

(2) The sex instinct is the greatest weakness of the human race. That is catty Satan selected this weak spot for his attack on the adversary and devised the scheme to strike at their modesty. Therefore, the first step he took in this direction was to expose their nakedness to them so as to open the door of indecency before them and beguile them into sexuality. Even to this day, Satan and his disciples are adopting the same scheme of depriving the woman of the feelings of modesty and shyness, and they cannot think of any scheme of `progress' unless they expose and exhibit the woman to all and sundry.

(3) It is human nature not to accept easily an open invitation to wickedness. That is why every Satan has to pose as a sincere well-wisher of man in order to entangle him in his snare.

(4) Man has a great natural yearning for a higher position than the existing one, or for obtaining immortality. That is why Satan succeeded in beguiling them by offering to make them angels or immortals. Even now he first tempts man by the allurements of a higher position and a better condition, and then leads him to follow the way that throws him into the abyss of degeneration.

(5) The Qur'an refutes the commonly known version that Satan first beguiled Eve and then used her to mislead Adam. It says that Satan beguiled both of them and both of them were deceived. Though the difference between. the two versions appears to be trivial, yet a careful appraisal of the two will show that

they have far-reaching implications. The first version played a great part in degrading woman morally, legally and socially, whereas the Quranic version has helped raise the status of woman to a high level.

(6) This story makes it, quite clear that whenever man disobeys Allah, he is exposed sooner or later. The nakedness of Adam and Eve became visible because they disobeyed the command of Allah, and not because of any inherent quality of the forbidden tree: At first Allah had made His own special arrangement to cover their nakedness, but when they disobeyed Him by eating the forbidden fruit, He undid that arrangement and they were left to themselves to cover themselves in their own way, if they so desired. And if they had no intention of covering themselves, or if they did not do anything in this connection, Allah did not care at all about the condition in which they moved about. This meant to show that Allah would help them only if they remained obedient to Him. As soon as they would transgress the bounds of His obedience, He would withdraw His protection and leave them to do whatever they liked. The Holy Prophet also stated the same thing in several Traditions. He used to pray, "O my Allah. I expect Mercy from Thee: so do not leave me to myself even for a moment" .

(7) In his conflict with man, Satan wanted to prove that man was not superior to him in any way. So he beguiled him to eat the forbidden fruit. Though Satan was successful in beguiling him into disobeying his Lord, yet on the whole man proved his moral. superiority over Satan. (a) Satan exhibited pride by claiming to be superior to man, but man did not put up such a claim. (b) Satan disobeyed Allah solely because of his pride without any external temptation. On the contrary, man did not commit disobedience because he intended it, but he was beguiled into it by Satan, who approached in the guise of a well-wisher. Even then, he was misled because he imagined that he was going towards a higher position. (c) When Satan was warned of his sin, he did not confess it nor return to the way of obedience, but became all the more obdurate. On the contrary, when man was warned of his sin, he did not show obduracy, nor arrogance; but felt ashamed and sorry; he confessed it, turned to the way of obedience to his Lord and begged His forgiveness in order to seek His blessing.

(8) This story has been related here mainly to teach the lesson that the right course for the offspring of Adam is to follow His way and not that of Satan. The Satan's way has been clearly made distinct from Adam's way. It is to turn away from Allah's obedience and to adopt the way of rebellion against Him and to persist in it with pride in spite of warning, and to beguile into disobedience those who are treading the path of obedience. Therefore the Right Way for man is to fight against satanic deceptions and to understand and counteract his cunning devices and to be ever on the guard to protect himself from his evil designs, and to repent, if, in spite of all his precautions; he sometimes falls a victim to Satan and disobeys his Allah. He should, then, confess it, feel sorry for it and be ashamed of it and turn to Allah and make amends for it.

It also meant to warn the people who were opposing the Holy Prophet, as if to say, "The way you are following is the way of Satan, who has made you swerve from the Right Way. The very fact that you have made the satans from among the jinns and mankind your patrons and that you are persisting in your error, in spite of repeated warnings, shows that you have fallen a victim to your open and permanent enemy. As

you are going to be utterly ruined by him and meeting with the same consequences that are in store for Satan, if you are not your own enemies, and if you have any common-sense left in you, you should take a warning and turn to the way of your first parents., Adam and Eve, and repent. "

14The words "Go down" should not give rise to the misunderstanding that they were exiled from Paradise as a punishment for their disobedience. The Qur'an has at several places declared clearly that Allah accepted their repentance and forgave them their sin. And there is nothing in this command that might be regarded as punishment. They were sent to the earth as His vicegerents and this was the very purpose of the creation of man. (Refer to E.N.'s 48 and 53 of Al Baqarah.)

15In this passage, the Qur'an has used the story of Adam and Eve for the eradication of the evil of nakedness. Satan had seduced the Arabs of the pre-Islamic period into believing that clothing was meant merely for the purpose of decorating and protecting the body from the hardships of weather. Accordingly they totally disregarded its real purpose and paid no heed to cover their shameful parts and did not hesitate to uncover them before others in the open. Above all, they would go round the Ka'abah in perfect nudity during the Haj season; and their women were even more shameless than their men. That was because they considered it a religious act and did this as if it were a virtuous deed.

The whole human race has been addressed because this evil was not confined to the Arabs alone but many people of the world had been (and even today are) guilty of this. Therefore the whole human race has been warned, as if to say, "O children of Adam! Nudity is a clear manifestation of the fact that you have been seduced by Satan. As you have discarded the Guidance of your Lord, and rejected the Message of His Prophets, you have given yourselves up to Satan who has misled you from the way of natural modesty into that shameful state, in which he intended to mislead your first parents. If you consider it seriously, you will come to the inevitable conclusion that you can neither understand rightly the demands of your nature nor fulfill them without the Guidance of the Messengers."

16This passage brings out clearly the following facts about clothing:

(1) The need of clothing has not been artificially created in man, but it is an important urge of human nature. That is why Allah has not created a natural covering for the human body, as He has done in the case of all other animals. Instead, He has instilled inherently the feelings of modesty and shyness in human nature. Besides this, He has not made his sex organs as merely sex organs, but has also made them shameful organs, which, by his very nature, he does not like to expose before others. Moreover, He has not given man any ready-made covering for hiding the shameful parts, but has ingrained in the human nature that man should hide them with a clothing. This is what v. 26 implies. Allah has inspired man with the urge to hide the shameful parts of the body. Therefore man should understand the nature of this inspired urge and make clothing for himself from the material provided by Him.

(2) The fact that in v. 26 the covering of the shameful parts precedes the protecting and decorating of the

body, is a clear proof that more importance has been attached to the moral than the physical function of clothing. Thus it is obvious that the human nature is quite different from the animal nature. That is why Nature has made provision for the protection and decoration of the body of the animals, but has ingrained no urge in them for the covering of their shameful parts. But when the human beings discarded the Guidance of Allah and began to follow the guidance of Satan, they reversed the above order as if to say, "Your clothing is merely to protect and decorate your bodies just as the skins cover the bodies of the animals. As regards the covering of the shameful parts, garments have absolutely no importance, for these are merely sex organs and not shameful organs."

(3) The garments should not only be the means of covering the shameful parts and of protection and decoration but should also enable man to attain piety. The dress should, therefore, be such as to conceal those parts of the body that should be hidden from others; it should neither be too expensive nor too poor with regard to the position of the wearers; it should not smack of haughtiness nor arrogance nor hypocrisy. Moreover, the garment of piety demands that the male should not wear the female dress and vice versa, and that the Muslims should not imitate blindly the non-Muslims in dress. It is obvious that only those who believe in the Guidance of Allah and follow it, can attain the desired standard of the garment of piety. But those who discard the Guidance of God and make satans their guides, are misled by them into one error or the other in regard to clothing.

(4) Clothing is one of Allah's many Signs which are spread all over the world and which lead men to the recognition of the Reality, provided that one sincerely seeks it. If one seriously considers the above-mentioned three facts about clothing, one can easily understand how clothing is an important Sign of Allah.

17This refers to the custom of the Arabs of going round the Ka`abah in perfect nudity (E.N. 15), considering it to be a religious act, enjoined by Allah.

18This brief sentence ("Allah never enjoins a shameful thing") contains a very forceful argument against their beliefs and customs of ignorance. In order to understand the force of the argument, it is necessary to understand two basic things:

(1) Though the Arabs practiced nudism in the performance of certain religious rituals, they considered nakedness itself a shameful thing. That is why, in spite of this custom, no respectable Arab ever chose to practice nudism in a civilized gathering, in the bazaar or before one's kith and kin.

(2) Even though they considered nudism to be a shameful thing, they said that they practiced it because this custom had been enjoined by Allah. This claim was based on the wrong notion that their religion was from Allah. But the Qur'an refutes their claim by arguing like this: "You yourselves consider nudism to be an indecent thing. Therefore your claim that Allah has enjoined the practice of nudism is absolutely false. As a corollary to this, if this indecent custom is approved by your religion, it is a clear proof of the fact that

your religion is not froth Allah.

19In v. 29, Allah showed, by contrast, that the religion prescribed by Him had no connection whatsoever with their senseless customs, which were contradictory to the following fundamental principles of His religion:

(1) A man should conduct his life in accordance with justice and righteousness;

(2) He should keep his direction right during worship. That is, "It should be exclusively directed towards Allah and there should be absolutely nothing of shirk in it and he should not show any sort of obedience or obeisance or servility to any other than Allah.

(3) He should invoke Allah and none else, for guidance, succor, help and protection. He should, however, dedicate his entire life exclusively to Allah before invoking His help, for it is absurd to lead a life of shirk. disbelief, disobedience, and slavery of others, and then invoke Allah, as if to say, "O God, help us in carrying out successfully our rebellion against Thyself."

(4) Above all, he should sincerely and firmly believe that he shall be resurrected in the Next World, just as he has been given birth in this world, and then shall be called upon to render an account of all his deeds in this world.

20Here the word "Zinat"means full and proper dress. The verse exhorts the people to be fully clothed, when they are engaged in worship. For this purpose, it does not suffice to cover merely those parts of the body which the Law requires to be hidden in public in addition to the shameful parts. Therefore one should dress properly and decently so as to serve both the purposes, in accordance with one's means.

This command is meant to refute the wrong attitude which the ignorant people at that time had adopted, and have been adopting since then. They thought that one should worship Allah in perfect or semi-nudity and should put on a disheveled appearance before Him. In utter contrast to this, Allah not only prohibits nudity but also commands that one should be dressed fully, properly and decently at the time of worship and should put on an appearance that might not have even a tinge of untidiness and indecency.

21That is, "Allah does not like those people who transgress the limits imposed by Him by making the lawful as unlawful. That is why He does not approve of those who put on a disheveled appearance or starve themselves or deprive themselves of the lawful and pure flings under the foolish belief that they are pleasing their Allah thereby. He does not demand this as essential for His worship; nay, He is pleased if one wears a decent dress and makes use of the pure things provided by Him. According to His Law, the only thing that is sinful is to transgress His limits by making the lawful unlawful or the unlawful lawful."

22It should be noted that this question is a typical way which the Qur'an employs to refute false ways and religions. The argument implied in the question is this: As Allah Himself has created all the pure, good and nice things for His servants, it cannot be His will to make these as unlawful for His servants. Therefore, if a religious, moral or social system makes these things unlawful or detestable or considers these as impediments in the spiritual evolution and progress, this very thing is a clear proof of the fact that it is not from Allah.

23That is, "As a matter of fact all the good things of life are meant for the believers because they are the faithful servants of their real Owner and deserve the reward of faithfulness. But in this world, these are given to the unfaithful also because this world is for the trial of mankind. That is why, sometimes, the unfaithful receive even a greater share than the faithful. But in the Hereafter, where these good things will be distributed on the basis of merit alone, all the good and pure things shall be reserved for the faithful only. On the other hand, the unfaithful, who adopted the attitude of rebellion against Allah, in spite of the fact that they lived on His provisions in this world, shall not get any share in the Hereafter.

24Please refer to E.N. 128 and E.N. 131 of Al-An'am.

25The literal meaning of "ithm " is negligence. The sense of sin has entered into this word from athimah"which means a she-camel that can run fast but willfully does not do so. Likewise that man who neglects to obey the Commandments of his Lord, in spite of his ability to do so, shall be sinful for he has no intention of pleasing Him.

26It will be rebellion against the Truth, if one transgresses the prescribed limits and enters into the bounds where he has no right. Likewise all such people as transgress the bounds prescribed for the servants of Allah and follow their own will, behave as masters in His Kingdom and encroach on the rights that belong to Allah alone, are really rebels against Allah.

27"Every community has been given a fixed term": it does not mean a fixed period of time in terms of years, months and days, after the expiry of which that community is exterminated without fail. This means that a moral limit has been set to the opportunity that is allowed to every community for showing its performance as a respectable community. This is determined by the ratio between its good works and its evil works. Allah tolerates a community as long as the ratio of its good works to its evil works does not fall below the normal 1inmils. When it transgresses those limits that wicked community is given no more respite. In order to grasp this see v. 4, v.10 and v. 12 of LXXI.

28The Qur'an has stated the thing contained in v. 36 in every place where the mention of the sending down of Adam and Eve from Paradise has been made. (Please see II: 38-39 and XX: 123-124). Therefore, here too, the same thing will be taken concerning the same occasion i. e. , at the time of the beginning of the life of man, this thing was clearly explained to him. (See E.N. 69 of III).

29That is, "They shall live here in this world for the term that has been set for them and get their destined share, good or bad, to pass this lift."

30There is a double chastisement for every generation for the sins it committed as successor, and for the sins it left for others as predecessor, because it followed the heritage of evil left by its predecessors and then left the heritage of evil for its successors. Therefore if its predecessor shares a part of the burden of responsibility for its sins, it also shares a part of the burden of the responsibility for the legacy of the sins left by it for its successors.

There is a Tradition to this effect: "The one who initiates an innovation, that is disapproved of by Allah and His Messenger, shall be held responsible for the sins of all those people, who followed his innovation, without lessening in the least the burden of the responsibility for the sin committed by the inventor." Here is another Tradition: "Whenever a man is killed unjustly anywhere in the world, a part of the guilt of this murder is debited against the account pf that son of Adam who was the first to murder his own brother, because he was the first to open the way of murder. "

It is clear from the above that the person or the group or the community that starts the wrong idea or a wrong attitude, is not only responsible for his or its own error, but is also partly responsible for the sins of all those who are influenced by the error, and as long as the effects of that error continue to influence others, they are credited to his or its account. This also shows that an individual is not only personally accountable for his own good or bad actions but also for its effects on the lives of others.

As an illustration, let us take the case of an adulterer. All those persons whose bad example, or bad company or evil inducement misled him to adultery, share the responsibility for his becoming an adulterer and this responsibility extends above to all other persons, from whom those persons received this evil heritage. Thus it will go further and further upwards till it reaches the first person who initiated this evil way of sexuality.

Then the adulterer himself shall have w bear the responsibility of his guilt, because he committed this in utter disregard of many deterrents. He did not discriminate between good and bad: he did not pay attention to the voice of his conscience: he did not resort to the power of self-control within him: he did not make use of the knowledge of good and bad he had received from virtuous people and of their noble examples, and he did not take warning from the evil consequences of sexual immorality. In the face of all the above factors, that could have restrained him from adultery, he gave himself up to the blind sex urge that wanted its satisfaction in any available way.

Now let us consider the case of the adulterer from the point of view of its evil influences and heritage in relation to his contemporaries and successors. The responsibility of his guilt does not remain confined to his own acts of adultery but extends to all those evil acts that were prompted and influenced by these. At

first he himself catches the infection of a venereal disease and then communicates it to his own generation and to countless successive generations: he causes illegitimate births and then throws the burden of nourishment on others and makes them unlawful inheritors at the expense of the lawful inheritors, and the evil results of this injustice may continue to influence countless generations. Moreover, he seduces some innocent girl and induces her to surrender herself to sexual immorality, and then she, in her turn, spreads the evil to others and causes the ruin of countless families. Then he sets a bad example for his own children, his relatives and his friends and for the other people of his society and becomes a cause of the moral ruin of many persons, who, in their turn, leave the evil heritage, with all its evil influences on the countless succeeding generations. Therefore justice demands that a part of the responsibility for all these evil results should be laid on him as long as the effects last.

The case of the heritage of virtue may also be considered in the same way. All those persons, up to the first man, who left the heritage of virtue for us are entitled to a share of its reward. Then we shall also be entitled to a share of its reward, if we exert to preserve and increase it. Then we shall also be entitled to a share of its reward, if we leave behind us the legacy of virtue for others to follow, as long as its good effects go on influencing mankind and they benefit from it.

Every sensible man will admit that the manner of retribution presented by the Qur'an is the only right and perfect way of doing full justice: The right understanding of this tact will help remove the misunderstandings of those who regard this worldly life to be quite sufficient for retribution, and also of those who believe that this purpose is achieved by the process of the transmigration of souls. As a matter of fact, neither of the groups has fully grasped the extent, the effects and the consequences of human acts, nor the full requirements of just retribution. Obviously it is not possible today to punish here the countless generations, which contributed to the good or bad acts of a person during his life in this world. Moreover the effects of his good or bad acts do not cease with his death, but will continue through the countless centuries and will go on influencing the lives of countless people after him. Justice requires that these should he credited to his account as long as the effects last. Therefore the requital of justice is impossible in this worldly life, when even the smallest part of the effects of Iris acts has not yet appeared. Then there are not enough means for awarding fully the rewards or the punishments for the acts of a man in the limited life of this world and its limited means. Just imagine the extent of the guilt of a man who kindles the fire of a World War and destroys and ruins the lives of millions of people and leaves a legacy of evil that will continue to influence the lives of billions of people for centuries. Can any punishment in this world, physical or moral, or spiritual, however severe that may be, fully meet the requirements of justice? Or can any reward in this world, however great, fully recompense a man for his lifelong work for the good of humanity, which goes on benefiting millions of people for thousands of years?

Anyone, who will consider the problem of retribution from this point of view, will come to the inevitable conclusion that for the requital of full justice, there should be another world, where all the generations should be mustered together with their accounts: then there should be an all-knowing and all-aware judge to administer justice and there should also be human beings with eternal lives to receive the reward or

punishment, as the case may be, and all kinds of means for the dispensation of justice as well.

This way of thinking also helps expose the basic error of the doctrine of transmigration, which has led its advocates to believe in the passage of souls after death into other bodies according to their merits or demerits. This is because they have not been able to grasp the fact that for the retribution of the acts of this short worldly life, a thousand times longer life is required. It is thus obvious that another reborn life of the same length in this world will not help solve the problem of retribution because it is quite insufficient for the purpose. On the contrary, this will make it all the more complex, for the circle of transmigration will go on multiplying such acts-good or bad-and increasing their effects more and more in an endless chain. Thus, according to the doctrine of transmigration, the account of person will remain unsettled for ever.

31The Qur'an has described at several places this sort of altercation between the dwellers of Hell. For instance, in XXXIV:31-33, it says, "I wish you could see these unjust people when they will be standing before their Lord and accusing one another. The people, who were made weak, will say to those who posed as mighty ones, `But for you, we would have been believers'. But the so called mighty ones will reply, 'What, did we keep you back from the Guidance when it came to you? No, you yourselves were the guilty ones' . " In simple words, it means, "You yourselves are to blame for discarding the Guidance. You fell an easy prey to the greed with which we tempted you, to become ow slaves, because you yourselves were greedy for wealth. When we wanted to buy yow conscience, you sold it because you yourselves were eager to sell it: when we invited you to the worship of materialism, worldliness, nationalism and the like, you accepted our invitation, because you had an aversion W God-worship and a liking for this-worldliness. That is why you rejected the invitation of the worshipers of Allah, and accepted ours. When we deluded you with false religious things, you at once accepted these, because you yourselves were cherishing the same in yow hearts. For instance, you were in starch of such gods as might fulfill your desires without demanding any moral obligations from you, and we supplied such ones, and you accepted them. You were in search of such intercessors as might take the responsibility for your entry into Paradise, allowing you to do whatever pleased you in the world, without minding the Guidance of Allah. So we invented such ones and you followed us: you were in search of such religions as might guarantee short-cuts to salvation, freeing you from the hardships, restrictions and sacrifices for the cause of Allah, and permitting you to enjoy all sorts of indulgences, and we invented such easy and pleasant religions for you, and you followed them. In short, we alone arc not responsible for your misguidance but you, too, share it equally with us: if we supplied misguidance, you bought it of your own accord".

32It means that if there had been any hostile or unfriendly feelings or misunderstandings between good people in this world, they would all be removed in the Hereafter. Their hearts will be quite free from enmity, and they will enter Paradise like sincere friends. So much so that they will not be displeased to see their opponents, rivals, critics, etc., sharing the joys of Paradise along with themselves. Once when Caliph `Ali recited this verse, he exclaimed, "I do expect that Allah will remove the misunderstandings between me and `Uthman and Talhah and Zubair. "

If we consider this verse in its wider meaning, we come to the conclusion that Allah will not like to take His good people to Paradise with any blot on their characters but He will cleanse them by His grace before their entrance into Paradise. Thus they will enter it in a perfectly pure condition.

33This refers to a fine happening that will take place on the occasion of the entry of the faithful into Paradise. On the one hand, they will not be boastful that they have gained Paradise by their good works, but will be grateful and thankful and will praise Allah, saying, "All this is due to Allah's grace, for we did not deserve this. " On the other; Allah will not even hint that it was due to His favor, but will say, "You have gained this by yow services and in return for yow own earnings. This is not a piece of charity but a reward of your own efforts, a fruit of yow own labor; it is a respectable living that you have earned" . To add to His grace, Allah does not say, "We will reply" but "they will hear a voice."

In fact the servants of Allah behave like this in this world also. Unlike the workers of iniquity, they do not become proud of any worldly success and say, "This is the result of ow own ability, work and effort," and then grow even more rebellious, and spread disorder in the world. In contrast to these rebels, the true servants of Allah consider every worldly success as His favor and are thankful and grateful to Him. The more they are favored by Him, the more humble, generous and merciful they become. They do not rely on their good works and say, "We an quite sure that we shall get salvation". Instead of this, they beg Allah's pardon for their shortcomings and rely on His grace and mercy, and they are always filled with the fear lest their accounts should turn out to be unfavorable against them.

A Tradition of the Holy Prophet related both by Bukhari and Muslim, confirms the above-mentioned thing. Once he warned his Companions, saying, "You should know that you will not get entry into Paradise merely by virtue of your works". They asked, "Is it we of you also?" He replied, "Yes, I, too, shall enter Paradise merely by Allah's grace and mercy."

34The people on 'the Heights' will be those with pending cases. While their positive sides will not be so strong as to merit admission into Paradise, their negative sides will not be so weak as to condemn them to Hell. Therefore they will wait for the decisions of their cases on 'the Height' between Paradise and Hell.

35From this dialogue between the inmates of Paradise and the inmates of Hell and the people on 'the Heights,' we can form some idea of how strong the faculties of men will become in the Next World. The faculty of sight will become so strong that the people of Paradise and those of Hell and on 'the Heights' will be able to see one another whenever they will desire to do so. Likewise their faculties of speech and hearing will grow so strong that the people of the thee different worlds will be able to carry on their dialogues without any hindrance. From this and the like descriptions of the Next World in the Qur'an; we learn that the laws of life in the Hereafter will be quite different from the physical laws of this world, though there will be no change in our personalities. It is a pity that such descriptions in the Qur'an and Hadith have made certain people skeptical because they cannot imagine that there can be another world

with greater potentialities than the limited physical world they live in. As they judge everything by the standards of this world, they make fun of such things they come across in the Qur'an and Hadith. But the fact is that the potentialities of life an not limited as their narrow minds arc.

36That is, "The Qur'an gives details of the reality and of the correct attitude man should adopt in the life of this world and of the basic principles of the Right Way of life. Then it may also be noted that these details an not based on guess-work or conjecture or whim but on pure and accurate knowledge."

37The Qur'an is `Guidance' because its teachings arc so clear that they show the right way to anyone who ponders over them. Moreover, the practical effects of that guidance can be seen in the lives of those who believe in it and follow its teachings. And it is really a great `blessing' because it brings a blessed change in the mental attitude, the moral out-look and the character of the one who accepts it. The truth of this was being proved by the wonderful changes that were taking place in the lives of the Companions of the Holy Prophet.

38In other words, it means: The distinction between right and wrong has been made clear in the most rational manner, but there are people who do not see it; they have the examples of those who have been totally changed for the better by following the Right Way, though they were just like them before this, yet they do not learn any lesson from this. Such people will admit their error only when they will suffer the consequences of their wrong ways.

Their case is similar to the case of a patient, who does not follow the advice of the physician, nor does he learn a lesson from the other patients, who regained their health by following the instructions of the physician, when they were suffering from the same disease. Such a patient will admit that the ways of life he was following were fatal but only on his death-bed.

39When they will see, with their own eyes, the consequences of the rejection of the Message of the Prophets, they will say, "Now that we have witnessed that reality, which we denied at the time, when the Messengers informed us about it, we will behave in a different way if we are sent back to the same world". For response to such a request, see VI: 27, 28; XIV: 44, 45; XXXII: 12, 13; XXXV: 37; XXXIX: 56-59;XL: 11, 12.

40Here the word "day"has been used in the sense of period. This word has been used in the same sense in XXII:47: "The fact is that with your Lord a day is equal to one thousand years as you reckon", and also in LXX: 4: "Angels and Gabriel ascend to Him in a day which is equal to fifty thousand years". Allah alone Knows its real significance. (for further explanation see E.N.'s 11-I5 of XLI).

41It is very difficult for us to comprehend the nature of "He sat upon the Throne". It is just possible that after the creation of the universe, He fixed some place as the center of His limitless Kingdom, which may

have been called "The Throne," from where He is showering His blessings on the whole universe and it is also possible that the Arabic word "Al- 'Arsh" " may have been used figuratively to express His Sovereignty and "seating Himself on the Throne" may mean "the taking of the reins of His Kingdom in His hands" . Anywise, whatever be the details of the Text, the Qur'an mentions this to impress the fact that Allah is not only the Creator of the universe but also its Sovereign as well as Ruler, that after its creation He has not cut off all connections with it and has not become disinterested in its affairs, but is practically governing each and every minute part of it; all the powers of Sovereignty are, in fact, in His hands; that everything is under His Command and is obedient to Him, and the destinies of everyone and everything are permanently in His hands. In this way the Qur'an cuts across the basic misunderstanding that gives rise to the errors like shirk and rebellion against Him. The creed that God has nothing to do with the affairs of the universe, inevitably leads to the belief that someone else is the maker or destroyer of one's destiny, and, therefore, one should bow down before that one or one should consider one's own self to be its maker and become independent of Him.

In this connection, it is worth while to consider the use of words akin to "kingdom" and "kingship", which the Qur'an usually employs to express the relation between Allah and man. Though it is dune obvious that the Qur'an has employed such words, technical terms, figures of speech and a style as may be within the comprehension of human beings, yet some critics with perverted minds have inferred from this use the strange conclusion that this Book is the invention of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). The line of their argument is this: "The frequent use of the words like `king' shows that the 'author' of the Qur'an was irresistibly influenced by the system of kingship that was prevalent all around him during the period when this Book was composed; therefore its author cannot be Allah, Who knows that there can be no comparison between Him and a king, etc., etc." Obviously, this argument is very flimsy. The conception of the Sovereign of the earth and the heavens put forward in the Qur'an clearly shows that in contrast to the mortal weak kings of this world, having only a limited authority for a limited period, the King, Allah, is Eternal, All-Powerful, having the supreme Authority, above all others and for all times. This conception of the Sovereignty of `King' Allah falsifies the very basis of the theory of the critics, for no human king can fit in the conception of the `King' laid down in the Qur'an. For in this conception there is no scope for anyone to claim or assume powers of sovereignty like the King, because it requires that man should acknowledge Allah alone as the sole object of worship in the religious sense and the sole sovereign in the civil and political sense.

42This is a further explanation of the meanings of `seating Himself on the Throne': "Allah is not only the Creator but is also the Sovereign and Ruler of the universe. After its creation, He has neither relinquished its rule in favor of others nor has He made the whole of His creation or any part of it independent, but He has kept in His own hands the functioning of the whole universe. Day and night are not following each other by themselves but by the Command of Allah, Who has the power, to stop or change the present system totally. Likewise, the sun, the moon and the stars possess no inherent power of their own but are entirely under His Command, and are functioning perforce like slaves under His orders."

43The original meaning of barkat ("blessing") is growth, increase and development along with greatness, exaltation, permanence and stability. Besides all these meanings, the word carries with it the idea of goodness and welfare. Thus the Text means, "His good qualities and excellences are boundless; His beneficence spreads everywhere; He is the possessor of the highest position that has no limits. Above all, all His excellences are absolutely permanent and stable, without decay or decline." For further explanation see E.N.'s 1-19 of XXV.

44According to the Qur'an, the root cause of disorder in the world is that man breaks away from the service of God and, giving himself up to the service of his own self or of others and discarding His Guidance, adopts the guidance of others instead for the building up of his morality, society and culture. As this creates disorder and gives birth to many other kinds of disorder, the Qur'an aims at its eradication. At the same time it warns that disorder is not inherent in the system of the world so that it may be replaced by order. But it so happens that disorder over-whelms the order that was set in it, as a result of man's ignorance and rebellion. In other words, man did not start his life on the earth in ignorance, barbarism, shirk, rebellion and moral disorder, and then reforms were introduced afterwards to remove them by degrees. The fact is that he started life in peace and order, which was corrupted afterwards by the follies and mischiefs of the evil-doers. Then Allah sent His Messengers to eradicate that disorder and to set right the system of life again to bring it back to the original state. That is why they always invited the people to adopt the same old system of peace and order, and to refrain from spreading disorder.

It should also be noted that the point of view of the Qur'an in this matter is quite different from that of the evolutionists who assert that man has gradually come out of darkness into light and his life is being reformed by degrees. In contrast to this, the Qur'an declares that Allah settled man on the earth in full light and started his life with a system based on peace and order. Then afterwards man himself repeatedly followed the guidance of Satan and went into darkness and corrupted the original right and orderly system. Then Allah sent His Messengers over and over again to invite the people to come out of darkness into light and to refrain from disorder. (Please refer also to E.N. 230, Al-Baqarah).

45It has become clear from this sentence that the `chaos' referred to above is that man should adopt someone else as his guardian, protector and helper and invoke that one for help. The order can, therefore, be restored by acknowledging Allah as the sole Guardian and Protector and Helper and by invoking Him alone.

46It should be noted here that the allegorical use of rain and its blessings etc. does not only aim to describe the powers of Allah and to give a proof of the life-after-death (though that has been mentioned incidentally). Its main object is to present Prophethood and its blessings, as also how it helps to distinguish good from bad, pure from impure. The coming of the Messenger and the sending down of the Guidance and the teachings have been likened to the winds laden with clouds and the life-giving rainfall. Just as the rainfall brings back to life the dead soil, which begins to bring forth the treasures of life, so the teachings of the Prophet and his guidance bring back to life the dead humanity, which begins to pour out

the treasures of goodness. Further on, the allegory points out that all these blessings profit only that soil which is intrinsically rich and fertile, and is only waiting for rainfall to bring forth its treasures. In the same way, only those people can benefit from the blessings of the guidance and teachings of the Messengers, who had the required capability but could not develop their latent qualities for lack of right guidance. As regards the mischievous and impure people, they are incapable of benefiting from the blessings of Prophethood for they are just like the bad soil, which brings forth only useless thorny bushes, if rain falls on it. That is why all their hidden mischiefs come into full play at the coming of the Messenger. The lesson derived from this allegory has been illustrated by citing a series of historical events in the succeeding passages, and it has been shown that on the coming of every Messenger in every age, mankind divided itself into two groups. One group consisted of pure and capable people, who benefited from the guidance of the' Messengers, developed their capabilities to the fullest and brought forth the fruit of goodness. The second group, that consisted of impure people, displayed all their impurities in their encounter with the Messengers, and was sorted out, just as alloy is separated from gold, as a useless and worthless metal.

47The first of the historical events referred to in E.N. 46, is being related here. According to the Qur'an, Prophet Noah was sent to his people, who were the first to corrupt the Right Way of life followed by Adam (Allah's peace be upon him) and taught by him to his descendants. We learn from the brief hints in the Qur'an and the details in the Bible that the people of Noah lived in the country which is now called Iraq. The same is confirmed by the tablets found in the archaeological remains of Babel which are older than the Bible. They tell a story similar to the one related in the Bible and the Qur'an, and fix the place of its occurrence near Mosul. Moreover, the traditions that have come down from the most ancient times from Kurdistan and Armenia say that the ark of Noah anchored at some place in the same region. They also point out to some relics connected with the story of Noah near Mt. Ararat and the inhabitants of Nakhchiwan claim even today that the town was founded by Prophet Noah.

Traditions, similar to the story of Noah, are found in the ancient literatures of Greece, Egypt, India and China. Besides these, the traditions that have come down from the roost ancient times from Burma, Malaya, East Indies, Australia, New Guinea and from different parts of Europe and America are also similar to it. All this shows that this story is connected with the period when all the descendants of Adam lived in the same region from where they dispersed all over the earth. That is why references to the "Flood" are found in the ancient history of every nation, though they forgot its real facts and mixed it with the fictions of their own imagination.

48This verse and others, in which the story of Noah has been related, show that his people did neither deny the existence of Allah nor were they ignorant of it, nor did they deny His worship. But the root cause of their deviation was that they were involved in shirk and had set up other partners with Allah in His Godhead and regarded them worthy of worship along with Him. This basic deviation led them to numerous other evils. For instance, this gave birth to a special class to represent the false gods they had set up. By and by, this class took possession of all the religious, political and economic powers of the

community and created artificial barriers of high and low among people. Consequently, chaos, tyranny and immorality were rampant everywhere and humanity sank to the lowest depths of degradation, Prophet Noah was sent to reform this state of affairs. Accordingly, he exerted his utmost with great wisdom and fortitude for a very long time to bring about the desired reform, but that corrupt class had cunningly deluded the common people so much that all his efforts proved fruitless. When no more hope of their reform was left, Prophet Noah prayed to Allah and said, "My Lord, do not leave upon the earth even one of these disbelievers for, if Thou leave anyone of them alive, he will lead astray Thy servants and will give birth only to wicked and ungrateful descendants." (For details please refer to XI: 25-48, XXVI: 105-119 and the whole of Surah LXXI).

49The incident has been related here because what had happened between Noah (Allah's peace be upon him) and his people was exactly taking place at that time between Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and his people. His Message was the same as that of Noah and the response of the chiefs to it was also the same. The chiefs of the Quraish were raising the same doubts against his Message that were raised by the chiefs of the people of Noah thousands of years before the Holy Prophet, and the same things were said in reply as were said by Noah. Further on, it has been shown in the stories of the Messengers that the attitude of their people towards their Message was the same that was being shown by the chiefs of Makkah. Thus, the Qur'an impresses on its addressees the fact that in every age, the basic deviation of each people had always been the same, and that the invitation of the Messenger of Allah had also been the same in every age, and the ultimate end of all those who denied and rejected that invitation, has always been the same and will always be the same.

50The brief descriptions of certain events from the mission of Prophets at certain places in the Qur'an have given rise to the conjecture that the whole thing was finished in a couple of meetings. They think that a prophet presented his claim before his people and they raised some objections against it. Then the Prophet answered them, but they rejected him, and declared the Message to be false. This was repeated a couple of times; then God sent down His scourge. This is a wrong conjecture made by those who are ignorant of the style of the Qur'an. These things arc only parts of the long struggle, for the Qur'an does not give all the details of a story at one and the same place. In relating some historical event, it confines itself only to that part of the story which is directly connected with the theme under discussion and leaves out all other details. As an illustration, let us cite instances of this from the story of Prophet Noah. Here the aim is to warn the people of the consequences of the denial and rejection of the Message of the Prophet. So it was not necessary to mention the long period during which the Prophet continued preaching the Message to his people. But at places where the story is related to teach fortitude to Prophet Muhammad and his Companions, a special mention has been made of the long period during which Prophet Noah went on preaching the Message. This is to encourage them that they should not lose heart by seeing no great and immediate result of their efforts of a few years but should learn a lesson from the story of Prophet Noah, who went on performing his mission with fortitude for centuries in very adverse circumstances, without losing heart. (Sec XXIX: 14).

Likewise, some people become skeptical when they read, over and over again, such a thing as this: "We drowned (destroyed) those who denied the Message and treated it as false": they ask, "Why do such things not happen now a-days?" They admit that though the rise and fall of nations is always taking place in the world, this change is of a different nature from the one described in the Qur'an, e.g., instant destruction of a nation by an earthquake or flood or storm or lightning after due notice by a Prophet. In order to remove this doubt, one should understand the difference between the case of that community in which a Prophet is born and raised from among themselves, and the one where a Prophet is not present in person. He conveys Allah's Message directly to them in their own language and presents a perfect and excellent model of it in his own person in such a convincing way as to leave no excuse whatever for them to reject it. Therefore such a community deserves the severest punishment on the spot for rejecting the Messenger of Allah after such clear Signs. Obviously the case of such a community is basically different from the case of that community which does not receive the Message directly from the Prophet but received it through indirect means. So there is no wonder if such chastisements arc not inflicted on the spot now, as they were during the times of the Prophets. This is because after the Prophethood of Muhammad, the last in the line of prophets (Allah's peace be upon them all), no prophet has been sent, nor shall any be sent up to the Last Day.

This does not, however, mean that Allah has now totally given up the infliction of chastisements. The fact is that even now He sends disasters by way of warning or punishment on those communities which rebel against Him and deviate into error. But it is a pity that people do not turn their attention towards the real cause. Instead of looking at these as the consequences of their own evil ways, their scientists, their historians and their philosophers, who cannot go beyond physical causes, mislead them by ascribing these to some physical and historical laws. These so-called scholars do not let them turn their attention to the fact that there is Allah above them, Who first warns them of their evil ways by inflicting minor disasters, and then, if they persist in the wrong ways, He throws them into the abyss of destruction.

51'Ad was one of the most ancient tribes of Arabia. Their stories were well known and were related all over the country. The stories of their power and wealth had become proverbial and their utter annihilation also was cited as an example. Their notoriety helped to produce some new words akin to their name. Every ancient thing is called (`adi) and archaeological remains are called ('adiyyat) The land, which has no owner left and thus becomes fallow, is called (`adi-ul-ard).

This tribe is often mentioned in the ancient Arabic poetry. The experts in the art of genealogy of the Arab tribes mention `Ad as the first of the extinct tribes of Arabia. There is a tradition that once a man of Bani Zahl-bin-Shaiban, who was a resident of the territory where the `Ad tribe lived, came to the Holy Prophet and related stories about 'Ad, that had come down from ancient times.

According to the Qur'an, the tribe of `Ad lived in Ahqaf, surrounded by Hijaz, Yaman and Yamamah. From here they had established their authority over a vast territory , that extended from the western coast of Yaman and ' Umman and Hadar Maut to 'Iraq. Though their remains have become quite extinct from

the historical point of view, yet there arc some remnants in Southern Arabia that are ascribed to `Ad. At one place in Hadar Maut, there is a tomb which is said to be of Prophet Hud. In 1837, James R. Wellested, an officer in the British Navy, discovered near Hisn-i-Ghurab a tablet which contained a mention of Prophet Hud. Moreover, the writing on the tablet showed that they were the followers of the Law of Prophet Hud. (For further explanation see E.N. 25 of XLVI).

52The Arabic word ala means (1) "blessings" (2) Demonstrations of nature and (3) Praiseworthy qualities. Thus the verse can be elaborated to mean, "Remember the blessings and favors of Allah and do not forget that He also has the power to take away these from you" .

53Verse 70 also shows that the people of Hud were neither ignorant of . the existence of Allah nor did they deny Him nor did they refuse to worship Him. What they refused to accept was the invitation of Prophet Hud to worship Allah alone, without associating anyone else with Him.

54That is "You call one `the lord of rain', the other `the lord of air' or `lord of wealth' or `lord of disease', when, in fact, none of these is lord of anything. These are mere names that you have invented". In our own time they call one `the remover of difficulties' and the other `the bestower of treasures', whereas he has no treasure to bestow on anyone. They have made one "the giver", when he owns nothing to give, and so on. In fact, such titles are empty words without any corresponding possessor of such qualities, entitling anyone to these titles. Therefore, if one argues to justify these titles, he, in fact, raises disputes over mere names that have no reality behind them.

55That is, "Allah, Whom you yourselves acknowledge to be the Overlord, has not delegated to any of these gods the powers of a lord or god. He has never said that He has delegated a part of His Godhead to such and such a one, nor has He sent command authorizing anyone with the powers of `giver' or `remover of difficulties'. You yourselves have, of your own accord, bestowed such titles on the ones you pleased.

56"We cut off the roots of . . ." means, "We destroyed them so completely that no sign of theirs was left in the world". This is a fact that has been established by the traditions of Arabia. The archaeological remains also bear testimony that the people of the "First `Ad" were so completely annihilated that even their monuments were effaced from the world. The Arab historians count the `Ad tribe among the extinct tribes. They, however, assert it as a fact that the followers of Hud were saved and were known as the "Second `Ad" and the tablet of Hisn-i-Ghurab mentioned in E.N. 51, is one of their monuments. Here are some extracts of the inscriptions which were inscribed on it some 1800 years before Christ:-

"We have lived for a long period in this fort in great prosperity. Our canals were always full of water ..... and our rulers were noble kings who were free from evil. They were, however, hard on those who disturbed the peace. They ruled over us in accordance with the Law of Hud and used to enter all

important decisions in a book. We believe in miracles and life-after-death."

The above extracts bear witness to the fact stated in the Qur'an that the followers of Hud became the inheritors of the ancient glory and prosperity of the `Ad tribe.

57After `Ad, Thamud is the second most widely known ancient tribe of Arabia. Before the revelation of the Qur'an, their stories were very common among the Arabs. Their mention occurs in the poetry and the addresses of pre-Islamic Arabia, and on the tablets found in Assyria. The ancient historians and geographers of Greece, Alexandria and Rome also mention this tribe. Some of their remains existed till some years before the birth of Prophet Christ. According to the Roman historians, the people of this tribe joined the Roman army and fought against the Nabataeans, their enemies.

The tribe of Thamud inherited the territory in the north-western part of Arabia and is even today known by the name of Al-Hijr. Its capital was Madain-iSalih, which is now-a-days a railway station on the Hijaz Railway between AI Madinah and Tabuk. Its old name is Hijr. There are even ' now spread over thousands of acres of land, those stony buildings that they had carved out of hills. Even a cursory glance at this dead city leads one to the conclusion that its population must have been about five hundred thousand people.

At the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, the trading caravans from Hijaz used to pass through the archaeological remains of Thamud. When the Holy Prophet was leading his followers towards Tabuk, he passed by and pointed out towards the remains and asked them to bear in mind the lesson which such things hold out for every close observer. He pointed to a well from which the she-camel of Prophet Salih drank water, and told them to drink water only from that well. Then he showed them a pass over a hill and said that the she-camel used to come through it to the well for drinking water. That pass is still called Fajj-un-Nagah (the pass of the she-camel.) Then he assembled together those Muslims who were enjoying a walk through the remains and said, "This is the territory of the tribe on which Allah inflicted His scourge. Therefore pass through this with as much haste as you can, because this is not a place of enjoyment but a place of lamentation.

58The wording of the Text clearly shows that Allah's she-camel was the clear proof", which has been called "a Sign" in the next sentence. We learn from XXVI: 154-158 that the people of his tribe had themselves demanded from Prophet Salih to bring a clear Sign of his appointment as Messenger of Allah. In response to this, the Prophet presented the she-camel as a Sign. This is a positive proof of the fact that the birth of the she-camel had taken place in some miraculous manner and her appearance was a miracle of the same kind as presented by other Prophets to the disbelievers at their demand of a proof of their Prophethood. Another proof of her miraculous birth is the fact that Prophet Salih presented the she-camel to the disbelievers with a warning to this effect: "Your lives are directly connected with the life of this she-camel. She shall graze freely in your fields and she shall be privileged to drink water at the well one day all alone by herself, and all your cattle shall drink water the following day, turn by turn; and if

you touch her with an evil intention, Allah's scourge will overtake you all of a sudden". It is obvious from this that the she-camel could have been presented in such a forcible manner only if the people had seen with their own eyes that she was an extraordinary animal. That is why they let her graze freely in their fields and let her drink water throughout the day all by herself, though in their heart of hearts they were not willing to accede to this. They were so much afraid of her that in order to kill her they had to hold long consultations and hatch secret plots, though Prophet Salih had no worldly power to prevent them from this. This shows that they knew there was some hidden power behind her that made her so bold as to roam about wherever she liked.

The Qur'an does not say anything about its physique as to how it came into being. Moreover, there is no mention of its miraculous existence in any authentic Tradition. Therefore. one is not bound to accept the stories the commentators have related concerning her birth, etc. However, it is quite evident from the Qur'an that she was a miracle in one way or the other.

59The people of Thamud used to carve out grand houses in the hills as has already been mentioned in E. N. 57. Some of them are still intact at Madain-i-Salih and bear witness to the wonderful skill they had achieved in engineering.

60That is, "You should take a warning from the woeful end of `Ad. The same Allah, Who destroyed that mischievous tribe and made you its successor, has the power to destroy you and make someone else your successor, if you become mischievous like `Ad."

61Though only one man had killed the she-camel (vide IV: 27-29 and XCI: 12-14), the whole tribe has been declared to be guilty of the crime because it was backing him as a whole, and he was, in fact, merely its tool, for every crime which represents the will of a nation or is approved by it, is a national crime, even though it is committed by one individual. According to the Qur'an, even that crime, which is committed openly by an individual, and is tolerated by the community, is a national crime.

62The catastrophe that overtook Thamud has been called "the terrifying shocker", but in other places it has been called (a cry) and (a thunderbolt) and (a roaring noise).

63Those people lived in the territory now called Trans-Jordan and is situated between 'Iraq and Palestine. According to the Bible its head quarters was Sodom which was situated somewhere near the Dead Sea or has been submerged in it. The Talmud says that they had four more big cities besides Sodom, and the land between these cities looked like one big garden for miles, and charmed the onlookers. But now those cities cannot be located with accuracy because the whole land is covered with the Dead Sea, which is also called Lot's Sea.

Prophet Lot was the nephew of Prophet Abraham. He left 'Iraq along with his uncle and traveled with him

over Syria, Palestine and Egypt in order to gain experience for the propagation of the Message. Then he was appointed as a Messenger by Allah and sent to reform the wicked tribe, which has been called `his people' because he might have had some blood relation with it.

It is a pity that in the existing Bible, which has been tampered with by the Jews, the character of Prophet Lot has been blemished. Besides other things, even his mission to the plains of Jordan has been described as a migration to a fertile land after "a strife between the herdsmen of Abraham's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle". (Genesis 5: 12, 13). But the Qur'an refutes this allegation and says that Lot was appointed a Messenger and was sent there in order to reform those people.

64At other places, the Qur'an mentions some other crimes of these people, but here it mentions only their most heinous crime that brought about the scourge of Allah on them.

Although wicked people have always been committing this most heinous sin that has given the people of Sodom an everlasting notoriety, yet it has always been considered a filthy and detestable act. But the only people who have ever tried to raise it to a moral excellence, were the Greek philosophers in the ancient world, and the Europeans in the modern world. The latter are doing their utmost to make up the deficiency by making an open propaganda for it, and have succeeded in giving this filthy act a legal sanction. So much so that the legislatures of some countries have legalized it. It does not require elaborate argument to show that homo-sexuality is a horrible social crime and a heinous sin. For the Creator has made the male and the female of each and every living species different from difference in the human species has been created to serve another purpose. This is to urge the two to live together in order to form a family along with their offspring. For this is the foundation of a civilized life for which man has been created. That is why their bodies have been made complementary to attract each other for the satisfaction of sex urges and for the service of the natural function of reproduction of the species. Therefore the one who satisfies this sex urge in an unnatural way becomes guilty of many crimes at one and the same time. (1) Such a one, so to speak, wages a war against the natural and physical functioning of his own organs and those of the victims of his lust. This inevitably produces very harmful effects on their physiques, their minds and their morality. (2) He becomes guilty of treachery and dishonesty against Nature for he enjoys sexual pleasure, without performing the necessary service of his species and civilization and without fulfilling the rights and obligations attached to it. (3) He commits a breach of trust against the society in general for he enjoys all the benefits of the civilized society, but in his turn does not take on himself the responsibilities of the married life and wastes all his powers in the unnatural gratification of his sexual desires. This selfish and unworthy attitude is not only useless but also positively harmful to the collective morality. Thus he makes himself unfit for the service of the family and of the human race and produces unnatural feminine characteristics in, at least, one other male, and opens the way to adultery and moral degradation for at least two women.

65The very fact that they could not tolerate even the presence of pious people among them, shows that they had gone to the lowest depths of moral degradation. They were not only shameless, wicked and

immoral but also had lost every feeling of goodness and virtue. That is why they wanted to turn out Prophet Lot and his followers so that none should be left among them to invite them to virtue. When they, as a community, reached this extreme limit of wickedness and no vestige of goodness was left in them, Allah decreed that they should be totally exterminated because there was then no justification for their existence on the earth. Their case may be likened to a basket of apples, most of which are rotten, and only a few are good. When the good apples are taken out of it, then the remaining fruit becomes utterly useless and should, therefore, be thrown away into a heap of garbage.

66In other places it has been made clear that Lot's wife, who probably was one of their daughters, supported her disbelieving relatives in their conflict with the Prophet, and did not leave them up to the end. That is why Allah ordained that Lot should not take her away with his followers.

67The "rain" was not a rain of water but a rain of stones as has been explicitly stated at some other places in the Qur'an. Their habitations were turned upside down and sunk into the earth.

68Here and at other places the Qur'an merely declares that sodomy is such a heinous sin that it brought the wrath of Allah on a people. Then we learn from the guidance of the Holy Prophet that it is the duty of the Islamic State to eradicate this crime and should punish those who are guilty of it. In regard to this there are traditions with wording to this effect: (a) "kill the sodomite and the object of sodomy". (b) " ..... whether they are married or unmarried". (e) "Stone to death the upper one and the lower one". But no definite and specific punishment was prescribed for the criminals because during his time, no case of sodomy was ever brought before the Holy Prophet.

There are, however, some traditions from his successors regarding this. Hadrat 'Ali is of the opinion that the criminals should be killed with sword and the dead bodies should not be buried but burnt to ashes. Hadrat Abu Bakr also agrees with it. Hadrat `Umar and Hadrat `Uthman arc of the opinion that they should be taken under the roof of a dilapidated building, which should be pulled down on them. lbn `Abbas has decreed that they should be thrown down headlong from the top of the highest building of the habitation and then stoned to death. Imam Shafi`i says that both the criminals involved in sodomy should be killed, whether married or unmarried. According to Shi`ibi" Zuhri, Malik and Ahmad they should be stoned to death. Said bin Musayyib, 'Ata, Hasan Basri, Ibrahim Nakh`i, Sufyan Thauri and Auza`i are of the opinion that the punishment is the same as for adultery, that is, one hundred stripes and exile for the unmarried, and stoning to death for the married. Imam Abu Hanifah is of the opinion that the culprit should be punished in accordance with the circumstances of the crime with an exemplary punishment. There is also a saying of Imam Shafi`i to this effect.

It should also be noted that it is unlawful for the husband to commit sodomy with his own wife. The Holy Prophet has declared, "The man who commits such an act with a woman is accursed" and "Allah will not even look at a person who commits this offense with a woman". In another Tradition, he has warned, "The one who cohabits with a woman in her menses or commits sodomy with her or goes to a soothsayer

and believes him to be true, is a disbeliever in what has been sent down to Muhammad. "

69The territory of (Midian) lay to the north-west of Hijaz and to the south of Palestine in the eastern side of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqabah and extended to a part of the Sinai Peninsula. The Midianites were great traders. Their habitations lay at the crossroads of the trade routes from Yemen-Makkah to Syria along the side of the Red Sea and from `Iraq to Egypt. Therefore they were well known among the Arabs and were remembered even after their extermination for their trade caravans to Syria and Egypt had to pass through their archaeological remains.

In order to grasp the significance of their story in the Qur'an, it should be noted that the Midianites claimed to be the descendants of Midian, a son of Prophet Abraham from his third wife, Qaturah. Though all of them had not directly descended from him, they claimed to be so. For, according to an ancient custom, all those people who became attached to some great man, began, by and by, to be counted among his descendants. That is why all Arabs were called Bani Isma`il, though the majority of them were not his descendants. The same was the case with Bani Isra'il. Likewise all the inhabitants of the territory, who came under the influence of Midian, a son of Prophet Abraham came to be known as Bani Madyan and the territory itself was called Madyan (Midian).

In the light of the above historical fact, there is no reason to suppose that they heard for the first time the voice of the Truth from Prophet Shu`aib. In fact, they were originally Muslims like the Israelites, but had become corrupt at the time when Prophet Shu'aib was sent to them, just as the Israelites were at the time when Prophet Moses was sent to them. Though they had become involved in shirk and immoralities by mixing with the mushrik and immoral people during the six centuries or so after Prophet Abraham, yet they professed to be "believers" and were proud of that.

70This shows that Prophet Shu`aib was sent to reform them of their two main evils-shirk and dishonesty in trade.

71For a detailed commentary on this, please refer to E.N.'s 44 and 45 of this Surah. Here Prophet Shu`aib wanted to draw their attention particularly to this: "You should not corrupt by your wrong beliefs and immoral ways the Right Way of life that had been established by the former Prophets."

72The fact that the Prophet appeals to their Faith shows that they themselves professed to be Believers, as has been pointed out in E.N. 69. They were corrupt Muslims, who, though involved in wrong beliefs and misconduct, not only professed to be "believers" but also were proud of this. That is why the Prophet appealed to them, "If you are true believers, you should judge good and evil by the standard of the righteous and honest people, and not by the standards of those worldly people who do not believe in Allah and the Hereafter. "

73Prophet Shu'aib hastened to add these words to show that he could not claim with certainty even this much that they would not return to the creed of the disbelievers. A believer who rightly and fully comprehends the significance of the power of Allah, knows that it is His Will that prevails over everything. Therefore he cannot claim with certainty, "I will do this or I will not do this, for the fulfillment of this or that depends entirely on the will of my Lord. If He will, I shall become successful, otherwise I shall fail in it."

Allah has taught the same thing in XVIII: 23-24:

"Never say about anything, 'I will do this tomorrow, for you cannot do anything, but say, If it be Allah's Will'."

74We should not pass cursorily over this sentence, but should think deeply about its implications. The chiefs and the leaders of Midian meant and wanted to convince the people of this thing: "We shall be utterly ruined if we accept and practice the fundamental principles of honesty, righteousness, uprightness and morality. It is obvious that our trade and commerce can never flourish if we apply the principle of truth to it and carry out our bargains with honesty. Besides this, if we do not exploit our geographical position on the crossroads of the most important trade routes, and let the caravans pass on without molestation and become peaceful citizens, all its political and commercial advantages will come to art end. This will also bring to an end the awe and influence we wield over our neighboring countries." This fear of "ruin" was not peculiar to the people of Shu'aib alone. In every age the corrupt people have felt the same fear concerning the way of truth, righteousness and honesty. This has always been the considered opinion of all the corrupt people that it is not possible to carry out commercial, political and other worldly activities without resort to lies, dishonesty and immorality. That is why the greatest argument against the Message of Truth has always been that the community would be ruined, if it gave up the known worldly wrong ways and adopted the Right Way.

75This total destruction of Midian had become a byword among the neighboring nations. In Psalms (83: 5-9) Prophet David invokes the help of Allah against the oppressors, "who have taken crafty counsel against thy people," saying, "Do unto them as unto the Midianites." And Prophet Isaiah consoles the Israel, saying, "..... be not afraid of Assyrian....he shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt....the Lord of the hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian...." (Isaiah: 10: 21-26.)

76A deep significance underlies all the stories which have been related here. Every story applied appropriately and exactly to the case of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and his people, the Quraish. In every story there are two parties - the Prophet and his people. In every story the Message of the Prophet, his teachings, his admonition and all other things were exactly the same as those of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). On the other side, in every case his people, who were sunk deep in wrong creeds, immoralities and obduracies, and the chiefs who were puffed up with pride, rejected the Message contemptuously. As the Quraish were behaving exactly in the same way towards

Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and his Message, they have been warned indirectly that their doom would be similar to those people, if they did not accept his Message, and did not avail of the opportunity that Allah had afforded them: if they persisted blindly in their obduracy they would meet with the same destruction which had always been the doom of those peoples who persisted in their deviation.

77After citing the individual case of every Prophet and his people, now the general and comprehensive procedure has been enunciated, that Allah adopted at the appointment of each one of His Messengers. Whenever a Messenger was sent, Allah afflicted his people with adversities and calamities so that they should become meek and humble, and be conditioned for the acceptance of the Message. Accordingly, He sent famines and epidemics to them and made them suffer economic losses, defeats in wars, and the like, in order to humble their pride and haughtiness and to frustrate their over-confidence in their powers, riches, resources, capabilities etc. This was to make them realize that there is a Higher Power above them that controls their destinies so that their hearts should be inclined to admonition and they should bow down humbly before their Lord. But, if this failed to incline their hearts to the acceptance of the Truth, they were tempted with prosperity. And this was the beginning of their end. As a rule, when such people, as are afflicted with adversity and calamities, begin to flourish and are enriched with blessings, they do not show any gratitude to their Master, and even forget the days of adversity. Then their intellectuals delude them by arguing like this: "There is nothing unusual in this. History tells us that the vicissitudes of fortune have always been taking place independent of moral values and these are not taking place under the control of Allah or in accordance with moral laws but blind nature is always working and bringing about adversity or prosperity. That is why our forefathers also had had their adversities and prosperities. It is, therefore, a sign of mental weakness to draw any moral lesson from these and to bow down and humble oneself before Allah.

The Holy Prophet had described the same thing in a Tradition: "Affliction goes on helping a Believer to reform himself till he comes out of this furnace cleansed of all impurities. But the case of a hypocrite in affliction is that of an ass, who does not realize why his master tied him and why he untied him." This implies that if a community does not turn to Allah, even when adversities and calamities are inflicted on it or does not remember Allah in gratitude, when He showers His blessings upon it and is not inclined at all to reform itself in any way whatsoever, it is doomed and its destruction is imminent.

In this connection it should also be noted that the Divine procedure mentioned in vv. 94-95 was at work at' Makkah at the time when this Surah was revealed. The Quraish were showing the same antagonistic attitude and were consequently suffering from a severe famine. We learn from a Tradition, related by Ibn Mas'ud and Ibn `Abbas, that when the Quraish began to oppose the mission of the Holy Prophet, he prayed, "O Lord, help me against these people by a seven-year famine, like the one that visited Egypt during the time of Joseph". Accordingly, Allah sent a very severe famine to Makkah and things came to such a pass that they began to eat dead animals, skins, bones and even wool. Then the people of Makkah, under the leadership of Abu Sufyan, went to the Holy Prophet, and beseeched him to pray to Allah to remove the famine. But when Allah removed the famine and they began to flourish, they became

all the more arrogant and their evil geniuses began to hinder even those from it whose hearts were somewhat inclined towards the Faith, saying, "The famine was due to the vicissitudes of time, and was not different from the ones that visited us even before the advent of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). Therefore you should not fall into his trap by its visitation." Such things as "Our forefathers also had their adversity and prosperity" were being repeated at the time when this Surah was sent down. As these verses applied very appropriately to the condition of the Quraish at the time, this background should be kept in view in order to understand their full significance.

78The Arabic word makr implies such a secret plan as remains hidden from the person against whom it is directed, and keeps him deluded that as is well, till it suddenly strikes him a decisive blow.

79It is a pity that the succeeding nation does not learn any lesson from the mistakes of the fallen nation it replaces. There would be a great guidance for the people if they considered seriously the question why those people, who were ruling over the land before them and were prosperous and flourishing, were utterly ruined and totally destroyed. The answer would show them the erroneous thoughts and deeds which resulted in their ruin. Then they can also realize that the Sovereign Ruler Who seized them for their mistakes and deposed them is All-Powerful even now, is still ruling over the universe and is able to punish them and depose them, if they commit the same kind of errors that their predecessors committed.

80According to the Divine Law, the fall of a nation takes place when it neglects to take a lesson from the history of the former people and from the ruins of their monuments, but tries to delude itself. Then Allah does not let them think rightly or accept the admonition of any well wisher. As regards the individuals, the Divine Law is that if a person himself closes his eyes deliberately, the light of the sun does not help him; likewise if he does not want to hear, none else can make him hear.

81In v.101, Allah Himself has explained the meanings of the previous verse, "We seal their hearts: then they do not hear anything". From this it is clear that by the `sealing of the hearts-' is meant that state of mind which is caused as a result of the working of the Divine Law. When one deliberately refuses to accept the Truth because of one's ignorance, prejudice, selfishness, lust etc. , then such a person becomes so obdurate that he persists in error without paying any attention to his own observations or to the arguments of his true well-wishers.

82The disbelieves showed no respect for any of the three covenants that should be binding on every man. They respected neither the natural covenant that makes man by his very birth the servant of Allah, his Sustainer, nor that collective covenant that binds every individual to the observance of the known social code of the community of which he is a member, nor that personal covenant which every man undertakes with his Allah at the time of distress and helplessness.

83The preceding stories were related to bring home to the people of Makkah the fact that the community which receives the Message of Allah and then rejects it, is inevitably doomed to destruction. After these, the story of Moses, Pharaoh and the Israelites is being related with the same object, though there are other important lessons also for the disbelievers of the Quraish, the Believers and the Jews.

In this story the disbelievers of the Quraish have been admonished that they should not be deluded by their apparent favorable balance of power in the initial stages of the conflict between the Truth and falsehood. The whole history of the conflict bears evidence to the fact that a single man starts the Movement to establish the Truth in his nation, nay, in the whole world, and wages war, without the help of any material provisions, against falsehood which had the backing of great nations and powerful kingdoms. But in spite of this, ultimately it comes out triumphant in the conflict. The Quraish have also been warned to note how all the devices of the disbelievers directed against the Messenger of the Truth in order to suppress his Message turn against themselves: that Allah gives a long respite to the disbelievers so that they might mend their ways before He makes the final decision to destroy them: that He gives exemplary punishment to those who do not take any lesson from a warning or a clear sign or an event that serves for a lesson.

There were two lessons for the Believers who had become the target of the persecution by the enemies. First, they should not be discouraged because they were smaller in number and weaker in power than their opponents, and they should not lose heart because Allah's succor was late in coming. Secondly, they were warned to guard against the attitude that was adopted by the Jews after they had professed to believe in the Truth: otherwise they would become accursed like the Jews.

The past history of the Israelites was related for their own benefit also. They were warned to consider the consequences of the worship of falsehood, and admonished to follow the Holy Prophet who was representing the true religion of the former Prophets after cleansing it of all the impurities that had been mixed up with it.

84"They, too, treated Our Signs unjustly" by rejecting them and treating them as pieces of sorcery. It was injustice in the sense that they were not behaving fairly towards the signs and were treating them as pieces of sorcery and scoffing at them. There could be no greater injustice than to reject such Signs as were clear proofs of their being from Allah and about which no reasonable man could say that they could be produced by sorcery. Besides this, when the sorcerers themselves bore witness to the fact that it was beyond the power of sorcery to produce such Signs, it was nothing but injustice to reject these as pieces of sorcery. Thus they really showed that they were void of wisdom and truth as well.

85The word Fir`aun (Pharaoh) literally means "the offspring of the sun god" . The ancient Egyptians called the sun Ra, which they worshiped as their supreme lord, and Fir`aun was named after it. According to the creed of the ancient Egyptians, every ruler based his authority on his relation to Ra `a and claimed to be its incarnation and representative on the earth. Therefore every royal dynasty that came into power

in Egypt presented itself to be the descendant of the, sun-god and every ruler adopted the title of Fir`aun in order to show to the people that he was the Supreme Lord.

In this connection, it should also be noted that two different Pharaohs have been mentioned in the story of Moses as related in the Qur'an. The one was that Pharaoh who was ruling over Egypt when Moses was born, and who brought him up in his own house, and the second was the one whom Moses invited to accept the Divine Message of God and deliver the children of Israel, and who was drowned .

The research scholars of today are inclined to believe that the first of the two Pharaohs who oppressed the Israelites was Rameses II, who ruled from 1292 to 1225 B.C. And the second Pharaoh who has been mentioned in these verses was Mineptah, who assisted his father Rameses II in the affairs of the government, and succeeded as ruler after his death. But these dates appear to be doubtful because, according to the calendar of the Israelites, the year of the death of Moses was 1272 B.C. These are, however, mere historical guesses for it is difficult to reconcile the days of the Israelite, the Egyptian and the Christian calendars.

86Prophet Moses was sent to Pharaoh with two missions. First, he should invite Pharaoh to surrender to Allah by accepting Islam. Second, he should demand from him to set the Israelites free from his slavery and tyranny. The Qur'an mentions both the missions at one and the same place or separately, as required by the occasion.

87These two Signs were given to Prophet Moses as a proof that he was a representative of Allah, the Creator and Sovereign of the whole universe. We have already stated that whenever the Messengers presented themselves before the people as the representatives of Allah, the people always demanded: "If you are really a representative of Allah, let such and such an event take place through you as may not be capable of being explained by the ordinary laws of nature, and which may clearly show that it has happened by the direct intervention of Allah to prove that you are really a representative of Allah". In answer to this demand, the Prophets showed those Signs that are called 'ayat' by the Qur'an and miracles by the common people.

It is a pity that sane learned Muslims try to explain away these Signs or miracles as ordinary events that took place according to the known physical laws of nature. They do not realize that in this way they arc adopting a skeptical attitude towards the Book of Allah, for, in the context, the Qur'an cites a supernatural event, and it presents the same as a Sigh of Allah as a proof of his Prophethood. Therefore to explain it away as an ordinary event is, in fact, to disbelieve the Book. Thus such people make their own position ridiculous. On the one hand, they do not sincerely believe in the Qur 'an as a Book of Allah just because it upholds miracles; en the other, they do not have the courage to declare openly their disbelief in the Book' which upholds supernatural events, because it would deprive them of the benefit of the religion they profess, as it would adversely affect their worldly interests.

The decisive question about miracles is whether Allah suspended His activities after starting the system of the universe according to certain laws, and now cannot interfere in any way whatever with the working of that system, Or, whether He keeps the reins of His kingdom in His own hands and enforces His commands every moment in this kingdom and He has full powers to make any change, partial or complete, in shaping things and the course of events, as and when He wills. Those who believe in the first alternative cannot believe in the miracles for it goes against their conception of Allah and His universe, but the most proper course for such people is to deny the Divine Revelation of the Qur'an instead of writing any commentary on it so as to refute the Quranic conception of Allah and prove their own. On the other hand, if one is convinced by the arguments of the Qur'an and accepts the second alternative he would readily understand and believe in the miracles. It is quite obvious that if one believes that a serpent can come into being only through a biological process and it is not possible for Allah to create it in any other way, then such a one should consider it false that a staff was changed into a serpent and again into the staff. On the contrary, if one believes that lifeless matter can come to life by the command of Allah, Who has the power to give any kind of life to anything He wills, he will readily believe that the staff was changed into a serpent just as he believes that a live chicken comes out of a lifeless egg. To such a person, there will be nothing extraordinary, just because the staff was changed into a serpent only thrice and a chicken comes out of an egg over and over again.

88Naturally some questions arise here: How was Prophet Moses a danger to Pharaoh and his kingdom? How could a destitute person of a slave community like him be a menace to a powerful and rich king like Pharaoh, who was the object of worship of his subjects as well? How was the turning of the staff into a serpent menace to his great kingdom which extended from Syria to Libya and from the Mediterranean Sea to Abyssinia? Why did they then raise the alarm that Prophet Moses intended to deprive the great Pharaoh and the members of the royal dynasty and the big chiefs of their kingdom, and drive them out of Egypt? Above all, why was there a danger at all of a revolution, when he had put forward no other claim than that he was a Prophet of Allah; and demanded the freedom of the Israelites? These questions are specially important because so far no political talk had taken place between them.

The answer is that the claim to Prophethood in itself implied that Prophet Moses meant to bring about a complete revolution in the existing system of life, including the political system as well. The very fact that a person claims to be a Delegate of the Lord of the universe, contains in itself the demand for total submission of human beings to himself. This is because the Delegate of the Lord of the universe does not come to live as a subject of and subordinate to anyone else but as the ruler and the guardian. For, it is the negation of his claim to Prophethood to acknowledge the sovereignty of an unbeliever. That is why Pharaoh and his courtiers felt the menace of a political, social and cultural revolution when Moses made a claim to Prophethood.

Let us consider the question: Why did the court of the great Pharaoh of Egypt attach so much importance to the claim of Moses, who had no other helper than his own brother, and no other emblem of his appointment from Allah than his miraculous staff and his shining hand? In my opinion there were two

main reasons: First, Pharaoh and his courtiers were fully acquainted with the great personality of Prophet Moses. They knew that he possessed a pure and strong character and an extraordinary ability, and was a born leader and commander. Besides this, if we rely on the stories of the Talmud and Josephus, Prophet Moses had acquired education in all the sciences of the age, and was fully trained in the art of war and administration, because these things were considered essential for the members of the royal family in which he was brought up, and had proved himself to be an excellent general in the campaign against Abyssinia. Above all, the hard desert life of eight years or so in Midian had helped to remove the effects of a life of ease in the royal palace. Therefore, when this grand, serene and pious man stood in the court of Pharaoh with the claim of Prophethood, they could not brush aside his. claim as hollow. Secondly, when they saw the miracles of the staff and the shining hand, they were all filled with awe and were inclined to admit that there was, indeed, some supernatural force at his back. Thus there was an apparent contradiction in their calling him a magician and, at the same time, expressing a fear that he would drive them out of the country. This also showed that they had been nonplussed by the very first appearance of the Signs of Prophethood: If they had really considered Prophet Moses to be a magician, they would have never felt and expressed the danger of a revolution from him, for magic has never brought about any revolution in the world.

89These words of the courtiers of Pharaoh show that they had a clear conception of the distinction between the change produced by a Divine miracle and the effect of magic. They knew that the change brought about by a Divine miracle was real, whereas the effect produced by magic was merely an illusion. That is why they tried to refute the claim of Prophet Moses, saying, "this man is an expert magician". They meant to say that the staff had not actually turned into a serpent but had only appeared so to them to be a serpent because of his magic and they would not acknowledge it as a Divine miracle. Therefore they counseled Pharaoh to gather together all the expert magicians so that they may show that they could also turn ropes and sticks into serpents and remove to some extent from the hearts of the people the awful effect that had been produced in their minds by the miracle of the staff of Moses.

90There is no ground to believe that the staff of Moses swallowed up the sticks and ropes that had been cast by the magicians and had appeared to be serpents. What the Qur'an says is that the staff swallowed up the false magic produced by them as soon as it turned into a real serpent. In plain words it means that wherever the serpent of the staff went, it nullified the effects of the magic which had made their ropes and sticks appear as moving serpents and as a result of one round made by the staff they began to look like their real selves as ropes and sticks. (For further explanation, see E.N. 42 of XX).

91This defeat and acknowledgment turned the tables on the people of Pharaoh. They had mustered all the expert magicians of the land to demonstrate publicly that Prophet Moses was a magician or, at least, to create doubts in the minds of the public about his Prophethood. But after the defeat, their own experts in the art admitted unanimously that what Prophet Moses was presenting was not magic at all, but most surely it was the work of the power of the Lord of the worlds, and that every kind of magic was powerless against it.

Obviously their considered opinion could not be brushed aside in an offhand way, for none could judge magic better than the magicians. That is why when the magicians testified, after practical demonstration and trial, that it was not magic, it became impossible for Pharaoh and his courtiers to assert that Moses . was a magician.

92When Pharaoh saw the tables turning on himself, he thought out another device. He declared that the whole show was the outcome of the plot that Moses and the magicians had devised. Then he threatened the magicians with a severe chastisement and death so that they should confess that his accusation was true. But this move also turned against him. As the magicians remained firm in their new Faith, and were prepared to undergo any torture for its sake, it became evident that their belief in the Truth presented by Moses was a genuine confession of faith and not the pretense of any plot. That is why he had to give up the pretense of truth and justice and resort to open tyranny.

In this connection it should also be noted that in a few moments, their Faith had brought about a wonderful change in the character of the magicians. The same people who had left their homes for the sake of helping the religion of their forefathers and had, a few minutes before, very humbly requested Pharaoh to give them rewards if they came out successful in the conflict with Moses, were now filled with the courage of conviction of the true Faith. They had become so bold and brave that they were now defying the same king, before whom they were meekly bowing, and begging a reward for their encounter. But now they had become so convinced of the truth of their Faith that they were not ready to give it up for the fear of the worst torture with which they were being threatened.

93It should be noted that there were two periods of oppression. At first the Israelites were oppressed during the reign of Rameses II, before the birth of Prophet Moses. The second period of oppression mentioned in this verse started during the reign of Mineptah, after the appointment of Moses as a Messenger of Allah. However, there was one thing common. The sons of Israelites were killed and the lives of their daughters were spared so that their race should gradually come to an end and the survivors get merged into other races. A tablet that was dug up during the archaeological excavations in 1896; probably refers to this period, when it mentions the exploits and victories of Mineptah, saying, "The Israelites have been exterminated and no seed has been left for their reproduction." (For further explanation see v. 25 of XL).

94This was the height of bigotry and obduracy that the courtiers of Pharaoh were dubbing as magic that thing which they knew could never be magic. Even a fool would not believe that magic can bring about famine and scarcity in the whole country. In connection with the same story the Qur'an says in XXVII: 13-14, "When Our Signs came openly before their eyes, they said, "This is an obvious magic. Though their hearts were convinced (of their truth), they denied these unjustly and rebelliously."

95Probably it was a rain-storm that was accompanied by hailstones, though it could have been any other

kind of storm. As the Bible does not mention a rain-storm but only a heavy fall of hailstones, the common word storm has been preferred.

96The Arabic word (qummal) in the original stands for any of the small insects like louse, small fly, mosquito, small locusts, weevil and the like. Probably this comprehensive word has been used for the reason that lice and mosquitoes had inflicted human beings and seed-weevils had attacked granaries at one and the same time. (For comparison, see Chapters 7-12 of Exodus, and E.N. 43 of LXIII).

97That is, "The Israelites were made the inheritors of Palestine". Some ' commentators infer from this that the Israelites were made the masters of Egypt. But we hesitate to accept this version for there is neither any direct reference to it in the Qur'an nor is there any historical evidence to support it. (Sec E.N. 57 of XVIII and E.N. 45 of XXVI).

98"These people" were the Egyptians, who lived at Mafqah, a cantonment in the Sinai Peninsula. The Israelites crossed the Red Sea probably at a place somewhere between the present Suez and Isma'iliyah, and started on their journey along the coast towards the southern part of the Peninsula, which was at that time under Egypt. In its lower part, there wen copper and emerald mints, and for their protection the Egyptians had built cantonments at some places. One of these was at Mafqah, where the Egyptians had set up a big idol temple whose remnants are found even today in the south-western part of the Peninsula. At another place near it, there was another idol-temple, which was dedicated to the Moon-god. Probably the Israelites were passing by one of these idol-temples, when they made their demand for an artificial god. This shows that slavery under the Egyptians had left a deep mark of their culture on the Israelites.

It can be easily judged from the following remarks made by Joshua, son of Nun, Moses' first successor, in his last address to the Israelites, seventy years after their exodus from Egypt:

"Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua, 24: 14-15).

This shows that even after forty years of training and guidance under Prophet Moses, and 28 Rears under Prophet Joshua, the Israelites could not cleanse themselves of the evil effects that had been stamped upon their lives during their long slavery under the Pharaohs of Egypt. That is why these corrupted Muslims were so eager to bow down before those gods, whom their Egyptian masters served, no sooner did they see an idol-temple after their exodus.

99After their departure from Egypt, when the Israelites became free from the shackles of slavery, and won the position of an independent nation, Prophet Moses was summoned to Mount Sinai by the Divine Command so that the Law should be given to him for them. This was the first summons of the series that is being mentioned here. Forty days were appointed so that he should prepare himself by fast, devotion, worship, prayer, deep thought, meditation and reflection for the heavy task that was about to be entrusted to him On this occasion prophet Moses left the Israelites at a place now called Wadiy-u-Shaikh, between Nabi Salih and Mt. Sinai. That part of the valley where the Israelites then encamped is now called Maidan-ur-Rahat. At one end of the valley is situated the hillock, where, according to the local tradition Prophet Salih migrated from the territory of Thamud. The mosque, which was built in his memory, stands there even today. On the other side, there is another hillock, called Jabl-i-Harun, where, it is said, Prophet Aaron had gone in protest against the cow-worship of the Israelites. On its third side is Mt. Sinai, which is 7359 feet above the sea level and is usually covered with clouds. On the top of this is the cave in which Moses spent forty days and nights and which has become a holy place of pilgrimage. There is a mosque of the Muslims and a church of the Christians near the cave and at the foot, a monastery built during the reign of Justinian, Byzantine Emperor. (For details, see E.N.'s 9, 10 of XXVIII).

100Though Prophet Aaron was the elder of the two by three years, he was under Prophet Moses in the mission of Prophethood. In fact, Prophet Aaron was appointed as a Prophet to work as an assistant to Moses in response to his prayer. The fact that he was appointed by Allah as assistant to Prophet Moses has. been stated in XXV: 35.

101The Bible says that these two tablets were slabs of stone. Both the Qur'an and the Bible ascribe the writing upon them to Allah. We have, however, no specific source to say how that was done. Therefore we cannot say with certainty whether the writing was inscribed on the tablets directly by Allah or through the agency of an angel or by Prophet Moses. (Please compare this with Exodus 31: 18, 32: 15-16, Deut. 5: 6-22).

102That is, "The Divine precepts and instructions should be followed in their direct and plain meanings, that can be grasped by a man of average intelligence, who has a pure heart and pure intentions." This condition has been attached lest one should confuse them with the hair-splitting of those who, by their legal quibblings, are able to devise ways of crookedness, deceit and mischief out of the plain words of the Divine Commandments.

103That is, "In your onward march, you will pass through the ruins of the homes of those who disobeyed the Divine Law and discarded the way of Allah's worship and obedience and persisted in the paths of error. When you see these things you will yourselves know the end of the people who adopt such ways. "

104That is, "This is My law: such people as behave haughtily cannot take any warning from any exemplary sign and cannot learn any lesson from anything that may teach a lesson. "

According to the Qur'an, a person behaves haughtily who considers himself above submission to Allah and becomes heedless of His Commandments and behaves in a way as if he was not a servant of Allah and Allah was not his Lord. Obviously such an arrogance is not based on any rightful claim, for no servant has any right to behave as if he were not His servant, when he lives on Allah's earth. That is why Allah says, who without any right behave haughtily."

105".... his deeds became vain," and produced no good result and were useless and worthless, because these did not satisfy the two elementary conditions that make human deeds worthwhile. First, these should be performed in accordance with the Divine Law. Secondly, the object of these acts and deeds should be success in the Hereafter and not mere success in this world. If these two conditions are not fulfilled in the performance of any deed, it shall become vain. Obviously anything done without giving heed to or in defiance of the Divine Guidance does not deserve any reward from Him, for his case is the same as that of a usurper of land, who exploits it against the owner's will. He does not deserve anything but severe punishment for this wrongful possession. Though he may benefit from it as long as the real owner connives at his audacity, he knows that he will be deprived of it when he is dispossessed of it. And there is no reason why (and he himself does not expect that) any portion of its produce should go to him, after the real owner takes possession of his land from the usurper.

106They made the image in his absence of forty days, when Moses went to Mt. Sinai on the summons of Allah, while his people were encamping in the plain of Ar-Rahah.

107Their calf-worship was the second manifestation of the change that had taken place in the Israelites during their stay in Egypt. They were so charmed by the cow-worship of the Egyptians that the Qur'an says, "......They were so prone to disbelief that they cherished the calf in their hearts" . It is really strange that hardly three months after their miraculous escape from Egypt, they began to make demands on their Prophet to make an artificial god for them, and, as soon as he left them for the Sinai, they themselves devised a false god. It appears as if they had forgotten their recent deliverance from slavery, and their safe passage through the sea and the drowning of Pharaoh and his army in it. Though they knew that all those wonderful events had happened wholly and solely through the supernatural power of the Eternal, yet they shame-facedly forgot their Allah. It was this faithless conduct of the Israelites that prompted some of their Prophets to liken the Community to that wicked woman who shows love to all men other than her husband and does not hesitate to be faithless even in the very first night of her marriage.

108By citing his words ".....do not include me among the workers of iniquity", the Qur'an has absolved Prophet Aaron from the wicked blemish that the Jews had stamped upon him. According to the Bible, Prophet Aaron was guilty of making the golden calf as god for them:

"And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as

for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wont not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings, which were in their ears and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a Braving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. (Exodus, 32: 1-6). The Qur'an has refuted this allegation and related the fact about the matter that the man responsible for this heinous sin was not Allah's Prophet Aaron but his rebel Samiri. (For details, see XX : 90-94).

Though it may appear very strange that the Jews should accuse their own Prophets of the most heinous sins, yet a deep and critical study of their history will show that this was done to justify their own moral degradation. When the whole community in general, and the religious scholars and priests in particular, became involved in deviations and immoralities, their guilty consciences impelled them to invent excuses for justifying their own bad conduct. As they committed heinous sins like shirk, sorcery, adultery, treachery, falsehood and the like, they Blemished the pure character of their own Prophets by ascribing such sins to them as were most shameful even for an ordinary good man, not to speak of a prophet so that they could justify their own wicked deeds. They argued like this: "When even the Prophets could not save themselves from such sins, how could ordinary people like us be immune from weaknesses?"

'The Hindus also did the same during their moral degeneration and the literature of that period depicts gods, rishis and the like, in the blackest colors so that they could say, "When such highly placed beings were involved in immoralities, how could the common people escape froth them? And why should such things be shameful for them, when they were not shameful for their gods and rishis?"

109The seventy delegates were summoned to Mt. Sinai so that they should present themselves before their Lord, and on behalf of the community beg forgiveness for the sin of calf-worship that was committed by the Israelites, and to renew the covenant of obedience to Him. The Bible and the Talmud do not mention this, though the Bible says that Moses was summoned to Mt. Sinai so that he should be given new tablets for those that were broken, when he had thrown them down. (Exodus chapter 34).

110That is, every occasion of trial is very decisive for the people: it separates like a winnow useful from the useless out of a mixed mass. On such decisive occasions, the one who comes out successful in the trial does so only by Divine guidance and help, and the one who fails in the test becomes unsuccessful because he is deprived of Divine guidance and help. Though one gets Allah's guidance and help in accordance with certain Divine Laws, which are based on absolute wisdom and justice, anyway the fact is that one's success or failure in the trial depends entirely on Divine guidance and help.

111That is, "The way, whereby Allah is ruling His Kingdom is based on mercy and not on wrath. He always shows mercy to His creatures and manifests His wrath only when the rebellion and arrogance of His servants transgress the limits"

112After replying to the prayer of Moses in the previous verse, the Qur'an utilizes the opportunity to invite the Israelites to follow Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). It means: "The conditions that were laid down for Allah's mercy upon you during the time of Prophet Moses, still stand, and require you to believe in this Messenger. It was said to you that Allah's mercy is sent to those people who refrain from disobedience. Now, there is no greater disobedience than to reject the Guidance of the Messengers appointed by Allah. If you, therefore, do not refrain from this disobedience, you will have no other basis of virtue left in spite of your show of piety in the observance of minor and trifling religious rituals. You were enjoined to pay the Zakat so that you may be blessed with mercy. but today the only right way of expending the Zakat is to stake contributions towards the success of the campaign that is being carried on for the establishment of the Divine Way under the leadership of this Messenger, for the basic requirements of Zakat can only be fulfilled in this way. You were told that Allah has prescribed His Mercy for those who believe in His Revelations: therefore if you reject the Revelations that Allah is sending down to His Messenger, you will have failed to fulfil this last condition, even though you might go on asserting that you believe in the Revelations of the Torah."

Here the use of the word (ummi) for the Holy Prophet is very significant. This title was used to break the national pride and arrogance of the Jews, who called the non-Jews ummis (gentiles). In this respect, they were so arrogant that, as a nation, not to speak of acknowledging an ummi as their leader. they were not ready even to concede basic human rights to the gentiles. They asserted, "..... We are not to be called to account for our behavior towards the gentiles ...." (III: 75). That is why Allah has used the word ummi before "Prophet". as if to say. "Now your salvation solely depends on following this Ummi Prophet. If you follow him, you will receive a portion of My mercy. otherwise you are doomed to the same wrath to which you have been subjected during the centuries of your deviation."

113There are clear references in the Bible to the coming of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). For instance, see Deut. 18: 15-19, Matthew 21: 33 4V. John I: 19-21. 14: 15-17, 25-30, 15: 25-26, 16: 7-15.

114That is, "He makes lawful those pure things which they have made unlawful. and stakes unlawful those impure things which they have made lawful."

115That is, "He relieves them of the burdens that had been laid on them by the legal hair-splittings of their jurists and by the exaggerated piety of their spiritual leaders, and by the superstitious restrictions and regulations imposed by their common people. Likewise this Messenger makes their lives free from the fetters with which they themselves had bound their lives"

116The theme of the address that was interrupted by the parenthesis (vv. 157-158) is again being resumed.

117The majority of the translators render v. 159 like this: "Among the people of Moses there is a group that guides and decides in accordance with the Truth" . They mean to say that there existed such a group among the Jews at the time of the Revelation of the Qur'an. But from the context in which this occurs, we conclude that there was such a group of good people among the Israelites during the time of Prophet Moses. This has been mentioned here to show that there were some good people even at that time, when the Israelites had gone to the lowest level of moral and spiritual degradation and adopted the worship of the golden calf, and were punished by Allah.

118This refers to the organization of the Israelites that has been stated in v.12 of Al-Ma'idah and given in detail in Numbers. the fourth Book of the Bible. According to this. Prophet Moses was bidden in the desert of Sinai by the Eternal to count up the total members of the community of Israel. Accordingly they were numbered and divided into twelve clans, comprising the descendants of the ten sons of Prophet Jacob and two sons of Prophet Joseph. The twelve men. who were at the head of each clan, were made the leaders of their ancestral clans so that they should look after the moral, religious, social, cultural and military condition of each clan and enforce the Commandments. However. the ancestral clan of Prophets Moses and Aaron, the clan of the Levites, the twelfth son of Prophet Jacob. was left out. It was not counted among the other twelve clans of Israel. but was organized as a separate community and was entrusted with the duty of looking after the religious and spiritual welfare of all the clans of general Israel.

119The above-mentioned organization was one of the great favors that had been conferred by Allah on the Israelites. In continuation of the same, three more favors have been mentioned here: (1) The miraculous supply of water during their stay in the Sinai Peninsula. (2) The sky was covered with clouds to protect them from the scorching heat of the desert. (3) Manna and Salva were sent down in a supernatural manner to feed them there. It is obvious that if adequate arrangements had not been made for the supply of these three most important necessities of life. this big community that consisted of about two million people would have perished with heat, hunger and thirst.

A visit to the Peninsula makes one realize that it is not possible even today to arrange for the supply of water and food and for shelter from the sun, if such a large number of people should happen to visit that place without previous arrangements. It is so thinly populated that its total population is not more than a few thousands. It would be a headache even for a modern government, if it wanted to send an army of. say, only 500,000 soldiers there in this twentieth century of inventions. That is why many research scholars who believe neither in Revealed Books nor in miracles have rejected the historical fact that the Israelites ever passed through and stayed in that part of the Peninsula for years, as mentioned in the Qur'an and the Bible. They opine that they might have passed through a region somewhere to the south of Palestine and to the north of Arabia. They consider that it is inconceivable for such a large number of people to encamp so long, under the hard geographical and economical conditions of the Peninsula,

when in addition to these the means of supplies from Egypt were also cut off, and there was a constant threat of attack from the Amelikites who lived in the eastern and northern parts of the Peninsula.

If we keep in view these things, we can appreciate the true value of the favors that have been mentioned here. At the same time, it also becomes obvious that this community showed ingratitude by committing acts of disobedience and infidelity, which abound in its history. (Compare this with E.N.'s 72, 73 and 76 of Al-Baqarah).

120Now some incidents from the history of the Israelites are being related to show that their response to the above-mentioned favors of Allah was very wicked and rebellious, which gradually threw them into the lowest abyss of destruction.

121Please refer to E.N.'s 74 and 75 of Al-Baqarah.

122The research scholars are of the opinion that the place refers to Ailah or Elat or Elote where the modern Jewish state of Israel has constructed a seaport of the same name and near which is situated Jordan's famous seaport of Aqabah. It is at the end of that long inlet of the Red Sea which is between the eastern pan of the Sinai Peninsula and the western side of Arabia. It was a very important trade center in the heyday of the Israelites. Prophet Solomon had made this city the chief port of his fleet in the Red Sea.

The incident referred to here has neither been mentioned in the religious books of the Jews nor in their history books but the way in which the Qur'an has related it here and in Al-Baqarah clearly shows that at the time of its Revelation, it was well known among the Israelites. That is why the Jews of AI-Madinah did not challenge its validity; although they never missed a chance of raising an objection against the Holy Prophet.

123Sabbath (Saturday) is the Holy day of the week. The Lord made Saturday the Sabbath day for the Jews, saying, "Verily my Sabbaths ye will keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations .... every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever death any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. . . wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." (Exodus 31: 12-16). But, in spite of this Commandment that held out the punishment of death for any worldly work-from burning fire in the houses to taking any service from animals or slaves, the Israelites had begun to practice open violation of this law. So much so that during the time of Prophet Jeremiah (628-586 B.C.), they used to carry in loads through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day. Therefore the Prophet had to hold out the threat that he would 'light a fire in the city-gates that would burn up the buildings of Jerusalem and never be put out.' (Jeremiah 17: 21-27). Likewise Prophet Ezekiel (595-536 B.C.) also complains bitterly of the desecration of Lord's Sabbath by the Jews on a national scale (Ezekiel 20: 12-24). From these quotations it appears that the desecration of Sabbath mentioned here in the Qur'an

probably took place during this period.

124Allah puts His servants to trial in many ways. When He sees that some of them are turning away from obedience to His Law, and are growing more and more prone to disobedience, He opens the doors of disobedience before them by holding out such temptations as are very alluring to those people. Thus their evil intentions openly come to the surface and they commit such crimes from which they had refrained only for the lack of necessary opportunities for them.

125This shows that there were three kinds of people in that town. First, there were those who were openly and boldly violating the Divine rules and regulations. Then there were some who did not violate the laws themselves but silently saw others violating them: they told admonishers that it was no good to give any piece of advice to those hardened law-breakers. Lastly, there were others who were so much imbued with the sense of honor and courage that they could not tolerate such open violations of the Divine Law. They enjoined the lawbreakers to practice virtue and refrain from evil in the hope that they would return to the Right Way, or at least, they themselves would be in a position to present the proof before their Lord that they, on their part, did their duty to admonish those law-breakers. Accordingly, when the scourge of Allah befell that township, the only people who were delivered from it were those who belonged to the third group. According to the Qur'an, they were delivered because they had shown their concern for the eradication of evil. The other two groups were counted among the workers of iniquity and punished in proportion to the nature and extent of their crime.

Some commentators are of the view that it cannot be said with certainty whether the second group was among those who were delivered or among those who were punished, for the Qur'an is not explicit about this. According to a tradition from Ibn `Abbas (Allah be pleased with him), he was at first of the opinion that the second group was among those who were punished, but afterwards his disciple 'Ikrimah convinced him that it was among those who were delivered. But when we consider deeply the words of the Qur'an, we feel that his tirst opinion was correct for it is obvious that on the occasion of a scourge, the concerned township was divided into two groups only. One group consisted of those who were visited by the scourge, and the other of those who were delivered from it. Now when the Qur'an is explicit that the group that was delivered consisted of those who were forbidding evil, the other two groups must have been among those who were not delivered. This conclusion is supported by "in order to offer an excuse before your Lord", and also by the succeeding verse, It is quite clear from this that the whole township, wherein the law of Allah is openly violated, is seized by His wrath, with the only exception of those who forbid evil. One will not be delivered simply because one did not violate the Law but shall (rave to show practically that one did exert one's utmost to establish virtue and eradicate vice. This view is further supported by other passages from the Qur'an and Hadith that this is the Law of Allah concerning collective crimes. The Qur'an says, "Fear that trial which will not involve in scourge only those who will be guilty of transgression from among you ....." (VIII: 25). Explaining this verse, the Holy Prophet says, "Allah dces not punish the common people for the sins of sinful people unless the common people connive at those glaring sins that are committed before their very eyes and show no displeasure at them,

in spite of the fact that they are in a position to do so. When they degenerate to such a degree, then Allah seizes the criminals as well as the connivers".

Besides this, it appears from the verses under discussion that the scourge of Allah was sent to that township in two installments. The first has been called a severe scourge. The second was "Be apes". We are of the opinion that the scourge in the first case was inflicted on both the first and the second groups, but in the second case it was inflicted on the first group only. (And Allah knows best. If I am right, this is from Allah and if I am wrong, it is from me. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.) known

126Please refer to E.N. 83, Al-Baqarah.

127The Arabic word (ta-azzana) "to give notice" or ,"to make known".

128Such a warning had been administered over and over again to the Israelites ever since the eighth century before the Christian era and is contained in the Books of Isaiah. Jeremiah and of the Prophets after them. Then Prophet Christ also administered the same in several of his addresses in the Gospels. Last of all, the Qur'an also gave the same warning. The fact that since then the Jewish people have always been abased and degraded at one place or the other is a clear proof that the Qur'an and those Books are really the Books of Allah.

129In other words, "They commit a sin, like illegal possession, knowing well that it is a sin, in the expectation of forgiveness. They rely on the presumption that they are the favorites of Allah; therefore, they will be pardoned somehow or other, in spite of what they did. That is why they neither feel ashamed bf a sin nor repent of it. Moreover they would again commit a similar sin, as soon as there is another opportunity for it. What a wretched people they are! They inherited the Book that was to make them the leaders of the world; yet they aspired to nothing higher than to grab the transitory things of this world. Thus they became the wretched worshipers of this world, instead of being the bearers of the banner of justice and righteousness and the leaders of virtue and reform."

130They themselves have studied the Book, and know that there is absolutely no mention in the Torah of an unconditional salvation of the Israelites. When neither Allah guaranteed to them nor did their Prophets ever give them the assurance that they would obtain salvation anyhow, what right have they to ascribe to Allah what He never told them? Besides this, their guilt becomes more heinous because they were breaking the Covenant they had made with Allah that they would say nothing but the truth in the name of Allah.

131This verse may be translated in two ways. The one that has been adopted in the Text means this: "The abode of the Hereafter is worthy of good people and will be given only to those who arc God fearing for it is not the monopoly of any person or family as such. How can it be possible that one should commit

such deeds as deserve punishment yet get a good place in the Hereafter, just because one is a Jew or an Israelite"? The second rendering will be this: The abode of the Hereafter is better for God fearing people who prefer the good life in the Hereafter to a life of pleasure in this world, for only those people who have no fear of Allah can prefer the pleasures of this life to the joys and peace of the Next World.

132This is a reference to the event that occurred at the foot of Mt. Sinai on the occasion when the Stone Tablets containing the Covenant were given to Moses. The Bible says, "And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly". (Exodus 19: 17-18).

Allah caused such conditions before taking a Covenant from the children of Israel in the above environment so that they might realize the greatness, the exaltation and the glory of Allah with Whom they were making the Covenant, and the importance of the Covenant itself. It does not, however, mean that they were not willing to enter into the Compact with Allah and were coerced to do so in this terrifying way. The fact is that they all were sincere believers and had gone to the foot of the mountain for the very object of making a Covenant with Allah. But, instead of making the Covenant in an ordinary way, these awe-inspiring conditions were created in order to impress on theta its great importance so that they should keep in mind the power of the Almighty God, with Whom they were making it and the fear of grave consequences of breaking it.

Here the address to the Israelites comes to an end. In the succeeding passages, it is directed to mankind in general, and to the people of the Holy Prophet in particular.

133The previous theme ended with this that God took a Covenant from the children of Israel to the effect that they should surrender to and obey their Lord. From here the address is being directed to the whole of mankind, which is being reminded that all the people, and not the Israelites alone, are bound by a . Covenant. Therefore they shall be called upon to render individually an account as to how far they had observed it.

134We team from several traditions that. this thing happened on the occasion of the creation of Adam. At that time the angels were gathered together and commanded to bow down before him and man's appointment as Allah's vicegerent was proclaimed; likewise the whole of mankind that was to be born up to the Day of Resurrection was brought into existence at one and the same time and imbued with common-sense and brought forth in His presence and asked to testify that Allah is their Lord.

A tradition of Hadrat Ubayy-bin-Ka`ab which is most probably based on the knowledge he received from the Holy Prophet, is the best commentary or this verse. He says:

"Allah gathered the whole of mankind and arranged it into separate groups according to their kinds or

periods and gave them human shape and power of speech. Then He took a Covenant from them and made them witnesses concerning themselves and asked, `Am I not your Lord?' They answered, 'Most certainly, You alone are our Lord.' Then Allah said, `I ask the earth and the heavens and your father Adam to bear witness to this effect lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection that you had no knowledge of this. So note it well that none other than I is worthy of worship and that there is no other Lord than I. You should not set up any partner with Me. I will send to you My Messengers, who will remind you of this Covenant that you are Making with Me; I will also send My Book to you . At this the whole of mankind replied, "We bear witness to this: You alone are our Lord and our Deity: we have no other lord or deity than You."

Some people take vv.172-173 as a symbolic narration: They are of the opinion that in this way the Qur'an intends merely to impress the fact that Allah's Divinity is implanted in the human nature and relates it in a way as if it had happened as a tangible event. But we do not consider this interpretation as correct because the Qur'an and the Hadith describe it as an event which actually took place. More than that it has been asserted that on the Day of Judgment the event of the Covenant will be brought forward as an authentic proof against mankind. Therefore there is no reason why we should regard this event as a symbolic narration. We believe that this event actually took place in the physical world. The All-Powerful Allah did actually bring into existence and gave understanding and power of speech to each and every individual in the posterity of Adam whom He intended to create up to the Day of Resurrection and assembled before Himself at one and the same time and took the Covenant from all of them to the effect that they had no other lord or god than Himself and that they had no other right way of life than Islam (surrender and submission to Allah).

Those who consider such an assemblage as impossible are in fact skeptical of the limitless powers of Allah: otherwise they would not have entertained any doubts about it because this is as easy for Allah as the gradual birth of mankind. The All-Powerful Allah, Who is bringing human beings into existence in the way he is doing now, has also the power to assemble all mankind before its birth and after its death. It meals to reason that Allah let all mankind know that He was going to make His vicegerents after giving them wisdom and understanding and authority and the right to exploit the resources of the earth, and that He also took the oath of allegiance from them. Thus it is obvious and clear that there is nothing impossible or strange in this assemblage of the whole of mankind on the occasion of Adam's creation.

135In this verse the object, for which the Covenant was taken from the whole of mankind has been stated: it was to make each and every individual fully and consciously responsible for his deeds so that those who would rebel against their Lord should be held accountable for their guilt. It has been made plain that after this Covenant they could not justify any sin on the ground that they had committed it in ignorance nor could they shift the responsibility for deviation on to their predecessors. Allah warns that by taking this Covenant He has imbued in the heart of every individual that He alone is his Allah and Lord. Therefore none can absolve himself from the responsibility for a deviation, saying, "I was quite unaware of this", or "I was led astray by my wrong environment."

In this connection, let us now consider a few questions that might arise. Supposing that this Covenant did take place, do we have any remembrance of this? Is anyone of us conscious that he was brought before his Allah on the occasion of the Creation and that the said dialogue did actually take place? If the answer is in the negative, then how can it be justified to bring such a Covenant as evidence against us, when we do not remember it nor are conscious of this Covenant?

The answer is that this will be brought against us as an evidence because, though its remembrance and consciousness has been removed from the memory and the conscious mind, it has been retained in the subconscious mind.

As to why it has been removed from the memory and the conscious mind the answer is obvious. If the impression of the Covenant had remained fresh in the memory and the conscious mind, then everyone would have automatically observed it, and the trial and test would have become meaningless. Thus the very object for which man has been created would have been tendered meaningless. It has, however, been retained in the subconscious mind as a potentiality, and can be brought into consciousness by intuition and internal factors as in the case of all other branches of subconscious knowledge. The fact is that whatever man has achieved in culture, civilization, morality, sciences and all other aspects of human activities, lay hidden as potentialities and was brought out by external factors and intuition. But it is also a fact that no education, no training, no environment, no external factor, no intuition is capable of creating any other thing than the one that already lies potentially in the subconscious mind. Likewise none of these factors is in any way capable of totally effacing the things that lie hidden potentially in the subconscious mind. The most that these factors can do is to pervert its nature, but in spite of all efforts to pervert it, it will still remain latent in the subconscious mind and will try to come to the surface in response to external factors. The following is true of all the branches of potential knowledge:

All these exist as potentialities in our subconscious minds and prove their existence when they appear as actual actions.

All potentialities require external stimuli, teaching and training to take practical shapes which, in fact. are a response of our potentialities to the external stimuli.

All these things can be suppressed and made dormant by wrong desires and environment and perversions but can never be effaced totally from the subconscious mind. Therefore these can be reformed and converted by the help of inner feelings and external efforts.

Exactly the same is true of the intuitional knowledge we have regarding our own position in the universe and our relationship to the Creator of the universe.

That this knowledge does really exist is proved by the fact that it has been appearing every now and then

in every period of human life in every pan of the earth, in every habitation, in every posterity and in every generation and that no earthly power has been successful in effacing it.

That this conforms to the reality is shown by the fact that whenever this knowledge has actually been applied to practical life, it has always produced good and useful results.

There has always been need of some external appeal to cause them to appear and take practical shapes. Accordingly the Prophets, the Books, and inviters to the Truth from among the followers of the Prophets have been performing this service. That is why the Qur'an calls them remembrancers: for the Prophets, the Books and the inviters to the Truth do not create anything new in the minds of the people but refresh and bring to the surface by reminders what was already latent in them.

Another proof of the existence of this hidden knowledge in the human mind is that in every age, it has made a positive response to the call of the inviter and has come out as soon as it recognized his voice.

Above all, the greatest proof of the existence of this knowledge is that it Has survived in the human heap in spite of the strenuous and continuous efforts to suppress, conceal and pervert it. Though the powers of ignorance and folly, lusts and prejudices, misguidance and temptations, have succeeded in producing shirk, atheism, irreligiousness, deviation, they have failed to efface the impress of this inherent knowledge from the human heart. That is why it comes to the surface whenever efforts are made to revive it.

As regards the evidence of this inherent knowledge on the Day of Judgment, Allah will refresh and revive the memory of this Covenant, whereby they all acknowledged Allah alone as their Lord and Deity. Then He will show that this remained embedded in their hearts, in spite of its persistent denial in this world and will provide from their own selves the proof of the fact that the impress of this Covenant was always present in their minds and will show from the records of their lives how and when they suppressed the voice of this inherent knowledge: how and when their intuitional knowledge rebelled against their deviations, and how often it urged theta to respond to the invitation of the inviters to the Truth and how they silenced their inner voice by means of different pretexts. At that time, when all the secrets will be exposed, none will be able to put forward any excuses. Everyone shall have to confess one's guilt in plain and clear words. That is why the Qur'an says that they shall not say, "We had no knowledge of this Covenant," but will have to confess, "We were disbelievers and knowingly denied the Truth". They will stand witness against themselves to the effect that they were disbelievers.

136"Our Signs" are the impresses of the knowledge of the Truth that have been embedded in the human heart and point clearly to Allah's existence.

137That is, "So that these people should (turn away from the paths of deviation and rebellion and) come back (to the paths of obedience and service)".

138The wording of the Text shows that he was not an imaginary person invented for the sake of a parable but did really exist. Allah and His Messenger did not mention him by name because the purpose for which the event had been narrated was served without this. Therefore his name was kept secret so as to avoid giving him unnecessary notoriety; and this generous way has generally been followed both in the Qur'an and the Traditions. That is why they have not mentioned the name of the person who has been cited as a bad example. Some commentators have, however, mentioned some specific names belonging to the ancient history or to the time of the Holy Prophet. For instance, some mention the name of Ba'alam, the son of Ba`ura, others that of Umayyah-bin-Abi-Assalt and Saifi-ibn Ar-Rahib. But the fact is that the identity of that person has not been established by the Qur'an or the Hadith. Therefore it is still a secret, but the parable applies to everyone who bears such a conduct.

139As this passage deals with a very important subject, it requires detailed continents.

The person, who has been held out as a bad type, possessed the knowledge of the Revelations of Allah and was acquainted with the Reality.

Therefore it was reasonably expected that his knowledge ought to have guarded him against the way he knew to be wrong, and guided him to the way he knew to be right. Then Allah would have exalted him to the high rank of humanity because of his practice in accordance with the knowledge of the Revelation. But he became inclined towards the benefits, lusts and comforts of the world and succumbed to temptations. He was so overpowered by avarice of these lower desires that he discarded all the higher things and let go waste all the rational and moral potentialities of progress. Thus he transgressed all the limits that he ought to have observed in accordance with the demand of his knowledge. When Satan, who was lying in ambush nearby, saw him turning away deliberately and willfully from the Truth because of his moral weaknesses, he chased him down and down froth one abyss to the other, till he fell into the company of those who had utterly last their reason under his misguidance.

Allah has likened such a person to a dog because of his similarity to it in avarice and lust. The dog is proverbial for these characteristics: its ever hanging tongue and watering mouth point to its insatiable greed: it goes on smelling the earth even when it is hit with a piece of stone; it picks it up in its teeth, hoping that it might be a piece of bone. Its intense greed for exclusive ownership becomes manifest when it comes across a big carcass, sufficient to feed a number of dogs; but it does not let any other dog share it. The second characteristic of the dog is its being very sexy. It is because of these things that the worldly man, who transgresses all bounds imposed by Faith and knowledge, has been likened to a dog. Then he, like the dog, looks for nothing but the means of filling up his belly and gratifying his lust.

140It does not mean that.... "There are many Jinns and human beings whom We have created for the sole purpose of sending them to Hell and with the intention of making them fuel for it." But what it means is this: "We created them and gave them hearts, brains, eyes and ears but these wicked people did not

make use of these faculties to discern the Truth from falsehood and made themselves fuel for Hell by their evil deeds."

The way that has been adopted to express the above thing is that of showing intense regret in human language. For example, when the young sons of a mother are killed in the battle she says to the people, "I brought them up to become fodder for the cannon". But she does not mean that she really brought them up for this purpose. She wants to show her intense regret and sorrow and blame those who were responsible for the battle.

141Now that the discourse is coming to an end, the people are being admonished and reproved to guard against some well known deviations. At the same time they have been warned of the serious consequences of the attitude of ridicule and denial they were adopting towards the Message of the Holy Prophet.

142This admonition about giving names to Allah is of great importance, for different names reflect different concepts which people form of Him in their minds. It is obvious that people give such names to things as express their conception of them. The defects in the conceptions of things are reflected by the defects in the names and defects in the names show the defects in the conceptions. Besides this, man's relationships and his dealings depend on that particular. conception which he forms about some one or some thing. The defect in the conception of things shows itself in the defect of one's relationship to it. On the other hand, if one's conception of a thing is correct and right, one's relationship to it will also be of the correct and right son. The same is true in the case of one's relationship with Allah. The error one commits in giving wrong names to Allah (whether for distinction with reference to His attributes) is the result of one's error in the creed and in the conception of Allah and His attributes. A man commits the same kind of error and to the same extent in the formation of his moral attitude towards life that he commits in his creed and his conception of Allah. In fact a man's moral attitude towards life is wholly governed by his conception of Allah and his relationship to Him and the universe. That is why Allah has commanded the people to give most excellent names to Him and to refrain from giving wrong names to Hint, for He is worthy of excellent names only. Therefore the best thing is to give Him excellent names because the results of the perversion of His names are most serious "Excellent names" are those names that point to the greatness, the supremacy, the sanctity, the purity and the perfection of His attributes. It shall be deemed perversion of His names to give Hint such names as are below His dignity; which are against the reverence due to Him; which ascribe defects and shortcomings to Him or mislead one to form wrong creeds about Him. Again it shall also be a perversion to give such names to any of His creation as are worthy of Allah alone

As regards the Command ".....leave alone those who pervert His names," it means, ".....you need not involve yourself in useless discussions with them, if they do not listen to your admonition and do not try to understand what you say, but use crooked arguments to confuse the issue They themselves shall see the consequences of their deviation".

143These questions have been posed to refute the charge that their comrade, Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), was suffering from a disorder of the mind, for otherwise he would not have given the Message he was conveying. They have been asked to reflect upon the fact that he was born and bred among them and had been their comrade before he claimed that he was appointed a Messenger by Allah. During all those years they had known him to be of a sound mind and of a good nature. Thus it is obvious that they charged him of having a distracted mind not because of what he said before his Prophethood but because of what he proclaimed as a Prophet. That is why they have been asked to reflect upon and point out anything from his Message which they regarded as meaningless, unreal and irrational. If they had ever reflected upon the wisdom of the wonderful administration of the heavens and the earth or observed closely any creation of Allah, they would have come to the inevitable conclusion that the whole system of the universe, nay, each and every particle of His creation is a clear evidence of the Truth of His Message. For all these things refute shirk and prove the Oneness of Allah and invite people to His worship and arouse in them the sense of responsibility and accountability. And that was what their brother was preaching.

144That is to say, "They do not realize even this much that none knows the exact time of one's death, and that they should, therefore, make the best use of the respite that has been given them and repent and reform themselves; otherwise they will meet with serious consequences."

145That is, "I cannot tell you the exact time of Resurrection because I myself do not know anything about the unseen. Had I possessed any knowledge of the future, I would not have suffered any harm because I would have avoided it and achieved many benefits because of my fore knowledge. Therefore it is very foolish on your part to ask me about it merely to test my Prophethood."

146In order to understand this passage, it should be kept in mind that it criticizes the pagan Arabs for associating partners with Allah in the matter of the birth of children. They have been told to remember that the first man and his mate were brought into being by Allah: and they could not deny this. Then they also knew that it is He Who has arranged the birth of human beings after the first pair: that it is He by Whose will a woman becomes pregnant and who nourishes the child in her womb in a wonderful manner, and that it is He Who imbues it with a sound body and sound mind with various powers and capabilities and lets it come out as a healthy human being. They could not deny that all this is in the power of Allah alone. If Allah willed, He could have created a monkey, a serpent or any other animal in her womb or made the child deformed or physically or mentally defective. They knew that no one had the power to make any change in Allah's creation. That is why all their hopes were centred in Allah during the period of pregnancy and prayers were invoked for the birth of a perfect child. But it is an irony that the pagans as well as the Believers change their whole attitude after the birth of a child, and, instead of being grateful to Allah, they make their grateful offerings to some god or goddess or saint or the like and give such names as smack of shirk-Pir Bakhsh, "Favor of the Saint," or Abdur-Rasul, "Servant of the Prophet" etc.

Though the passage is quite clear, yet a misunderstanding has arisen about it, which has been supported by weak traditions. The mention of the first man and woman (Adam and Eve) in the beginning, and immediately after it of a man and a woman, has led to the confusion that both the pairs were one and the same. Therefore some commentators were of the opinion that the man was Adam and the woman who became pregnant was Eve and that they prayed to Allah for their child in the womb, but when it was born, they associated others with Allah in this favor. Then, with the help of weak traditions they concocted a complete story about it: When several children of Eve died soon after their birth, Satan came to her at the birth of one, and seduced her saying, "If you give him the name of `Abdul Harith, the servant of Satan, he will survive." It is all the more regrettable that some of these traditions have been linked up to the Holy Prophet. But the fact is that all these traditions are unauthentic and are not supported by the wording of the Qur'an and by the context in which they occur. The Qur'an criticizes the pagans for associating others with Allah in the matter of birth, when they themselves acknowledge that it is He Who is the Creator of the children which are born as a result of the cohabitation of a man and a woman. That is why they also invoke Allah for the safe delivery of the child; when they are not sure of the perfection of the child. But after the safe delivery of a sound child, they turn to others with gratitude and offerings. It is thus clear that it is not any particular man and woman who have been admonished for their behavior, but every man and every woman, (including pagan men and women) who behave like that.

In this connection it should also be noted that the condition of the present-day Muslims is even worse than that of the pagan Arabs whom the Qur'an has condemned in this passage. They committed shirk after the delivery of the child, though before this they prayed to Allah for the child. But the Muslims of today, who claim to be the bearers of the creed of Tauhid, go far beyond this. These wretched people pray to others even for the birth of a child and make vows to others during the period of pregnancy, and after the delivery of the child make offerings to the associates they set up with Allah. Yet they consider those Arabs as pagans who deserved Hell, and themselves as Believers in One Allah, for whom Paradise has been guaranteed!

147This is to show the helplessness of the deities of the pagans. Not to speak of guiding their worshipers to the Right Way, they themselves are unable to follow the guidance of others. So much so that they cannot give any answer to the call of any one.

148It is obvious that here they are being criticized for one of the three kinds of shirk they practiced. First, they worshiped idols, images or some other symbols of the objects of their worship. The second kind of shirk was the worship of some persons or spirits which were represented by idols, pictures, etc. The third kind of shirk consisted of the wrong creeds that were the basis of these practices of shirk. All the three kinds of practices have been criticized severely in the Qur'an at different places. Here it condemns the idols before which the pagan Arabs performed their religious rituals and presented their supplications and made their offerings.

149This is the answer to the threats which the pagan Arabs held out to the Holy Prophet to this effect, "If you do not refrain from opposing our deities and from preaching against them they will inflict their wrath on you and destroy you."

149aThat is, "Those who are under the influence of Satans".

150In this passage Allah has taught His Messenger some very important things about the methods of inviting people to promulgating the Message of Islam, and of guiding and reforming people. The object is to instruct the Holy Prophet and, through him, his successors to enable them to carry on his mission after him. Some salient points are given below and should be considered in the order they are given:

(1) The most important thing is that the inviter to the Truth should have a large and tender heart, and should be forgiving and forbearing. He should be friendly to his companions, kind to the common people, and should show forbearance to his opponents. He should tolerate the weaknesses of his comrades and endure patiently the persecution of his enemies. He should keep cool even under the greatest provocation and connive at the most unpleasant things. He should bear patiently the bitterest words, the most wicked slanders and the most cruel persecutions. Harsh treatment, hard-heartedness, bitter talk, and vindictive retaliations are as harmful as poison for this work: this spoils the work and does not mend it.

There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet to the same effect: "My Lord has enjoined me to utter what is just whether I am in a state of anger or happiness: to try my best to have cordial relations even with those who are inimical to me: to render their rights even to those who deprive me of my rights: to forgive even those who are cruel to me." He advised those whom he sent on this Mission: "Wherever you go, your visit should be a harbinger of happiness and not of hatred: you should become the source of comfort to the people and not of bringing hardships on them". Allah has also praised this characteristic of the Holy Prophet: ("O Messenger,) it is a great blessing of Allah that you are very lenient towards and gentle with them. If you had been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have scattered away from you. . . " (III: 159).

(2) The second formula for the success of this Mission is to avoid philosophizing and to enjoin those simple and well-known virtues that are universally accepted to be virtues, and are easily recognized by common sense which an ordinary person possesses. Thus the appeal of the inviter to the Truth convinces every one. Its greatest advantage is that it helps win over the common people to the side of promulgators of the Truth, against its antagonists. When the common people, in spite of their prejudices, see on one side a gentle and kind person inviting them towards simple virtues, which they themselves wider stand well, and on the other, his antagonists opposing his noble mission with unmoral and inhuman devices, they turn away by and by from those degraded opponents and come to the inviter of the Truth. As a result of this, in the end, only those remain in tire field to oppose the Truth, whose own interests are closely linked with falsehood or those who are slaves of the traditions of their forefathers and of the customs of ignorance. The Holy Prophet owed his great success in Arabia to this wise policy. Then his

successors achieved the same in the adjoining countries, where Islam spread by leaps and bounds and was accepted by the overwhelming majority of the people.

(3) The other important instruction that has been given for the promulgation of Islam is to avoid useless discussions with the ignorant people. The inviter to the Truth should always be strictly on the guard against involvement in useless talk and discussion with mischievous and quarrelsome people. He should take the utmost care to approach and converse with those people only who adopt a reasonable and rational attitude towards his Message. As soon as he feels that his addressees are adopting the attitude of ignorance and are resorting to argumentations, wranglings and taunts, he should make an honorable retreat from them. This is because it is not only useless to be involved in such things but it is harmful to the mission, as valuable time and energy, that could have been usefully employed for the promulgation of the Message, go to waste.

(4) In case the inviter to the Truth feels that the provocations from the mischievous people are becoming too much for him to bear and he cannot withstand their tyrannies, mischiefs, foolish objections and accusations, he should at once realize that it is Satan who is tempting him to retaliate. Then the best thing is to seek refuge in Allah, and invoke His help to protect His servant from doing in anger anything that might be harmful to his Mission. This is possible only if one remains cool-headed even under the greatest provocations, for one can never think or act wisely if one is easily excited by anger, insult, injustice or cruelty etc. But Satan who does not like this Mission to succeed and is always devising schemes to defeat it, first incites own disciples to attack the inviter to the Truth and then incites him to make counter-attacks on them. As Satan's appeal is couched in very alluring words and pious terms, it is not an easy thing to withstand it. That is why pious people have been fore-warned, in vv. 201-202, of this serious danger and instructed that if they intend to refrain from evil, they should immediately get alarmed as soon as they feel the evil effects of the temptation of Satan and its incitement in their hearts and stand on their guard. Then they will clearly see the right course that they should adopt on such occasions and under such circumstances for the sake of their Mission.

As for "the brethren of Satan", they become self-seekers under their influence, and cannot withstand their temptation. So they follow satans, who tempt them to retaliate, and resort to every kind of abuse and dishonesty like their enemies.

Besides the above-mentioned particular implications of this passage, it bears a general meaning as well. It helps differentiate the way of the pious from that of the impious. Those who really fear Allah and sincerely desire to refrain from evil, are so sensitive that even if an evil thought so much as touches their hearts, it pricks their consciences and rankles in their hearts and they seek Allah's refuge from Satan. This is because they are not used to evil thoughts, evil desires and evil intentions, for these are foreign to their nature. As soon as they become conscious of their presence in their minds, their eyes are opened and their consciences recognize them. Then they seek Allah's refuge from Satan in order to cleanse their hearts of those dirty things. In contrast to them, those, who do not tear Allah nor desire to refrain from evil

and those who have satans as their brethren, go on cherishing evil thoughts, evil intentions and evil designs in their hearts without feeling anything strange in them. So much so that no sense of cleanliness is left in their minds: and in due course, these ding things take practical shapes and expose them before the world.

151This question of the disbelievers implied a taunt. They meant to say, "Well sir, as you are posing to be a Prophet, you ought to have faked up a miracle in proof thereof". The grandeur that is contained in the answer that follows is worthy of the Book of Allah.

152This is the answer to the question: "I am not in a position to invent miracles or compose or patch up verses on your demand or when I feel their need. I am only a Messenger and my duty is to follow the Guidance of the One Who has sent me. Therefore instead of demanding miracles from me, you should consider seriously the contents of the Qur'an that has been sent down to me, as it contains spiritual lights. Those who accept this, see the straight path of life, and their good moral qualities begin to show the signs of "Divine Mercy".

153It means, "In your bigotry and obduracy you turn a deaf ear to the Qur'an when it is being recited, and make a loud noise so that no one should be able to listen to it. Leave this wrong attitude towards it and listen to it with attention and consider the teachings contained in it. It is just possible that your acquaintance with it may enlighten your hearts and make you co-sharers with the Believers in the mercy of your Lord."

Incidentally, it should be noted that the above answer to the taunts of the opponents is so nice and sweet and appealing to the hearts that words cannot describe its excellence. There is also a lesson of wisdom for those who are engaged in the missionary work.

Though the real object of this verse is the same that has been stated above, incidentally it also enjoins the hearers to remain silent and listen to it as a mark of respect which is due to the Book of Allah. It is also deduced from this that when the Imam recites the Qur'an during the Salat, the followers in the congregation should listen to it in silence, and they should not recite anything. There is, however, difference of opinion among the Imams in regard to its interpretation. According to Imam Abu Hanifah and his companions, the followers in the congregation should not recite anything whether the Imam is reciting the Qur'an aloud or silently in his mind. However, Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad arc of the opinion that only in that case when the Imam is reciting the Qur'an aloud, the followers should not recite anything, but in the other case they should recite Surah Al-Fatihah. But according to Imam Shafi'i, the followers must recite Surah AI-Fatihah, whether the Imam is reciting loudly or silently in his mind. He bases his opinion on the Traditions according to which one's Sales is not complete without the recital of Surah AI-Fatihah.

154"Remember your Lord" means "offer .Salat" as well as "keep Allah in mind whether by utterance or

without it."

And "morning and evening" means both the times as well as "always". Therefore "Remember your Lord morning and evening" means "Offer Salat in the morning and in the evening", and also "always keep Allah in mind."

The Surah concludes with the above admonition, which is meant to warn the Muslims against their negligence in the remembrance of Allah, for this alone is responsible for all the chaos and the evils in the world. Whenever man forgets that Allah is his Lord, and that he is the servant of Allah Who has sent him to this world for a trial and that he shall have to render his account to Him immediately after his death, he deviates from the Right Way and commits acts of wickedness and immorality. Therefore the man who intends to follow the Right Way and guides others to the same Way, should strictly guard against such a negligence. That is why the Qur'an has emphasized, over and over again, the importance of the observance of Salat and of the remembrance of Allah and of turning to Him on each and every occasion.

155In contrast to the ways of pride and vanity of satans that mislead into disobedience to Allah, and consequently to the depths of degradation, the example of the angels has been cited to teach the lesson of humility. They bow down before Allah and are always engaged in His service. Therefore if one desires to achieve high ranks in the sight of Allah, one should follow the angels and refrain from the paths of satans.

156The Arabic word(yusabb-i-huna-hu) means, "They acknowledge and declare that Allah is flawless, and is absolutely free from every sort of defect, error or weakness, and has neither any partners nor compeers nor the like of Him, and that they are always engaged in this"

157Everyone, who recites this verse or heats its recital, is required to perform a (sajdah-prostration) so that ones physical state may be in agreement wish the angels near to Allah to give a practical proof of ones humility, servitude and obedience to Allah simultaneously with His angels.

This is the first of the fourteen verses of the Qur'an, the recital of which requires the performance of a sajdah (prostration). Though all the Jurists agree that a prostration should be performed at these places, there is a difference in regard to its obligatory status. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, it is wajib (compulsory) but the other scholars are of the opinion that it is sunnat (optional). It may also be noted that a thing which is sunnat is not as binding as wajib but its intentional omission, though not sinful, is considered bad for a true Muslim and its permanent omission is sinful.

As regards the manner of the performance of sajdah. we learn from Traditions that it was different in form on different occasions. Sometimes while the Holy Prophet was reciting a verse that required the performance of sajdah, he himself would prostrate then and there, and everyone in the gathering did the

same so much so that if one did not find room fur it on the ground. he would perform it by laying his head on the back of the man in front of him. We also learn from Traditions that on the occasion of the Conquest of Makkah, when the Holy Prophet was reciting the Qur'an, a verse requiring the performance of sajdah occurred. Then those who were standing on the ground performed it on the ground, while those who were riding their horses or caramels performed it on the backs of animals they were riding. Sometimes when he recited a verse requiring sajdah during his address, he came down from the pulpit, and performed it on the ground and then climbed the pulpit and resumed his address.

The majority of the Muslims arc of the opinion that the conditions for the performance of sajdah are the same as for the performance of Salat. But there is no proof for these conditions in the Traditions concerning sajdah. we find from them that when a person hears a verse requiring sajdah, he should bend down his head wherever and in whatever position he may be irrespective of these conditions. He should not mind whether he is in a state of ablutions or not; whether he can turn his face towards the qiblah or not; whether it is possible for hull to prostrate his head on the ground or not. We trod examples of the lcarncd and pious people in the past following the same practice. According to Imam Bukhari, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar would perfom sajdah whether he was In a state of ablutions or not. It is cited in Fatehulbari that Abu 'Abdur-Rehman Sulami would recite the Qur'an while he was walking and would merely bend down his head when he read a verse requiring sajdah, whether he was in a state of ablutions or not and whether he was facing qiblah or not. From these we have come to the conclusion that, though the method followed by the majority is more prudent, if a person follows a practice different from that of the majority, he should not be reproved for this because there is no proof in Sunnah for the method followed by the majority, while there are examples of learned personages for this practice.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

8. Surah Al Anfal (The Spoils of War)

Name

The Surah takes its name Al-Anfal (The Bounties) from the first verse.

The Period of Revelation

It was revealed in 2 A. H. after the Battle of Badr, the first battle between Islam and *kufr*. As it contains a detailed and comprehensive review of the Battle, it appears that most probably it was revealed at one and the same time. But it is also possible that some of the verses concerning the problems arising as a result of this Battle might have been revealed later and incorporated at the proper places to make it a continuous whole. At any rate, in the whole Surah there is nothing that might show that it is a collection of a couple of discourses, that have been patched up together.

Historical Background

Before reviewing the Surah, it is worthwhile to consider the events that led to the Battle of Badr.

During the first decade or so of the Prophethood at Makkah, the Message had proved its firmness, and stability. This was the result of two things. First, the Messenger, who possessed the highest qualities of character, was performing his Mission with wisdom, foresight and magnanimity. He had shown by his conduct that he had made up his mind to carry the movement to a successful end and, therefore, was ready to face all sorts of dangers and obstacles in the way. Secondly, the Message was so charming that it attracted the minds and hearts of the people irresistibly towards itself. So much so that all obstacles of ignorance, superstition and petty prejudices failed to check, its advance. That is why the Arab upholders of the ways of "ignorance,' who looked down upon it in its initial stages, had' begun to reckon it as a serious menace during the last period of the stay of the Holy Prophet at Makkah, and were bent on crushing it with all the force at their command. But in spite of the above-mentioned strength, the movement still lacked certain things to lead it to victory:-

First, it had not yet been fully proved that it had gathered round it a sufficient number of such followers who not only believed in its truth, but also had such an intense devotion to its principles that they were ready to expend all their energies and all that they possessed in the struggle for its success and establishment. So much so that they were ready to sacrifice their lives in the fight against the whole world itself even though they should be their own nearest relative. It is true that the followers of Islam had endured the severest persecutions at the hands of the Quraish of Makkah and had given a good proof of the firmness of their faith and their strong relation with Islam, yet further trials were required to show that Islam had succeeded in acquiring such a band of followers which considered nothing dearer than its ideal and was ready to sacrifice life for it.

Secondly, though the voice of Islam had reached' every part of the country, its effects were yet scattered and its acquired strength was spread here and there: it had not yet gathered sufficient force essential for a decisive conflict with the old established order of "ignorance".

Thirdly, Islam had yet no home of its own and had not established itself firmly anywhere in the land where it could consolidate its power and make it a base for further action. For the Muslims were scattered all over the country and were living among the unbelievers as aliens whom their bloodthirsty enemies wanted to uproot from their own homes.

Fourthly, the Muslims had not yet had an opportunity to demonstrate practically the blessings of the system of life based on Islam. There was neither any Islamic culture, nor any social, economic or political system; nor were there any established principles of war and peace for their guidance. Therefore the Muslims had no opportunity for demonstrating those moral principles on which they intended to build their entire system of life; nor had it been proved on the touchstone of trial that the Muslims as a community were sincere in their proclamation of the Message.

Allah created opportunities for making up these deficiencies.

During the last four years or so of the Prophet's stay at Makkah, the voice of Islam had been proving effective at Yathrab and the people for various reasons had been accepting the message more readily than other clans of Arabia. So much so that in the twelfth year of Prophethood on the occasion of *Haj* a deputation of 75 people met the Holy Prophet in the darkness of night. These people not only accepted Islam, but also offered to give him and his followers a home. As this was a most epoch making opportunity provided by Allah, the Holy Prophet took advantage of it.

The significance of this offer was quite clear to the people of Yathrab, and they fully realized that this was not an invitation to a mere fugitive, but to the Messenger of Allah so that he should become their leader and ruler. Likewise they knew that they were not inviting the Muslim refugees to give them shelter from persecution but to assemble them from all over the country for their integration with themselves to form an organized community. Thus the offer of the people of Yathrab was to make Yathrab the "City of Islam." Accordingly the Holy Prophet accepted their invitation and made it the first "City of Islam" in Arabia.

And the people of Yathrab were fully aware of the implications of this offer. It was indeed a declaration of war against the whole of Arabia, and an invitation to their own social and economic boycott as well. And when the *Ansar* from Yathrab declared their allegiance to the Holy Prophet at Aqabah, they knew fully well its consequences. During the course of the formal declaration of allegiance, Asad-bin- Zurarah, the youngest of all the delegates from Yathrab, stood up and said, "0 people of Yathrab! Just listen to me and consider the matter carefully in all its aspects. Though we have come to him, regarding him only as a Messenger of Allah, we should know that we shall be inviting the enmity of the whole of Arabia. For when we take him away to Yathrab, we shall be attacked and our children may be put to the sword. Therefore if you have the courage in your hearts to face it, then and then only, you should declare your allegiance to him and Allah will give you its reward. But if you love your lives more than him and his Message, then leave this matter and frankly excuse yourselves, for at this time Allah may accept your excuses."

Abbas bin Ubadah bin Naalah, another member of the delegation, reiterated the same thing, saying,

Do you understand the implication of the declaration of your allegiance to this person?" (Voices, "Yes, we know it.") "You are challenging the whole world to war by your declaration of allegiance to him. There is every likelihood of a serious menace to your lives and properties. Therefore consider it well. If you have any idea lurking in your minds that you will then hand him over to his enemies, it is much better to leave him alone now, because that conduct shall bring shame and disgrace to you in this world and the next. On the other hand, if you have sincerely resolved that you will endure all kinds of consequences that will follow as a result of this invitation, then it would be the best thing to take the oath of allegiance to him because, by God, this will surely bring good to you in this world as well as in the next world."

At this all the members of the delegation cried with one voice, "We are ready and prepared to risk all our wealth and our noble kith and kin for his sake."

It was then that the famous oath of allegiance, which is known as the "Second Oath of Allegiance at Aqabah" was taken.

On the other side, the people of Makkah also understood fully well the implications of this matter from their own point of view. They realized that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), who, they knew well, had a great personality and possessed extraordinary abilities, was going to gain a strong footing, by this allegiance. For this would help integrate his followers, whose constancy, determination, and unwavering fidelity to the Messenger had been tried, into a disciplined community under his wise leadership and guidance. And they knew that this would spell death for their old ways of life. They also realized the strategic importance of. Al-Madinah to their trade, which was their chief means of livelihood.

Its geographical position was such that the Muslims could strike with advantage at the caravans traveling on the trade route between Yemen and Syria, and thus strike at the root of their economy and that of other pagan clans very effectively. The value of the trade done by the people of Makkah alone on this route, not to count that of raif and other places, amounted to about two hundred thousand *dinars* annually.

As the Quraish were fully aware of the implications of the oath of allegiance at Aqabah, they were greatly perturbed when they got wind of it the same night. At first they tried to win over the people of Al-Madinah to their side. But when they saw that the Muslims were migrating to Al- Madinah in small groups, they realized that the Holy Prophet was also going to emigrate soon from there. Then they decided to adopt an extreme measure to prevent this danger.

A few days before his migration, the Quraish held a council to consider the matter. After a good deal of argument; they decided that one person should be taken from each of the families of Quraish other than that of Banu Hashim to put an end to the life of the Holy Prophet. This was to make it difficult for the family of the Holy Prophet to fight alone with all the other families of the Quraish and thus to force them to accept blood-money for his murder-instead of taking revenge from them, but by the grace of Allah their plot against the life of the Holy Prophet failed because of his admirable foresight and full trust in Allah, and he reached Al- Madinah safe and sound. When they could not prevent his emigration, it occurred to them to exploit Abdullah bin Ub`ai who had begun to cherish a grievance against the Holy Prophet since his arrival at Al-Madinah. He was an influential chief of Al-Madinah and the people had agreed to make him their king. But when the majority of Aus and Khazraj clan became Muslims and acknowledged the Holy Prophet as their leader, guide and ruler, all his hopes of becoming a king came to an end. Therefore the Quraish wrote to him, "As you have given shelter to our enemy, we tell you plainly that you should either fight with him yourself or exile him from your city otherwise we swear by God that we will invade your city, kill your males and make your females our slave girls." This letter added fuel to the flames of his jealousy and he was inclined to do some mischief, but the Holy Prophet took timely precautions and defeated his evil designs.

The Quraish got another opportunity to hold out a threat. When Sa'ad bin Mu'az, another chief of Al-Madinah, went to Makkah to perform `*Umrah*, Abu Jahl interrupted him at the very door of the Kabah, saying, "Do you think we will let you perform `*Umrah* in peace while you give shelter and help to renegades from us? Had you not been a guest of Ummayyah bin Khalf, you would not have gone alive from here." Sa'ad replied, "By Allah, if you prevent me from this, I will retaliate in a worse manner and block your route near Al-Madinah." This incident virtually led to a declaration from the people of Makkah that they would prevent the Muslims from a pilgrimage to the Kabah, and from the people of Al- Madinah that as a retaliation they would block their trade route to Syria against the opponents of Islam. As a matter of fact there was no other alternative for the Muslims than to keep a strong hold on this route so as to force the Quraish, and the other clans, whose interests were vitally bound with this route, to reconsider their inimical and antagonistic attitude towards them. That is why the Holy Prophet attached the greatest importance to this problem. As soon as he was free from making the preliminary arrangements for organizing the newly formed Muslim Community and settling peace terms with the neighboring Jewish habitations, he adopted two measures in this connection:-

First, he entered into negotiations with those clans who lived between the Red Sea and this route so as to make alliances with them or at east to persuade them to make treaties of neutrality with the Muslims. He was successful in this, and he entered into a treaty of non-alignment with Juhainah, which was a very important clan of the hilly tract near the sea coast. Then, at the end of the first year of Hijrah, he made a treaty of defensive alliance with Bani Damrah, who lived near Yanb'u and Zawal Ushairah. In 2 A. H. Bani Mudlij also joined the alliance, as they were the neighbors and allies of Bani Damrah. Then ii so happened that quite a large number of these people were converted to Islam as a result of the missionary work done by the Muslims.

Secondly, he successively sent small bands of his men on this route to serve as a warning to the Quraish, and himself accompanied some of them. In the first year of Hijrah, four expeditions were sent there, that is, the expedition under Hamzah, the expedition under Ubaidah bin Harith, the expedition under Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas and the Al-Abwa' expedition under the Holy Prophet himself. In the first month of the second year two more incursions were made on the same route. These are known as Buwat Expedition and Zawal Ushairah Expedition. Two things about all these expeditions are noteworthy. First, no blood was shed and no caravans were plundered in any of these expeditions. This proves that the real object of these expeditions was to show to the Quraish which way the wind was blowing. Secondly, not a single man from the people of Al-Madinah was sent by the Holy. Prophet on any of these incursions. All the bands consisted purely of the immigrants from Makkah so that the conflict should remain between the people of the Quraish themselves and should not further spread by the involvement of other clans. On the other side, the Quraish of Makkah tried to involve others also in the conflict. When they sent bands towards Al-Madinah, they did not hesitate to plunder the people. For instance, an expedition under the leadership of Kurz bin Jabir al-Fihrl plundered the cattle of the people of Al-Madinah from the very vicinity of the city to show what their real intentions were.

This was the state of affairs when, in Sha'aban, 2 A. H. (February or March, 623 A. D.) a big trade caravan of the Quraish, carrying goods worth $50,000 or so, with only a guard of thirty to forty men, on its way back from Syria to Makkah, reached the territory from where it could be easily attacked from Al-Madinah. As the caravan was carrying trade goods worth thousands of pounds, and was scantily guarded, naturally Abu Sufyan, who was in charge of it, from his Past experience feared an attach from the Muslims. Accordingly, as soon as he entered the dangerous territory, he dispatched a camel rider to Makkah with a frantic appeal for help. When the rider reached Makkah, he, following an old custom of Arabia, tore open the ears of his camel, cut open his nose and overturned the saddle. Then rending his shirt from front and behind, he began to cry aloud at the top of his voice, "O people of Quraish dispatch help to protect your caravan from Syria under the charge of Abu Sufyan, for Muhammad with his followers is in pursuit of it; otherwise I don't think you will ever get your goods. Run, run for help." This caused great excitement and anger in the whole of Makkah and all the big chiefs of the Quraish got ready for war. An army, consisting of 600 armored soldiers and cavalry of 100 riders with great pomp and show marched out for a fight. They intended not only to rescue the caravan but also to put to an end, once for all, the new menace from the Muslims who had consolidated themselves at Al-Madinah. They wanted to crush that rising power and overawe the clans surrounding the route so as to make it absolutely secure for future trade.

Now the Holy Prophet, who always kept himself well informed of the state of affairs, felt that the decisive hour has come and that was the right time when he must take a bold step; otherwise the Islamic Movement would become lifeless for ever and no chance would be left for it to rise again. For if the Quraish invaded Al-Madinah, the odds would be against the Muslims. The condition of the Muslim Community was still very shaky because the immigrants (*Muhajirin*) had not been able to stabilize their economy during the short period (less than two years) of their stay at Al-Madinah; their helpers, (the *Ansar*) had not yet been tried; and the neighboring Jewish clans were antagonistic. Then there was a strong group of hypocrites and *mushriks* in Al- Madinah itself; above all, the surrounding clans lived in awe of the Quraish and had all their religious sympathies with them. The Holy Prophet, therefore, felt that the consequences of this possible invasion would not be favorable to the Muslims.

The second possibility was that they would not invade Al-Madinah but try only to escort their caravan safely and securely by a mere show of force. In that case, too, if the Muslim remained inactive, it would affect their reputation

adversely. Obviously, this weak stand in the conflict would embolden the other Arabs also and make the position of the Muslims very insecure in the country and the surrounding clans would, at the instance of the Quraish, start hostilities against them, and the Jews, the hypocrites and the *mushriks* of Al- Madinah would openly rise against them and not only endanger their security of life, property and honor but make it difficult for them even to live there.

The Muslims would not be able to inspire the enemy with awe so as to keep safe from them their life, property and honor. A careful study of the situation led the Holy Prophet to make up his mind to take a decisive step and go into the battle with whatever little strength he could muster, for thus and thus only could he show whether the Muslim Community had the right to survive or was doomed to perish.

When he arrived at this momentous decision, he called the *Muhajirin* and the *Ansar* together and placed the whole position before them, without any reservation. He said, "Allah has promised that you will confront one of the two, the trade caravan coming from the north or the army of the Quraish marching from the south. Now tell me which of the two you want to attack!" A large majority of the people replied that they wanted to attack the caravan. But the Holy Prophet who had something else before him, repeated the same question. At this Miqdad bin 'Amr, a *Muhajir*, stood up and said, "0 Messenger of Allah! Please march to the side to which your Lord commands you; we will accompany you wherever you go. We will not say like the Israelites, 'Go and let you and your Lord fight we will wait'. In contrast to them we say, 'Let you and your Lord fight; we will fight by your side to our last breath'." Even then he did not announce any decision but waited for a reply from the *Ansar* who had not yet taken any part in any battle of Islam. As this was the first opportunity for them to prove that they were ready to fulfill their promise of fighting for the cause of Islam, he repeated the question without directly addressing them. At this, Sa'ad bin Mu'az, an *Ansar*, stood up and said, "Sir, it appears that you are putting the question to us." When the Holy Prophet said, "Yes", the *Ansar* replied, "We have believed in you and confirmed that what you have brought is the Truth, and have made a solemn pledge with you that we will listen to you and obey you. Therefore, 0 Messenger of Allah, do whatever you intend to do. We swear by Allah Who has sent you with the Truth that we are ready to accompany you to the sea shore and if you enter it, we will plunge into it. We assure you that not a single one of us will remain behind or forsake you, for we will not hesitate at all to go to fight, even if you should lead us to the battlefield tomorrow. We will remain steadfast in the battle and sacrifice our lives in the fight. We do hope that by the grace of Allah our behavior will gladden your heart. So, trusting in Allah's blessing, take us to the battlefield."

After these speeches it was decided that they should march towards the army of the Quraish and not towards the trade caravan. But it should be noted that the decision was of an ordinary nature. For the number of people, who came forward to go to the battlefield, was only a little more than three hundred (86 *Muhajirs*, 62 from Aus and 170 from Khazraj). Then the little army was ill-armed and hardly equipped for battle. Only a couple of them had horses to ride and the others had to take their turn in threes and fours on the back of a camel, out of the 70 they had in all. Above all, they had not got enough weapons for the battle; only 60 of them had armors. It is, therefore, no wonder that with the exception of those who were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the cause of Islam, the majority of those who had joined the expedition, were so filled with fear that they felt as if they were knowingly going into the jaws of death. Then there were people who always looked at things from a selfish point of view. Though they had embraced Islam, they did not realize that their faith would demand the sacrifice of their lives and properties from them; they were of the opinion that it was a mad expedition prompted by irrational enthusiasm for religion. But the Holy Prophet and the true Believers had realized the urgency of that critical hour which required the risk of life:

therefore they marched straight to the south-west, wherefrom the army of the Quraish was coming. This is a clear proof of the fact that from the very beginning they had gone out to fight with the army and not to plunder the caravan. For if they had aimed at plundering the caravan they would have taken the north- westerly direction and not the south- westerly one.

The two parties met in combat at Badr on the seventeenth of Ramadan. When the two armies confronted each other and the Holy Prophet noticed that the Quraish army outnumbered the Muslims by three to one and was much better equipped, he raised his hands up in supplication and made this earnest prayer with great humility: "O Allah! Here are the Quraish proud of their war material: they have come to prove that Thy Messenger is false. O Allah! now send that success that Thou hast promised to give me. O Allah! If this little army of Thy servants is destroyed, then there will be left none in the land to worship Thee."

In this combat the emigrants from Makkah were put to the hardest test for they had to fight against their own near and dear relatives and put to the sword their fathers, their sons, their paternal and maternal uncles and their brothers. It is obvious that only such people could have come out successful in this hardest of tests as had accepted the Truth sincerely and cut off all relations with falsehood. And in another way the test to which the *Ansar* were put was not less hard. So far they had only alienated the powerful Quraish and their allies by giving shelter to the Muslims against their wishes but now, for the first time, they were going to give fight to them and to sow the seeds of a long and bitter war with them. This was indeed a very hard test for it meant that a small town with a population of a few thousand inhabitants was going to wage a war with the whole of Arabia. It is obvious that only such people could take this bold step who believed in the Truth of Islam so firmly that they were ready to sacrifice every personal interest for its sake.

So Allah accepted the self-sacrifices of the *Muhajirin* and the *Ansar* because of their true faith, and rewarded them with His success. The proud, well- armed Quraish were routed by these ill-equipped devotees of Islam. Seventy men of their army were killed and seventy captured as prisoners and their arms and equipment came into the hands of the Muslims as spoils of war. All their big chiefs, who were their best soldiers and who had led the opposition to Islam, were killed in this Battle. No wonder that this decisive victory made Islam a power to be reckoned with. A Western research scholar says that before the Battle of Badr, Islam was merely a religion and a state but after the Battle it became the state religion, nay, the state itself.

Topics of Discussion

It is this great Battle that has been reviewed in this Surah. But let it be noted that in some respects this review is quite different from the reviews that are usually made by the worldly commanders after a great victory.

1. Instead of gloating over the victory, the moral weaknesses that had come to the surface in that expedition have been pointed out so that the Muslims should try their best to reform themselves.

2. It has been impressed upon them that the victory was due to the success of Allah rather -than to their own valor and bravery so that the Muslims should learn to rely on Him and obey Allah and His Messenger alone.

3. The moral lesson of the conflict between the Truth and falsehood has been enunciated and the qualities which lead to success in a conflict have been explained.

4. Then the Surah addresses the *mushriks*, the hypocrites, the Jews and the prisoners of this war in a very impressive manner that should teach them a good lesson.

5. It also gives instructions in regard to the spoils of war. The Muslims have bean told not to regard these as their right but as a bounty from Allah. Therefore they should accept with gratitude the share that is granted to them out of it and willingly accede to the share which Allah sets apart for His cause and for the help of the needy.

6. Then it also gives normal instructions concerning the laws of peace and war for these were urgently needed to be explained at the stage which the Islamic Movement had entered. It enjoined that the Muslims should refrain from ways of "ignorance" in peace and war and thus should establish their moral superiority in the world. It also meant, to demonstrate to the world in actual practical life the morality which it had been preaching to the world from the very beginning of Islam and had been enjoining that practical life should be based on the same.

7. It also states some articles of the Islamic Constitution which help differentiate the status of the Muslims living within the limits of *Dar-ul-Islam* (the Abode of Islam) from that of the Muslims living beyond its limits.

Subject: Problems of ***Jihad***

This surah enunciates general principles of war (one aspect of ***Jihad***) and peace while reviewing the Battle of Badr and uses them for the moral training of the Muslims.

Topics and their Interconnection

This portion deals with the problems of the "Spoils of War". The Quran says that these are not the spoils of war but the "Bounties of Allah" and proves this by showing that the victory at Badr (and in all other battles, too,) was won by His succor and not by the efforts of the Muslims. It also declares (in v. 40) that the war aim of the Muslims should be to eliminate all unfavorable conditions for the establishment of Islam and not to gain spoils. Moreover, the spoils, being the bounties of God, belong to Allah and His Messenger and they alone are entitled to allocate them. Then after conditioning the Muslims to accept these things, the different shares have been allocated in v. 41. 1 - 41

The Battle of Badr was ordained by Allah so that Islam should triumph over "ignorance". The lesson from this is that the Muslims should trust in God and prepare themselves for war and should not be beguiled by Satan as the disbelievers were. 42 - 54

Sanctity of treaties has been enjoined and the Muslims commanded to observe them as long as the other party does not break them. 55 - 59

The Muslims should always be prepared for war on every front, but should be ready to make peace if the other party is inclined towards it. 60 - 66

In these verses, instructions about prisoners of war have been given. 67 - 71

In order to keep the Muslims joined together against their enemies, they have been taught to have cordial relations with one another. 72 - 75

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْأَنفَالِ ۖ قُلِ ٱلْأَنفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا۟
ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۖ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١﴾

إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ
ءَايَٰتُهُۥ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَٰنًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] They ask you concerning the bounties? Say, "The bounties belong to Allah and the Messenger. So fear Allah and set things aright among yourselves; obey Allah and His Messenger, if you are true believers."[1] True believers are only those whose hearts tremble with awe, whenever Allah is mentioned to them; whose faith increases[2] when the revelations of Allah are recited to them; who put their trust in their Lord, who establish Salat and spend in Our

way out of what we have given them.

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَّهُمْ دَرَجَٰتٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ
وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

كَمَآ أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنۢ بَيْتِكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
لَكَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٥﴾

يُجَٰدِلُونَكَ فِى ٱلْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى
ٱلْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

[4-6] Such people are indeed true believers; they have high ranks with their Lord and forgiveness for their sins[3] and most generous provisions. (Now in regard to the spoils the same thing is happening again which happened when) your Lord had brought you forth from your home with the Truth, for some of the Believers were very much averse to it: they were arguing with you concerning the truth, though it had become quite evident; they were filled with awe as if they were being driven towards death with their eyes wide open.[4]

وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ إِحْدَى ٱلطَّآئِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ
ذَاتِ ٱلشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُحِقَّ ٱلْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَيَقْطَعَ
دَابِرَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧﴾

لِيُحِقَّ ٱلۡحَقَّ وَيُبۡطِلَ ٱلۡبَٰطِلَ وَلَوۡ كَرِهَ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ ٨

[7-8] Remember the occasion when Allah was holding out to you the promise that one of the two hosts[5] would fall to you: you wished the weaker host should fall to you:[6] but Allah willed to prove by His words the Truth to be truth and to cut across the roots of the disbelievers so that the Truth should come out as truth and falsehood should be proved to be falsehood, even though the evil-doers did not like it.[7]

إِذۡ تَسۡتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمۡ فَٱسۡتَجَابَ لَكُمۡ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُم بِأَلۡفٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُرۡدِفِينَ ٩

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشۡرَىٰ وَلِتَطۡمَئِنَّ بِهِۦ قُلُوبُكُمۡۚ وَمَا ٱلنَّصۡرُ إِلَّا مِنۡ عِندِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ١٠

[9-10] And when you were praying to Allah for succor, He answered, "I am sending for your succor one thousand angels, one after another". Allah told you this thing only as a good news for you, and to comfort your hearts: although succor is always from Allah: indeed Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise.

إِذۡ يُغَشِّيكُمُ ٱلنُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةٗ مِّنۡهُ وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيۡكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ لِّيُطَهِّرَكُم بِهِۦ وَيُذۡهِبَ عَنكُمۡ رِجۡزَ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِ وَلِيَرۡبِطَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمۡ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ ٱلۡأَقۡدَامَ ١١

[11] And remember the time when Allah was giving you peace and security from Himself in the form of drowsiness,[8]

and was sending down on you water from heaven in order to cleanse you and to remove from you the defilement caused by Satan, and to strengthen your hearts and to steady your footsteps.[9]

إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا۟
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ سَأُلْقِى فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلرُّعْبَ فَٱضْرِبُوا۟
فَوْقَ ٱلْأَعْنَاقِ وَٱضْرِبُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ ﴿١٢﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَآقُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ ۚ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿١٣﴾

ذَٰلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ وَأَنَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٤﴾

[12-14] And remember when your Lord was inspiring the angels with this: "I am with you: so keep the Believers steadfast. I am now going to fill the hearts of the disbelievers with awe: so smite their necks and beat every joint of their bodies.[10] This is because they have opposed Allah and His Messenger; whoso opposes Allah and His Messenger, surely Allah is very severe for him in retribution.[11] This[12] is the punishment for you: so taste it now: you should also know that there is the torture of Hell for those who deny the Truth.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ زَحْفًا فَلَا تُوَلُّوهُمُ ٱلْأَدْبَارَ
﴿١٥﴾

وَمَن يُوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُۥٓ إِلَّا مُتَحَرِّفًا لِّقِتَالٍ أَوْ
مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَىٰ فِئَةٍ فَقَدْ بَآءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ
وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦﴾

[15-16] O Believers! when you encounter, as an army, the disbelievers in a battle, do not turn your backs on them. Whoso turns his back on such an occasion, except it be as a strategy, or to join another troop of the Believers, shall incur the wrath of Allah: Hell shall be his abode: most wretched is that place of retreat![13]

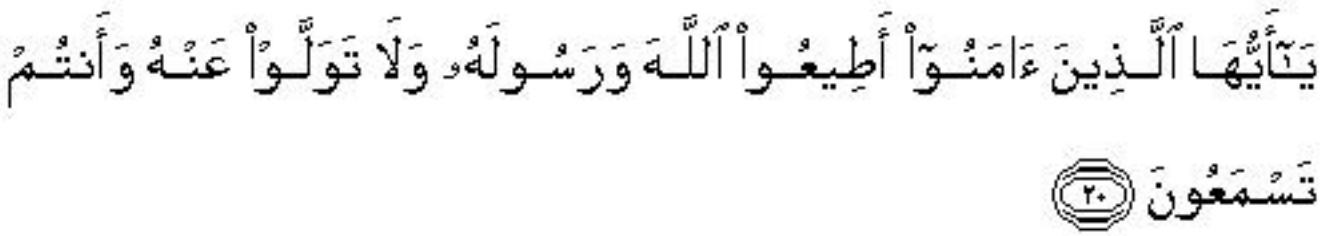
فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
رَمَىٰ ۚ وَلِيُبْلِيَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَآءً حَسَنًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

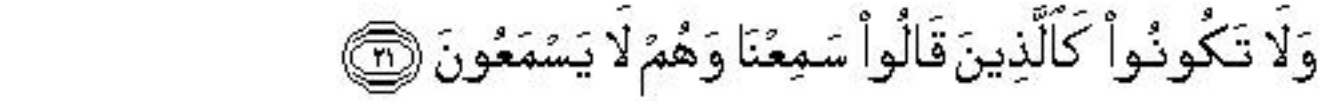
ذَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

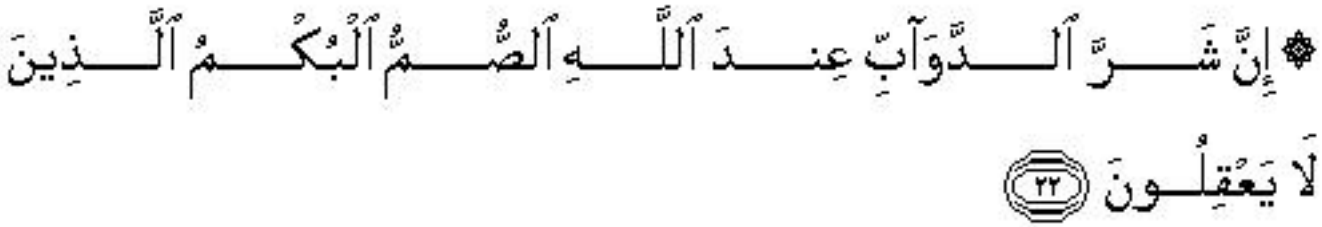
إِن تَسْتَفْتِحُوا۟ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمُ ٱلْفَتْحُ ۖ وَإِن تَنتَهُوا۟ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَإِن
تَعُودُوا۟ نَعُدْ وَلَن تُغْنِىَ عَنكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

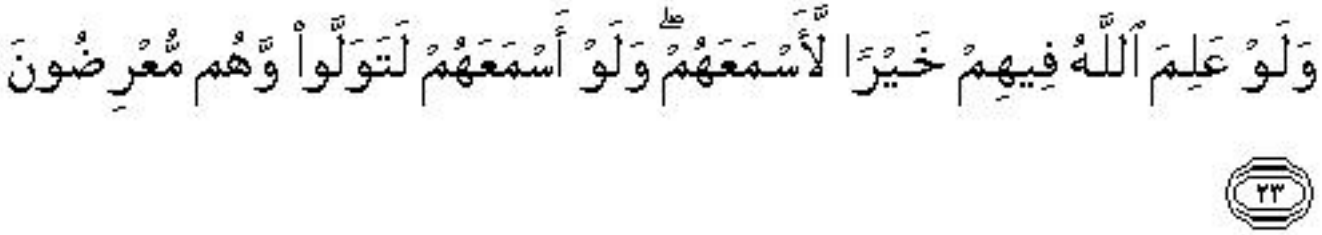
[17-19] So the fact is that you did not slay them but Allah slew them, and you did not throw (the sand) but Allah threw it.[14] (And the hands of the Believers were employed for this work) so that Allah would pass the Believers successfully through this excellent test; indeed Allah is All-Hearing and All-Knowing. This is His dealing with you: as

regards the disbelievers, Allah surely thwarts their evil designs. (Say to the disbelievers:) "If you desired a decision, lo! the decision has come before you.[15] It is best for you to desist from it now: but if you repeat the same folly, We will also repeat the same punishment and your forces, howsoever large their number, shall avail you nothing, for Allah is with the Believers."


يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا تَوَلَّوۡاْ عَنۡهُ وَأَنتُمۡ تَسۡمَعُونَ ٢٠


وَلَا تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ قَالُواْ سَمِعۡنَا وَهُمۡ لَا يَسۡمَعُونَ ٢١


إِنَّ شَرَّ ٱلدَّوَآبِّ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلصُّمُّ ٱلۡبُكۡمُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعۡقِلُونَ ٢٢


وَلَوۡ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِمۡ خَيۡرٗا لَّأَسۡمَعَهُمۡۖ وَلَوۡ أَسۡمَعَهُمۡ لَتَوَلَّواْ وَّهُم مُّعۡرِضُونَ ٢٣

[20-23] O Believers, obey Allah and His Messenger and do not turn away from the Message after hearing it. Do not be like those who said, "We have heard," but have not listened to it,[16] for the vilest beasts in Allah's sight are those deaf, dumb people[17] who do not use commonsense. Had Allah known any good in them, He would certainly have given them the power of hearing but if He had made them hear it (without perceiving any good in them), they would have turned away from it with disdain.[18]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱسۡتَجِيبُواْ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمۡ لِمَا يُحۡيِيكُمۡۖ وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيۡنَ ٱلۡمَرۡءِ وَقَلۡبِهِۦ وَأَنَّهُۥٓ إِلَيۡهِ تُحۡشَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَٱتَّقُواْ فِتۡنَةٗ لَّا تُصِيبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنكُمۡ خَآصَّةٗۖ وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡعِقَابِ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَٱذۡكُرُوٓاْ إِذۡ أَنتُمۡ قَلِيلٞ مُّسۡتَضۡعَفُونَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ تَخَافُونَ أَن يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ ٱلنَّاسُ فَـَٔاوَىٰكُمۡ وَأَيَّدَكُم بِنَصۡرِهِۦ وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَخُونُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوٓاْ أَمَٰنَٰتِكُمۡ وَأَنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّمَآ أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ وَأَوۡلَٰدُكُمۡ فِتۡنَةٞ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجۡرٌ عَظِيمٞ ﴿٢٨﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِن تَتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ يَجۡعَل لَّكُمۡ فُرۡقَانٗا وَيُكَفِّرۡ عَنكُمۡ
سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمۡ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلۡفَضۡلِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٢٩

[24-29] O Believers, respond to the call of Allah and the Messenger, when the Messenger calls you to that which gives you life. And know that Allah stands between a man and his heart, and that to Him you shall be mustered.[19] And guard against that mischief which will not bring punishment in particular to the mischief-makers alone from among you:[20] and know that Allah is severe in inflicting punishment. Recall to mind that time when you were few in number and were regarded weak in the land, and were fearful lest the people should do away with you; then Allah provided you with a place of refuge, strengthened you with His succor and bestowed pure and good provisions upon you so that you may be grateful.[21] O Believers, do not betray Allah and His Messenger nor violate your trusts knowingly.[22] And know that your worldly goods and your children are, in fact, a test for you,[23] and Allah has plenty for giving you reward. O Believers, if you are God fearing, He will provide you with a criterion,[24] and cleanse you of your evils, and forgive your shortcomings. Allah is bountiful in His favors.

وَإِذۡ يَمۡكُرُ بِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لِيُثۡبِتُوكَ أَوۡ يَقۡتُلُوكَ أَوۡ يُخۡرِجُوكَۚ
وَيَمۡكُرُونَ وَيَمۡكُرُ ٱللَّهُۖ وَٱللَّهُ خَيۡرُ ٱلۡمَٰكِرِينَ ٣٠

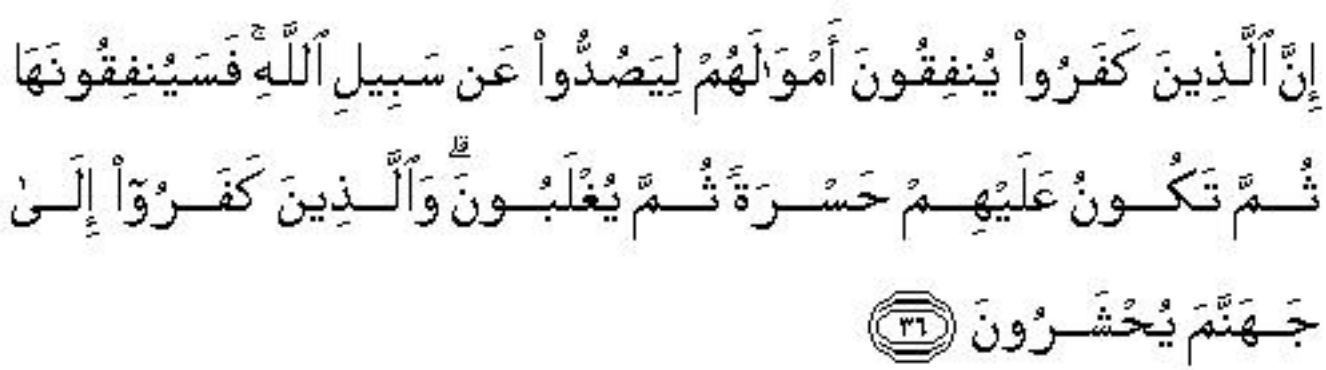
وَإِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتُنَا قَالُواْ قَدۡ سَمِعۡنَا لَوۡ نَشَآءُ لَقُلۡنَا مِثۡلَ هَٰذَآ إِنۡ
هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ٣١

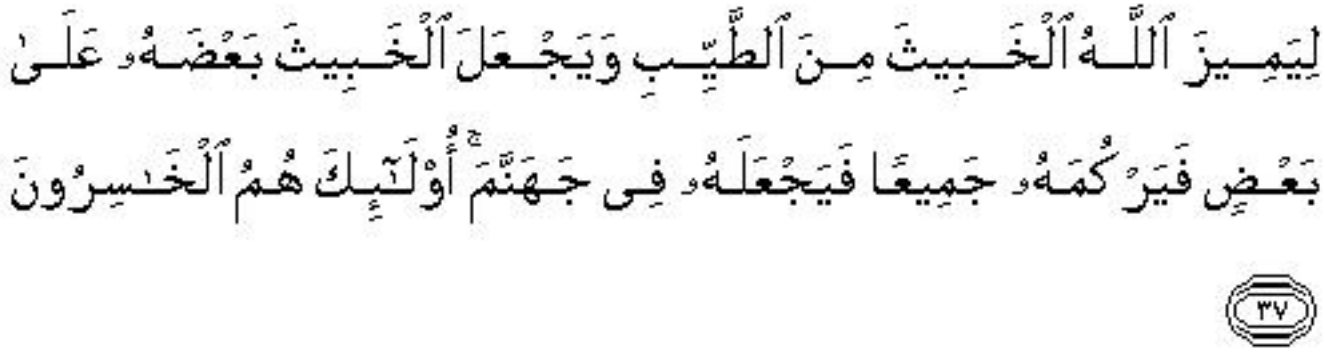
وَإِذْ قَالُواْ ٱللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَـٰذَا هُوَ ٱلْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ أَوِ ٱئْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوٓاْ أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ وَلَـٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِندَ ٱلْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَآءً وَتَصْدِيَةً ۚ فَذُوقُواْ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾





[30-37] It is worth-while to remember the time when those who rejected the Truth, were making plots against you to capture you or to slay you or to exile you.[25] They were plotting their plots and Allah was devising His schemes: and Allah's schemes are most effective of all. When Our revelations were recited to them, they said, "Well, we have heard: if we will, we also can fabricate such things: for these are the same ancient tales which have already been told again and again by the former people. " And recall also to mind the thing they said, "If it is the Truth and has been sent down by Thee, rain down stones on us from the heavens or send down any other painful torment on us."[26] At that time Allah would not send down any torment on them for you dwelt in their midst: nor does Allah chastise people while they are asking His forgiveness.[27] But now there is no reason why He should not send torment on them, when they are barring the way to the Masjid-i-Haram whereas they are not its lawful guardians. Indeed the God fearing people alone can be its lawful guardians, but most of the people do not know this thing: And what is their "prayer" near the House of Allah ?: it is nothing but whistling and clapping of hands.[28] So now take the chastisement and taste the torment in requital for your persistent denial of the Truth.[29] Those who have denied the Truth spend their wealth in blocking the way of Allah, and will go on spending still more of it. But in the end, these very efforts of theirs will become a cause of their regret; then they will be overcome, and the disbelievers shall be gathered and driven towards Hell: so that Allah may separate the filthy from the pure and gather together every sort of filth and then throw the whole heap into Hell: they are the people who have, in fact, become bankrupt.[30]

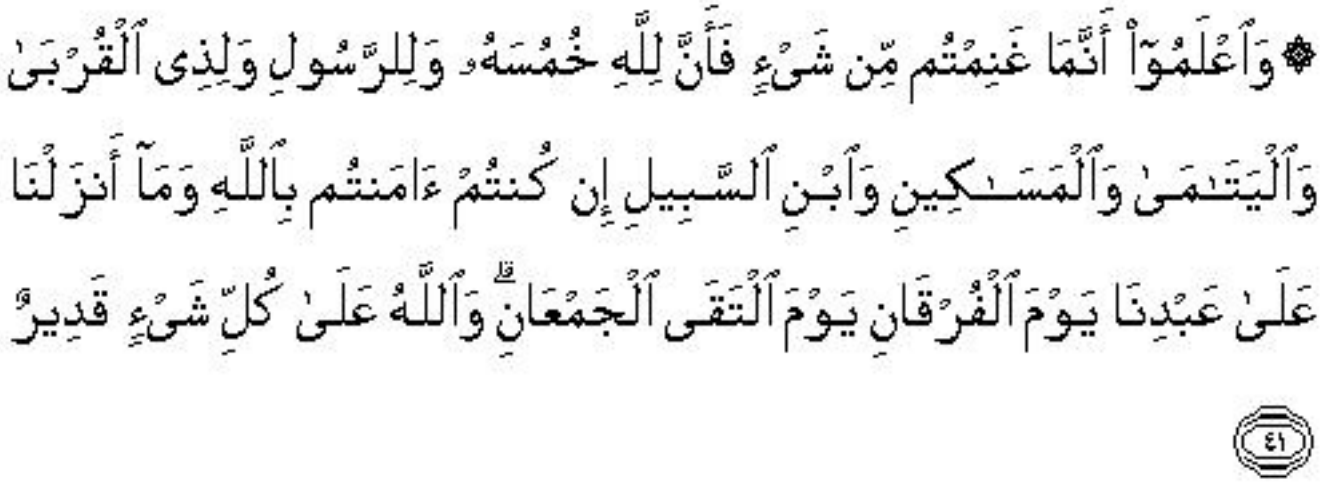
قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِن يَنتَهُواْ يُغۡفَرۡ لَهُم مَّا قَدۡ سَلَفَ وَإِن يَعُودُواْ فَقَدۡ مَضَتۡ سُنَّتُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

[38] O Prophet, tell the disbelievers that if they desist (from their evil ways), their past actions will be forgiven; but if they persist in their ways, all know what happened to the peoples before them.

وَقَٰتِلُوهُمۡ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتۡنَةٞ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ كُلُّهُۥ لِلَّهِۚ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوۡاْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا يَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَإِن تَوَلَّوۡاْ فَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَوۡلَىٰكُمۡۚ نِعۡمَ ٱلۡمَوۡلَىٰ وَنِعۡمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٤٠﴾

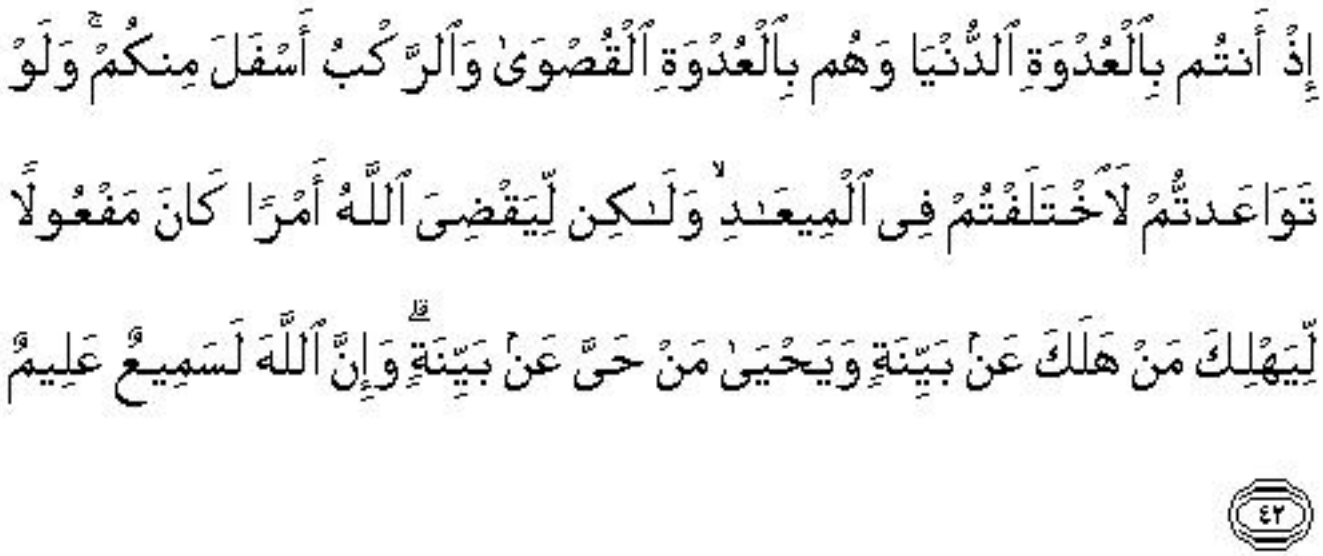
[39-40] O Believers, fight with the disbelievers till there is no more mischief and the way of life prescribed by Allah is established in its entirety.[31] Then if they desist from mischief, surely Allah beholds what they do, but if they give no heed, know it that Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of all protectors and helpers.



۞ وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّمَا غَنِمۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُۥ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ
وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱبۡنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ إِن كُنتُمۡ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلۡنَا
عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِنَا يَوۡمَ ٱلۡفُرۡقَانِ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡتَقَى ٱلۡجَمۡعَانِۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٌ

٤١

[41] And know that, whatever spoils you have got, the fifth of these is for Allah and His Messenger and for the relatives and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarers;[32] if you have believed in Allah and in what We sent down on Our servant on the day of decision,[33] when the two armies met in combat. (then yield this portion willingly) Allah has power over everything.



إِذۡ أَنتُم بِٱلۡعُدۡوَةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَهُم بِٱلۡعُدۡوَةِ ٱلۡقُصۡوَىٰ وَٱلرَّكۡبُ أَسۡفَلَ مِنكُمۡۚ وَلَوۡ
تَوَاعَدتُّمۡ لَٱخۡتَلَفۡتُمۡ فِي ٱلۡمِيعَٰدِ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَقۡضِيَ ٱللَّهُ أَمۡرٗا كَانَ مَفۡعُولٗا
لِّيَهۡلِكَ مَنۡ هَلَكَ عَنۢ بَيِّنَةٖ وَيَحۡيَىٰ مَنۡ حَيَّ عَنۢ بَيِّنَةٖۗ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

٤٢

[42] Recall the time when you were on this side of the valley and they were encamped on the farther side and the caravan was below you (towards the coast). If you had made an engagement with them to fight, you would surely have evaded it (but there was a fight): so that Allah might accomplish what He had ordained, and that whoever had to perish should perish with a clear sign and whoever deserved to live, should live with a clear sign:[34] indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All Knowing.[35]

إِذْ يُرِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى مَنَامِكَ قَلِيلًا ۖ وَلَوْ أَرَىٰكَهُمْ كَثِيرًا لَّفَشِلْتُمْ
وَلَتَنَٰزَعْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَلَّمَ ۗ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

[43] And remember the time. O Messenger, when Allah made them appear in your dream as a small band.[36] Had He shown them to you as a great army, you would certainly have lost courage and begun to dispute about the matter (the fight). But Allah saved you from this: indeed He known the very secrets of the breasts.

وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ ٱلْتَقَيْتُمْ فِىٓ أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلًا وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِىٓ أَعْيُنِهِمْ
لِيَقْضِىَ ٱللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا ۗ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٤٤﴾

[44] And remember when you met them in the encounter, Allah made the enemies appear in your eyes as few and made you appear as few in their eyes so that Allah might accomplish the matter that was to take place: for ultimately all matters return to Allah.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَٱثْبُتُوا۟ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا تَنَٰزَعُوا۟ فَتَفْشَلُوا۟ وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ ۖ
وَٱصْبِرُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بَطَرًا وَرِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ
وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

[45-47] O Believers, when you encounter a host in combat, be steadfast and remember Allah very much: it is expected that you will obtain success. And obey Allah and His Messenger and do not enter into disputes with one another, otherwise you will lose courage and you will become insignificant (in the eyes of the enemy). Practice fortitude;[37] indeed Allah is with those who practice fortitude. And do not behave like those who marched arrogantly out of their homes with great pomp and show for the people to see. They debar the people from the Way of Allah.[38] For whatever they are doing is completely within Allah's grasp.

وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَإِنِّى
جَارٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَرَٰٓءَتِ ٱلْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكُمْ
إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٤٨﴾

إِذْ يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ غَرَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ دِينُهُمْ ۗ
وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ
وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَٰرَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلْحَرِيقِ ﴿٥٠﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٥١﴾

كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٥٢﴾

[48-52] Just think of the time when Satan made their foul deeds seem fair to them and said, "Today no one can overcome you, for I am with you." But when the two armies confronted each other, he took to his heels, saying, "I have nothing to do with you; I see that which you cannot see. Indeed I fear Allah, for Allah is very severe in inflicting chastisement" At the same time, the hypocrites and all those who had diseased hearts were saying: "Their Faith has made them crazy,"[39] whereas the fact is that whoso trusts in Allah (finds that) Allah is All Mighty and All-Wise. Would that you could see how it was when the angels were seizing the souls of the slain disbelievers! They were striking on their faces and hips and saying, "Now taste the torment of burning; this is the recompense for what your hands had prepared beforehand; for Allah does not do injustice to His servants". This happened to them just as it had been happening to the people of Pharaoh and to the peoples before them: this was because they rejected His revelations and He seized them as a consequence of their sins, indeed Allah is All-Powerful and severe in inflicting chastisement.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِّعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا۟ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۙ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَٰهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ وَكُلٌّ كَانُوا۟ ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

[53-54] This happened in accordance with Allah's way that He does not withdraw the favor He bestows on any

people unless they themselves change their ways.[40] Allah hears everything and knows everything. This same principle was applied to the people of Pharaoh and the other peoples before them: when they treated the revelations of Allah as false, We destroyed them in consequence of their sins, and drowned the people of Pharaoh; all these peoples were the workers of iniquity.

إِنَّ شَرَّ ٱلدَّوَآبِّ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتَّ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ فِى كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

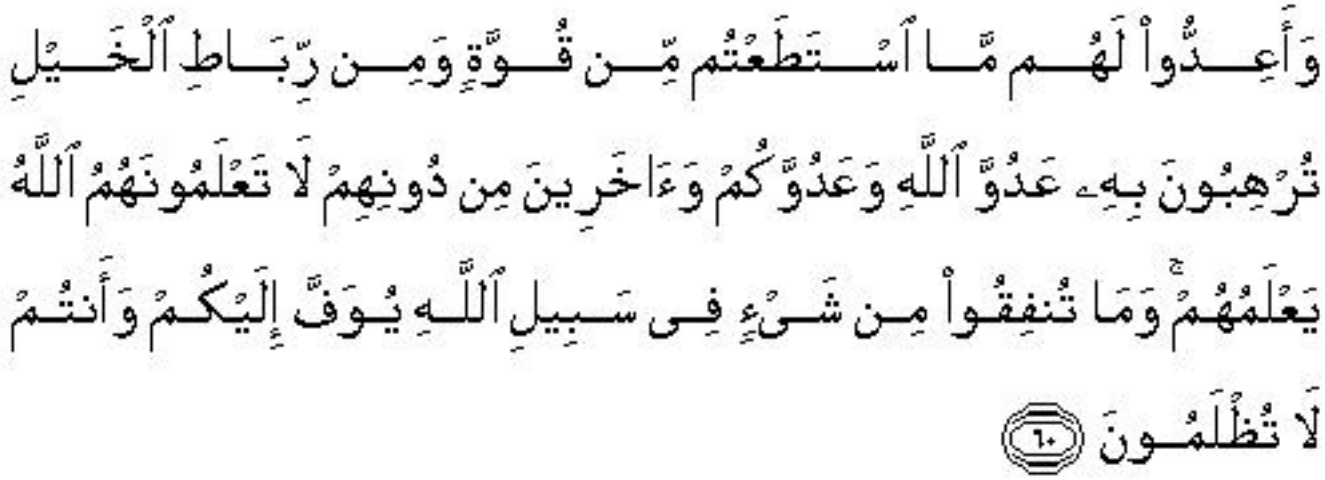
فَإِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِم مَّنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَإِمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِن قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَٱنۢبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَآءٍ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْخَآئِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

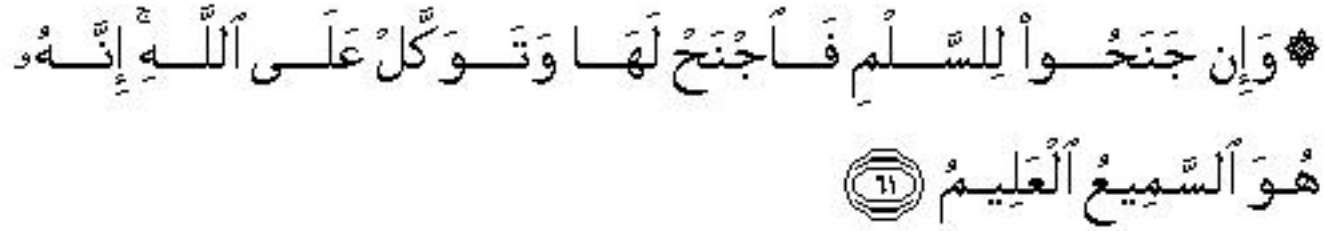
وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ سَبَقُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ لَا يُعْجِزُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

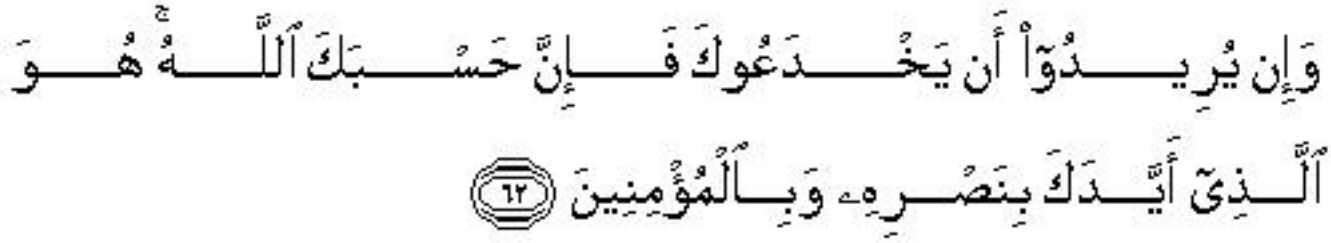
[55-59] Indeed the vilest creatures in the sight of Allah are those people who denied the Truth, and then would not believe in it. As regards those from among them with whom you made treaties and who violate them time after time and do not fear Allah in the least,[41] if you encounter them in combat, make of them a fearsome example for others who would follow them so that they might be unnerved.[42] It is expected that they will learn a lesson from the end of the treacherous people. And if you ever fear treachery from any people, throw their treaty openly before them;[43]

indeed Allah does not like the treacherous people. Let not those who deny the Truth delude themselves that they have won the game; indeed they are incapable of frustrating Us.


وَأَعِدُّواْ لَهُم مَّا ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن قُوَّةٍ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ ٱلْخَيْلِ
تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِۦ عَدُوَّ ٱللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخَرِينَ مِن دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُواْ مِن شَىْءٍ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ
لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[60] And to encounter them, provide whatever force and trained ever-ready horses you can afford[44] whereby you may strike terror into the enemies of Allah and your enemies as well and others besides them whom you do not know but whom Allah knows. The reward of whatever you expend in the way of Allah shall be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged in any way.


۞ وَإِن جَنَحُواْ لِلسَّلْمِ فَٱجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ
هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦١﴾


وَإِن يُرِيدُوٓاْ أَن يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِىٓ أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِۦ وَبِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّا أَلَّفْتَ
بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

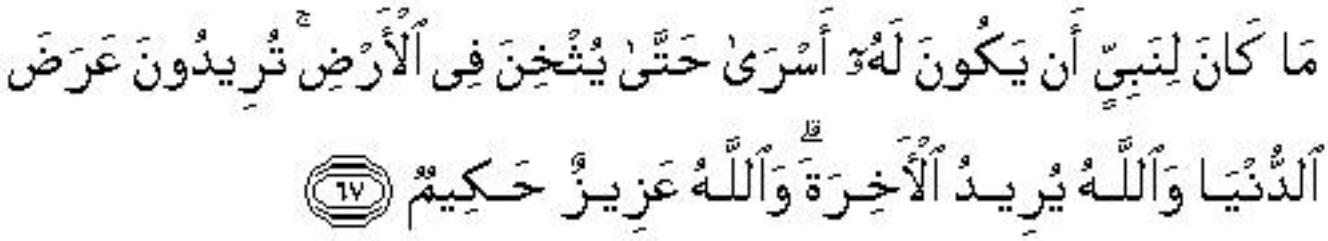
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

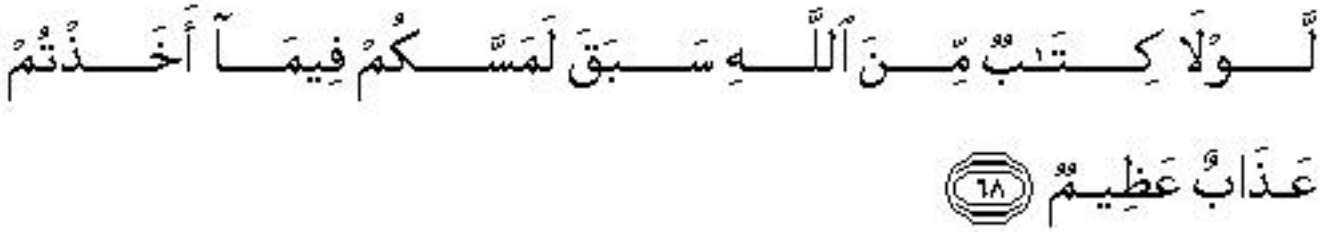
[61-64] And, O Prophet, if the enemies incline to peace, you should also incline to it and put your trust in Allah: indeed He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. And if they intend to deceive you, Allah is sufficient for you.[45] It is He Who strengthened you with His succor, and by means of the Believers. And it is He Who united the hearts of the Believers; even if you had spent all the riches of the earth, you could not have united their hearts by yourself, but it is Allah Who united their hearts;[46] indeed He is All-Powerful, All-Wise. O Prophet! Allah is sufficient for you and for the Believers who follow you.

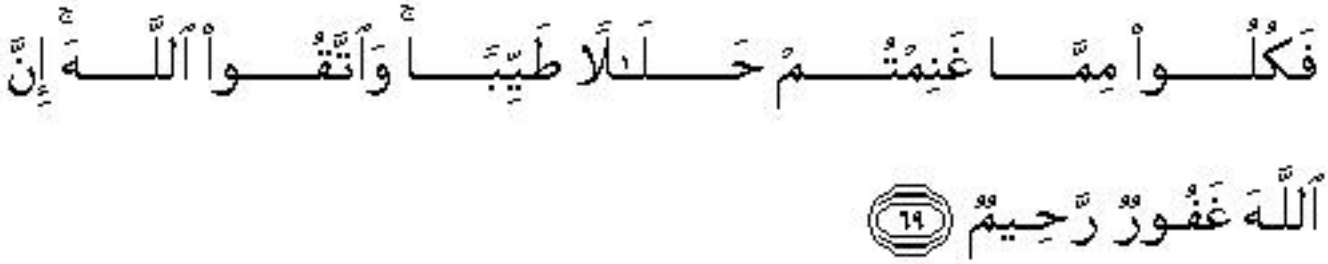
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ ۚ إِن يَكُن مِّنكُمْ عِشْرُونَ
صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُم مِّائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِّنَ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

الْآنَ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا ۚ فَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُم مِّائَةٌ
صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[65-66] O Prophet! stir the Believers to the fight. If there be twenty men among you, who show fortitude, they will overcome two hundred men, and if there be a hundred such men of you, they will overcome a thousand of the deniers of the Truth, for they are a people who lack understanding.[47] Now that Allah has lightened your burden, He has noticed that you are still weak: so if there be a hundred steadfast men among you, they will overcome two hundred men and if there be a thousand such men, they will overcome two thousand by Allah's permission.[48] But Allah is with those people alone who show fortitude.


مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُۥٓ أَسۡرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يُثۡخِنَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ
ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةَۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٞ ٦٧


لَّوۡلَا كِتَٰبٞ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمۡ فِيمَآ أَخَذۡتُمۡ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٞ ٦٨


فَكُلُواْ مِمَّا غَنِمۡتُمۡ حَلَٰلٗا طَيِّبٗاۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٦٩

[67-69] It does not behoove a prophet to keep captives until he has crushed down the enemies in the land. You desire the gains of this world, but Allah desires (for you the good of) the Hereafter; and Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. Had there not been a decree that had already been given by Allah, you would have incurred a severe chastisement in consequence of what you have taken. So eat of what you have taken as spoils for it is lawful and pure. And fear Allah.[49] Surely Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّمَن فِيٓ أَيۡدِيكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡأَسۡرَىٰٓ إِن
يَعۡلَمِ ٱللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمۡ خَيۡرٗا يُؤۡتِكُمۡ خَيۡرٗا مِّمَّآ أُخِذَ مِنكُمۡ
وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٧٠

وَإِن يُرِيدُواْ خِيَانَتَكَ فَقَدۡ خَانُواْ ٱللَّهَ مِن قَبۡلُ فَأَمۡكَنَ مِنۡهُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ٧١

[70-71] O Prophet, tell the captives in your custody, "If Allah finds any good in your hearts, He will give you that which is far more and far better than what has been taken from you, and will forgive your sins: He is Forgiving and Compassionate". But if they have any treacherous designs against you, they have already shown treachery to Allah. As a consequence of this He has given you mastery over them. Allah is All-Knowing, All-wise.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَهَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ بِأَمۡوَٰلِهِمۡ وَأَنفُسِهِمۡ فِي
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَواْ وَّنَصَرُوٓاْ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ بَعۡضُهُمۡ أَوۡلِيَآءُ بَعۡضٖۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ وَلَمۡ يُهَاجِرُواْ مَا لَكُم مِّن وَلَٰيَتِهِم مِّن شَيۡءٍ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُواْۚ
وَإِنِ ٱسۡتَنصَرُوكُمۡ فِي ٱلدِّينِ فَعَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلنَّصۡرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوۡمِۭ بَيۡنَكُمۡ
وَبَيۡنَهُم مِّيثَٰقٞۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ ٧٢

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُن فِتْنَةٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

[72-73] Those who embraced the Faith and emigrated from their homes and expended their possessions and their lives in the Way of Allah, and those who gave refuge to the emigrants and helped them, are indeed the guardians of one another. However, you have no relation of guardianship with those who have embraced the Faith, but have not emigrated (to Dar-ul-Islam) until they emigrates[50] (to it); yet it is obligatory on you to help them in the matters of Faith, if they ask for your help, except against a people with whom you have a treaty.[51] As for disbelievers, they help one another; unless you also help one another, there will be mischief and great disorder on the earth.[52]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَوا۟
وَّنَصَرُوٓا۟ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۖ لَّهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ مَعَكُمْ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مِنكُمْ ۚ
وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِى كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ
عَلِيمٌۢ ﴿٧٥﴾

[74-75] Those who embraced the Faith, emigrated and exerted their utmost in the Way of Allah, and those who gave refuge to the emigrants and helped them, are true believers: there is forgiveness for them and the best of provisions. And those who embraced the Faith afterwards and emigrated and joined with you in your exertions for the Faith, are also of you, but according to the Book of Allah the blood relations have greater rights on one another.[53] Indeed Allah knows everything.

1A dispute arose among the Muslims concerning the division of the spoils of victory after the Battle of Badr, Allah used this opportunity for the benefit of the Muslims and gave instructions for the solution of

the problems of peace and war.

As Badr was the first battle fought under the flag of Islam, naturally the Muslims were unaware of the Islamic laws about war and the problems, created by it. Some preliminary instructions had already been given in Surahs Al-Baqarah and Muhammad, but more instructions were needed for the "humanization of war", because their notions were still the same that they had during the pre-Islamic days. That is why according to the old usage each Muslim claimed to be the rightful owner of the spoils which came in his hand after the victory. But there were others, who had gone in pursuit of the enemy instead of plundering the spoils, They claimed that they, too, were entitled to a share of the spoils, for, they said, "If we had not pursued the enemies to a long distance, they would have come back and by a surprise attack turned the victory into a defeat". There were still others, who were standing guard for the Holy Prophet: they also claimed a share, saying that they had rendered the greatest service in the Battle by protecting the person of the Holy Prophet, for, without this, there could have been no victory at all. But the people of the first group who possessed the spoils, were adamant and were not amenable to any reason whatever; for them, possession was the strongest of all arguments. By and by, the dispute began to take a very serious turn.

It was at this psychological moment that Allah sent down Surah Al-Anfal and chose the same thorny problem for the introduction of the review of the Battle of Badr. And it is a miracle of the Divine Book that it solved the thorny problem in a few words. The very first sentence- "They ask you concerning the bounties?"-that introduced the problem contained its solution. The use of the Arabic word(anfal), bounties', instead of (ghana'im),spoils of victory', provided the answer to the problem. The word(anfal) is the plural of (nafl). It means something which is in addition to the thing to which one is entitled by right. When that something is from the servant, it denotes the additional service to what is obligatory on the servant, but when it is from the master it denotes the additional reward which is bestowed on the servant as a bounty over and above to what the servant is entitled. The verse, therefore, implies: "Are you having a dispute concerning the bounties of Allah? If these are not the spoils of victory, but the bounties of Allah, who arc you to decide about their division? It is for the Giver of the bounties to decide whom to give and how much. "

This conception of the spoils of victory helped to bring about a great moral reform in the attitude towards war. Muslims do not go to war for the sake of material gains but for the sake of reforming the moral and social evils in the world in accordance with the principles of the Truth; and that they wage war only when the opposing forces make it impossible for them to carry out the reform work by means of preaching and teaching. Therefore the reformers must keep in view only that aim and object and not the material gains that may be bestowed on them by Allah as His bounties. That is why the Muslims were warned after the very first battle for the cause of Islam to guard themselves against the material gains of the battle lest these should become the sole aim and object of the fight.

This also brought about a great reform in connection with the division of the spoils of war. Formerly these

spoils became the property of anyone who got possession of them, or of the commander or of the king who became the owner of the whole of them. In the first case, the selfishness of the soldiers of the victorious army led to a bitter competition for the grabbing of spoils and sometimes even brought about a civil war with all its horrible consequences. In the second case, the soldiers would resort to pilfering, which would degrade them to the low level of thieves. The Qur'an reformed these evils by declaring the spoils of war to be the property of Allah and His Messenger, and then further on in v. 41 by laying down equitable shares for its fair division. The first reform demanded that all these spoils, be they worth much or little, should be brought at one place before the chief commander. Then by the second reform, one-fifth of this should be kept for the Islamic State for the cause of Allah and for the help of the poor, and the remaining part should be divided among all those who had taken part in the battle. In this way the evils of the age of "ignorance" were reformed to the satisfaction of all.

Here this subtle point should also be kept in view: the Qur'an leaves the problem of the division after declaring that these bounties belong to Allah and the Messenger, and does not even touch it so that the minds should first be prepared for obedience and its acceptance: Then in v. 41 it gives the Command for the division of the spoils. That is why these have been called the `bounties' here and the `spoils' of war in v. 41.

2This implies that a man's Faith increases on every occasion he acknowledges the Revelations of Allah to be true, and submits to them. Most surely his Faith increases and grows, whenever he surrenders himself to the Book of Allah and to the teachings of the Holy Prophet though they may be against his own desires, his opinions, his conceptions, his theories, his habits, his interests, his lusts, his comforts, his affections and his friendships. For, instead of changing the teachings, he changes himself in accordance with the Commands of Allah and the instructions of the Holy Prophet, and accepts them for his guidance. In contrast to this, if a believer hesitates to accept these, his Faith begins to decrease and fade away.

This also shows that Faith is not something that is incapable of growth and increase and which always remains in one and the same state, but it is capable of both improvement and decay. Every denial of the Truth corrupts its quality, and likewise every acknowledgment and acceptance improves it. But as far as the grading of the rights and ranks of the people, according to the acceptance or denial of the Truth, is concerned, all the Muslims shall be placed in one and the same position, and likewise the non-Muslims. In the Islamic society, the legal rights and obligations of all the Muslims shall be the same, irrespective of the differences in the quality of the Faith. In the same way, the non-Muslims shall be Zimmis or belligerents or allies of the same rank, irrespective of the quality of their denial of the Islamic Faith.

3The promise, that the shortcomings of the believers shall be forgiven, gives great solace to them, for everyone, however great and good he may be, is liable to commit offenses and it is not at all possible that a human being will always do such deeds as conform in every case to the highest standard and are absolutely free from defect, deficiency and fault. Allah, however, shows one of His greatest blessings to those who perform obligatory duties, and forgives their shortcomings by His grace, and rewards His

servants with a far greater recompense than the one they deserve. Otherwise, if His rule had been to reward and punish each and every virtue and vice separately, then even the most righteous people could not have escaped punishment.

4The verse may mean either of the two things: as translated it means at that time the Truth required that they should go to the fight but they were afraid of this; and now the Truth required that they should not argue concerning the spoils of war and wait for the Command, but they did not seem to submit to this for the sake of the Truth. The second meaning will be this: "In the Battle of Badr, you have seen with your own eyes the good results of following the Truth. Although you were afraid of going to the fight as if you were being driven towards death, yet by obeying Allah and His Messenger, you won a great victory: likewise, if you now abide by the Truth in regard to the division of the spoils and submit to the Command of Allah and obey the decision of the Holy Prophet instead of yielding to the desires of your hearts, you will see good results with your own eyes".

Incidentally, verses 5-6 refute all those traditions about the Battle of Badr that are related in the books on the life of the Holy Prophet and his wars. They say that the real plan of the Holy Prophet and his followers was to plunder the caravan and accordingly they had marched out of Al-Madinah for the same purpose. But when they had traveled some distance, they learned that an army of the Quraish was corning for the protection of the caravan, and they held a council to decide whether to attack the caravan or the army. The Qur'an, however, contradicts this. It says that Allah brought forth the Holy Prophet from his home with the Truth at the very beginning and he had this Truth before him that they should meet the army of the Quraish in a decisive battle. For these consultations were held before they had started from Al-Madinah and not after. It was then that some Muslims were arguing with the Holy Prophet concerning the Truth that they should go to meet the army of the Quraish, though it had become quite evident to them. That was why these people felt as though they were being driven towards death, when they were commanded to march out of Al-Madinah at the very start of the expedition.

5That is, the trade caravan, or the army of the Quraish.

6That is, the trade caravan, that was accompanied by a guard band numbering between thirty and forty.

7This makes it clear that the march of the army of the Quraish towards Al-Madinah amounted to a challenge from the system of 'ignorance' to the system of Islam, as stated in the Introduction to this Surah. Allah willed that the Muslims should accept that challenge and fight a decisive battle for the survival of Islam in Arabia. If the Muslims had not marched out boldly on that occasion, they would have lost all chances of their survival. Their bold march and victory at Badr in the very first battle crushed the power of the Quraish and created such favorable conditions for Islam that after this it went on defeating the system of "ignorance".

8The Muslims experienced the same thing during the Battle of Uhd. (III: 154). On both these critical occasions, Allah filled the hearts of the Muslims with such peace and security that they were overpowered by drowsiness.

9On the eve of the Battle of Badr, there was a rainfall, which helped the Muslims in three ways. First, they got an opportunity of storing water in reservoirs. Secondly, it made the sandy ground hard in the upper part of the valley where the Muslims were camping and they could move about with steady footsteps. Thirdly, it created difficulties for the army of the disbelievers who were camping in the lower part of the valley for the rain-water gathered there and made the ground marshy and their feet sank into the mud.

"The defilement caused by Satan" was the fear and confusion he had imbued in their minds because of the coming battle. The God-sent rainfall and slumber at that critical occasion helped to remove that fear and confusion.

10From what we have learned about the basic principles from the Qur'an, we are of the opinion that the angels were not employed directly to take part in fighting and killing but probably they were used to help the Muslims in making their strokes hard and effective. But the true knowledge is with Allah.

11Up to this place references have been made one by one to some events in connection with the Battle of Badr: this is to show the real significance of the Arabic word anfal. At the very beginning of the Surah, it is decreed that 'bounties belong to Allah and the Messenger and not to you because the spoils are not the fruit of your efforts.' As a proof of this, these events have been enumerated for the consideration of the Believers and they have been asked to judge for themselves how much they contributed to the spoils by their courage and bravery and how these owed to the bounty of Allah.

12The address has been suddenly turned to the disbelievers because of the mention of the punishment they deserved.

13The Qur'an does not forbid an orderly retreat if necessitated by military strategy. It is lawful to retreat if there is a hard pressure of the enemy, and the fighting troops retreat to get re-enforcements or to join another pan of the army in the rear. However, what has been forbidden is a rout in utter defeat, involving disorderly and cowardly flight for safety. Such a retreat is obviously a heinous sin, because it is to save one's own life and it deserves the most painful retreat in Hell. Any one, who runs away in disorder from the battlefield, does so because he loves his own life more than the cause for which he professed to fight. Accordingly the Holy Prophet condemns this emphatically, saying, "There are three sins which make virtue vain-shirk, violation of the rights of parents and flight from the battlefield, when fighting in the Way of Allah." Likewise in another Tradition, he mentions seven sins that are ruinous and destructive for the Life-after-death. One of these is that one should turn one's back to the disbelievers and run away from the conflict between Islam and kufr. Such a rout is condemned because, besides being a cowardly act, it

leads to serious consequences: the flight of one soldier may cause the rout of a platoon and that in turn of a regiment or of the whole army. Then it is also possible that the rout of the army might ruin the whole country.

14This refers to an event that happened during the Battle of Badr. After single bouts, when a general fight was going to ensue, the Holy Prophet took a handful of sand and threw it towards the army of the disbelievers, saying, "May their faces be scorched." At the same time he made a gesture and the Muslims attacked the disbelievers in a body.

15This refers to the prayer that was offered by the Quraish at the Ka'abah before they marched for the fight. The mushriks held the curtains of the Ka`abah and prayed: "O Allah! grant victory to the better of the two parties." Abu Jahl particularly invoked Allah's decision, saying, "O God! grant victory to that party which is in the right, and disgrace that one which is the aggressor. "

Accordingly Allah gave His decision and granted their prayer to the letter by giving a signal victory to the Muslims to show that they were the better of the two parties and were in the right.

16This exposes the attitude of the hypocrites, who heard the Truth with their ears, yet did not accept and believe in it: they professed to believe but did not obey the Commands.

17That is, "Those who do not listen to the Truth and do not utter it with their tongues, are deaf and dumb concerning the Truth."

18As those hypocrites had no love for the Truth and no desire to work in its cause, they would have turned their backs from the Battle at the first critical juncture, even if Allah had helped them to obey the Command and march to the battlefield. Thus their company would have proved to be harmful rather than useful.

19In vv. 21-23, the Believers were warned to guard against behaving like the hypocrites and here the remedy is being prescribed for it. The most effective antidote against hypocritical behavior is the belief in Allah and the life in the Hereafter. If a person sincerely believes that he has to deal with that Allah Who knows everything-even the intentions, desires, designs, thoughts, etc., hidden in the hearts arc known to Him- and that one has ultimately to return to Him, he will try his best to refrain from such a behavior. That is why the Qur'an mentions these two articles of Faith over and over again as a remedy to cure the evil of hypocrisy.

20"That mischief" refers to those collective evils that are not confined to individuals but are so widespread that a large number of persons in a locality become addicted to these at the same time. In such a case, it is not the wrongdoers alone who are seized by the scourge of Allah but also those few people who arc

involved in those evils. This is because they put up with life in such evil surroundings.

In order to illustrate this, let us consider the case of a town from the point of view of its sanitary conditions. If filth lies scattered at a few places, its evil effects remain confined to that particular locality or localities and only those people who keep their houses or persons dirty suffer from the consequent diseases. But if filth gets scattered all over the town and there is no one to prevent it and restore sanitary conditions, then the air, the water and the soil will all be contaminated and become so poisonous as to cause the outbreak of an epidemic in the whole town. Obviously it will not discriminate between those who scattered the tilth and those who refrained from it, but will affect all the people who live in those surroundings. The same is the case of moral impurity, corruption and obscenity. If these evils are found in some persons individually but the fear of the good people of the society keeps them under check, the evil effects remain confined to the wrongdoers alone. On the other hand, if the collective conscience of the society becomes so weak that it cannot keep the evil suppressed, and the wrongdoers, the indecent and the unmoral people become so bold that they begin to commit their filthy acts openly, that mischief takes the forth of an epidemic of immorality. Then even those good people who remain content with their own individual goodness and adopt a passive attitude towards the widespread evils, fall victims to the consequent scourge because they did nothing to prevent the spread of the epidemic.

In this way Allah impresses upon the Muslims the importance of the mission of reform and guidance for which the Messenger had risen and to which he was inviting them, as if to say, "There is life for you as individuals and as Community in this work. If you do not sincerely exert for its achievement and for the eradication of evils, an epidemic of evils will break out which will involve in its scourge all of you, even though there may be some among you who might. not have been guilty of either the commission of those evils or of their spread; nay, they might have been leading good lives as individuals" . The same thing has already been enunciated in VII :164. And this may be regarded as the fundamental principle of that war which has been permitted by Islam for the reform of the people in general.

21The words "...so that you may be grateful" are very significant in the context in which they occur. They require that the Muslims should not merely acknowledge the kindness of Allah that He brought them out of their weak position in Makkah to the security of Al-Madinah and provided them with pure and good things of life. They should also show their gratitude in a practical manner and obey Allah and His Messenger and work sincerely and devotedly for the success of his mission, facing bravely, with trust in God, the dangers, hardships, obstacles and misfortunes that come in the way. They should firmly believe that if they sincerely exert in the way of Allah, He will most surely become their Guardian and Helper as before and bring them out safely from all sorts of dangers. Thus gratitude does not mean mere acknowledgment; it has to be given a practical shape as well. It is not gratitude if one acknowledges the kindness of a benefactor but does nothing to please him or serve him sincerely or entertains doubts about the kindness of the benefactor in future; it is ingratitude.

22"Your trusts" is a very comprehensive term and includes all those things that are entrusted to anyone

for fulfillment, whether they concern individuals or communities. For instance, one should not violate treaties and agreements or betray secrets of community or misappropriate property and office entrusted to one's care. (For further details, please refer to E.N. 88 of An-Nisa).

23Worldly goods and children generally prove to be the greatest temptations that lead a person to the ways of hypocrisy, treachery and dishonesty. That is why Allah has warned the Believers to be on their guard against indulging in too much love of money and children, as if to say, "This world is a big Examination Hall, and Your wealth and Your children are two of its question papers. These have been given to you only to test whether you fulfill their prescribed rights and keep the prescribed limits; whether you walk straight on the Right Way while carrying the burden of responsibilities or swerve from it because of the attractions of allurements and temptations; and whether you control your "self' which is liable to become their slave in a way that it remains the slave of Allah, and at the same time renders their rights in the way He has prescribed.

24The Believers have been assured that if they behave in a God-fearing way, Allah will provide them with the criterion (that is, the true knowledge and the right understanding of all affairs), to enable them to discern between right and wrong. Thus, if they so intend, they will be able to do the Will of God and follow the way He approves of. That criterion will serve as a signal at every turning, every crossing, every up and down and show them the Right Way, the Way of God, and warn them of the false ways, the ways of Satan.

25This plot was made at the time when the Quraish realized that the Holy Prophet also was going to migrate to Al-Madinah. They felt that if he succeeded in emigrating from Makkah, he would be out of their reach and become formidable. Accordingly they held an urgent meeting of their chiefs in Dar-un-Nadvah (Council House) to discuss the matter and come to a final decision in regard to him. Some were of the opinion that he should be chained and imprisoned for life. But this plan was not approved for it was feared that his Companions would go on working for the mission and would do their best to release him, even at the risk of their own lives, as soon as they would gain some power. The others proposed that he should be exiled from Makkah for that would at least relieve them of the `disorder' he was creating among them. Then it would not matter for them where he lived and what he did. But the chiefs rejected this plan, saying, "This man possesses the art of a charming speech and of winning hearts. If he leaves this place, he may go to the other Arab clans and win them over to his side, and then after gaining power, he may attack Makkah". At last Abu Jahl, putting forward his plan, said, "Let us select from each of our families one strong, stout and smart young man of high rank. They should all attack Muhammad at one and the same time and kill him. In this way, the responsibility for his blood will be divided equally among all the families of the Quraish, and it will not be possible for Banu `Abd Manaf, the family of Muhammad, to fight with all of them and they will be forced to accept blood-money for him". They approved this plan unanimously and nominated young men to kill him at the appointed time. Accordingly the would-be murderers reached their places on the night fixed for the crime, but the Holy Prophet, throwing dust in their eyes, escaped safely from Makkah. Thus their plot ended in utter failure at the eleventh hour.

26These words were not uttered as a prayer but as a challenge. What they really meant was this: Had this been really the Truth sent down by God, He would have rained down stones on us from heaven or sent down some other painful torment on us, in consequence of its rejection by us. But as nothing of the sort has happened, it means that it is neither the Truth nor has it been sent down by Allah.

27This is the answer to their challenge that was implied in their seeming prayer. They have been told that a torment was not sent down during the Makkan period because of the presence of the Messenger in their midst. For Allah gives respite to the people to reform themselves as long as the Messenger continues to invite them to the Truth, as He does not deprive them of the opportunity of reforming themselves by sending down a scourge before the expiry of the term. The second reason is that Allah does not send down a scourge on an habitation as long as there remain in it any people, who tray ask His forgiveness for their past negligences and deviations and mend their ways. However, a scourge is sent down on the habitation when the Messenger considers that he has done all he could to admonish its people and emigrates from it or is expelled from it or is murdered by its people. This is because that habitation proves practically that it cannot tolerate in it even the presence of any good element.

28They have been further warned to this effect: "Now that you have incurred a torment, you should be ready for it for nothing will save you now from it" . The Quraish were under the delusion that they would not be visited by any torment because they were the guardians and keepers of the House of God. This misunderstanding has been removed by declaring, so to say, "They arc not its lawful guardians for mere inheritance does not entitle them to its guardianship. The pious people alone are the rightful guardians of this Sacred Place. The people of the Quraish have forfeited that right now if they had any right to it, because they were barring the way of the really pious people to this House, which is dedicated to the exclusive worship of Allah. The Quraish were behaving not as the guardians and keepers and servants of the House but as its masters, and prevented anyone they liked from visiting it. As regards their worship in the House, it was nothing more than making meaningless noises by whistling and clapping of hands: it was void of devotion towards Allah and of His remembrance and of all its requirements. How could they, then, expect any favor from Allah or any guarantee of immunity from His scourge?"

29They have been told that the scourge of Allah had visited them in thy shape of utter defeat in the Battle of Badr, which had given life to the Islamic Way and brought death to their way of 'ignorance'. This was necessary to remove their wrong notion that the scourge of Allah came only in the shape of rain or storm from the heavens or the like.

30"They have become bankrupt", for all their efforts, abilities, time and wealth ultimately proved to be absolutely worthless. It not only failed to earn any interest or profit for them but has also driven them to utter ruin.

31Here the war aim of Islam, which had previously been declared in 11: 193, has been repeated. This aim has two aspects-- the negative and the positive. On the negative side, the aim of war is to abolish (fitnah), and on the positive, it is to establish Allah's Way completely and in its entirety. This is the only objective for which it is lawful, nay, obligatory for the believers to fight. There is no other object for which fighting is lawful, and it does not behoove the believers to resort to fighting for any other objective. (For fuller details, please see E.N.'s 204 and 205 of Al-Baqarah.)

32This verse contains the answer to the question which) was asked about the division of spoils at the very beginning of the Surah. There it was merely said that 'these are the bounties of Allah and belong to Him and His Messenger, and the authority to divide these belongs to them. `In this verse, the verdict on the spoils has been given. After the battle is over, the fighters should bring all the spoils to the leader and hide nothing of these. Then one-fifth should be set apart for the requirements stated in this verse, and the remaining four-fifths divided among those who took part in the fighting. That is why the Holy Prophet used to announce after every fight, "These spoils belong to you, and I have no share in these for my own person except one-fifth only and that, too, is spent for your common good. Therefore bring here everything-even a needle and its thread. Do not hide anything, big or small, for this is a shameful thing and leads to Hell" .

This one-fifth share of Allah and His Messenger has been reserved for the cause of Allah and for the establishment of His Way.

During his life-time, by the relatives were meant the relatives of the Holy Prophet. A share from the one-fifth of the spoils was to be given to those relatives of the Holy Prophet who wen dependent on him for now he had to devote the whole of his time to the cause of Allah's religion and it was not possible for him to earn for the maintenance of the members of his own family and of the relatives who were dependent on him. But there has been a difference of opinion regarding this share of the relatives after his death. Some are of the opinion that this share was abolished after the death of the Holy Prophet; others say that this share should go to the relatives of his successor. But there arc still others who hold that this share should be spent for the needy persons from among his offspring. According to my research, this share was given to the needy ones of his offspring during the time of his rightly guided successors.

33"What We sent down on Our servant" means His timely succor that brought about the victory in the Battle of Badr.

34That is, "It should be proved that whichever (Islam or ignorance) survived in the Battle, really deserved to live, and whichever perished, ought to have perished" . It should be noted that here the conflict for survival was not between different persons as such but between Islam and ignorance' as represented by the Believers and the disbelievers.

35As Allah hears everything and sees everything and knows everything, He is running His universe with wisdom and justice and will allow the right alone to survive.

36This happened when the Holy Prophet was marching from Al Madinah towards the battlefield and it was not then known how large the army of the disbelievers was. In this dream, he saw the army and concluded from what he saw that it was not large. He related what he saw in his dream to the Muslims, and this filled them with courage and they marched on boldly towards the enemy.

37As the Arabic word (sabr) which has been translated into fortitude is very comprehensive in meaning, 'practice fortitude' implies: "Keep your feelings and passions under control; avoid rashness, bewilderment, despair, and greediness: keep cool and calm and make considered decisions; remain firm and steadfast in the face of dangers and difficulties; don't take any wrong step even under the greatest provocations; don't lose your senses even when you are attacked by afflictions and are in a sad plight; don't take any hasty action in your impatience to achieve your objective without delay with the help of some seeming effective device and don't be enticed by the temptation of some worldly interest or gain or lust" . Allah helps those who practice fortitude (sabr) in accordance with the above implications.

38The Muslims have been forewarned never to behave like the disbelievers of Makkah, who had marched arrogantly out of their homes and who were debarring the Muslims from the Way of Allah. They had singing girls with them and they held singing, dancing and drinking parties at many halting places. Moreover, they made a great display of their power, grandeur, numerical strength and equipment before the clans and habitations which came in their way and freely bragged that none could have the courage to fight with them. This was the state of their morality but the objective for which they were marching out was even worse than this. They had not marched out to raise the standard of truth, righteousness and justice, but to prevent it from rising up. Their objective was to annihilate the only people who were exerting to raise up that standard. This bad example was held out before the Muslims so that they should guard against such behavior for their Faith required that their conduct should be righteous and their war aim should be pure and noble.

It may also be noted that this guidance was not needed only at that time but it is equally needed even today and will be needed in future as well, for the moral condition of the armies of the modern `civilized' nations is the same as of the disbelievers of Makkah. Prostitutes indecent recreations and wine constitute their essential parts, and they do not ask for these things secretly but openly and brazen-facedly. More than that! their soldiers openly demand from their own people that they should present their own daughters to them for the gratification of their lusts. How can, then, any other people expect from them that they would spare their women and will not make them the plaything of their passions? As regards their arrogance, suffice it to say that each and every soldier and officer of their army is an embodiment of pride and vanity. Then their politicians are never tired of bragging like this: 'None is able to defeat us today for none is more powerful than we". And their war aims are still more wicked. Whereas everyone of their leaders most solemnly and cunningly assure the world that they have nothing but the good of

humanity before them, they might have, in fact, all other aims but this. They wage war in order to capture all the resources of the earth that God has created for all mankind, and to monopolize these for the benefit of their own country and nation, and make all other people their servants and dependents. That is why the Qur'an forbids the Muslims to follow the evil ways of those wicked people and enjoins them to refrain from expending their wealth and life for the achievement of the objective for which the wicked people fight.

39This was the opinion of the hypocrites and the worldly-wise people of Al-Madinah. When they saw that the small band of Muslims was going to fight with the large and superior force of the Quraish they said to one another, "Over enthusiasm for their religion has made these people mad and they are going to meet with utter destruction. As they have been blinded by their Prophet, they cannot see that they are going into the very mouth of death" .

40That is, "Allah does not withdraw His favor from any people until they themselves prove by their conduct that they have become unworthy of it".

41"Those ..... who violate the treaties....." were the Jews. On his migration to Al-Madinah, they were the first people with whom the Holy Prophet had entered into an alliance to co-operate for mutual good. He did his very best to establish good relations with them, for he considered them to be nearer to Islam than the mushriks, and he preferred their way to those of the mushriks, whenever a choice had to be made between the two. But their scholars and rabbis did not at all like the pure doctrine of Tauhid, taught by him, and the high standard of morality presented by him, and the exertions put in by him for the establishment of the Right Way. Therefore, in spite of the treaties they were persistently trying to defeat the New Movement. Accordingly, they adopted several measures: they conspired with the hypocrites of Al-Madinah against the true Muslims: they incited the clans of Aus and Khazraj against each other in order to kindle the fire of the old enmity that existed between the two before the advent of Islam and had led to bloody feuds, and they contrived plots with the Quraish and other hostile clans to ruin the Muslims. Though the Jews had all along been violating the written treaty the Holy Prophet had made with them, their enmity and jealousy had become even more furious than before, after the victory at Badr. For they had expected that the Movement would receive a crushing blow at the hands of the Quraish, but the result had been quite the reverse of it. Therefore they increased their inimical activities all the more in order to prevent Islam from becoming a formidable force. So much so that on hearing the news of the defeat of the Quraish, one of their leaders, Ka`ab bin Ashraf, cried out in anguish, "Today the bowels of the earth are far better for us than its surface". Accordingly, he himself went to Makkah and recited exciting elegies to incite the people of Quraish to wreak their vengeance. More than that: the people of one of their clans, Bani Qainqa `, setting aside the good neighborly manners, began to tease the Muslim women who used to go to their habitations for business. When the Holy Prophet reproved them, they gave an impudent reply and said, "We are not weak like the Quraish: we are a people who know how to fight even to the death: you will have an experience of our courage when you encounter us. "

42That is, "If we 'have made a treaty with a certain people and they disregard its obligations and take part in a fight against us we shall also be absolved from the obligations of the treaty and fight against them. Likewise if we are fighting against any people and find any of our allies among the enemies we should not hesitate to kill them and treat them as enemies. For by discarding the obligations of the alliance as individuals, they forfeit all the rights of an ally in regard to the security of life and property."

43This verse lays down a very clear and strict rule for the breaking of a treaty when necessary, and enjoins the Muslims to "throw their treaty openly before them" . According to this verse, it is unlawful to make a unilateral decision of its termination, even if the Muslims felt that the other party with whom they had entered into an alliance, was not observing the treaty strictly and properly, or if they were afraid that the other party would turn treacherous on the first opportunity. Therefore it forbids them to treat the other party in a way as if there had been no treaty with it at all. On the other hand, this verse binds the Muslims to inform the other party in clear words, before taking any step against it, that the treaty with it had been terminated. This is essential so that the other party should have no misunderstanding whatsoever that the treaty was still in force. The Holy Prophet based the international policy of Islam on this verse. He decreed, "The one that has made a treaty with another party is bound by it until the expiry of its teen. Or if obliged, then one should throw it before the other party so that both may be set on equal footing" . Then he extended the same principle to all other affairs, saying, "Behave not treacherously even towards those who are treacherous to you" . And he had impressed the same so deeply on the minds that this principle was observed most strictly both in letter and in spirit. That is why when Amir Mu'aviyah assembled his army near the frontiers of the Roman Empire with the intention that he would invade their territory immediately after the expiry of the term of the treaty, Hadrat Amar bin `Anbasah, a Companion of the Holy Prophet, strongly protested against this and recited the same Tradition before him according to which even concentration of army was a piece of treachery. The Amir had to submit to this, and he gave up the concentration of army.

It may also be noted that the practice of unilateral abrogation of treaties `and invading the enemy without any declaration of war was common during the time of `ignorance' in the ancient times and is also in vogue in the civilized ignorance: of today. For example, during World War' II, Germany invaded Russia, and Britain and Russia took military action against Iran without any formal declaration of war. It may be noted that the pleas put forward for such breaches and violations are very flimsy: it is argued that if a declaration of war had been made beforehand, the other party would have taken precautionary measures and given a tough fight; or that if they had not taken action, their enemy would have forestalled them. But they seem to forget that if moral responsibilities were to be set aside on such lame excuses, then there remains no crime and no sin that cannot be justified on one plea or the other, and every thief, every robber; every adulterer, every murderer and every forgerer can put forward a justification for his crime or sin. But it is strange that the modem leaders have two standards of judgment. While they justify the acts of treachery in the international sphere, they condemn the same when these are committed in their own national sphere.

There is, however, an exception to the above principle. The Islamic Law allows the Muslims to attack the other party, if it violates the treaty openly and takes some specific inimical action against them. In such a clear case, this verse does not bind them to give a due notice of the termination of the treaty, but grants them the right to take military action against such a treacherous party without giving any ultimatum. The Muslim jurists have deduced this exception from a precedent set by the Holy Prophet. When the Quraish openly broke the treaty of Hudaibiyah, in regard to Bani Khuza`ah, he did not consider it obligatory to give them a notice that he, too, had terminated the same. He, therefore, invaded Makkah without giving them any notice. But here we must strike a note of warning. In order to take advantage of this exception, we must consider all the circumstances under which the Holy Prophet thought it right to invade Makkah. In that case, and in that alone, it is lawful for us to follow the precedent set by him; otherwise we are liable to take undue advantage of it. We learn from the books of Hadith and Sirat that the following circumstances led him to take this step:

(1) The violation of the treaty by the Quraish was so glaring that there was absolutely no doubt that there had been a breach and they themselves confessed that the treaty had come to an end. That is why they sent Abu Sufyan to AI-Madinah for its renewal. Though that was a proof that they also knew that the treaty had come to an end, it does not mean that this exception will be justifiable only if those who violate the treaty also know it and confess it. The exception will be only justifiable if the violation would be quite clear and beyond any doubt.

(2) After the violation of the treaty, the Holy Prophet did not indicate in any way whatever by word or by deed or by implication- that in spite of the violation of the treaty by them he regarded the treaty to be still in force; nor did he continue such relations with them as might indicate the same. All the traditions show that he rejected the offer of the renewal of the treaty made by Abu Sufyan.

(3) He openly took the military action against the Quraish and did nothing at all to show an outward display of peace while harboring secret intentions of war.

This is the excellent precedent set by the Holy Prophet in this matter. An exception to the injunction contained in this verse can, therefore, be made under such specific circumstances that existed on the occasion, and that, too, in the same straightforward noble way.

Besides, it is lawful for the Muslims to use force for the settlement of an issue if and when they find that the other party is neither willing to solve it by mutual talk nor by international arbitration, but is bent upon using force. In such a case, this verse makes it incumbent on the Muslims to make a clear and open declaration to this effect before taking any action. Islam considers a secret military action as immoral and does not allow it, if the Muslims are not prepared to make an open declaration of war.

44This means, "You should always keep in readiness the necessary military equipment and an organized standing army so that you may be able to take military action immediately without the least delay, should

the enemy attack you suddenly. These precautionary measures should be taken so that there should be no confusion and no hurry to urge you to enlist half-trained and ill-equipped volunteers; nor would there be any fear that the enemy would take you unawares and inflict irreparable losses on you before you could get ready for the defense".

45That is, "Your relations with other nations should be based on your trust in God for `He is sufficient for you'. Therefore you should boldly face the enemy both in war and in peace. When the enemy desires to have a talk with you for peace, you should be willing and ready to negotiate with the other party without any hesitation. Do not reject the offer on the pica that the other party is not sincere and has treacherous intentions. for no one can have correct knowledge of the intentions of others: If the other party is sincere in its offer, then it will be wrong to reject it and continue the bloodshed. And if the enemy has treacherous intentions, then Allah will protect you from them because of your courage and moral superiority. In that case, fight bravely with the treacherous enemy so as to teach them such a lesson as may prove a deterrent".

46This refers to the blessing of Islam which led to the union of the hearts of the different Arab clans and integrated them into a strong community, although before this there had been permanent enmities between them for centuries. This favor of God had been very conspicuous in the case of Aus and Khazraj clans of Al-Madinah. These two clans had been mortal enemies, and the bloody war of Bu'ath had taken place between them only two years before this. It was really a miracle that such enmities had been changed into such a union as was witnessed by the Islamic Community during the time of the Holy Prophet. It was quite obvious that this thing could not have been accomplished through any human powers or resources, for whatever had been accomplished, it had been accomplished by His grace and whatever will be accomplished, it will be accomplished by His grace.

47Here the word "understanding" has been used in the same sense as `morale' is used now-a-days. Understanding is a better scientific term than morale-the moral and mental condition which enables persons to keep up courage and enthusiasm, etc. For it is obvious that the one, who understands clearly the objective for which he is fighting would realize that it is more precious than his own life which would be meaningless if that object was lost, will possess a fighting power far greater than of the one who has no clear understanding of the object for which he is fighting, even though the two may be equal in their physical powers. Above all, the one who has the right understanding of the Reality, of the existence of Allah, of his own position in the universe, of his relation with Allah, of the life and death in this world, of the life in the Next World, of the distinction between Truth and falsehood, of the consequences of the victory of falsehood over Truth, has much more power even than those who fight for their country, their nation or for the sake of a class, even if the latter had the right understanding of their cause. Thus it is clear that the power of the Believers, who have full understanding of their object, is ten times that of disbelievers of the same capability. But along with this understanding, the practice of fortitude is also essential for gaining and maintaining that power.

48This reduction of the ratio of the power of a Muslim to that of a nonMuslim from ten to one, to two to one does not mean that this was due to sane deterioration in the morale of the Muslims. It simply means that in v. 65 the general principle of the ratio of the power of the Believers and the disbelievers was enunciated and in v. 66 that principle was applied in accordance with the then existing condition of their morale. At that time (A.H. 2) the morale of the Muslims had not attained perfection, for many of them had only recently entered the fold of Islam and were still under preliminary training. Afterwards when their morale reached the desired standard under the guidance of the Holy Prophet, the ratio of ten to one was actually established, and was demonstrated practically in the battles during his last years and during the time of his rightly-guided successors.

49As regards the question why Allah rebuked the Muslims in v. 68 for taking ransom, the commentators have cited some traditions. According to these, after the Battle of Badr, a consultation was held in regard to the prisoners taken from the army of the Quraish. Hardrat Abu Bakr was of the opinion that they should be set at liberty after the payment of ransom but Hadrat `Umar opined that they should be slain. The Holy Prophet agreed to the opinion of Hadrat Abu Bakr and set them at liberty after the payment of their ransom. At this, Allah sent down this verse as a rebuke. But this interpretation is open to some objections.

The first difficulty of these interpreters is that they are unable to give a satisfactory explanation that might fit into the words: "Had there not been a decree that had already been given by Allah....". They say that it refers to the decree that was predestined by Allah or it means that Allah had already decreed to snake spoils of war lawful though He had not sent down this decree to the Holy Prophet. But it is obvious that a thing does not become lawful unless it is made so by an explicit Command. The second difficulty is that according to this explanation, the Holy Prophet himself and his followers become guilty of the sin of taking ransom for prisoners. Therefore one would think many times before accepting an explanation that is based on traditions emanating from a single source.

In my opinion, Allah rebuked the Muslims for not complying fully with the condition laid down in the Ordinance in XLVII: 4: "So kill the disbelievers until you crush them down; after this you may take them as prisoners; and then set them at liberty as a favor or for a ransom after the battle comes to an end. According to this previous Ordinance, there was nothing wrong in taking prisoners of war and charging ransom for them, but what was wrong was that they did not fully comply with the prior condition, that is, `until you crush them down' . For we learn that, when after the Battle of Badr the army of the Quraish was put to rout, many Muslims began to gather spoils or to take prisoners and only a few of them went in pursuit of the enemy to crush them. Had all the Muslims gone in pursuit of them, they would have crushed down their power then and there. Therefore Allah rebuked the Muslims (and not the Holy Prophet) as if to say, "O Muslims ! you have not yet fully understood the meaning of the mission of the Prophet. He is not sent to take prisoners and charge ransoms or gather spoils. The main objective of his mission is to crush down the powers of disbelief. But you are overwhelmed by the worldly Breeds again and again. During the course of this campaign, you at first desired to attack the trade caravan instead of

the army of the Quraish. Then you began to gather spoils and take prisoners, and afterwards entered into a dispute regarding the division of spoils. Had We not previously given you permission for taking ransom (XLVII :4), We would have inflicted a severe chastisement on you. Very well, now you may enjoy what you have taken, but you should, in future, fear Us and refrain from incurring Our displeasure.

Imam Jassas also is of the same opinion (as expressed in his book Ahkamul-Qur an), and therefore the above interpretation is worth considering. This view is also supported by a Tradition related in Sirat-i-Ibn Hisham. According to this, the Holy Prophet noticed signs of disapproval on the face of Sa`ad bin M'uaz on the occasion, when the Muslims were gathering the spoils and taking prisoners. So the Holy Prophet said, "O Sa`ad, it appears that you do not approve this conduct of the Muslims". Sa`ad replied, "It is so, O Messenger of Allah. This is the first victory that Allah has given us over the mushriks. Therefore it would have been much better for us to crush down their power completely than to save their lives by taking them prisoners" . (Volume II, pp. 280-281).

50This verse contains a very important article of the Islamic Constitution . and lays down the terms of the relationship (vilayat-guardianship) between the Muslims. According to it, "Those Muslims only shall be bound by the relationship of vilayat who are either the inhabitants of Dar-ul-Islam or emigrate to it. As for the Muslims living outside the territorial borders of the Islamic State, there shall be the relationship of Islamic brotherhood only, but there shall be no relationship of vilayat with them. Likewise there shall be no relationship of vilayat with those Muslims who visit the Dar-ul-Islam as foreigners in the capacity of the subjects of Dar-ul-Kufr, without emigrating to it permanently"

The Arabic word (vilayat) is very comprehensive in meaning and 'guardianship' does not convey its full significance. It denotes the relationship of help, succor, protection, support, friendship, guardianship and the like between the citizens and the State and vice versa, and between the citizens themselves. Thus it is clear that this verse confines the limits of the Islamic, political and constitutional citizenship to its territorial boundaries only and excludes from this particular relationship the other Muslims who live beyond its territorial boundaries.

The legal implications of this negation of guardianship are very extensive, but this is not the occasion for their statement. Here it will suffice to say that according to this, the Muslims of Dar-ul-Kufr cannot become the inheritors of the Muslims of Dar-ul-Islam and vice versa, nor can they be the legal guardians of one another, nor can there be inter-marriages between them; nor can the Islamic State appoint a citizen of Dar-ul-Kufr on any responsible post, until that one renounces the relationship of citizenship with Dar-ul-Kufr. Moreover, this verse affects also the foreign policy of the Islamic State and frees it from the responsibility of the Muslims living outside its territorial borders by restricting it only to the Muslims living within its territory. The Holy Prophet also declared the same thing, saying, "I owe no responsibility for the protection of any Muslim who resides among the mushriks"

This foreign policy of Islam cuts at the very roots of such disputes as are generally responsible for

creating international crises. For it is obvious that if states refuse to shoulder any responsibilities for the protection, etc., of the minorities living outside their territorial borders, there cannot arise such disputes concerning them as lead to wars over and over again.

51Though the Muslims living outside the territorial borders of the Islamic State have been excluded from political protection in the preceding verse, this fact does not deprive them of the brotherly relationship of Faith. Therefore it is obligatory on the Islamic State and its inhabitants, to help their wronged and oppressed brethren if they ask for help. But even in this case, they should observe the International Law and the universally accepted moral code. If Dar-ul-Islam has made a treaty with the persecuting people of Dar-ul-Kufr the Muslims of Dar-ul-Islam are forbidden to give any help to the oppressed Muslims in Dar-ul-Kufr if that is against the moral obligations of the treaty.

In this verse the word (mithaq) has been used for treaty. It implies everything that gives the guarantee of peace in the known sense to the parties concerned even though there might not be any explicit mention of a no-war agreement.
Moreover, the original words of the Arabic Text- "....between you and thetas there is a treaty"- clearly show that a treaty of the Islamic State with a non-Islamic State is not merely a treaty between the two states but between the two nations. Therefore it is morally binding on both the Islamic State and the Muslims living in the Islamic State. The Islamic Code does not tolerate that the Muslim subjects should be left free from the obligations of the treaty which a Muslim government makes with other countries or nations. Of course, those Muslims who reside outside the territorial borders of the State that makes a treaty are free from this obligation. that is why Abu Busair, Abu Jandal and other Muslims who were not the subjects of Dar-ul-Islam were not bound by the terms of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, which the Holy Prophet had made with the disbelievers of Makkah.

52The sentence-"unless you also help one another"-has two meanings: (1) If it is considered in connection with the previous sentence, "the disbelievers help one another," it means: "If you, the Believers, will not help one another just as the disbelievers help one another, there will be mischief and great disorder on the earth" . (2) But if it is considered in connection with the instructions given in v. 72, it will mean: if the people living in Dar-ul- Islam (a) do not become the guardians and protectors of one another, (b) do not consider the Muslims, who have not migrated to Dar-ul-Islam and live in Dar-ul-Kufr, outside their political protection, (c) do not. give help to the persecuted Muslims, living outside Dar-ul-Islam, when they ask for it, and if at the same time, they do not observe the law that the Muslims living in Dar-ul-Islam would not help those Muslims living in Dar-ul-Kufr among the people with whom they made a treaty of peace, and (d) do not break all their friendly relations with the disbelievers,-then there will be mischief and great chaos in the world.

53This is to remove a misunderstanding. After migration to AI-Madinah, the Holy Prophet had established the relationship of brotherhood between the Muhajirin and the Ansar, which gave rise to the misunderstanding that they had become the inheritors of one another. This verse says that inheritance

shall be determined by the blood-relationship and not by the relationship of brotherhood in the Faith.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

9. Surah At Taubah (The Repentance)

Name

This Surah is known by two names -- At-Taubah and Al-Bara'at. It is called At-Taubah because it enunciates the nature of *taubah* (repentance) and mentions the conditions of its acceptance.(vv. 102. 118). The second name Bara'at (Release) is taken from the first word of the Surah.

Omission of *Bismillah*

This is the only Surah of the Quran to which *Bismillah* is not prefixed. Though the commentators have given different reasons for this, the correct one that which has been given by Imam Razi: namely,this is because the Holy Prophet himself did not dictate it at the beginning of the Surah. Therefore the Companions did not prefix it and their successors followed them., This is a further proof of the fact that utmost care has been taken to keep the Quran intact so that it should remain in its complete and original form.

Discourses and Periods of Revelation

This Surah comprises three discourses:-

The first discourse (vv. 1-37), was revealed in Zil-Qa'adah A.H. 9 or thereabout. As the importance of the subject of the discourse required its declaration on the occasion of *Haj* the Holy Prophet dispatched Hadrat Ali to follow Hadrat Abu Bakr, who had already left for Makkah as leader of the Pilgrims to the Ka'abah. He instructed Hadrat Ali to deliver the discourse before the representatives of the different clans of Arabia so as to inform them of the new policy towards the *mushriks*.

The second discourse (vv., 38-72) was sent down in Rajab A.H. 9 or a little before this, when the Holy Prophet was engaged in making preparations for the Campaign, of Tabuk. In this discourse, the Believers were urged to take active part in *Jihad*, and the shirkers were severely rebuked for holding back their wealth and for hesitation to

sacrifice their lives in the way of Allah because of their hypocrisy, weak faith or negligence.

The third discourse (vv. 73-129) was revealed on his return from the Campaign of Tabuk. There are some pieces in this discourse that were sent down on different occasions during the same period and were afterwards consolidated by the Holy Prophet into the Surah in accordance with inspiration from Allah. But this caused no interruption in its continuity because they dealt with the same subject and formed part of the same series of events. This discourse warns the hypocrites of their evil deeds and rebukes those Believers who had stayed behind in the Campaign of Tabuk. Then after taking them to task, Allah pardons those true Believers who had not taken part in the *Jihad* in the Way of Allah for one reason or the other.

Chronologically, the first discourse should have come last; but being the most important of the three in regard to its subject matter, it was placed first in the order of compilation.

Historical Background

Now let us consider the historical background of the Surah. The series of events that have been discussed in this Surah took place after the Peace Treaty of Hudaibiyah. By that time, one-third of Arabia had come under the sway of Islam which had established itself as a powerful, well organized and civilized Islamic State. This Treaty afforded further opportunities to Islam to spread its influence in the comparatively peaceful atmosphere created by it. After this Treaty, two events took place, which led to very important results:

Conquest of Arabia

The first was the Conquest of Arabia. The Holy Prophet was able to send missions among different clans for the propagation of Islam. The result was that during the short period of two years, it became such a great power that it made the old order of ignorance' feel helpless before it. So much so that the zealous elements from among the Quraish were so exasperated that they broke the Treaty in order to encounter Islam in a decisive combat. But the Holy Prophet took prompt action after the breach so as not to allow them any opportunity to gather enough force for this. He made a sudden invasion on Makkah in the month of Ramadan in A. H. 8 and conquered it. Though this conquest broke the backbone of the order of ignorance, it made still another attack on Islam in the battle-field of Hunain, which proved to be its death-knell. The clans of Hawazin Thaqif, Naur, Jushm and others gathered their entire forces in the battle field in order to crush the reformative Revolution, but they utterly failed in their evil designs. The defeat of 'ignorance' at Hunain paved the way for making the whole of Arabia the 'Abode of Islam' (*Dar-ul-Islam*). The result was that hardly a year had Passed after the Battle of Hunain, when the major portion of Arabia came within the fold of Islam and only a few upholders of the old order remained scattered over some corners of the country.

The second event that contributed towards making Islam a formidable power was the Campaign of Tabuk, which was necessitated by the provocative activities of the Christians living within or near the boundaries of the Roman Empire to the north of Arabia. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet, with an army of thirty thousand marched boldly towards the Roman Empire but the Romans evaded the encounter. The result was that the power of the Holy Prophet and Islam increased manifold and deputations from all corners of Arabia began to wait upon him on his

return from Tabuk in order to offer their allegiance to Islam and obedience to him. The Holy Quran has described this triumph in Surah An-Nasr: "When the succor of Allah came and victory was attained and you saw people entering the fold of Islam in large numbers...

Campaign to Tabuk

The Campaign to Tabuk was the result of conflict with the Roman Empire, that had started even before the conquest of Makkah. One of the missions sent after the Treaty of Hudaibiyah to different parts of Arabia visited the clans which lived in the northern areas adjacent to Syria. The majority of these people were Christians, who were under the influence of the Roman Empire. Contrary to all the principles of the commonly accepted international law, they killed fifteen members of the delegation near a place known as Zat-u-Talah (or Zat-i-Itlah). Only Ka'ab bin Umair Ghifari, the head of the delegation, succeeded in escaping and reporting the sad incident. Besides this, Shurahbll bin Amr, the Christian governor of Busra, who was directly under the Roman Caesar, had also put to death Haritli bin Umair, the ambassador of the Holy Prophet, who had been sent to him on a similar minion.

These events convinced the Holy Prophet that a strong action should be taken in order to make the territory adjacent to the Roman Empire safe and secure for the Muslims. Accordingly, in the month of Jamadi-ul-Ula A. H. 8, he sent an army of three thousand towards the Syrian border. When this army reached near Ma'an, the Muslims learned that Shurahbil was marching with an army of one hundred thousand to fight-with them and that the Caesar, who himself was at Hims, had sent another army consisting of one hundred thousand soldiers under his brother Theodore. But in spite of such fearful news, the brave small band of the Muslims marched on fearlessly and encountered the big army of Shurahbil at M'utah. And the result of the encounter in which the Muslims were fighting against fearful odds (the ratio of the two armies was 1:33), as very favorable, for the enemy utterly failed to defeat them. This proved very helpful for the propagation of Islam. As a result, those Arabs who were living in a state of semi independence in Syria and near Syria and the clans of Najd near Iraq, who were under the influence of the Iranian Empire, turned towards Islam and embraced it in thousands. For example, the people of Bani Sulaim (whose chief was Abbas bin Mirdas Sulaimi), Ashja'a, Ghatafan, Zubyan, Fazarah, etc., came into the fold of Islam at the same time. Above all, Farvah bin 'Amral Juzami, who was the commander of the Arab armies of the Roman Empire, embraced Islam during that time, and underwent the trial of his Faith in a way that filled the whole territory with wonder. When the Caesar came to know that Farvah had embraced Islam, he ordered that he should be arrested and brought to his court. Then the Caesar said to him, "You will have to choose one of the two things. Either give up your Islam and win your liberty and your former rank, or remain a Muslim and face death." He calmly chose Islam and sacrificed his life in the way of the Truth.

No wonder that such events as these made the Caesar realize the nature of the danger that was threatening his Empire from Arabia. Accordingly, in 9 A.H. he began to make military preparations to avenge the insult he had suffered at M'utah. The Ghassanid and other Arab chiefs also began to muster armies under him. When the Holy Prophet, who always kept himself well-informed even of the minutest things that could affect the Islamic Movement favorably or adversely, came to know of these preparations, he at once under- stood their meaning. Therefore, without the least hesitation he decided to fight against the great power of the Caesar. He knew that the show of the slightest weakness would result in the utter failure of the Movement which was facing three great dangers at that time. First the dying power of 'ignorance' that had almost been crushed in the battle-field of Hunain might revive again. Secondly, the Hypocrites of Al: Madinah, who were always on the look-out for such an opportunity, might

make full use of this to do the greatest possible harm to it. For they had already made preparations for this and had, through a monk called Abu Amir, sent secret messages of their evil designs to the Christian king of Ghassan and the Caesar himself. Besides this, they had also built a mosque near Al-Madinah for holding secret meetings for this purpose. The third danger was of an attack by the Caesar himself, who had already defeated Iran, the other great power of that period, and filled with awe the adjacent territories.

It is obvious that if all these three elements had been given an opportunity of taking a concerted action against the Muslims, Islam would have lost the fight it had almost won. That is why in this case the Holy Prophet made an open declaration for making preparations for the Campaign against the Roman Empire, which was one of the two greatest empires of the world of that period. The declaration was made though all the apparent circumstances were against such a decision: for there was famine in the country and the long awaited crops were about to ripen: the burning heat of the scorching summer season of Arabia was at, its height and there was not enough money for preparations in general, and for equipment and conveyance in particular. But in spite of these handicaps, when the Messenger of Allah realized the urgency of the occasion, he took this step which was to decide whether the Mission of the Truth was going to survive or perish. The very fact that he made an open declaration for making preparations for such a campaign to Syria against the Roman Empire showed how important it was, for this was contrary to his previous practice. Usually he took every precaution not to reveal beforehand the direction to which he was going nor the name of the enemy whom he was going to attack; nay, he did not move out of Al-Madinah even in the direction of the campaign.

All the parties in Arabia fully realized the grave consequences of this critical decision. The remnants of the lovers of the old order of 'ignorance' were anxiously waiting for the result of the Campaign, for they had pinned all their hopes on the defeat of Islam by the Romans. The 'hypocrites' also considered it to be their last chance of crushing the power of Islam by internal rebellion, if the Muslims suffered a defeat in Syria. They had, therefore, made full use of the Mosque built by them for hatching plots and had employed all their devices to render the Campaign a failure. On the other side, the true Believers also realized fully that the fate of the Movement for which they had been exerting their utmost for the last 22 years was now hanging in the balance. If they showed courage on that critical occasion, the doors of the whole outer world would be thrown open for the Movement to spread. But if they showed weakness or cowardice, then all the work they had done in Arabia would -end in smoke.

That is why these lovers of Islam began to make enthusiastic preparations for the Campaign. Everyone of them tried to surpass the other in making contributions for the provision of equipment for it. Hadrat Uthman and Hadrat Abdur Rehman bin Auf presented large sums of money for this purpose. Hadrat Umar contributed half of the earnings of his life and Hadrat Abu Bakr the entire earnings of his life. The indigent Companions did not lag behind and presented whatever they could earn by the sweat of their labor and the women parted with their ornaments. Thousands of volunteers, who were filled with the desire of sacrificing their lives for Islam, came to the Holy Prophet and requested that arrangements for weapons and conveyance be made for them so that they should join the expedition. Those who could not be provided with these shed tears of sorrow; the scene was so pathetic that it made the Holy Prophet sad because of his inability to arm them. In short, the occasion became the touchstone for discriminating a true believer from a hypocrite. For, to lag behind in the Campaign meant that the very relationship of a person to Islam was doubtful. Accordingly, whenever a person lagged behind during the journey to Tabuk, the Holy Prophet, on being informed, would spontaneously say, "Leave him alone. If there be any good in him, Allah will again join him with you, and if there be no good in him, then thank Allah that He relieved you of his evil company".

In short, the Holy Prophet marched out towards Syria in Rajab A. H. 9, with thirty thousand fighters for the cause of Islam. The conditions in which the expedition was undertaken may be judged from the fact that the number of camels with them was so small that many of them were obliged to walk on foot and to wait for their turns for several had to ride at a time on each camel. To add to this, there was the burning heat of the desert and the acute shortage of water. But they were richly rewarded for their firm resolve and sincere adherence to the cause and for their perseverance in the face of those great difficulties and obstacles.

When they arrived at Tabuk, they learned that the Caesar and his allies had withdrawn their troops from the frontier and there was no enemy to fight with. Thus they won a moral victory that increased their prestige manifold and, that too, without shedding a drop of blood.

In this connection, it is pertinent to point out that the general impression given by the historians of the campaigns of the Holy Prophet about the Campaign of Tabuk is not correct. They relate the event in a way as if the news of the mustering of the Roman armies near the Arabian frontier was itself false. The fact is that the Caesar had begun to muster his armies, but the Holy Prophet forestalled him and arrived on the scene before he could make full preparations for the invasion. Therefore, believing that "discretion is the better part of valor," he withdrew his armies from the frontier. For he had not forgotten that the three thousand fighters for the cause of Islam had rendered helpless his army one hundred thousand strong at M'utah. He could not, therefore, even with an army of two hundred thousand, dare to fight against an army of thirty thousand, and that, too, under the leadership of the Holy Prophet himself.

When the Holy Prophet found that the Caesar had withdrawn his forces from the frontier, he considered thee question whether it would be worthwhile to march into the Syrian territory or to halt at Tabuk and turn his moral victory to political and strategical advantage. He decided on the latter course and made a halt for twenty days at Tabuk. During this time, he brought pressure on the small states that lay between the Roman Empire and the Islamic State and were at that time under the influence of the Romans, and subdued and made them the tributaries of the Islamic State. For instance, some Christian chiefs Ukaidir bin Abdul Malik Kindi of Dumatul Jaiidal, Yuhanna bin D'obah of Allah, and the chiefs of Maqna, Jarba' and Azruh also submitted and agreed to pay *Jizyah* to the Islamic State of Al- Madinah. As a result of this, the boundaries of the Islamic State were extended right up to the Roman Empire, and the majority of the Arab clans, who were being used by the Caesar against Arabia, became the allies of the Muslims against the Romans.

Above all, this moral victory of Tabuk afforded a golden opportunity to the Muslims to strengthen their hold on Arabia before entering into a long conflict with the Romans. For it broke the back of those who had still been expecting that the old order of 'ignorance' might revive in the near future, whether they were the open upholders of *shirk* or the hypocrites who were hiding their *shirk* under the garb of Islam. The majority of such people were compelled by the force of circumstances to enter into the fold of Islam and, at least, make it possible for their descendants to become true Muslims. After this a mere impotent minority of the upholders of the old order was left in the field, but it could not stand in the way of the Islamic Revolution for the perfection of which Allah had sent His Messenger.

Problems of the Period

If we keep in view the preceding background, we can easily find out the problems that were confronting the Community at that time. They were:

1. to make the whole of Arabia a perfect *Dar-ul-Islam*,

2. to extend the influence of Islam to the adjoining countries,

3. to crush the mischiefs of the hypocrites, and

4. to prepare the Muslims for *Jihad* against the non- Muslim world.

1. Now that the administration of the whole of Arabia had come in the hands of the Believers, and all the opposing powers had become helpless, it was necessary to make a clear declaration of that policy which was to be adopted to make her a perfect *Dar-ul-Islam*. Therefore the following measures were adopted:

    1. A clear declaration was made that all the treaties with the *mushriks* were abolished and the Muslims would be released from the treaty obligations with them after a respite of four months.(vv. 1-3). This declaration was necessary for uprooting completely the system of life based on *shirk* and to make Arabia exclusively the center of Islam so that it should not in any way interfere with the spirit of Islam nor become an internal danger for it.

    2. A decree was issued that the guardianship of the Ka`abah, which held central position in all the affairs of Arabia, should be wrested from the *mushriks* and placed permanently in the hands of the Believers, (vv. 12-18) that all the customs and practices of the *shirk* of the era of 'ignorance' should be forcibly abolished: that the *mushriks* should not be allowed even to come near the "House" (v. 28). This was to eradicate every trace of *shirk* from the "House" that was dedicated exclusively to the worship of Allah.

    3. The evil practice of *Nasi*, by which they used to tamper with the sacred months in the days of 'ignorance', was forbidden as an act of *kufr*(v. 37). This was also to serve as an example to the Muslims for eradicating every vestige of the customs of ignorance from the life of Arabia (and afterwards from the lives of the Muslims everywhere).

2. In order to enable the Muslims to extend the influence of Islam outside Arabia, they were enjoined to crush with sword the non- Muslim powers and to force them to accept the sovereignty of the Islamic State. As the great Roman and Iranian Empires were the biggest hindrances in the way, a conflict with them was inevitable. The object of *Jihad* was not to coerce them to accept Islam they were free to accept or not to accept it-but to prevent them from thrusting forcibly their deviations upon others and the coming generations. The Muslims were enjoined to tolerate their misguidance only to the extent that they might have the freedom to remain misguided, if they chose to be so, provided that they paid *Jizyah* (v. 29) as a

sign of their subjugation to the Islamic State.

3. The third important problem was to crush the mischiefs of the hypocrites, who had hitherto been tolerated in spite of their flagrant crimes. Now that there was practically no pressure upon them from outside, the Muslims were enjoined to treat them openly as disbelievers (v. 73). Accordingly, the Holy Prophet set on fire the house of Swailim, where the hypocrites used to gather for consultations in order to dissuade the people from joining the expedition to Tabuk. Likewise on his return from Tabuk, he ordered to pull down and burn the 'Mosque' that had been built to serve as a cover for the hypocrites for hatching plots against the true Believers.

4. In order to prepare the Muslims for *Jihad* against the whole non-Muslim world, it was necessary to cure them even of that slight weakness of faith from which they were still suffering. For there could be no greater internal danger to the Islamic Community than the weakness of faith, especially where it was going to engage itself single-handed in a' conflict with the whole non-Muslim world. That is why those people who had lagged behind in the Campaign to Tabuk or had shown the least negligence were severely taken to task, and were considered as hypocrites if they had no plausible excuse for not fulfilling that obligation. Moreover, a clear declaration was made that in future the sole criterion of a Muslim's faith shall be the exertions he makes for the uplift of the Word of Allah and the role he plays in the conflict between Islam and *kufr*. Therefore, if anyone will show any hesitation in sacrificing his life, money, time and energies, his faith shall not be regarded as genuine. (vv. 81-96).

   If the above-mentioned important points are kept in view during the study of this Surah, it will facilitate the understanding of its contents.

Subject: Problems of Peace and War

In continuation of Surah Al-Anfal, this Surah also deals with the problems of peace and war and bases the theme on the Tabuk Expedition.

Topics and their Interconnection

This portion deals with the sanctity of treaties and lays down principles, rules and regulations which must be kept in view before breaking them, in case the other party does not observe them sincerely. 1 - 12

In this portion the Muslims have been urged to fight in the Way of Allah with the *mushrik* Arabs, the Jews and the Christians, who were duly warned of the consequences of their mischievous and inimical behavior. 13 - 37

In this discourse, the Muslims have been told clearly and explicitly that they will inherit the rewards promised by Allah only if they take active part in the conflict with *kufr*, for that is the criterion which distinguishes true Muslims from hypocrites. Therefore true Muslims should take active part in *Jihad*, without minding dangers, obstacles, difficulties, temptations and the like. 38 - 72

This portion deals with the problems of hypocrites and lays down rules and regulations governing the treatment that should be meted out to them and points out their distinctive marks from true Muslims. 73 - 90

This portion deals with the case of those who remained behind and did not accompany the Holy Prophet for *Jihad* to Tabuk. For this purpose they have been separated in different categories, that is, the disabled, the sick, the indigent, the hypocrites, the believers who realized their guilt and punished themselves before the return of the Holy Prophet from Tabuk and those who confessed their error. Their cases have been dealt with in accordance with the nature and extent of their offense. 91 - 110

In order to make their noble qualities look all the more conspicuous and dignified by contrast, the characteristics of the Believers have been mentioned, and they have been reassured that Allah, the Sovereign of the Universe, is their helper and guardian. Accordingly, because of their sincerity, He has forgiven the Three Believers who did not take part in the expedition. 111 - 118

In the concluding portion, general instructions have been given to the Believers for their guidance. 119 - 127

This is the conclusion: "Follow the Messenger who is gentle and compassionate and your greatest well-wisher, and trust in Allah, the Lord of the Universe". 128 - 129

بَرَآءَةٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّم مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١﴾

فَسِيحُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِى ٱللَّهِ ۙ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُخْزِى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] This is a declaration[1] of immunity (from obligations) by Allah and His Messenger to those mushriks with whom you had made treaties:[2] "You are free to move about in the land for four months more:[3] but you should know that you cannot frustrate the Will of Allah, and that Allah will degrade the rejecters of the Truth."

وَأَذَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلنَّاسِ يَوْمَ ٱلْحَجِّ ٱلْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ۙ وَرَسُولُهُۥ ۚ فَإِن تُبْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟
أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِى ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣﴾

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّم مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنقُصُوكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَمْ يُظَٰهِرُوا۟
عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَدًا فَأَتِمُّوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ
﴿٤﴾

[3-4] This is a public proclamation from Allah and His Messenger for all the people on the Day of Great Haj:[4] Allah is free from the treaty obligations made with the mushriks and so is His Messenger. If, therefore, you repent now, it is better for you but if you turn away, you should know it well that you cannot frustrate (the Will of) Allah. And, O Prophet, give the good news of a painful chastisement to the rejecters excepting those mushriks with whom you made treaties. and who afterwards did not violate these in the least nor did they give help to anyone against you; so you also should observe the treaties with such people in accordance with their terms, for Allah loves the pious people.[5]

فَإِذَا ٱنسَلَخَ ٱلْأَشْهُرُ ٱلْحُرُمُ فَٱقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدتُّمُوهُمْ
وَخُذُوهُمْ وَٱحْصُرُوهُمْ وَٱقْعُدُوا۟ لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ ۚ فَإِن تَابُوا۟ وَأَقَامُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَخَلُّوا۟ سَبِيلَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ٱسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلَٰمَ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ
أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُۥ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

[5-6] Then, when the months made unlawful[6] for fighting expire, kill the mushriks wherever you find them, and seize them, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they repent, and establish Salat and pay the Zakat dues, then let them go their way:[7] for Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. And if any of the mushriks requests you for protection so that he may come to you (to hear the Word of Allah), give him protection till he hears the Word of Allah; then convey him. to the place of his safety: this should be done because these people do not know the Truth.[8]

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَعِندَ رَسُولِهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ عَٰهَدتُّمْ
عِندَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ۖ فَمَا ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱسْتَقِيمُوا۟ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧﴾

كَيْفَ وَإِن يَظْهَرُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا يَرْقُبُوا۟ فِيكُمْ إِلًّا وَلَا ذِمَّةً ۚ يُرْضُونَكُم
بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَتَأْبَىٰ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾

[7-8] How shall a treaty with these mushriks be regarded as abiding by Allah and His Messenger? -excepting those with whom you made a treaty at the Masjid-i-Haram:[9] so long as they behave rightly with you, you also should behave rightly with them, for Allah loves the righteous people.-But how can a treaty be regarded as abiding with the other mushriks? Since if they get power over you, they will not respect ties of kindred with you nor honor any treaty obligations. They try to conciliate you with their tongues, while their hearts are averse to their tongues,[10] for most of them are evil-doers.[11]



[9-12] They bartered away Allah's revelations for paltry worldly gains[12] and then debarred others from His Way:[13] indeed very evil were the deeds they did. They do not observe the ties of kindred in regard to the Believers nor observe the obligations of treaty, and it is they who have always been the transgressors: yet if they -repent even now, and establish Salat and pay Zakat dues, then they shall be your brethren in faith. Thus We make plain Our Messages to those who try to understand.[14] But if they break their oaths after making compacts and revile your Faith you should fight with these ringleaders of disbelief because their oaths are not trustworthy: it may be that sword alone will restrain[14a] them.[15]

أَلَا تُقَٰتِلُونَ قَوْمًا نَّكَثُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَهُمْ وَهَمُّوا۟ بِإِخْرَاجِ ٱلرَّسُولِ وَهُم
بَدَءُوكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۚ أَتَخْشَوْنَهُمْ ۚ فَٱللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَن تَخْشَوْهُ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ
١٣

قَٰتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ
صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ١٤

وَيُذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَيَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ
١٥

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تُتْرَكُوا۟ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذُوا۟
مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا رَسُولِهِۦ وَلَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلِيجَةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
١٦

[13-16] Will you not fight[16] such people who have been breaking their solemn pledges, who conspired to banish the Messenger and were the first to transgress against you? Are you afraid of them? If you are true Believers, surely Allah has a greater right that you should fear Him. Fight them. Allah will chastise them by your hands and will bring

disgrace and degradation upon them and succor you against them and soothe the hearts of many believers. And He may remove the wrath of their hearts; and may also show guidance towards repentance[17] to whomsoever He wills; Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. Do you think that you will be left (without a trial)? Note it well that Allah has not as yet seen which of you exerted your utmost in His (Allah his way) and did not take as intimate friends any other than Allah, His Messenger and the Believers[18] Allah has full knowledge of what you do.

مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَن يَعْمُرُوا۟ مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ شَٰهِدِينَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِم
بِٱلْكُفْرِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ وَفِى ٱلنَّارِ هُمْ خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَٰجِدَ ٱللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَأَقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَى
ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۖ فَعَسَىٰٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَن يَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

۞ أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ ٱلْحَآجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ
ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَجَٰهَدَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ لَا يَسْتَوُۥنَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ
أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[17-20] It does not behoove the mushriks to become the guardians and servants of Allah's houses of worship, the

while they themselves bear witness against themselves to their disbelief;[19] in fact, all their works have gone to waste[20] and they shall abide in the Fire for ever. Only those are worthy of being the guardians and servants of Allah's houses of worship, who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and establish Salat and pay Zakat dues, and fear none but Allah: for these alone are expected to follow the Right Way. Have you made the mere giving of water to pilgrims and the guardianship of the Masjid-i-Haram as equal to the works of the one who has believed in Allah and the Last Day, and exerted his utmost in the Way of Allah ?[21] Well, these things are not equal in the sight of Allah, and Allah does not show guidance to the workers of iniquity. Those alone who have believed, and left their homes and exerted their utmost with their lives and possessions in the Way of Allah, shall have the highest ranks with Allah: they are truly successful.

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُم بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَرِضْوَٰنٍ وَجَنَّٰتٍ لَّهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ
مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

[21-22] Their Lord gives them the good news of His mercy and His pleasure and of the Gardens, wherein is everlasting bliss for them: therein they shall abide for ever, for surely Allah has abundance to give rewards for services.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَٰنَكُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ إِنِ ٱسْتَحَبُّوا۟
ٱلْكُفْرَ عَلَى ٱلْإِيمَٰنِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

قُلْ إِن كَانَ ءَابَآؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ
وَأَمْوَٰلٌ ٱقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَٰرَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَٰكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَآ
أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَجِهَادٍ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ فَتَرَبَّصُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ
ٱللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[23-24] O Believers, do not take your fathers and brothers as allies, if. they choose disbelief in preference to Faith; for whoso of you will take them as allies shall surely be the workers of iniquity. O Prophet, tell them plainly, "If your fathers and your sons, and your brothers and your wives, and your near and dear ones and the wealth which you have acquired and the trade you fear may decline and the homes which delight you-if all these things-are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and the struggle in His Way, then wait till Allah passes His judgment on you;[22] for Allah does not guide the wicked people"

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ ۙ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ ۙ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ
فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُم
مُّدْبِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَأَنزَلَ جُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ
ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

ثُمَّ يَتُوبُ ٱللَّهُ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ﴿٢٧﴾

[25-27] Allah has helped you on many occasions before this; (recently you witnessed the glory of His help[23]) on the day of the Battle of Hunain; you were proud of your great numbers which had deluded you but it availed you nothing and the earth, with all its vastness, became too narrow for you, and turning your backs, you fled. Then Allah sent down His sakinat (peace and tranquility) upon His Messenger and the Believers and sent (to your aid) forces which you could not see and chastised those who denied the Truth: for this is the due recompense of those who deny the Truth. Then (you have also seen that) after giving chastisement like this, Allah guides to repentance whom He wills:[24] Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّمَا ٱلۡمُشۡرِكُونَ نَجَسٞ فَلَا يَقۡرَبُواْ ٱلۡمَسۡجِدَ ٱلۡحَرَامَ بَعۡدَ عَامِهِمۡ هَٰذَاۚ وَإِنۡ خِفۡتُمۡ عَيۡلَةٗ فَسَوۡفَ يُغۡنِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦٓ إِن شَآءَۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ ﴿٢٨﴾

[28] O Believers, the mushriks are unclean; therefore let them not come near the Masjid-i-Haram[25] after this year (of their pilgrimage); if you fear poverty Allah will enrich you, out of His bounty if He wills: for Allah is All-knowing, All-Wise.

قَٰتِلُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَلَا بِٱلۡيَوۡمِ ٱلۡأٓخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ ٱلۡحَقِّ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ حَتَّىٰ يُعۡطُواْ ٱلۡجِزۡيَةَ عَن يَدٖ وَهُمۡ صَٰغِرُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

[29] Fight with those from among the people of the Book, who do not believe in Allah nor in the Last Day;[26] who do not make unlawful that which Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful,[27] and do not adopt the Right way as

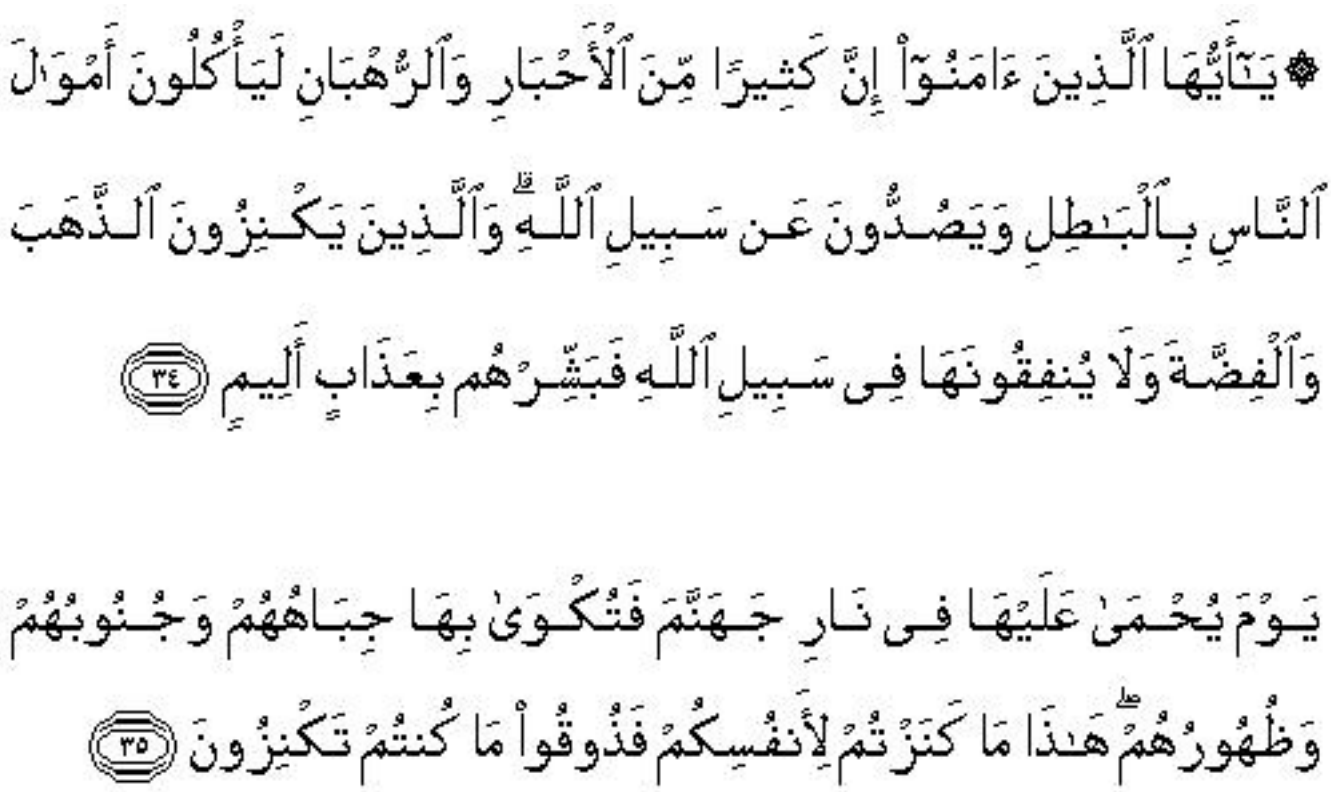
their way. (Fight with them) until they pay Jizyah with their own hands and are humbled.[28]

وَقَالَتِ ٱلْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ٱبْنُ ٱللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ ٱلنَّصَٰرَى ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ ٱللَّهِ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ
قَوْلُهُم بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ ۖ يُضَٰهِـُٔونَ قَوْلَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ قَٰتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ
أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَٰنَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَسِيحَ ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ
وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓا۟ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَٰهًا وَٰحِدًا ۖ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ
﴿٣١﴾

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُطْفِـُٔوا۟ نُورَ ٱللَّهِ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَيَأْبَى ٱللَّهُ إِلَّآ أَن يُتِمَّ نُورَهُۥ وَلَوْ
كَرِهَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ
عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾



[30-35] The Jews say, "Ezra (`Uzair) is the son of Allah,"[29] and the Christians say, "The Messiah is the son of God." Such are the baseless things they utter with their tongues, following in the footsteps of the former unbelievers.[30] May Allah afflict them with chastisement! Where from are they being perverted? They have made their scholars and monks as their Lords beside Allah,[31] and likewise the Messiah, the son of Mary, although they were enjoined not to worship any other than the One Deity, besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. He is absolutely pure and free from what they associate with Him. These people desire to extinguish the light of Allah with puffs from their mouths and Allah refuses (His consent to their desire) but wills to perfect His light, even though the disbelievers be much averse to it. He is Allah Who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Right way so that He may make it prevail over all other ways,[32] even though the mushriks be much averse to it. O Believers, indeed most of the scholars and monks of the people of the Book devour the wealth of others by evil means, and debar them from the Way of Allah.[33] Give them the good news of a painful torment, who hoard up gold and silver and expend not these in the Way of Allah. The Day shall surely come when the same gold and silver shall be heated in the fire of Hell, and therewith their foreheads, their bodies and their backs shall be .branded, (saying), "Here is that treasure you had hoarded up for yourselves: now taste the evil of your hoarded treasure"

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ ٱلشُّهُورِ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِى كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ مِنْهَآ أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ ۚ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا۟ فِيهِنَّ
أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ وَقَٰتِلُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ كَآفَّةً كَمَا يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ كَآفَّةً ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
مَعَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

إِنَّمَا ٱلنَّسِىٓءُ زِيَادَةٌ فِى ٱلْكُفْرِ ۖ يُضَلُّ بِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ يُحِلُّونَهُۥ عَامًا وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُۥ عَامًا لِّيُوَاطِـُٔوا۟ عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ
ٱللَّهُ فَيُحِلُّوا۟ مَا حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ زُيِّنَ لَهُمْ سُوٓءُ أَعْمَٰلِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا
يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[36-37] The fact is that the number of months ordained by Allah has been twelve since the time He created the heavens and the earth,[34] and out of these four are forbidden months: this is the right code of reckoning: therefore do not wrong yourselves by violating these months.[35] And fight against the mushriks all together even as they fight against you all together:[36] and note it well that Allah is with the God fearing people. Nasi is but one more instance of disbelief, whereby these disbelievers are led astray. In one year they make a certain month lawful and in another year they make the same a forbidden month, so as they might make up for the number of the forbidden months and, at the same time, make lawful that which is forbidden by Allah.[37] Their evil deeds have been made seeming fair to them: for Allah does not guide those who deny the Truth.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَا لَكُمۡ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمُ ٱنفِرُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ٱثَّاقَلۡتُمۡ إِلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ أَرَضِيتُم بِٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا مِنَ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۚ فَمَا مَتَٰعُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

إِلَّا تَنفِرُواْ يُعَذِّبۡكُمۡ عَذَابًا أَلِيمٗا وَيَسۡتَبۡدِلۡ قَوۡمًا غَيۡرَكُمۡ وَلَا تَضُرُّوهُ شَيۡـٔٗاۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

إِلَّا تَنصُرُوهُ فَقَدۡ نَصَرَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِذۡ أَخۡرَجَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ثَانِيَ ٱثۡنَيۡنِ إِذۡ هُمَا فِي ٱلۡغَارِ إِذۡ يَقُولُ لِصَٰحِبِهِۦ لَا تَحۡزَنۡ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَنَاۖ فَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَيۡهِ وَأَيَّدَهُۥ بِجُنُودٖ لَّمۡ تَرَوۡهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ ٱلسُّفۡلَىٰۗ وَكَلِمَةُ ٱللَّهِ هِيَ ٱلۡعُلۡيَاۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

ٱنفِرُواْ خِفَافٗا وَثِقَالٗا وَجَٰهِدُواْ بِأَمۡوَٰلِكُمۡ وَأَنفُسِكُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

[38-41] O[38] you who believed! what was amiss with you that, when you were asked to march forth on the Way of Allah, you clung to the earth? What! did you prefer the life of this world to the life of the Hereafter? If it is so, you should know that all these goods of this worldly life will prove to be but little in the Hereafter.[39] If you will not march forth, Allah will inflict on you a painful chastisement,[40] and will substitute other people for you,[41] and you will in no way harm Him, for Allah has power over everything. If you do not help your Prophet, (it does not matter): Allah did help him before when the disbelievers forced him to go away from his home, and he was but the second of two: when the two were in the cave; when he was saying to his Companion, "Be not distressed: indeed Allah is with us."[42] Then Allah sent down peace of mind to him from Himself, and helped him with the forces you did not see, and made the word of the disbelievers abased. And Allah's Word is always supreme, for Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. March forth whether you be light or heavy,[43] and exert your utmost in Allah's Way with your possessions and your lives: this is best for you, if you but know it.

لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيبًا وَسَفَرًا قَاصِدًا لَّاتَّبَعُوكَ وَلَٰكِنۢ
بَعُدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلشُّقَّةُ ۚ وَسَيَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ لَوِ ٱسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا
مَعَكُمْ يُهْلِكُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[42] O Prophet, had there been a prospect of immediate gain and an easy journey, most certainly they would have been quite ready to follow you; but the journey seemed too hard to them.[44] Still they will swear by Allah and say, "Had we been able to go forth, we would certainly have marched along with you"; they are incurring destruction on themselves: for Allah knows well that they are liars.

عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنكَ لِمَ أَذِنتَ لَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا۟ وَتَعْلَمَ
ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

لَا يَسْتَـْٔذِنُكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ أَن يُجَـٰهِدُوا۟ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ
وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَـْٔذِنُكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ وَٱرْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
فَهُمْ فِى رَيْبِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[43-45] O Prophet, may Allah forgive you: why did you give them leave to stay behind? (You yourself should not have given them leave), so that it would have become clear to you which of them spoke the truth, and you would have also known which of them were liars.[45] For; those, who believe in Allah and the Last Day, will never ask you to exempt them from doing Jihad with their possessions and their persons: Allah knows well those who fear Him. Those only make such requests, who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, and whose hearts are filled with doubts, and they are wavering because of their doubts.[46]

۞ وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا۟ ٱلْخُرُوجَ لَأَعَدُّوا۟ لَهُۥ عُدَّةً وَلَـٰكِن كَرِهَ ٱللَّهُ ٱنۢبِعَاثَهُمْ
فَثَبَّطَهُمْ وَقِيلَ ٱقْعُدُوا۟ مَعَ ٱلْقَـٰعِدِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

لَوْ خَرَجُوا۟ فِيكُم مَّا زَادُوكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا وَلَأَوْضَعُوا۟ خِلَـٰلَكُمْ يَبْغُونَكُمُ
ٱلْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيكُمْ سَمَّـٰعُونَ لَهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

لَقَدِ ٱبۡتَغَوُاْ ٱلۡفِتۡنَةَ مِن قَبۡلُ وَقَلَّبُواْ لَكَ ٱلۡأُمُورَ حَتَّىٰ جَآءَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ
أَمۡرُ ٱللَّهِ وَهُمۡ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَمِنۡهُم مَّن يَقُولُ ٱئۡذَن لِّي وَلَا تَفۡتِنِّيٓۚ أَلَا فِي ٱلۡفِتۡنَةِ سَقَطُواْۗ وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
لَمُحِيطَةُۢ بِٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

[46-49] If they had really intended to march forth, they would surely have made some preparation for it. But Allah was averse to their going forth;[47] and He caused them to hold back, and it was said to them, "Stay behind with those who stay behind." Had they gone forth with you, they would have added nothing but mischief to you and they would have made strenuous efforts to sow discord among your ranks; yet there are among you some who listen to them but Allah knows these mischief-makers full well. Even before this, these people had striven to stir up mischief and turn by turn they practiced all sorts of devices to make you unsuccessful, until the Truth prevailed and Allah's design was fulfilled, though they were averse to it.

There is such a one among them, who says, "Give me leave to stay behind and do not expose me to temptations."[48] ---Note it well that such people have already succumbed to temptations[49] and Hell has encircled these disbelievers.[50]

إِن تُصِبۡكَ حَسَنَةٞ تَسُؤۡهُمۡۖ وَإِن تُصِبۡكَ مُصِيبَةٞ يَقُولُواْ قَدۡ أَخَذۡنَآ أَمۡرَنَا مِن
قَبۡلُ وَيَتَوَلَّواْ وَّهُمۡ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

قُل لَّن يُصِيبَنَآ إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَىٰنَا ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ

فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

[50-51] If a good thing comes to you, it grieves them; but if a disaster befalls you, they turn away rejoicing and saying, "It is good that we took our precautionary measures beforehand to set our affairs aright." Say to them, "Nothing (good or bad) can befall us except that which Allah has destined for us: Allah is our Guardian and the Believers should put their trust in Him alone."[51]

قُلْ هَلْ تَرَبَّصُونَ بِنَآ إِلَّآ إِحْدَى ٱلْحُسْنَيَيْنِ ۖ وَنَحْنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمْ

أَن يُصِيبَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِّنْ عِندِهِۦٓ أَوْ بِأَيْدِينَا ۖ فَتَرَبَّصُوٓا۟ إِنَّا

مَعَكُم مُّتَرَبِّصُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

[52] Say to them, "What can be the thing you await for us other than one of the two .best things?[52] But what we await for you is whether Allah Himself inflicts His chastisement on you or at our hands; well, now await, and we, too await with you."

قُلْ أَنفِقُوا۟ طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا لَّن يُتَقَبَّلَ مِنكُمْ ۖ إِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ قَوْمًا فَٰسِقِينَ

﴿٥٣﴾

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَن تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَٰتُهُمْ إِلَّآ أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلَا
يَأْتُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَىٰ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُهُمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ
لِيُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ
﴿٥٥﴾

[53-55] Say, "You may expend your possessions willingly or unwillingly:[53] they shall not be accepted in any case, because you are a wicked people." The reason why their expenditures shall not be accepted is no other than that they have not believed in Allah and His Messenger: and they come to offer their Salat but reluctantly, and they expend in the Way of Allah with unwilling hearts. So let not their great wealth and the large number of their children delude you; for Allah wills to chastise them by means of these very things in this worldly life[54] and that they would die in a state of unbelief.[55]

وَيَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَمِنكُمْ وَمَا هُم مِّنكُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّهُمْ
قَوْمٌ يَفْرَقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

لَوْ يَجِدُونَ مَلْجَـًٔا أَوْ مَغَٰرَٰتٍ أَوْ مُدَّخَلًا لَّوَلَّوْا۟ إِلَيْهِ وَهُمْ يَجْمَحُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

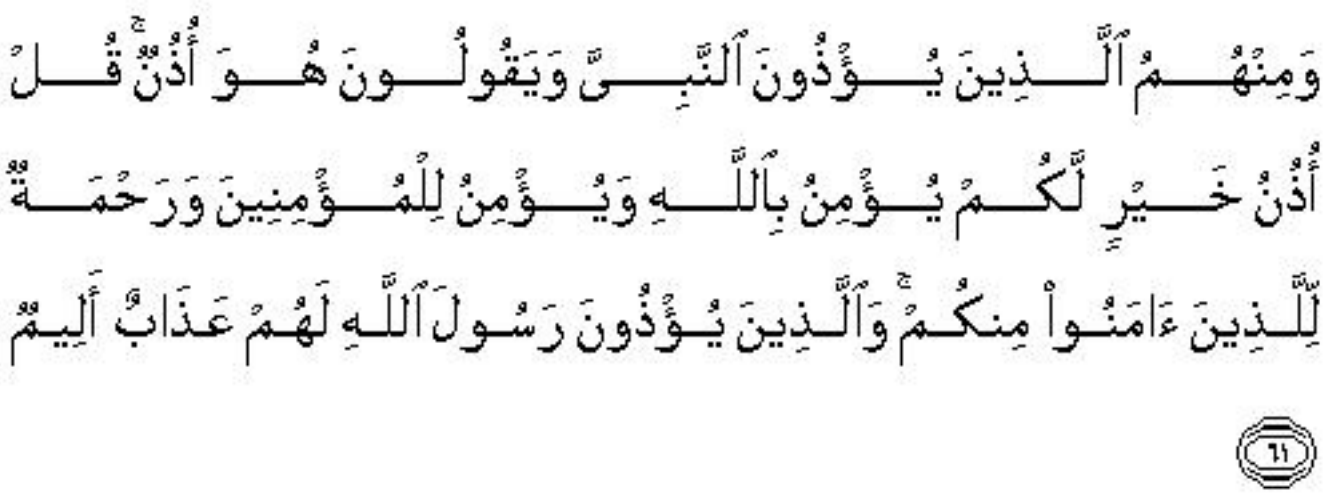
[56-57] They swear by Allah that they are Believers like you, whereas they are not at all of you. In fact, they are people who are afraid of you: if they could find a place of refuge or a cave or a hiding place to lode therein, they would run in frantic haste to take refuge in it.[56]

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَلْمِزُكَ فِي ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا۟ مِنْهَا رَضُوا۟ وَإِن
لَّمْ يُعْطَوْا۟ مِنْهَآ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

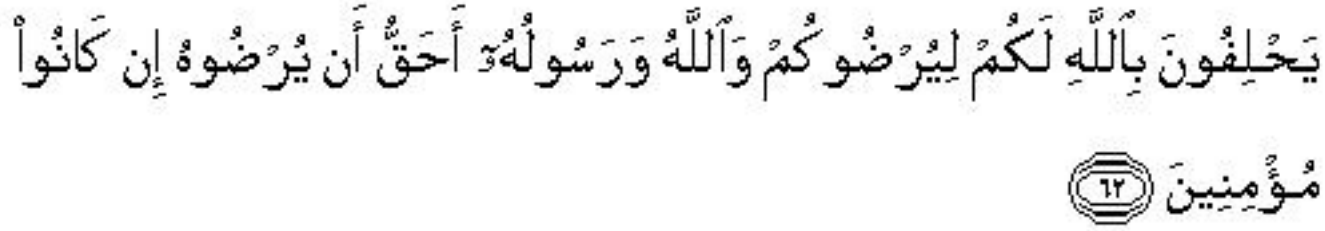
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا۟ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَقَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا ٱللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا
ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ إِنَّآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ رَٰغِبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

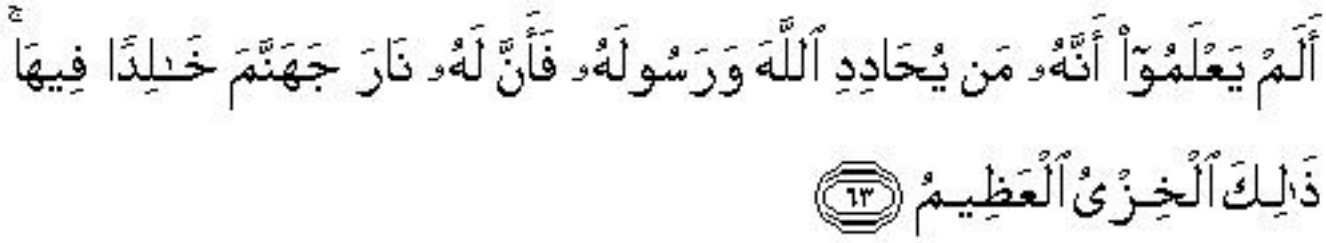
۞ إِنَّمَا ٱلصَّدَقَٰتُ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَٱلْمُؤَلَّفَةِ
قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَٱلْغَٰرِمِينَ وَفِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

[58-60] O Prophet, there are some among them who find fault with you concerning the distribution of Sadaqat (Zakat collections); if something is given to them thereof, they are well pleased and if they are not given anything thereof they become angry.[57] Would that they were contents[58] with what Allah and His Messenger had given them and would say, "Allah suffices us: He will provide for us in abundance out of His own bounty,[59] and His Messenger will also be kindly disposed towards us. Indeed we look to Allah alone."[60] As a matter of fact, Zakat collections are only for the needy[61] and the indigent,[62] and for those who are employed to collect them[63] and for those whose hearts are to be won over[64] and for the ransoming of slaves[65] and for helping the debtors[66] and for the way of Allah[67] and for the hospitality of the wayfarers.[68] This is an obligatory duty from Allah: and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.



[61] There are some among them who injure the Prophet and say, "This man readily believes whatever he hears."[69] Say, "It is good for you that he is so:[70] He believes in Allah and puts his trust in the believers[71] and is a blessing for those who are true believers among you. As regards those who injure the Messenger of Allah, there is a painful chastisement for them."





[62-63] These people swear by Allah before you in order to please you, though Allah and His Messenger have a greater right that they should try to please them if they are true believers. Do they not know that whoso opposes Allah and His Messenger shall have the Fire of Hell for him wherein he shall abide for ever? This is a great ignominy.

يَحْذَرُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ أَن تُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُورَةٌ تُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا فِى
قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ قُلِ ٱسْتَهْزِءُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا تَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ ۚ قُلْ
أَبِٱللَّهِ وَءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَرَسُولِهِۦ كُنتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا۟ قَدْ كَفَرْتُم بَعْدَ إِيمَٰنِكُمْ ۚ إِن نَّعْفُ عَن طَآئِفَةٍ
مِّنكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ طَآئِفَةًۢ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[64-66] The hypocrites dread lest a surah should be sent down to Muslims revealing to them what is in their hearts.[72] O Prophet, say to them, "Go on mocking, Allah will surely bring to light the very thing you are dreading." If you question them ("What were you talking about?"), they will promptly answer, "We were merely jesting and making merry."[73] Ask them, "What, then! were you mocking at Allah and His Revelations and His Messenger? Do not invent excuses now; you have indeed denied the truth after you had professed belief in it. Even if We pardon some of you, We will surely chastise others of you, for they are the guilty ones"[74]

ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتُ بَعْضُهُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ ۘ يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ ٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ ۚ نَسُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ
هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتِ وَٱلْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَا ۚ هِىَ حَسْبُهُمْ ۚ وَلَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

كَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوٓا۟ أَشَدَّ مِنكُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرَ أَمْوَٰلًا وَأَوْلَٰدًا
فَٱسْتَمْتَعُوا۟ بِخَلَٰقِهِمْ فَٱسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِخَلَٰقِكُمْ كَمَا ٱسْتَمْتَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ
مِن قَبْلِكُم بِخَلَٰقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَٱلَّذِى خَاضُوٓا۟ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ
أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

أَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ نَبَؤُا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَقَوْمِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ
وَأَصْحَٰبِ مَدْيَنَ وَٱلْمُؤْتَفِكَٰتِ ۚ أَتَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ
ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

[67-70] The hypocrites, both men and women, are all of a kind: they enjoin what is evil and forbid what is good and withhold their hands from doing good.[75] They forgot Allah: then Allah also forgot them; indeed the hypocrites are the evil-doers. Allah has promised the hypocrites, both men and women, as well as the disbelievers the fire of Hell, wherein they shall abide for ever: that is the proper place for them; for the curse of Allah is upon them and theirs is the lasting torment.-You are behaving[76] just like those who went before you: they had more power than you, and possessed greater riches and had more children than you: they had enjoyed their portion of the good things of the worldly life and you, too, have enjoyed your portion of the good things like them: you are also engaged in idle discussions like the discussions they held. Consequently in the end everything they did, proved vain in this world and shall be vain in the Next World: surely they are the people who are the losers. Has not[77] the story reached them of those who had gone before them-the people of Noah, tribes of `Ad and Thamud, the people of Abraham and the

inhabitants of Midian and of the overturned cities?[78] Their Messengers came to them with clear signs; then it was not Allah Who would wrong them, but they wronged their own selves.[79]

وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
أَكْبَرُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٧٢﴾

[71-72] As regards the true Believers, men and women, they are all comrades to one another: they enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil; they establish Salat, pay Zakat dues, and obey Allah and His Messenger.[80] It is they upon whom Allah will most surely send His blessings. Allah is All-Mighty, All Wise. Allah has promised to the Believers, both men and women, the Gardens underneath which canals :low and wherein they will abide for ever: there will be neat and clean Swelling places for them in these Gardens of perpetual bliss; and, above all, they will enjoy Allah's pleasure: this is the great success.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ جَٰهِدِ ٱلْكُفَّارَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمْ
جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧٣﴾

يَحۡلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ مَا قَالُواْ وَلَقَدۡ قَالُواْ كَلِمَةَ ٱلۡكُفۡرِ وَكَفَرُواْ بَعۡدَ إِسۡلَٰمِهِمۡ
وَهَمُّواْ بِمَا لَمۡ يَنَالُواْۚ وَمَا نَقَمُوٓاْ إِلَّآ أَنۡ أَغۡنَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦۚ
فَإِن يَتُوبُواْ يَكُ خَيۡرٗا لَّهُمۡۖ وَإِن يَتَوَلَّوۡاْ يُعَذِّبۡهُمُ ٱللَّهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمٗا فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا
وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۚ وَمَا لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مِن وَلِيّٖ وَلَا نَصِيرٖ ٧٤

[73-74] O Prophet,[81] strive hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be adamant and stern with them.[82] In the end, their abode shall be Hell, and it is the worst of all abodes. They swear by Allah that they did not say the thing, when in fact, they did utter the word of unbelief.[83] Thus, they were guilty of unbelief after they had professed Islam: however, they could not accomplish what they had intended to do.[84] They had no reason to be spiteful except that Allah and His Messenger had enriched them by His bounty.[85] If even now they repent of their misbehavior, it will be good for their own selves, but if they do not repent, Allah will chastise them with a painful chastisement in this world and in the Hereafter, and there will be none on the earth to protect and help them.

۞وَمِنۡهُم مَّنۡ عَٰهَدَ ٱللَّهَ لَئِنۡ ءَاتَىٰنَا مِن فَضۡلِهِۦ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ
وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ٧٥

فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَىٰهُم مِّن فَضۡلِهِۦ بَخِلُواْ بِهِۦ وَتَوَلَّواْ وَّهُم مُّعۡرِضُونَ ٧٦

فَأَعۡقَبَهُمۡ نِفَاقٗا فِي قُلُوبِهِمۡ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ يَلۡقَوۡنَهُۥ بِمَآ أَخۡلَفُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا
وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُواْ يَكۡذِبُونَ ٧٧

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَىٰهُمْ وَأَنَّ
ٱللَّهَ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلْغُيُوبِ ﴿٧٨﴾

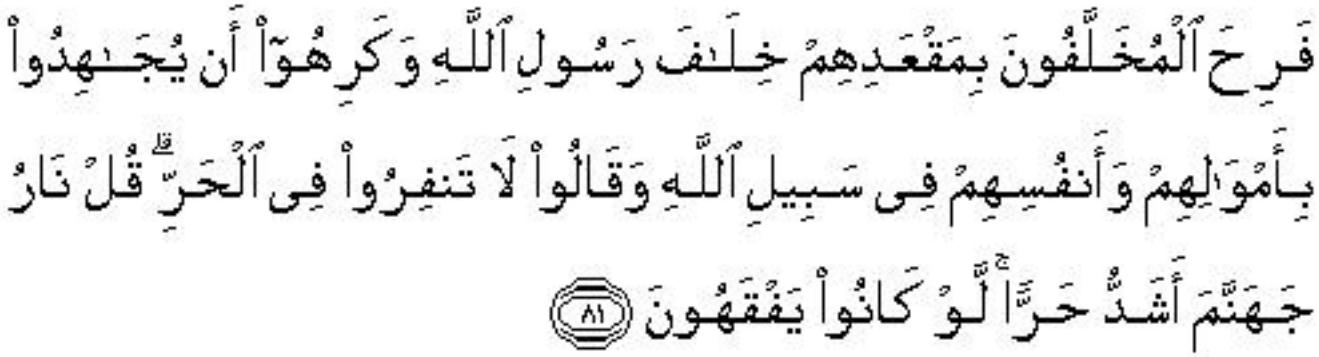
ٱلَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ ٱلْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِى ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ وَٱلَّذِينَ
لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ سَخِرَ
ٱللَّهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾

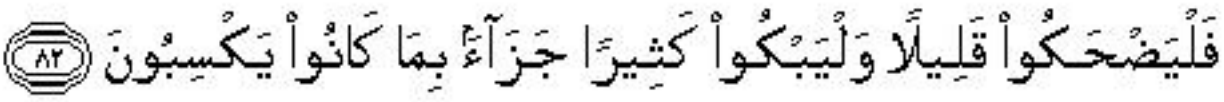
[75-79] There are some among them, who made this covenant with Allah: If He gives us of His bounty, we will disburse charity and lead a righteous life." But when Allah enriched them by His bounty, they grew niggardly and went back on their covenant, and paid no heed to it.[86] As a consequence of the breach of the covenant they had made with Allah and the lies they told, He set hypocrisy deep in their hearts that will follow them till the Day when they shall meet Him. Do these people not know that Allah knows fully well even their secrets and their conspiracies and that Allah knows fully well all that is hidden. (He fully knows those stingy rich people) who find fault with the monetary sacrifices of those Believers who make willing and voluntary contributions generously and scoff at those people who find nothing to contribute (to the cause of Allah) except what little they contribute sacrificing their own needs:[87] Allah scoffs at those who scoff and there is a painful punishment in store for them.

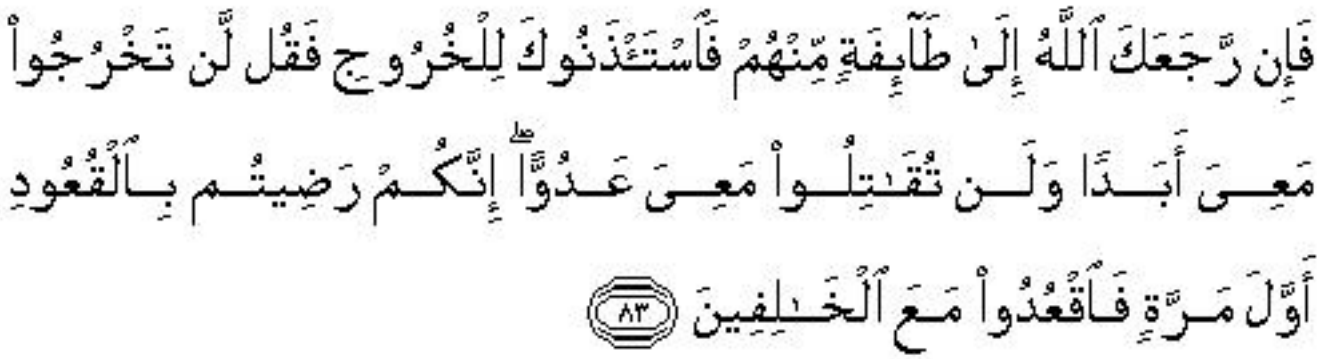
ٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ إِن تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَن
يَغْفِرَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى
ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[80] O Prophet, (it will all be the same) whether you beg forgiveness for such people or not; for Allah will not forgive

them even if you beg forgiveness for them seventy times. This is because they have no belief in Allah and His Messenger: and Allah does not show guidance to the wrong-doers.


فَرِحَ ٱلْمُخَلَّفُونَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خِلَٰفَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَرِهُوٓاْ أَن يُجَٰهِدُواْ
بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَقَالُواْ لَا تَنفِرُواْ فِى ٱلْحَرِّ ۗ قُلْ نَارُ
جَهَنَّمَ أَشَدُّ حَرًّا ۚ لَّوْ كَانُواْ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨١﴾


فَلْيَضْحَكُواْ قَلِيلًا وَلْيَبْكُواْ كَثِيرًا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾


فَإِن رَّجَعَكَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَىٰ طَآئِفَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ فَٱسْتَـْٔذَنُوكَ لِلْخُرُوجِ فَقُل لَّن تَخْرُجُواْ
مَعِىَ أَبَدًا وَلَن تُقَٰتِلُواْ مَعِىَ عَدُوًّا ۖ إِنَّكُمْ رَضِيتُم بِٱلْقُعُودِ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ فَٱقْعُدُواْ مَعَ ٱلْخَٰلِفِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[81-83] Those who were allowed to remain behind, were happy that they had not gone with Allah's Messenger, and had stayed at home, for they did not like to do Jihad in the Way of Allah with their possessions and their persons. They said to the people, "Do not go forth in this heat." Say to them, "The Fire of Hell is much hotter than this"; would that they understood this! Let them now laugh little and weep much for the recompense of what they have been earning is such (that they should weep). Henceforth, if Allah brings you among them and any of them asks your leave to go forth for Jihad. say to them plainly, "Now you shall never be allowed to go forth with me nor to fight an enemy in my company; as you were pleased to stay behind the first time, now you stay at home with those who stay behind".

وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلَىٰٓ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُم مَّاتَ أَبَدًا وَلَا
تَقُمْ عَلَىٰ قَبْرِهِۦٓ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَمَاتُوا۟ وَهُمْ
فَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدُهُمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُعَذِّبَهُم بِهَا فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[84-85] And in future you should never say funeral prayer for anyone from among them; who dies nor stand at his grave, for they have denied Allah and His Messenger and died the while they were transgressors.[88] And let not the abundance of their possessions and children delude you; for Allah wills only to chastise them by means of their possessions and children in this world and let their souls depart while they are still disbelievers.

وَإِذَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَجَٰهِدُوا۟ مَعَ رَسُولِهِ ٱسْتَـْٔذَنَكَ أُو۟لُوا۟
ٱلطَّوْلِ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالُوا۟ ذَرْنَا نَكُن مَّعَ ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

رَضُوا۟ بِأَن يَكُونُوا۟ مَعَ ٱلْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ
﴿٨٧﴾

لَـٰكِنِ ٱلرَّسُولُ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ جَٰهَدُوا۟ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ
وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتُ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٨٩﴾

[86-89] Whenever a Surah was sent down with the revelation, "Believe in Allah and go forth for Jihad with His Messenger" , you might have perceived that even the capable people from among them began to beg you to excuse them from Jihad. saying, "Please leave us behind with those who are to stay at home. Those people chose to stay with those who had remained behind and a seal was set upon their hearts: therefore they do not understand anything now.[89] But the Messenger and those who shared his belief did Jihad with their possessions and persons: now all the good things are for them only and they alone are truly successful. Allah has prepared for them Gardens underneath which canals flow wherein they will abide for ever: this is the great success.

وَجَآءَ ٱلْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ لِيُؤْذَنَ لَهُمْ وَقَعَدَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَذَبُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ ۚ سَيُصِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

[90] And many from among the Bedouins[90] also came with their excuses that they, too, might be allowed to remain behind: thus stayed behind those who had made a false compact of Faith with Allah and His Messenger. In the near future those from among the Bedouins who adopted the way of unbelief[91] shall meet with a painful chastisement.

لَّيۡسَ عَلَى ٱلضُّعَفَآءِ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلۡمَرۡضَىٰ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ مَا
يُنفِقُونَ حَرَجٌ إِذَا نَصَحُواْ لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦۚ مَا عَلَى ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ مِن سَبِيلٖۚ
وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٩١

وَلَا عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا مَآ أَتَوۡكَ لِتَحۡمِلَهُمۡ قُلۡتَ لَآ
أَجِدُ مَآ أَحۡمِلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ تَوَلَّواْ وَّأَعۡيُنُهُمۡ تَفِيضُ مِنَ ٱلدَّمۡعِ حَزَنًا أَلَّا
يَجِدُواْ مَا يُنفِقُونَ ٩٢

۞ إِنَّمَا ٱلسَّبِيلُ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَسۡتَـٔۡذِنُونَكَ وَهُمۡ أَغۡنِيَآءُۚ رَضُواْ بِأَن يَكُونُواْ
مَعَ ٱلۡخَوَالِفِ وَطَبَعَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمۡ فَهُمۡ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ٩٣

[91-93] There is no harm if the weak, the sick and those that have no means of providing for Jihad stay behind, provided they are sincerely faithful to Allah and His Messenger.[92] There is no cause of blame against such righteous people: and Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. Likewise there can be no ground for criticizing those people who came to you in person and requested you to provide them with mounts. For when you said to them, "I am unable to provide you with mounts, they returned with heavy hearts, their eyes overflowing with tears: they were filled with sorrow that they had no means of going forth for Jihad at their own expense.[93] However, the conduct of those who are well-to-do and still ask for exemption from Jihad, is indeed very objectionable. As such people chose to stay behind with women, Allah set a seal upon their hearts: therefore now they do not know anything (about the consequences they shall incur in Allah's court).

يَعْتَذِرُونَ إِلَيْكُمْ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ قُل لَّا تَعْتَذِرُوا۟
لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكُمْ قَدْ نَبَّأَنَا ٱللَّهُ مِنْ أَخْبَارِكُمْ ۚ وَسَيَرَى ٱللَّهُ
عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُۥ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم
بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

سَيَحْلِفُونَ بِٱللَّهِ لَكُمْ إِذَا ٱنقَلَبْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لِتُعْرِضُوا۟ عَنْهُمْ ۖ فَأَعْرِضُوا۟ عَنْهُمْ ۖ
إِنَّهُمْ رِجْسٌ ۖ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ لِتَرْضَوْا۟ عَنْهُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَرْضَوْا۟ عَنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَرْضَىٰ عَنِ
ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾

[94-96] When you return to them, they will apologize to you, offering many sorts of excuses: but say to them plainly, "Make no excuses: we will not believe in anything you say for Allah has revealed to us the whole truth about you. Now Allah and His Messenger will keep a watch over your conduct: then you shall return to Him Who knows all that is visible and hidden, and He will tell you all that you have been doing. " On your return they will take solemn oaths by Allah to reassure you, so that you may turn away from theta. So turn away from them[94] because they are a filth and their real abode is Hell which shall be the recompense of what they have earned. They will take solemn oaths before you to satisfy you, but even if you accept their excuses. Allah will never accept the excuses of the evil-doers.

ٱلْأَعْرَابُ أَشَدُّ كُفْرًا وَنِفَاقًا وَأَجْدَرُ أَلَّا يَعْلَمُوا۟ حُدُودَ مَآ
أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٩٧﴾

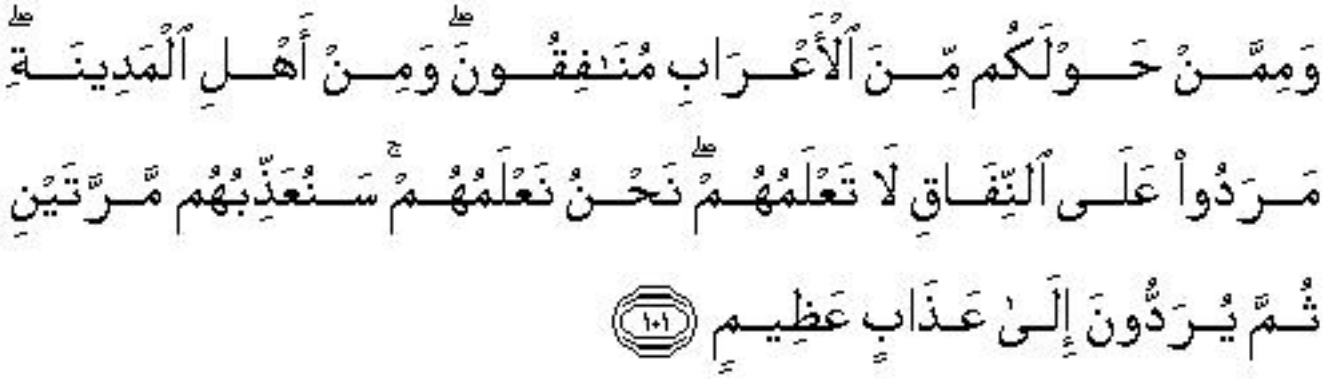
وَمِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنفِقُ مَغْرَمًا وَيَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمُ ٱلدَّوَآئِرَ ۚ
عَلَيْهِمْ دَآئِرَةُ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٨﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَيَتَّخِذُ مَا
يُنفِقُ قُرُبَٰتٍ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَصَلَوَٰتِ ٱلرَّسُولِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّهَا قُرْبَةٌ لَّهُمْ ۚ سَيُدْخِلُهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٩٩﴾

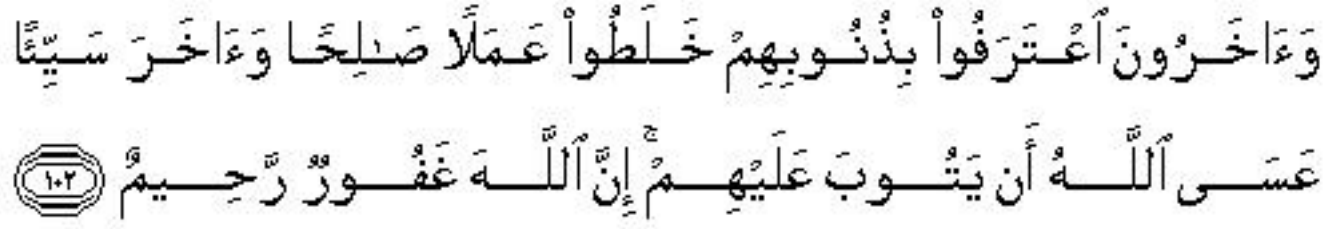
[97-99] These Bedouins are most stubborn in unbelief and hypocrisy,and, in all probability, will remain ignorant of the laws of the Way which Allah has sent down to His Messenger:[95] and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. There are such among the Bedouins, who regard what they expend in the Way as a penalty[96] and await some change of fortune to turn against you (so that they should be able to overthrow the government you have imposed on them,) whereas they themselves have been encircled by a vicious circle; and Allah hears everything and knows everything. But among these Bedouins there are some, who believe in Allah and the Last Day and regard what they expend in the Way as a means of bringing themselves nearer to Allah and of seeking the Messenger's prayers for Allah's blessing; yes, this is indeed a means of bringing them nearer to Allah, and Allah will certainly admit them to His blessing; indeed Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate.



[100] Allah was pleased with those Muhajirs and Ansar who were the first to respond to the invitation to the Faith, and with those also who followed them in their righteous conduct, and they, too, were pleased with (the reward from) Allah; He has got ready for them gardens underneath which canals flow and they will abide therein for ever; this is the greatest success.



[101] There are many hypocrites among the Bedouins who dwell around you; likewise among the citizens of Al-Madinah there are hypocrites who have become experts in hypocrisy. You do not know them, but We do know them.[97] The time is coming when We will give them double chastisement:[98] then they shall be returned to a far greater torment.



خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ صَلَوٰتَكَ
سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَأْخُذُ ٱلصَّدَقَٰتِ
وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

وَقُلِ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ فَسَيَرَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۖ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ
عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[102-105] There are some others who have confessed their sins: they have a mixed record of deeds, good and bad. It may be that Allah will turn to them again with kindness for He is Forbearing and Compassionate. O Prophet, accept propitiatory offerings from their possessions to cleanse and purify them thereby, and help them onward (in the way of virtue); and pray for blessings for them because your prayer will bring comfort to them; and Allah hears everything and knows everything. Do these people not know that it is Allah alone Who accepts the repentance of His servants and approves of their propitiatory offerings, and that Allah is indeed Forgiving, Compassionate? And tell them, O Prophet: Do as you will: Allah and His Messenger and the Believers will now keep a watch over your conduct;[99] then you shall return to Him Who knows all that is visible and hidden and He will tell you all that you have been doing.[100]

وَءَاخَرُونَ مُرْجَوْنَ لِأَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَإِمَّا يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[106] There are some others who yet await Allah's decision: He may either punish them or turn to them again with mercy: Allah knows everything and is All-Wise.[101]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا وَتَفْرِيقًۢا بَيْنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِرْصَادًا
لِّمَنْ حَارَبَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَآ إِلَّا ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ
يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

لَا تَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَدًا ۚ لَّمَسْجِدٌ أُسِّسَ عَلَى ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَن
تَقُومَ فِيهِ ۚ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُوا۟ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُطَّهِّرِينَ
﴿١٠٨﴾

أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَٰنَهُۥ عَلَىٰ تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنٍ خَيْرٌ أَم مَّنْ أَسَّسَ
بُنْيَٰنَهُۥ عَلَىٰ شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَٱنْهَارَ بِهِۦ فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى
ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

لَا يَزَالُ بُنْيَـٰنُهُمُ ٱلَّذِى بَنَوْا۟ رِيبَةً فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَّآ أَن تَقَطَّعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ

عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

[107-110] There are others who built a "mosque" in order to harm the Righteous Mission and to practice unbelief (instead of Allah's worship) and to cause discord among the Believers, and to make this (place of worship') an ambush for the one who even before this had been in conflict with Allah and His Messenger. They will take solemn oaths and say, "Our intention was nothing but good." But Allah is a witness that they are absolute liars. You should never stand in that building: the Mosque which has been founded on piety from the very first day, is the proper place for you to stand (for prayer). For there are such people in it as would like to keep themselves pure; and Allah likes those people who like to keep themselves pure.[102] Why, is he better who founded his building upon Allah's fear and for His approval or he who founded his building on the brink of an under-mined bank[103] that tumbled with him down into the fire of Hell? Allah never shows the Right Way to such workers of iniquity.[104] This building which they have built will never cease to create doubts in their hearts (from which there is no way to come out) unless it be that their hearts are cut into pieces:[105] and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةَ ۚ

يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ ۖ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ

وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِۦ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَٱسْتَبْشِرُوا۟ بِبَيْعِكُمُ

ٱلَّذِى بَايَعْتُم بِهِۦ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١١﴾

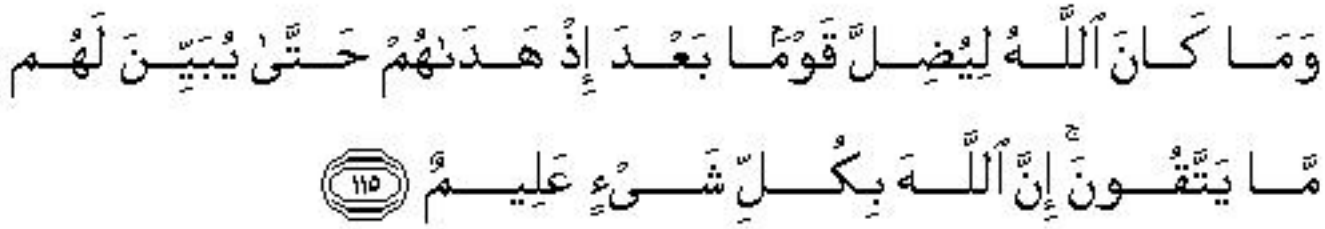
ٱلتَّٰٓئِبُونَ ٱلْعَٰبِدُونَ ٱلْحَٰمِدُونَ ٱلسَّٰٓئِحُونَ ٱلرَّٰكِعُونَ ٱلسَّٰجِدُونَ
ٱلْءَامِرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَٱلنَّاهُونَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَٱلْحَٰفِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ
وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

[111-112] Indeed Allah has bought from the Believers their persons and their possessions in return for the Gardens;[106] they fight in the Way of Allah, kill and are killed. This promise (of the Gardens) is the true pledge of Allah made in the Torah, the Gospel, and the Qur'an,[107] and who is more true in fulfilling his promise than Allah? So rejoice in the bargain you have made with Him; and this is the greatest success. Those who turn back to Allah over and over again;[108] those who worship Him, those who sing hymns in His praise, those who move about in the land for His sake,[109] those who bow down and prostrate before Him, those who enjoin virtue and forbid evil and strictly observe the limits prescribed by Allah[110] (are the Believers who make such a bargain with Allah;) and O Prophet, give good news to such Believers.

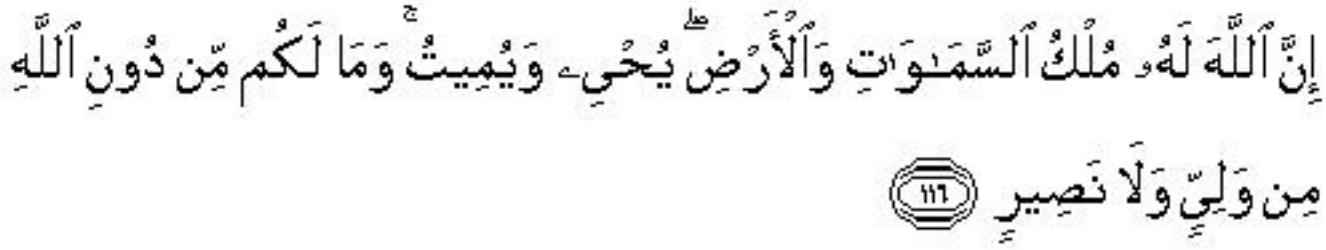
مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِىِّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَن يَسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوٓا۟ أُو۟لِى
قُرْبَىٰ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿١١٣﴾

وَمَا كَانَ ٱسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَن مَّوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَآ إِيَّاهُ
فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُۥٓ أَنَّهُۥ عَدُوٌّ لِّلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَأَوَّٰهٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

[113-114] It does not behoove the Prophet and those who have believed to pray for the forgiveness of the mushriks, even though they be near kinsmen, when it has become clear to them that they deserve Hell.[111] As regards the prayer of Abraham for his father, it was only to fulfill a promise he had made to him,[112] but when he realized that he was an enemy of Allah, he disowned him. The fact is that Abraham was a tender-hearted, God fearing and forbearing man.[113]

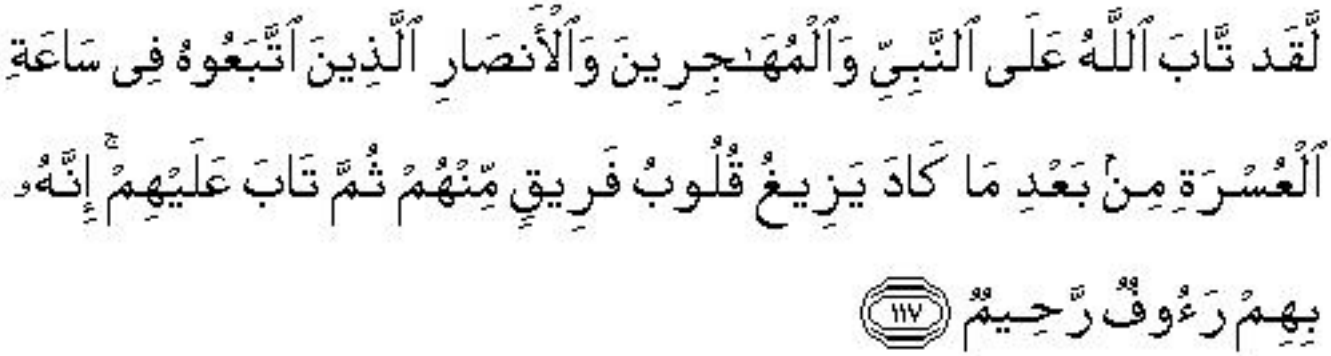


وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًۢا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَىٰهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُبَيِّنَ لَهُم
مَّا يَتَّقُونَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾



إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۚ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ
مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١١٦﴾

[115-116] It is not the way of Allah to let people go astray after He has given them guidance, until He makes plain to them all that they should avoid:[114] surely Allah has the knowledge of everything. And it is also the fact that the kingdom of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him: he ordains life and death: and you have neither any helper nor protector to rescue yourself from Him.



لَّقَد تَّابَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِىِّ وَٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ وَٱلْأَنصَارِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُ فِى سَاعَةِ
ٱلْعُسْرَةِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا كَادَ يَزِيغُ قُلُوبُ فَرِيقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ
بِهِمْ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

وَعَلَى ٱلثَّلَٰثَةِ ٱلَّذِينَ خُلِّفُواْ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا ضَاقَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمُ
ٱلۡأَرۡضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتۡ وَضَاقَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡ أَنفُسُهُمۡ وَظَنُّوٓاْ أَن لَّا مَلۡجَأَ
مِنَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّآ إِلَيۡهِ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ لِيَتُوبُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ
ٱلتَّوَّابُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ١١٨

[117-118] Allah forgave the Prophet and those muhajirin and Ansar who stood by him in the hour of distress,[115] though the hearts of some of them had well-nigh swerved aside:[116] (Hut when they did not follow that crooked way, and stood by the Prophet) Allah forgave them:[117] surely Allah is Gentle and Compassionate to these people. And Allah has forgiven the Three whose case had been put off.[118] When the earth with all its vastness seemed to have become narrow for them, and their own souls were a burden on them, and they realized that there was no refuge for them except in the mercy of Allah Himself, Allah turned to them with kindness so that they should turn to Him. Surely, He is Forgiving and Compassionate.[119]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَكُونُواْ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ١١٩

مَا كَانَ لِأَهۡلِ ٱلۡمَدِينَةِ وَمَنۡ حَوۡلَهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡأَعۡرَابِ أَن يَتَخَلَّفُواْ عَن رَّسُولِ
ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَرۡغَبُواْ بِأَنفُسِهِمۡ عَن نَّفۡسِهِۦۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ لَا يُصِيبُهُمۡ ظَمَأٞ وَلَا
نَصَبٞ وَلَا مَخۡمَصَةٞ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَطَـُٔونَ مَوۡطِئٗا يَغِيظُ ٱلۡكُفَّارَ وَلَا
يَنَالُونَ مِنۡ عَدُوّٖ نَّيۡلًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُم بِهِۦ عَمَلٞ صَٰلِحٌۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ
أَجۡرَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ١٢٠

وَلَا يُنفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً وَلَا يَقْطَعُونَ وَادِيًا
إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

[119-121] O Believers, fear Allah and be with those who are Truthful. It did not behoove the people of Al-Madinah and the Bedouins, dwelling around, to abandon Allah's Messenger and stay at home in order to safeguard their own interests, in utter disregard of him. For, every hardship like thirst, hunger and any other physical ordeal they suffer in the Way of Allah, and every step they take on that Way which enrages the unbelievers, and every act of wreaking vengeance upon the enemies of the truth, is credited in their favor with a good deed for each: surely Allah does not let go unrewarded any deed of the righteous people. Likewise, whatever they spend (in the Way of Allah), be it little or much, and whichever valley they traverse (for Jihad), is credited to their account so that Allah may reward them for the good deeds they did.

۞ وَمَا كَانَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنفِرُوا۟ كَآفَّةً ۚ فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ
مِّنْهُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا۟ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[122] And it was not required that all the believers should leave their homes, but why did not some people from every habitation leave their homes in order to understand the Way of Islam and to warn their people when they returned to them, so that they should refrain from un-Islamic conduct?[120]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قَٰتِلُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوا۟ فِيكُمْ
غِلْظَةً ۚ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

وَإِذَا مَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَٰذِهِۦٓ
إِيمَٰنًا ۚ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَٰنًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَتْهُمْ رِجْسًا إِلَىٰ رِجْسِهِمْ وَمَاتُوا۟
وَهُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

أَوَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُفْتَنُونَ فِى كُلِّ عَامٍ مَّرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لَا يَتُوبُونَ وَلَا
هُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

وَإِذَا مَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ نَّظَرَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ هَلْ يَرَىٰكُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ ثُمَّ
ٱنصَرَفُوا۟ ۚ صَرَفَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُم بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

[123-127] O Believers, fight with these disbelievers who are near you,[121] and they should find you firm and stern:[122] and know that Allah is with the God fearing.[123] Whenever a new Surah is revealed, some of them ask the Muslims (in jest), "Say, whose Faith from among you has increased?" (The answer is that) most surely (every Surah) increases the Faith of those who have sincerely believed and they rejoice but it has added more filth to the existing filth[124] of those whose hearts are suffering from the disease (of hypocrisy) and they shall remain disbelievers up to their death. Do these people not see that they are tried once or twice every year? [125] Yet, still they do not repent or learn a lesson from this. When a Surah is sent down, they cast looks at one another, asking, "Is anyone watching you?" Then they silently slip away:[126] Allah has turned away their hearts for they are a people who do not understand.[127]

لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم
بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُلْ حَسْبِىَ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ ۖ وَهُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ
ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿١٢٩﴾

[128-129] Listen! A Messenger has come to you, who is from among you He grieves at your (spiritual) loss: he is greedily anxious for your (true) success: he is gentle and compassionate for the Believers:

Now if they turn away from you, say to them, O Prophet, "Allah suffices me: there is no god but He: in Him have I put my trust: He is the Lord of the Great Throne."

1As has already been stated in the Preface to this Surah, this discourse (vv. 1-37) was revealed in A.H. 9, when Hadrat Abu Bakr had left for Makkah as leader of the pilgrims to the Ka`abah. Therefore the Companions said to the Holy Prophet, "Sir, send it to Abu Bakr so that he may proclaim it on the occasion of Haj. " He replied, "The importance and nature of the Declaration demands that this should be proclaimed on my behalf by some one from my own family." Accordingly, he entrusted this duty to Hadrat 'Ali and instructed him to proclaim it openly before the pilgrims, and also make these four announcements: (1) "No one who rejects Islam shall enter Paradise. (2) No mushrik should perform Haj after this. (3) It is forbidden to move round the Ka`abah in a naked state. (4) The terms of the treaties which are still in force (i.e. with those who have not broken their treaties with the Messenger of Allah up to that time) would be faithfully observed till the expiry of the term of the treaties".

In this connection, it will be worthwhile to know that the first Haj of the Islamic period after the conquest of Makkah was performed in A.H. 8, according to the old customs. Then in A.H. 9 the second Haj was performed by the Muslims in the Islamic way, and by the mushriks in their own way. But the third Haj, known as "Hajja-tul-Wida a", was performed in A.H. 10 in the purely Islamic way under the guidance of the Holy Prophet himself. He did not perform Haj during the two previous years because up to that time the mushriks had not been forbidden from it, and so there were still some traces of shirk associated with it.

2This declaration of the abrogation of the treaties with the mushriks was made in accordance with the law enjoined in VIII: 58 regarding the treacherous people, for it is treachery from the Islamic point of view to wage war against any people with whom a treaty of peace had been made, without openly declaring that the treaty had been terminated. That is why a proclamation of the abrogation of the treaties was necessitated against those clans who were always hatching plots against Islam in spice of the treaties of peace they had made. They would break the treaties and turn hostile on the first opportunity for treachery, and the same was true of all the mushrik clans with the exception of Bani Kananah, Bani Damrah and one or two other clans.

This proclamation practically reduced the mushriks of Arabia to the position of outlaws and no place of shelter was left for them, for the major part of the country had come under the sway of Islam. As this released the Muslims from the obligations of the treaties made with them and forestalled them, they were driven into a tight comer. For this smashed all their evil designs of creating trouble by inciting civil war at the time of a threat from the Roman and the Iranian Empires or after the death of the Holy Prophet. But Allah and His Messenger turned the tables on them before the opportune moment for which they were waiting. Now the only alternatives left with them were either to accept Islam that had become the state religion of Arabia, or to fight against it and be exterminated, or to emigrate from the country.

The wisdom of this grand plan became apparent when the mischief of apostasy broke out in different parts of Arabia a year and a half after this at the death of the Holy Prophet. This disturbance was so sudden and violent that it shook to its foundations, the newly created Islamic State, and would have done a far greater harm if the organized power of shirk had not been broken beforehand by this abrogation. It may be asserted that but for this timely action the mischief of apostasy, that rose at the very beginning of the Caliphate of Hadrat Abu Bakr, would have done ten-fold harm by rebellion and civil war, and might have changed the whole history of Islam.

3The respite of four months from the tenth of Zil-Haj (the date of the proclamation) to the tenth of Rabi'-uth-thani; was granted to give time to the mushriks so that they should consider their position carefully and decide whether to make preparation for war or to emigrate from the country or to accept Islam.

4Hajj-i-akbar refers to the 10th of Zil-Hajjah and is also known as Yaum-un-Nahr. This has been explained by the Holy Prophet in an authentic Tradition. On the 10th of Zil-Hajjah, during the last Haj of the Holy Prophet, he asked the people, "What is this day?" The people answered, "It is the day of Sacrifice. "

The Holy Prophet said, "This is the day of Hajj-i-akbar" Here the word Hajj-i-akbar (Great Pilgrimage) has been used in contrast to Hajj-i-asghar which the Arabs used for 'Umrah' . Thus, the Haj which is performed in the prescribed dates of Zil-Haj is called Hajj-i-akbar.

5".....you also should observe the treaties with such people" who do not violate them, for your violation in such cases shall be against piety. And Muslims should remain pious under all circumstances "for Allah loves the pious people" only.

6Here "the months made unlawful" are not those four months during which war is forbidden for the sake of Haj and `Umrah but the four months that were made unlawful for the Muslims to make any attack on the mushriks, who were granted respite by v. 2.

7That is, "Mere repentance from disbelief and shirk will not end the matter. but they shall have to perform the prescribed prayer and pay Zakat dues. Without these it will not be considered that they had given up disbelief and embraced Islam. " Hadrat Abu Bakr based his decision on this verse in the case of the apostates, after the death of the Holy Prophet, who argued that they were not the rejecters of Islam, because they offered Salat, even though they had refused to pay the Zakat dues. This argument roused doubts in the minds of the Companions in general that they had no right to fight with such people as these. But Hadrat Abu Bakr removed their doubts, saying, "Verse 5 enjoins us to let those people go their way who fulfill all the three conditions- repentance from shirk, the establishment of Salat and the payment of Zakat. We cannot forbear them, because they do not fulfill one of these three conditions."

8That is, "if during a fight, an enemy makes a request that he should be given an opportunity to understand Islam, the Muslims should give him a surety of protection and allow him to visit them. They should then present Islam before him in order to make him understand it. If, after this, he does not embrace Islam, they should convey him safely to his place" . Such a person who comes to Dar-ul-Islam under the above mentioned protection is called musta'min in the Islamic Code.

9That is: Bani Kinanah and Bani Khuza`ah and Bani Damrah.

10That is, "Though outwardly they negotiated for peace treaties, they cherished evil intentions in their hearts, and waited for an opportune moment to break them. And this was borne by later experiences."

11They were evil-doers because they had no sense of moral responsibilities nor did they hesitate to break moral limits.

12That is, "When they had to make a choice between the Divine Guidance and the transitory worldly ambitions, they chose the latter, because they did not comprehend the comparative values of the two. Whereas the Revelations of Allah were inviting them to goodness, righteousness and observance of the Divine Law, which lead to eternal bliss, they chose to follow the unbridled lusts of their selves which gained some transitory worldly benefits for them, but consequently led them to eternal perdition.

13Those evil-doers "blocked His Way for others", for they not only chose misguidance for themselves but

also tried to prevent others from following the right way. They put every kind of obstruction in the way of the invitation to righteousness; nay, they tried their worst to gag the mouths of those who were extending that invitation and make their lives hard for them. In short, they did all they could to prevent the establishment of the righteous system of life that Allah required the people to establish.

14Here, too, it has explicitly been stated that those who repent will not become your brethren in faith without the observance of Salat and Zakat.

"Yet if .....they shall be your brethren in faith": This means that "if they fulfill those conditions, then not only shall their lives and properties become unlawful for you but also they shall enjoy equal rights with you in the Islamic Community. There shall be no distinction between them and the other Muslims in regard to social, cultural, legal and political rights, and nothing will stand in their way to the progress for which they are otherwise qualified.

14a".....you should fight with them.....":perhaps the fear of war may force them to desist from breaking oaths and reviling Islam.

15In the context,the words, oaths and compacts mean the compact of the acceptance of Islam. Therefore, the question of making a new compact with them does not arise. As regards the old pacts, they had already broken all of them. It is on account of this that the declaration of immunity (from obligations) by Allah and His Messenger has been clearly made. It has also been stated that such people are not worthy of any treaty and they can only be let off if they repent of their disbelief and shirk and establish Salat and pay Zakat dues. This verse states clearly how the renegades should be treated. As a matter of fact, .this verse forestalled the mischief of apostasy that broke out a year and a half after its revelation and Hadrat Abu Bakr followed the guidance given in this verse to crush it. (For further explanation, see my book entitled Murtad ki Saza Islami Qanun men).

16In this passage the addressees are the Muslims. They have been urged to fight perseveringly in the Way of Allah, without paying the least heed to their ties of blood and relationship and to their worldly interests. In order to understand fully the spirit of this passage, the reader should keep in view the state of affairs at the time, when the abrogation of the treaties was declared. Though Islam was reigning supreme in the greater part of Arabia and there was no greater power to challenge its supremacy, still superficial observers saw a number of dangers in the extreme step which was being taken at that time.

First, it was feared that the abrogating of the treaties with all the mushrik clans at one and the same time, and debarring them from Haj and changing the guardianship of the Ka`abah and abolishing all the rituals of `ignorance', would so incite the mushriks and the hypocrites and kindle such fire of enmity that they would be ready to shed the last drop of their blood for safeguarding their interests and prejudices.

Secondly, it was feared that the mushriks would be greatly enraged by this declaration which granted freedom of movement to the Muslims to perform Haj, whereas it forbade the non-Muslims. Obviously this would also affect adversely their economic condition, for Haj played a very important part in the economic life of Arabia during that period of her history.

Lastly, it was feared that this would put to a hard trial those people who had embraced Islam recently after the Peace Treaty of Hudaibiyah and the Conquest of Makkah. For many of their kith and kin were still mushriks, some of whom had their interests closely bound up with those offices of `ignorance' which were abolished. Now it was obvious that the total war against the mushriks demanded that these new Muslims should not only kill their own near and dear ones but should also themselves abolish those ancient offices and distinctions which they had enjoyed for centuries.

Though it is true that none of these dangers took any practical shape, there were good reasons for these apprehensions, for none could foresee the trends of events at the time of the abrogation of the treaties. And the dangers were averted because these Commandments had prepared them beforehand to meet them. More than that: this preparedness produced other good results. The delegates from the remnants of the mushriks, their chiefs and rulers began to visit Al-Madinah and take the oath of allegiance to Islam and obedience to the Holy prophet, who let them retain their old positions and offices. These things proved that if the Muslims had not been in a state of readiness to take immediate action for enforcing the terms of the "Declaration" with the sword, the events which followed might have taken a different direction. Therefore it was the need of the hour that the Muslims should have been vehemently urged for Jihad, and their apprehensions removed. That is why it was being enjoined that they should not let anything hinder them from doing the Will of Allah. And this is the theme of this discourse.

17This was a subtle reference to the possibility of what actually was going to happen afterwards. "And He may remove ..... repentance": this was to remove the misunderstandings of the Muslims who apprehended a bloody war as a result of the Declaration. They were told that it was also possible that some of the enemies might repent and embrace Islam. This was not made quite plain lest it should slacken the war preparations of the Muslims on one side and weaken the force of the warning to the mushriks on the other. The latter thing might have hindered the mushriks from giving a serious thought to the critical position they were in that finally led them to embrace Islam.

18The addressees in v. 16 were those Muslims who had recently embraced Islam. It means to tell them plainly: "Now that you have embraced Islam, you shall ave to give a genuine proof by a trial that you have accepted it because you believe in its Truth and not because it has become supreme in the country by the exertions of the true Believers. The trial is that you shall have to sacrifice your lives, wealths and your near and dear ones for the sake of Allah and His Way. Then and only then, you will be regarded as true Believers."

19This lays down the general principle for the guardianship of the places of worship that ave been built

exclusively for the worship of Allah. Obviously, those people who associate others with Allah in His essence, His rights and His powers cannot be the proper persons to be the guardians, the servants, the managers etc. of such sacred places. And when they themselves reject the invitations to Tauhid, and openly declare that they are not going to dedicate their worship and obedience exclusively o Allah, they automatically forfeit any right they ad for the guardianship of such places of worship that had been built for the worship of Allah alone. Though the principle is of a general nature, it has been mentioned here with the particular object of removing the mushriks from the guardianship of the Ka`abah and Masjid-i-Haram and establishing permanently the guardianship of the worshipers of One God over them.

20".....all their works have gone to waste.....", including the little real service they did to the `House of Allah' because they mixed with it shirk and other practices of ignorance. Their little good was destroyed by their far greater evils.

21This question has been posed to bring home the fact that the guardianship of a shrine or attendance at it or other religious acts that are done for show, and are exploited by worldly people to establish and maintain the show of their piety, have no value whatsoever in the sight of Allah. The real worth of a person with Allah is that he should be sincere in his beliefs and make sacrifices in the Way of Allah, no matter whether he enjoys or does not enjoy such distinctions or happens to descend or not from a family of `saints'. On the contrary, those people who lack these excellences have no value with Allah, no matter whether they be the descendants of saints or inherit the guardianship of shrines from a long line of saints, or perform some `religious' acts for show on special occasions. And it is not lawful in any way that the guardianship, etc. of sacred places and institutions should be left in the hands of these worthless people just because they happen to inhere such rights from their forefathers.

22That is: "The judgment will deprive them of the blessings of the true Faith, and of the honor of bearing its standard and leading the world towards its guidance. and bestow these on others".

23This has been mentioned to allay the fears of those who were afraid of the consequences of the Declaration of the abrogation of the treaties, as if to say, "Why are you afraid of war? That Allah, Who helped you in far worse and dangerous situations on so many occasions before this, is there even now to help you. Had this Mission depended on your might, it could not have come out victorious in the hard trials at Makkah nor in the Battle of Badr when the odds were heavily against you. This is because Allah's Power has been helping you, and past experiences have shown you how effective that Power is. Rest assured that the same Power will help you to succeed in your Mission."

The Battle of Hunain had taken place in the valley of Hunain between Ta'if and Makkah in the month of Shawwal A.H. 8, a year or so before the Revelation of this discourse. This was the first battle in which the Muslim army consisted of 12,000 fighters and this far outnumbered the army of the disbelievers. But in spite of this the archers of the Hawazin clan wrought havoc among the Muslim army and put them to rout.

The Holy Prophet and a few of his bravest Companions, however, firmly stood their ground and rallied the routed army, and ultimately won the victory. It was because of their perseverance that the army reassembled and the Muslims ultimately won the victory; otherwise they would have lost much more at Hunain than they had gained by the conquest of Makkah.

24".....Allah enables .....to repent" refers to the large number of the disbelievers who embraced Islam after the victory at Hunain as a result of the kind and generous treatment they received from the Holy Prophet, in spite of their former antagonism. This was mentioned to allay the anxiety of those new Muslims who feared that, as a result of the Declaration, all of their mushrik relatives would be put to death. (E.N. 16). They have been told to expect, in the light of the previous experiences, that the mushriks would be obliged to accept Islam, when they realize that neither any hope of the revival of the order of 'ignorance' was Ieft nor of any props to support it.

25This prohibition was meant to root out all the vestiges of shirk and ' ignorance' . For the mushriks were prohibited not only from the performance of Haj and attendance at the Masjid-i-Haram but also from entering into its sacred precincts .

They are "unclean" in their creeds, in their morals, in their deeds, and in their ways of `ignorance', and not in their physical bodies by themselves. That is the reason why they have been prohibited from entering the sacred precincts of the Holy Place.

This prohibition has been interpreted in different ways. Imam Abu Hanifah is of the view that it prohibits them only from the performance of Haj and Umrah, and from the observance of the rites of `ignorance' in the Holy Precincts. But Imam Shafi`i is of the opinion that they have been forbidden even to enter the Masjid-i-Haram for any purpose whatsoever. Imam Malik is of the opinion that they are forbidden not only to enter Masjid-i-Haram but any mosque at all. It is, however, obvious that the last opinion is not correct, as the Holy Prophet himself permitted mushriks to enter the Prophet's Mosque at Al-Madinah.

26Though the people of the Book professed to believe in Allah and the Hereafter, in fact they believed in neither. For only that person really believes in Allah who acknowledges Him as the only One God and the only One Lord, and does not associate with Him any other, whatsoever, in His Being, in His characteristics, in His rights and in His powers and authority. But according to this definition of shirk both the Christians and the Jews were guilty of shirk as has been made plain in the verses that follow: therefore their profession of belief in Allah was meaningless. Likewise they did not really believe in the Hereafter, in spite of the fact that they believed in Resurrection. For it is not enough: one must also believe that on that Day absolute justice will be done on the basis of one's belief and actions. One should also believe that no ransom and no expiation and no 'spiritual' relationships with any 'saint' shall be of any avail on that Day. It is absolutely meaningless to believe in the Hereafter without this. And the Jews and the Christians had polluted their faiths because they believed that such things would protect them against justice on that Day.

27The second reason why Jihad should be waged against them is drat they did not adopt the Law sent down by Allah through His Messenger.

28This is the aim of Jihad with the Jews and the Christians and it is not to force them to become Muslims and adopt the `Islamic Way of Life.' They should be forced to pay Jizyah in order to put an end to their independence and supremacy so that they should not remain rulers and sovereigns in the land. These powers should be wrested from them by the followers of the true Faith, who should assume the sovereignty and lead others towards the Right Way, while they should become their subjects and pay jizyah. jizyah is paid by those non-Muslims who live as Zimmis (proteges) in an Islamic State, in exchange for the security and protection granted to them by it. This is also symbolical of the fact that they themselves agree to live in it as its subjects. This is the significance of "..... they Pay jizyah with their own hands," that is, "with full consent so that they willingly become the subjects of the Believers, who perform the duty of the vicegerents of Allah on the earth. "

At first this Command applied only to the Jews and the Christians. Then the Holy Prophet himself extended it to the Zoroastrians also. After his death, his Companions unanimously applied this rule to all the non-Muslim nations outside Arabia.

This is jizyah " of which the Muslims have been feeling apologetic during the last two centuries of their degeneration and there are still some people who continue to apologize for it. But the Way of Allah is straight and clear and does not stand in need of any apology to the rebels against Allah. Instead of offering apologies on behalf of Islam for the measure that guarantees security of life, property and faith to those who choose to live under its protection, the Muslims should feel proud of such a humane law as that of jizyah. For it is obvious that the maximum freedom that can be allowed to those who do not adopt the Way of Allah but choose to tread the ways of error is that they should be tolerated to lead the life they like. That is why the Islamic State offers them protection, if they agree to live as its Zimmis by paying jizyah, but it cannot allow that they should remain supreme rulers in any place and establish wrong ways and impose them on others. As this state of things inevitably produces chaos and disorder, it is the duty of the true Muslims to exert their utmost to bring to an end their wicked rule and bring them under a righteous order.

As regards the question, "What do the non-Muslims get in return for Jizyah " it may suffice to say that it is the price of the freedom which the Islamic State allows them in following their erroneous ways, while living in the jurisdiction of Islam and enjoying its protection. The money thus collected is spent in maintaining the righteous administration that gives them the freedom and protects their rights. This also serves as a yearly reminder to them that they have been deprived of the honor of paying Zakat in the Way of Allah, and forced to pay jizyah instead as a price of following the ways of error.

29Uzair (Ezra) lived during the period around 450 B.C. The Jews regarded him with great reverence as

the revivalist of their Scriptures which had beat lost during their captivity in Babylon after the death of Prophet Solomon. So much so that they had lost all the knowledge of their Law, their traditions and of Hebrew, their national language. Then it was Ezra who re-wrote the Old Testament and revived the Law. That is why they used very exaggerated language in his reverence which misled some of the Jewish sects to make him 'the son of God'. The Qur'an, however, does not assert that all the Jews were unanimous in declaring Ezra as 'the son of God'. What it intends to say is that the perversion in the articles of faith of the Jews concerning Allah had degenerated to such an extent that there were some amongst them who considered Ezra as the son of God.

30"Those who were involved in Kufr before them" were the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Persians, etc. The Jews and the Christians were so influenced by their philosophies, their superstitions and fancies that they also invented erroneous creeds like theirs. (For details sec E.N. 101 of Al-Maidah).

31"They have taken their scholars and monks as their Lords the Holy Prophet himself explained its true significance. According to a Tradition, when Hadrat `Adi bin Hatim, who was formerly a Christian, came to the Holy Prophet with the intention of understanding Islam, he asked several questions in order to remove his doubts. One of these was: "This verse accuses us of taking our scholars and monks as our lords. What is its real meaning, sir? For we do not take them as our fords."

As a reply to this, the Holy Prophet put him a counter-question: "Is it not a fact that you accept as unlawful what they declare to be unlawful, and lawful what they declare to be lawful?" 'Adi confessed, "Yes, sir, it is so." The Holy Prophet replied, "This amounts to making them your lords." Incidentally, this Tradition shows that those who themselves set limits to the lawful and the unlawful without the authority of Allah's Book, assume for themselves the rank of Godhead, and those who acknowledge their right of making laws take them as their Lords.

It should be noted that they have been charged with (a) attributing sons to Allah, and (b) giving the right of making laws to others than Allah. These are to prove that their claim, that they believed in Allah, is false, even though they should believe in his existence. But such a wrong conception of Allah makes their belief in Allah meaningless.

32The Arabic word ad-din has been translated into 'ways'. For the word din, as has already been explained in E.N. 204, :Al-Baqarah, is used for the 'way of life' or the 'system of life', which is followed in obedience to the supreme authority.

Now let us try to understand the significance of this verse. The object of the Mission of the Messenger is to make the Guidance and the Right Way he has brought from Allah dominant over all the other ways and systems of life. In other words, the Messenger is not sent to allow Allah's Way to remain subordinate to other ways in order to enjoy concessions from them. He is sent by the Sovereign of the earth and the

heavens to make His Way dominant over all other ways. And if a wrong way is at all allowed to remain on the earth, it should be tolerated only under its own protection by the payment of Jizyah under the limits conferred by the Divine System as in the cast of the system of life of the Zimmis who pay Jizyah.

33These religious leaders are guilty of two sins. First, they devour the wealth of the common people by selling false decrees, and by taking bribes, gifts and presents on different pretexts. They invent religious regulations and rituals as tempt people to buy their salvations and fortunes in life from them and make deaths and marriages dependent on the payment of due `price' to these "monopolists" of Paradise. To add to this another sin, they debar the people from the Way of Allah by involving them into different sorts of deviations and by obstructing the way of every Righteous Mission with the obstacles of `learned' doubts and `pious' suspicions.

34This means that ever since Allah created the sun, the moon and the earth, the new moon takes place only once in a month; thus the year has always been of twelve months.

This has been mentioned to refute the practice of nasi (v. 37) whereby the pagan Arabs increased the number of the months of a year to 13 or 14 to enable them to interpose in the calendar the forbidden month which had been made lawful by them. (For fuller explanation see E.N. 37).

35"....do not wrong yourselves ....": "Do not let go waste the good things for which fighting has been made unlawful during these months by creating disorder in them that will ultimately be harmful to you also" . The four forbidden months are . . Zil-Q`adah, Zil-Hajjah and Muharram for Haj and Rajab for ' Umrah.

36That is, "If the mushriks do not desist from fighting during these months, you should also fight them and present a united front against them, just as they put up a united front against you". This verse has been explained by v. 194 of Al-Baqarah.

37The pagan Arabs practiced nasi in two ways. Whenever it suited them, they would declare a prohibited month to be an ordinary month in which fighting, robbery and murder in retaliation were lawful for them. Then they would declare an ordinary month to be a prohibited month instead of this month in order to make up for the deficiency caused in the number of the prohibited months.

The other way of nasi was the addition of a month in order to harmonize the lunar with the solar year so that the Haj should always fall in the same season and they should be saved from the bother and inconvenience that are experienced by its observance according to the lunar year. In this way Haj was observed for 36 years on dates other than the actual dates. Then in the thirty seventh year it was again observed on the 9th and 10th of Zil-Hajjah, as they should have actually fallen according to the lunar calendar. It so happened that on the occasion when the Holy Prophet performed Hajja-tul-Wida'a (his

Last Haj). these dates by rotation coincided with the actual dates of Haj according to the lunar calendar. So he declared during the course of his historic address at `Arafat: "This year the dates of Haj have again occurred exactly at their natural and proper time after a long period of circulation. " Accordingly, since that `Last Haj' of A.H. 9, it is being observed up to this day according to the correct dates of the lunar year.

By making nasi unlawful and forbidding it, the Law declared that the two objects for which it was practiced were also sinful. First, they not only made lawful what Allah had made unlawful but also tried to practice deception on Allah by the seeming observance of the Law. As regards the second object of making the season of Haj fixed permanently according to the solar calendar, this too, was in fact the worst kind of rebellion against the Divine Law, although it appeared to be a harmless thing done for public good. But it defeated the very object of the Divine Law which prescribed the lunar calendar instead of the solar calendar for the observance of obligatory duties. Allah did this to ensure many good things for the Muslims, one of which is that His servants should be so trained as to obey His Commandments at all times of the year and under all circumstances. For instance, the month of Ramadan circulates among all the seasons of the year and the Muslims get used to obeying His Commandments whether it be summer or winter, dry or rainy season. This gives them that excellent moral training which is the real object of all the obligatory duties imposed by the Divine Law. Likewise, the dates of Haj according to the lunar calendar, fall during different seasons: therefore the servants of Allah have to travel during all the seasons, favorable and unfavorable. Thus they come out successful in the Divine test under all the circumstances and learn to be steadfast in their obedience.

It is obvious that such a training will stand them in good stead in many other fields in which one has to fight the battle of the Truth.

Now it would have become quite clear why nasi was made unlawful and forbidden. It was designed to fix the season of Haj in order to suit their own conveniences though it defeated the Divine purpose of Haj and of the forbidden months. It meant that they had rebelled against Allah and become independent of Him; this is kufr. Besides this, Islam is a universal religion and for all human beings. It is obvious that the periods of fasting and performing Haj cannot satisfy all if they be fixed in accordance with the months of the solar year. For if they are performed in fixed months according to the solar year, the one and the same month will not equally suit all for the simple reason that it will fall during the same seasons in different places-summer or winter or very hot or very cold or rainy or dry or harvesting or sowing-year after year.

In this connection it may also be kept in view that the proclamation about the prohibition of "nasi " was made on the occasion of Haj in A. H . 9 and next year,the Haj was performed on right dates which were in accordance with the lunar year. Since that time Haj is being performed according to exact dates.

38From here begins the discourse (vv. 38-72) which was sent down at the time when the Holy Prophet was engaged in making preparations for the Campaign to Tabuk.

39".... you should know that the goods ... Hereafter" may imply two meanings. First: "When you will find that the life in the Hereafter is eternal and see that the good things and the provisions of enjoyment are countless, you will realize that the potential and the actual enjoyments of the temporary life of this world were nothing as compared with the blessings of that great Kingdom. At that time you will regret why you deprived yourselves of this everlasting happiness and bliss for the sake of the little-very little-sort-lived enjoyments of the mortal life of this world. " Second: "The goods of this worldly life are of no value in the Hereafter, howsoever abundant they might be. You shall have to give up each and everything as soon as you breathe your last, for nothing of this world can go with you to the Next World. Of course, you will get credit for what you sacrificed for the pleasure and love of Allah, and love of Islam."

40A general rule of the Islamic conduct has been derived from "If you .... chastisement. " When the Muslims are commanded to go to Jihad by a public proclamation from their leader, it becomes an obligatory duty for those who are called upon to do Jihad, whether they belong to any particular group or region. So much so that the Faith of those who do not go for Jihad without a genuine excuse becomes doubtful. But even in cases where the Muslims are called upon to go forth for Jihad and there is no command for the compulsory enrollment of every able-bodied Muslim of a particular group or region, it is a religious duty (though not obligatory), and it shall be considered to have been performed even if only some Muslims go forth for it.

41That is, "Allah's work does not depend on you and will be accomplished only if you do it. It is Allah's grace and bounty that He is affording you the golden opportunity of serving the cause of His Way. Therefore if you miss this opportunity because of any foolish assumption, Allah will raise another people and bestow on them the opportunity and capability of doing His work, and you will be losers".

42This refers to the occasion when the disbelievers had decided to assassinate the Holy Prophet, and the very night fixed for his assassination he had left Makkah for Al-Madinah. By that time most of the Muslims had migrated to Al-Madinah in twos and threes and only a few helpless ones had remained behind in Makkah. As he was sure that he would be pursued, he took only Hadrat Abu Bakr with him and went southward instead of following the northern route to Al-Madinah and remained hidden in the Thaur Cave for three days. In the meantime the blood thirsty enemies had begun to make a thorough search for him all around Makkah and some of them reached the very mouth of the Cave where he was hidden. On this critical occasion Hadrat Abu Bakr naturally felt alarmed lest they should peep into the Cave, and see them. But the Holy Prophet remained as calm as before and reassured his Companion, saying, "Be not distressed: indeed Allah is with us."

43The words ".... whether you are light or heavy ..." have a very comprehensive meaning: "When it is enjoined to march forth for Jihad, you must go forth anyhow, whether you like it or not: whether you are in a state of prosperity or indigence: whether you are well-equipped or ill-equipped: whether the circumstances are favorable or adverse: whether you are young and healthy or old and weak. "

44They felt the journey to Tabuk to be hard because they had to fight with the army of the great and powerful Roman Empire: because they had to journey in the scorching heat of the summer season of the desert: because there was a famine in the country and the new harvest on which they had pinned their hopes, was ready for reaping.

45Allah did not approve of the exemption which the Holy Prophet had granted to the hypocrites who had put forward lame excuses. Though he knew it well that they were inventing false excuses, he gave them leave to stay behind because of his inherent kindness. But Allah warned him that such a leniency was not well placed as he gave them an opportunity of hiding their hypocrisy. Had they remained behind without getting an exemption, the false profession of their faith would have been exposed.

46This verse shows clearly that the conflict between Islam and kufr is the criterion to distinguish between a true Believer and a hypocrite. The one who supports Islam in this conflict with the whole of his heart and expends all of his energies and resources in order to make it victorious and does not hesitate in the least to make any sacrifices for this purpose, is a true Believer. On the contrary, the one who hesitates to support Islam in this conflict and refrains from making sacrifices in its Way, when he confronts the threat of the victory of kufr, is a hypocrite, for such an attitude is itself a proof of the fact that there is no faith in his heart.

47Allah held them back for He did not like that they should join Jihad unwillingly without any sincere intention for it. As they had no mind to make sacrifices to exalt the cause of Islam, and, therefore, would have taken part in it. half-heartedly to escape the taunts of the Muslims or to create mischief, this would have resulted in a greater evil, as has been stated explicitly in the next verse (48).

48Some of the hypocrites, who were requesting the Holy Prophet to give them leave to stay behind on one pretext or the other, were so impudent that they were inventing excuses of a religious or moral nature for refraining from jihad in the Way of Allah. One of these was Jad-bin-Qais, who, according to traditions came to the Holy Prophet and said. "I am a lover of beauty and my people know that I am very weak in regard to women: therefore I am afraid to go forth lest the beauty of the Roman women should beguile me into sin. Therefore ".... do not expose me to temptations."

49Though they wanted exemption, they had already fallen a prey to the temptations of telling lies, of double dealings and hypocrisy. They deluded themselves that they would be considered pious people, if they would put forward the fear of temptations to avoid Jihad, when, in fact; they had already fallen into the greatest possible temptation of refraining from Jihad in the conflict between Islam and kufr.

50That is, "Such a show of piety has not taken them away from Hell; nay, on the other hand, the same thing has caused them to be entangled in the clutches of Hell."

51In this passage a demarcation has been made between the attitudes of a man of the world and of a man of God. Whatever the man of the world does, he does it to please his own self. He exults if he attains some worldly ends but feels utterly dejected if he fails to attain them. Besides, he depends entirely on his material resources for his success and feels encouraged if these are favorable, but loses heart if these are unfavorable.

In contrast to the man of the world, whatever the man of God does, he does it to please Him and trusts in Him and not in his own powers nor in material resources. Therefore he is neither exultant over his success in the cause of Allah nor loses heart by failure, for he believes that it is the Will of God that is working in both the cases. Therefore he is neither disheartened by disasters nor is filled with conceit by successes. This is because he believes that both prosperity and adversity are from Allah and are nothing but a trial from Him. Therefore his only worry is to do his best to come out successful in His test. Besides, as there are no worldly ends before him, he does not measure his success or failure by the achievement or failure of his ends. On the other hand, the only object before him is to sacrifice his life and wealth in the Way of Allah, and he measures the success or failure of his efforts by the standard he achieves in the performance of this duty. Therefore if he is satisfied that he has done his best to perform this duty, he believes that he has come out successful by the grace of God, though he might not have been able to accomplish anything from the worldly point of view; for he believes that his Allah in Whose cause he has expended his life and wealth will not let go waste the reward of his efforts. As he does not depend on the material resources only, he is neither grieved if they are unfavorable, nor feels exultant when these are favorable. His entire trust is in God Who is the controller of all the resources; therefore he goes on doing his duty even under the most unfavorable circumstances with the same courage and perseverance that is shown by the worldly people unfavorable circumstances alone. That is why Allah asked the Holy Prophet to say to the hypocrites, "There is a basic difference between you and us in regard to the conduct of affairs. We believe that both the good and the bad are from Allah: therefore the apparent result does not make us happy or sad. Moreover, we depend on Allah in our affairs and you depend on material resources: so we are content and happy in all circumstances."

52This is the answer to those who, as usual, were not taking any part in the conflict between Islam and kufr, but were very "wisely" watching it from a distance to see whether the Holy Prophet and his Companions would return victorious from Tabuk or would be totally destroyed by the powerful Roman army. They were told that either of the two results they were awaiting, would be good for the Muslims. For it was obvious that it would be a good thing if they won victory. But even if they were killed in the Way of Allah, it would be a success froth their point of view, though not in the sight of the world, as the Muslims' standard of measurement is different from that of the hypocrites and the like. A Believer considers it his success if he sacrifices his life and wealth in the Way of Allah, irrespective of whether he succeeds in conquering some country or in establishing a government or not. According to him the criterion of success or failure is whether he has extended or not all the powers of his body and soul, his head and his heart to elevate the Word of Allah, though from the worldly point of view the result of his efforts might be

nothing at all."

53V. 53 is a sharp retort to those hypocrites who desired exemption froth Jihad but, at the same time, wanted to make some monetary contributions in order to avoid the exposure of their hypocrisy, They said, "Please grant us leave from military service because we are unable to do this, but we are ready to make monetary contributions towards it." To this Allah retorted, saying, "Whatever you may contribute, it shall not be accepted".

54"Allah wills to chastise them by means of these things in this world", because of their great love for their children and wealth as these misled them to adopt the hypocritical attitude which, in turn, degraded them in the Muslim society. Consequently, in the Islamic System they would lose the respect, tire reputation and the prestige they enjoyed in the pre-Islamic society. On the contrary, even the Muslim slaves and the sons of slaves, the farmers and the shepherds, who proved the sincerity of their Faith would win honor in the new system, and the big hereditary chiefs, who refrained from this because of their love of the world, would lose their fame, honor and prestige.

In order to illustrate the above we cite an incident that happened during the Caliphate of Hadrat `Umar. Once some big chiefs of the Quraish including Suhail-bin-`Amr and Harith-bin-Hisham, went to see Caliph Umar and took their seats near him. Soon after this some humble people from among the Muhajirin and the Ansar came there. The Caliph asked those chiefs to make room for them, and seated these humble people near his own seat. This went on for some time till these chiefs reached the remotest corner in the assembly. When they came out, Harith-bin-Hisham said to his companions, "You have noticed what a humiliating treatment has been meted out to us today!" Suhail-bin-`Amr replied, "It is no fault of `Umar but it is our own fault. When we were invited to Islam, we turned away from it, but these humble people accepted it and made sacrifices for it. " Then both of them returned to the meeting and said "Today we have noticed your treatment and we feel that it is all due to our own shortcomings, but tell us if there is a way for us to make atonements for our past failures" . The Caliph did not make any reply but merely pointed towards the Roman territory, which meant that the only way of regaining their prestige was to expend their lives and wealths in doing Jihad there.

55"They would die in a state of unbelief" because of their hypocrisy, which would not let them attain sincere Faith till they die. Thus after ruining their moral and spiritual lives in this world, they would leave it in the state of unbelief, which will ruin their lives in the Hereafter in a far worse way.

56This was the condition of the hypocrites of Al-Madinah, the majority of whore were rich and old. We find from a list of the hypocrites, cited by Ibn Kathir in Al-Badayah-wan-Nihayah, that only one of them was young and none was poor. These people had large properties and flourishing businesses in Al Madinah. They were worldly-wise and their wide experience had taught them expediency, but their sense of self-interest had put them into a dilemma. When Islam reached Al-Madinah and a large majority of the population embraced it sincerely and enthusiastically, they found themselves in a very perplexing

situation. They could not reject it outright for the majority of their own people, nay, their own sons and daughters, were filled with enthusiasm for Islam. If they had remained unbelievers, they would have lost their high position, their prestige and reputation and run the risk of a rebellion by the Muslims of their own household. On the other hand, if they sincerely embraced Islam, they would incur the danger of war, not only with the whole of Arabia but also with the adjoining nations and empires. Above all, self-interest had so blinded them that, in resolving the dilemma, they would not consider the problem from the point of view of truth and righteousness which by themselves are worthy of every sacrifice. Therefore they decided that the best thing for them was to profess Islam outwardly in order to make their positions, properties and businesses secure, but to adopt a hypocritical attitude towards it so that they might be able to avoid the losses and perils inherent in the sincere acceptance of Islam.

This verse (57) depicts the dilemma of the hypocrites, as if to say, "In reality these people are not Muslims, though they swear that they are Muslims like you; they profess Islam simply because they are afraid of losses they might incur, if they reject it outright. Then they dare not stay at AI-Madinah as non-Muslims for they would lose the high positions they enjoyed and might even have to cut off their connection with their wives and children; and if they decided to emigrate from AI-Madinah, they would have to abandon their properties and business. But they are not prepared for these sacrifices for they have no sincere attachment even to kufr. Therefore they are compelled against their beliefs by the force of circumstances to remain in AI-Madinah: they offer their Salat but regard this as forced labor: they pay the Zakat dues but as a penalty, for they are in their heart of hearts averse to these things. To add to their `calamities' they are asked every now and then to make sacrifices of their lives and their wealth and to go forth for Jihad and to fight with one enemy or the other. They are so much afraid of these `calamities' that, in order to escape from them, they would run in frantic haste to take refuge in any hole, if they hoped that it would provide immunity against these 'calamities' .

57The people referred to were the hypocrites, who felt depressed on every occasion of the distribution of the Zakat collections, for they thought that they were not being given their due share. Then they would taunt the Holy Prophet with making unfair distributions. This happened when the payment of Zakat was made an obligatory duty on all those Muslims whose possessions exceeded the prescribed limits. They were required to contribute from their agricultural products, animals, commercial commodities, minerals dug out of mines and the gold and silver they possessed, at different rates, varying from 2½% to 20%, and all these were collected and spent in a systematic way from a central place.

As a result of this so much wealth flowed into the hands of a single person, the Holy Prophet, that it had no parallel in the whole territory of Arabia. Naturally the materialists looked at these things with greedy eyes and wanted to grab as much as possible out of this wealth. But their greed could not be satisfied, for the Holy Prophet, who had made the use of Zakat Fund unlawful for his own person and for his own relatives, could not be expected to give anything out of it to anyone who did not deserve it. It is thus obvious that they found fault with the Holy Prophet not because he was unfair in the distribution of the Zakat collections but because he did not allow the hypocrites to grab anything from these without any

right to them. They, however, very cunningly hid their real grievance, and accused the Holy Prophet of showing partiality and injustice in the distribution of the Zakat collection

58That is, it would have been much better for them if they had been content with their share of the spoils which the Holy Prophet gave them and what they earned by the grace of Allah and with the prosperity Allah had bestowed on them.

59It would have been good for. them to adopt this attitude: "Allah suffices us....bounty," for they ought to have known that they would receive their due shares besides the Zakat collections out of the wealth that would come to the State treasury, just as they were receiving their shares previously.

60"We look to Allah alone" means "We give ow attention to Allah and His grace and not to the world and its worthless riches and we desire to do His Will: we direct ow expectations and hopes to Him and we are content with what He bestows on us."

61According to the Arabic usage (fuqara: the needy) are all those people who depend on others for the necessities of life. The Arabic word fuqara'. is a general word for all those who are needy because of some physical defects, or old age, or temporarily, and can become self-supporting if they are helped. e.g. orphans, widows, the unemployed, etc. , etc.

62According to the Arabic usage(masakin) are those indigent people who are in greater distress than the needy people usually are. The Holy Prophet especially enjoined the Muslims to help such people as are unable to find the necessary means to satisfy their wants and are in very straitened circumstances, but are so self-respecting that they would not beg for anything nor would others judge from their outward appearance that they were deserving people. According to a Tradition "Miskin is one who cannot make both ends meet, though his appearance does not show that he needs help nor does he beg for help." In short, he is a self-respecting man who has become needy.

63"....who are employed to collect them...." are those who collect Zakat dues, supervise the collections and keep accounts, and help in their distribution, irrespective of the fact whether or not they are needy or indigent; their remunerations shall be paid out of the Zakat Funds. In this connection it should be noted well that the Holy Prophet had declared the Zakat Funds to be unlawful for himself and for the members of his own family (Bani Hashim). Accordingly, he never received any remuneration for collecting or distributing Zakat Funds. As regards the other members of Bani Hashim, they were allowed to do this service without receiving any remuneration, but otherwise it is unlawful for them. On the contrary, the payment of the Zakat dues was obligatory on Bani Hashim if their possessions warranted this under the prescribed limits, but under no circumstances whatsoever were they allowed to accept anything out of zakat collected from others.

There is, however, a difference of opinion as to whether they should accept anything out of the collections made from their own family or not. Imam Abu Yusuf opines that they are allowed to accept these when they are needy or poor or wayfarers, but the majority of the Jurists regard this also unlawful.

64A portion of Zakat Funds may also be given to win over to Islam those who might be engaged in anti-Islamic activities or to those in the camp of the unbelievers who might be brought to help the Muslims or to those newly converted Muslims, who might be inclined to revert to kufr if no monetary help was extended to them. It is permissible to award pensions to them or give them lump sums of money to make them helpers of Islam or submissive to it or at least to render them into harmless enemies. A portion of the spoils or other incomes may be spent on them and, if need be, also a portion of Zakat Funds. In such cases, the condition of being needy or indigent or on a journey etc., is also waived; nay, they might be even rich people or chiefs who are otherwise not eligible for anything from Zakat Funds.

All are agreed that during the time of the Holy Prophet pensions and gifts were given under the head of 'winning over people', but there is a difference of opinion whether this head of expenditure was abolished or not after his death. Imam Abu Hanifah and his followers are of the opinion that it was abolished during the Caliphate of Hadrat `Umar, and `now it is not lawful to spend anything under this head'. Imam Shafi`i is of the opinion that something tray be given to j sinful Muslims under this head from Zakat Funds but not to unbelievers, while other Jurists arc of the opinion that expenses under this head are lawful even now, if a need arises for them.

The Hanafis base their opinion on an incident that happened after the death of the Holy Prophet. `Uyainah bin Hisan and Aqra`a bin Habis came to Hadrat Abu Bakr and asked him to allot to them a certain piece of land. So he gave them a written order for this. They took it to some other highly placed Companions for further confirmation and some of them endorsed this order. But when they took it to Hadrat `Umar, he tore the paper into pieces before their very eyes, saying, "It is true that the Holy Prophet used to give something to win over your hearts because Islam was weak at that time, but now Allah has made Islam so strong that it does not stand in need of people like you. " At this they went to Hadrat Abu Bakr and complained to him about it and taunted him, saying, "Are you the Caliph or `Umar?" But he took no notice of this nor did any of the Companions differ with Hadrat `Umar's opinion. The Hanafis conclude from this incident that when the number and power of Muslims increased by the grace of Allah and they no longer stood in need of any support from such people; the reason for which expenses under this head were permitted in the first instance remained no longer there. Therefore the Companions unanimously abolished expenditure under this head.

Imam Shafi'i says that there is nothing to prove that the Holy Prophet ever spent anything out of Zakat Funds under this head. All the incidents mentioned in the traditions show that whatever he spent for the purpose of winning over hearts to Islam, was spent out of the spoils of war and not out of Zakat funds.

In my opinion there is nothing to show that the expenses for winning over hearts have been made

unlawful for ever up to the Last Day. There is no doubt that the action taken by Hadrat `Umar was absolutely right, for if and when the Islamic State does not consider it necessary to spend anything under this head, Islam does not make it obligatory to spend something for `winning hearts'. On the other hand, if need for this arises at any time, it is authorized to incur expenses under this head for Allah has kept a provision for this. Hadrat `Umar and the other Companions agreed only on this that there was no need to give anything for this purpose at that time because the circumstances did not warrant it. But there is no reason to conclude from this that the Companions disallowed for ever the expenses that were permitted by the Qur'an under certain circumstances for the good of Islam.

As regards the opinion of Imam Shafi`i, it appears to be correct in so far as it is not lawful to spend anything under this head out of Zakat Funds, if these expenses can be met out of other funds. But if it is necessitated that something should be spent under this head out of Zakat Funds, there is no reason why a differentiation should be made in this regard between sinful Muslims and unbelievers. For the Qur'an has not allocated the share because of the faith of the prospective recipients but because Islam required to win their hearts for its own good and because this could not be achieved except by giving them a portion of wealth. Therefore the Qur'an allows the Amir of the Believers to spend a part of the Zakat Funds to achieve this end, if, when and where the required conditions exist. The fact that the Holy Prophet did not spend anything from the Zakat Funds on unbelievers for this purpose does not mean that it is unlawful to do so, for he did not spend from this fund because there was enough money in other funds for this purpose. Had it been unlawful to spend anything from Zakat Funds on unbelievers, he would have explicitly forbidden it.

65A portion of Zakat Funds may be spent for the ransoming of slaves in two ways. First, help may be given to a slave for the payment of the ransom money, if he enters into an agreement with his master that he will set him free, if the slave pays him a certain amount of money. The second way is that the Islamic government may itself pay the price of Iris freedom and set him at liberty. There is a consensus of opinion about the first way, but there is difference of opinion about the second way. Hadrat 'Ali, Said bin Jubair, Laith Thauri, Ibrahim Nakh`i, Sha'abi; and Muhammad bin Sirin, Hanafis and Shafi" is consider this as unlawful while Ibn, 'Abbas, Hasan Basri, Malik, Ahmad and Abu Thaur consider this as lawful expenditure from this Fund.

66Help may be given out of Zakat Funds to such debtors as would be reduced to a state of poverty, if they paid off all their debts out of their own possessions, irrespective of the fact whether they are earning any money or not, whether they are indigent in the general sense or well off. According to some Jurists, the only exceptions to this are those debtors who are spendthrifts or involve themselves in debts by spending money on wicked deeds. Help may be given to them only if and when they repeat.

67"The Way of Allah" is a general term which unplies all those good works which please Allah. That is why some Jurists are of the opinion that Zakat Funds may be spent on every kind of good work. But the fact is, and the majority of the earliest Muslim scholars have opined, that here the 'Way of Allah' stands

for Jihad in the Way of Allah, that is, the struggle to eradicate the systems based on kufr and to establish the Islamic system in their stead. Therefore the Zakat Fund may be utilised to meet the expenses of the journeys the people make, or for procuring means of conveyance, equipment, weapons and other articles needed for Jihad, irrespective of the fact whether they are so well off or not as to need any help fur personal requirements. Likewise help of a temporary or permanent nature may also be given to those people who devote the whole of their time and energies, temporarily or permanently, for this work

It should also be noted that there has arisen a misunderstanding regarding the "Way of Allah," for the early scholars usually use for Jihad the Arabic word as (ghazyah) which is synonymous with "fight". They, therefore, are of the opinion that Zakat Fund may only be used for the purpose of fighting. But Jihad in the Way of Allah is a much more comprehensive term than mere fighting in the Way of Allah. Jihad applies to all those efforts that are made to degrade the word of kufr and to exalt the Word of Allah and to establish the Islamic System of life, whether by propagating the Message of Allah in the initial stage or by fighting in the final stage of the struggle.

68Help from Zakat Fund may be given to a wayfarer on a journey even though he might be quite well off at home.

Some of the Jurists are of the opinion that according to this verse only that wayfarer who does not undertake a journey for a sinful purpose may be helped out of Zakat Funds. But no such condition has been laid down in the Qur'an or the Hadith to this effect. Besides this, we learn from the fundamental principles of Islam that the sins of a needy person would in no way prevent us from helping him As a matter of fact such a help may prove very useful in reforming sinful and depraved persons. For if they get a support in the tithe of need, it may reasonably be expected that they would turn towards purifying their souls.

69This was one of the charges which the hypocrites leveled against the Holy Prophet. As he used to listen to everyone and let him say freely whatever he had to say, they would find fault with him, saying, "He is a credulous person. Everyone can approach him freely and may say whatever he pleases, and he readily believes whatever he hears!" Though it was a good thing that he heard everyone, the hypocrites intentionally spread it as a vice, so that the poor and humble Muslims should be kept away from coming near the Holy Prophet. The hypocrites did not like that these true Believers should inform the Holy Prophet about their plots, mischiefs and hostile talks. They resented it very much that the Holy Prophet listened to and believed in the talk of these humble people against such "respectable" people as they.

70The answer to this charge implies two things. First, "Though the Prophet listens to everything, he attends only to that which is good and is for the welfare of the Community, for he is not the one who would listen to or encourage mischievous things." Secondly, "It is good for yourselves that he listens patently to everyone; otherwise he would not have allowed you to put forward lame excuses for your negligence from the struggle in the Way of Allah. Had he not been forbearing, he would not have paid

attention to your false professions of faith and hypocritical expressions of good wishes for Islam, but would have taken you to task for your mischiefs and made it difficult for you to live at Al-Madinah. It is thus obvious that it is good for you that he listens to everyone."

71That is, "You are wrong that he listens to everyone. He puts his trust only in the true Believers. Accordingly, he believed only in those things about you that were conveyed to him by good and trustworthy people, who were neither liars nor tale-bearers. Therefore, whatever they said about you was true and should leave been taken as true."

72The hypocrites were afraid that their secret plans would be disclosed in the Qur'an to their great discomfort. Though they did not believe that the Holy Prophet was a Messenger of Allah, they were convinced from their experience of the last nine years or so that he possessed some supernatural powers by which he learned their hidden secrets, and revealed these through the Qur'an (which according to them was written by himself).

73This refers to the hypocrites who used to make fun of the Holy Prophet and the true Muslims in their secret meetings when they were making preparations for the expedition to Tabuk. In this way, they used to discourage those Muslims who sincerely and honestly intended to go forth for Jihad. We learn many things in this connection from the traditions. For instance, in one of their meetings, when the hypocrites were having a gossip, one of them remarked, "I say! Do you think that the Romans are no better than the Arabs ? You will see that in the near future these "brave" men will be bound with ropes." Another responded to this, "What a fun it would be if after this each one of them is lashed with a hundred stripes! " Still another, ridiculing the preparations by the Prophet for the expedition, remarked, "Look at this man, and his preparations! He intends to go forth to conquer the forts in Syria and the Roman Empire."

74That is, "Those foolish buffoons, who take interest in such conversations and mock even at serious things because there is nothing serious in the world for them, may be pardoned. But there are others who mock at these serious things deliberately with evil intentions, because they consider the Messenger and the Way taught by him as ridiculous in spite of their professions of Faith. As their real object is to discourage the believers from making preparations for Jihad, they are criminals and not buffoons; therefore they shall not be pardoned at all."

75These are the common characteristics of all hypocrites. All of them are interested in evil and inimical to good. If some one undertakes to do an evil thing, they would dedicate all their sympathies, counsels encouragements contributions. good wishes, praises and their approvals to such a one. They would join hands co accomplish that evil thing and persuade others to take part in it and encourage tire doer in every way. Moreover, they would show in every way their hearty pleasure if they perceived that that evil thing was progressing satisfactorily. On the other hand, if someone undertakes to do a good thing, they are shocked to Bear the very news of it for it pains their hearts; nay, they do not even like that such a

thing should be undertaken at all. Then if they see some one coming forward to help it, they feel very uncomfortable and try their worst to hinder him from it and if he does not give it up, they would wish that he should fail in it. Then all of them have this common characteristic that they do not spend anything at all for good ends irrespective of the fact whether they be otherwise parsimonious or generous. At any rate, their wealth is either for hoarding or for evil deeds. As a matter of fact, they would spend large sums on evil works generously but would not be willing to spend a farthing for good things.

76In the preceding verse, they were being mentioned in the third person, but here they are being addressed directly in the second person.

77Again they are being mentioned in the third person.

78These were the people of Lot.

79"They wronged themselves" for they were themselves responsible for their destruction. Allah had no enmity with them and had no desire to destroy them. As a matter of fact, they themselves adopted the way of life that led to destruction, whereas Allah had sent His Messengers to them and afforded them the opportunities of thinking, understanding and reforming. His Messengers admonished and warned them of the consequences of treading wrong paths, and presented very clearly before there the Way that leads to success, and also the ways that lead to destruction. But when they did not benefit from the opportunities that were offered to them to mend their ways, and persisted in treading the ways that led to destruction, they inevitably met with the end for which they were heading. And this horrible end was not due to Allah's will to be unjust to theta but due to their own evil doings."

80The contrast between the characteristics of the hypocrites (v. 67) and of the true Believers (v. 71) clearly shows that the two are entirely different from each other, in spite of their outwardly similar profession of faith in Islam and obedience to it. The difference lies in their morals, conducts, habits, attitudes and ways of thinking. On the one hand are the hypocrites whose tongues are never tired of professing faith in Islam, but who are void of sincere faith, and whose whole conduct belies their professions. They are, as it were, like bottles which have labels of "musk", but contain cow-dung which may easily be recognized from its appearance and unpleasant odor. On the other hand are the true Believers, who are like those bottles which contain musk which may be tested in any way-by its appearance, its smell and other characteristics-to be musk. Likewise, though the outward label of Islam apparently makes both of them one community of Muslims, the real characteristics of the hypocritical Muslims are so different from those of the true Muslims that they have, in fact, become two different communities. The hypocritical Muslims, men and women, form a separate community with those who have similar characteristics. They all are neglectful of Allah, take interest in evil things and deviate from all that is good and never co-operate with tare Believers and, in short, they are allies to one another and practically dissociate themselves from true Believers and form a group of their own. In contrast to them,

the true Believers, men and women, have practically become one community. All of them take interest in what is good, and abhor what is evil: they remember Allah day and night and cannot think of life without the constant remembrance of Allah; they are very generous in spending in the Way of Allah, and obey Him and His Messenger without any mental reservations. These common characteristics have dissociated them from the hypocrites and united them in one Community and trade them allies to one another."

81From here begins !he third discourse that was sent down after the expedition to Tabuk.

82This Command enunciated the change of policy towards the hypocrites. Up to this time, leniency was being shown to them for two reasons. First, the Muslims had not as yet become so powerful as to take the risk of an internal conflict in addition to the one with the external enemies. The other reason was to give trough respite to those people who were involved in doubts and suspicions so that they could get sufficient time for attaining to faith and belief. But now the time had come far a change of policy. The whole of Arabia had been subdued and a bitter conflict with the external enemies was about to start; therefore it was required that these internal enemies should be crushed down so that they should not be able to conspire with the external enemies to stir up any internal danger to the Muslims. And now it had become possible to crush them. As regards !he second reason, these hypocrites had been given respite for a period of nine years to observe, to consider and test the Right Way, and they could have availed of it, if they had any good in them. So there was no reason why any more leniency should be shown to them. Therefore, Allah enjoined the Muslims to treat the hypocrites on one and the same level with the disbelievers and start Jihad against them, and to give up the policy of leniency Grey had adopted towards them and adopt a fine and stern policy instead.

In this connection, it should also be noted that this verse does not enjoin the Muslims to fight with the hypocrites. It merely meant to end the policy of leniency that had hitherto been adopted towards them. This verse enjoined that they were no more to be considered a part and parcel of the Muslim community nor were they to be allowed to take part in the management of its affairs nor consulted about any matter, so that they might not be able to spread the poison of hypocrisy. This changed policy required that the true Believers should expose all those, who adopted a hypocritical attitude and conduct and showed in any way that they were not sincere allies to Allah, His Messenger and the true Muslims. Each and every one of such hypocrites should be openly criticized and reproved so that there should remain for them no more place of honor and trust in the Muslim society: they should be socially boycotted and kept away from the consultations of the Community: their evidence in the courts of law should be regarded as untrustworthy: the doors of offices and positrons of trust should be closed against them and they should be held in contempt in the social meetings. In short; every Muslim should show by his behavior to such a one that there was no place of honor or respect or trust for a hypocrite in the Muslim society. Besides this, if any one of them was found to be guilty of treachery, there should be no connivance at his crime, nor should he be pardoned but openly tried in a court of law and should be duly punished.

This Command was urgently needed at the time it came. It was obvious that in order to save the Muslim Community from fall and degradation, it was essential to purge it of all the internal dangers to its solidarity, because a Community, which nourishes hypocrites and traitors and allows the internal enemies to flourish with honor and security, wall inevitably be doomed to moral degradation and ultimate destruction. Hypocrisy is a plague and a hypocrite is the rat that carries and spreads its germs. Therefore to allow him the freedom of movement in the society is to expose the whole population to the danger of hypocrisy. Likewise, to give a place of honor and prestige to a hypocrite is to encourage many others in hypocrisy and treachery, for this shows that it is not sincerity, true faith and its welfare that count in it. One may flourish and prosper in it even if one verbally professes ;o be a Muslim and at the same time indulges in dishonesty and treachery. The Holy Prophet has expressed the same thing in a pithy saying. He said, "Whoso honors and respects the inventor of new practices which are un-Islamic, indeed helps to demolish the very structure of Islam."

83We cannot say with certainty what that "word of unbelief" was which they had uttered. There are, however, traditions that mention several things of unbelief which were uttered by the hypocrites during that time. For instance, it is related that a hypocrite, while he was talking to a young Muslim, a near relative of his, said, "If all that this man (referring to the Holy Prophet) is saying be true, then we are worse than donkeys." Another tradition relates that when, during the expedition to Tabuk, one of the she-camels of the Holy Prophet went astray and the Muslims were moving about in search of it, a party of the hypocrites made a good deal of fun of this, saying to one another, "(Just consider the Prophethood of this man!) He tells news of heavens but cannot tell where his she-camel is!'

84This is a reference to the plots which the hypocrites had made during the Tabuk expedition. On the return journey they conspired to pus!' the Holy Prophet down into some ravine, while he would be passing over some hill at night. The Holy Prophet got wind of the plot and ordered that the army should take the longer route through the valley round the hills, while he himself along with 'Ammar-bin-Yasir and Huzaifah-bin-Yaman would make the short-cut over the hi" . While they were on the way, suddenly they discovered that a dozen of the hypocrites, with covered faces, were following them. At this Hadrat Huzaifah tented towards them so that he may drive away their camels but they were terrified when they saw him coming towards them and took to flight lest they should be recognized.

The other plot was to declare `Abdullah bin Ubayy as king at Al-Madinah as soon as they should hear some 'bad news' about the Muslim army, because according to their expectations, the Holy Prophet and his faithful Companions could never fare well against tire armies of the Great Roman Empire.

85This is an insinuation to put to shame by an indirect suggestion the hypocrites of AI-Madinah. This refereed to the prosperity of Al-Madinah and its peoples, for Al-Madinah was a small town before the migration of the Holy Prophet to it, and its two clans-Aus and Khazraj-did not hold any high position in regard to wealth or prestige. But within the short period of nine years or so, this small town became the capital of Arabia because of the residence of the Holy Prophet and the sacrifices of the Ansar, the true

Muslims. As a result of this, the former peasants-Aus and Khazraj of AI-Madinah became the `Great Ones' of the Islamic State and wealth began to flow into this central city on account of spoils of war and increased commercial activity. The hypocrites were rebuked in this verse that, instead of being grateful to the Holy Prophet, they showed anger and spite against him for no other "sin" than that he had brought forth prosperity among them.

86This is an instance of their ingratitude for which the hypocrites were rebuked in v. 74.

They broke their covenant with Allah which enjoined them to spend money in charity, if Allah enriched Them by His bounty. This shows that they were confirmed criminals and they did not care in the least for the agreements they made, and were niggardly and had no moral code to observe.

87This refers to the mean conduct which the hypocrites evinced on the occasion of the appeal of the Holy Prophet for contributions towards the Tabuk expedition. The well-to-do hypocrites did not themselves make any contributions, but when the sincere Muslims came forward with generous contributions according to their means, they began to deride them. If a well-to-do Muslim made a handsome contribution, they would at once accuse him to be guilty of a 'showoff . On the other hand, if a poor Muslim contributed a paltry sum which he could hardly spare after sacrificing some of the barest necessities of his family or contributing the small earnings obtained by hard work, they would at once ridicule, saying, `Lo! Here is the farthing that will help conquer the forts of the Roman Empire!"

88This verse was sent down to prevent the Holy Prophet from saying funeral prayers for 'Abdullah bin Ubayy, the ringleader of the hypocrites, who died a short while after the Tabuk Expedition. His son 'Abdullah who was a sincere Muslim called on the Holy Prophet and requested him to give his shirt for his father's shroud. The Holy Prophet very generously granted his request. Then he begged the Holy Prophet to lead his father's funeral prayer. The Holy Prophet agreed to this also but Hadrat 'Umar very respectfully requested him repeatedly not to do so, saying, "O Prophet of Allah! will you say funeral prayer for a person who was guilty of such and such crimes and sins"? The Holy Prophet, who was a blessing both for friends and for foes, got ready to say funeral prayer even for that man who was a deadly enemy of Islam. At last when he stood up to lead the funeral prayer, this verse was sent down to prevent him from this by a direct Command from God, in accordance with the changed policy declared in v. 73 which forbade to do anything that might encourage the hypocrites among the Muslims.

The above incident led to the formulation of the regulation that the leaders and prominent people from among the Muslims should neither lead nor offer the funeral prayers of the sinners against Islam or for those notorious for their disobedience to Islam. After this, whenever a request was made to the Holy Prophet for a funeral prayer, he would first inquire about the conduct of the deceased person. If he came to know that he was a bad person, he would say to his people, "You may perform his burial just as you like".

89"...they do not understand anything now," for they deliberately and intentionally chose the shameful way of staying at home with women, when they were required to go forth for Jihad, though they were healthy, physically fit and well-to-do, and professed Islam. Therefore, according to the Divine Law of Nature. a seal was set upon their hearts and they were bereft of those noble feelings which make one feel ashamed of adopting such a disgraceful conduct.

90Here the word "Bedouins" refers to those Arabs who lived in the desert near Al-Madinah.

91The hypocritical profession of Islam has been called the way of unbelief, because that profession of faith which lacks practical proof, surrender, sincerity and obedience, is, in fact, unbelief. As such persons prefer their own interests and worldly desires to Allah and His Way, they shall be dealt with by Allah as unbelievers and rebels, even if they could not be legally treated as such in this world but were considered Muslims due to their profession of faith. This is because in the life of this world, the Islamic Law treats as unbelievers only such hypocrites as are guilty of open unbelief, rebellion, treachery or infidelity. That is why there are many cases of hypocrisy that do not come under kufr in the Islamic Shari'ah. However, this does not mean that if one escaped the penalty according to the Islamic Code, one will escape punishment According to the Divine Judgment also.

92This implies that even those people who are otherwise excusable because of disability, sickness or indigence will be pardoned only if they are sincerely and truly faithful to Allah and His Messenger. Without this fidelity, no one shall be pardoned merely because he was sick or indigent at the time when he was called upon to go forth for Jihad. For Allah does not judge merely by appearances and treat alike and forgive all those who present "medical certificates" of their disability because of sickness, old age or some other physical defect. On the Day of Judgment, He will examine minutely the heart of each and everyone, and take into account his whole conduct, open and hidden, and will consider whether his excuse was of a faithful servant or of a traitor and rebel. It is obvious that each and every case, in spite of apparent similarity, requires a separate and different judgment. For instance, let us take the case of two men who suddenly fell ill on the eve of Jihad. One of them thanked his lucky stars for the timely disease, as if to say, "How lucky it is that I have fallen ill on the opportune moment! Otherwise, this calamity of Jihad could not have been avoided and I would have had to suffer it anyhow." On the contrary, the other man was filled with sorrow at his illness, and he cried in anguish, "Ah! what a bad luck! I have been attacked by this sudden disease at the time when I ought to have been in the battle-field instead of lying down here in bed!" One of them made his illness not only an excuse for exemption from Jihad but also tried to dissuade others from it. On the contrary, the other one, though lying in the sick-bed, went on urging his own dear relatives, friends and others to go forth to Jihad; nay, he entreated even those who were attending him, saying, "Leave me in the care of the Real Master, and go forth to Jihad. I am sure that the arrangements for my nursing will be made somehow or other: therefore you should not waste your precious chance for my sake but go forth and serve the Right Way." But the other, who stayed at home, spent all this time in spreading discontent and bad news and in damaging war efforts and in disrupting the affairs of the families of the fighters. The other man in similar circumstances did his very best to make

the home front as strong as he could. Though these two men had similar excuses for exemption, they cannot be considered as equal in the sight of Allah: the second one only may expect Allah's pardon, and not the first man who was a traitor and rebel against Allah, though he might have had a genuine excuse for exemption.

93Such people as felt a strong urge for Jihad but could not join it because of some really genuine excuse, will be counted by Allah among those who actually took part in it, even though they could not join it in person and do anything practically for it. This is because they were sincerely grieved at their absence from Jihad for no fault of theirs, just as a man of the world would be grieved if he were deprived of some lucrative business or of some high profit. Allah considers such a one as on duty, because his heart was serving in the Way of Allah, though he had been deprived of active service on account of some genuine excuse. The Holy Prophet, while returning from Tabuk, stated the same thing like this: "There are some people at Al-Madinah (at this time) who have been traveling and marching all along with you through every valley. Naturally the Companions to whom he was speaking were wonder struck at this. So they asked, "While staying at Al-Madinah?" He replied, "Yes, while staying at AI-Madinah! This is because they were compelled by the circumstances to stay behind at AI-Madinah: otherwise they would certainly have accompanied you. "

94The Arabic words and are of the same root but have different senses in the two sentences in which they occur. In the first sentence it means, "... so that you may turn away from them and forbear them and may not take them to task ...." In the second sentence it means, "... so turn away from them and break off all connections with them and have nothing to do with them, as if you had broken off completely with them,, and they with you."

95As has already been stated in E.N. 90, the "Bedouins" here refers to those rustic Arabs of the desert who had settled in the suburbs of Al-Madinah.

The background which may help one to comprehend the meanings of the verse is this. Though these people had outwardly embraced Islam, they had not done so from conviction. When they saw the rising of the organized power of Islam in Al-Madinah, they were so overawed by it that they could not ignore it. So at first they adopted the attitude of the opportunists towards the conflict between Islam and kufr. But when the power of the Islamic Government spread over the major portions of Hijaz and Najd, and the power of its enemy clans began to decline, they thought it expedient to enter the fold of Islam. But there were very few among them who had sincerely accepted Islam from the conviction that it was the Right Way. That is why they did not make any sincere efforts to fulfill the implications of the true Faith, and observe the obligatory duties imposed by Islam. On the contrary, the majority of them had accepted Islam just because it was the best policy for them. They merely desired to take advantages of being "Muslims" in order to gain those benefits to which they were entitled as members of the ruling party, without performing those duties which became obligatory on them by the very acceptance of Islam. Therefore they were utterly averse to saying the prescribed Prayers, observing the Fast, paying the Zakat dues

from their date palm gardens and their herds of cattle. Moreover, they smarted under the discipline of the Islamic State and resented being subdued by any power for the first time in history. Above all, it was against their very nature to make sacrifices of their lives and wealth in the Way of Allah, as was being demanded by Islam, for they were accustomed to fight only for plunder and spoils. That is why they always invented one excuse or the other for exemption from the restrictions and obligations that were being imposed on them. For they had no interest in the Truth or the welfare of humanity; their only concern was their camels and their goats, that is, the narrow world around their tents. As regards anything higher than these, the only thing which they could believe in was irrational reverence for those who would guarantee their worldly welfare and protect them from calamities and give them amulets to safeguard them against haram and evil, and say prayers for them as a recompense for their offerings to them. Hut they were not prepared to accept any faith or belief that would bring under its moral and legal discipline every aspect of their cultural, social and economic life, and demand from them the sacrifices of lives and wealth for the cause of a universal reform.

In this verse, the above-mentioned mental and moral condition of the Bedouins has been described like this: "These Bedouins are more hypocritical than the urban Arabs and are more stubborn and obdurate in their denial of the Truth. This is because the urban people make use of the opportunities of meeting the learned and pious people and thus learn the laws and regulations of the Way. On the other hand, in all probability, the Bedouins will learn little about the Divine Way, because they get few opportunities for this. Moreover, they lead lives of "economic animals" rather than of human beings having moral and spiritual values; therefore they do not think of higher things than their animal urges.

It should also be noted that the main cause of the subsequent storm of rebellion and apostasy during the caliphate of Hadrat Abu Bakr two years after the revelation of these verses (97-99) was the same that has been mentioned therein.

96This means that they regarded the payment of Zakat dues as a fine and the expenditure on hospitality, an Islamic duty, a penalty. Likewise, if they had to make any contributions towards Jihad, they did so to show that they were loyal to the Islamic State and not because they wanted to please Allah by giving sincere monetary help for His cause.

97They had become so expert in the art of hiding their hypocrisy that even the Holy Prophet could not recognize them, though he possessed immense sagacity and insight into human nature; so Allah informed him about them.

98This double chastisement will be the loss of their worldly advantages and the victory of the Islamic Mission in the teeth of their opposition. Thus one chastisement shall be the loss of their worldly benefits for which they practiced deceptions and adopted hypocritical attitudes, and instead of gaining wealth, honor and prestige they shall meet with disgrace and utter failure. The second chastisement will be in the

shape of the victory of the Islamic Mission to defeat which they exerted their utmost by their machinations and plots. But the Islamic Mission will come out successful in the teeth of their evil wishes, desires, intentions and vicious efforts and they themselves shall witness its victory to their utter despair, regret, grief and sorrow.

99In this passage a clear line of demarcation has been drawn between the hypocritical "Muslims" and the true Muslims, and instructions have been given regarding the treatment that should be meted out to the hypocrites. Therefore, the one who claims to be a Muslim but dots not sincerely devote himself to Allah, His Way and the Islamic Community, should be severely dealt with, if there is a clear proof, from his conduct, that he lacks sincerity; or if he offers anything in the Way of Allah, it should be rejected forthwith: or when he dies the Muslims should neither join his funeral prayer nor beg God's pardon for him, even though he be one's father or brother. In contrast to this, if a believer is guilty of some sin and confesses it, he should be pardoned, and his offerings should be accepted and prayers should be said for his forgiveness.

As regards the criterion by which it will be judged whether one is or is not a hypocrite, though one might have been guilty of an act of insincerity, three things have been implied in this passage:

(1) A sincere follower will openly and clearly confess his sin without offering any lame excuses and giving false explanations and interpretations of his offense.

(2) It will be judged from his previous conduct whether he was a habitual offender or he committed the sin on the spur of the moment because of some weakness. If he had been behaving like a righteous Muslim and if his record showed sincere services, sacrifices and good deeds to his credit, it will be reasonably concluded that he was not a hypocrite.

(3) His future conduct will be watched to see whether his confession was verbal or there had really been a change of heart. If he sincerely feels sorry for his sin and is anxious to compensate for it and his whole conduct shows that he intends to eradicate the root cause of the weakness in his Faith that misled him into the sin, it will be concluded that he sincerely feels sorry for his sin and that he was not a hypocrite but a sinful believer.

The event that is connected with the occasion on which this passage was sent down, makes this subject quite clear. It is related by the scholars of Traditions that these verses were revealed in regard to Abu Lubabah bin `Abdul Manzar and his Companions. Hadrat Abu Lubabah was one of those people who had embraced Islam on the occasion of the Oath of Allegiance at `Aqabah before the migration of the Holy Prophet to Al-Madinah. He had taken part in the battles of Badr, Uhd and other campaigns. But on the occasion of the Tabuk Expedition, he succumbed to some inner weakness and stayed at home without any genuine and lawful excuse. The same was the case of the other six Companions, who were sincere Muslims. When the Holy Prophet returned from Tabuk and they came to know that Allah and His

Messenger had a very bad opinion of those who had stayed behind, they were filled with shame and regret. Therefore they tied themselves to a pillar even before they were called upon to explain their conduct. Then they declared, "We will neither eat anything nor sleep unless we are pardoned or die in the same condition." After some days they fell down in an unconscious condition because of hunger and sleeplessness. When at last they were informed that Allah and His Messenger had pardoned them, they went to see the Holy Prophet and said, `Sir, we request you to accept from us as propitiatory offerings our houses and the whole of our possessions. As these were responsible for our sin of omission, we desire to give them away in the Way of Allah. "But the Holy Prophet replied, "There is no need to give the whole of your property for only one-third of it will suffice."

A deep consideration of this event clearly brings out the kind of weaknesses that are pardonable. All of these people were not habitual offenders and defaulters. Their whole past conduct showed that they were sincere Muslims: none of them invented false explanations to excuse themselves but confessed their sin. By offering the whole of their properties as. propitiatory offerings, they proved that they were really sorry for their conduct and wanted to atone for their sin.

In this connection, another important lesson should also be learned from these verses. In order to atone for one's sins, one should give a practical proof along with the verbal confession and heartfelt regret. One way of this is to give charity in the Way of Allah for this helps to cleanse the filth which was being nourished in the heart and which was responsible for the sin. This not only eradicates the hidden evil but also increases the capacity for good works. For the confession of one's sin is like the feeling of one who has fallen into a pit. He at once realizes that he is in a critical situation in a pit, where he does not like to abide, and is troubled over it. Therefore he thinks out plans for getting out of it and makes practical efforts for this. Likewise the one who confesses his sin and feels ashamed of it and takes practical steps to atone for it by making offerings and doing other good works, intends to come out of the pit of sin.

100"... then you shall return to Allah ...." Who is the ultimate judge of everything and from Whom nothing can be concealed. Therefore even if one succeeds in hiding one's hypocrisy in this world or is judged to be up to the standard in one's Faith and sincerity, it does not mean in any way that such a one will succeed in escaping chastisement for hypocrisy in the Hereafter also.

101The case of these people had been deferred because it could not yet be legally decided whether they were sinners or hypocrites and not because their case was doubtful in the sight of Allah. This was because the symptoms of their diseases had not as yet come to the surface to indicate clearly which of the two they were. For Islam teaches the Muslims not to pass judgment on a person or a party unless they possess definite knowledge based on conscious reasoning and not on intuition and the like to support it.

102" . . the one in conflict . . . Messenger" was Abu `Amir who belonged to the clan of Aus of Al-Madinah. He had become Christian monk during the period of `ignorance' before the migration of the Holy Prophet

and was well-known as a scholar of the Scriptures and was held in great reverence as a pious monk. But his scholarship and asceticism, instead of leading him to the Truth, became hindrance in the way. That was why he not only rejected Islam but also became a bitter enemy of the Holy Prophet and his Mission, for he took the Prophet for a rival in the "holy business" of priesthood. At first he ignored the Holy Prophet and his Mission in the hope that the power of the Quraish would suffice to crush him and his Mission. But when the Quraish suffered an utter defeat in the battle of Badr, he could no longer ignore it, so he started a vigorous vicious campaign against the Islamic Movement. Accordingly he left Al-Madinah and visited . different clans, in order to incite them against Islam, and was one of those who brought about the battle of Uhd. It is said that he had got some pits dug in the battle-field of Uhd, and that the Holy Prophet fell into one of these and received injuries. Then he played an important role in organizing the armies which came to invade Al-Madinah in the battle of Ahzab. Likewise this Christian Monk took a very active part in giving support to the mushriks against Islam in all the subsequent battles up to the battle of Hunain, At last when he realized that no power in Arabia could withstand the onslaught of Islam. he left Arabia and went to the Roman Caesar in order to warn him of the rising "danger" from Al-Madinah. It was because of his efforts that the Caesar began to make preparations for invading Arabia, to counteract which the Holy Prophet went forth on the expedition to Tabuk.

Now let us consider the background of the building of the `mosque' that was built to harm the Righteous Mission.

A section of the hypocrites of Al-Madinah collaborated wholeheartedly with Abu `Amir in all the above-mentioned hostile activities against Islam. They also fully agreed with him that he should use his "spiritual" influence to obtain military help from the Roman Caesar and the Christian states of northern Arabia. Accordingly, when he was preparing to go to the Roman Caesar to urge him to invade Arabia. they devised a plan of making a `mosque' of their own to serve as a safe meeting place for organizing themselves into a separate party because none would suspect that they were carrying on evil activities under the garb of religion. Moreover. this `mosque' would serve as an ambush for the agents of Abu `Amir who could stay in it as travelers and mendicants without raising any suspicion that they were spies of the enemy.

As there were already two mosques in Al-Madinah-one at Quba and the other, Masjid-i-Nabavi, in the city obviously there was no need for a third one. The hypocrite's themselves understood this: therefore they began to invent "reasons" to show that there was really a need for a third mosque. Accordingly, they went to the Holy Prophet and said, "We need another `mosque' because it is very difficult for the people of this area, especially the old, the sick and the disabled, to offer the five prescribed Prayers in either of the two Mosques, during the winter season and the rainfall. Therefore we intend to build a new `mosque' only for the convenience of those who live at a distance from the two Mosques but are desirous of saying their prayers in congregation."

With such professedly pure motives, these mischief makers built the 'mosque' and then went to the Holy

Prophet with the request, "Sir, please stand in this new 'mosque' and lead the congregation in one of the prescribed prayers so as to perform its opening ceremony." But the Holy Prophet postponed the matter, saying, "At this time I am wholly engaged in making preparations for the expedition to Tabuk. I shall consider the matter on my return home. " After this he went forth to Tabuk, and they started their nefarious activities. They went on organizing themselves and conspiring against Islam in the `mosque' and decided to crown Abdullah-bin-Ubayy as their king, as soon as the Muslims would meet with reverses and be utterly crushed down by the Romans, as they had expected. But their expectations were all frustrated by what happened at Tabuk. Then on the revelation of these verses during the return journey at a place, Zi Avan, near AI-Madinah, the Holy Prophet dispatched some men to demolish the mosque' before his entry into the city.

103In order to comprehend fully the implications of this simile, let us first consider the significance of the Arabic word ~~ (Juruf). This applies to the brink of that piece of land which has been undermined by a river or a stream, leaving its surface without any support. In this meaningful simile the construction of the structure of life on the Godless foundations has been compared to that building which is built on the river brink, which has been undermined by its water. It is obvious that the ignorant man who builds a structure on the surface of such a piece of land, merely because it is a piece of land, will not only lose the building but will also lose his own life, for it will inevitably fall down into the river along with him because it has nothing to support it. Likewise, the one who lays the foundation of the structure of the system of his life on the surface of worldly things, without any regard to God's fear or His favor which are the only permanent supports of human life, is like the man who builds his structure on the surface undermined by the river. For such a man himself undermines the structure of his life by his wrong deeds which inevitably follow if there is no bed-rock of God's fear and His favor. Therefore the surface on which he had built his life would one day inevitably tumble down into the abyss of Hell along with the earnings of his whole life.

104"The Right Way" that leads to man's real success.

105That is, these hypocrites have deprived their hearts of the capability of receiving and accepting faith by the commission of the most heinous sin of building a `mosque' to do harm to that very Islam for the propagation of which mosques are built. This crime has set the desire of disbelief so deep in their hearts that it will remain there as long as they are alive and will leave them only at the time of death when their hearts will cease to beat in their breasts. Obviously, the case of such people is quite different from that of those unbelievers, who openly build idol-temples or openly make preparations for war against God. For it is possible that such a one may get Guidance just because he is honest, sincere and bold. Moreover, his open antagonism shows that he has the courage of his convictions and may, therefore, accept Islam, when he would be convinced of its Truth. But there is no hope for that cowardly lying and cunning man who builds a 'mosque' for the service of kufr and puts on the garb of God-worship for fighting against Allah's Way. This is because a conduct like this kills all the noble sentiments within him and renders him utterly incapable of understanding and accepting Islam.

106In this verse that aspect of the Islamic Faith which determines the nature of the relationship between Allah and His servants has been called a transaction. This means that Faith is not merely a metaphysical conception but is, in fact, a contract by which the servant sells his life and possessions to Allah and in return for this accepts His promise that He would give him the Garden in the Life-after-death. In order to comprehend the full implications of this transaction, let us first understand its nature.

We should note it well at the outset that, in reality, this transaction is not in regard to the actual selling of the life and possessions of the servant to Allah in the literal sense, for Allah is in fact the real Owner of man's life and possessions. Allah alone has the right o ownership because He is the Creator of man and of everything he possesses and uses. Therefore there is no question at all of selling and buying in the worldly sense; for man possesses nothing of his own to sell, and Allah has no need to buy anything because everything already belongs to Him. However, there is one thing which has entirely been entrusted to man by Allah, that is, the freedom of will and the freedom of choice, and the transaction concerns that thing.

Of course, it is true that this freedom does not make any change in the real position of man with regard to the right of ownership to his own life and his possessions. They belong to Allah Who has delegated to him only the authority to use or abuse these things as he wills, without any coercion or compulsion from Him. This means that man has been given the freedom to acknowledge or not to acknowledge that Allah is the owner of his life and property. The transaction mentioned in v. 111 is concerning the voluntary surrender of this freedom to Allah's Will. In other words, Allah wills to test man whether he acknowledges the ownership of Allah over his life and property, in spite of that freedom, and considers himself to be their trustee only, or behaves as if he were their owner and so could do whatever he liked with them.

Thus, the terms of this transaction from Allah's side arc these: "If you voluntarily (and not by compulsion or coercion) agree to acknowledge that your life, your property and everything in this world, which in fact belong to Me, are Mine, and consider yourself only as their trustee, and voluntarily surrender the freedom I have given you to behave, if you so like, in a dishonest way and yourself become their master and owner, I will give you, in return, Gardens in the eternal life of the Next World". The one who makes this bargain with Allah is a Believer, for Faith is in fact the other name for making this bargain. On the other hand, the one who refuses to make this bargain, or after making it adopts the attitude of the one who has not made the bargain, is a kafir for, technically, kufr is the term applied to the refusal to make this bargain.

The following are the implications of making this transaction:

(1) Allah has put man to two very hard tests in this matter. The first is whether he acknowledges the real Owner as owner, in spite of the freedom of choice given to him, or he refuses this and becomes ungrateful, treacherous and rebellious. The second test is whether he puts his trust in his God or not, and surrenders his freedom and sacrifices his desires and wishes in this present world in return for His promise of the Gardens and eternal bliss in the Next World, even though the world were to proclaim: "A

bird in hand is worth two in the bush".

(2) This matter helps to draw a clear line of demarcation between the legal conception of the Islamic Faith and the higher and spiritual one according to which Allah will judge one in the Hereafter.

According to its legal conception, the mere verbal profession of the articles of the Faith is a sufficient proof that one is legally a Muslim and after this no Jurist is authorized to declare such a one to be a disbeliever or to expel one from the fold of the Islamic Community, unless there is a definite and clear proof that the one made a false profession of the Faith. But this is not so with Allah: Allah considers the Faith of only that person to be true, who makes this bargain with Him and sells his freedom of thought and action to Him and gives up his entire claim to ownership in His favor. That is why a man might profess the articles of the Faith and observe the prescribed obligatory duties, but if he considered himself alone to be the master and owner of his body and soul, his heart and brain and his other faculties, his property and his resources and other things in his possession, and reserved to himself the right of expending them as he willed, he shall be regarded a disbeliever in the sight of Allah, even though he should be regarded a believer in the sight of the world. This is because such a man has not made that bargain with God which is the essence of the Faith according to the Qur'an. The very fact that a man does not expend his life and property in the way Allah approves of, or expends these in the way He disapproves, shows that the one who claimed to profess the Faith either did not sell these to Allah or after having made the transaction still regarded himself to be their master and owner.

(3) The above conception of the Islamic Faith draws a clear line of demarcation between the attitude of a Muslim and that of a disbeliever towards life. The Muslim, who sincerely believes in Allah, surrenders himself completely to Allah's Will, and does nothing whatsoever which may show that he is independent in his attitude, except when he temporarily forgets the terms of the bargain he has made with Him. Likewise no community of the Muslims can collectively adopt an independent attitude in political, cultural, economic, social and international matters and still remain Muslim. And if sometimes it temporarily forgets its subordinate position and its voluntary surrender of its freedom, it will give up the attitude of independence and readopt the attitude of surrender, as soon as it becomes aware of its error. In contrast to this, if one adopts the attitude of independence towards Allah and makes decisions about all the affairs of life in accordance with ones own wishes, whims and caprices, one shall be regarded to have adopted the attitude of disbelief, even though one was a `Muslim' or a non-Muslim.

(4) It should also be noted well that the Will of God to which a man is required to surrender himself is that which is specified by Allah Himself and not the one which the man himself declares to be the will of God. For in the latter case one does not' follow God's Will but one's own will, which is utterly against the terms of the transaction. Only that person (or community) who adopts the attitude that conforms to the teachings of His Book and His Messenger, shall be deemed to have fulfilled the terms of the transaction.

From the above implications of this transaction, it also becomes clear why the fulfillment of the terms by

Allah has been deferred to the Next World after the termination of the life of this world. It is obvious that the Garden is not the return for the mere profession that the buyer has sold his life and property to Allah "but it is the actual surrender of these things in the worldly life and their disposal by him as a trustee of Allah according to His Will." Thus, this transaction will be completed only when the life of the buyer comes to an end in this world and it is proved that after making the bargain, he went on fulfilling the terms of the agreement up to his last breath. For then and then alone, he will be entitled to the recompense in accordance with the terms of the transaction.

It will also be worthwhile to understand the context in which this matter has been placed here. In the preceding passage, there was the mention of those people who failed in the test of their Faith and did not make the sacrifice of their time, money, life and interests for the sake of Allah and His Way, in spite of their professions, because of their negligence or lack of sincerity or absolute hypocrisy. Therefore after criticizing the attitudes of different persons and sections, they have been told in clear words the implications of the Faith they had accepted: "This is not the mere verbal profession that there is God and He is One, but the acceptance of the fact that He is the Owner and the Master of your lives and possessions. Therefore, if you are not ready and willing to sacrifice these in obedience to the Command of Allah, but expend these and your energies and resources against the Will of Allah, it is a clear proof that you were false in your profession of the Faith. For the true Believers are those who have truly sold their persons and possessions to Allah, and consider Him to be their Owner and Master, and expend their energies and possessions without any reservations, where He commands them to expend, and do not expend the least of these where He forbids them to expend."

107Some critics say that the statement "this promise is contained in the Torah and the Gospel" is not confirmed by these Books. Their objection in regard to the Gospel is obviously wrong for even in the existing Gospels there are sayings of Prophet Jesus that confirm this verse. For instance:

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (MAT. 5: 10).

"He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (MAT. 10: 39).

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life." (MAT. 19: 29).

It is, however, true that the matter of this transaction is not confirmed in its entirety by the existing Torah. For instance, there is a mention of the first part of the bargain at several places in one forth or the other:

. . .is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?" (DEUT. 32: 6).

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. " (DEUT. 6: 4-5).

But as regards the other part of the bargain, that is, the promise of the Gardens, they applied it to the land of Palestine:

"Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey." (DEUT. 6: 3).

This is because the Torah does not give any conception of the Life-after-death, the Day of Judgment, Rewards and Punishments in the Here-after, though this creed has always been an inseparable part of the Right Way. This does not, however, mean that the Torah did not originally contain this creed. The fact is that the Jews had become so materialistic during the period of their degeneration that they had no other idea of a reward from God than the well-being and prosperity in this world. Therefore they perverted all the promises made by God in return for man's service and obedience to Him and applied those to the land of Palestine.

In this connection, it should also be noted that the above-mentioned changes became possible because the original Torah had been tampered with in several ways. Some portions were taken away from it and others were added to it. Thus, the Torah in the existing form is not purely the Word of God but also contains the comments, etc. , of the Jewish scholars mixed up with it. So much so that at some places it becomes difficult to distinguish the Word of God from the Jewish traditions, their racial prejudices, their superstitions, their ambitions and ,wishes, their legal interpretations, etc., all of which have got mixed with the Word of God. (For further details please see E.N. 2 of Al-i-Imran).

108The Arabic word (atta-i-bun) literally means "those who repent" . But in the context it occurs it implies "those who possess repentance as their permanent characteristic", that is, they repent over and over again. Moreover, the literal meaning of (taubah) is "to turn to" or "to turn back" . Therefore its explanatory translation will be "....those who turn back to Allah over and over again" . This is the first and foremost characteristic of a true Believer because even a true Believer is liable to forget the bargain he makes with Allah by which he sells his life and property to Him. As this matter does not concern his sense organs but pertains to his mind and heart, he is liable to forget that these things are not really his property but they belong to Allah. Therefore, even the true believer occasionally forgets the bargain, and behaves in a way as if he were their owner. But as soon as he becomes conscious of this transitory lapse and realizes that he had violated the terms of his agreement, he feels sorry and ashamed of his conduct and turns to his God, begs His pardon and renews the terms of the bargain with Him, and pledges his allegiance to Him after every slip of its violation. This kind of repentance alone is the guarantee that one will always come back to one's Faith: otherwise it is not possible for man because of the inherent human weaknesses, to

observe strictly and deliberately the terms of the bargain without ever falling a prey to negligence and error. That is why Allah says in praise of the true Believer that ".....he turns back to Allah over and over again" and not that "he never slips into error after making the bargain of obedience and service to Him" . And this is the greatest excellence that man can accomplish. Let us now consider the wisdom of placing this characteristics first in the list of the characteristics of the true Believers. It is to admonish those who had been guilty of crimes after the profession of their Faith, They have been told in v. III that the true Believers are those who sell their lives and property to Allah. After this they are being told that if they sincerely intend to become true Believers they should first of all create in themselves this characteristic and at once turn to Allah without showing any obduracy so that they should not deviate further into error.

109Some commentators are of the opinion that here (Assn `ihun) means " . . . those who observe fast" . As this is not the lexical meaning of the word but only its figurative sense, which has been based on an unauthentic tradition attributed to the Holy Prophet, we are of the opinion that there is no need to depart from its lexical meanings, that is,".....move about in the land (for His sake...,... "). For here the Arabic word does not mean merely to "...move about in the land" but "move about in the land for the sake of noble and high aims, e.g. to propagate Islam, to do Jihad, to emigrate from those places where the unbelievers are in power, and to reform the people, to seek True Knowledge, to earn a lawful livelihood and the like" . This characteristic of the Believers has been especially mentioned here to reprove those who had not gone forth to Jihad, in spite of their claim that they were "Believers" . They have been admonished that a true Believer is the one who goes forth into the land to raise high His Word, and exerts his utmost to fulfill the implications of his Faith, and not the one who stays behind when he is called upon to move about in the land.

110That is those who "strictly observe the limits prescribed by Allah . . . . . " in regard to the Articles of the Faith, worship-morality, social behavior, culture, economics, politics, judiciary, peace and war- in short, in all the aspects of their individual and collective lives. They neither transgress these limits in order to follow their lusts nor invent laws nor replace the Divine Law by other laws. They establish these limits and prevent their violations. Hence, the true Believers are those who not only strictly observe the limits prescribed by Allah, but also do their very best to establish them and safeguard them so as to prevent their violation to the best of their powers and capabilities.

111"It does not behoove . . . to pray for the mushriks . . . " implies two things. First, we love them and sympathize with them. Secondly, we consider their crime to be pardonable. There is no harm to cherish these things for the one who is loyal, though a sinner, but it is absolutely wrong in principle to love and sympathize with a person who is an open rebel and to consider his case as pardonable as it renders our own loyalty doubtful. Besides, it adds to the intensity of the crime, if we pray for the forgiveness of a mushrik, who is our near relative. For it means that we consider our relationships to be more valuable than the fulfillment of the implications of our loyalty to Allah and that our love with Allah. and His Way is not wholly unalloyed and that we desire that Allah should also be influenced by the love we have with His rebels and pardon our criminal kinsmen, even though He should throw the other criminals into the fire of

Hell. Obviously, all such things are wrong and are against loyalty and sincerity and the Faith demands that our love with Allah and His Way should be absolutely unalloyed and that His friend should be our friend and His enemy our enemy. That is why Allah has not said, "Do not pray for the forgiveness of the mushriks ", but has instead warned, It does not behoove the Prophet and those who have believed to pray for the forgiveness of the mushriks", which implies this: "The right thing for you is that you yourselves should regard it as improper to Show sympathy with Our rebels and consider their crime as pardonable: nay, you should not wait for any Command from Us about this."

In this connection, it should also be noted well that it is forbidden to show sympathy with the mushriks only in matters of Faith. As regards the human relationships that demand the observance of the rights of one's own relatives, of showing love, sympathy and kindness, and cherishing fellow-feelings with them it is not forbidden at all but it is considered to be a virtue. We must fulfill the worldly rights of a relative whether he be a believer or a disbeliever: we should help him in affliction and give support ,to the needy ones and the orphans and show all possible 'sympathy with a sick or wounded person, irrespective of whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim.

112The reference is to what Prophet Abraham said when he broke off all connections with his father:

(1).....Peace be upon you. I will pray to my Lord to forgive you: for He is very kind to me" . (XIX: 47).

(2) "And forgive my father: indeed he is of those who have gone astray. And disgrace me not on the Day, when mankind shall be brought back to life; when neither riches nor children shall avail anyone, and none shall obtain salvation except the one who comes before his Lord with a sound and pure heart". (XXVI: 86-89).

(3). . . . .I will pray for your forgiveness, but I have no power to rescue you from Allah . . . . . " (LX: 4).

In the first place it should be noted that even the wording and the tone of the prayer for his father were very guarded, but when Prophet Abraham realized that the person for whom he was praying was an open rebel against Allah and a bitter enemy of His Way, he refrained himself from saying even such a guarded prayer for him and declared in clear words that he would have nothing to do with him in future, even though the rebel was his father who had brought him up with love and care.

113The words (swab) and (hatim) which the Qur'an uses for Prophet Abraham are very comprehensive in meaning. Avvah is the one who is lamenting, humble, weeping, grief-stricken and God fearing. And hatim is the one who can keep control over himself under all circumstances, and is neither beside himself in anger and enmity nor transgresses the proper limits in his affections, friendships and relationships. Here both the words have been used in their comprehensive senses. Prophet Abraham prayed for his father because he was tender-hearted and lamented for him that he would become the fuel for the fire of Hell. As he had full control over himself, and was very forbearing, he prayed even for that father who had

persecuted him cruelly in order to hinder him from the Way of Islam. Lastly, he was God fearing and did not want to go beyond the limits in his love for his father; so he broke off all his relations with his father when he realized that he was an enemy of Allah.

114"He makes plain to the people. . . . " beforehand that they should avoid such and such thoughts, deeds and ways. But if they take no heed, and persist in wrong thinking and wrongdoing, Allah withholds His guidance from them and lets them follow the wrong way they themselves choose to follow.

This is the general formula that helps understand those passages of the Qur'an in which Allah ascribes to Himself the guidance and the deviation of the people. Allah's guidance is that He makes plain to them the Right Way through His Prophets and Books. Then He enables those who have the intention, to follow the Right Way. On the other hand, He does not force and compel them to follow the Right Way, if they themselves intend to persist in the wrong ways in spite of the fact that the Right Way has been made quite clear to them; He rather enables them to follow the way they themselves intend to follow.

As regards the context in which this occurs here, it is plain that it is meant to warn those people who have been mentioned in the preceding passage, and to introduce those who are .going to be mentioned in the succeeding passage.

115Allah forgave the Prophet and his Companions for those inadvertent lapses that had been made in connection with the Tabuk expedition, in view of their excellent services. The inadvertent lapse made by the Holy Prophet was that he had given leave to stay behind to those people who were able to take part in the Jihad. (v. 43).

116This refers to those sincere Companions who were at first somewhat unwilling to go to war on that critical occasion, but at last overcame their weakness, for they had true Faith in their hearts and loved the Right Way.

117That is, Allah will not take them to account for their wrong inclinations. for He does not punish a man for that weakness which he himself has overcome and corrected.

118These Three were among those who came to the Holy Prophet to present their excuses for staying behind. More than eighty of them were hypocrites, who put forward lame excuses and the Holy Prophet accepted these and let them go. Then came the turn of these Three, who were true Believers, and they confessed their fault plainly. Therefore the Holy Prophet postponed the decision of their case and ordered the Muslims not to have any social relations with them till the decision of their cast came from Allah. This verse was sent down to decide their case.

In this connection it should be kept in mind that the case of these Three was different from the case of the

seven mentioned in E.N. 99. They had inflicted the punishment on themselves before they were called to account for their fault.

119The Three whose condition has been described in this verse, were Ka`ab bin Malik, Hilal bin Umayyah and Murarah bin Rubai. They were sincere Believers, as has been stated above, and had made many sacrifices and given proofs of their sincerity before this. The last two had taken part in the battle of Badr also, and therefore their Faith was above every kind of suspicion. Though Ka'ab had not taken part in the battle of Badr, he had accompanied the Holy Prophet in every other expedition. But in spite of all these services, they were severely punished for the negligence they had shown on the critical occasion of the Tabuk Expedition, when all the able-bodied Muslims were commanded to go forth to Jihad.

When the . Holy Prophet came back from Tabuk, he ordered the Muslims to break away completely from them; so much so that they should not even respond to their greetings. After forty days of this boycott their wives also were ordered to have nothing to do with them. In short, they were reduced at Al-Madinah to the same sad plight which has been described in this verse. At last, after a boycott of fifty days, this verse was sent down to announce their forgiveness.

The story of the above-mentioned boycott has been described in detail by Ka`ab bin Malik, who was one of the Three. When he became old and blind, he himself told his story to his son, ' Abdullah, who used to accompany him everywhere. As this story is an excellent lesson for all, it is given below in Ka`ab's own words:

"When the Holy Prophet urged upon the people to get ready for Jihad, I made up my mind to make preparations for this. But when I went home, I became negligent, saying to myself, `There is .no hurry: when the time comes I will readily make preparations and start forthwith'. In this way I went on putting off my preparations till the time came when the army was going to start on the Expedition. As I had made no preparations for the journey, I said to myself, `It does not matter: 1 will be able to join the army in a couple of days during the journey' . But again the same negligence prevented me from putting my intention into practice. At last no occasion was left for me to join the army. To add to my misery my conscience pricked me over and over again that the people with whom I had stayed behind in Al-Madinah were either the hypocrites or those Muslims who were old or otherwise unfit for Jihad.

"When the Holy Prophet came back from Tabuk, he, as usual, said two rak'ats of prayer in the Mosque. Then he sat there to meet the people. At first, the hypocrites, whose number was a little more than eighty, came to him and offered lathe excuses on solemn oaths. The Holy Prophet listened to the false story of each of them and accepted their apparent excuses and left the decision about their hearts to Allah, saying, `May Allah forgive you' . Then it was my turn to put forward my excuse. I went forward and uttered my salutations. He smiled and said, `Well, what kept you behind?' (I hesitated for a moment.) By God, I would have invented one excuse or the other to satisfy any man of the world, for I am well versed

in the art of conversation. But here was the Holy Prophet who was demanding an explanation from me. I believed that even if I succeeded in satisfying him by making a false excuse, Allah will inform him of the truth of the case and I shall again incur his displeasure. On the other hand, if I told the truth, I expected that Allah would forgive me, even though I were to incur his displeasure for the time being. So I replied, `Sir, I have no excuse for staying behind. I was in every way able to go forth (to Tabuk)' . At this the Holy Prophet remarked, `This is the man who has told the truth'. Then turning to me, he said, `Go and wait till Allah decides your case'

"I rose from there and took my seat among the people of my own clan. They at once began to tease and reprove me because I had made no excuse. At this, I was tempted to go and make some false excuse. But when I came to know that there were also two good people (Murarah bin Rubai and Hilal bin Umayyah), who had told the same thing that I had, I felt satisfied and stuck to the truth.

"After this the Holy Prophet issued a general order that no one should have any kind of talk with us. The other two confined themselves to their houses but I used to go out of my house and say my prayers in congregation and walk through the bazaars. As nobody spoke to me, it appeared to me that I was a foreigner in some strange city where I had no acquaintances. When I attended the mosque, I would utter the usual salutations and wait in vain for a response from the Holy Prophet. I would turn stealthy looks at him to read his thoughts in regard to me, but he would turn his eyes away from me, though he had been looking at me while I was engaged in prayer. As this condition became intolerable for me, one day I went to see Abu Qatadah who was a cousin of mine and a friend from childhood. I climbed over the wall of his garden and uttered my salutations, but even he did not make any response to it. Then I said, `O Abu Qatadah ! I ask you to tell me on oath whether I love or do not love Allah and His Messenger' . But he remained silent. Again I repeated the question but he kept silent. I asked him on oath to answer my question. Then he merely replied, `Allah and His Messenger know best' . At this my eyes were filled with tears, and I came back.

"Another incident happened during, those days. Once I was passing through the bazaar, when a Syrian came to me and gave me a letter wrapped in silk. This was from the king of Ghassan and read like this: `We have come to know that your Leader is persecuting you these days. As you are not an ignoble person, we will not leave you to rot there. Therefore come to us and we will honor you (as you deserve)' I said to myself, `Here is another hard trial for me' . Then I threw the letter into the burning oven.

"The boycott continued for forty days, when a man brought this message from the Holy Prophet that I should separate from my wife. I asked whether I should divorce her but was told that I should only separate from her. Accordingly I said to my wife, 'Go to your parental home and wait till a decision comes from Allah. '

"On the fiftieth day, when after the morning prayers, I was sitting in a state of utter despair on the top of my house, all of a sudden some one cried aloud, `O Ka`ab bin Malik! Please accept my congratulations.'

Hearing this, I fell prostrate to the ground before Allah, for I understood that the Command of my forgiveness had come After this, people began to pour in, each trying to forestall the other in congratulating me on the acceptance of my repentance. I rose and went directly to the Mosque. I noticed that the face of the Holy Prophet was glowing with happiness and in response to my salutations, he said, `I congratulate you on this: it is the best day of your life.' I said, `Is this forgiveness from you or from Allah?' He replied, `It is from Allah.' Then he recited these verses (117-118). I asked, `O Messenger of Allah! Does my repentance require that I should give the whole of my property in charity?' He replied, `Keep a part of it, for it will be better for you.' Accordingly, I kept my property at Khaibar for myself and gave all the rest in charity. Then I solemnly pledged that I would stick to the truth throughout the rest of my life, for Allah had forgiven me in return for the truth I had told. That is why I have never uttered a word against reality intentionally up to this time and hope and expect that Allah will protect me from lies in future as well. "

This story contains many lessons, and every Believer should impress these on his mind and heart.

The first and foremost lesson we learn from this story is that the matter of the conflict between Islam and kufr is so important and delicate that we should take the greatest possible care to be on our guard in regard to this. Not to mention the case of one who takes active part on the side of kufr, if a Muslim shows the least negligence even inadvertently in taking part on the side of Islam once in his life; and that, too, not with any evil intention, he is liable to lose all the lifelong services and devotions rendered by him in the cause of Islam. That was why such a severe action was taken even against those worthy people who had done great deeds of valor in the battles of Badr, Uhd, Ahzab and Hunain, and whose sincerity and Faith were absolutely above suspicion.

The second thing, which is as important as the first, is that one should never consider lightly any negligence in the performance of a duty, for this often misleads one to commit an offense that is counted among heinous sins. The fact that ore did not commit the offense with any evil intention cannot save one from punishment.

Lastly, this story presents the true spirit of the society that had been evolved out under the leadership of the Holy Prophet. On the one side there were the hypocrites whose treacherous deeds were quite well known to all. They offered lame excuses which were accepted without demur for nothing better could be expected from them. On the other side, let us take the case of Ka`ab bin Malik, who was a tried Believer, and whose sacrifices were above every kind of suspicion. He did not invent any false story to justify himself but confessed his fault quite plainly and clearly. But in contrast to the hypocrites, a severe chastisement was inflicted on him, not because there was any suspicion about his Faith but because a sincere Believer like him had behaved in a way in which only a hypocrite could behave. Thus the chastisement was meant to remind them: "You are the salt of the earth. But if you, too, become tasteless, from where will then salt be obtained?"

There is another noteworthy side of the matter. The part played by the Leader and the Follower and the Muslim Society in this incident is unique. The Leader inflicts the most severe punishment but with the feelings of affection and without any tinge of anger or hatred in it. It is like the punishment which a father gives to his son, It is always understood that the punishment is given for the good of the son, who knows that as soon as he mends his ways, he will regain the fatherly love. And the Follower sets an excellent example of obedience under very trying circumstances. He suffers hard from the severity of the chastisement but never thinks of rebelling against the Leader because of any false personal or clannish pride; nay, he does not cherish in his heart any complaint against his beloved Leader, but begins to love him even more than before. During this saddest period of his life the only thing he yearns for is a look of affection from his Leader. For he is like a famine-stricken farmer whose only hope is the piece of cloud which he sees floating in the sky.

Now let us have a glimpse of the Muslim society, which displayed the greatest discipline and the highest moral spirit that had ever been shown by any society. No sooner does the Leader order the boycott than the whole community becomes a stranger to the follower not only in public but also in private. So much so that his nearest relatives and closest friends do not even speak to him; nay, his own wife leaves him alone. He implores them on oath to tell him if they suspected his sincerity, but even his lifelong companions make a point-blank refusal, saying that he should ask Allah and His Messenger for that testimony. But in spite of the show of this strict discipline, the moral spirit of the community is so high and so pure that not a single person tries to take advantage of the position of the fallen brother by adding insult to his injury; nay, every one feels sorry for his brother in disgrace, and is important to embrace him as soon as he is forgiven. That is why the people run in haste to tell him the good news. to build.

The above is the model of the Righteous community that the Qur'an aims

This background makes it plain why Allah not only forgave them but also manifested His Kindness; Gentleness and Compassion in His Forgiveness to these people. It was because of their sincerity which they proved during the fifty days of their chastisement. Had they shown arrogance after the commission of their offense and retaliated by taking angry and hostile actions as does every self-worshiper whose pride is wounded: had they behaved during their boycott in a manner as if they would break away from the community but never bow down before it: had they passed this period in spreading dissatisfaction in the community and gathering around them all the disgruntled people in order to organize a strong "opposition" against the Leader, then they would have most certainly been expelled from the community, as if to say, "Go you now and worship the idol of your self, for henceforth you will never be given any opportunity for exerting to raise the Word of Allah". But these Three did not adopt this way though it was open to them. On the contrary, they took a different way, as has been seen, and proved that God-worship had destroyed every idol that might have remained hidden in their hearts: that they had dedicated themselves entirely to the exertion in the Way of Allah: that while joining the Islamic community they had burnt their boats to make it impossible for themselves to go back anywhere: that they would put up with every kind of treatment but would remain in the community and die as a member of it and would

scornfully reject any offer of an honorable place outside it; and would rather bear disgrace in it. That was why they were again taken in the community with the same honor as before. This is the explanation of the kind words of forgiveness: "Allah turned to them with kindness so that they should turn to Him." In these concise words, the Qur'an has depicted the true picture of the matter. The Master had at first turned away His attention from His Three servants but when He saw that they had not left His door but had remained there with broken hearts, He again turned to them in appreciation of their fidelity so as to bring them back into the fold.

120In order to comprehend the meaning of this verse, v. 97 with which it is connected, should be kept in view:

"These Bedouins are most stubborn in unbelief and hypocrisy, and, in all probability, will remain ignorant of the laws of the Way which Allah has sent down to His Messenger."

In v. 97, the Qur'an merely diagnosed the disease and pointed out its symptoms. The Bedouins were suffering from the disease of hypocrisy because of their ignorance of the laws of the Way of Allah. This was so because they had not had any connections with the Center of that knowledge. Here in this concluding portion of the Surah, the remedy of that disease has been prescribed so that they should have an understanding of Islam and its implications. It is not necessary that for this purpose all of them should leave their homes and come to AI-Madinah to learn that knowledge, but some of them should come from each habitation, clan and region to the Centers of the Knowledge (AI-Madinah, Makkah and the like) and understand Islam. Then they should go back to their own habitations and create its understanding among the common people.

This was a very important instruction that was given at the opportune moment to strengthen the Islamic Movement for, at that time, the people were entering into the fold of Islam in large numbers without its proper understanding. Obviously, this instruction was not needed in the initial stages of the Movement, for at that tune everyone who embraced Islam did so with its full understanding. No one would think of becoming a Muslim without this as this was an invitation to persecution. When the Movement became successful and won power in the land, the clans and the habitations began to enter en bloc into the fold of Islam. Naturally very few of them understood the full implications of the Faith before accepting it, but the majority of them were being carried into the fold, as it were, by the strong current that had been generated by the Movement. Outwardly this immense increase in numbers appeared to be a source of strength to Islam, but in reality such people as had no true understanding of Islam and were, therefore, not prepared to fulfill its moral obligations, were not only useless for the Islamic System but were actually harmful to it. This side of the matter became quite apparent during the preparations for the Tabuk expedition. That is why Allah sent down the instruction that necessary steps should be taken for the integration of the Islamic Community so that it may keep pace with the immense increase in its number. Therefore some people should be brought out from every habitation and taught and trained in the requirements of Islam and these in their turn should teach and train their own people so that the whole

Muslim population should understand Islam and obtain the knowledge of the limits prescribed by Allah.

In this connection, it should also be clearly understood that the Command about mass education given in this verse is not merely about literacy but it had the definite aim of imparting the understanding of the Way of Islam among the masses and enabling them to refrain from un-Islamic Ways. This is the real and permanent aim of education that has been set before the Muslims by Allah Himself. Therefore every system of their education shall be judged by this criterion and shall be regarded Islamic only to the extent it fulfills this aim. It does not, however, mean that Islam is against the spreading of literacy and teaching of the purely mundane subjects to the masses, but it simply means that the primary aim of the Islamic Education should be the achievement of the objective which has been mentioned above in italics. Without this, it does not consider any education to be education at all, even if it were to produce Einsteins and Freuds of the age.

It will be worthwhile to consider the true significance of the words used in the context, for they created a strange misunderstanding among the people of the later period, and produced lasting poisonous effects on the religious education of the Muslims, nay, on their whole religious life in general. It is obvious that Allah used these words in order to lay down the objective of education before the Muslims, which was this: to understand the Islamic Way of life and have an insight into its system: to be familiar with its true nature and spirit so as to be able to judge and differentiate between the Islamic and the un-Islamic ways of thought and conduct in every aspect of life. But later on when the knowledge of the Muslim Law was given the technical name of (fiqh), it gradually developed into the science of the details of external form (as opposed to the spiritual aspect of the Islamic Law). As the word (fiqh) is of the same root as used in this verse, a misunderstanding was created that this Command of the Qur'an was about acquiring the knowledge of fiqh in the above-mentioned sense. It is true that this knowledge is of great importance in the Islamic System of life, but it is not all that is required by the Qur'an but only a part of the objective. It is not possible to recount here all the damages that the Muslim Community has suffered because of this misunderstanding, but suffice it to say that this is the thing, which is responsible for reducing the religious education of the Muslims to the knowledge and interpretation of the external form of Islam without paying any attention to the spirit of Islam. This inevitably resulted in making lifeless formalism the ultimate goal of the life of the Muslims.

121From the apparent wording of this verse, it may be inferred that only those Muslims have at first been held responsible to fight with those enemies of Islam who live near their territory. But if we read this verse along with the succeeding passage, it becomes clear that here "disbelievers who are near you refers to those hypocrites who were doing great harm to to Islamic Society by mixing up with the sincere Muslims. This very thing was stated in v. 73 at the beginning of this discourse. The Command has been repeated at its end in order to impress on the Muslims the importance of the matter and to urge them to do Jihad and crush these internal enemies, without paying the Least regard to the racial, family and social relations that had been proving a binding force with them. The only difference between the two Commands is that in v. 73, the Muslims were asked to do Jihad with them, while in this verse stronger

words, "fight with them" , have been used, which were meant to impress on them that they should crush the hypocrites thoroughly and completely. Another difference in the wordings is that in v. 73, two different words, "disbelievers and hypocrites", have been used, while in this verse only one word, "disbelievers", has been used so that the hypocrites should forfeit all their claims as Muslims, for there was room for this concession in the word "hypocrite"

122This is meant to impress that they should not, in future, show the lenient treatment they had been meting out to them up to that time. This has already been commanded in v. 73: "be firm and stern with them".

123This warning has two-fold meanings and both are implied here. First, "If you show any kind of leniency towards them because of your personal or family or economic connections with them, you should know that such a thing shall be against the fear of God', for the fear of God and friendly relations with the enemies of Allah are contradictory things. Therefore, you should give these up, if you desire to obtain Allah's help". Secondly, "You should scrupulously observe the moral and humane limits in doing Jihad, and in fighting with them. For you should always keep yourselves within the prescribed limits in everything. If you transgress these in any way, you should know that Allah will forsake you for He helps only those who are God fearing.

124As regards the increase and decrease in Faith. disbelief and hypocrisy, please refer to E.N.2 of Surah Al-Anfal.

125That is, during the course of every year such circumstances are created as put to test once or twice their claim to the Faith, and these disclose that their profession of Islam was like a counterfeit coin. For instance, some time their Faith is tested by (a) a Commandment of the Qur'an which lays some new restriction on their lust, or by (b) a demand of the Faith that hits hard at their self interests, or by (c) an internal dispute which discloses their preference for worldly interests and for their personal, family and clannish relations to Allah, His Messenger and the Faith, or by (d) a war that requires the sacrifice of their lives, wealth, time and energies. All these tests help bring to the open that filth of hypocrisy that lay hidden in their hearts under the garb of the profession of Islam. Besides, these things increase that filth which had already gathered in their hearts because of their deviations from the implications of the Faith.

126This happened when the hypocrites had to attend a meeting that was specially hold for the recital of some new surah. The Holy Prophet used to recite as an address every new surah before the assembly. The true believers would listen to it very attentively and respectfully. But the hypocrites, who had to attend the meeting to show that they were "Muslims', would sit listlessly in the meeting for they had no interest in the recital. But when they would be assured that their "attendance" had been marked, they would look for an opportune moment to slip away without being seen and noticed.

127"Allah has turned away their hearts from the Qur'an, because they do not understand that it is in their own interest to listen to the Qur'an and to act upon its teachings. These foolish people do not realize that by ignoring the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet, they in fact, deprive themselves of a great blessing. As they are deeply engaged in their own narrow interests, they do not see that the great knowledge of the Qur'an and the right guidance of the Holy Prophet has the potentiality of making them the leaders of this world, and of bringing salvation to them in the Next World. As a result of their folly and neglect of the great blessing, Allah has, in accordance with His Law, deprived them of the capacity of making use of this blessing and "turned away their hearts" from it. That is why these unfortunate, people do not even feel the great loss they are suffering, while the blessed people are taking full advantage of this great fountainhead of power and strength and are preparing themselves for achieving the greatest success that human beings could ever achieve.

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10. Surah Yunus (Jonah)

Name

The Surah takes its name from V. 98, in which there is a reference to Prophet Yunus (Jonah). The name, as usual, is symbolical and does not indicate that the Surah deals with the story of Prophet Jonah.

Period of Revelation

We learn from traditions, and this is supported by the contents of the Surah itself, that the whole of this Surah was revealed at Makkah. But there are some people who are of the opinion, that some of its verses were revealed at Al-Madinah. This is, however, a superficial view. The continuity of the theme clearly shows that this does not comprise isolated verses or discourses that were revealed at different times and on different occasions. On the contrary, it is, from the beginning to the end, a closely connected discourse which must have been revealed at one sitting. Besides this, the nature of its theme is itself a clear proof that the Surah belongs to the Makkan period.

Time of Revelation

We have no tradition in regard to the time of it's revelation, but its subject matter gives clear indication that it must have been revealed during the last stage of the Holy Prophet's residence at Makkah. For the mode of the discourse suggests that at the time of its revelation, the antagonism of the opponents of the Message had become so intense that they could not tolerate even the presence of the Holy Prophet and his followers among themselves, and that things had come to such a pass as to leave no hope that they would ever understand and accept the Message of the Prophet. This indicates that the last stage of the Prophet's life among thee people had come, and the final warning like the one in this Surah had to be given. These characteristics of the discourse are clear proof that it was revealed during the last stage of the Movement at Makkah.

Another thing that determines more specifically the order of the Surahs of the last stage at Makkah is the mention (or absence) of some open or covert hint about *Hijrat* (Emigration) from Makkah. As this Surah does not contain

any hint whatsoever about this, it is a proof that it preceded those surahs which contain it.

Now that we have specified the time of its revelation, there is no need of repeating its historical background because that has already been stated in Surahs VI and VII.

Subject

This discourse deals with the invitation to the Message, admonition and warning. In the very introductory verses, the invitation has been extended like this:-

"The people consider it a strange thing that this Message is being conveyed by a human being and charge him with sorcery, whereas there is nothing strange in it nor has it any connection with sorcery or sooth saying. It simply informs you of two realities. First, Allah, Who has created the universe and manages it, is, in fact, your Master and Lord, and He alone is entitled to your worship. The second reality is that after the life in this world, there will be another life in the Next World, where you shall have to render full account of the life of this world and be rewarded or punished according to whether you adopted the righteous attitude as required by Him after acknowledging Him as your Masters or acted against His will. Both of these realities, which the Messenger is presenting before you, are "realities" in themselves whether you acknowledge them as such or not. He is inviting you to accept these and regulate your lives in accordance with them; if you accept these, you will have a very blessed end; otherwise join shall meet with evil consequences."

Topics

After the introduction, the following topics have been dealt with in an appropriate order:-

1. Proofs of the doctrines of *Tauhid*, Providence and Life-after-death have been given by such arguments as may satisfy the minds and hearts of those who listen to the Message without prejudice and bigotry with the sole intention of safeguarding themselves against deviation and its evil results and not for the sake of seeking opportunities for useless discussions.

2. Those misunderstandings which were (and always are) hindering people from accepting the doctrines of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter, have been removed and they have been warned to guard against those negligences that stand in their way.

3. Those doubts have been removed and answers to those objections given which were being raised about the Prophethood of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and the Message brought by him.

4. Graphic descriptions of the life in the Hereafter have been presented in order to warn the people beforehand so that they should mend their ways here and be not sorry afterwards for their conduct in this world.

5. They have been admonished and warned that the life in this world is really a test and a trial, and that the

time allowed for it is only up to the last moment of the earthly life, and that this is the only opportunity that shall be given to them for accepting the Message and achieving success in the test. Therefore, they should make the best use of the opportunity that has been provided for them by the appointment of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) for their guidance and obtain the true knowledge of the Reality from the Quran that is being sent down to him. Otherwise, they shall be remorseful for ever and ever.

6. Their attention has been drawn to some of their acts of manifest ignorance and deviation which were the direct result of discarding Divine Guidance from their lives.

   In this connection, the story of Prophet Noah has been related in brief and that of Prophet Moses in detail in order to impress four things on the minds :-

   First, "As your behavior towards Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is like that of the peoples of Prophet Noah and Prophet Moses towards them, you should know it for certain that you also shall meet with the same consequences which they met with." Secondly, "You should not be deluded into believing by the helpless and weak condition of the Prophet and his followers, you are witnessing today, that it will always remain like this. You should know that the same All-Powerful Allah Who supported Prophets Moses and Aaron, is supporting them and that He changes the circumstances in such a sudden and thorough manner that none can foresee it." Thirdly, "If you do not make use of the term that has been granted to you by Allah and mend your ways now, and postpone this to the last moment like followers of th Holy Prophet have been reassured that they should not lose heart because of the severity of the circumstances created by their opponents, especially at the time when they themselves were in an utterly helpless condition. They have also been given instructions as to how they should carry on their Mission under those harsh conditions. Moreover,they have been warned to be on their guard against the kind of behavior which was adopted by the Israelites, when they were rescued by Allah from the tyranny of the People of Pharaoh.

7. At the end of the Surah, the Holy Prophet has been commanded to make a declaration to this effect: "This is the Creed and this is the rule of conduct that has been prescribed for me by Allah: no change can be made at all in this: whoso will accept this will do so for his own good and whoso will reject this will do so at his own peril."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓرٰ ۚ تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلۡحَكِيمِ ١

[1] Alif Lam Ra. These are the verses of the Book, which is full of wisdom and knowledge.[1]

أَكَانَ لِلنَّاسِ عَجَبًا أَنۡ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰ رَجُلٖ مِّنۡهُمۡ أَنۡ أَنذِرِ ٱلنَّاسَ
وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَنَّ لَهُمۡ قَدَمَ صِدۡقٍ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡۗ قَالَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ
إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَٰحِرٞ مُّبِينٌ ٢

[2] "Did it seem strange to the people that We should have inspired a man from among themselves to warn the (neglectful) people, and to give the Believers the good news that they will have real honor and success with their Lord?[2] (Is this the thing that) led the unbelievers to say, "This man is a manifest enchanter?"[3]

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٖ
ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلۡعَرۡشِۖ يُدَبِّرُ ٱلۡأَمۡرَۖ مَا مِن شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعۡدِ
إِذۡنِهِۦۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمۡ فَٱعۡبُدُوهُۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ٣

[3] The fact is that your Lord is the same Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then sat Himself upon the Throne of His Kingdom, and is directing the affairs of the universe.[4] None can intercede with Him except after His permissions[5] That is Allah, your Lord: so worship Him.[6] Will you not then understand?[7]

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا ۖ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقًّا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ
لِيَجْزِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَهُمْ
شَرَابٌ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٤﴾

[4] To Him you shall all return:[8] this is the true and sure promise of Allah. Indeed He originates creation and He will bring it back to life[9] so that He may recompense with perfect justice those who believed and did righteous deeds. As for those who disbelieved, they shall drink boiling water and undergo a painful chastisement for their rejection of the Truth.[10]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ ٱلشَّمْسَ ضِيَآءً وَٱلْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُۥ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا۟
عَدَدَ ٱلسِّنِينَ وَٱلْحِسَابَ ۚ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ يُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥﴾

إِنَّ فِى ٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ لَءَايَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦﴾

[5-6] It is He Who gave the sun his brightness and the moon her light, and ordained her phases precisely so that you may calculate years and dates from this. Allah has not created all this (for mere fun) but for a serious end. He makes His Signs manifest for those people who possess knowledge. In the alternation of the night and day and in all that Allah has created in the heavens and the earth, surely there are Signs for those who intend avoiding (deviation from the Truth)[11]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا وَرَضُوا۟ بِٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱطْمَأَنُّوا۟
بِهَا وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِنَا غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَأْوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨﴾

[7-8] The fact is that the ultimate abode of those, who expect not to meet Us and are well pleased and satisfied with this worldly life and pay no heed to Our Signs, shall be Hell in consequence of the evils they earned (because of this erroneous creed and wrong conduct.)[12]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِإِيمَٰنِهِمْ ۖ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ فِى جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٩﴾

دَعْوَىٰهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَٰنَكَ ٱللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌ ۚ وَءَاخِرُ
دَعْوَىٰهُمْ أَنِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

[9-10] And it is also a fact that, because of their faith, Allah will guide aright those who believe (sincerely in the Truths that have been presented in this Book) and do righteous deeds; and canals will be flowing underneath there in the Gardens of bliss.[13] Therein their prayers will be. "Glory to Thee, O Lord," and their greeting, "Peace be to you," and the burden of their hymn will be, "Praise is for Allah alone, the Lord of the universe."[14]

۞ وَلَوْ يُعَجِّلُ ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ ٱلشَّرَّ ٱسْتِعْجَالَهُم بِٱلْخَيْرِ لَقُضِىَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَجَلُهُمْ ۖ
فَنَذَرُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا فِى طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١﴾

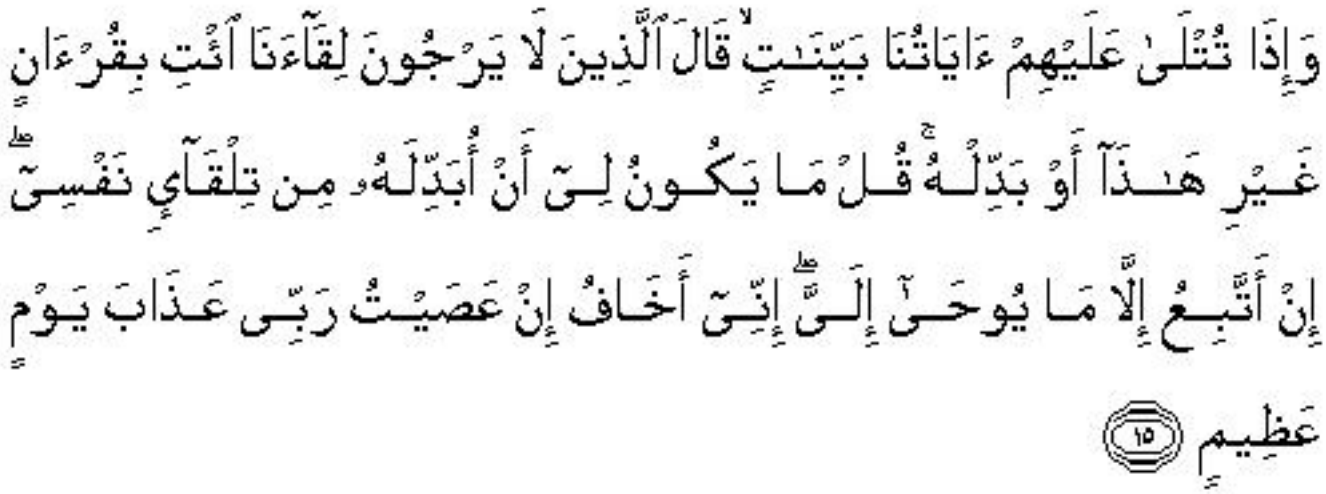
وَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ ٱلضُّرُّ دَعَانَا لِجَنۢبِهِۦٓ أَوْ قَاعِدًا
أَوْ قَآئِمًا فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُ ضُرَّهُۥ مَرَّ كَأَن لَّمْ يَدْعُنَآ إِلَىٰ ضُرٍّ
مَّسَّهُۥ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا ٱلْقُرُونَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا۟ وَجَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ
وَمَا كَانُوا۟ لِيُؤْمِنُوا۟ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

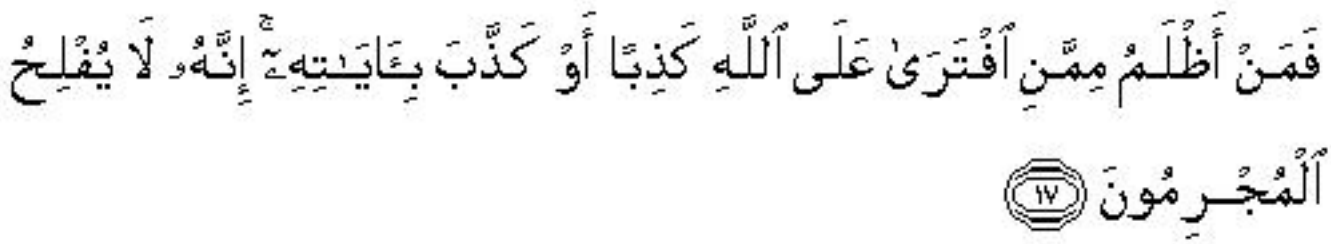
ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَٰكُمْ خَلَٰٓئِفَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ لِنَنظُرَ
كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

[11-14] Had Allah[15] hastened in dealing out evil to people as they hastened in asking good of the world, the term allowed to them for action would have been terminated long before this. (But this is not Our Way:) We let wander in their rebellion those people who do not expect to meet Us. Strange is the behavior of man! When he is in affliction, he calls Us, standing or sitting or lying down, but when We remove his .affliction from him, he behaves as if he had never called Us at the time when affliction came upon him. Thus the evil deeds of such transgressors have been made seeming fair to them. O mankind, We destroyed before you those communities[16] (which were in power in their time,) when they adopted the attitude of transgression,[17] for their Messengers came to them with clear signs but

they would not believe in them. This is how We recompense the criminals for their crimes. Now We have appointed you in their place on the earth so that We may test how you conduct yourselves.[18]


وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَاتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا ٱئْتِ بِقُرْءَانٍ
غَيْرِ هَٰذَآ أَوْ بَدِّلْهُ ۚ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِىٓ أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُۥ مِن تِلْقَآئِ نَفْسِىٓ ۖ
إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّى عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥﴾


قُل لَّوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَآ أَدْرَىٰكُم بِهِۦ ۖ فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ
عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِۦٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾


فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِـَٔايَٰتِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ
ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

[15-17] When Our clear revelations are recited to them, those who do not expect to meet Us say, "Bring another Qur'an in its stead or make some amendment in it."[19] O Muhammad, say to them, "It is not for me to make any alteration in it of my own accord. I follow only what is revealed to me. Indeed, if I disobey my Lord, I fear the chastisement of a dreadful Day."[20] Say also, "Had Allah willed so, I would never have recited this Qur'an to you, nor would I have told you anything (about its existence). I have already lived a lifetime among you before its revelation. Do you not use your common-sense?[21] And Who can be a greater sinner than the one who himself forges a lie and then ascribes it to Allah or falsifies[22] His real Revelations? Indeed, criminals can never attain (true) success."[23]

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ
شُفَعَٰٓؤُنَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَتُنَبِّـُٔونَ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

[18] These people worship besides Allah those which can neither harm nor benefit them, and say, "These are our intercessors with Allah." O Muhammad, say to them, "Do you presume to inform Allah of that thing which He knows not to be either in the heavens or in the earth ?"[24] He is absolutely free from and exalted above what they associate with Him.

وَمَا كَانَ ٱلنَّاسُ إِلَّآ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً فَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ
مِن رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُمْ فِيمَا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

[19] In the beginning all the people were one community, but afterwards they invented different creeds and ways.[25] And had not your Lord ordained a decree, that thing in which they differ would have been resolved.[26]

وَيَقُولُونَ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْغَيْبُ لِلَّهِ
فَٱنتَظِرُوٓا۟ إِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[20] As regards their saying, "Why has not a Sign been sent down to this Prophet from his Lord?"[27] tell them, "The unseen belongs wholly and solely to Allah. Well, wait (for it): I, too shall wait with you."[28]

وَإِذَآ أَذَقْنَا ٱلنَّاسَ رَحْمَةً مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ضَرَّآءَ مَسَّتْهُمْ إِذَا لَهُم مَّكْرٌ
فِىٓ ءَايَاتِنَا ۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ أَسْرَعُ مَكْرًا ۚ إِنَّ رُسُلَنَا يَكْتُبُونَ مَا تَمْكُرُونَ
﴿٢١﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُسَيِّرُكُمْ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا
كُنتُمْ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ وَجَرَيْنَ بِهِم بِرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَفَرِحُوا۟ بِهَا جَآءَتْهَا
رِيحٌ عَاصِفٌ وَجَآءَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْجُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ أُحِيطَ بِهِمْ
دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ لَئِنْ أَنجَيْتَنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِۦ لَنَكُونَنَّ
مِنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَلَمَّآ أَنجَىٰهُمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَبْغُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۗ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّمَا
بَغْيُكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُم ۖ مَّتَٰعَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُكُم
بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَخَذَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَٱزَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَآ أَنَّهُمْ قَٰدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَآ أَتَىٰهَآ أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَٰهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَ بِٱلْأَمْسِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْأٓيَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ دَارِ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

۞ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَسَبُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ جَزَآءُ سَيِّئَةٍ بِمِثْلِهَا وَتَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ۖ مَّا لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ ۖ كَأَنَّمَآ أُغْشِيَتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ قِطَعًا مِّنَ ٱلَّيْلِ مُظْلِمًا ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ مَكَانَكُمْ
أَنتُمْ وَشُرَكَآؤُكُمْ ۚ فَزَيَّلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ وَقَالَ شُرَكَآؤُهُم مَّا
كُنتُمْ إِيَّانَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[21-28] This is how people behave: No sooner do We show mercy to them after some calamity had afflicted them than they begin to practice deceptions[29] concerning Our Signs. Say to them, "Allah is more swift in His plans than you: indeed His angels are keeping a full record of your acts of deception.[30] It is Allah Who enables you to travel over land and by sea. So you set sails in ships, rejoicing over a fair breeze. Then all of a sudden a strong wind begins to rage against the passengers and billows begin to surge upon them from every side and they realize that they have been encircled by the tempest. At that time they pray to Allah with sincere faith, saying, "If You deliver us from this peril, we will become Your grateful servants."[31] But when He delivers them, the same people begin to rebel in the land against the Truth. O people, this rebellion of yours is harmful only to yourselves. (You may enjoy) the transitory pleasures of this world, then you have to return to Us: then We will let you know what you have been doing. This worldly life (which has so enamored you that you have become neglectful of Our Signs) may be likened to the produce of the earth: We sent rain-water from the sky, and the crops of which man and animals eat, grew up luxuriantly. Then at that very time, when the land was at its best, and the crops had ripened and decked out and the owners were presuming that they would be able to benefit from them, Our Command came all of a sudden by night or by day, and We destroyed it so thoroughly as though nothing had existed there the previous day.[31a] Thus We expound Our Signs in detail for the consideration of those people who are thoughtful. (You are being deluded by this transitory life,) and Allah invites you to the Abode of Peace.[32] (Guidance is in His power,) and He guides to the Right Way whomsoever He pleases. Those who have done excellent works will get excellent rewards, and even more than their merits:[33] neither gloom nor disgrace shall cover their faces. They deserve the Garden, where they will abide for ever. And those who have earned evil deeds shall have their recompense according to the evil they earned:[34] disgrace shall set over them: there shall be none to protect them from Allah: their faces shall be covered with such gloom[35] as if the black veils of the night had fallen over them: they deserve Hell, wherein they shall abide for ever. On the Day We will muster them together (in Our Court,) We will say to those who committed shirk, "Stay where you are, you and those whom you set as partners with Us." Then We will remove the state of strangeness from among them,[36] and the partners they had set up will say, "You did not worship us."

فَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًۢا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ إِن كُنَّا عَنْ عِبَادَتِكُمْ لَغَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

هُنَالِكَ تَبْلُواْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّآ أَسْلَفَتْ ۚ وَرُدُّوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَوْلَىٰهُمُ ٱلْحَقِّ ۖ وَضَلَّ
عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُواْ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

قُلْ مَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ أَمَّن يَمْلِكُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَمَن
يُخْرِجُ ٱلْحَىَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلْحَىِّ وَمَن يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ ۚ
فَسَيَقُولُونَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

فَذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۖ فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ ٱلْحَقِّ إِلَّا ٱلضَّلَٰلُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُصْرَفُونَ
﴿٣٢﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ فَسَقُوٓاْ أَنَّهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[29-33] “Allah suffices as a witness between you and us and (even if you worshiped us) we were utterly unaware of your worship”[37] At that time everyone will taste of what he ,did. All shall be brought back to Allah, their real Lord, and all the lies they had invented would vanish from them.

Ask them "Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth? Who has power over the faculties of hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? Who directs the system of the universe?" They will surely reply, "Allah". Say "Will you not, then, refrain from (going against the Truth)?" The same Allah is your true Lord:[38] then, what remains there after the Truth except deviation? Well, whither are you being turned away?"[39] O Prophet, behold! thus has the Word of your Lord come true in regard to the evil-doers that they would not believe.[40]

قُلۡ هَلۡ مِن شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَبۡدَؤُاْ ٱلۡخَلۡقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يَبۡدَؤُاْ ٱلۡخَلۡقَ
ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤۡفَكُونَ ٣٤

[34] Ask them "Is there any of the partners you have set up with Allah who originates creation and then brings it back again?[41] Say: "It is Allah Who originates creation and brings it back again. How then are you being perverted to the wrong ways of shirk?"[42]

قُلۡ هَلۡ مِن شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَهۡدِيٓ إِلَى ٱلۡحَقِّۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يَهۡدِي لِلۡحَقِّۗ
أَفَمَن يَهۡدِيٓ إِلَى ٱلۡحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَن يُتَّبَعَ أَمَّن لَّا يَهِدِّيٓ إِلَّآ أَن يُهۡدَىٰۖ فَمَا لَكُمۡ
كَيۡفَ تَحۡكُمُونَ ٣٥

[35] Ask them, "Is there any of the partners you have set up with Allah, who guides to the Truth?"[43] Say: "It is Allah alone Who guides to the Truth." Very well, then tell: "Who is more worthy to be followed: He Who guides to the Truth or the one who cannot guide unless he himself be guided? What has then gone wrong with you that you make perverted judgments?"

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ أَكۡثَرُهُمۡ إِلَّا ظَنًّاۚ إِنَّ ٱلظَّنَّ لَا يُغۡنِي مِنَ ٱلۡحَقِّ شَيۡـًٔاۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمُۢ
بِمَا يَفۡعَلُونَ ٣٦

[36] The fact is that most of them are following mere conjecture,[44] as whereas conjecture cannot in any way fulfill the requirements of the true knowledge. Allah has full knowledge of what they are doing.

وَمَا كَانَ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانُ أَن يُفْتَرَىٰ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَٰكِن تَصْدِيقَ ٱلَّذِى بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[37] And this Qur'an is not a thing that could be composed without Allah's Revelation: nay, it is the confirmation of what was revealed before it, and full explanation of `the Book'.[45] There is no doubt about this that it is from the Lord of the universe.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِۦ وَٱدْعُوا۟ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِمَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا۟ بِعِلْمِهِۦ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِهِمْ تَأْوِيلُهُۥ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ
ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يُؤْمِنُ بِهِۦ وَمِنْهُم مَّن لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَرَبُّكَ
أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

وَإِن كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُل لِّي عَمَلِي وَلَكُمْ عَمَلُكُمْ ۖ أَنتُم
بَرِيئُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَأَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

[38-41] Do they say that the Prophet has composed it himself? Tell them,. "If what you say be true, then produce one surah like this and you may call to your assistance anyone you can other than Allah."[46] The fact is that they have denied (on mere conjecture) what was not within the reach of their knowledge nor had they, as yet, tasted its consequences.[47] Likewise, the people who went before them declared as false the Revelations, but behold, what was the end of those unjust people! Some of these people will believe in it and others will not, and your Lord knows these mischief-makers[48] very well indeed. If these people declare that you are an impostor say to them "I am responsible for my deeds and you are for yours: you are not accountable for what I do, and I am not for what you do."[49]

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ ۚ أَفَأَنتَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ وَلَوْ كَانُوا لَا يَعْقِلُونَ
﴿٤٢﴾

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنظُرُ إِلَيْكَ ۚ أَفَأَنتَ تَهْدِي الْعُمْيَ وَلَوْ
كَانُوا لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا وَلَٰكِنَّ النَّاسَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ كَأَن لَّمْ يَلْبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّهَارِ يَتَعَارَفُونَ بَيْنَهُمْۚ قَدْ
خَسِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُواْ بِلِقَآءِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا كَانُواْ مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَإِمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِلَيْنَا
مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ ٱللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[42-46] There are many among them who hear what you say: but will you make the deaf listen to you even though they be incapable of understanding it?[50] Then there are many others among them who see you: but will you show the way to the blind, even though they be bereft of sight?[51] The fact is that Allah does not in any way wrong the people but they wrong themselves.[52] (Today these people are intoxicated with the life of this world but) on the Day when Allah will muster them they will feel as if they had stayed (in this world) for only an hour[53] or so in order to have acquaintance with one another. (At that time they will realize that) they who disbelieved in their meeting with Allah were losers[54] indeed and were not rightly guided. Maybe, We let you witness some of the dire consequences with which We threaten them or raise you to Ourselves before this. Anyway they shall have to return to Us and Allah is a witness to what they are doing.

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولٌۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قُضِىَ بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ
لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

[47] There is a Messenger for every ummat.[55] then, when its Messenger comes a just judgment is passed on its people and they are not wronged in the least.[56]

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

قُل لَّآ أَمۡلِكُ لِنَفۡسِي ضَرّٗا وَلَا نَفۡعًا إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۗ لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌۚ إِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمۡ فَلَا يَسۡتَـٔۡخِرُونَ سَاعَةٗ وَلَا يَسۡتَقۡدِمُونَ ٤٩

قُلۡ أَرَءَيۡتُمۡ إِنۡ أَتَىٰكُمۡ عَذَابُهُۥ بَيَٰتًا أَوۡ نَهَارٗا مَّاذَا يَسۡتَعۡجِلُ مِنۡهُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ ٥٠

أَثُمَّ إِذَا مَا وَقَعَ ءَامَنتُم بِهِۦٓۚ ءَآلۡـَٰٔنَ وَقَدۡ كُنتُم بِهِۦ تَسۡتَعۡجِلُونَ ٥١

ثُمَّ قِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ ذُوقُواْ عَذَابَ ٱلۡخُلۡدِ هَلۡ تُجۡزَوۡنَ إِلَّا بِمَا كُنتُمۡ تَكۡسِبُونَ ٥٢

[48-52] They ask "When will this threat come to pass ? Tell us if what you say be true. " Say "I have no power to bring benefits or to avert evils from myself: everything depends upon Allah's will.[57] Every ummat has its appointed term: when that term expires it is neither delayed nor advanced for them by a single hour."[58] Ask them "Have you ever considered this? (What can you do to avert it,) if His scourge comes upon you suddenly by night or by day ? Why is it that the criminals are seeking to hasten it?" What! will you believe in it, when it actually overtakes you?-Do you want to escape from it now, when you yourselves were demanding it? Then it will be said to the transgressors, "Now taste the everlasting torment; what other recompense than this do you expect to get for what you have been earning?"

۞ وَيَسْتَنۢبِـُٔونَكَ أَحَقٌّ هُوَ ۖ قُلْ إِى وَرَبِّىٓ إِنَّهُۥ لَحَقٌّ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِكُلِّ نَفْسٍ ظَلَمَتْ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لَٱفْتَدَتْ بِهِۦ ۗ وَأَسَرُّوا۟ ٱلنَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۖ وَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

أَلَآ إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

هُوَ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

[53-56] Then they ask, "Is what you say really true ?" Tell them, "Yes by my Lord, it is absolutely true, and you have no power to avert it." And every person who has transgressed would gladly give all the wealth of the earth as ransom, if he possessed it, to redeem himself from the torment. When they will see the torment they will be remorseful in their hearts.[59] And the judgment will be passed on them with justice and no wrong will be done to them. Listen! all that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah. Note it well that Allah's word is true, yet most of them know it not. It is He Who ordained life and death, and to Him you shall all return.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم مَّوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَآءٌ لِّمَا فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِۦ فَبِذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا۟ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ
﴿٥٨﴾

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ فَجَعَلْتُم مِّنْهُ
حَرَامًا وَحَلَٰلًا قُلْ ءَآللَّهُ أَذِنَ لَكُمْ أَمْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

وَمَا ظَنُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ
عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[57-60] O mankind, there has come to you the Admonition from your Lord: this is the remedy for the diseases of the heart, and guidance and blessing for those who believe in it. O Prophet, say, "It is the bounty of Allah and His mercy that He has sent this thing: let the people rejoice over it for it is better than what they amass." O Prophet, ask them, "Have you ever considered that you yourselves have made something unlawful and the other lawful out of what[60] Allah has given you?"[61] Then ask them, "Has Allah allowed you this or do you ascribe a false thing to Him?"[62] What treatment do they think Allah will mete out to them who ascribe this false thing to Him on the Day of Resurrection ? Indeed Allah is bountiful to mankind, but most of them are not grateful.[63]

وَمَا تَكُونُ فِى شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُواْ مِنْهُ مِن قُرْءَانٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا
عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ مِن مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَآ أَصْغَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَآ أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ
٦١

أَلَآ إِنَّ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ٦٢

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَكَانُواْ يَتَّقُونَ ٦٣

لَهُمُ ٱلْبُشْرَىٰ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ٦٤

وَلَا يَحْزُنكَ قَوْلُهُمْ ۘ إِنَّ ٱلْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ۚ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٦٥

[61-65] O Prophet, We are witnessing whatever work you may be engaged in and whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur'an; We are also keeping a watch, O people, over whatever you are doing: for there is not an iota of anything, small or big, in the earth and the heavens that is hidden from your Lord, and everything is on record in the clear Register.[64] Listen: those, who are Allah's friends and who believe and fear God, shall have no occasion for fear or sorrow: there is nothing but good news for them in this world and in the Hereafter: Allah's words

cannot be changed-this is the greatest success. O Prophet, let not their remarks grieve you, for honor wholly rests with Allah. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

أَلَآ إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ ۚ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا
يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا۟ فِيهِ وَٱلنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ۚ إِنَّ
فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[66-67] Note it well that all the dwellers of the heavens and of the earth belong to Allah: and those who invoke, besides Allah, partners (they have set up with Him) follow nothing but surmises and merely indulge in guess-works. It is He Who ordained the night for you to repose in it, and gave to the day its light. Indeed there are Signs in this for those who listen[65] (to the Message).

قَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَدًا ۗ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ ۖ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ۖ لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنْ عِندَكُم مِّن سُلْطَٰنٍۭ بِهَٰذَآ ۚ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٦٨﴾

قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

مَتَـٰعٌ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ نُذِيقُهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

[68-70] They remarked," Allah has taken a son to Himself.[66] Allah is All-Pure![67] He is Self-Sufficient: He is the Owner of everything that is in the heavens and the earth.[68] Have you any authority for what you say? What! do you ascribe to Allah that of which you have no knowledge? O Prophet, say to them, "Those, who ascribe false things to Allah, can never prosper." Well, they may enjoy the transitory pleasures of this life, but after this they have to return to Us and then we will make them taste a severe torment because of this blasphemy they are committing.

۞ وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ نُوحٍ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَـٰقَوْمِ إِن كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكُم مَّقَامِى وَتَذْكِيرِى بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ فَأَجْمِعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ ٱقْضُوٓا۟ إِلَىَّ وَلَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿٧١﴾

فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَمَا سَأَلْتُكُم مِّنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ خَلَٰٓئِفَ وَأَغْرَقْنَا
ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ۖ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ رُسُلًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَآءُوهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا
كَانُوا۟ لِيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِمَا كَذَّبُوا۟ بِهِۦ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَطْبَعُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ
ٱلْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

[71-74] Recite[69] to them Noah's story, when he said to his people; "O my brethren, if it has become intolerable for you that I should dwell in your midst and preach to you the Revelations of Allah, then (note it well that) I have put my trust in Allah. You may muster all the partners you have set up and come to a united decision about me and consider your scheme well so that no aspect of the matter should remain hidden from you. Then bring that into action against me without giving me any respite.[70] If you have turned away from my Message, (I have lost nothing) for I did not demand any reward from you: my reward is with Allah, and I have been commanded to behave like a Muslim, (whether any other does so or not.)" But they disbelieved in him and the result was that We rescued those of them, who were with him in the Ark and made them successors on the earth and drowned those who rejected Our Revelations. So consider the end of those who were warned (but did not believe). After Noah We sent different Messengers to their peoples and they came to them with manifest Signs, but they would not believe in what they had disbelieved before. This is how We set a seal on the hearts of the transgressors.[71]

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِم مُّوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلۡحَقُّ مِنۡ عِندِنَا قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسِحۡرٞ مُّبِينٞ ٧٦

قَالَ مُوسَىٰٓ أَتَقُولُونَ لِلۡحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَكُمۡۖ أَسِحۡرٌ هَٰذَا وَلَا يُفۡلِحُ ٱلسَّٰحِرُونَ ٧٧

قَالُوٓاْ أَجِئۡتَنَا لِتَلۡفِتَنَا عَمَّا وَجَدۡنَا عَلَيۡهِ ءَابَآءَنَا وَتَكُونَ لَكُمَا ٱلۡكِبۡرِيَآءُ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا نَحۡنُ لَكُمَا بِمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٧٨

وَقَالَ فِرۡعَوۡنُ ٱئۡتُونِي بِكُلِّ سَٰحِرٍ عَلِيمٖ ٧٩

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰٓ أَلۡقُواْ مَآ أَنتُم مُّلۡقُونَ ٨٠

فَلَمَّآ أَلۡقَوۡاْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ مَا جِئۡتُم بِهِ ٱلسِّحۡرُۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَيُبۡطِلُهُۥٓۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُصۡلِحُ عَمَلَ ٱلۡمُفۡسِدِينَ ٨١

وَيُحِقُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[75-82] Then after them We sent Moses and Aaron with Our Signs to Pharaoh and his chiefs.[72] But they showed arrogance,[73] for they were criminals. So when the Truth came to them from Us, they said, "This is clear sorcery.[74] Moses replied, "What, do you call the Truth sorcery, when it has come to you? Is this sorcery? The fact is that sorcerers can never attain true success.[75] In reply to this, they said, "Have you come to turn us away from the faith of our forefathers so that you two may dominate over the land?'[76] We are not going to believe in what you say." And Pharaoh said (to his people), "Bring every expert sorcerer to me. "- When the sorcerers came, Moses said to them. "Cast down whatever you have to cast." When they cast down their appliances, Moses said to them, "This is sorcery what you have cast down:[77] Allah will surely render it in vain for He does not let the plans of mischief-makers succeed. And Allah vindicates the Truth by His Commands, though the guilty ones may dislike it."

فَمَآ ءَامَنَ لِمُوسَىٰٓ إِلَّا ذُرِّيَّةٌ مِّن قَوْمِهِۦ عَلَىٰ خَوْفٍ مِّن فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِمْ أَن
يَفْتِنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ لَعَالٍ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[83] (Then behold that) none but a few youths[78] from his own people obeyed and followed[79] Moses because of the fear of Pharaoh and their own chiefs; for they apprehended that Pharaoh would afflict them with a torment. And the fact is that Pharaoh was mighty in the land: indeed he was one of those who do not hesitate to transgress any limit.[80]

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَٰقَوْمِ إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوٓا۟ إِن كُنتُم
مُّسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

فَقَالُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

وَنَجِّنَا بِرَحْمَتِكَ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[84-86] Moses said to his people, "O my people, if you sincerely believe in Allah, put your trust in Him, if you are Muslims. "[81] They answered,[82] "We have put our trust in Allah: `Our Lord, do not make us a cause of trial[83] for the unjust people, and deliver us by Thy mercy from the unbelievers'."

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَن تَبَوَّءَا لِقَوْمِكُمَا بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا
وَٱجْعَلُوا۟ بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

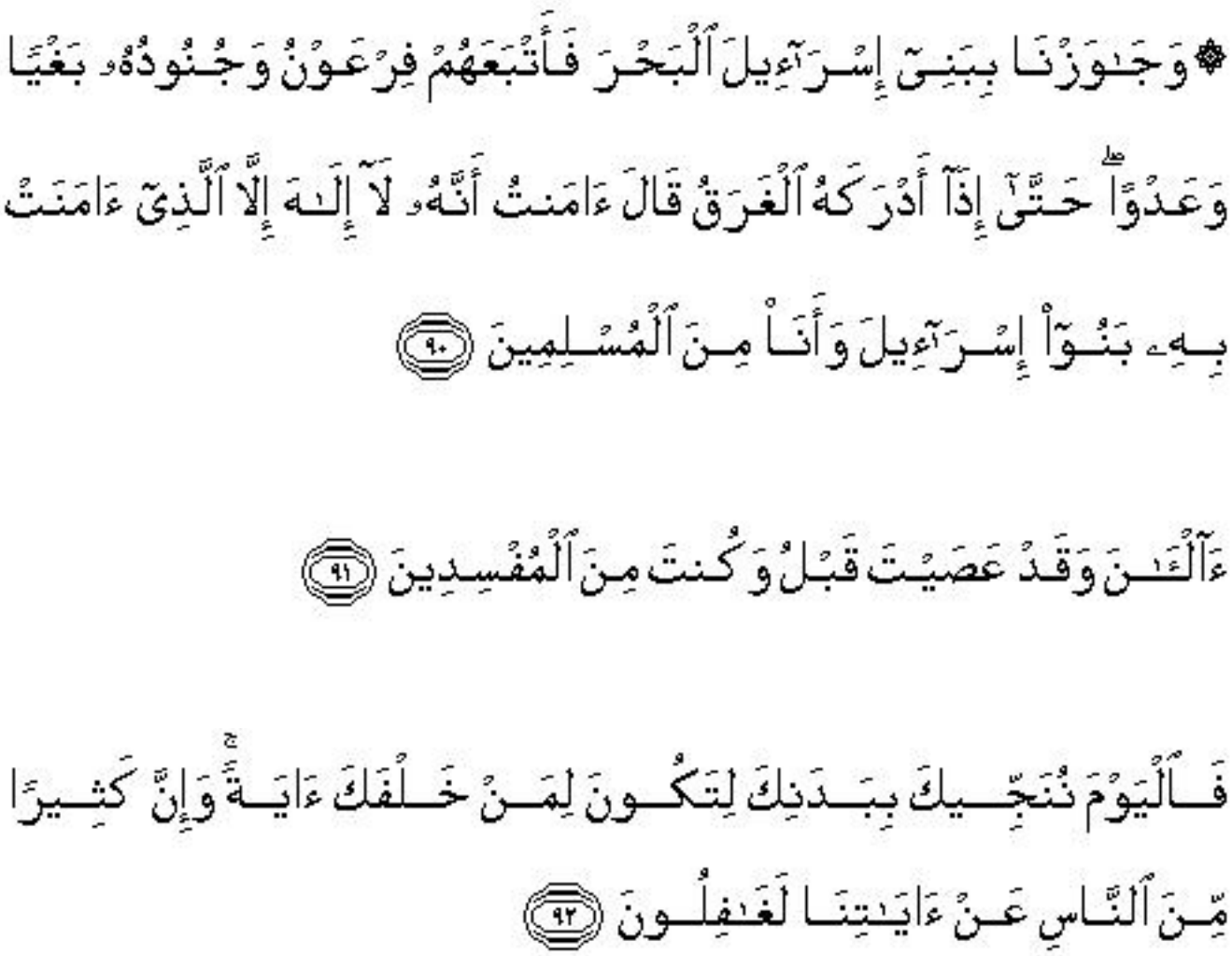
[87] And We inspired Moses and his brother: "Provide some houses for your people in Egypt, and make those houses of yours as qiblah, and establish Salat[84] and fill the Believers with hope and courage."[85]

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ ءَاتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُۥ زِينَةً وَأَمْوَٰلًا فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا رَبَّنَا لِيُضِلُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِكَ ۖ رَبَّنَا ٱطْمِسْ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَٱشْدُدْ عَلَىٰ
قُلُوبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلْأَلِيمَ ﴿٨٨﴾

قَالَ قَدْ أُجِيبَت دَّعْوَتُكُمَا فَٱسْتَقِيمَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعَآنِّ سَبِيلَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٨٩﴾

[88-89] Moses prayed[86] and said, "Our Lord, Thou hast bestowed on Pharaoh and his chiefs splendor[87] and possessions[88] in the worldly life; our Lord, hast Thou done this that they may lead astray the people from Thy Way ?

Lord, destroy their wealth and harden their hearts in a manner so that they may not believe till they see the painful torment."[89] Allah replied, "The prayer of you both has been granted; so be steadfast and follow not the way of those who have no knowledge.[90]


۞ وَجَٰوَزۡنَا بِبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱلۡبَحۡرَ فَأَتۡبَعَهُمۡ فِرۡعَوۡنُ وَجُنُودُهُۥ بَغۡيٗا
وَعَدۡوًاۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَدۡرَكَهُ ٱلۡغَرَقُ قَالَ ءَامَنتُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِيٓ ءَامَنَتۡ
بِهِۦ بَنُوٓاْ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَأَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ ٩٠
ءَآلۡـَٰٔنَ وَقَدۡ عَصَيۡتَ قَبۡلُ وَكُنتَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُفۡسِدِينَ ٩١
فَٱلۡيَوۡمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنۡ خَلۡفَكَ ءَايَةٗۚ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرٗا
مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ عَنۡ ءَايَٰتِنَا لَغَٰفِلُونَ ٩٢

[90-92] And We led the children of Israel across the sea. Then Pharaoh and his hosts pursued them with the intention of cruelty and oppression to them until, when he was drowning, he cried, "I have believed that there is no god but the real God in Whom the children of Israel have believed and I am of those who surrender."[91] (In answer it was said :) "Now you believe! Whereas hitherto you had been rebellious and of the mischief-makers. Now We will preserve your dead body[92] only to be a sign of warning for the succeeding generations, though there are many people who give no heed to Our Signs."[93]

وَلَقَدْ بَوَّأْنَا بَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ مُبَوَّأَ صِدْقٍ وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ فَمَا
ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعِلْمُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِى بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا
كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[93] We gave an excellent abode[94] to the children of Israel and provided them with the best things of life. Then they caused not dissensions among themselves until the knowledge had come to them.[95] Surely your Lord will decide between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that in which they had been differing.

فَإِن كُنتَ فِى شَكٍّ مِّمَّآ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ فَسْـَٔلِ
ٱلَّذِينَ يَقْرَءُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ۚ لَقَدْ جَآءَكَ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَلَا
تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

[94-95] If you are in doubt regarding the Guidance We have sent down to you, you may inquire about this from those people who have been reading the Scriptures before you. In fact, it is the very Truth that has come to you from your Lord; so be not of those who doubt and join not those who treat Allah's Revelations as false; otherwise you shall be of the losers.[96]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

وَلَوْ جَآءَتْهُمْ كُلُّ ءَايَةٍ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلْأَلِيمَ ﴿٩٧﴾

فَلَوْلَا كَانَتْ قَرْيَةٌ ءَامَنَتْ فَنَفَعَهَآ إِيمَـٰنُهَآ إِلَّا قَوْمَ يُونُسَ لَمَّآ ءَامَنُوا۟ كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْخِزْىِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَتَّعْنَـٰهُمْ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٩٨﴾

[96-98] The fact is that whatsoever Signs are shown to those who have fallen under Allah's decree,[97] they will not believe till they see the painful torment. Then, is there any instance of a habitation that, seeing the torment, accepted the faith and that faith profited it? (There is no instance of this) except that of Jonah's people.[98] When they believed, We warded off the torment of ignominy from them in this worldly life[99] and allowed them to make use of the things of life for a while.[100]

وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَـَٔامَنَ مَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ كُلُّهُمْ جَمِيعًا ۚ أَفَأَنتَ تُكْرِهُ ٱلنَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا۟ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٩﴾

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تُؤْمِنَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَيَجْعَلُ ٱلرِّجْسَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

[99-100] Had your Lord willed (that all the people of the world should be believers), all the dwellers of the earth would have believed in Him[101] Will you, then, force the people to become believers?[102] No one can believe without Allah's permission,[103] and it is the way of Allah that He throws filth on those who do not use their commonsense.[104]

قُلِ ٱنظُرُواْ مَاذَا فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَا تُغْنِى ٱلْـَٔايَـٰتُ وَٱلنُّذُرُ عَن قَوْمٍ
لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

فَهَلْ يَنتَظِرُونَ إِلَّا مِثْلَ أَيَّامِ ٱلَّذِينَ خَلَوْاْ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ قُلْ
فَٱنتَظِرُوٓاْ إِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّى رُسُلَنَا وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نُنجِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

[101-103] Say to them, "Make a keen observation of all that is in the heavens and the earth." And (the fact is that) the Signs and warnings are of no avail to those who would not believe.[105] Now what do they wait for but the evil days that befell the peoples before them? Say to them, "Well, wait and see, I, too, wait with you." Then, (when such a time comes), We deliver Our Messengers and those who believed in them-This is Our Way: We have laid it on Ourselves to deliver the believers.

قُلْ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمْ فِى شَكٍّ مِّن دِينِى فَلَآ أَعْبُدُ ٱلَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَـٰكِنْ أَعْبُدُ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى يَتَوَفَّىٰكُمْ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

وَأَنْ أَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

وَلَا تَدۡعُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُكَ وَلَا يَضُرُّكَۖ فَإِن فَعَلۡتَ فَإِنَّكَ إِذٗا مِّنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ١٠٦

وَإِن يَمۡسَسۡكَ ٱللَّهُ بِضُرّٖ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُۥٓ إِلَّا هُوَۖ وَإِن يُرِدۡكَ بِخَيۡرٖ فَلَا رَآدَّ لِفَضۡلِهِۦۚ يُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ١٠٧

[104-107] O Prophet say,[106] O mankind! if you are still in doubt concerning my Faith, know that I do not worship those whom you worship beside Allah, but I worship that Allah alone, Who has the power to cause your death.[107] I have been commanded that I should be of the believers. I have also been bidden: Dedicate yourself sincerely, and exclusively and steadfastly to this Faith[108] and be not at all of those who associate other gods with Allah.[109] And do not invoke beside Allah any being that can neither do you good nor harm: for if you will do so, you shall be one of the workers of iniquity. If Allah afflicts you with a calamity, there is none to remove it but He Himself. Likewise if He wills to bestow a favor on you, there is none to withhold His bounty. He bestows His bounty on anyone of His servants He wills. And He is Forgiving and Merciful."

قُلۡ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمُ ٱلۡحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمۡۖ فَمَنِ ٱهۡتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهۡتَدِي لِنَفۡسِهِۦۖ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيۡهَاۖ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ عَلَيۡكُم بِوَكِيلٖ ١٠٨

وَٱتَّبِعۡ مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيۡكَ وَٱصۡبِرۡ حَتَّىٰ يَحۡكُمَ ٱللَّهُۚ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلۡحَٰكِمِينَ ١٠٩

[108-109] O Muhammad, tell them, "O mankind! the Truth has come to you from your Lord. Now, whosoever follows the Right way, he does so for his own good, and whosoever goes astray, he does so to bring about his own ruin; and I am not a keeper over you. " And, O Prophet, go on following the Guidance that has been revealed to you; persevere steadfastly till Allah passes His judgment, for He is the best of judges.

1This introductory verse contains a subtle answer to those foolish people who presumed that the discourses, which the Messenger was presenting as the Qur'an, were nothing more than eloquent speeches, poetic lofty thoughts, and some predictions like those of the sooth-sayers. They are being warned that the Qur'an 'is not what they supposed it to be but this is the Book of wisdom, and that if they did not pay due attention to it, they would deprive themselves of wisdom.

2This question has been posed to impress on them that if they considered the matter coolly, they themselves would come to the conclusion that:

(a) there is nothing strange in appointing a man to warn his fellow men of the consequences of neglecting the Message. For it is obvious that a man, and not a Jinn or an angel or any other being, was the proper messenger for human beings.

(b) there is nothing strange in it that the Creator and Lord of mankind should make arrangements for the guidance of erring human beings; nay, it would have been strange if He had made no such arrangements, and

(c) there is nothing strange in this that real honor and success should come to those who accept the guidance and not to those who reject it.

3They dubbed him "enchanter" but did not consider whether the epithet appropriately applied to him or not. It is obvious that the mere fact that he was moving the hearts and influencing the minds of the believers with his eloquence, was not a sufficient proof that he was using magic to achieve this object. And it is not difficult at all to distinguish rhetoric of a Messenger from that of an enchanter for these are quite distinct from each other in their nature, in the objectives for which they are used and in the effect they produce on the lives of the believers. The irresponsible "enchanter" does not care at all whether what he utters is correct, just and righteous because his only object is to influence the hearts of the hearers in order to achieve his own unlawful ends. That is why he does not hesitate at all to utter any false, exaggerated or unjust thing, if it serves his purpose. For his only aim is to produce an emotional effect in order to deceive the people by using an artificially ornamented and exaggerated language rather than to state things of wisdom. As a result of this, his talk is contradictory, imbalanced and unsystematic. As his sole object is self-interest, he abuses his rhetoric for exploitation, or for sowing seeds of discord or for setting one party against the other. Therefore, the "enchanter" fails to produce any high moral effects on the lives of the people or to imbue them with any righteous thoughts or to urge them to noble deeds or to bring about any healthy change in their lives; nay, as a result of his "magic" the people begin to exhibit

even worse qualities than they did before.

Thus it is implied that by the application of this criterion, the charge of the unbelievers that. "This man is a manifest enchanter" is refuted, for it means to say to them, "You yourselves are witnessing that the talk of 'this person' is wise, systematic, balanced, right and just. Every word he utters is well-thought out and everything he says is most valuable and precious. His eloquence aims at nothing but reform of the people. There is not the least tinge of personal, family, national or any other worldly interest in his talk. His only intention and desire is to warn the people of the consequences of their negligence and to invite them to the way of their own good. Then consider the effects of his eloquence and you will find that they are quite different from those produced by the rhetoric of the `enchanters'. The lives of all those who have been influenced by him have been so reformed that they have become models of high moral character and excellent conduct. Therefore, you should consider the matter and decide for yourselves whether he is an enchanter or a prophet. "

4This is to impress the fact that after creating the universe, Allah has not cut off connection with it, but has sat Himself upon His Throne and is practically directing and conducting and governing each and every part of it. The foolish people think that after creating the universe, Allah has left it to itself or to others to exploit it as they will. But the Qur'an refutes this and says that Allah Himself is governing the whole of His creation and He has kept all the powers and the reins of government in His own hands and whatever is taking place in each and every part of the universe is happening with His command or permission. In short, He is not only the Creator but also the Ruler, Designer and Supporter of the universe, which is working in accordance with His will. (Please see also E.N.'s 40, 41 of Al-A'araf.)

5This is to emphasize the other side of the matter. He is All-Powerful and there is none who dare make even a recommendation to Him about anything not to speak of interfering with His management of affairs so as to cause any change in His decrees or in the making or marring of anyone's fate. The most one can do is to make a supplication to Him but it all depends on His will to grant or reject it. There is none so powerful in His Kingdom as to have his own way in anything or to get his recommendations through anyhow.

6After stating the bare fact that Allah alone is the Lord, people are being told the kind of conduct that fact' demands from them, that is, "When Allah alone is your Lord, you should worship Him alone. " In this connection, it should also be noted that just as the Arabic word (Rab) implies three things Providence, Supremacy and Sovereignty-likewise the Arabic word (ibadat) also contains three corresponding implications: (1) worship, (2) servitude and (3) obedience:

(1) As Allah is his sole Providence, man should show his gratitude to Him by worshiping Him alone. He should pray and supplicate to Him and bow his head in reverence to Him and none else.

(2) As Allah is the only Supreme Being, man should behave like His servant and slave and should not

adopt the attitude of independence towards Him nor should he subject himself to the mental or practical servitude of anyone else.

(3) As Allah is his sole Sovereign, man should obey His Commands, and follow His Law, and he should neither become his own sovereign nor should he acknowledge anyone else as his sovereign.

7That is, "Will you not then understand the implications of the Reality that has been expounded? Will you not open your eyes and see the misunderstandings which have been misleading you into wrong ways opposed to Reality? Will you persist in them?"

8This is the second basic principle of the teachings of every prophet; "You shall have to return to your Lord and render an account of all you did in this world." The first principle has been stated in the preceding verse: "Allah alone is your Lord: therefore worship Him only.

9This sentence contains both a statement and its proof. The statement is, "Allah will again bring to life all human beings," and the proof is, "This is as easy for Allah as it was to create them first. " The one who acknowledges that Allah has originated all creation (and who can deny this except those atheists who accepted the absurd theory of "Creation without a Creator" merely to get a plea for discarding the religion of the Christian clergy?) cannot consider this as impossible or irrational.

10The reason why Allah will again bring the whole mankind to life is to reward the believers and to punish the disbelievers. After showing that this is possible to raise the dead, it is stated that it is absolutely necessary to fulfill the demands of common-sense and justice, for full justice cannot be done without this. Common-sense and justice demand that those who believe and do righteous deeds should be given their full rewards, and those who disbelieve and reject the Truth and do evil deeds, should be duly punished. As every sensible and just person knows that this demand of justice is not fulfilled in its entirety, and cannot be fulfilled in this world, it is absolutely essential that the whole of mankind should again be brought to life for this purpose. (Please see also E.N. 30, Al-A 'araf and E.N. 105, Hud.)

11This is the third argument in proof of the doctrine of the life in the Hereafter. It is based on Allah's manifestations in the heavens and on the earth. The greatest and most manifest of these are the sun, the moon and the alternation of the night and day, for these are ever present before each and every human being. All these clearly show that the Creator of this great and vast universe is not a child who has made all this for mere fun and will break it up when he is satiated with it. These manifestations of His are a clear proof of the fact that the Creator is All-Wise, for there is a system, a wisdom, a design and a serious object in each and every particle of His creation. These seem, as it were, to say. "When you yourselves learn from the signs and manifestations of His wisdom that He is All Wise, how can you, then, expect that He will not call man to account after granting him common-sense, moral feelings, independent responsibility and authority to exploit His endless resources, and that He will not reward those who make

the right use of these and punish those who abuse them?"

Thus, it has become obvious that in vv. 4-6, three arguments have been given in their logical order to present the doctrine of the Hereafter:

(1) The fact of the origination of life in this world is a proof that life in the Next World is also possible.

(2) There must be life in the Hereafter, because it is essential for the recompense of the deeds that one does, and of the use or abuse one makes of the moral responsibilities that have been entrusted to man. Therefore, it is the demand of common-sense and justice that there must be another world in which one should bear the consequences of one's deeds, for this is not possible in this world.

(3) When common-sense and justice demand that there must be life in the Hereafter, this need will surely be satisfied, for the Creator of man and the universe is All-Wise, and it cannot be conceived that the All-Wise will not satisfy the demands of common-sense and justice.

A deep thinking will show that these are the only possible arguments for the proof of the life in the Hereafter and these suffice, too. After this the only thing that might be demanded in this connection is that it should be actually demonstrated before man to convince him that this thing is possible, necessary and demanded by the Wisdom of Allah. But it is obvious that this will not be done in this world for this is for the trial of man and not for recompense, and Allah wills to test whether man believes in the Hereafter without seeing it, merely by his reasoning on the right lines.

Besides this, the words, "He makes His Signs manifest for those people, who possess knowledge" and "... in all that Allah has created... there are Signs for those, who intend avoiding (deviation from the Truth)" are worthy of serious consideration. These words imply this: "Allah has in His wisdom spread such signs in each and every manifestation of His as clearly point to the realities that are hidden behind them; but only those people can reach to those realities, who (a) free themselves from the prejudices of ignorance and acquire knowledge from the sources with which Allah has provided man for this purpose, and (b) have the intention of avoiding wrong ways and following the Right Way."

12This passage also contains both a statement and its proof. The statement is that those who reject the doctrine of the Hereafter shall inevitably go to Hell and its proof is that those who reject or pay no heed to this, commit such evil deeds as deserve nothing less than the fire of Hell. The fact which is supported by the experience of thousands of years, is that those who do not consider themselves responsible and accountable to God in the Hereafter, go astray into wrong ways for lack of any control over themselves, and commit immoralities and fill God's earth with tyranny, chaos and filth and thus merit Hell. This is inevitable. If a man leads his life on the presumption that there is no other life, he will have no fear that he shall have to render a full account of all his deeds in this world. Therefore his sole aim in this life will be to win, by hook or by crook, prosperity, happiness, fame and power in this world. Naturally these

materialistic attitudes make people heedless of the Signs of Allah and mislead them into wrong ways that lead to Hell.

The above argument for the doctrine of the Hereafter is in its nature different from the previous three arguments. This is based on the knowledge gained by human experience while the former were based on rational reasoning. Though here only a hint has been given about it, the same has been stated in detail in other places in the Qur'an. This is the argument in brief. Human beings cannot adopt individually or collectively the right attitude towards life unless the doctrine of accountability to God is deeply embedded in their hearts. The fact that human beings begin to behave erroneously, if and when their belief in this doctrine disappears or becomes weak, is borne out by a long experience. Had not the creed of the Hereafter been real, its acceptance or rejection would not have produced the results inevitably and continuously for centuries. The fact that the acceptance of a doctrine should have continuously produced right sort of results, and its denial wrong results, is a clear proof that it is real. Though the premises of the above argument and the conclusion drawn from these arc clear and closely connected, there arc some people who do not agree with this proposition. They argue their point like this. There are many instances of people who deny the Hereafter and base their moral philosophy and their rule of conduct on atheism and materialism: still they possess high moral characters and abstain from every sort of evil; in short, they are virtuous in their affairs and render great services to the people. But a little thinking will show that this is a weak argument. If we probe into the materialistic philosophies and systems, we shall find that all these lack solid foundations for the moral excellence and practical virtuous deeds; therefore they cannot produce those qualities with which the atheists and the materialists are credited. Indeed no such motivating factors exist in those philosophies as may produce the qualities of righteousness, honesty, trust-worthiness, justice, compassion, generosity, sacrifice, sympathy, self-control, purity, the fulfillment of duties, obligations and pledges and the like. The only alternative to the doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter is "utilitarianism" which might become the basis for a practical moral system, for all the other philosophies are merely hypothetical and impracticable. It is quite obvious that the motivating power of utilitarianism is very limited because it is incapable of carrying a person farther than "utility" itself. Therefore the one who believes in this doctrine will consider a virtue a "virtue" only as long as it is useful to his own person, family, society etc., and will direct all his efforts towards promoting their welfare and happiness and will adhere to moral qualities only as long as they are conducive to his own good or to that of his own people. But he will discard these "virtues", when he is convinced that these will be harmful. That is why a utilitarian does not believe in absolute morality but adopts truth or falsehood, honesty or dishonesty, faithfulness or treachery, justice or injustice, in short, any virtue or vice that may suit the occasion and be useful for his own interests. The English people are the most appropriate example of utilitarian morality. Their example will serve our purpose as they are cited by its supporters to prove their proposition that one may possess a high moral character even though one were to deny the existence of God and the Hereafter for, they say, the English people in general are more truthful, more honest, more just and more trust-worthy than others though they arc materialists; whereas the fact is that the English people provide the most appropriate practical proof of the instability of utilitarian character. Is it not a fact that the representatives of the English nation make a very poor show of their morality in regard to

international affairs? They tell brazen-faced lies and are guilty of treachery, tyranny, injustice and dishonesty, and the whole nation backs them up as its champions. Had their morality been founded on sound basis, it could not have been possible that as individuals they should be truthful, honest, just, righteous and observe pledges, but as a nation they would discard all these moral values. This is a clear proof that these people do not believe in moral values as such but only if these are useful for their self-interest: otherwise they could not have adopted two contradictory positions as individuals and as a nation. Morality is morality only if it is absolute, otherwise it is a policy and expediency.

Nevertheless, if there be any up-holders of absolute morality from among the disbelievers of Allah and the Hereafter, they could not have got these virtues from the doctrine of utilitarianism but from those latent religious influences that might have remained embedded in their hearts without their conscious knowledge. Such a person is, in fact, indebted to religion for his moral excellences, though he be attributing these to secularism and materialism, for he cannot point out anything, whatsoever, in them that might have motivated those virtues.

13We should not pass cursorily over this verse and should consider it deeply in the order it has been presented:

(1) Why will they be given Gardens of bliss in the life of the Hereafter? This will be because they followed the Right Way in the life of this world and adopted the right ways in every aspect of life, both as individuals and as a community, and discarded the false and erroneous ways.

(2) How did they obtain at every step, at every turning and at every crossroad the correct criterion of judging between the right and the wrong, the true and the false, the righteous and the erroneous? Then from where did they get the power to remain stead-fast on the Right Way, avoiding scrupulously wrong ways, after getting the right sort of discernment? It was their Lord Who is the real source of everything, Who gave them the guidance and the power of doing good works on every critical occasion.

(3) Why did their Lord give them that guidance and power? He gave them these things because of their Faith.

(4) What is that characteristic of the Faith which produces the above results ? The Faith which produces those results does not comprise mere profession but it is that Faith which becomes the moving spirit of one's conduct and character and has the power of reforming one's morals and deeds.

In order to illustrate this point, let us consider, in the physical life of man, the case of food that is consumed for nourishment, health, energy and happiness. It is obvious that these results cannot be produced by the mere taking in of any food, but by that "food" which is so digested as turns into blood and circulates into every vein to provide energy to every part of the body for its proper functioning. In the same way, in the moral life, guidance, righteous attitude and pure conduct and true success, depend on

those right creeds that get deeply embedded in the mind, heart and soul. Otherwise, creeds which are merely professed by the tongue or lie dormant in some corner of the mind and the heart, cannot produce such results, for they cannot influence one's conduct, character, way of thinking and attitude towards life for the better. Just as one may eat food and still not obtain those useful results which arc produced only if it is digested properly according to the physical laws of God, in the same way, one who professes those right creeds merely with his tongue, but does not make them a part of his mind, heart and soul, does not deserve those rewards which are only for those whose deeds correspond to the creeds.

14These facts about the life in Paradise have been stated in order to make conspicuous the high thinking and the noble qualities of the Believers. When they enter Paradise after coming out successful in this worldly test they will manifest the same high qualities of character that they had in this world. Instead of making urgent and immediate demands for beautiful articles of luxury, musical instruments, wine and women, they will sing hymns of praise to their Lord. This also belies that picture of the lift in Paradise that some crooked people have formed of it. The fact is that the noble personalities which the Believers build in this world and the high ways of thinking and the excellent moral characters they form in this world and the great and rigid training they give to their feelings, emotions and desires, will become all the more prominent in the pure surroundings and environments of Paradise. That is why they will love it most to sing hymns of praise to Allah and glorify His name just as they did in this world. Besides this, their greatest wish and desire in Paradise will be peace for one another, as it was in their collective life in this world.

15After the introductory verses (1-10), the Qur'an takes up admonition which is the main subject of the Surah. In order to understand this fully we should keep two things in view as its background:

First, a little before its revelation, the continuous horrible famine, which Had afflicted Makkah for seven long years and humbled the haughty Quraish, had come to an end. Naturally this had given a blow to idol-worship and acted as a stimulus to God-worship: for in their utter helplessness, they had to supplicate to Allah and cry meekly for help. So much so that Abu Sufyan had to approach the Holy Prophet with this request: "Please pray to Allah to remove this affliction from us. But when the famine was over, and rains began to fall, and prosperity returned, they began to show rebellion and do evil deeds and started their hostile activities against the believers. Thus the hearts that had fumed to Allah, again became neglectful of Him. (See XVI: 113, XXIII: 75-77, XLIV: 10-16).

Secondly, the Qur'an answered the question with which they confronted the Holy Prophet whenever he warned them of the consequences of rejecting the Truth. They would say, "You are always threatening us with Allah's wrath; why doesn't the Divine torment visit us and why is it being delayed?"

Keeping the above background in view, vv. 11-12 may be expanded like this: "Allah does not hasten in punishing and seizing the people for their sins as He hastens in showing kindness and compassion to them. Do they, then, want Him to hasten His torment for their rebellions, as He hastened to remove

famine in answer to their supplications? As this is not Our Way, We give them time to mend their evil ways in spite of their transgressions and rebellions. We send warning after warning and give them respite until their term comes to an end. Then the law of requital comes into force. In contrast to this, their way is the way of mean and narrow-minded people. When affliction comes, they remember Allah, begin to cry and call Him meekly, but forget it all during the time of prosperity. Such bad ways as these are leading them to Divine torment."

16The Arabic word (qarn) is commonly used for "the people living during the same period." But from the way the Qur'an has used this word on different occasions, it is evident that by "qarn " is, meant the community which had been invested with power and authority and appointed wholly or partially to the position of leadership of the world. One way in which such a community is destroyed is that it is totally exterminated but there are other forms of its destruction also

17Here the word (zulm) has not been used in its commonly known limited sense, but it covers all sorts of sins that are committed, when people transgress the boundaries of Allah's slavery. (Please refer to E.N. 49 of Al-Baqarah.)

18vv. 13-14 have been pointedly addressed to the Arabs so as to say, "O Prophet of Arabia, learn a lesson from the communities that have passed before you. They were given an opportunity for doing good deeds in their time but instead of this they adopted the attitude of transgression and rebellion and rejected the teachings of the Messengers who had been sent for their guidance. As they failed in Ow test, We dismissed them from leadership. Now, O people of Arabia, yow turn has come and you have replaced them and have got the opportunity for doing the same work under the guidance of Our Prophet Muhammad. You must understand that you are undergoing the same test in which your predecessors have failed. If you do not want to meet with the end they met, you should make the right use of this opportunity by learning a lesson from their end and by avoiding the errors, which became the ultimate cause of their destruction. "

19They implied two things when they said these words. First, they meant that what Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was presenting as Divine Revelation was really the product of his own mind but he was ascribing it to Allah merely to make his claim weighty. Secondly, they implied this: "If you want to be the leader of your people, present something that may make them prosperous in the world and give up the doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter and the moral restrictions you are prescribing in yow teaching. And if it be not possible, make some amendments in the Qur'an so that a compromise may be effected between you and us on the principle of give and take so that there should be some scope for ow shirk in yow Tauhid and for our self-worship and for our salvation in the Hereafter, irrespective of what we do in this world. You should also note it well that we cannot accept yow absolute morality: therefore you should make an allowance for ow prejudices, ow rites and customs, ow personal and national interests and ow lusts. We propose that with mutual agreement we should make a list of those religious demands which should be obligatory on us for the fulfillment of Allah's rights, and beyond that we should be free to

conduct ow worldly affairs in any way we like. This compromise is necessary because we cannot accept yow demand that human life in all its aspects should entirely be led in accordance with the implications of the doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter and the regulations of the Islamic Code of life. "

20This is the answer to the two about-mentioned demands: "I have no authority of making any alterations in this Book for I am not its author but Allah is the One Who is sending it down to me. Therefore there is no question of any compromise about it. If you want to accept its Way, you will have to accept it as it is; otherwise you are free to reject it. "

21This is a very strong argument against their accusation that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was himself the author of the Qur'an but was ascribing it to Allah, and in support of the Holy Prophet's claim that it was being sent down to him by Allah, Who was its Author. The argument is this: "You yourselves have witnessed the forty years of his life before his appointment to Prophethood. He was born in yow own city and passed his boyhood, youth and middle age before yow very eyes. He lived among you and had all kinds of relations-social, marital, economic, etc. with you. So much so that no aspect of his life was hidden from you. Did you notice anything in his whole life that might show that he could be the author of this Book? Do you not use your commonsense?"

The question posed in the Qur'an implied two things which were well known to everyone in Makkah about the Holy Prophet:

First, during the forty years of his life before Prophethood, he had neither received any education nor training nor sat in any company that should have enabled him to become the author of such a Book as was full of unique things that were unknown to the people around him. No one had ever heard from him anything about the problems that had been dealt with in different Surahs of the Qur'an. So much so that not even a relative or close friend of his had ever noticed anything in his talk or in anything about him that might have shown any signs of gradual development towards it, before he made his great claim to Prophethood when he reached the age of forty. This was a clear proof of the fact that the Qur'an was not the invention of his own brain and that it must have been sent down to him from outside. For it is impossible for a human being to produce anything like this, all of a sudden and without ever manifesting any signs of its evolution and development in his earlier life. That is why when some intelligent people of Makkah felt the absurdity of this accusation, they began to say that it was some other person who taught these things to him. But this was even more absurd than the first thing because they could not point out specifically a single person in the whole of Arabia, not to say of Makkah, who had the ability of producing such unique things as were contained in the Qur'an. They also knew that a person of his high caliber could not have remained obscure in some unknown corner for forty years.

The second thing, that had distinguished him during those forty years of his life, was his noble character both from the negative and from the positive aspects. He was never known to have told a single lie or practiced any kind of deceit, forgery, cunning, craftiness and the like in any way whatsoever, On the other

hand, all those people with whom he had come into contact in any capacity bore witness to the fact that he had been truthful, honest, and trustworthy without any blemish whatsoever. As an instance, a most well-known historical fact may be cited. Only five years before his Prophethood, the Ka`abah was damaged by rains. When they were re-building it, a quarrel arose among the different clans of the Quraish as to who should have the honor of setting Hajr-I-Aswad (the Black Stone) in its proper place. Therefore it was agreed that the one who would be the first to enter into the Haram next morning should arbitrate in the quarrel. Next morning the first person who entered the Haram was Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). At this all the people cried out with joy, "He is an absolutely trust- worthy man, and we are fully satisfied with him; he is Muhammad. " This is how Allah had made that large gathering of the Quraish bear witness to the fact that he was "The Trustworthy", before appointing him as His Messenger. Therefore there was no justification for anyone to accuse the man who had never told a lie nor ever practiced forgery nor craftiness in his whole life, of ascribing falsely to Allah his own literary creation, and claiming categorically and persistently that it was of ' Divine Origin.

That is why Allah has asked His Messenger to refute their absurd charge by saying, as it were, only this: "O my people, use your commonsense before making this absurd accusation, for I am not a stranger or a foreigner among you. I have lived a life-time of forty years among you before making a claim that I have received Revelation from Allah. How can you expect from my past that I would present the Qur'an to you as Allah's Book, without gaining knowledge from Him and without His Command?" (For further details sec Surah Al-Qasas, E.N. 109).

22That is, "If these Revelations are not from Allah and I myself compose them and present them as Revelations from Him, there can be no greater sinner than I. On the other hand, if these Revelations are truly from Allah and you are falsifying these, then there can be no greater sinner than you. "

23Some foolish people draw wrong and misleading conclusions from this verse, by a fallacious reasoning. They confine the meanings of (falah) to "long lift" or "worldly prosperity" or "worldly success" and argue like this: This verse declares categorically that "criminals can never attain success." The converse of this proposition, that is, "anyone who is successful cannot be a criminal" must also be true. Hence, if a claimant should live a long life after his claim to Prophethood or prosper in the world or his claim receives a good response in the world from the people, he should be acknowledged as a true prophet. For they argue, if he had been a false prophet he could not have "prospered," but would have been killed or starved to death or rendered unsuccessful in his mission, as soon as he had claimed to be a prophet. But even a little thinking will show that this "argument" is fallacious on the face of it. Firstly, the converse of every proposition is not always true. Secondly, the Qur'an does not use the word falah in this limited sense. Thirdly, Allah deals with the criminals according to His Divine Law of respite.

Now let us consider the matter in detail. The words "Indeed the criminals cannot attain success", have not been used, in the context they occur, to prescribe a criterion for judging a true Prophet from a false one, so that if a claimant is "successful", he should be accepted, and if he is not, he should be rejected. As a

matter of fact, these words have been put in the mouth of the Messenger to make a declaration like this: "I know it for certain that the criminals cannot attain (true) success: therefore I cannot commit the crime of making a false claim to Prophethood. But as regards you, I am absolutely sure that you cannot attain true success because you are guilty of falsifying me who is a true Prophet of Allah."

The other thing is that the word falah is not used in the limited sense of "worldly success", but it has been used to denote the permanent 'success' which never suffers any loss whatsoever irrespective of the fact whether the claimant gains or does not gain any worldly success in the initial stage. Nay, it is just possible that a false "claimant" who invites people to misguidance should attain great worldly "success" and his misguidance might also prosper. This is, however, not success in the terminology of the Qur'an, but this would be an utter failure. On the other hand, it is also possible that the inviter to the Truth should suffer untold afflictions or fall a prey to the persecutions of the transgressors, and leave this world without winning over anyone to the side of the Truth, but this will be, in the terminology of the Qur'an, true success and not a failure.

The other thing that refutes the fallacy of these foolish people is that they do not take into consideration the "Divine Law of Respite", according to which the mere fact that a false prophet enjoyed a long "prosperous" life is not a proof that he was a true prophet. The Qur'an has made it clear at many places that Allah does not expedite the matter of the punishment of the criminals, but gives them respite to mend their ways; nay, He also lets them loose in their deviation if they abuse that respite and become more corrupt. Sometimes He makes them even more "prosperous" so that they should fully manifest all the evils they had hidden in their hearts and incur full punishment which they really deserve for their evil deeds. The "Divine Law of Respite" takes its due course in the case of false prophets as it does in the case of other criminals. And there is no reason why they should be an exception to this. Satan, the greatest of all criminals, has been allowed to practice every kind of deception up to the Day of Judgment, and there is no mention of any exception to this effect that he will not be allowed to set up a false prophet.

As a last resort, such perverse interpreters of the Qur'an turn to vv. 44-47 of Surah Al-Haqqah: "If Muhammad had fabricated something himself and ascribed that to Us, We would have seized his hand and cut off his heart's vein." But these cannot serve their purpose, for what they imply is only this: "If the true Prophet appointed by Allah were to ascribe any false thing to Allah, he would be seized forthwith" . Therefore it is no more than a fallacy to argue from this to the erroneous conclusion that the impostor who is not seized is a true prophet, for this Divine principle applies only to a true Prophet and not to an impostor. In order to grasp this point, let us take the instance of the government servants. It is obvious that the rules and regulations which are prescribed for government servants apply only to those who are actually government servants and not to impostors. Those who pretend to be government servants are dealt with according to the criminal code like other criminals and villains and not according to the code of employment. Besides this, the context in which these verses occur clearly shows that these are not laying down any criterion of judging whether a claimant is a true Prophet or an impostor. For, in continuation of the preceding verse (43), the passage will, so to say, read like this: "This is the Revelation sent down

from the Lord of the universe. If Muhammad had himself fabricated this and ascribed that to Us, We would have....." Moreover, a true Prophet can easily be distinguished from an impostor by his high character, his noble mission and the unique Message he presents. Hence there was no need of setting up such an irrational and unnatural standard of distinguishing a true Prophet from an impostor. "

24This is a fine way of saying that no such intercessors exist as can plead their cases with Allah. For if "something" is not in the knowledge of Allah, it implies that it does not exist at all, for everything that exists anywhere in the heavens and the earth is in His knowledge.

25Please see E.N. 230 of Al-Baqarah and E.N. 24 of Al- An`am.

26The "decree" that. Allah has ordained is that "the Reality" shall be kept hidden from man's senses in order to test whether he recognizes this by using his common-sense, intelligence, conscience and intuition, and if he does not, he shall be allowed to tread the wrong ways he chooses. That is why their differences about the Reality are not being resolved by uncovering it today.

This thing has been stated here to remove a common misunderstanding about the diversity of religions in the world.

At that time, there was a confusion in the minds of the people (and is even today) concerning this. They said, "Different people profess different religions, and the followers of each religion claim that their religion alone is the true one. How may then a seeker after truth judge which one of these is the true religion?" The answer is: "In the beginning all mankind had one religion only, and that was the true religion. Then people strayed away from it and invented different religions of their own with different creeds and ways. Now if you desire that Allah Himself should uncover the Truth and present it to you to enable you to decide which religion is the true one, you should know that this will not be done in this life, because you arc required to decide this by using your commonsense and intelligence. This worldly lift is a trial to sec whether or not you yourselves recognize the Truth by using your common-sense and intelligence."

27That is, "Though they demanded a sign as a proof of the fact that he was a true Prophet and was presenting true Revelations, this was not based on a genuine desire for recognizing and accepting the Truth but was merely a pretext for rejecting it. For they had no intention of molding their habits, their morality, their social system, in short, reforming every aspect of their life in accordance with the implications of the acceptance of the Message of the Prophet. As they did not intend to believe in it, they would say, even after seeing a Sign, that no Sign had been shown to them. Obviously, they would not give up that "freedom" which they were enjoying in following their desires and lusts, by accepting the Unseen (the creeds of Tauhid and the Hereafter), which would bind them to the absolute moral principles."

28That is, "I have presented before you what Allah has sent down to me; but what He has not sent down to me, is "unseen" both for me and for you, and it is entirely with Allah to reveal or not to reveal it. Now if you will not believe unless Allah sends down what He has not sent down, you may wait for it: I, too, shall wait and sec whether your persistent demand is or is not satisfied".

29They practiced deceptions regarding "the Sign of the famine" that had been inflicted on them (vv. 11, 12). This verse alludes to the same, as if to say, "How dart you demand a Sign again, whereas recently the Sign of the famine has been shown to you ? At that time you invoked the help of your deities but in vain, though you had set them up as intercessors with Allah and believed that offerings to their shrines would prove very effective in removing the famine. But you yourselves learned by first hand experience that those so-called gods possessed no power at all. Therefore when you were convinced that all power belongs to Allah alone, you turned to Him and began to invoke His help. This experience ought to have convinced you of the Truth of the Message of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) for this was the very fundamental thing which he was teaching. Instead of learning a lesson from this Sign, you began to practice deceptions to explain it away, as soon as the famine was over and there had come the blessed rainfall. You invented many explanations (deceptions) concerning the causes of the famine and its subsequent end in order to 'escape' from the doctrine of Tauhid and stick to your shirk. The verse is meant to declare that no Sign would convince such people as those who had not benefited from the great Sign of the famine. Therefore there was no use of showing any sign to them.

30"Allah is more swift in His plans than you....." means this: "If you practice deceptions in order to explain away the Sign of the famine so that you might find excuses to evade the implications of its acceptance, in order to continue your rebellious attitudes, Allah is more swift in carrying out His plans to out-do your deceptive methods. He will leave you free to move in your wrong ways: He will even bestow upon you the worldly prosperity, which will so delude you that you will forget that you were being closely watched and will, therefore, commit evil deeds with apparent immunity and enjoy yourselves to your heart's content. But His angels will go on keeping a full and complete record of your deeds, which will be presented for your prosecution after your death."

31The fact that even the most obdurate mushriks and the most hardened atheists who forget Allah when things go well with them, begin to invoke Allah's help when they are pressed hard from all sides and despair of help froth any other quarter, is a clear evidence that there is the All-Powerful Allah Who is controlling each and every thing in the universe. (Please refer to E.N. 29, Al An 'am.)

31aThe parable is meant to warn those who are utterly neglectful of the Life-after-death because of their apparent "success" in this worldly life. They have been likened to the owners of the land who were happy to presume that the crop was ripe and luxuriant and it was within their power to reap it and enjoy the produce of their harvest. They were so sure of this that they began to enjoy the fore-taste of the ripened crops, unaware of the Decree of Allah which destroyed their crops and all their great expectations also.

Like-wise those who neglect to make preparations for the life-after-death will find to their sorrow that all they did to earn for the enjoyments of this world was, in relation to the Next World, like the ripe crop that was destroyed all of a sudden.

32That is, "Allah invites to the Way that leads to the Abode of Peace in the Hereafter."

"The Abode of Peace" here means Paradise, where there will be no fear whatsoever of any loss, calamity, sorrow, pain and trouble.

33That is, "Allah by His grace will give to those who did good deeds more than their due reward. "

34That is, "In contrast to the additional rewards to the good people, those who earned evil deeds, shall be punished only in proportion to their crimes." (For further explanation see E.N. 109a of XXVII).

35It shall be that kind of gloom that overspreads the faces of the criminals when they are caught, and they despair all hope of escape.

36Some commentators are of the opinion that the original words of the text mean this: "We will cut off every kind of connection and relation between them so that they are not able to show any concern for one another. " But these meanings are opposed to the Arabic usage, according to which they mean: "We will distinguish them from one another" or "We will cause a distinction among them." That is why these have been translated into English like this: "We will remove the state of strangeness from among them. " That is, the mushriks and their deities shall stand in front of each other and recognize their mutual and respective positions. The mushriks shall come to know the whole truth about those whom they worshiped and their deities will learn everything about their worshipers.

37That is, "Their deities-the angels, the jinns, the spirits, the forefathers, the prophets, the saints, the martyrs and all others-whom they had set up as partners with God and rendered those rights to them which belonged to God alone, will dissociate themselves from their worshipers and declare, "We did not know at all that you worshiped us, for no reverence, no respect, no honor, no admiration, no regard, no adoration, no homage, that you paid to us; no prayer, no supplication, no request, no offering, no gift, you presented to us; and no praise, no prostration, no bowing down, no remembrance, no religious service, or ceremony or ritual you made in our name ever reached us."

38That is, "As you yourselves admit that Allah alone is your real Providence, Owner and Master, He alone is your true Lord, and, therefore, entitled to your servitude and worship. How have you, then, made others as partners with Him?"

39It should be kept in mind that these questions have been posed to the common people: therefore they

are not being asked, "Whither are you turning away?" but "Whither are you being turned away?" The passive voice clearly shows that there must be some person (or persons) who was turning away the people from the right direction to the wrong one. That is Why this appeal is being made to the people: "Why are you blindly following those who are misguiding you? Why don't you use your own commonsense? When you yourselves admit the Truth about Allah, why don't you consider the fact that you are being turned away from Him?"

This question has been posed at many places in the Qur'an to bring home the Truth to the common people, but at every place the passive voice has been employed in order to keep back the names of the misguiding ones so that their followers should consider the matter coolly and objectively. This also contains a valuable piece of advice for those engaged in propagation work. By avoiding the names of the misguiding ones, the Qur'an has taken away a very strong weapon from the hands of those, who could otherwise incite the followers that their revered leaders were being made the target of ridicule and criticism.

40That is, "This Word of your Lord has come true that those who have made up their minds that they would not believe in any case would never believe because of their obduracy, even if the Truth were to be presented before them with very plain and clear arguments."

41It is to be noted that the answers to the questions posed in this and the following verse have been put in the mouth of the Holy Prophet in contrast to the answers posed in the preceding verses. This is because the mushriks themselves believed, and therefore could not deny, that Allah originated the creation and that their gods had no share in this. But they would not admit that He could or would bring it back, for they could not in that case reject the doctrine of the Life-after-death, though it was obvious that the One Who originated the creation could also bring it back again and not any one of those who had not originated it. That is why the answer has been put in the mouth of the Holy Prophet that he should declare it openly and boldly that Allah originated the creation and could and would bring it back again.

42This question has been posed to bring home to them the folly of the doctrine of shirk. The argument is this: "When Allah originates the creation and has the power to bring it back again, where do the gods you have set up come in ? If you think a little, you yourselves will realize that there is no room for any one in the universe for any claim or title to your reverence or worship or servitude."

43This is one of the series of questions that have been posed to refute the doctrine of shirk and to establish the doctrine of Tauhid. Besides, it is also meant to focus attention on the importance of the guidance to the Truth, which is one of the greatest human necessities. For it is obvious that the human needs and requirements are not confined to food, clothes and the like necessities of the physical life nor to its protection from losses, distresses, calamities etc. But one of man's needs (nay, his greatest need) is to have the knowledge of the right way of life so that he may, on the whole, achieve success in it. It is obvious that in order to be successful in life, man should have the correct knowledge of the use he should

make of and the way he should employ his own physical, mental and spiritual powers and capabilities and natural resources. He should also know the nature and the kind of behavior he should adopt towards other human beings (and as a whole, towards the system of the universe in which he has inevitably to live and work), with whom he comes into contact in different capacities. The Qur'an calls that right way "The Truth" and the guidance that leads to that way, "The Guidance to the Truth".

Now let us turn to the question that has been posed in this verso. The Qur'an asks the mushriks and all those people who reject the teachings of the Holy Prophet: Is there any of the partners and gods you have set up besides Allah, who guides you to the Truth or can do so? Obviously the answer to this will surely be in the negative for neither of the classes of gods is capable of this: First, let us consider this with regard to those gods and goddesses and living or dead human beings, who are worshiped as gods. Though it is true that people turn to them for the fulfillment of their needs or for their protection from calamities in some supernatural way, yet they never turn to them to seek guidance to the Truth nor have they themselves ever sent it nor do their devotees ever claim that their deities teach them the principles of morality, sociology, culture, economics, politics, law, justice and the like.

Then there is the case of those who make rules, regulations and laws which others accept and follow. It is true that such persons are accepted and followed as leaders, but the pertinent question is this: Are they the real guides to the Truth, or are they capable of becoming guides to it? Does any one of them possess the kind of knowledge that comprehends all those truths that are a prerequisite for formulating right principles for the guidance of human life ? Can anyone of them have full vision of the vast field of activities over which the human problems spread? Is there anyone of them who is absolutely free from the weaknesses, prejudices, personal or communal interests, which become hindrances to the formulation of just laws? If the answers to these questions are in the negative (and obviously no one in his senses can answer otherwise), how can then people with such limitations be expected to be the source of guidance to the Truth?

In the light of the above questions, we are able to grasp the signification of the question that has been posed in the Qur'an: "Is there any of the partners you have set up with Allah who can guide you to the Truth ?"

This shows conclusively that Allah alone has the power to satisfy all the human needs and requirements, which may be divided into two categories. First, man stands in need of a providence, a protector, a being to hear and grant his prayers, in short, a permanent support to which he may turn whenever other supports should fail him. The above question inevitably leads to the conclusion that there is no god other than Allah who can fulfill these needs. The other human needs and requirements demand that there should be a guide to lay down such principles for the conduct of human life in its entirety as should be obeyed with perfect confidence and peace of mind. The question posed in v. 35 implies that that "Being" can be none other than Allah. Therefore there remains no argument in support of the point that the principles of culture, morality, and politics should be based on shirk or secularism except that one should

persist in obduracy and obstinacy .

44It means that neither the authors of religion, nor philosophers, nor law-makers based their opinions on knowledge but on mere guesswork and conjecture. Likewise, those who followed these religious or worldly leaders did it on the mere assumption that their authors were great people; therefore they must be right. That was why their forefathers and the common people followed them.

45The arguments contained in v. 37 may be elaborated like this:

(1) The Qur'an confirms that which had been revealed before and presents the same fundamental principles and teachings which were taught by the Prophets who came before Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). Had he invented the Qur'an, he would have made additions to the truths of the former books in order to make himself conspicuous.

(2) The Qur'an explains in detail and amplifies the fundamental principles and teachings contained in "the Book", that is, the Scriptures brought by the former Prophets, and adds more evidence and explanations to it so that it may be better understood and practiced.

46There is a general misunderstanding that the challenge of the Qur'an to produce (a book, nay,) a Surah like this, is in regard to its eloquent, pure and unique literary excellence. This has been the natural result of the way in which discussions have been carried on to prove the miracle of the Qur'an. But the Qur'an is far above this that it should claim to be a unique and matchless book because of its excellent diction. There is no doubt at all that it is unique and matchless in this respect also, but the real basis of its claim and challenge, that no human brain is capable of producing a book like this, is its subject-matter and teachings. The Qur'an itself has stated at different places those aspects which are a sure proof of its revelation from Allah and the refutation of the false aspersions that it was a human invention. This has already been explained at appropriate places and will be explained in the succeeding pages. (For further explanation see E.N. 26, 27 of LII).

47They could declare the Qur'an as forged on two grounds only but neither of these existed: First, if they had had a proof that the Book had not been revealed by Allah, but had been forged by someone; secondly, that the Truths enunciated in it and the information given in it were false. But no one could say on the basis of true knowledge that the Book had been really forged and then ascribed to God: nor could anyone say that he had peeped behind the curtains of the "unseen" and discovered that there was not One God (as taught in this Book) but many gods in the heavens: nor could anyone assert on the basis of true knowledge that there wen no angels, no Revelations and no God, but these wen mere fictions that had been invented by some fertile imagination: nor had anyone witnessed by actually visiting the "Hereafter" that the information about rewards and punishments was utterly wrong. But in spite of the lack of any proof to the contrary; they were challenging the genuineness of the Qur'an with the boldness and

impudence of one who had made a thorough research into the matter and proved it to the hilt.

48Those who do not believe in the Qur'an have been called "mischief makers" because their rejection is not based on any sound reason but on prejudice and selfishness and because it prevents others from believing in it."And your Lord knows them very well" because there is nothing that is hidden from Him. They can deceive the people that they are rejecting the Qur'an because they are convinced that it is not the Book of God, but they cannot deceive Allah that they are doing this with good intentions for he knows that it is because of their mischief. They are obdurate and obstinate and arc suppressing the voice of their consciences and hearts: they deliberately shut their ears and minds against the Truth and prefer their worldly interests their fancies, their lusts and desires to it. That is why they cannot be regarded as "innocent" sinners, but they arc, in fact, the "mischief-makers."

49This is to say, "I don't want to enter into useless discussions and disputes with you on this score. If I am an impostor, I alone shall bear the consequences for it; and if you are rejecting the truth, you are not doing any harm to me but to yourselves alone."

50Though this and the succeeding verse have been addressed to the Holy Prophet, these are meant to reprove those people who were not paying attention to the Message. For they only heard the sounds of the words he spoke to them, just as the animals hear the sound of the words, but pay no attention to understand what is said to them. This was because they were prejudiced against him and had decided before-hand that they would not acknowledge anything, however, reasonable that may be, if it went against the creeds and ways they had inherited, and against their own desires, lusts, and interests. Likewise those people who live like animals hear the sounds of his words, but pay no attention to their meaning for they are not interested in anything other than "eating, drinking and making merry." They are so engaged in and intoxicated with the gratification of their lusts that they never bother to find out whether what they are doing is right or wrong. All such people are deaf to the Message, though they might have ears for other things.

51Here again they may be likened to animals which see with their eyes but cannot perceive anything beyond what appears on the surface. Likewise those people saw the Holy Prophet and his Companions, but did not perceive their pure life for they had not got the mind's eyes to see the wonderful change that was coming in the lives of those who had listened to and accepted the Message.

As has been pointed out in E.N. 50, though these verses were addressed to the Holy Prophet, they were really meant to reprove and admonish the disbelievers in a subtle manner so as to arouse their dormant faculties of hearing and seeing and open these for the reception and acceptance of the rational and sympathetic Message. In order to understand the wisdom of this indirect method of admonition, let us take the example of two righteous friends. One of them who lived among corrupt people did his very best to convey the righteous message both by precept and by practice. He set the model of the highest moral conduct and character before them, and urged them in a sincere and sympathetic manner to consider

their own moral condition, and admonished them in a very sincere and rational manner to make them realize that they were living in a very corrupt moral state, and advised them to adopt the right way of life. But none of them would pay any attention to his admonition nor learn any lesson from his pure life. Suppose his friend came there at that time and said: "Why are you giving advice to these deaf people and showing the way to these blind ones, who have no ears for good things and no eyes for the right way ?" It is obvious that these words would not have been uttered by way of dissuading the first friend from doing his reform work but for arousing the dormant faculties of the corrupt people by this subtle indirect method.

52"Allah does not in any way wrong the people" because He gives them ears to hear, eyes to see and hearts to feel and ponder, and everything that is required to enable them to discriminate between right and wrong, truth and falsehood. But it is "they who wrong themselves" by refusing to make the right and proper use of their faculties and by following their lusts and enjoying the things of this world. Naturally this has made their eyes so blind and their ears so deaf and their hearts so dead that they are incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong, good and bad, for their conscience has also become dead.

53That is, "When they will enter the Hereafter and contrast its eternal life with the transitory .life they lived in this world, they will realize that their past life was nothing in comparison with the eternal future life of the Hereafter. Then they will see clearly that it was a big folly to spoil the eternal life for the sake of transitory joys and paltry gains of the world."

54They were losers because they forgot that one Day they would have to present themselves before Allah and as a result of this disbelief committed evil deeds.

55Here the word (ummat) does not merely mean a nation or a community but includes all those people whom the Message of a Messenger reaches after his appointment, even though he be not alive among them. More than this: as long as his teachings remain intact and within the reach of everyone to ascertain what they really are, all such people will be treated and judged as his ummat and their cases decided with justice in accordance with v. 47. According to this standard, all the people of the world are the ummat of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), and will remain so, as long as the Qur'an continues to be published in its original and complete form as today. That is why it has not been . said, "There is a Messenger in every ummat" but "There is a Messenger for every ummat. "

56That is, when the Message of a Messenger reaches a people, they should know that henceforth they are on trial and that no excuse would be accepted that they were ignorant of it. Then judgment is passed on them with scrupulous justice. Those, who accept the Message and mend their way in accordance with it, are declared to be worthy of Allah's blessings, and those who reject it are doomed to a torment that may be inflicted both in this world and in the next World or only in the Hereafter.

57This is to say, "I never said that I will sit in judgment on you and inflict torment on those who do not believe in me. Therefore, I am not in a position to tell when the threat will be made good. As the threat has been held out by Allah, He will pass His judgment on you when He wills, and in whatever way He wills, for everything depends on His will."

58That is, "Allah passes His judgment on individuals and communities after the expiry of the term that He Himself has set and He alone knows how long it lasts for a community. He is not hasty in giving rewards or punishments. When He sends His Messenger to deliver His Message, He allows sufficient time to each individual and to each community to consider it and ponder over it and mend his (or its) way, during the appointed term. The period of the term may extend to centuries in the case of a community and He knows best how long it should be.

When that term, which is based on justice, expires, and that person or community does not repent of its rebellious conduct, then Allah passes His judgment. When the time of the judgment comes it is neither advanced nor delayed even by a single hour. "

59"They will be remorseful," when all of a sudden, they face the torment on the Day, which they had denied throughout their lives, and on that presumption had gone on doing wrong deeds. Not only this: they will also feel very sorry that they had denied the Messengers and brought baseless charges against them, who had warned them of it. Therefore when they witness it against all their expectations, they will find the ground slipping from under their feet and will feel utterly helpless and guilty in their minds because of the remembrance of their wrong doings and of the pricking of their conscience. In short, their condition will be that of a gambler, who turns a deaf ear to the counsel of his well-wishers and stakes his all on mere speculation and goes bankrupt. But such a person has to blame none but himself only for his sad plight.

60It has been purposely avoided to translate the Arabic word (rizq) into "provisions" for it is liable to create a very serious misunderstanding regarding the implications of this verse. For in this sense rizq will be confined to food and eatables only, whereas it is very comprehensive in its meaning and it covers everything that Allah has given to man-food, children, knowledge, law etc. etc. Instances can be cited from the Qur'an and the Traditions in support thereof. Thus it has become, obvious that according to this verse, in Allah's sight it is wrong and sinful to adopt the attitude of independence towards every kind of rizq, including articles of food.

Thus it has become clear that the consequences of this misunderstanding about the meaning of rizq are far-reaching. As a result of this limited meaning of rizq, it will be sinful only to make the unlawful articles of food lawful and vice versa but it will not be sinful if the people become their own law-makers in regard to the social, economic, political and international matters. It is because of this misunderstanding that even some scholars of the Islamic Law do not consider it sinful if people do not take guidance from the "Shari'at" in regard to matters other than those of food; whereas in this verse, Allah has taken to task all

those people, who arrogate to themselves the right of making lawful or unlawful not only the articles of food but anything that has been made lawful or unlawful by the "Shari'at."

61The question has been posed to impress how horrible and rebellious their crime is, as if to say, "How dare you make your own regulations contrary to those which Allah has given you, when, in fact, you yourselves are His creation? What do you think about the servant, who claims that he himself has the right to prescribe the limits concerning the things which his master has entrusted co his care, and therefore, there is no need of consulting him? How will you treat your own servant if he were to claim that he had every right to use and expend as he will all that belongs to you? Leave alone the case of that servant, who does not acknowledge at all that he has any master or that he is a servant and the things that are in his possession arc not his but belong to some one else; for the case under discussion does not concern such a villainous usurper. The question has been posed concerning that servant, who himself acknowledges that he is a servant of some master and that the things in his possession belong to the master and not to himself. Yet he claims that he has the right to make rules and regulations and set limits for himself regarding the use of those things, and that there is no need for him to consult his master.

62This question has been posed to corner the transgressors who arrogate to themselves the right to make rules and regulations in regard to the use they could make of the things of their Master. It is meant to impress on them that they have placed themselves in an awkward position by arrogating that right without any lawful authority. Their claim would have been valid, if the Master had Himself authorized them to make whatever laws they liked concerning the use of the things entrusted to the servants by Him. The pertinent question is whether they possessed any such authority from the Master, or were putting forward this claim without any delegation of such rights to them. If they had any such warrant they should show it: otherwise they would be guilty of two crimes-rebellion and forgery.

63It is a pity that most of the servants are not grateful to the Master for this great favor that He has given them full instructions about the way they should live in His `house' and the use they should make of His things and the conduct they should adopt, as if to say, "If you live in the world according to My instructions, you will win My approval and deserve the greatest rewards, but if you live as rebels, you would incur My wrath and merit a painful chastisement. " Nay, instead of showing gratitude for this favor, many of the servants seem to think like this: "The Master ought to have left us in the world without any guidance and secretly watched us to see which of us was living in rebellion against His Law, and then punished the criminals. " They do not seem to realize that if the Master had put them to this hard test none would have escaped punishment.

64These things have been mentioned here in order to comfort the Holy Prophet and give a warning to his enemies. These are meant to lessen his worry and to strengthen him, as if to say, "We see all that you are doing in propagating the Message of the Truth with great patience and fortitude, and exerting your utmost to reform mankind. Rest assured that We have not left you alone after entrusting you with this

arduous duty. We are not unaware of whatever you are doing for the performance of your mission, and also whatever your enemies are doing to oppose you. " On the other hand, a warning has also been administered to his opponents: "Don't remain under the delusion that no one is seeing what you are doing in opposing the Messenger of the Truth and the reformer of mankind? We are seeing whatever mischiefs you are doing and whatever obstacles you are placing in the way of the mission. We arc keeping a detailed and accurate record of all these things. Therefore beware that you shall be called upon to render an account of all your doings."

65This is a concise statement of a very important subject and requires a detailed explanation. The Qur'an declares in a few words that all religions other than the Revealed one are false because they have been founded on there philosophical research for the primary cause of the origin of the universe. The philosophical research is after all based on guess-work, and is in its very nature incapable of reaching the Truth. The right way of arriving at the Truth is to make a study of the signs (e.g. day and night) and of the Message of the Prophets in a dispassionate manner. For this is the only way of discovering the Truth: otherwise, if one follows wrong ways one shall always arrive at wrong conclusions. Let us now consider the several methods that different people have adopted in search of this knowledge:

The mushriks bast their search wholly and solely on superstition.

The hermits and ascetics pretend and claim that they acquire that knowledge by means of contemplation and meditation and see the reality by peeping into the hidden. But the fact is that they do not see the reality; it is only a trick of their own imagination. They form a mental image and then concentrate their mind on it and eventually it takes the shape of the "reality."

The so-called philosophers claim to base their researches on rationalism but it is really only surmise and guess-work, even though they may give "logical" arguments and "sound" reasons in its support.

Then there are the scientists: though they follow the scientific method of research in the physical world, they abandon it completely in regard to their investigation into metaphysics and start to follow conjectures, surmises, and guess-work.

Then these groups invariably suffer from prejudices and are not inclined to understand the point of view of those who differ with them, and, therefore, obstinately stick to their own theories.

In this passage (vv. 66-67) the Qur'an declares that this way of search after knowledge is basically wrong, as if to say, "The real cause of your deviation is that you base your search of Reality on mere surmise and guess-work, and then, because of your prejudices, refuse to listen even to reasonable things. The result is that you have not only failed to arrive at the truth but also to judge rightly the Revealed Religion, presented by the Messengers."

In contrast to the above ways of research, the Qur'an presents its own way and asserts that it alone is the correct, rational and scientific way of arriving at the Truth. It is this: "The prerequisite for research is that you should give up your preconceived prejudices and listen to the Message of those who claim that their information about the Reality is based on "Knowledge" and not on surmises, guess-works, meditations and contemplations, abstract deductions etc. Then consider deeply the Signs in the universe to which the Qur'an invites your attention. If these also point to the Reality they claim to reveal, amen there is no reason why you should deny the Truth taught by those Messengers." This is the basis of the philosophy of Islam. What a pity that even the Muslim philosophers have forsaken this way and followed in the footsteps of Plato and Aristotle!

The Qur'an has inculcated this method at many places and has over and again presented many a phenomenon as a proof of the Reality, and taught the people how to arrive at the right conclusion so as to perceive the Reality. Accordingly, in verse 67, the Sign of the night and the day has been presented for the deep consideration of the people. The change of day and night is a wonderful Sign and clearly points to the Universal Designer and the All-Powerful Ruler; for it takes place by the turning of the earth on its axis and in relation to the sun with mathematical precision. This change is due to the great wisdom of the Designer and has a great purpose behind it because of its innumerable benefits for all that exists on the earth. This points out also to the Providence of the Creator for it demonstrates conclusively that He has made perfect arrangements for the existence of His creation. Moreover, this also shows that the Universal Designer is One and also that He is not playful but Wise and purposeful. This change points also towards the great Reality that He, being the Benefactor and Lord, is worthy of worship and none else. This is because every other being is provided with its requirements by this change of day and night and none provides others; therefore none of them can be the Lord and the Master. In the light of these Signs, how can, any other religion, based on mere surmise and guess-work, be considered to be true when it is compared with the Revealed Religion which is based on such clear Signs as these?

66In the preceding passage people were taken to task for founding false religions on mere surmise and guess-work. In this passage the Christians and others, who believe that God has begotten a son, have been taken to task for this blasphemy which has no authority other than mere presumption.

67The Arabic phrase (subhan-Allah) is used to express astonishment at something apparently inexplicable. But its literal meaning is, "Allah is All-Pure, and is absolutely free from any defect, blemish and flaw". Here it implies both these things. It expresses astonishment at their blasphemy that Allah has taken a son to Himself, and also refutes it, saying, "Allah, being perfect in every way, does not stand in need of a son. "

68Three things have been put forward to refute their blasphemy: (1) Allah is pure and without any defect, (2) Allah is Self-sufficient in every way, and (3) Allah is the Owner of everything in the heavens and the earth. Let us now briefly explain how these three things refute that blasphemy.

It is obvious that a son is either sprung from the loins or is adopted. In the first case, such a conception of Allah amounts to this: He is mortal like every other being: therefore He stands in need of a spouse in order to propagate His offspring like other beings. In the second case, it shall have. to be presumed that Allah stands in need of a son to inherit His Kingdom in order to make up, to some extent, for the deficiency that is caused by His childlessness. Or that Allah also cherished paternal love like human beings, and therefore, adopted as son one of the millions of His slaves.

Whatever be the case, it is obvious that the blasphemy shall have to be based on such a creed which presumes that Allah suffers from many defects, many weaknesses, many shortcomings and many wants. The Qur'an refutes all such blasphemous creeds, saying, "He is All-Pure" and therefore, is free from all such defects; and by "He is Self-sufficient", the Qur'an asserts that He does not suffer from any of those weaknesses and wants which impel the mortals to have children. Lastly, it says clearly that all the beings in the heavens and the earth belong to Him and that He has no particular relation with anyone of them so as to make such a one His "son" or "only son" or heir apparent. Though it is true that Allah loves some of His slaves more than the others because of their excellences, it does not in any way mean that He raises such a one from the rank of a slave to that of a partner in His Godhead. For, the highest rank He bestows on them is that they are Allah's friends, "....who believe and fear Allah, (and therefore they) shall have no occasion for fear and sorrow. There is nothing but good news for them in this world and in the Hereafter. " (vv. 62-63).

69The story of Prophet Noah has been related here to serve as a warning to those who were rejecting the Message of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). Up to this place, arguments had been presented before them to show the errors of their creeds, thoughts and ways, and impressive appeals had been made to them to adopt the Right Way. But from here onward they are being warned of the consequences of the attitude they had adopted towards their Messenger and admonished indirectly to learn a lesson from the fate of Prophet Noah's people, who had behaved towards their Prophet like the Quraish, the addressees. The Holy Prophet had been pointing out to them in a very befitting manner their errors and deviations, and was trying to correct them. Hut instead of considering and re-considering these things, they had become his mortal enemies, though he had no self-interest in his Mission and was extending the Message for their good, but they responded to his arguments with rudeness, abuses and stones. So much so that his very person had become intolerable and unbearable for them. This was because of their prejudices against the Right Way, which had so blinded them that they could not tolerate even the presence of the one who was following the Right Way. At this Allah commanded His Messenger to recite to them the story of Prophet Noah so that they might get in it the answer to their misbehavior towards him.

70This was a challenge that amounted to this: "I am not going to give up my Mission at all, whatever you may do against me, for I have my full trust in Allah. " (For contrast please See I. 55 of Hud).

71The transgressors whose hearts are sealed are those obstinate and obdurate people who are so

hardened against persuasion that they firmly and perversely adhere to the opinion they have once formed erroneously. As they themselves refuse to listen to counsel and admonition, Allah's curse falls on them and they are deprived of the ability of ever coming to the Right Way.

72Explanatory Notes (84-111) concerning the story of Prophet Moses and Pharaoh, already added to Chapter VII, should be kept in view, as the things explained therein will not be repeated here.

73"They showed arrogance" because of their wealth, power, pomp and show, and considered themselves above subjection to the Message. Therefore they showed haughtiness instead of surrender and obedience to it.

74The story of Prophet Moses and Pharaoh is being related also to serve as an object-lesson for the Quraish, who were behaving towards Prophet Muhammad in the same way as Pharaoh and his people had behaved towards Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon them); for the response to the Message by the Quraish was similar to that of Pharaoh's people. (Please refer to v. 2 of this Surah.)

In this connection, it will also be worthwhile to note that the Mission of Prophets Moses and Aaron was not merely to liberate the Israelites from the slavery of Pharaoh, as some people have opined. If we keep in view the context in which the story occurs here, it will be quite clear that they, too, were appointed to pursue the same Mission that was entrusted to all the Prophets from Noah to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon them all). The theme of this Surah from its very beginning has been this: "Acknowledge Allah alone as your Lord and Deity for He is the Lord of the whole universe. Relieve in the life-after-death in which you shall have to present yourselves before Allah and render the account of all you did in this world. " Then the Surah makes it clear to those who rejected the Message that history bears witness to this that the true success of humanity has always followed the acceptance of this Message. Therefore it admonished them: "You should also accept the Message which has always been put forward by all the Messengers, and establish your life in its entirety on these Articles of Faith. For those who rejected the Message were destroyed in the end. "

Thus it has become quite clear from the context in which their story occurs, that the main object of the Mission of Prophets Moses and Aaron was the same as that of all the other Prophets. It is true that one of their objects was also to liberate the Israelites (a Muslim Community) from the domination of a kafir community, if it persisted in its unbelief. But this had a secondary place in their Mission, and was not its main object. The real object has been stated explicitly in LXXIX, vv. 17-19, wherein his Lord said to Moses: "Go to Pharaoh for he has transgressed the bounds of subjection and say to him, "Are you prepared to reform yourselves and fear your Lord, if I guide you towards Him' ?"

The part played by the two Prophets in liberating the Israelites from Pharaoh's slavery became prominent in history because he and his' nobles rejected the Message and the Prophets had to rescue their people from their slavery. Accordingly, the Qur'an gave it the same prominence as in history. But if one does not

commit the error of isolating the details of the Qur'an from its fundamental principles but studies them in the light of these principles, one cannot fall a prey to the misunderstanding that the mere liberation of a community could be the main object of the mission of a Prophet and the propagation of the Message its secondary object only. (For further explanation sec XX: 44-52, XLIII: 46-56, LXXIII : 15-16).

75".....The sorcerers can never attain true success" is meaningful for this is the answer to their charge: "This is a clear sorcery." It means this. "You have called the Signs of Moses a "sorcery" on account of its apparent likeness to it. You have not considered the clear and marked distinctions between the characteristics of the Prophets and sorcerers. Otherwise you would never have dared to make such an absurd charge. Have you ever seen a sorcerer go before a tyrant and talk boldly and fearlessly to him as Moses did, and admonish him for his deviation and invite him to adopt the way of purity and God-worship? You know that a sorcerer behaves quite differently. He starts with the flattery of the courtiers so that they may obtain for him the permission to show his tricks. After this he goes to the presence of "His Majesty" and makes obsequious bows and very humbly requests him to see his tricks. Then he prays for his long life and prosperity and begs for his reward. Now, you can judge for yourselves whether the Prophet is a sorcerer or a far greater and far higher personality than even kings and the like."

76It is obvious that if this demand had been merely for the liberation of the Israelites, there could have been no question of any threat to Pharaoh's kingdom. The threat was because of the Message which demanded subordination to the Truth, for it threatened the system which was based on shirk and on which depended the domination of Pharaoh and his chiefs and priests. (For further explanation see E.N. 66 of VII and E.N. 43 of XL.)

77That is, "What I showed was not sorcery but sorcery is that which you are showing."

78Though literally (Zur-riyyah) means offspring, it has been translated into youths because the Qur'an has used this word here to point out a specific aspect of the matter. It is this: during that fearful period of persecution only a few young men and women showed the moral courage of acknowledging the Messenger of the Truth as their leader and becoming his standard bearers. On the contrary, their fathers, mothers and elders had not the courage to follow him and endanger their worldly interests and even their lives. They not only followed the way of ease and expediency, but also discouraged their youth, saying, "Don't go near Moses: for you will thus invite trouble both for yourselves and your elders."

The Qur'an has mentioned this particular aspect of the matter because the same was the case of the response to the Mission of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). In its initial stage, those who came forward were not the elders and the old people but some courageous youth. These first Muslims who were boldly facing persecution and enduring hardships for the sake of Islam were the young people. For instance, `Ali-ibn-Abi Talib, Ja`afar Tayyar, Zubair, Talhah, Sa`ad bin Abi Waqqas, Mus`ab bin `Umair, `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, etc., were under twenty years when they embraced Islam. `Abdur-

Rahman bin `Auf, Bilal, Suhail were under thirty years, and Abu `Ubaidah-bin-al-Jarrah, Zaid bin Harithah, `Uthman bin `Affan and `Umar Faruq were under thirty-five years. Abu Bakr was no more than 38 when he embraced Islam. Among the early Muslims, there is only one instance of a Companion, `Ammar bin Yasir, who was of the same age as the Holy Prophet and another of `Ubaidah bin Harith Muttalabi, who was older than the Holy Prophet.

79Some people have misinterpreted the Arabic words say that. all the people of Israel were unbelievers and at first only a few of them believed in the Message. But when (iman) is followed by the letter (lam), it generally means obeying and following. Thus the original words of the text will mean (as translated) "----a few youth from his own people obeyed and followed Moses," that is, "Only a few young people from the whole tribe of the Israelites had the courage to accept and acknowledge Prophet Moses as their leader and guide and stand by him in his struggle with Pharaoh and his chiefs." The words that follow make it quite clear that the Israelites refrained from this not because they did not believe in Prophet Moses or his Message but because they (specially their elders) were afraid of exposing themselves to the persecution of Pharaoh. This state of fear was the result of their moral degeneration. Though all of them racially and religiously belonged to the community of Prophets Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph and, therefore, were Muslims, yet slavery of centuries had so much degraded them that they had lost that spirit of Islam which impels one to become the standard-bearer of Islam against the domination of unbelief and deviation, or imbues one with the courage to stand by the one who had raised that banner.

The Bible has described their degraded condition at the time of the conflict with Pharaoh in Exodus 5: 20-21: "And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: And they said unto them, the Lord look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savior to be abhorred n the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us. " The Talmud (Selections by H. Polano, page 152) confirms the same

"Yea" said the overburdened children of Israel to Moses and Aaron, "We are like a lamb which the wolf has carried from its flock, the shepherd strives to take it from him, but between the two the lamb is pulled to pieces; between ye and Pharaoh will we all be killed. "

The Qur'an also refers to this in VII: 129:

"His people answered, `We were oppressed before you came and now again we are being oppressed after you have come. "

80The Arabic word (musrifin) literally means "transgressors" . As this could not express the true spirit, it has been translated into "....those who are not bound by any limits". They are the people who do not hesitate to employ even the most wicked methods to achieve their object: who practice without any pangs of conscience cruelty, immorality, barbarism etc., if these serve their purpose, and who cross all limits in pursuit of their desires. In short, they are such people as know no limits to stop at."

81The fact that Prophet Moses in his address called his people "Muslims" shows that all the people of the community of Israel were Muslims; otherwise he could not say to them, "-if you arc Muslims" . He meant to urge them to be brave, saying, "If you are true Muslims, as you profess to be, do not fear the might of Pharaoh but put your trust in the might of Allah."

82Those, who responded to the appeal of Prophet Moses, were those "youth" who obeyed and followed him, and not the Israelites, as a community, as is obvious from the context.

83The prayer, "Our Lord, do not make us a cause of trial for the unjust people," is very comprehensive in meaning. Whenever the standard-bearers of the Truth rise up to establish virtue and eradicate the prevalent evil, they come into conflict with unjust people, who, for one reason or the other, are always on the look-out to find fault with them. First, there are the champions of falsehood, who try their level best to crush down with full force the champions of the Truth. Then there are the so-called champions of the Truth who profess to believe in it but are not prepared to enter into conflict with the powerful government of the time. Therefore they declare it to be a useless and foolish effort, and begin to invent excuses to justify the wrong stand they take in regard to the struggle with falsehood in order to silence the prick of conscience they feel for their criminal attitude of cowardice. Accordingly, they try to prove that it is these standard-bearers of the Truth who are in the wrong and not they. Lastly, there are the common people, who watch the conflict as by-standers and join forces with those who prove to be more powerful of the two, whether they are the supporters of the Truth or of falsehood.

Now let us consider how the champions of the Truth are liable to become a cause of trial for these unjust people. If they are crushed down or defeated, the first group declares, "We were in the right and not these foolish people: otherwise they could not have been defeated. " The second group says, "Their defeat has proved that they did not make the correct estimate of the circumstances and caused the destruction of valuable lives by coming in conflict with the mighty powers. Moreover, the Shari`at has not made it obligatory on unto expose ourselves to risk, when we are fulfilling the most essential religious duties without any restrictions from the tyrants of the day." As regards the common people, their criterion of judging the Truth is this: "Whatever triumphs is truth. Therefore their defeat has proved that the champions of the Truth must be in the wrong. " Likewise every mistake and error the champions of the Truth commit, every weakness they show in the face of overwhelming odds against them, every moral fault to which anyone of them succumbs, becomes a good excuse for those who intend to stick to falsehood. Consequently, the "invitation" to the Truth becomes dormant for years after their "defeat".

Thus it has become quite clear that this prayer of the companions of Prophet Moses was well-timed and meaningful: "Our Lord, have mercy upon us so that we might not become a cause of trial for the unjust people: protect us from errors, defects and, weaknesses and make our efforts successful in this world so that we may become a source of goodness to Thy creatures and not a source of evil for the unjust people."

84There is a difference of opinion among the Commentators in regard to the meaning of this verse. As for me, I have considered deeply its wording and the circumstances under which this was sent down, and have come to the conclusion that Prophet Moses was commanded to build or acquire some houses for the establishment of Salat in congregation This was necessitated because the system of Salat in congregation had been abandoned by the Israelites and the Egyptian Muslims as a result of their persecution by the government, and owing to the weakness of their faith. As this had brought about their disintegration and killed their religious spirit, it was essential to re-establish the system of Salat in congregation, which is indeed the first and foremost thing for the revival of that spirit and the integration of a scattered Muslim community and its powers.

As regards " .... appoint your houses as qiblah", I am of the opinion that it means:".... set apart these houses as common places of worship for offering Salat in congregation and the central places for holding their meetings. That is why it is followed by 'and establish Salat'," which means that they should offer their Salat collectively in congregation instead of individually.

85The Arabic word (bashshir) means: "Fill them with hope and courage by giving them the good news of success by the grace of Allah. " And they needed that very badly at that time, for they were full of despair, fear and depression.

86This prayer was offered by Prophet Moses during the last period of his stay in Egypt. There was a long interval between this and the events mentioned in the preceding verse which happened during the early days of his Mission. The details of this intervening period are available at other places in the Qur'an.

87The Arabic word (zinat) includes the magnificence, grandeur, glory and the apparent brilliance of their culture and civilization which attracted other people towards them with the desire of imitating them.

88"Possessions": resources and means which help the people like Pharaoh to put into practice all their devices and plans, and the lack of which prevents the standard-bearers of the Truth from carrying out their plans.

89As it has already been stated, Prophet Moses made this prayer during the last period of his stay in Egypt. When he had shown many Signs, one after the other, to Pharaoh and his chiefs and pointed out the Way clearly to them, but they had persisted obdurately in their antagonism to the Truth, the, Prophet begged his Lord to destroy their possessions and harden their hearts. And this was in accordance with the decree of Allah. As they had merited this punishment according to the Divine Law of retribution, Allah decreed that they should not get the light of Faith, which they themselves had extinguished with their persistent disbelief.

90In this verse, Allah has urged Prophet Moses and his followers to guard against a common misunderstanding that is likely to arise in such cases. It so happens that those people who have no knowledge of the reality and who do not understand the wisdom of Allah's ways are liable to believe from the apparent success of His rebels that perhaps it is His will that they should dominate in the world. When they witness the failures of the upholders of the Truth in their conflict with falsehood in contrast to the splendor and vast possessions of the champions of falsehood, they begin to think that Allah does not will to help the Truth in its conflict with falsehood. Therefore some foolish people further conclude from these wrong suppositions that it is useless to exert for the establishment of the Truth. Then they consider it to be the best and most proper thing to rest content with the little religiosity that the sovereignty of falsehood and unbelief allows them. That is why Allah has urged Prophet Moses and his followers to guard against such a misunderstanding and to carry on the Mission entrusted to them with patience under the adverse circumstances.

91The Bible does not mention this happening but the Talmud says explicitly that when he was drowning he said, "Who is like Thee, O Lord, among the gods?"

92Even today the place, where the dead body of Pharaoh was found floating, is pointed out by the inhabitants of that region. It lies on the western coast of the Sinai Peninsula and is now known by the name of Jabl-i-Fir`aun (Pharaoh's Mount). There is also near it a hot spring called Hammam-i-Fir`aun (Pharaoh's Bath), which is situated at a distance of a few miles from Abu Zenimah, where, they say, Pharaoh's dead body was found lying.

If the Pharaoh who was drowned was Mineptah, who ruled over Egypt when Prophet Moses was sent to him, his embalmed dead body is still lying in the Cairo Museum. When Sir Grafton E. Smith removed the bandages from his mummy, a layer of salt was found on the body, which was a clear proof that he was drowned in the sea.

93That is, "We show Signs to the people over and over again so that these should serve as warnings and be the means of teaching them lessons, but it is a pity that they do not learn lessons even from such Signs as the dead body of Pharaoh."

94That is, "in Palestine after their exodus from Egypt"

95This refers to the dissensions the Israelites had caused in the Divine Way and the new religions they had invented. This verse accuses them of falling into variances, even though they possessed the Divine Knowledge, which had provided them with the criterion of judging between the Right Way and the wrong ways. They did this because of mischiefs of their hearts in spite of the fact that the Right Way had been made clear to them, and its fundamental principles had been imparted to them and instructions had been given about its implications and demands and its boundaries had been distinctly demarcated from those

of the ways of unbelief. Besides, they had been admonished to follow the path of obedience and guard against the paths of disobedience, and establish their lives entirely in accordance with the rules and regulations based on that Knowledge, for they shall have to render an account of all they did in this life. But in spite of all the instructions that were given to them, they divided one original Religion into many divergent sects and built different ways on foundations other than those laid down by Allah.

96Though these words were addressed to the Holy Prophet, they were meant for those who expressed doubts about his Message. As regards the reference to the people of the Book, it is because they possessed the Knowledge of the Scriptures, whereas the common people of Arabia lacked this, and were, therefore, strangers to the voice of the Quran. It was also expected that their just and pious scholars would testify that its Message was the same as that of the Scriptures of the former Prophets.

97Allah's decree that had become applicable to them was this: Allah does not thrust the Faith on those who do not seek after the Truth: who obstinately and obdurately shut their hearts against it with prejudice: who are so lost in the love of this world that they do not care at all about the Hereafter.

98Though Prophet Jonah (860-784 B.C.) was an Israelite Prophet, he was sent to 'Iraq for the guidance of the Assyrians, who have been called the people of Jonah for this reason. At that time, Nineveh, a very ancient and famous city, was their capital. Its vast remains are scattered on the left bank of the Tigris, opposite to the city of Mosul, and one of the mounds bears the name of 'Prophet Jonah' . In order to form an estimate of the glory of these people, suffice it to say that the circumference of their capital Nineveh was 60 miles or so.

99As regards the question why the threatened torment was warded off from the people of Jonah as an exception to the Divine principle, "After the decision of the torment, the profession of faith by any community does not benefit it," the Qur'an does not give any details of this, but merely refers to the story at three places. (See XXI: 87, 88; XXXII: 139-148; LXVIII: 48-50). Though the story contained in the Book of Jonah gives some details, these cannot be depended upon because it was neither composed by Prophet Jonah nor it is a Revealed Book but was written by some unknown person and then inserted in the Bible. Besides this, it contains some apparently absurd things which cannot be accepted as true. Nevertheless if we consider this deeply in the light of the allusions made in the Qur'an and details in the Book of Jonah, the explanation given by various commentators of the Qur'an seems to be correct.- Prophet Jonah left the place of his Mission without Divine permission after warning the people of the torment. Therefore Allah forgave the Assyrians, when they repented after seeing some Signs of the coming torment. This was in accordance with the Divine principles as stated in the Qur'an. For, according to one of these, Allah does not inflict any torment on any people, till He has the Message fully demonstrated to them. As the Prophet did not continue his admonition in accordance with the appointed term and left the place of his Mission of his own accord, Allah's justice did not inflict the chastisement because the legal argument against his people had not been fulfilled. (For further explanation see E.N. 85 of XXXVI).

100When the Assyrians believed in the Message, they were given a new lease of life. But after some time, they adopted the wrong ways of thought and deed. Prophet Nahum (720-698 B.C.) warned and admonished them but without any effect. Then Prophet Zephaniah (640-609 B.C.) gave them the last warning that "he .... will destroy Assyria and will make Nineveh a desolation" but it also proved in vain. At last in about 612 B.C., Allah made the Medes dominant over them.

The Median king, with the help of the Babylonians, invaded Assyria, and their army was defeated and was besieged within the walls of Nineveh. They put up a stiff resistance for some time but then the floods in the Tigris swept away the city wall and the invaders swarmed into the city and burnt it to ashes along with the surrounding countryside. The Assyrian king set fire to his palace and was himself burnt to death. Thus the Assyrian Empire and its culture came to an end for ever. The recent archaeological excavations reveal widespread effects of the fire.

101This refers to the freedom that Allah has granted to mankind to believe or not to believe in Him. Otherwise He could have very easily created all the people as born believers and obedient servants and there would have been no disbelief and disobedience at all on the earth. Or He could have very easily inspired them to turn towards belief and obedience. But these methods would have defeated the wisdom that underlies the creation of mankind.

102This does not at all mean that the Holy Prophet desired to force people to become believers, and that Allah was forbidding him to do this. In fact, the Qur'an has here adopted the same method of admonishing the people that it has adopted at many other places, that is, though the words have apparently been addressed to the person of the Holy Prophet, in fact, these have been addressed to the people. The implication is this: "O people! Our Messenger has made the distinction between the Guidance and deviation quite clear and plain by argument and pleading. Now, therefore, it is for you to believe or not to believe in the Guidance. If you accept that some one should force you to adopt the Right Way, you should know that this `duty' has not been assigned to Our Prophet. Had Allah willed this, He could have done it Himself: then there would have been no need of sending any Prophet to you."

103This is to emphasize the principle that the bestowal of all these blessings is in the power of Allah alone: therefore none can acquire or bestow on anyone any blessing without the permission of Allah. As faith and guidance also are blessings, they, too, can be acquired only with Allah's permission; and no one can acquire these without His permission nor bestow these on anyone else even though one should desire to do so. That is why, even if the Prophet had sincerely desired to make people believers forcibly, he could not have done this, for this could be done only with Allah's permission and help.

104This points out clearly that the above principle is not applied blindly and irrationally so as to bestow the blessing of faith on or withhold it from anyone without any rhyme or reason, but it works according to

a system which is based on wisdom. Allah bestows this on anyone who uses his common sense properly in starch of the Truth, for Allah provides for such a one the means of attaining it in proportion to the sincerity of his intention and the extent of his exertion and grants him its correct knowledge required for faith. But He throws the filth of ignorance, deviation, wrong thinking and wrong doing on the one who is not a seeker after the Truth and does not seek the Truth and does not use his common-sense properly because of his prejudices, or does not use it at all in search of the Truth. And this is what such people deserve.

105This is the answer to the condition that they would believe him to be a true Prophet, if a Sign would be shown to them. The Holy Prophet has been asked to say to them, "There are countless Signs in the heaven and the earth, which confirm and testify the Message I am giving you. You could have easily recognized them, had you observed and considered them with open eyes and open hearts. But if you lack this urge and desire for the Truth, you will not accept and acknowledge it, however wonderful, miraculous and supernatural the sign may be, for you will declare that it was a piece of sorcery like Pharaoh and his chiefs. The fact is that the people, who suffer from this malady, see the Truth only when the torment with all its horrors overtakes them, just as Pharaoh came to believe only when he was drowning. But you should note it well that the repentance at the time of punishment is of no avail.

106In this concluding portion, the same thing that was stated at the beginning of the discourse, has been reiterated. Therefore it will be worthwhile to keep in view the introductory passage (vv. 1-10).

107The Arabic word literally means "gives you death", but it has been purposely translated into "who has power to cause your death" in order to convey its real spirit in the content it occurs. It implies this: "I worship only that One, who has full power over your life: He has complete authority and power to let you live as long as He wills and cause you to die at any moment He wills. That is why I am fully convinced that I should submit and surrender, worship, serve and obey Him alone."

Now let us consider why of all His characteristics, this quality of Allah was specifically cited here. This was to bring home to the mushriks of Makkah that the doctrine of shirk was absolutely false. For they also believed (and all the mushriks have always believed) that death is entirely in the hands of Allah, the Lord of the universe, and none else has any power over it; so much so that they confessed that even those beings, whom they believed to be partners with God in other qualities and powers of, His, could not avert death even from themselves. Thus the mention of this quality of Allah along with the statement of the Doctrine of Tauhid has been made to serve as a proof of that creed. That is, "I serve Him only for He alone has the full power over life and death. Why should, then, I serve others who have no power at all over their own lives and deaths, not to mention the lives and deaths of others?" The eloquence and force of the statement has been enhanced manifold by saying, ".....Who gives you life and death" instead of ".....Who gives me life and death". For this contains the statement of the Doctrine, its proof and invitation to it, all the three combined in one concise sentence. Had it been said, "...I serve that one Who gives me death," then it would have implied, "I alone should serve Him". But by saying. ".....Who gives you death"

the implication is: "It is not only I, who should serve Him, but you also should serve Him. For it is absolutely wrong to serve any other than Allah, Who alone has such powers."

108The force of the Arabic words of the text "Dedicate yourself sincerely, exclusively and steadfastly to this Faith", is worth deep consideration. The purpose might have been served by the use of such words as "Adopt this Faith" or "Follow this Faith". But Allah considered such expressions as weak and incapable of serving the real purpose, which is implied in the wording of the Text. For the literal meaning is "Set your face steadfastly", which implies, "You should steadfastly turn your face in one direction only, without turning it even slightly to right or left, or backward, and go on marching in the same direction." Though these words were in themselves quite sufficient, the addition of the word made it all the more forceful. For (Hanif) is one who turns away from all others and exclusively turns to one direction. Thus what Allah demands is this: "Adopt this Faith, this Way of the worship of Allah and this way of life in such a manner that your worship, subjection, submission, servitude and obedience should be dedicated exclusively to Allah, the Lord of the universe, so that you do not deviate in the least after adopting this Way, you should have nothing to do with those ways that you have discarded and that you should not even have a look at the crooked paths that erroneous people follow."

109This negative way of forbidding shirk has been purposely adopted. It implies this: "You should not at all be one of those, who set up in any way whatsoever other gods as partners with Allah in His essence, His attributes, His rights and His powers, whether that god be one's own self or another man or a group of men or some spirit or Jinn or angel or some material or imaginary being." The demand of Tauhid has been made both in the positive form, "Dedicate.... Faith", and in the negative form, "and be not....other gods with Allah. " Thus it forbids shirk both in creed and in deed, in individual and in collective life, in places of worship and in education, in courts and in legislative assemblies in political and in economic activities. Therefore it demands from the worshiper of Tauhid to adopt a different way in every aspect of life from the way of those who adulterate God-worship with ungodly worships, for the former can never be a fellow traveler with those who practice shirk. As such things can never be expected from him, it can never be imagined that he would follow them.

Thus it is clear that it cuts at the very root of shirk, both (Jali) open and (khafi) hidden. As a matter of fact, shirk in its latter form is even more dangerous and should therefore be avoided most scrupulously. This warning is necessary, as some foolish people consider it to be almost harmless just because it is hidden. The fact is that open shirk is like an avowed enemy who makes an attack in the open and hidden shirk is like an enemy in the guise of a friend. Or the former is like a disease of which the symptoms arc quite apparent and the latter like the hidden disease that gradually undermines one's health. Thus it is obvious that when the 'open' shirk comes into conflict with the Faith of Tauhid, it may be cured. But the one who suffers from the `hidden' shirk does not realize the threat posed by it and slowly and gradually succumbs to it, while the victim remains quite unaware that his Faith is being devoured by the deadly secret enemy.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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11. Surah Hud

Name

This Surah has been named after Prophet Hud whose story has been related in vv. 50-60.

Period of Revelation

If we consider its theme deeply, we come to the conclusion that it was revealed during the same period as Surah Yunus and most probably followed it immediately.

Subject

The Surah deals with the same subject as Surah Yunus, that is, invitation to the Message, admonition and warning, with this difference that the warning is sterner. This is also supported by a Tradition:

It is related that after its revelation, once Hadrat Abu Bakr said to the Holy Prophet, "Of late I have been noticing that you are growing older and older. What is the cause of it?" The Holy Prophet replied, "Surah Hud and the like Surahs have made me old." This shows that it was a very hard time for the Holy Prophet and these stern warnings added greatly to his anxieties that were caused by the persecution from the Quraish, who were doing their worst to crush down the Message of Islam. For it was obvious to the Holy Prophet that the last limit of the respite given by Allah was approaching nearer and nearer and he was afraid lest the term of the respite should expire and his people be seized by the torment.

The invitation is this: Obey the Messenger of Allah; discard *shirk*, and worship Allah and Allah alone: establish the entire system of your life on the belief that you shall be called to account in the Hereafter.

The admonition is this: Remember that those people who put their faith in the outward appearance of this worldly life and rejected the Message of the Prophets met with dire consequences. Therefore you should consider it

seriously whether you should follow the same way that history has proved to be the path to ruin.

The warning is this: You should not be deluded by the delay in the coming of the punishment: it is because of the respite that Allah has granted you by His grace so that you might mend your ways: if you do not make use of this opportunity, you shall be inflicted with an inevitable punishment that will destroy you all except the Believers.

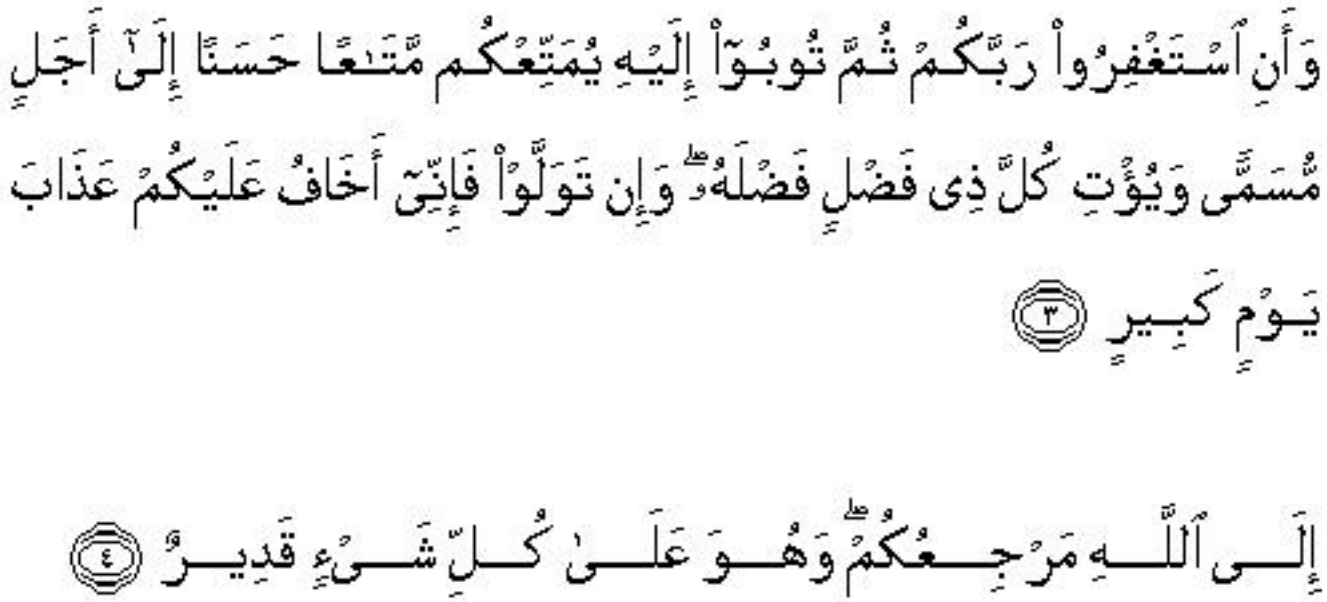
Instead of addressing the people directly, the Quran has used the stories of the people of Noah, Hud, Salih, Lot, Shu'aib and Moses to achieve the above mentioned objects. What is most prominent in their stories is that when Allah passes His judgment on the people, He does not spare anyone whatsoever, even if he be the nearest relative of the Prophet of the time. Only that one is rescued who had believed in the Prophet, and none else, not even his own son or wife. More than that: the Faith demands from each and every Believer that he should totally forget his relationships when that judgment comes and remember only the relationship of the Faith. For it is against the spirit of Islam to show any regard whatsoever for the relationships of blood and race. And the Muslims demonstrated these teachings practically in the Battle of Badr, four years after the revelation of this Surah.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

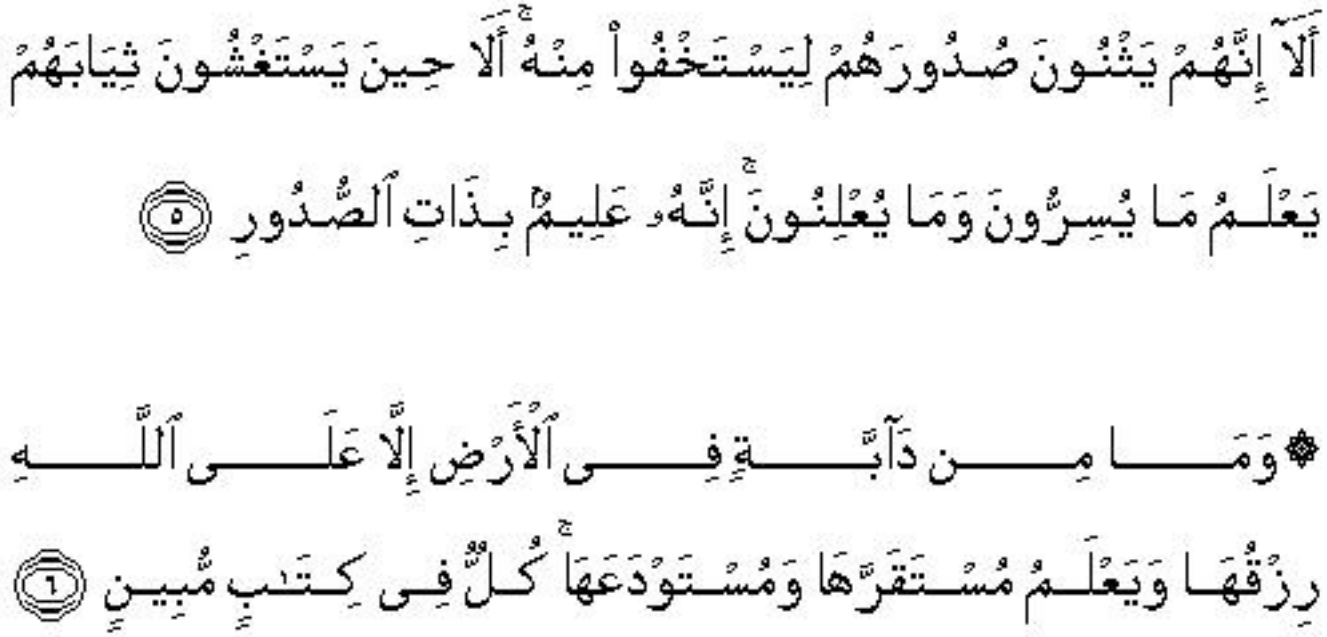
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓرۚ كِتَٰبٌ أُحْكِمَتْ ءَايَٰتُهُۥ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِن لَّدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ ﴿١﴾

أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓاْ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَۚ إِنَّنِى لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ ﴿٢﴾



[1-4] Alif Lam Ra. It is an Edict[1] whose contents have been made firm and issued in detail[2] by the All-Wise and All-Aware: (it is this): "You should worship none but Allah-I am indeed a warner and also a bearer of good news from Him to you-And you should ask forgiveness of your Lord: then return to Him and He will provide you with good provisions of life till an appointed term.[3] And He will bestow His favors on everyone who deserves His favors.[4] But if you turn away I am afraid you shall meet with the torment of a dreadful day. To Allah you shall all return and He has power over everything."



[5-6] Behold! They turn aside their chests in order to hide themselves from him.[5] Beware! Even when they cover themselves with clothes Allah knows alike what they conceal and what they show; indeed He knows even the secrets they conceal in their breasts. There is no moving creature on the earth whose sustenance does not depend

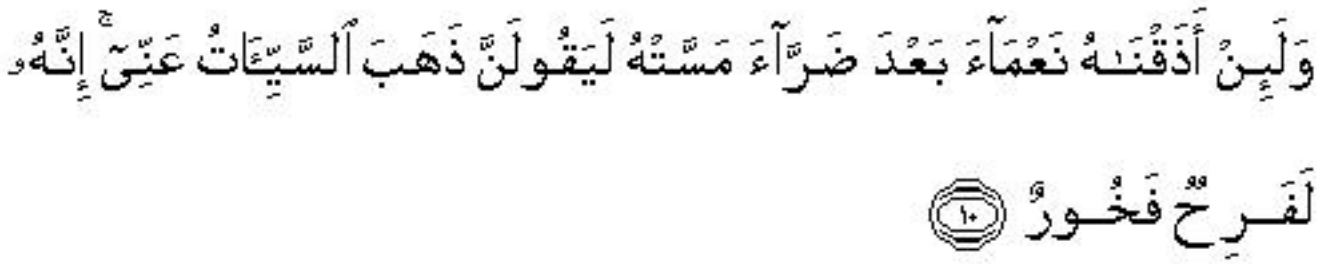
on Allah: He knows its dwelling place and its repository.[6] Everything has been recorded in an open register.

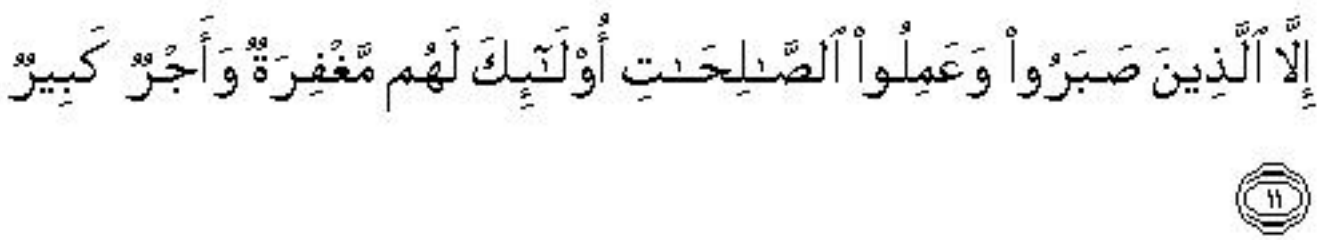
وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلْمَآءِ
لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَلَئِن قُلْتَ إِنَّكُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلْمَوْتِ
لَيَقُولَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

وَلَئِنْ أَخَّرْنَا عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابَ إِلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٍ مَّعْدُودَةٍ لَّيَقُولُنَّ مَا يَحْبِسُهُۥٓ ۗ
أَلَا يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمْ لَيْسَ مَصْرُوفًا عَنْهُمْ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٨﴾

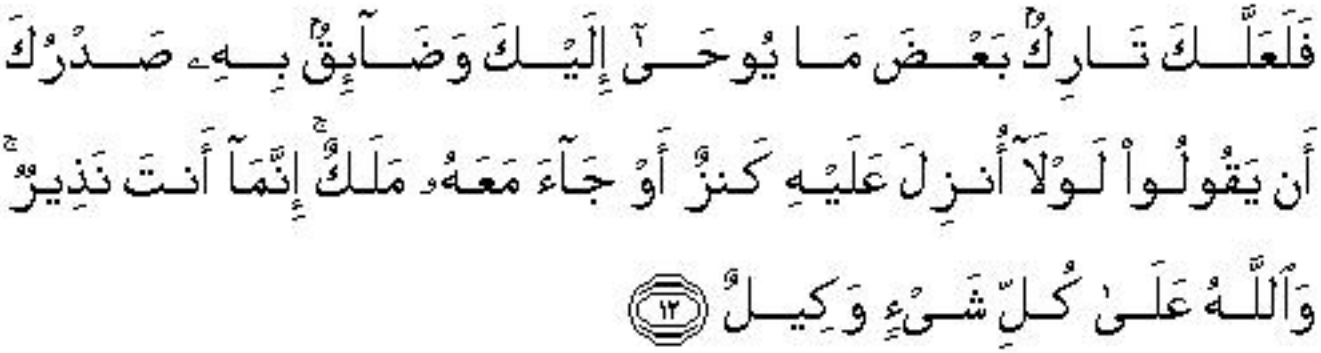
[7-8] And it is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days-whereas before this His Throne rested upon water[7] so that He may test which of you does the best deeds.[8] Now O Muhammad, if you tell them "You will, O people, be raised again after death," those who disbelieve promptly exclaim, "This is plain sorcery!"[9] And if We defer their punishment to some definite and reckoned time, they say, "Well, what is it that is delaying this?" Listen! When the day of that punishment comes, no one shall be able to avert it from them, and that very thing which they are ridiculing shall encircle them on all sides.

وَلَئِنْ أَذَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً ثُمَّ نَزَعْنَٰهَا مِنْهُ إِنَّهُۥ لَيَـُٔوسٌ كَفُورٌ ﴿٩﴾





[9-11] If We show man Our mercy and then deprive him of it, he is filled with despair and shows ingratitude. And if after the adversity that had visited him. We bestow favors upon him, he says, "All my sorrows have gone from me," and grows over-jubilant and arrogant.[10] Only those are free from this, who are steadfast[11] and do good deeds: they are the ones who will have forgiveness and a rich reward.[12]



[12] So O Prophet, be on your guard lest you should omit (to recite) some of the things which are being revealed to you and be not distressed at heart that they would say Why has no treasure been sent down to Him?" Or "Why has no angel come with him?" You are only a warner and Allah has everything in His power and charge.[13]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِعَشْرِ سُوَرٍ مِّثْلِهِۦ مُفْتَرَيَٰتٍ وَٱدْعُوا۟
مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

فَإِلَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ بِعِلْمِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَن لَّآ إِلَٰهَ
إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

[13-14] Do they say, "He has invented the Book himself?" Say to them "Very well, if it is so, bing ten fabricated Surahs like this: and you may has been revealed with Allah's knowledge and that there is no true deity other than Allah. Do you then surrender to this (which is the very Truth)?[14]

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ
فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارُ ۖ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا۟
فِيهَا وَبَٰطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

[15-16] Those who desire this worldly life and its splendors[15] are given the full reward of their works here and nothing is detracted from it. But there is nothing except the Fire[16] for them in the Next World. (There they shall come to know) that all that they did in this world had come to naught and whatever they did was useless and worthless.

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ وَمِن قَبْلِهِۦ
كِتَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۚ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِۦ
مِنَ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ فَٱلنَّارُ مَوْعِدُهُۥ ۚ فَلَا تَكُ فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن
رَّبِّكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

[17] Can it happen that he who takes his stand on a clear evidence from his Lord,[17] subsequently followed by a witness from Him (in his support),[18] and prior to that the Book of Moses was revealed as a guide and a mercy, (would even he deny the truth in the manner of those who adore the life of this world)? Rather, such men are bound to believe in it.[19] The Fire shall be the promised resort of the groups that disbelieve. So be in no doubt about it for this indeed is the truth from your Lord although most people do not believe.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَىٰ
رَبِّهِمْ وَيَقُولُ ٱلْأَشْهَٰدُ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ أَلَا لَعْنَةُ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ
كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ مُعْجِزِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُم مِّن
دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ يُضَٰعَفُ لَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۚ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ
ٱلسَّمْعَ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمُ ٱلْأَخْسَرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَأَخْبَتُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

۞ مَثَلُ ٱلْفَرِيقَيْنِ كَٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَٱلْأَصَمِّ وَٱلْبَصِيرِ وَٱلسَّمِيعِ ۚ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيَانِ
مَثَلًا ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[18-24] And who can be more unjust than the one who ascribes false things to Allah?[20] Such persons shall be brought before their Lord and the witnesses will say "These are the people who ascribed false things to their Lord." Beware! Allah's curse rests upon the unjust people[21] -on those unjust people[22] who debar others from Allah's Way and seek to make it crooked;[23] and who disbelieve in the Hereafter. They were unable to frustrate Allah on the earth,[24] nor had they protectors to defend them against Allah. Now they shall be given double chastisement:[25] for

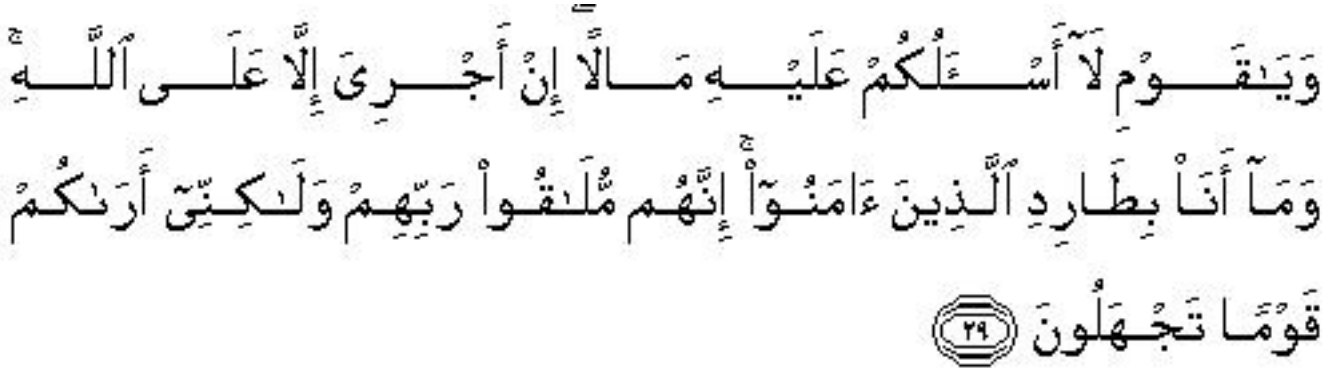
they would neither listen to others nor see the Truth for themselves. These are the people who brought about their own loss and all that they had invented vanished from them.[26] No doubt they shall be greatest losers in the Hereafter. As regards those who believed and did righteous works and dedicated themselves exclusively to their Lord most surely they shall be the dwellers of Paradise and shall abide there for ever.[27] These two groups may be likened to two men, one of whom is blind and deaf, and the other can see and hear. Can they be alike and equal?[28] Do you not learn a lesson(from this example)?

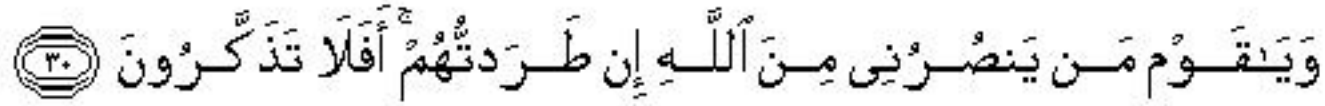
وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦٓ إِنِّي لَكُمۡ نَذِيرٞ مُّبِينٌ ٢٥

أَن لَّا تَعۡبُدُوٓاْ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَۖ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ عَذَابَ يَوۡمٍ أَلِيمٖ ٢٦

فَقَالَ ٱلۡمَلَؤُاْ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِن قَوۡمِهِۦ مَا نَرَىٰكَ إِلَّا بَشَرٗا مِّثۡلَنَا
وَمَا نَرَىٰكَ ٱتَّبَعَكَ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ أَرَاذِلُنَا بَادِيَ ٱلرَّأۡيِۖ وَمَا نَرَىٰ لَكُمۡ عَلَيۡنَا
مِن فَضۡلِۭ بَلۡ نَظُنُّكُمۡ كَٰذِبِينَ ٢٧

قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ أَرَءَيۡتُمۡ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّي وَءَاتَىٰنِي رَحۡمَةٗ مِّنۡ
عِندِهِۦ فَعُمِّيَتۡ عَلَيۡكُمۡ أَنُلۡزِمُكُمُوهَا وَأَنتُمۡ لَهَا كَٰرِهُونَ ٢٨


وَيَٰقَوۡمِ لَآ أَسۡـَٔلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ مَالًاۖ إِنۡ أَجۡرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
وَمَآ أَنَا۠ بِطَارِدِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْۚ إِنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُواْ رَبِّهِمۡ وَلَٰكِنِّيٓ أَرَىٰكُمۡ
قَوۡمٗا تَجۡهَلُونَ ٢٩


وَيَٰقَوۡمِ مَن يَنصُرُنِي مِنَ ٱللَّهِ إِن طَرَدتُّهُمۡۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ٣٠


وَلَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمۡ عِندِي خَزَآئِنُ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَعۡلَمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبَ وَلَآ أَقُولُ إِنِّي مَلَكٞ
وَلَآ أَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ تَزۡدَرِيٓ أَعۡيُنُكُمۡ لَن يُؤۡتِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ خَيۡرًاۖ ٱللَّهُ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا
فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡۖ إِنِّيٓ إِذٗا لَّمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٣١

[25-31] And such was the state of affairs when) We had sent Noah to his people.[29] (He said,) "I warn you plainly not to worship anyone but Allah: otherwise I am afraid that a fearful torment shall visit you one day."[30] In answer to this, those chiefs of his people, who had rejected his Message, said, "We see that you are no more than a mere man like ourselves,[31] and we also see that only the meanest from among us have become your followers without due consideration,[32] and we find nothing in you that might give you superiority over us.[33] Nay, we consider you to be liars. " He replied, "O my people, just consider it yourselves: If my Lord had sent a clear Sign to me and then bestowed His special blessing on me,[34] but you did not see it, how can we compel you to accept that, when you are averse to it ? O my people, I do not ask of you any wealth for this work:[35] for I look only to Allah for its reward. And I am not going to drive away those who have believed in me. Indeed they are going to meet their Lord,[36] (Who knows their worth). But I see that you are adopting the attitude of ignorance. And, O my people, who will help save me from Allah, if I drive them away? Don't you understand this simple thing? And I do not say to you that I possess treasures from Allah: nor do I say that I have the knowledge of the unseen: nor do I claim to be an angel:[37] nor can I say about those whom you disdain, `Allah has not bestowed on them any good'. Allah knows best what is in their minds: for I shall be unjust, if I utter anything like this.

قَالُوا۟ يَـٰنُوحُ قَدْ جَـٰدَلْتَنَا فَأَكْثَرْتَ جِدَالَنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ
ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَأْتِيكُم بِهِ ٱللَّهُ إِن شَآءَ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلَا يَنفَعُكُمْ نُصْحِىٓ إِنْ أَرَدتُّ أَنْ أَنصَحَ لَكُمْ إِن كَانَ ٱللَّهُ
يُرِيدُ أَن يُغْوِيَكُمْ ۚ هُوَ رَبُّكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[32-34] At last those people said, "O Noah, you have already argued with us and argued too much. Now you bring down on us that scourge with which you threaten us, if what you say be true." Noah replied, "Allah will bring down that on you if He will and you have no power to frustrate it. Now, even if I wished to do you some good it cannot profit you even if I wanted to be your well wisher, when Allah has decided that you should go astray:[38] He is your Lord and to Him you shall return.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ قُلْ إِنِ ٱفْتَرَيْتُهُۥ فَعَلَىَّ إِجْرَامِى وَأَنَا۠ بَرِىٓءٌ
مِّمَّا تُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[35] O Muhammad! do they say, "He himself has forged all this?" Say to them, "If I have forged this myself, I shall bear all its consequences, and I am clear of the crime you are committing."[39]

وَأُوحِيَ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ أَنَّهُۥ لَن يُؤْمِنَ مِن قَوْمِكَ إِلَّا مَن
قَدْ ءَامَنَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَٱصْنَعِ ٱلْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَٰطِبْنِى فِى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُم
مُّغْرَقُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَيَصْنَعُ ٱلْفُلْكَ وَكُلَّمَا مَرَّ عَلَيْهِ مَلَأٌ مِّن قَوْمِهِۦ سَخِرُوا۟ مِنْهُ ۚ قَالَ إِن
تَسْخَرُوا۟ مِنَّا فَإِنَّا نَسْخَرُ مِنكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

[36-39] And it was revealed to Noah: "No more of your people will believe in you now than those who have already believed. So do not grieve at their misdeeds, but start to build an Ark under Our supervision in accordance with Our Revelation. And beware that you do not plead with Me for those who had been unjust: indeed now they shall all be drowned."[40] So he began to build the Ark. And whoso of the chiefs of his people passed by him, he jeered at him. Noah said, "Laugh at us, if you will; we. too, are laughing at you; for soon you shall come to know who is visited by the torment that will disgrace him, and who is afflicted with the inevitable and lasting calamity."[41]

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَمۡرُنَا وَفَارَ ٱلتَّنُّورُ قُلۡنَا ٱحۡمِلۡ فِيهَا مِن كُلّٖ زَوۡجَيۡنِ ٱثۡنَيۡنِ
وَأَهۡلَكَ إِلَّا مَن سَبَقَ عَلَيۡهِ ٱلۡقَوۡلُ وَمَنۡ ءَامَنَۚ وَمَآ ءَامَنَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلٞ ﴿٤٠﴾

۞وَقَالَ ٱرۡكَبُواْ فِيهَا بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ مَجۡرٖىهَا وَمُرۡسَىٰهَآۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَغَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ
﴿٤١﴾

[40-41] Thus was it until Our Command came to pass and At-Tannur[42] began to boil up. Then We said, "Take into the Ark a pair from every species, and embark your own people -save those who have already been specifically marked[43] - and also those who have believed;[44] and those who had believed with Noah were only a few. Noah said, "Embark in the Ark: in the name of Allah will it move and cast anchor. Surely my Lord is very Forgiving and Compassionate."[45]

وَهِيَ تَجۡرِي بِهِمۡ فِي مَوۡجٖ كَٱلۡجِبَالِ وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٌ ٱبۡنَهُۥ وَكَانَ
فِي مَعۡزِلٖ يَٰبُنَيَّ ٱرۡكَب مَّعَنَا وَلَا تَكُن مَّعَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

قَالَ سَـَٔاوِيٓ إِلَىٰ جَبَلٖ يَعۡصِمُنِي مِنَ ٱلۡمَآءِۚ قَالَ لَا عَاصِمَ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا
مَن رَّحِمَۚ وَحَالَ بَيۡنَهُمَا ٱلۡمَوۡجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُغۡرَقِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[42-43] As the Ark was moving on with them amid waves like mountains, Noah cried out to his son, who was at a distance, "My son! Embark with us and be not with the unbelievers." He answered, "I am going to climb up a mountain that will protect me from waters." Noah said, "Today there is nothing to protect from Allah's judgment except that He Himself should take pity on anyone." In the meantime a wave came between them and he was

among the drowned.

وَقِيلَ يَٰٓأَرۡضُ ٱبۡلَعِي مَآءَكِ وَيَٰسَمَآءُ أَقۡلِعِي وَغِيضَ ٱلۡمَآءُ وَقُضِيَ ٱلۡأَمۡرُ
وَٱسۡتَوَتۡ عَلَى ٱلۡجُودِيِّۖ وَقِيلَ بُعۡدٗا لِّلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٤٤

[44] It was commanded, "O Earth! Swallow up thy waters, and O Sky, cease thy rain!" Accordingly the waters sank into the Earth. The decree was carried out; and the Ark rested upon Mount Judi.[46] And it was proclaimed: "Gone are the workers of iniquity!"

وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٞ رَّبَّهُۥ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ ٱبۡنِي مِنۡ أَهۡلِي وَإِنَّ وَعۡدَكَ ٱلۡحَقُّ
وَأَنتَ أَحۡكَمُ ٱلۡحَٰكِمِينَ ٤٥

قَالَ يَٰنُوحُ إِنَّهُۥ لَيۡسَ مِنۡ أَهۡلِكَۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَمَلٌ غَيۡرُ صَٰلِحٖۖ فَلَا تَسۡـَٔلۡنِ مَا لَيۡسَ
لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلۡمٌۖ إِنِّيٓ أَعِظُكَ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡجَٰهِلِينَ ٤٦

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّيٓ أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنۡ أَسۡـَٔلَكَ مَا لَيۡسَ لِي بِهِۦ عِلۡمٞۖ وَإِلَّا تَغۡفِرۡ لِي
وَتَرۡحَمۡنِيٓ أَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٤٧

[45-47] Noah called out to his Lord, saying, "My Lord! My son is of my family, and Thy promise is surely true[47] and Thou art the greatest and the best of all rulers." [48] In answer it was said, "O Noah! He is not of your family; he has turned out to be a worthless act.[49] So do not ask Me anything of which you have no knowledge. I admonish you that you should not behave like ignorant people."[50] Noah meekly replied, "My Lord, I seek Thy protection lest I should

ask of Thee anything of which I have no knowledge. For if Thou forgivest me not for my presumption, and hast not mercy on me, I shall be totally ruined."[51]

قِيلَ يَٰنُوحُ ٱهۡبِطۡ بِسَلَٰمٖ مِّنَّا وَبَرَكَٰتٍ عَلَيۡكَ وَعَلَىٰٓ أُمَمٖ مِّمَّن مَّعَكَۚ
وَأُمَمٞ سَنُمَتِّعُهُمۡ ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ٤٨

[48] It was said, "O Noah, go down:[52] Peace and blessings from Us are on you and on the communities that are with you. But there are other communities, whom We shall give the provisions of life for some time: then a painful torment from Us shall visit them."

تِلۡكَ مِنۡ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلۡغَيۡبِ نُوحِيهَآ إِلَيۡكَۖ مَا كُنتَ تَعۡلَمُهَآ أَنتَ وَلَا قَوۡمُكَ مِن
قَبۡلِ هَٰذَاۖ فَٱصۡبِرۡۖ إِنَّ ٱلۡعَٰقِبَةَ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ ٤٩

[49] O Muhammad! These are some of the tidings of the "Unseen" which We are revealing to you. You did not know these before this nor did your people. So practice fortitude, for ultimately, the God-fearing people shall come out successful.[53]

وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمۡ هُودٗاۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنۡ إِلَٰهٍ
غَيۡرُهُۥٓۖ إِنۡ أَنتُمۡ إِلَّا مُفۡتَرُونَ ٥٠

يَٰقَوۡمِ لَآ أَسۡـَٔلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ أَجۡرًاۖ إِنۡ أَجۡرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلَّذِي فَطَرَنِيٓۚ أَفَلَا
تَعۡقِلُونَ ٥١

وَيَٰقَوۡمِ ٱسۡتَغۡفِرُواْ رَبَّكُمۡ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓاْ إِلَيۡهِ يُرۡسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيۡكُم مِّدۡرَارٗا
وَيَزِدۡكُمۡ قُوَّةً إِلَىٰ قُوَّتِكُمۡ وَلَا تَتَوَلَّوۡاْ مُجۡرِمِينَ ٥٢

[50-52] And to `Ad We sent their brother Hud;[54] he said. "O my people! Serve Allah: you have no god other than He: it is nothing but falsehood that you have forged.[55] O brethren! I do not ask of you any recompense for this service: my recompense is with Him who has created me. Do you not then use your common-sense?[56] And O my people, beg forgiveness of your Lord; then turn to }um in repentance. and He will open the gates of the heavens for you and add more strength to your present strength.[57] Do not turn away as guilty people."

قَالُواْ يَٰهُودُ مَا جِئۡتَنَا بِبَيِّنَةٖ وَمَا نَحۡنُ بِتَارِكِيٓ ءَالِهَتِنَا عَن قَوۡلِكَ وَمَا
نَحۡنُ لَكَ بِمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٥٣

إِن نَّقُولُ إِلَّا ٱعۡتَرَىٰكَ بَعۡضُ ءَالِهَتِنَا بِسُوٓءٖۗ قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أُشۡهِدُ ٱللَّهَ وَٱشۡهَدُوٓاْ
أَنِّي بَرِيٓءٞ مِّمَّا تُشۡرِكُونَ ٥٤

مِن دُونِهِۦۖ فَكِيدُونِي جَمِيعٗا ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونِ ٥٥

إِنِّى تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رَبِّى وَرَبِّكُمْ ۚ مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ ءَاخِذٌۢ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ
رَبِّى عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٦﴾

فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُم مَّآ أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِۦٓ إِلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَيَسْتَخْلِفُ رَبِّى قَوْمًا
غَيْرَكُمْ وَلَا تَضُرُّونَهُۥ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَفِيظٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

[53-57] They answered "O Hud! You have not brought us any clear evidence,[58] and we are not going to give up our gods at your word, nor are we going to believe in you. We rather believe that some of our gods have smitten you with some evil."[59] Hud replied, "I bring Allah's evidence.[60] And you should bear witness to it that I have nothing to do with the gods you have set up beside Allah in His Godhead.[61] So all of you may do whatever you can against me and give me no respite;[62] I have full trust in Allah Who is my Lord and your Lord as well. There is no living creature which He does not hold by its forelock. Indeed straight is the way of my Lord![63] You may turn away, if you will; now that I have conveyed to you the Message with which I was sent to you, my Lord .will raise up some other community in your place and you shall not be able to do Him any harm whatsoever.[64] Indeed my Lord keeps watch over everything."

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا نَجَّيْنَا هُودًا وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُم
مِّنْ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ ﴿٥٨﴾

[58] And when Our Command came We delivered through Our Mercy Hud and those who had believed with him and rescued them from a woeful scourge.

وَتِلْكَ عَادٌ ۖ جَحَدُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَصَوْا۟ رُسُلَهُۥ وَٱتَّبَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَ كُلِّ جَبَّارٍ
عَنِيدٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

وَأُتْبِعُوا۟ فِى هَـٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ عَادًا كَفَرُوا۟
رَبَّهُمْ ۗ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّعَادٍ قَوْمِ هُودٍ ﴿٦٠﴾

[59-60] These are `Ad! They rejected the Revelations of their Lord and disobeyed His Messengers[65] and followed every tyrannous enemy of the Truth; so they became accursed in this world and in the Next World as well. Listen! `Ad disbelieved in their Lord! Listen! Cast away were Ad the people of Hud!

۞ وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَـٰلِحًا ۚ قَالَ يَـٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم
مِّنْ إِلَـٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ هُوَ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ فِيهَا فَٱسْتَغْفِرُوهُ
ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى قَرِيبٌ مُّجِيبٌ ﴿٦١﴾

[61] And to Thamud We sent their brother Salih.[66] He said "O my people! worship Allah: you have no other Deity than He. It is He Who has created you from the earth and made it a living place for you.[67] So ask His forgiveness[68] and turn to Him in repentance. Most surely my Lord is near at hand and answers prayers.[69]

قَالُوا۟ يَـٰصَـٰلِحُ قَدْ كُنتَ فِينَا مَرْجُوًّا قَبْلَ هَـٰذَآ ۖ أَتَنْهَىٰنَآ أَن نَّعْبُدَ مَا يَعْبُدُ
ءَابَآؤُنَا وَإِنَّنَا لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَآ إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ ﴿٦٢﴾

[62] They replied "O Salih, till now you were such a person among us of whom we had great expectations.[70] What! do you forbid us to worship gods whom our forefathers worshiped?[71] Indeed we have a strong doubt about the way to which you are calling us and this has caused a feeling of distraction in us."[72]

قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ أَرَءَيۡتُمۡ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّي وَءَاتَىٰنِي مِنۡهُ رَحۡمَةٗ
فَمَن يَنصُرُنِي مِنَ ٱللَّهِ إِنۡ عَصَيۡتُهُۥۖ فَمَا تَزِيدُونَنِي غَيۡرَ تَخۡسِيرٖ ٦٣

وَيَٰقَوۡمِ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةُ ٱللَّهِ لَكُمۡ ءَايَةٗۖ فَذَرُوهَا تَأۡكُلۡ فِيٓ أَرۡضِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا
تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٖ فَيَأۡخُذَكُمۡ عَذَابٞ قَرِيبٞ ٦٤

فَعَقَرُوهَا فَقَالَ تَمَتَّعُواْ فِي دَارِكُمۡ ثَلَٰثَةَ أَيَّامٖۖ ذَٰلِكَ وَعۡدٌ غَيۡرُ مَكۡذُوبٖ
٦٥

[63-65] Salih said, "O my people! Just consider it yourselves: if my Lord had sent me with a clear Sign and bestowed His special blessings on me who will help save me from Allah if, after this, I become disobedient to Him? You cannot help me any way, but might hasten my ruin.[73] And O my people, behold: here is Allah's she-camel, a Sign for you. So let her graze at will in Allah's land, and do not touch her with evil intention, lest a scourge should seize you from your Lord in the near future."

But they killed the she-camel. At this Salih warned them, "Well, you have only three more days to enjoy yourselves in your houses. This is a time limit that will not prove false."

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمۡرُنَا نَجَّيۡنَا صَٰلِحٗا وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحۡمَةٖ مِّنَّا وَمِنۡ
خِزۡيِ يَوۡمِئِذٍۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ ٱلۡقَوِيُّ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٦٦

وَأَخَذَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ ٱلصَّيۡحَةُ فَأَصۡبَحُواْ فِي دِيَٰرِهِمۡ جَٰثِمِينَ ٦٧

كَأَن لَّمۡ يَغۡنَوۡاْ فِيهَآۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ثَمُودَاْ كَفَرُواْ رَبَّهُمۡۗ أَلَا بُعۡدٗا لِّثَمُودَ ٦٨

[66-68] So when Our judgment came to pass, We delivered through Our mercy Salih and those who had believed with him, and kept them safe from the ignominy of that Day.[74] Indeed your Lord is All-Mighty and 'All-Powerful. As regards those who were iniquitous, a dreadful shock overtook them and they lay lifeless and prostrate in their homes, as if they had never flourished there. Listen! Thamud disbelieved their Lord. Listen! Cast away were Thamud.

وَلَقَدۡ جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُنَآ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ بِٱلۡبُشۡرَىٰ قَالُواْ سَلَٰمٗاۖ قَالَ سَلَٰمٞۖ
فَمَا لَبِثَ أَن جَآءَ بِعِجۡلٍ حَنِيذٖ ٦٩

فَلَمَّا رَءَآ أَيۡدِيَهُمۡ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيۡهِ نَكِرَهُمۡ وَأَوۡجَسَ مِنۡهُمۡ
خِيفَةٗۚ قَالُواْ لَا تَخَفۡ إِنَّآ أُرۡسِلۡنَآ إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِ لُوطٖ ٧٠

وَٱمۡرَأَتُهُۥ قَآئِمَةٞ فَضَحِكَتۡ فَبَشَّرۡنَٰهَا بِإِسۡحَٰقَ وَمِن وَرَآءِ إِسۡحَٰقَ
يَعۡقُوبَ ٧١

قَالَتۡ يَٰوَيۡلَتَىٰٓ ءَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا۠ عَجُوزٞ وَهَٰذَا بَعۡلِي شَيۡخًاۖ
إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَيۡءٌ عَجِيبٞ ٧٢

قَالُوٓاْ أَتَعۡجَبِينَ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِۖ رَحۡمَتُ ٱللَّهِ وَبَرَكَٰتُهُۥ
عَلَيۡكُمۡ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡبَيۡتِۚ إِنَّهُۥ حَمِيدٞ مَّجِيدٞ ٧٣

[69-73] And lo, Our Messengers came to Abraham with good news. They said, "Peace be upon you." Abraham answered, "Peace be also upon you." And before long he brought a roasted calf for them.[75] But when he saw that they did not stretch out their hands towards it, he had a mistrust about them and felt a fear of them[76] in his heart. They said, "Don't have any fear: for we have been sent to the people of Lot."[77] And his wife was standing by; hearing this, she laughed.[78] Then We gave her the good news of Isaac, and after Isaac of Jacob.[79] She said, "Woe is me![80] shall I bear a child now when I have grown extremely old, and this husband of mine has also become old?[81] This is indeed a strange thing." The angels said, "What! Are you surprised at Allah's decree?[82] O people of Abraham's household! Allah's mercy and blessings are upon you. Indeed Allah is worthy of all praise and glory."

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبَ عَنۡ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ ٱلرَّوۡعُ وَجَآءَتۡهُ ٱلۡبُشۡرَىٰ يُجَٰدِلُنَا فِي قَوۡمِ لُوطٍ
٧٤

إِنَّ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّٰهٌ مُّنِيبٌ ﴿٧٥﴾

يَٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَٰذَآ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ قَدْ جَآءَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَإِنَّهُمْ ءَاتِيهِمْ عَذَابٌ غَيْرُ مَرْدُودٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

[74-76] So when Abraham's fear was allayed and his heart was filled with joy (because of the good news of a child), he began to dispute[83] with Us concerning the people of Lot, for Abraham was tender-hearted and merciful and always turned to Us. (At last Our angels said to him), "O Abraham, desist from this now that your Lord's decree has been issued and the scourge which cannot be averted by anyone shall overtake them."[84]

وَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَا لُوطًا سِىٓءَ بِهِمْ وَضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعًا وَقَالَ هَٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَصِيبٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

وَجَآءَهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ يُهْرَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ وَمِن قَبْلُ كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِى هُنَّ أَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُخْزُونِ فِى ضَيْفِىٓ ۖ أَلَيْسَ مِنكُمْ رَجُلٌ رَّشِيدٌ ﴿٧٨﴾

قَالُوا۟ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا لَنَا فِى بَنَاتِكَ مِنْ حَقٍّ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ ﴿٧٩﴾

قَالَ لَوۡ أَنَّ لِي بِكُمۡ قُوَّةً أَوۡ ءَاوِيٓ إِلَىٰ رُكۡنٖ شَدِيدٖ ﴿٨٠﴾

[77-80] And when Our Messengers came to Lot,[85] he was greatly perturbed and distressed in mind because of their visit and said, "This is a day of woe!"[86] (No sooner did the visitors come to him than) his people spontaneously rushed towards his house, for they had previously been addicted to wicked deeds. Lot said to them, "O my people, here are my daughters, who are purer for you.[87] So fear God and don't degrade me by committing evil to my guests. what ! Is there not a single good man among you ?" They replied, "You know it well that we have no need of your daughters,[88] and you also know what we want. " Lot cried, "I wish I had the power to set you right or I could find some strong support for refuge."

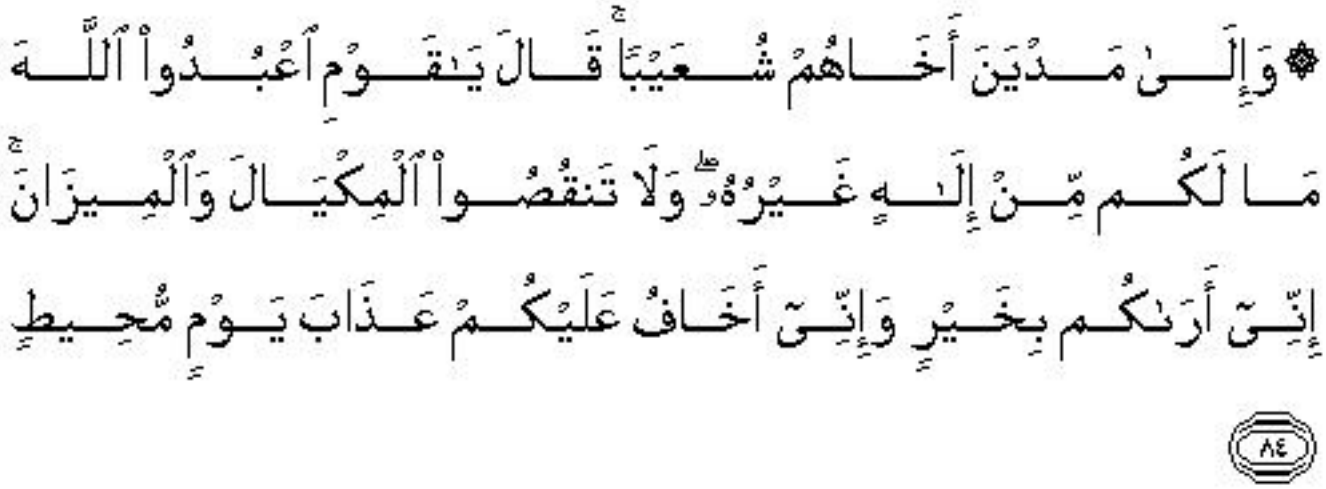
قَالُواْ يَٰلُوطُ إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَن يَصِلُوٓاْ إِلَيۡكَۖ فَأَسۡرِ بِأَهۡلِكَ بِقِطۡعٖ مِّنَ ٱلَّيۡلِ وَلَا يَلۡتَفِتۡ مِنكُمۡ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا ٱمۡرَأَتَكَۖ إِنَّهُۥ مُصِيبُهَا مَآ أَصَابَهُمۡۚ إِنَّ مَوۡعِدَهُمُ ٱلصُّبۡحُۚ أَلَيۡسَ ٱلصُّبۡحُ بِقَرِيبٖ ﴿٨١﴾

[81] Then the angels said, "O Lot, We are messengers sent by your Lord. They shall not be able to do you any harm. So depart from here with the people of your household in the last hours of the night. And look here: none of you should turn round to look behind;[89] but your wife (who will not accompany you) shall meet with the same doom as they.[90] The morning has been appointed for their destruction-the morning has almost come."

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمۡرُنَا جَعَلۡنَا عَٰلِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمۡطَرۡنَا عَلَيۡهَا حِجَارَةٗ مِّن سِجِّيلٖ مَّنضُودٖ ﴿٨٢﴾

مُّسَوَّمَةً عِندَ رَبِّكَۖ وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٖ ﴿٨٣﴾

[82-83] Accordingly, when the time of the execution of judgment came, We turned the habitation upside down and rained on it stones of baked clay,[91] and each one of these stones had been specifically marked[92] by your Lord. And such scourge is not far from the workers of iniquity.[93]



[84-86] And to the people of Madian, We sent their brother Shu`aib.[94] He said. "O my people, serve Allah: you have no deity other than He. Do not give short measure and weight. Though I see you now in a state of prosperity, I fear for you the scourge of a day that will encircle you. And, O my people, give full measure and weight justly and do not defraud people of their goods, and do not spread mischief in the land. The residue (after giving full measure) left over by Allah is best for you, if you are believers. Anyhow I am not a guardian over you."[95]

قَالُوا۟ يَٰشُعَيْبُ أَصَلَوٰتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَن نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَآ أَوْ أَن نَّفْعَلَ فِىٓ
أَمْوَٰلِنَا مَا نَشَٰٓؤُا۟ ۖ إِنَّكَ لَأَنتَ ٱلْحَلِيمُ ٱلرَّشِيدُ ﴿٨٧﴾

[87] They replied, "O Shu`aib! Does your Salat teach you this[96] that we should give up all those deities whom our forefathers worshiped or that we should have no right on our goads to dispense with them as we please?[97] Indeed you are the only generous and righteous man (remaining in the land)!"

قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّى وَرَزَقَنِى مِنْهُ رِزْقًا حَسَنًا ۚ
وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَآ أَنْهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ ۚ إِنْ أُرِيدُ إِلَّا ٱلْإِصْلَٰحَ
مَا ٱسْتَطَعْتُ ۚ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِىٓ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿٨٨﴾

وَيَٰقَوْمِ لَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شِقَاقِىٓ أَن يُصِيبَكُم مِّثْلُ مَآ أَصَابَ قَوْمَ نُوحٍ أَوْ
قَوْمَ هُودٍ أَوْ قَوْمَ صَٰلِحٍ ۚ وَمَا قَوْمُ لُوطٍ مِّنكُم بِبَعِيدٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى رَحِيمٌ وَدُودٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

[88-90] Shu`aib said, "O my people! Just consider it yourselves if I had a clear evidence from my Lord, and then had been bestowed good provisions[98] from Him, (how can I, then, be a party to your evil and unlawful practices?") And I do not want at all to commit those evil practices, which I forbid you.[99] I desire only to reform you as far as it lies in my power. And this work of mine depends entirely on Allah's help: and in Him I have put my trust and to Him I turn for everything. And O my people, let not your obduracy against me be conducive to bring upon you the doom that overtook the peoples of Noah, Hud and Salih. And the people of Lot are not far from you.[100] Listen! Ask forgiveness

of your Lord and turn to Him in penitence. Indeed my Lord is Merciful and loves His Creation."[101]

قَالُوا۟ يَٰشُعَيْبُ مَا نَفْقَهُ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا تَقُولُ وَإِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ فِينَا ضَعِيفًا ۖ وَلَوْلَا
رَهْطُكَ لَرَجَمْنَٰكَ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ عَلَيْنَا بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿٩١﴾

[91] They answered "O Shu`aib! We do not understand much of what you say.[102] Indeed we see that you are a powerless man among us. Had it not been for your family, we would have stoned you to death long before this, for you are not strong enough to prevail over us."[103]

قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَرَهْطِىٓ أَعَزُّ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱتَّخَذْتُمُوهُ وَرَآءَكُمْ ظِهْرِيًّا ۖ إِنَّ
رَبِّى بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

وَيَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّى عَٰمِلٌ ۖ سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ
يُخْزِيهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ كَٰذِبٌ ۖ وَٱرْتَقِبُوٓا۟ إِنِّى مَعَكُمْ رَقِيبٌ ﴿٩٣﴾

[92-93] Shu`aib said, "O my people! Do you regard my family to be more powerful for you than Allah (that you are afraid of it) but have disregarded Him totally? Note it well that whatever you are doing is within Allah's grasp. O my people, you may go on following your way and I will follow my way. You will come to know in the near future who shall be visited by an ignominious scourge and who is the liar; wait if you will and I, too, shall wait with you."

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمۡرُنَا نَجَّيۡنَا شُعَيۡبٗا وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحۡمَةٖ
مِّنَّا وَأَخَذَتِ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ ٱلصَّيۡحَةُ فَأَصۡبَحُواْ فِي دِيَٰرِهِمۡ
جَٰثِمِينَ ٩٤

[94] And when Our decree came to pass, We delivered through Our mercy Shu`aib and those who had believed with him. As regards those who were iniquitous, a dreadful shock overtook them and they lay lifeless and prostrate in their homes as if they had never flourished in them.

كَأَن لَّمۡ يَغۡنَوۡاْ فِيهَآۗ أَلَا بُعۡدٗا لِّمَدۡيَنَ كَمَا بَعِدَتۡ ثَمُودُ ٩٥

[95] Listen! Cast away were also the people of Madian as were Thamud cast away.

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مُوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَسُلۡطَٰنٖ مُّبِينٍ ٩٦

إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ فَٱتَّبَعُوٓاْ أَمۡرَ فِرۡعَوۡنَۖ وَمَآ أَمۡرُ فِرۡعَوۡنَ بِرَشِيدٖ ٩٧

يَقۡدُمُ قَوۡمَهُۥ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ فَأَوۡرَدَهُمُ ٱلنَّارَۖ وَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡوِرۡدُ ٱلۡمَوۡرُودُ ٩٨

وَأُتْبِعُوا۟ فِى هَٰذِهِۦ لَعْنَةً وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ بِئْسَ ٱلرِّفْدُ ٱلْمَرْفُودُ

٩٩

[96-99] And We sent Moses with Our Signs and a manifest authority of appointment to Pharaoh and the chiefs of his kingdom. But they followed the command of Pharaoh and unrighteous was Pharaoh's command. On the Day of Resurrection, he will head his people and lead them to Hell.[104] What a wretched goal for one to reach! Curse has fallen on them in this world and shall also fall on them on the Day of Resurrection. What an evil reward for one to receive!

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ نَقُصُّهُۥ عَلَيْكَ ۖ مِنْهَا قَآئِمٌ وَحَصِيدٌ

١٠٠

وَمَا ظَلَمْنَٰهُمْ وَلَٰكِن ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ فَمَآ أَغْنَتْ عَنْهُمْ ءَالِهَتُهُمُ ٱلَّتِى يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ لَّمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَمَا زَادُوهُمْ غَيْرَ تَتْبِيبٍ

١٠١

[100-101] This is the story of some of the habitations We are relating to you: some of these are still standing while the others have been brought down. We were not unjust to them but they were unjust to themselves. And when the judgment of your Lord came to pass, those deities of theirs, whom they worshiped instead of Allah, availed them not at all: they only hastened their ruin. They did them no good but caused their destruction and ruin.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَخْذُ رَبِّكَ إِذَآ أَخَذَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَهِىَ ظَٰلِمَةٌ ۚ إِنَّ أَخْذَهُۥٓ أَلِيمٌ شَدِيدٌ

١٠٢

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّمَنْ خَافَ عَذَابَ ٱلْأَخِرَةِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَّجْمُوعٌ لَّهُ ٱلنَّاسُ
وَذَٰلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَّشْهُودٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

وَمَا نُؤَخِّرُهُۥٓ إِلَّا لِأَجَلٍ مَّعْدُودٍ ﴿١٠٤﴾

يَوْمَ يَأْتِ لَا تَكَلَّمُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ شَقِيٌّ وَسَعِيدٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ شَقُوا۟ فَفِى ٱلنَّارِ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهِيقٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ رَبُّكَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ
لِّمَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٠٧﴾

۞ وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ سُعِدُوا۟ فَفِى ٱلْجَنَّةِ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ
وَٱلْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ رَبُّكَ ۖ عَطَآءً غَيْرَ مَجْذُوذٍ ﴿١٠٨﴾

[102-108] And when your Lord seizes a sinful town, He seizes it like this: indeed His seizure is very terrible and

painful. In fact, there is a Sign in this for everyone who dreads the Torment of the Hereafter:[105] that will be the Day when all the people shall gather together and will witness everything that will happen there. We are deferring that only for a fixed term. When that Day will come, no one shall dare speak a word except with Allah's permission[106] Then some people shall be damned, while others blessed. Those who shall be damned shall go to Hell: here they will pant and hiss (because of thirst). Therein they shall abide for ever as long as the earth and the heavens shall last[107] unless your Lord ordains otherwise. Indeed your Lord has full powers to do as He will.[108] As for those who shall be blessed they will go to the Garden and dwell therein for ever as long as the earth and the heavens shall last, unless your Lord wills something else.[109] They will be blessed with a boon that will be imperishable.

فَلَا تَكُ فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِّمَّا يَعْبُدُ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۚ مَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا
كَمَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُهُم مِّن قَبْلُ ۚ وَإِنَّا لَمُوَفُّوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ غَيْرَ مَنقُوصٍ
١٠٩

[109] So, O Prophet have no doubt concerning the deities they worship for they blindly imitate and worship what their forefathers worshiped before them.[110] And We will give them the full measure of their share without detracting anything from it.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ فَٱخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن
رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيبٍ ١١٠

وَإِنَّ كُلًّا لَّمَّا لَيُوَفِّيَنَّهُمْ رَبُّكَ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ
١١١

فَٱسۡتَقِمۡ كَمَآ أُمِرۡتَ وَمَن تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطۡغَوۡاْۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ ١١٢

وَلَا تَرۡكَنُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ فَتَمَسَّكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِنۡ أَوۡلِيَآءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ ١١٣

وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ طَرَفَيِ ٱلنَّهَارِ وَزُلَفٗا مِّنَ ٱلَّيۡلِۚ إِنَّ ٱلۡحَسَنَٰتِ يُذۡهِبۡنَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِۚ ذَٰلِكَ ذِكۡرَىٰ لِلذَّٰكِرِينَ ١١٤

وَٱصۡبِرۡ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجۡرَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ١١٥

[110-115] We gave the Book to Moses also before this and there arose differences regarding this (just as they are arising regarding the Book We have given to you.[111]) If a decree had not .been made beforehand by your Lord, a judgment would have been passed long before this on those who have created differences.[112] It is a fact that they are in doubt and uncertainty about this, and it is also a fact that your Lord will give them full measure for their deeds, for He is fully aware of what they are doing. So, O Muhammad, you and your companions, (who have turned back from unbelief and rebellion to Faith and obedience), should stick firmly to the Right Way, as you have been enjoined, and should not transgress the bounds of submission. Allah is watching over what you are doing. Do not incline even in the least towards the workers of iniquity lest you should come within the reach of the Fire. Then you will find no protector to defend you against Allah nor will you get any help from any quarter. And listen! Establish Salat at the two ends of the day and in the early part of the night.[113] Indeed virtues remove evils. This is a reminder for those who remember Allah.[114] And practice fortitude, for Allah does not let go waste the reward of those who do good.

فَلَوْلَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ أُوْلُوا۟ بَقِيَّةٍ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْفَسَادِ
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّمَّنْ أَنجَيْنَا مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَٱتَّبَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مَآ أُتْرِفُوا۟
فِيهِ وَكَانُوا۟ مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلُهَا مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذَٰلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ ۗ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ
ٱلْجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

[116-119] Then, why were there not among the communities before you such righteous persons who should have forbidden the people to make mischief in the land? If there were any, they were very few whom We saved from among those communities. The wrong-doers, however, pursued their worldly pleasures for which they had been abundantly provided, and became confirmed criminals. Your Lord is not such a One as to destroy the habitations without just cause, the while their inhabitants are doing right.[115] Your Lord could have made mankind one community had He so willed, but now they will continue to follow different ways but only those on whom Allah has His mercy (escape wrong ways). It will be so because He has created them for this (very freedom of choice and action).[116] And the word of your Lord, that He will fill the Hell with Jinns and human beings, has been fulfilled.

وَكُلًّا نَّقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ ۚ وَجَآءَكَ فِى هَٰذِهِ
ٱلْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

[120] And, O Muhammad, We relate the stories of the Messengers to you to strengthen your heart by these. And you have received the knowledge of the reality through these and the Believers have got an admonition and a reminder from them.

وَقُل لِّلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنَّا عَٰمِلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

وَٱنتَظِرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مُنتَظِرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ ٱلْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُۥ فَٱعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ
عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

[121-123] As regards those who do not believe, say to them, "You may go on following your way and We will follow our way. You may wait for its ultimate end, and we, too, will wait for it." Everything that is hidden in the heavens and the earth is in the power of Allah and everything shall return to Him. So, O Prophet, serve Him and put your trust in Him, for your Lord is not unaware of what you are doing.[117]

1The Arabic word (kitab) has been translated into "Edict" because of the context. For its meaning is not confined to "book" or "something written" but it includes "command" and "sovereign decree" as well and has been used in several places in the Qur'an in the same sense.

2The contents of this "Edict" are firm, strong, and unchangeable: they are well-balanced and measured: there is no tinge of verbosity, pedantry. volubility, poetic fancy and rhetorical exaggeration. The truth has

been stated accurately, and there is nothing more and nothing less than the truth. Moreover. the contents have been given in detail and everything has been made so clear and plain that there is neither confusion nor complication nor ambiguity in it.

3The assurance that "He will provide you with good provisions of life. . . " has been given to remove the misunderstanding which Satan has imbued in the heart of every foolish worshiper of the world that piety ruins one's worldly life, though it might lead to one's success in the Hereafter. Allah has re-assured the true believers that He will shower His blessings on God-fearing people and they will live happy and peaceful lives and will be honored and respected everywhere. The same thing has been stated in a different manner in XVI: 97: "Whoso will do good deeds, whether a man or a woman, provided the one is a believer, We will surely make such a one lead a pure and clean life in this world." Allah has refuted this theory of Satan and his disciples that piety inevitably brings poverty, distress and affliction and ignominy to the person who adopts truth, righteousness and virtue. He has assured that He will make the life of the one who will believe in Him and adopt a righteous life truly successful both in this world and in the Hereafter. And it is common experience that only those people enjoy real peace of mind and are honored and respected who are God-fearing and possess a pure character; who are fair and generous in all their affairs and dealings and who are free from evil. For they are trusted by all and none fears any wrong or wickedness from them.

According to the Qur'an, the provisions of life are either "good provisions" or "deceptive provisions." Here those, who return to Allah, have been assured that they will be given "good provisions" of life and not "deceptive ones". The provisions are "good" if their recipient becomes even more grateful to Allah than before and uses these for fulfilling His rights and the rights of mankind and of his own self. Such "good provisions" snake his life truly successful in this world and also in the Next World. On the contrary, the provisions are "deceptive", if they become a temptation for the recipient, and get him involved in the worship of the things of this world more than before. Though "the deceptive provisions" might appear to be a blessing and a "favor", these are, in fact, a curse and means of some future torment.

4This verse enunciates a fundamental Divine Principle. The higher a person rises in character and conduct, the higher is the rank he obtains in the sight of Allah. That is to say that Allah does not let go waste the good deed of anyone. He does neither appreciate any evil deed, nor detracts from any good deed. Everyone will be given the honor which he deserves for his deeds.

5They were those people of Makkah, who though not very active in their antagonism against the Message of the Holy Prophet, nevertheless were very averse to it. Therefore they did not like to hear it nor come face to face with him, and did their very best to avoid him. If, by chance, they found him sitting somewhere and talking to the people, they would at once turn back on their heels. Or if they saw him coming towards themselves they would slink away or hide their faces with cloth for fear that he might address them and convey his Message to them. As they did not have the courage to face the. Truth, they would bury their heads ostrich-like and make believe that the Reality from which they were hiding had

disappeared, whereas it was all along there and watching their ridiculous attempts to hide from it.

6That is, "It is foolish on your part to deceive yourselves that you can escape punishment by hiding yourselves from Allah Who has full and perfect. knowledge of everything: Who knows the nest where the tiniest sparrow lives and the hole where the smallest insect resides, and provides their sustenance to them wherever they be: Who knows the dwelling place and the final resting place of every creature and gives life and death to them at the appointed time. Do you think that by hiding yourselves from His Messenger, you can also hide yourselves from the All-Knowing Sovereign Who has sent him? Do you think that Allah does not see His Messenger doing his very best to convey His Message to you and you are trying to turn a deaf ear to it?"

7This is a parenthetical clause that has probably been inserted in answer to a question, which has not been cited: if the heavens and the earth were created afterwards in six days, what was there before their creation? The answer is: then there was water. It is not possible for us to say what exactly was the nature of that water. It might have been the common fluid known by that name. Or perhaps, the word "water" has been used as a symbol for the fluid state of the matter before it was changed to its present form. As regards "His Throne rested on water," I am of the opinion that it means: "His Kingdom was over water."

8This enunciates the purpose of the Creation: Allah created the heavens and the earth for the sake of the creation of mankind and He created mankind to rest human beings by delegating to them the powers of vicegerency and making them morally responsible for using or abusing them, just as they liked. Thus it has been emphasized that the sole purpose of the Creation is the moral trial of man and his consequent accountability to the Creator for the use or abuse of the delegated powers, and the award of rewards and punishments. For without this basic purpose, the whole work of Creation would have become meaningless and useless.

9That is, "The disbelievers very foolishly considered the purpose of the Creation to be no more than a pastime in which they themselves were mere playthings. They were so absorbed in their foolish conception that when the Holy Prophet told. them what the real purpose of Creation was and what part they were required to play in it, they would scoff at him, saying, "Your Message is like a piece of sorcery and beyond our understanding."

10This disgraceful characteristic of man has been mentioned here because the disbelievers were exhibiting it at that time. When the Holy Prophet warned them of the consequences of their disobedience to Allah, they would scoff at hire as if to say, "Arc you mad? Can't you see our prosperity and power? We are enjoying all the good things of life and dominating over everything and everyone all around us. How is it that you are prophesying torment for us?"

The above-mentioned arrogant behavior was due to the disgraceful human characteristic which has been

mentioned in this verse. It is this: Man is, by nature, shallow and superficial and lacks the depth of thought. Therefore, when he enjoys prosperity and power he becomes joyous, arrogant and boastful; so much so that he never even dreams of any possibility that his happy condition would ever come to an end. And if and when adversity befalls him, he becomes an embodiment of despair and begins to complain of his misfortune here, there, and everywhere; so much so that he does not hesitate even to abuse God and taunt at His Godhead. But whenever there is a change for the better in his fortune, he again begins to brag of his foresight, wisdom and success. That is why the disbelievers were exhibiting such a shallow and superficial characteristic in answer to the warning of the Holy Prophet. They forgot that Allah was deferring their punishment because of His mercy to give them sufficient time to consider well their absurd attitude and mend their ways during the respite given to them, and not to delude themselves by imagining that their prosperity had very deep foundations and would last for ever.

11Here (sabr) (fortitude) implies another meaning also, that is, "steadfastness" the antonym of shallowness etc., that has been mentioned in the preceding verse. Those "who are steadfast" remain fine and unwavering in their purpose in spite of the vicissitudes of life. They are not influenced by the changes of circumstances, but stick to the right, reasonable and correct attitudes they have adopted. They do rot give themselves airs nor become intoxicated nor over-jubilant and boastful, if they win power, prosperity and name. On the contrary, they are neither subdued nor depressed if they are visited by adversity. In short, they come out successful in their trial by Allah, whether it be in the shape of favor or adversity and remain steadfast in both the cases.

12This is the favor that Allah shows to such people; He forgives their shortcomings and gives them rich rewards for their good deeds.

13In this verse, Allah has comforted and urged His Messenger to propagate the Message without the least hesitation and not to waver in his determination for fear of ridicule or for lack of response from his people. He should convey the Message in its entirety and leave the result to Allah for He has full power over everything. In order to grasp its full significance, we should keep in view the circumstances that necessitated it.

At the tune of this Revelation, the Quraish were the most powerful and influential of all the clans. As they were the guardians of the Ka'abah (Makkah), the religious center of the Arabs, they enjoyed religious, economic, and political superiority over the whole of Arabia. Thus it was quite natural that they should resent and oppose that Message which proclaimed, "The religion of which you arc the leaders is absolutely false, and the system of life you are following is rotten to the core. As you are rejecting the Message, torment of Allah is threatening you. The only way of escape from it is that you should accept the Right Way and the righteous system of life I have brought from Allah." Obviously this Message struck a hard blow at their "superiority" and therefore they were averse to it from the very beginning.

The second reason why they did not accept it was that the Messenger possessed nothing extraordinary

to convince the people of his Prophethood except his pure character and his rational, and understandable Message. Then for the Quraish, there was nothing to warrant a torment from Allah except the rotten condition of their religion, morality and culture. On the contrary, there was "prosperity" to delude them that that was a sure sign of the favors of Allah and of their "gods" and "goddesses", which was a clear proof that the ways they were following were the "right" ways. The inevitable result was that only a small minority of those people, who had sound minds and hearts, accepted the Message and the remaining large majority became hostile to it. Then some of them tried to suppress the Message by persecutions and some did their worst to defame it by false accusations and frivolous objections and others resorted to calculated indifference to discourage it. There were still others who adopted an attitude of ridicule, derision, taunt and mockery in order to make light of it.

The above condition went on for many years and was liable to fill one with despair and discouragement. Therefore the Sovereign reassured His Messenger, as if to say, "We disapprove of these shallow, superficial and mean people, who are trying to make your mission a failure by their prejudice, indifference, ridicule, mockery and frivolous objections. You should go on following the Right Way with perseverance and courage: you should go on proclaiming the Truth that has been revealed to you without the least hesitation: you should never be afraid of propagating the Message for fear of ridicule or indifference: you should go on inculcating the Truth in its entirety whether anyone accepts it or rejects it for it is Allah Who has everything in His power and charge and He alone affords guidance to everyone He considers fit for it."

14Here one and the same argument has been advanced to prove two things. First, the Qur'an has been revealed by Allah. Secondly, it proves the truth of the doctrine of Tauhid. The argument is this:

(1) "You say that the Qur'an has not been revealed by Allah but has been devised and invented by my self and ascribed to Him. If your claim had been genuine you would have been able to invent a book like this in answer to the challenge I have given you over and over again. As you have failed to do so even with your combined resources and forces, my claim that it has been revealed with Allah's knowledge has been proved absolutely, fully and completely."

(2) "Then there was a two-fold challenge from the Qur'an to your deities but they utterly failed to meet it. They were challenged to come to your aid and help produce a book like the Qur'an. As they have not helped you, it is a clear proof that they are absolutely powerless and have no share at all in Godhead. You have seen that they have not only failed in this decisive test, but have also proved to be impotent to defend themselves against the open attacks made on them in this Book, which asks the people not to worship them for they have no share in the powers of Godhead. These things have proved that there is nothing Divine in them and you have made them your deities without rhyme or reason".

Incidentally, this verse shows that chronologically this Surah was revealed earlier than Surah Yunus. For at first they were challenged in this Surah to bring ten Surahs like the Surahs of the Qur'an, but they

failed to do so. Then in Surah Yunus they were challenged (v. 38) to bring even one Surah like this. (X: 38 and E.N. 46).

15This general statement has been made in continuation of the theme of the preceding verses, to refute the false excuses of the disbelievers mentioned therein for rejecting the Message of the Qur'an. This verse says that in general those people who rejected the Qur'an then (and are rejecting it now) were the worshipers of this world and its pleasures. As the root cause of their rejection was (and is) this false creed that there is nothing more valuable than the pleasures of this world and its material gains, there should be no restrictions (like the ones imposed in the Qur'an) on their acquisition. They first made this choice, and afterwards invented arguments (like the ones mentioned in the Qur'an) to deceive their own minds and those of others.

16This is a clear and stern warning to the worshipers of the world. They should know that they will get the full reward for the exertions (whatever they be) they put forth in order to acquire the worldly gains but they should note it well that they would get nothing in the Next World. As they confined their efforts to the benefits of this world, and did nothing to earn the benefits of the Next World, they should expect nothing for the deeds they have done for the material gains of this world. In order to illustrate this, let us take the case of a person who desires to build a palace for himself in this world and adopts all those devices, measures and means which help build such a palace. Most surely, he will succeed in building a grand palace, for no brick will refuse to stick to its place simply because he was an unbeliever. But it is equally obvious that he shall have to leave behind in this world that grand palace along with all its furnishings as soon as he breathes his last breath. For there is no reason why the palace he had built (or done anything else) for this world, should be credited to him in the Next World, if he had done nothing to provide himself with a palace in the Next World. For only those who provide for themselves with the necessary material for a palace in the Next World in accordance with the Divine Law, deserve to get a palace there.

Now a question arises in regard to the logical conclusion of this argument, according to which he should not get a palace in the Next World. It is this: "Well, he may not get a palace, but why should he be thrown into the Fire of Hell? The answer is this (and the Qur'an itself has given this same answer in different places) that the one who exerts and works only for a palace in this world in utter disregard of the Hereafter, naturally and inevitably adopts such treasures and means as help build a large Fire for himself in the Hell. (Please refer to E.N. 12 of Yunus.)

17This shows that even apart from revelation, there is ample evidence in man's own self, in the structure of the heavens and the earth, and in the order that prevails in the universe to prove that God is the only creator, master, lord and sovereign of the universe. The evidence referred to above also inclines man to believe that the present life will be followed by another one in which man will be required to render an account of his deeds and wherein he might be requited.

18The 'witness from Him' is the Qur'an. The testimony of the natural phenomena combined with that

provided by man's own self had already created in man the disposition to affirm the truths mentioned earlier. All that was further reinforced by the Qur'an which came as reassurance that what he was predisposed to believe in was indeed true.

19In the present context the verse means that those who are overly infatuated with the allurements of a worldly life will be inclined to reject the message of the Qur'an. Distinguishable from these are those who take full note of the testimony furnished by their own beings and by the structure and order prevailing in the universe in support of God's unity. This testimony was further reinforced by the heavenly books revealed before the Qur'an. How could such persons close their eyes to such overwhelming testimony as this and join their voice with those of the unbelievers?

This verse clearly indicates that even before the Qur'an was revealed, the Prophet (peace be on him) had reached the stage of belief in the Unseen. We have seen in al-An'am (see 6: 75 ff.) the case of Abraham. Before being appointed a Prophet, Abraham (peace be on him) was led by a careful observation of the natural phenomena to knowledge of God's unity. Likewise, the present verse makes it clear that by his reflection, the Prophet (peace be on him), had been led to believe in the Unseen even before the Qur'an was revealed. Subsequently, when the Qur'an was revealed it not only confirmed what he had already become inclined to accept, but also provided definite knowledge about it.

20To invent a lie against God consists of stating that beings other than God also have a share with God in His godhead, that like God they are also entitled to be served and worshiped by God's creatures. Inventing a lie against God also consists of stating that God is not concerned with providing guidance to His creatures, that He did not raise Prophets for that purpose, and that He rather left men free to behave as they pleased. Inventing a lie against God also consists of stating that God created human beings by way of jest and sport and that He will not have them render an account to Him, and that He will not requite them for their deeds.

21Such a proclamation would be made on the Day of Judgment.

22This is a parenthetical statement. That is, that God's curse will be proclaimed in the Hereafter against those who are guilty of the crimes mentioned.

23Such persons do not like the Straight Way being expounded to them. They would rather have the Straight Way rendered crooked by altering it under the influence of lust, prejudice, fancy, and superstition. It is only after the way that was once straight has been rendered crooked that they will be willing to accept it.

24This, again, refers to what will happen in the Next Life.

25They will suffer punishment for being in error and for misleading others and leaving behind a legacy of error and misguidance for coming generations. (Al-A'raf, note 30}

26All their conjectures regarding God, the universe and their own selves will prove to be absolutely baseless in the Next Life. Similarly, the notions they entertained about the help and support they would receive from those they considered to be either their deities, or their intercessors with God, or their patrons will prove to be false. Likewise, it will become obvious that all their notions about the After-life were utterly untrue.

27This concludes the account about the Hereafter.

28Can the attitude and ultimate end of both these types of people be the same? Obviously, he who fails to see the right way and ignores the instruction of the guide who directs him to the right way will necessarily stumble and meet with some terrible mishap. However, he who perceives the right way and follows the instructions of his guide will reach his destination, and reach it safely.

The same difference is found between the two parties mentioned here. One of these carefully observes the realities of the universe and pays heed to the teachings of God's Messengers. The other party, however, neither uses their eyes properly to perceive God's signs, nor pays heed to His Messengers. The behavior of the two parties is, therefore, bound to be different. And when their behavior is different, there is no reason to believe that their ultimate end will be identical.

29E.N.'s 47-50 of Al-A'araf should be kept in view.

30This is the same thing that has been put into the mouth of Muhammad (God's peace be upon him) in vv. 2-3.

31The same foolish objection was being raised by the people against the Holy Prophet. They argued like this: "You are a man like you eat and drink, walk and sleep and have a family like us, and there i in you that might show that you have been sent by God. " (See E. N . XXXVI).

32The "big" people of Makkah passed the same remarks about those who followed the Holy Prophet. They taunted him with things like these: "Your followers consist of mere inexperienced boys or slaves or the lowest strata of society, in short, of such people as are credulous and lack commonsense and wisdom." {Please refer to E.N.'s 34-37 of Al-An`am and E.N. 75 of Yunus).

33This is to say, "You claim that you are the favored ones of God Whose blessings are on you, and that those who do not follow your way are under His wrath. But the reverse of this is true for it is we who have been favored with wealth, servants and power and you possess nothing of the sort. Please point out

anything in which you are superior to us."

34This is the same thing that has been put into the mouth of the Holy Prophet in v. 17. That is, "At first I recognized the reality of Tauhid by observing keenly the Signs of God in the universe, and in my own self. Then the same was confirmed by Revelation to me" . This shows that all the Prophets acquired the knowledge of the "Unseen" by observation and contemplation. Then Allah blessed them with the actual knowledge of the same at the time of their appointment as Prophets.

35This was to bring home to them the fact that he had no selfish motive in the performance of his mission, as if to say, "I am conveying the admonition to you without any demand or hope or expectation of worldly gains. Nay, I am bearing all the sufferings in the hope that you may at last realize that I have no ax to grind. And you cannot point out anything to show that I have any personal or selfish interest before me in the mission of the Message". (See. E.N. 70 of XXIII, E.N. 17 of XXXVI and E.N. 41 of XLII).

36That is, "Their true worth will be known only when they shall meet their Lord. Therefore it is not proper for you to treat them with contempt here in this world. Maybe they are precious stones-their Lord alone knows-and you are treating them as mere worthless stones". (See VI: 52, XVIII: 28).

37This is the answer to their objection that he was no more than a man like themselves. Prophet Noah admitted this: "In fact I am a man and I never claimed to be more than this. My only claim is that God has shown me the Right Way of knowledge and action and you are welcome to test this in any way you like. But instead of this, you are asking me questions about the "Unseen", though I never claimed to have its knowledge. You ask me to produce such things as can be produced only by that person who possesses God's treasures and I never claimed to possess them. You object that my physical life is like that of other men, though I never claimed that I was an angel and not a man. The true test of my claim is that you should ask me about the true creeds, the principles of morality and culture and not about frivolous things about the future events for I never claimed to possess their knowledge."

38That is, "All my efforts to do good to you cannot prove effective, if Allah has decided to withhold the right way from you because of your obduracy in evil and the lack of interest in good ways. For Allah lets people go astray on the way they choose for themselves."

39The wording of the verse shows that during the recital of the story of Prophet Noah, the opponents of the Holy Prophet might have felt that he himself had invented that story in order to hit them hard indirectly. So they might have interrupted him, saying, "You are inventing such stories as these in order to apply these to us and hit us hard indirectly." That is why the narration of the story has been broken to answer their false accusation.

And the fact is that the mean people always behave like this: As they have no interest in goodness, they

would turn to the dark side of everything. Even if one gives them wise counsel or teaches them a useful lesson or warns them of an error, they would never benefit from these nor mend their ways. Instead of this, they would search out for that aspect of the matter which will not only undo the wisdom and goodness of the counsel but also bring an accusation against the admonisher. It is obvious that in this way, even the best of counsels can be made ' void and ineffective, if the hearer dubs that as a "hit," and takes it ill as an affront. Moreover, their thinking is always based on suspicion and mistrust. Supposing there is a certain story which appears to be true. A wise man will take it as a fact and learn a lesson from it, even if it applies exactly to his own condition and points out his error. On the contrary, a suspicious and crooked man will at once jump to the conclusion without any proof at all that the story had been invented for the sole purpose of applying it to him in order to hit him hard.

The same was the condition of those who accused the Holy Prophet that he himself had forged the story and ascribed it to Allah to make it more effective. Allah has asked him to say to them, "If I have forged the story, I shall have to bear its consequences, but this cannot lessen the punishments of the crimes you are committing for which you alone will be held responsible. "

40This verse lays down the limits of the Divine Law of respite. When the Message of a Prophet has been conveyed to a people and is rejected, they are granted respite from punishment only as long as there is the possibility that some of them might accept it. But when there remains no such possibility and there is left nothing but evil element among them, Allah does not grant them any further respite. And this is a manifestation of His mercy, just as for the safety of the good fruit the rotten ones should be thrown away and discarded. Conversely, it shall be an act of cruelty to the good people and the future generations, if pity is shown to those wicked people who are incorrigible.

41This is a very appropriate example of the points of view of those who look merely at the surface of things and of others who know the reality about them. It appears that when Prophet Noah was building the Ark on the land, it looked to be a ridiculous act to those wicked people who did not believe in him. They jeered at him as if to say, "Just see the madness of the old man! He wishes to float a ship on the land!" For they could never imagine that after a few days, a ship would actually float there. Therefore naturally they regarded that act of Prophet Noah to be a clear proof of his madness. Probably they might be pointing them fingers at him and the Ark he was constructing, saying to one another, "Have you any doubt now, if you had any before, that he is really a mad man, who is constructing a ship to float on the waterless land?" But the one, who had the knowledge of the reality and who knew that a ship would actually be needed there in the near future, was laughing at their ignorance and lack of knowledge of the real matter and their arrogant self-satisfaction, as if to say, "How foolish these people are! The catastrophe is threatening them overhead but they are not only self-satisfied but also regard me mad, who has warned them of it and who is himself making preparations to meet it." And these are exactly the two ways, in general, of judging the wisdom or folly of things. One man judges an act to be wise by looking merely at the surface, while the other goes down deep into it and knows it to be foolish. Likewise the former considers an act to be foolish and mad while the latter who has the real knowledge of the

matter, knows that it is based on wisdom and foresight, and is the very same thing that was required undo the circumstances.

42Different interpretations have been given of this, but we are of the opinion that the correct one is the one that is based on the plain words of the Text. The Deluge started from At-Tannur, a particular oven from under which water began to boil up. At the same time heavy rain began to fall and springs began to gush up water from many places in the earth. This is given in detail in vv. 11-12 of Surah Al-Qamar: "We opened the gates of the sky from which it began to rain heavily and constantly, and We tore open the earth and springs began to gush forth water from every side: Thus the two kinds of water gathered together to fulfill the destined doom."

In this connection, it should also be noted that the prefix (al) (the) before (tannur), oven, shows that a particular oven had been specifically marked by God for the purpose of starting the Deluge. This began to boil up water as soon as it was commanded to do so, and afterwards it began to be called (The Oven). It has been explicitly stated in v. 7 of XXIII that the said Tannur was specified before hand.

43That is, "Don't embark in the Ark those who had specifically been marked as unbelievers from your household, for they do not deserve to be shown Our Compassion. Most probably they were two persons. One was his son who was drowned (v. 43), and the other was his wife: (LXVI: 10). And if there were any others, they have not been mentioned in the Qur'an.

44Incidentally, this refutes the theory of the historians and genealogists who trace the genealogy of the whole human race to the three sons of Prophet Noah. This wrong theory became prevalent because of the stories in the Bible that none other than Prophet Noah, his three sons and his wife were rescued from the deluge. (Genesis 6: 18, 7: 7, 9, and 9: 19). But the Qur'an contradicts this in many places, saying that besides the people of his own household, sane other people of his community, though small in number, were also rescued along with him. Moreover, the Qur'an declares that the generations which came after Prophet Noah were his descendants and of all those people who were rescued in the Ark: "You are the descendants of those whom We bore in the Ark with Noah-- (XVII: 3) " . . . . they were from the descendants of Adam, and from the seed of those whom we carried in the Ark with Noah...." (XIX: 58).

45This humility shown by Prophet Noah that his delivery from the Deluge was not due to his own plans, measures and efforts but to the Mercy and Compassion of his Lord, who is most Forgiving, is the true characteristic of a Believer The Servant of God adopts all necessary measures as a man of the world does, but he does not put his trust in those measures alone. Along with these he puts his trust in his Lord for their success, because he knows well that no measure can be adopted without His sanction, nor can it be put into practice nor can it achieve the required object unless it is helped by the Compassion and Favor of Allah.

46According to the Qur'an, the Ark rested upon Mount Judi, which is situated to the North-east of Jazirah Ibn 'Umar in Kurdistan. But according to the Bible its resting place was Mount Ararat in Armenia, which is one of the ranges of mountains of tire same name that extends from Armenia to southern Kurdistan. Mount Judi is one of the mountains of the Ararat range, and is known by the same name even today. The ancient histories confirm that the resting place of the Ark was Mount Judi. For instance, Berasus, a religious leader of Babylonia, who lived about 250 years before Christ, says in his history of the Chaldeans that Noah's Ark rested upon Mount Judi. Abydenus, a pupil of Aristotle, not only confirms the same but also says that many people of `Iraq of his time possessed pieces of the Ark, which they ground in water and gave to the sick as a medicine.

Now let us consider the question: Did the Deluge mentioned here cover the whole earth or was it confined to that particular region where Prophet Noah lived? This is a question which has not been finally settled up to this day. As far as the Bible and the Israelite traditions are concerned, this was universal. (Genesis 7: 18-24). But the Qur'an is silent about it, though it does say things which show that the whole human race after the Deluge was the descendant of Prophet Noah and of those with him in the Ark, but this does not mean that the Deluge covered all the earth. It may be explained like this: at that time of the history the only region of the earth, which was inhabited by the human race, was the region in which Noah lived, and the generations which came after the Deluge, gradually spread over other parts of the earth. This theory is supported by two things. First, there is a conclusive proof that a great flood did come over the land of the Tigris and the Euphrates. This is confirmed by historical traditions, archaeological remains and geological evidence. But there are no such proofs in the other parts of the earth as might show that the Deluge was universal. Secondly, traditions have come down to almost all the peoples of the earth living even in distant places like America and Australia, that once a great flood had come all over the earth. The only conclusion which can be drawn from the above is that at one time the forefathers of all the people of the earth lived at one place. But, when afterwards they spread over different lands in the earth; they carried the traditions of the Deluge along with them. (Please refer to E.N. 47 of Al-A'araf).

47That is, "Thou promised that Thou wilt save the members of my family from this calamity; so save my son for he is also a member of my family."

48That is, "Thou art the greatest of all rulers: therefore Thy decision is final and there can be no appeal against it." And "Thou art the best of all rulers: therefore all Thy decisions are based on perfect knowledge and absolute justice."

49Allah has called the wicked son of Prophet Noah "a worthless act", for children are entrusted by the Creator to the care of parents so that they may bring them up and train them to become "good persons" and fulfill the purpose for which He created man. If a father does his very best to "process" and turn the child into a righteous person, but fails in his efforts, the child, who was a sort of raw material in his hands, would be likened to a "worthless act". It is obvious that the wicked son was a "worthless act", for he was not the sort of "good work" which his father had desired him to be. So in this sense he did not belong to

the family of Prophet Noah, whom the Creator had sent to mold all his people into "Good acts", especially those who were of his own flesh and blood. Thus that unrighteous son had forfeited all the rights of blood he had with the Prophet as far as the torment of "the Deluge" was concerned.

Now let us consider the other question: Why was not the request of the Prophet regarding his own flesh and blood granted? The answer is this: If any part of the body of a man becomes so rotten that the surgeon is of the definite opinion that that part must be cut off for the sake of the safety of the rest of the body, the surgeon will not comply with the request of the man not to cut that part of his body, but will say, "It is not a part of your body because it is rotten." This will not, however, mean that it was never actually a part of the body but will imply only this: "As it has ceased to function tightly as a part of the body, it is no more a part of the body in the sense and for the purpose the healthy parts of the body ace its parts" . Likewise, when it was said to Prophet Noah, "He is not of your family," it did not negate the fact that he was from his loins but implied, "He does not deserve to be treated as a member of your righteous family because of his spoiled morals and conduct. As the torment of the Deluge has been brought about to punish those who had sided with the unbelievers in the conflict of kufr and Faith, your son does not deserve to be rescued from it along with the believers. Had it been a conflict between your descendants and those of the unbelievers, the result would have been different, but this being a conflict between the righteous and the unrighteous, the former alone will be delivered from it."

The epithet, "a worthless act", has been purposely applied to the son of Noah, for it is very meaningful. It points to the two different objects that the parents have in view in bringing up their children. Those parents who look merely at the surface of things, bring up and love their children because they are from their loins or their wombs, irrespective of the fact whether they are righteous or unrighteous. But this epithet requires the believers to look upon their children as "pieces of work" entrusted to them in a natural way by their Creator, so that they should prepare and mold them so as to fulfill the object for which Allah has created man. Therefore, if a certain parent fails in his efforts to mold his child in a way to fulfill the very object for which the child was entrusted to him and the latter becomes a servant of Satan instead of his Lord, the parent should regard all his efforts for the child to have gone utterly waste. In that case there is no reason why that parent should have any consideration for that "worthless act".

As a corollary to the above, the same rule will apply to the other relationships of a believer. As a believer is one who believes in certain creeds and behaviors, all his relationships with the other people will be determined by those creeds and behaviors. If his blood relations have the qualities of a believer, their relationship with him becomes doubly stronger. But if they are void of the qualities of a believer; the believer will confine his relationship with them only to the extent of blood relationships and will have no spiritual relationship with them. Consequently, if such a relative comes face to face with the believer in the conflict between kufr and the Faith, the believer should fight with him just as he would with any other unbeliever.

50This warning from his Lord does not mean that Prophet Noah was suffering from the lack of "Faith" or

that his Faith had any tinge of weakness or that he had beliefs like those of the ignorant people. His response to this is rather a proof of his high moral character. As Noah was like the other Prophets, a human being, he also suffered from the common human weakness, that is, natural parental love for children. So he begged his Lord to deliver his son from the Deluge. Allah admonished him because the high character of a Prophet demanded that he ought not to have made such a request even for his own flesh and blood. That is why no sooner was the warning administered w him than he realized that he had come down from the high position of a Prophet to the level of a mere father because of the critical psychological human weakness. Therefore immediately after the warning, he repented of his weakness, and behaved as if his own son had not been drowned in the Deluge a moment before this. This character shown by him is a clear proof that he was a true Prophet. He returned to the same height and meekly asked his Lord's forgiveness for showing any concern for his own son who had forsaken the Truth and sided with falsehood.

51The Qur'an has cited the story of the drowning of the son of Prophet Noah to bring home to the people that Allah's decrees are absolutely just and final.

This also served as a warning to the Quraish who considered themselves to be immune from the torment of Allah simply because they were the descendants of Prophet Abraham, and had several gods and goddesses as their interceders. Likewise it was a warning to the Jews and the Christians who cherished, and still cherish, such beliefs, nay, even to those Muslims, who foolishly believe that their saintly ancestors and holy people will guard them against the consequences of the justice of Allah. For the tragic scene depicted here categorically refutes such false expectations and beliefs, saying, "O foolish people ! Why do you cherish such false hopes? When Our Prophet Noah could not save his son who was drowned before his very eyes, and his prayer for the son was not only rejected but he was rebuked for making such a prayer, how can you then expect that anyone much less than a Prophet can deliver you from the justice of Allah?"

52That is, go down from the Mountain on which the Ark is resting.

53That is, "You and your companions will come out successful at the end of the conflict just as Prophet Noah and his companions did. For this is the Divine Law that those who exert for the right cause, avoiding erroneous ways for fear of Allah, should come out successful in the end, even though they should meet with failures in the beginning of the conflict at the hands of the enemies of the truth. Therefore you should patiently bear the afflictions which you are suffering and stand steadfast against the obstacles you are encountering in the way, and you should not be in the least disheartened by the painful and superficial successes of your enemies. If you practice fortitude, you will come out successful in the end like Noah and his companions.

54Please keep in view E.N.'s 51-56 of Al-A'araf.

55That is, "You have forged falsehood about all the deities you worship beside Allah, for in fact they possess no powers and no qualities that might entitle them to Godhead. As they have absolutely nothing in them which might make them the objects of worship and service, you have put in them false hopes that they would fulfill your desires and needs."

56This concise sentence contains a very strong argument: "The fact that you are taking a superficial view of my Message and rejecting it without paying due and deep consideration to it is a clear proof that you are not using your common-sense. Had you tried to understand the matter, you would have found much material for your consideration. You would have noticed that I have absolutely no personal interests: nay, I am suffering hardships, in conveying the Message which cannot bring any benefit to me or to the members of my family. This is a conclusive proof that my Faith has very sound bases which are strong enough to enable me to forsake all the worldly joys and comforts and encounter the enmity of the whole world by waging a war against the centuries-old, established rites, customs and ways of life. Do these things not demand a deep and serious consideration? Why don't you then use your common-sense before rejecting the Message out-right?"

57It is the same thing that has been put into the mouth of the Holy Prophet in v. 3. This is a clear proof that moral values count not only in the life of the Hereafter but also determine the rise and fall of nations in this world. This is because Allah rules over the world in accordance with moral principles and not on the basis of His physical laws alone. That is why Allah has declared in many places in the Qur'an that the fate of a community hangs on the Message which He sends to it through His Prophet. If it accepts the Message, He opens the gates of His favors and blessings for it, but if it rejects the Message, then it is destroyed.

In short, this verse is an article of the moral Law in accordance with which Allah deals with man. Conversely, the other article of the same principle of the Law is that the community which, deluded by its worldly prosperity, begins to tread the paths of sin and iniquity is ultimately destroyed. But if, during its headlong race towards its doom, it realizes its erroneous behavior and gives up its disobedience and turns in repentance towards Allah, its evil fate is changed and the impending scourge is averted and it is given a further term of respite along with blessings and favors.

58That is, "You have not brought a clear Sign as evidence to prove conclusively to us that you have been sent by Allah and that the Message you are presenting before us is the Truth."

59That is, "It appears that you had behaved rudely towards a god or goddess or saint: Consequently you have been smitten with madness and are being abused, dishonored and pelted with stones in the same streets in which you were respected and honored before this."

60This was the refutation of their charge that he had not brought any clear evidence to them. It implied:

"You say that I have brought no evidence to prove that I have been sent by Allah who is a standing witness everywhere in His universe and giving evidence with the phenomena of Nature to show that the truths I have stated before you are absolutely correct. These also prove conclusively that there is no sign of truth in what you falsely ascribe to your gods."

61This is the answer of Prophet Hud to their assertion, "We are not going to give up our gods at your word....." (V: 53). His reply implied, "Note it well that I, too, feel a strong disgust at the gods you have set up beside Allah."

62This is his answer to their threat: ".....some of our gods have smitten you with some evil ....." (compare this with X: 71).

63That is, "Whatever my Lord does is always right and correct for all His ways are straight and just, and the judgments He passes are based entirely on truth and justice. Therefore you cannot come out successful in your conflict with me: for you have deviated from the Right Way and are committing wicked deeds, while I am on the Right Way."

64This is his answer to their obdurate denial: "..... nor will we believe in you...."

65Though only one Messenger had come to them, he had presented the same Message that had been presented by every Messenger in every age to every community. Therefore disobedience to one Messenger has been declared to be disobedience to all the Messengers.

66Please keep in view E.N.'s 57-62 of Al-A'Aaraf.

67This is the proof of the claim: " .... you have no other Deity than Allah" .The argument is based on the fact which the mushriks themselves acknowledged that it is Allah Who is their Creator. Therefore Prophet Salih argued like this: "You yourselves acknowledge that it is Allah Who has created your wonderful human body out of the life-less particles of the earth and that it is Allah Who has made the earth a suitable place for you to live. How can then there be any Deity other than Allah Who may be worthy of Godhead, service and worship?"

68That is, "So ask His forgiveness for the sin you have been committing by worshiping others."

69In this concise sentence, the Qur'an has refuted a grave misunderstanding of the mushriks, which has in every age misled people into wrong creeds. They presumed that Allah lived far away from them and, therefore, was unapproachable like their own rulers on the earth. As the only way of approach to them was an intercessor who alone could receive and present their requests and applications to their rulers, and convey their answers to them, they presumed that there should be some intercessor to help

approach Allah and bring to them the answers to their prayers. Obviously this is a false presumption, which has been endorsed and encouraged by clever people that Allah is out of the reach of common people and it is not possible for them to reach Him and present their prayers and get their answers. So they should search for such sacred beings as may have an approach to Him. Accordingly, they tried to secure the services of those who were well-versed in the art of conveying the requests with the necessary presents and gifts to the Highest Authority. This misunderstanding created hosts of intercessors, and the establishment of the system of priesthood, which has so incapacitated the followers of mushrik creeds of ignorance that they cannot perform by themselves any religious ceremony from birth to death.

Now let us consider the concise answer of Prophet Salih, by which he broke asunder the false presumption of the mushriks. It is this: "Allah is near at hand: so you can invoke His help directly without the help of any interceder. He answers prayers: so you can yourselves receive the answer to your prayer. Though He is the Highest, each one of you will find Him so near yourself that you will be able to convey your request even in a whisper, nay, you are permitted to convey your requests openly or secretly to Him. Therefore give up the folly of seeking interceders and setting them up as His partners, and address your prayers to Him Who is near at hand and answers prayers." (Please refer also to E.N. 188 of Al-Baqarah.)

70That is, "We had expected that by your wisdom, intelligence, foresight, serious behavior and dignified personality, you would become a great and prosperous man. So we had looked forward to the great success you would achieve and to the manifold advantages we would gain over other clans and tribes because of you. But you have brought to naught all of our hopes by adopting the Way based on Tauhid and the Hereafter which is bound to lead us to utter ruin."

It may be noted here that the people of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) have had the same great expectations of him. They, too, had a very high opinion of his abilities and capabilities before his appointment as a Prophet. For they expected that he would become a great leader, and his foresight would bring innumerable benefits to them also. But when, contrary to their expectations, he began to invite them to the doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter, and preach the principles of high morality, they lost not only all hope in him, but began to entertain and express quite the reverse views. They said, "What a pity! this man who was quite good till now has, under the influence of some charm, not only ruined his own career but has destroyed all of our hopes as well".

71That was their argument for the worship of their gods. They said that they would worship them because their forefathers worshiped them. Prophet Salih, argued like this: "Worship Allah....Who has created you from the earth, and Who made it a living place for you." In answer to this they argued, as if to say, "These deities are also worthy of worship, and we will not give them up, because our forefathers have been worshiping them for a long time." This is an apt example of the type of arguments employed by the supporters of Islam and "ignorance". The former base their arguments on sound reasoning, while the latter base them on blind imitation.

72The Qur'an has not specified the nature of the doubts and "feelings of distraction" . This is because, though all of them had these feelings, these were different in different persons. For it is one of the characteristics of the Message that it takes away the peace of mind of all these people to whom it is addressed. 'Though the feelings of distraction are of various kinds, everyone gets a portion of them. This is because it becomes simply impossible for anyone to continue treading the paths of deviation with that peace of mind which one had before the coming of the Message. For it impels everyone to think whether one is following the Right Way or any of the wrong ways of "ignorance". No one can shut one's ears and eyes against the penetrating and merciless criticism of the weaknesses of the ways of "ignorance", and the strong and rational arguments for the Right Way. Then the high moral character of the Messenger, his perseverance, his nobility, his gentle conduct, his frank and righteous attitude and his dignity cannot fail to snake their impressions even on the most obdurate, and prejudiced opponents. The Message by itself attracts the best elements from that society and brings about the most revolutionary changes in the characters of its followers so as to make them models of excellence. Naturally all these things combine to produce the feelings of distraction in the minds of those who desire to uphold the ways of "ignorance" even after the coming of the Truth.

73This is the answer to the preceding question: "If I disobey Allah by discarding the Guidance I have received from Him in order to please you, you cannot defend me against Him. You will rather add to the intensity of my guilt of disobedience to Him. Thus I shall incur additional punishment from Him for misleading you instead of showing the Right Way for which I had been sent to you.

74According to the traditions that are current in the Sinai Peninsula, Allah delivered them from the Torment and led them there. There is a Mount near Jabal-i-Musa, known by the name of Prophet Salih where, it is said, the Prophet took refuge after the destruction of his people.

75This shows that the angels had come to Prophet Abraham in the shape of human beings and had not disclosed their identity. Therefore he took them for strangers and brought a roasted calf for their entertainment.

76Some commentators are of the view that Prophet Abraham was afraid of them because, from their refusal to eat his meal, he had concluded that they had come to him with some evil intention. For, according to the Arab tradition, if some strangers refused hospitality, it meant that they had not come as guests but as enemies to plunder. But this view is not supported by the succeeding verse.

77The wording of their answer shows that Prophet Abraham had understood from their refusal to cat that they were angels. But he was afraid of their visit because he knew that the coming of the angels in the human shape did not bode well: So he was fearful that they might have come to take them to task for some offense committed by the people of his household or of his habitation or by himself. Had it been the

same thing that the commentators presumed, then their answer should have been, "Don't fear us for we are angels from your Lord. " But the answer they gave to remove his fear, "Don't have any fear for we have been sent to the people of Lot (and not to you)," shows that Abraham knew that they were angels but was troubled in his mind as to the reason of their visit in the human shape. This was because the angels came in human shape when some one was either to be put to a hard trial or punished severely for some offense.

78It appears from this that the news of the visit of the angels in the human shape had made the people of the house uneasy. So Prophet Abraham's wife had also come there to know what the matter was. She laughed with joy when she learned that the angels were sent not to punish their people but the people of Lot.

79The angels told the good news of a son to Hadrat Sarah instead of Prophet Abraham because he already had a son, Hadrat Ismail ,from Hadrat Hajirah but had no child from her. Therefore to remove her sorrow they told her the good news that a son, Isaac, will be born to her, who will have a son, Jacob, both of whom will be great Messengers of Allah.

80These words were not used by her in their literal sense as an exclamation of grief and lamentation. She uttered these words merely to express surprise at the news.

81According to the Bible Prophet Abraham was 100 years old at the time and Hadrat Sarah was 90 years.

82The question was posed to her to remind her, that, though people of old age, do not bear children, it is not beyond Allah's power to bring this about. Therefore a true believer like her should not show any surprise at. the good news, when it is conveyed to her from Allah.

83" .... he began to dispute with Us" is the expression of affection and endearment, which manifests the nature of close relationship of Prophet Abraham with his Lord. This helps depict the picture of the argument that the Servant had with his Lord for pleading the case of the people of Lot. He pleaded persistently, "Lord avert the coming scourge from the people of Lot". The Lord replied, "These people have become so degraded that no good was left in them and their crimes have become so heinous that they deserve no leniency at all." But the Servant still persisted, "Lord, give them more respite, even if a little good yet remains in them; maybe it should bear some fruit." This dispute' has been recorded in the Bible rather in detail, but the concise mention in the Qur'an is more meaningful. (For comparison please refer to Genesis 18: 23-32).

84A superficial view of this incident from the life of Prophet Abraham in the context it occurs might lead one to consider it to be irrelevant, especially as an introduction to the coming scourge on the people of

Lot. But if one reviews this in the light of the object for which these historical events have been related here, one will come to the conclusion that its mention is most apt here. In order to understand its relevancy we should keep in view the following two things:

(1) These historical events have been related here to warn the Quraish that they were absolutely wrong in their self-delusion that they were quite immune from the scourge with which the Qur'an was threatening them because of their relationship with Prophet Abraham and their guardianship of the Ka`abah and their religious, economic and political leadership of Arabia. They thought that Prophet Abraham, whose descendants they were, was a beloved servant of Allah and, would, therefore, intercede for them and defend them against any scourge from Him. That is why the graphic picture of the death of Prophet Noah's son has been drawn to show that the prayer of a great Prophet like him could not save his own son from the scourge. Not only was his prayer rejected but he was also taken to task for making a request for his wicked son. Then this second incident from the life of Prophet Abraham has been related to show that, though Allah was very kind to him, He rejected his appeal for the people of Lot because he had tried to intercede for the wicked people, which was against the requirements of justice.

(2) This incident from the life of Prophet Abraham has been related along with , the destruction of the people of Lot for another object as well. The Quraish had forgotten that the Law of Divine Justice had always been operating continuously and regularly and there were open proofs of this all around them. On the one hand, there was the case of Prophet Abraham. He had to leave his home for the sake of the Truth and righteousness and to live in a foreign country where to all appearances, he had no outward power to support him. But Divine Justice rewarded him for his righteousness with a son like Isaac and a grandson like Jacob (Allah's peace be upon them) whose descendants, the Israelites, reigned supreme for centuries over the same Palestine where he had taken refuge as a stranger. On the other hand, there were the people of Lot who were living nearby in great prosperity, which had intoxicated them so much that they lived in open wickedness, totally forgetting that they would be overtaken by retribution from Allah. So much so that they scoffed at the admonition of Prophet Lot. But Divine Justice came into operation at the same time, when it was conveying the good news to Prophet Abraham and decreed that those wicked people should be annihilated from the face of the earth. As a result of this, no vestige of their habitations was left on the surface of the earth. This fact should serve as a lesson to the wicked people for all times.

85Please keep in view E.N.'s 63-68 of Al-A'araf.

86From the tenor of the details of the story as given in the different parts of the Qur'an, it becomes quite plain that the angels came to Prophet Lot in the shape of handsome boys and that he was unaware that they were angels. That is why he was troubled and distressed in his mind, for he knew how wicked and shameless were his people.

87By "my daughters" Prophet Lot might have meant either of the two things. He might have referred to

the daughters of the community as "ray daughters" because the relationship of a Prophet to his people is as of a father to his children. But it is also possible that he aught have meant by this his own daughters. Anyhow this could not have been an offer of adultery, for the succeeding sentence "..these are purer for you" leaves no room for such a misunderstanding. This makes it quite obvious that Prophet Lot admonished them in this way so as to turn them to the females for the lawful gratification of their sexual desires instead of seeking unnatural ways.

88This answer of the people of Lot shows that they had gone to the lowest depth of depravity and openly and brazen-facedly declared that they did not want females but males. This was the proof that they had not only left the natural way of purity and strayed into the unnatural way of impurity but had also lost all interest in the natural way of gratification. Such a depraved condition is the worst form of moral degradation, for it shows that no good has been left at all. Supposing a person has fallen a victim to an unlawful and sinful behavior but at the same time considers it to be a wrong behavior which should be avoided. There is hope for the reform of such a person, and even if he does not mend his way the utmost that can be said about him is that 'he is a depraved person'. On the other hand, if a person gives himself wholly to the unlawful because he has no interest in the lawful, such a filthy person is not worthy of being considered a man at all, and therefore should be wiped out of the earth. That is why Allah decreed that the people of Lot should be completely annihilated from the face of the earth.

89This meant to impress on them the urgency of the matter so that they should get out of the doomed place and should not even turn round to look behind to see what was happening there. They were warned lest they should be attracted by the loud noises caused by the explosions and by the wailing of the people and thus lag behind in the territory that had been marked for the scourge and was to be overtaken by it.

90The doom of the wife of Prophet Lot is the third incident related in this Surah to serve as a lesson that no relationship can deliver a people from the horrible consequences of their sin.

91Probably the scourge came in the form of a horrible earthquake which turned their habitations upside down and the explosion of a volcano which rained stones on them.

"Stones of baked clay" probably refers to the stones that are formed by the underground heat and lava in the volcanic regions. The signs of such a formation are found even today near the Lot Sea.

92That is, "Every stone had been specified by Allah to do some particular work of destruction there, and to hit a particular offender".

93This was meant to warn the workers of iniquity who were engaged in their evil work, as if to say, "You should not consider yourselves immune from scourge as though it were far from you. If it could visit the

people of Lot, it could overpower you as well. Neither the people of Lot were able to defend themselves against Allah, nor can you frustrate Him now.

94Please keep in view E.N.'s 69-76 of Al-A'araf.

95That is, "I have no power over you. The most I can do for you is to admonish you as a well-wisher, but it rests with you to accept my advice or reject it. As you are accountable to Allah and not to me for your deeds, therefore you should fear Him and desist from your mischievous deeds, if you sincerely believe in Him."

96This taunting question was an expression of the feelings of hatred those un-godly people cherished against the religious observances of Prophet Shu`aib and other God-fearing, pious people. They selected Salat as a target of their taunt because it is the first and foremost outwardly observance of true religion which naturally has always been strongly hated by all un-godly wicked people. This hatred may also be noticed today among those who deliberately intend to follow the wicked ways, for they consider religious observances to be the greatest threat to their evil ways. As they regard Salat to be a symbol of the corning trouble, they begin to taunt the one who observes it. For they know that the victim of the "disease" of religiosity will not rest content with his own reformation but will exert his utmost to reform others as well. They fear that he will preach piety and righteous ways to them and criticize their ungodly and immoral ways. That is why Salat becomes the target of the taunts of wicked people. And if the person who observes Salat actually begins to preach the observance of virtues and criticize their evil ways just as they had feared, then they condemn it even more vehemently as though it were the cause of the whole trouble.

97These two things clearly distinguish the theory of the way of "ignorance" from, the theory of the way of "Islam". The way of "ignorance" is based on the assumption that one should follow the way of one's forefathers: and for the mere reason that it has been inherited from one's forefathers. Its second assumption is that one's faith and religion are concerned only with worship, and these have nothing to do with the worldly affairs of life, in which one is absolutely free to do as one pleases. On the other hand, the basic theory of Islam is that every way that is not founded on the submission to Allah is wrong, and, therefore, should not be followed, for no other way has got any proof of its truth from reason, knowledge and revelation. Besides, Islam is not confined to the worship of Allah but it covers in its entirety all aspects of life-cultural, social, economic and political. This is because all that man possesses really belongs to Allah and, therefore, man has absolutely no right to do as he pleases with his possessions.

Incidentally, this demand of the people of Prophet Shua'ib that they had every right to do as they pleased with their goods and possessions shows that there is nothing new about the theory of the division of life into separate compartments, religious and mundane. Some three thousand years or so ago they insisted on this division just as Western and Westernized people insist on it today. And they are absolutely wrong to presume that their division is the result of the `light' that had dawned upon humanity because of the

"intellectual progress" that man has made as a result of the evolutionary process. Thus it is clear that it is not light but darkness which prevailed with the same intensity thousands of years ago as it is today and that the conflict of Islam against it is also as old as that.

98Here (rizq) implies two things: provision of the knowledge of the Truth and provision of the necessities of life from Allah. In the first sense, it refers to the same thing that has been declared in this Surah by Prophets Muhammad, Noah and Salih (Allah's peace be upon them all), that is, "Allah bestowed on me by revelation that knowledge of the Truth, which I already had gained by making keen observations of my own self and of the phenomena of Nature. Therefore I cannot be a party to your evil creeds and unlawful practices." In the second sense, it is the answer to this taunt of theirs: "Indeed you are the only generous and righteous person left in the land!" It meant, so to say, this: "When my Lord has bestowed on me both the knowledge of the Truth and the good and lawful provisions of life, your taunts cannot turn this favor into disfavor. Therefore I cannot be so ungrateful to Him as to declare your deviations to be the truth and your unlawful practices lawful."

99That is, "It is a proof of the truth of my claim that I myself practice what I preach to you. For instance, if I had forbidden you to visit the shrines of gods and goddesses but had myself become the guardian of some such shrine, you would have been justified in bringing this charge against me that I was preaching the Doctrine of Tauhid merely for the sake of ruining the "business" of others in order to make room for my own trade. Likewise, if I had prohibited the use of unlawful means for you but had myself applied the same in my own trade, you would have been justified in charging me with preaching honesty merely for winning good reputation for the prosperity of my own trade; But you yourselves are a witness to this that I myself abstain from those evils which I forbid you to practice and I keep myself pure from those blemishes of which I desire to cleanse you and I follow the way to which I invite you. All this is a clear proof that I believe in the truth of the Message I am conveying to you."

100That is, "Your land is not far from the land of the people of Lot, which has been totally destroyed. It is quite near and what happened did not take place long ago."

101Prophet Shu`aib brought the attribute of love of Allah for His creation specially to the notice of his people in order to induce them to give up despair and turn to Allah for forgiveness for their evil deeds, so as to say, "Allah is not hard-hearted and cruel, and cherishes no feelings of enmity towards His creatures. He does not desire to punish thetas anyhow as if He were to derive pleasure from their torture. As a matter of fact, He inflicts punishment on you only when you transgress all limits and that, too, for the good of mankind. Therefore if you feel ashamed of your sins and repent of these, you will find Him Forbearing, for He loves His creation very much."

The Holy Prophet has explained the same thing by citing a parable. He said, "Suppose one of you was traveling in a waterless desert and lost his camel on whom he had laden all his provisions for-the journey.

He made a thorough search for the missing camel, but in vain. Then, in despair of his life, he lay down tinder a tree. When, lo, the camel with all the provisions intact on it appeared all of a sudden before him. Just imagine his happiness. Allah is more pleased than that man, when a sinful servant returns to Him in penitence." There. is another incident even more effective than this related by Hadrat `Umar: "Once some prisoners of war were brought before the Holy Prophet. One of thetas was a mother whose infant child had been lost. This had made her so restless and uneasy that she would hold any child she came across close to her breasts and suckle it. When the Holy Prophet saw this; he put this question to the bystanders: 'Can you imagine that this mother would ever throw her own child into the fire?' We replied, 'Never'; not to speak of throwing it into the fire, she would do her utmost in every possible way to prevent it from falling into the fire' . " Then the Holy Prophet said. "Allah is much more merciful to His servants than this mother is to her child."

Let us consider the same thing from another point of view. It is Allah Who has created love in the hearts of the mother and the father for their child, and without this parental love, they would never have shown the care and the sacrifice they shower on their child; nay, they would have even become its enemies because of the trouble and inconvenience they have to bear for it. From this it is quite evident that the love of the Creator of this parental affection for His own Creation must be far greater than this parental love.

102They did not understand what Prophet Shu'aib said to them not because he talked to them in some foreign language or because the theme was too difficult or complicated for them, for he talked to them in their own language and his theme was simple and clear. As a matter of fact, they did not understand because they would not: Their crooked thinking left neither any desire nor any aptitude for understanding his talk. And this is true of all those people who become such slaves of their prejudices and lusts as render them incapable of accepting anything against their preconceived notions. For they are neither inclined to listen to such things nor understand them as though these things were not .or them nor were they for them.

103While studying this part of the story of Prophet Shu'aib, it should be kept in view that similar conditions were prevalent at Makkah at the time of the revelation of this story. The Quraish were as blood thirsty to kill the Holy Prophet as were the people of Madian to take the life of Prophet Shu`aib. Just as the people of Prophet Shu'aib desisted from this evil design because they were afraid of his family, likewise the Quraish were afraid of Bani Hashim and refrained from executing their evil designs. So this story was being related to warn the Quraish that they should learn a lesson from the answer of Prophet Shu`aib (vv. 92-93), as if to say, "O people of Quraish! This same is the answer to you from Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him)".

104From this verse and some other narrations of the Qur'an it appears that the leaders of a community in this world will be its leaders also on the Day of Resurrection. If they guided and led the people towards virtue, righteousness and truth in this world, their followers will gather together under their banner on the

Day of Resurrection and march to the Garden under their leadership. On the other hand, if they called people to some deviation, immorality or unrighteous ways their followers will follow them there also, and march to the fire of Hell under their leadership. The Holy Prophet explained this thing in a Tradition: "On the Day of Resurrection, the banner of the poets of "ignorance" will be in the hands of Imra-ul-Quais, and all of them will march towards Hell under his leadership."

Now let us try to picture the march-past of these two processions. It is obvious that the first procession will march happily and joyously, praying for and praising their leaders whose guidance had led them to this happy state of marching to the blessed Paradise. On the other hand, when the followers of the leaders of errors will find themselves in the miserable plight, to which the leaders had brought them, naturally their anger against them will be beyond description. For the followers will march towards Hell, abusing and cursing their leaders, who had brought them to that horrible state of torture.

105That is, "In these historical events there is a sign which will show conclusively to the one who considers this deeply that the torment of the Hereafter is inevitable, as warned by the Messengers. One can also judge from this how terrible it will be. This knowledge will fill one with such fear that will keep one on the Straight Way."

Now let us consider the question: How are these historical events a Sign of the Hereafter and the chastisement therein. Everyone who makes a critical study of history with this consideration that it is not merely a collection of events but also a means of drawing logical conclusions, will find that the rise and fall of communities and nations has been taking place in a regular succession. Moreover, one will find that this rise and fall takes place in accordance with some moral laws in an extraordinary way. This is a clear proof that man is subordinate to the Sovereign, Who is ruling over the universe in accordance with some rational moral laws. Accordingly, He raises up those who keep the moral limits above a certain minimum standard set for this purpose and degrades those who fall below it. Then He gives respite to the latter to mend their ways, but if they do not avail of it and continue their downward march and fall below the limit set for their complete degradation, He annihilates them in a way as to serve as a lesson for others. The fact that these events always take place in a regular cycle leaves no shadow of doubt that rewards and punishments are permanent parts of the law of His Kingdom.

A further consideration of the chastisements that were inflicted on different communities shows that, though these punishments fulfilled the demands of justice to some extent, there was still need of more to fulfill all the demands of justice, for these criminals were punished only for those sins which they themselves committed but not for those committed by the succeeding communities, which followed the bad example left by them as their predecessors. It is obvious from the study of history that the law of retribution must take its course and justice demands that they should be punished for the evil legacy they left for others to follow after them. Commonsense and justice demand that life in this world should be reproduced in its entirety in order to fulfill all the demands of the law of retribution. The just Sovereign will, therefore, bring into existence all those people for this purpose and award them due punishments.

(Please see also E.N. 10 of Yunus).

106This is to warn these foolish people who depend on the promises of Their intercessors that they would protect them from the torment of the Day. They have been warned to desist from the evil deeds they are committing in the hope that their intercessors would not rest content till they succeed in obtaining froth Allah permits of forgiveness for their sinful followers. This is because they believe them to be the beloved favorites of Allah Who cannot afford to displease them at any cost. Then they have been told that, not to speak of wielding any such influence, they shall not dare utter a word except with His permission. No saint, no angel, howsoever high, is so powerful or influential as to speak a word or make any recommendation in the Court of the Highest Sovereign unless He Himself permits it. Therefore such people as make offerings to others than Allah will be utterly disillusioned and disappointed on that Day, for they will come to know that they were foolish in relying on their intercessors and committing evil deeds in the world in the hope that they would deliver them from the torment of the Day.

107In vv. 105-106, the words "the earth and the heavens" might have been used idiomatically to denote the everlasting state of their torment or they might refer to the new earth and the heavens that will be made in the Next World. Anyhow these cannot be the earth and the heavens in their existing state for two reasons. First, according to the Qur'an, they shall be changed on the Day of Resurrection. Secondly, the events that are being related in these verses will happen in the Hereafter.

108This is to emphasize that there is no power that can deliver them from that everlasting torment. Of course, Allah has full powers to forgive anyone He wills or to make a change in the term of the torment of anyone, for He Himself devises laws for Himself and there is no law higher than His Law so as to limit His powers.

109That is, "They will not be sent to the Garden nor will dwell there in accordance with any extraneous law which might have forced Allah to let them dwell therein anyhow. They shall dwell there simply because of His favor. He has full powers to make any changes, if He will, about them."

110It does not mean at all that the Holy Prophet had any doubts concerning their deities. Though these words have been addressed to the Holy Prophet, as a matter of fact they are meant for the common people. What they mean is this: "No reasonable person should entertain any presumption that the people who worship the deities must have been convinced of their miraculous powers, otherwise they would not have worshiped them nor offered gifts to them nor invoked their help" . The fact of the matter is that their worship, their offerings and their prayers are not based on any knowledge nor any experience nor any real observation, but are the result of blind imitation of their forefathers. The proof of their falsehood is that the deities could not save them,when Allah's scourge visited their worshipers who were completely annihilated in spite of them.

111It means this: "There is nothing new in the different opinions expressed by different people regarding the Qur'an. They behaved in the same manner towards the Book that was given to Prophet Moses. Therefore, O Muhammad, do not be disheartened by their rejection of the Qur'an, though its teachings are simple and plain. "

112This is to reassure the Holy Prophet and the believers that they should patiently wait for the consequences of the misbehavior of the unbelievers towards the Qur'an ways. But this will happen in due course as previously ordained by Allah for Allah does not make haste in passing judgment, though the people demand haste.

113This was to urge Salat at three times, that is, Morning, Evening and `Isha. This shows that this was revealed before Salat had been made obligatory five times a day during the Mi'raj. (For explanation, see E.N. 95 of XVII, E.N. 111 of XX, and E.N. 124 of XXX).

114This is the remedy for eradicating evil from the world: "Do good deeds and defeat evil with them. The best way of making you virtuous is to establish salat, which will remind you of Allah over and over again: which will produce those good characteristics in you that shall help you fight successfully against the systematic and united front of evil that has been formed against the Mission of the Truth. This will also enable you to establish practically the system of virtue and reform." (For explanation see E.N.'s 77-79 of XXIX).

115In this passage, the real cause of the fall of the communities mentioned in vv. 25-99 has been pointed out in a very instructive manner. In reviewing their history Allah declares that the cause of the downfall of not only these but of all the former communities was this: when Allah bestowed His favors on them, they abused these favors and were so intoxicated with their own prosperity that they began to make mischief in the land. By and by their collective conscience became so corrupt that no righteous persons were left among them to forbid evil, and, if a few were left, their voice was so weak that they could not prevent them from causing mischief. As a result of this, evil became so strong and prevalent among them as to warrant the scourge of Allah. Otherwise Allah bears no enmity against His servants that He should destroy them without any just cause, while they were performing righteous works. This has been mentioned here for impressing the following three things:

First, it is imperative that there should be some persons who should invite the people to virtue and forbid evil. For Allah approves virtue only and tolerates evil for its sake so long as there is any potential good left in them. But when a community has no righteous persons left in it and contains only wicked ones, or even if there be some such righteous persons in it as are so weak that nobody pays any heed to them, and the community as a whole rushes headlong towards moral degradation, then Allah's scourge becomes its inevitable doom.

Second, a community, which tolerates everything and everyone except those few who invite it to righteous deeds seals its own doom and invites its destruction.

Third, it is clear from this passage that the destiny of a community is determined by the influence the righteous people can wield in it. If it contains such a number of good persons as may be able to eradicate evil and mischief and establish virtue and righteousness, a general scourge is withheld from it so as to afford an opportunity to them for carrying on their work of reform. On the other hand, if the number of the righteous persons in it remains too small to carry on the reform work, and the community does not tolerate them at all and does not allow them to perform their 'reform work, then that community incurs its own destruction, for thus it proves itself to be a worthless community which has no justification for its existence. (For further explanation, See E.N. 34 of LI).

116This is the answer to the objection raised in the name of (taqdir) (destiny) against the principle that has been laid down in the preceding verse for the destruction of the wicked communities. It is this: Why should these communities be punished for lack of a sufficient number of righteous persons in them? Why didn't Allah Himself will to produce that sufficient number of righteous persons in it? Allah has answered this objection, so as to say: "It is not the will of Allah to .bind mankind inherently to a fixed course of life as He has bound the vegetable and animal life. Had it been so, there would have been no need of sending the Messengers and the Books for inviting mankind to the Faith. For in that case all human beings would have been born-Muslims and born Believers and there would have been no unbelief and no disobedience. But it is the will of Allah to grant freedom of choice and action to man so that he may be free to choose and follow any way of life. That is why He has left open both the way to Paradise and the way to Hell for man and given every individual and every community the opportunity to choose and follow either of the two ways with full freedom and win any of the two abodes as a result of one's own efforts and exertions. It is obvious that this scheme of Allah demands that it should be based on the freedom of choice and the option to adopt Faith or unbelief. This is why Allah does not compel a community to the right way if it itself intends to follow the wrong way, and plans and works for it. Allah's scheme does not interfere with the plans and works of such a community. When it makes deliberate arrangements to mold the wicked, unjust, and sinful people, He does not supply it with righteous persons by birth to set it right. Every community is free to produce good or bad people as it wills. And if a community wills to follow a wrong way as a community, leaving little room for the production and the development of the righteous people in order to raise up the standard of virtue, God does not will to coerce it to follow the righteous way. He will let it follow the way it chooses for itself with its inevitable consequences. On the contrary, Allah shows His mercy to that community which produces a sufficiently large number of such people as accept the invitation to virtue, and leaves room in its collective system for such people to work for its reform and purification. (For further explanation, See E.N. 24 of VI).

117At the end of the discourse, Allah has warned the champions of kufr, and comforted the believers, so as to say, "Allah is closely watching the behaviors of both the parties in the conflict between kufr and Islam, and the Sovereign is fully aware of all that is happening in His Kingdom. He is watching and

controlling everything with perfect wisdom. He will reward richly the champions of the Truth and will not let go waste their efforts and exertions. And though He is showing tolerance to the champions of kufr, and giving them respite, He will take them to task because they are unjustly persecuting the standard bearers of the Truth and are spreading chaos in the land, and exerting their utmost to put obstacles in the way of the work of reform. All these things are in the knowledge of Allah and the evil-doers shall have to bear the consequences of their misdeeds, and the true believers will ultimately come out successful."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

12. Surah Yusuf (Joseph)

When and Why Revealed?

The subject matter of this Surah indicates that it was revealed during the last stage of the Holy Prophet's residence at Makkah, when the Quraish were considering the question of killing or exiling or imprisoning him. At that time some of the unbelievers put this question (probably at the instigation of the Jews) to test him :"Why did the Israelites go to Egypt?" This question was asked because they knew that their story was not known to the Arabs for there was no mention of it whatever in their traditions and the Holy Prophet had never even referred to it before. Therefore they expected that he would not be able to give any satisfactory answer to this question or would first evade it, and afterwards try to inquire about it from some Jew, and thus he would be totally exposed. But, contrary to their expectations, the tables were turned on them, for Allah revealed the whole story of Prophet Joseph then and there, and the Holy Prophet recited it on the spot. This put the Quraish in a very awkward position because it not only foiled their scheme but also administered a warning to them by aptly applying it to their case, as if to say, "As you are behaving towards this Prophet, exactly in the same way the brothers of Prophet Joseph behaved towards him; so you shall meet with the same end."

Objects of Revelation

From the above it is clear that this Surah was sent down for two objects:

The first object was to give the proof of the Prophethood of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), and that too, the one demanded by the opponents themselves so as to prove conclusively that his knowledge was not based on mere hearsay, but was gained through Revelation. This aspect has been stated explicitly in its introductory verses and explained plainly in its concluding portion.

The second object was to apply it to the Quraish and warn them that ultimately the conflict between them and the Holy Prophet would end in his victory over them. As they were then persecuting their brother, the Holy Prophet, in the same way the brothers of Prophet Joseph had treated him. The Quraish were told indirectly that they would also

fail in their evil designs just as the brothers of Prophet Joseph had failed in his case, even after casting him into the well. This is because none has the power to defeat the Divine will. And just as the brothers of Prophet Joseph had to humble themselves before him, so one day the Quraish shall have to beg forgiveness from their brother whom they were then trying to crush down. This, too, has been made quite plain in v. 7: "Indeed there are signs in this story of Joseph and his brothers for these inquirers from among the Quraish."

The fact is that by applying this story to the conflict, the Quran had made a bold and clear prophecy, which was fulfilled literally by the events that happened in the succeeding ten years. Hardly two years had passed after its revelation, when the Quraish conspired to kill the Holy Prophet like the brothers of Prophet Joseph, and he had to emigrate from Makkah to Al-Madinah, where he gained the same kind of power as Prophet Joseph had gained in Egypt. Again, in the end the Quraish had to humble themselves before him just like the brothers of Prophet Joseph, when they humbly requested, "Show mercy to us for Allah rewards richly those who show mercy" (V. 88), and Prophet Joseph generously forgave them, (though he had complete power to wreak vengeance on them,) saying, " today no penalty shall be inflicted on you. May Allah forgive you:He is the greatest of all those who forgive" (V. 92). The same story of mercy was repeated, when after the conquest of Makkah, the crest fallen Quraish stood meekly before the Holy Prophet, who had full power to wreak his vengeance on them for each and every cruelty committed by them. But instead, he merely asked them, "What treatment do you expect from me now?" They replied, "You are a generous brother and the son of a generous brother." At this, he very generously forgave them, saying, "I will give the same answer to your request that Joseph gave to his brothers: “...today, no penalty shall be inflicted on you: you are forgiven."

Topics of Discussion

Moreover, the Quran does not relate this story as a mere narrative but uses it, as usual, for the propagation of the Message in the following ways:-

Throughout the narrative the Quran has made it clear that the Faith of Prophets Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph (Allah's peace be upon them all) was the same as that of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and they invited the people to the same Message to which Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was inviting them.

Then it places the characters of Prophet Jacob and Prophet Joseph side by side with the characters of the brothers of Joseph, the members of the trade caravan, the court dignitary; Al Aziz of Egypt and his wife, the "ladies" of Egypt and the rulers of Egypt and poses a silent question to the reader, as if to say, "Contrast the former characters molded by Islam on the bedrock of the worship of Allah and accountability in the Hereafter with the latter molded by ***kufr*** and "ignorance" on the worship of the world and disregard of Allah and the Hereafter, and decide for yourselves which of these two patterns you would choose."

The Quran has used this story to bring forth another truth: whatever Allah wills, He fulfills it anyhow, and man can never defeat His plan with his counterplans nor prevent it from happening nor change it in any way whatever. Nay, it often so happens that man adopts some measure to fulfill his own design and believes that he has done that very thing which would fulfill his design, but in the end he finds to his dismay that he had done something which was against his own and conducive to the Divine purpose. When the brothers of Prophet Joseph cast him into the well,

they believed that they had once for all got rid of the obstacle in their way but in fact, they had paved the way for the Divine purpose of making him the ruler of Egypt, before whom they would have to humble themselves in the end. Likewise, the wife of Aziz had sent Prophet Joseph to the prison, floating over the thought that she had wreaked her vengeance on him, but, in fact, she had provided for him the opportunity for becoming the ruler of Egypt and for putting herself to the shame of confessing her own sin publicly.

And these are not the solitary instances which prove the truth that even if the whole world united to bring about the down fall of the one whom Allah willed to raise high, it could not succeed. Nay, the very "sure and effective" measures that were adopted by the brothers to degrade Joseph were used by Allah for the success of Joseph and for the humiliation and disgrace of his brothers. On the other hand, if Allah willed the fall of one, no measure, howsoever effective, could raise him high : nay, it helped to bring about his fall and the disgrace of those who adopted them.

Moreover, the story contains other lessons for those who intend to follow the way of Allah. The first lesson it teaches is that one should remain within the limits, prescribed by the Divine Law, in one's aims and objects and measures, for success and failure are entirely in the hands of Allah. Therefore if one adopts pure aims and lawful measures but fails, at least one will escape ignominy and disgrace. On the other hand, the one who adopts an impure aim and unlawful measures to achieve it, shall not only inevitably meet with ignominy and disgrace in the Hereafter, but also runs the risk of ignominy and disgrace in this world.

The second lesson it teaches is that those who exert for the cause of truth and righteousness and put their trust in Allah and entrust all their affairs to Him, get consolation and comfort from Him, for this helps them face their opponents with confidence and courage and they do not lose heart, when they encounter the apparently terrifying measures of the powerful enemies. They will persevere in their task without fear and leave the results to Allah.

But the greatest lesson this story teaches is that if the Believer possesses true Islamic character and is endowed with wisdom, he can conquer a whole country with the strength of his character alone. The marvelous example of Prophet Joseph teaches us that a man of high and pure character comes out successful even under the most adverse circumstances. When Prophet Joseph went to Egypt, he was only a lad of seventeen years, a foreigner, all alone and without any provisions; nay, he had been sold there as a slave. And the horrible condition of the slaves during that period is known to every student of history. Then he was charged with a heinous moral Crime and sent to prison for an indefinite term. But throughout this period of affliction, he evinced the highest moral qualities which raised him to the highest rank in the country.

Historical and Geographical Background

The following historical and geographical details will help understand the story:

Prophet Joseph was a son of Prophet Jacob and a grandson of Prophet Isaac and a great grandson of Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon them all). The Bible says (and the allusions in the Quran also confirm this) that Prophet Jacob had twelve sons from four wives. Prophet Joseph and his younger brother Benjamin were from one wife and the other ten from the other wives. Prophet Jacob had settled at Hebron (Palestine) where his father

Prophet Isaac and before him Prophet Abraham lived and owned a piece of land at Shechem as well.

According to the research scholars of the Bible, Prophet Joseph was born in or about 906 B. C. and the incident with which this story begins happened in or about 890 B. C. He was seventeen when he saw the dream and was thrown into the well. This well was near Dothan to the north of Shechem according to Biblical and Talmudic traditions, and the caravan, which took him out of the well, was coming from Gilead (Trans-Jordan), and was on its way to Egypt.

At that time Fifteenth Dynasty ruled over Egypt, whose rulers are known in history as the Hyksos kings. They belonged to the Arab race, but had migrated from Palestine and Syria to Egypt in or about 2000 B. C. and taken possession of the country. The Arab historians and the commentators of the Quran have given them the name of Amaliq (the Amalekites), and this has been corroborated by the recent researches made by the Egyptologists. They were foreign invaders who had got the opportunity of establishing their kingdom because of the internal feuds in the country. That is why there was no prejudice in the way of Prophet Joseph's ascendancy to power and in the subsequent settlement of the Children of Israel in the most fertile region of Egypt. They could gain that power and influence which they did, because they belonged to the same race as the foreign rulers of Egypt.

The Hyksos ruled over Egypt up to the end of the fifteenth century B. C., and practically all the powers remained in the hands of the Israelites. The Quran has made a reference to this in v. 20 of Al-Ma'idah: “...He raised Prophets among you and made you rulers.” Then there arose a great nationalist movement which overthrew the power of this dynasty and exiled 250,000 or so of the Amalekites. As a result of this, a very bigoted dynasty of Copts came into power and uprooted everything connected with the Amalekites. Then started that persecution of the Israelites which has been mentioned in connection with the story of Prophet Moses.

We also learn from the history of Egypt that the "Hyksos kings" did not acknowledge the gods of Egypt and, therefore, had imported their own gods from Syria, with a view to spreading their own religion in Egypt. This is the reason why the Quran has not called the king who was the contemporary of Prophet Joseph by the title of "Pharaoh," because this title was associated with the religion of the original people of Egypt and the Hyksos did not believe in it, but the Bible erroneously calls him "Pharaoh." It appears that the editors of the Bible had the misunderstanding that all the kings of Egypt were "Pharaohs."

The modern research scholars who have made a comparative study of the Bible and the Egyptian history are generally of the opinion that Apophis was the Hyksos king, who was the contemporary of Prophet Joseph.

At that time Memphis was the capital of Egypt, whose ruins are still found on the Nile at a distance of 4 miles south of Cairo. When Prophet Joseph was taken there, he was 17 or 18 years old. He remained in the house of Aziz for three years and spent nine years in prison, and then became the ruler of the land at the age of thirty and ruled over Egypt independently for eighty years. In the ninth or tenth year of his rule he sent for his father, Prophet Jacob, to come from Palestine to Egypt with all the members of his family and, according to the Bible, settled them in the land of Goshen, where they lived up to the time of Prophet Moses. The Bible says that before his death, Prophet Joseph bound his kindred by an oath: "when you return from this country to the house of your forefathers you must take my bones out of this country with you. So he died a hundred and ten years old, and they embalmed him..."

Though the story of Prophet Joseph as given in the Quran differs very much in its details from that given in the Bible and the Talmud, the Three generally agree in regard to its component parts. We shall explain the differences, when and where necessary, in our Explanatory Notes.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓرٰ ۚ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿١﴾

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ قُرْءَٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ ٱلْقَصَصِ بِمَآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ وَإِن كُنتَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمِنَ ٱلْغَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] Alif Lam Ra. These are the verses of the Book that makes its object perfectly clear. We have sent it down as Qur'an[1] in Arabic so that you (Arabs) may understand it well.[2] O Muhammad, by revealing this Qur'an to you, We narrate to you events and truths in the best manner: though before this you were utterly unaware (of these things).[3]

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّى رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِى سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾

[4] This is the narrative of that time, when Joseph said to his father, "O father, I have seen in a dream eleven stars and the sun and the moon; I saw that they were prostrating themselves before me."

قَالَ يَٰبُنَيَّ لَا تَقۡصُصۡ رُءۡيَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ إِخۡوَتِكَ فَيَكِيدُواْ لَكَ كَيۡدًاۖ إِنَّ
ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَ لِلۡإِنسَٰنِ عَدُوّٞ مُّبِينٞ ٥

وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَجۡتَبِيكَ رَبُّكَ وَيُعَلِّمُكَ مِن تَأۡوِيلِ ٱلۡأَحَادِيثِ وَيُتِمُّ نِعۡمَتَهُۥ
عَلَيۡكَ وَعَلَىٰٓ ءَالِ يَعۡقُوبَ كَمَآ أَتَمَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ أَبَوَيۡكَ مِن قَبۡلُ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ
وَإِسۡحَٰقَۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ ٦

[5-6] In response to this, his father said, "My little son, say nothing of this dream to your brothers, lest they should plot any evil scheme against you.[4] Be on your guard, for Satan is the avowed enemy of man. And it will happen so (as you have seen in your dream) that your Lord will choose you (for His work[5]) and impart you the full understanding of problems,[6] and will perfect His blessing upon you and upon the children of Jacob as He perfected it on your forefathers- Abraham and Isaac; surely your Lord is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[7]

۞لَّقَدۡ كَانَ فِي يُوسُفَ وَإِخۡوَتِهِۦٓ ءَايَٰتٞ لِّلسَّآئِلِينَ ٧

إِذۡ قَالُواْ لَيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِينَا مِنَّا وَنَحۡنُ عُصۡبَةٌ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِي
ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٍ ٨

ٱقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ أَوِ ٱطْرَحُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا۟
مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ قَوْمًا صَٰلِحِينَ ﴿٩﴾

قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ لَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ وَأَلْقُوهُ فِى غَيَٰبَتِ ٱلْجُبِّ
يَلْتَقِطْهُ بَعْضُ ٱلسَّيَّارَةِ إِن كُنتُمْ فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَنَّا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَنَٰصِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾

أَرْسِلْهُ مَعَنَا غَدًا يَرْتَعْ وَيَلْعَبْ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ
﴿١٢﴾

قَالَ إِنِّى لَيَحْزُنُنِىٓ أَن تَذْهَبُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَأَخَافُ أَن يَأْكُلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ وَأَنتُمْ عَنْهُ
غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

قَالُوا۟ لَئِنْ أَكَلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَأَجْمَعُوٓا۟ أَن يَجْعَلُوهُ فِى غَيَٰبَتِ ٱلْجُبِّ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ
إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُم بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

وَجَآءُوٓ أَبَاهُمْ عِشَآءً يَبْكُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

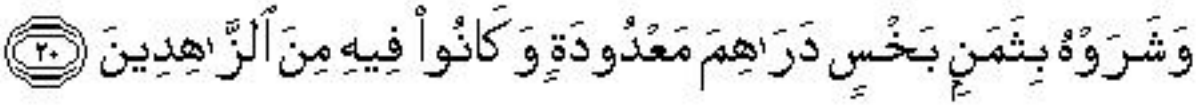
قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَآ إِنَّا ذَهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِقُ وَتَرَكْنَا يُوسُفَ عِندَ مَتَٰعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ ۖ
وَمَآ أَنتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَّنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَجَآءُو عَلَىٰ قَمِيصِهِۦ بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ ۚ قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ
أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

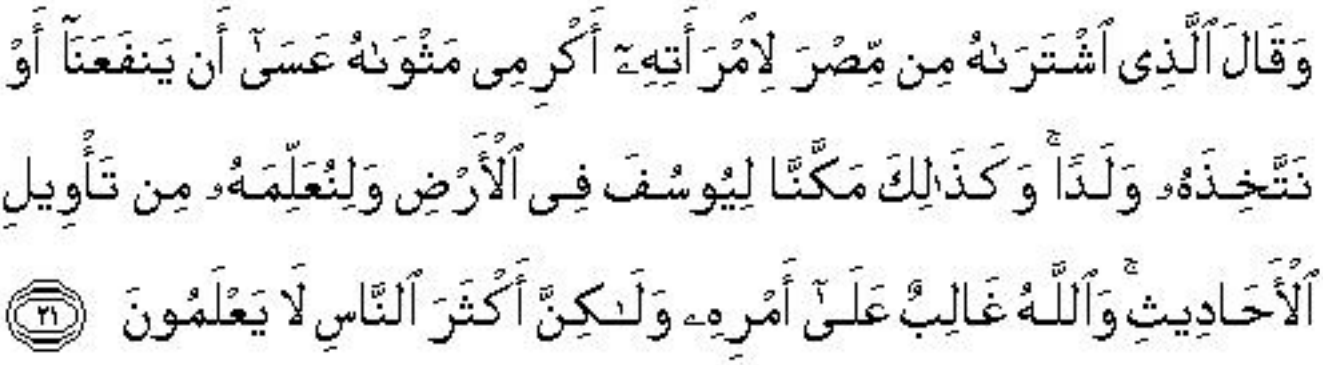
[7-18] Indeed there are Signs in this story of Joseph and his brothers for these inquirers. This is how the story begins: his brothers (held a consultation and) said to one another, "This Joseph and his brother[8] are dearer to our father than ourselves, even though we are a band. Truly our father seems to have lost his balance of mind.[9] Let us, therefore, kill Joseph or throw him somewhere so that your father's attention should be turned exclusively towards you. After this, you should again become righteous people."[10] At this one of them said, "Don't kill Joseph; but if you are bent on doing something, cast him into some dark well. Maybe some caravan passing by will take him out of it." After this consultation, they said to their father, "Father, why is it that you do not trust in us in regard to Joseph, though we are his sincere well-wishers? Send him with us tomorrow that he may freely eat and enjoy sport: we will take good care of him."[11] The father replied, "It troubles me that you should take him away with you, for I fear lest a wolf should eat him up, when you are off your guard." They replied, "If a wolf should eat him up in our company, when we are a band, we shall be worthless people indeed!" When, after persisting like this, they took him away with them, and decided to cast him into a dark well, We revealed this to Joseph: "A time will surely come when you will admonish them about this act of theirs; now they do not comprehend its consequences."[12] At nightfall they returned

to their father, weeping and wailing, and said, "O father! we were absorbed in running races, and we had left Joseph with our things, when a wolf came and devoured him: but you will never believe us, even though we were truthful". And (in proof thereof) they had brought his shirt with the false blood upon it. Hearing this, the father said, "No! your evil souls have made this heinous act easy for you. I, however, will bear this patiently with a good grace.[13] And Allah alone can be asked for help regarding what you are concocting."[14]





[19-20] A caravan came there; they sent their water carrier and he let down his bucket in the well. (Seeing Joseph in it,) he cried aloud, "Good news! Here is a young lad." So they hid him as merchandise, but Allah knew well what they were doing. Then they sold him for a paltry price.[15] a few dirhams. And they did not expect a big price for him.



[21] The person[16] who bought him in Egypt said to his wife,[17] "Deal kindly with him: maybe he proves useful to us, or we may adopt him as our son."[18] Thus We made a way for establishing Joseph in the land and arranged to teach him the understanding of affairs.[19] Allah does whatever He wills but most people do not understand this.

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥٓ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُ حُكۡمٗا وَعِلۡمٗاۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجۡزِي ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ

٢٢

[22] And when he reached his full maturity, We bestowed on him judgment and knowledge.[20] This is how We reward the righteous people.

وَرَٰوَدَتۡهُ ٱلَّتِي هُوَ فِي بَيۡتِهَا عَن نَّفۡسِهِۦ وَغَلَّقَتِ ٱلۡأَبۡوَٰبَ وَقَالَتۡ هَيۡتَ لَكَۚ
قَالَ مَعَاذَ ٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّهُۥ رَبِّيٓ أَحۡسَنَ مَثۡوَايَۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفۡلِحُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ٢٣

وَلَقَدۡ هَمَّتۡ بِهِۦۖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوۡلَآ أَن رَّءَا بُرۡهَٰنَ رَبِّهِۦۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصۡرِفَ عَنۡهُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَٱلۡفَحۡشَآءَۚ إِنَّهُۥ مِنۡ عِبَادِنَا ٱلۡمُخۡلَصِينَ

٢٤

وَٱسۡتَبَقَا ٱلۡبَابَ وَقَدَّتۡ قَمِيصَهُۥ مِن دُبُرٖ وَأَلۡفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَا ٱلۡبَابِۚ قَالَتۡ مَا
جَزَآءُ مَنۡ أَرَادَ بِأَهۡلِكَ سُوٓءًا إِلَّآ أَن يُسۡجَنَ أَوۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ٢٥

قَالَ هِيَ رَٰوَدَتۡنِي عَن نَّفۡسِيۚ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٞ مِّنۡ أَهۡلِهَآ إِن كَانَ قَمِيصُهُۥ قُدَّ
مِن قُبُلٖ فَصَدَقَتۡ وَهُوَ مِنَ ٱلۡكَٰذِبِينَ ٢٦

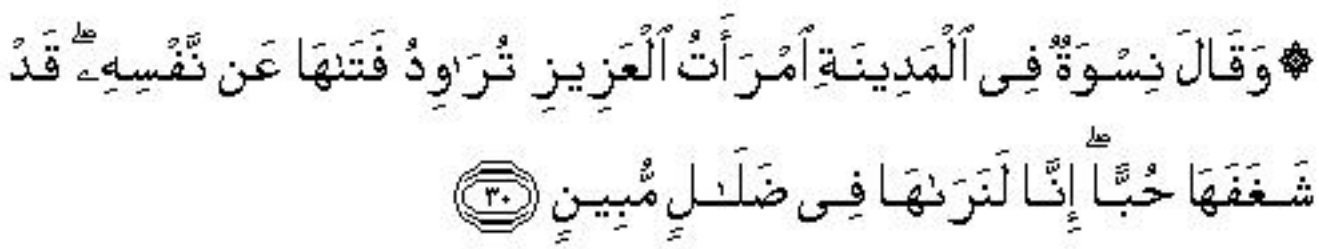
وَإِن كَانَ قَمِيصُهُۥ قُدَّ مِن دُبُرٖ فَكَذَبَتۡ وَهُوَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ
٢٧

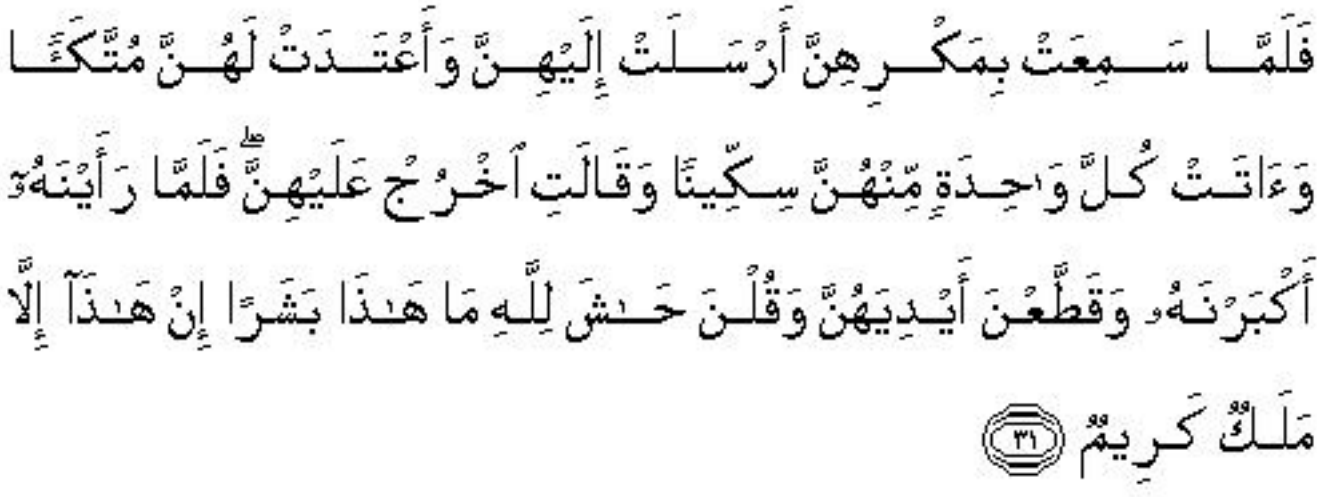
فَلَمَّا رَءَا قَمِيصَهُۥ قُدَّ مِن دُبُرٖ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ مِن كَيۡدِكُنَّۖ
إِنَّ كَيۡدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٞ ٢٨

يُوسُفُ أَعۡرِضۡ عَنۡ هَٰذَاۚ وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرِي لِذَنۢبِكِۖ إِنَّكِ كُنتِ مِنَ ٱلۡخَٰطِـِٔينَ
٢٩

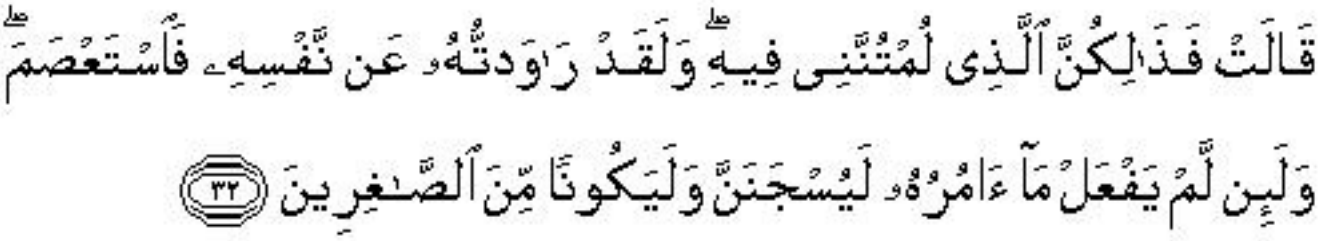
[23-29] Now the woman in whose house he was began to tempt him, and one day she closed the doors and said, "Come here." Joseph replied, "May Allah protect me from this! My Lord has given me a good abode: (and should I, then, misbehave like this?) Such workers of iniquity never fare well."[21] She advanced towards him, and he also would have advanced towards her, had he not perceived his Lord's argument.[22] This was so that We may remove indecency and immodesty from him;[23] indeed he was one of Our chosen servants. At last Joseph and she raced towards the door one behind the other and she rent his shirt (pulling it) from behind, and they met her husband at the door. Seeing him, she cried out, "What punishment does the one deserve who shows evil intentions towards your wife? What else than this that he should be put in prison or tortured with painful torment?" Joseph said, "It was she who solicited me." At this a member of her own family gave the circumstantial evidence,[24] saying, "If the shirt of Joseph is torn from the front, the woman speaks the truth and he is a liar. And if his shirt is torn from the back, she

speaks a lie and he is truthful.[25] When the husband saw that the shirt was rent from the back, he said, "This is one of your cunning devices: your devices are very cunning indeed! Joseph, leave this matter. And, O woman, beg forgiveness for your sin, for you were indeed the wrongdoer."[25a]





[30-31] The women of the town began to talk about this matter, saying, "The wife of Al-`Aziz has been soliciting her young slave, for she has passionately fallen in love with him. We think that she is manifestly doing the wrong thing." When she heard about their cunning talk, she invited them to a banquet at her house and got ready pillows for the party[26] and placed before each of them a knife. Then, (when they were engaged in cutting fruit) she made a sign to Joseph. as if to say, "Come out before them." When they caught sight of him, they were so amazed that they cut their hands, and exclaimed spontaneously, "Good God! He is no man; he is a noble angel!"



قَالَ رَبِّ ٱلسِّجۡنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدۡعُونَنِيٓ إِلَيۡهِۖ وَإِلَّا تَصۡرِفۡ عَنِّي كَيۡدَهُنَّ
أَصۡبُ إِلَيۡهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡجَٰهِلِينَ ٣٣

فَٱسۡتَجَابَ لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥ فَصَرَفَ عَنۡهُ كَيۡدَهُنَّۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ٣٤

[32-34] She said, "Well, this is he concerning whom you blamed me. No doubt, I sought to seduce him and he escaped. Yet if he does not yield to my bidding, he shall be cast into prison, and shall be humbled and disgraced."[27] Joseph said, "My Lord! I prefer imprisonment to that to which they invite me. If Thou dost not ward off their cunning devices from me, I may be caught in their snare, and become one of the ignorant. "[28] His Lord granted his prayer and warded off their guile from him.[29] Indeed, He hears everyone and knows everything.

ثُمَّ بَدَا لَهُم مِّنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا رَأَوُاْ ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِ لَيَسۡجُنُنَّهُۥ حَتَّىٰ حِينٖ ٣٥

[35] Then it occurred to them that they should cast him into prison for a time, even though they themselves had seen manifest signs[30] (of his innocence and of the guilt of their women).

وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ ٱلسِّجۡنَ فَتَيَانِۖ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَآ إِنِّيٓ أَرَىٰنِيٓ أَعۡصِرُ خَمۡرٗاۖ وَقَالَ
ٱلۡأٓخَرُ إِنِّيٓ أَرَىٰنِيٓ أَحۡمِلُ فَوۡقَ رَأۡسِي خُبۡزٗا تَأۡكُلُ ٱلطَّيۡرُ مِنۡهُۖ نَبِّئۡنَا
بِتَأۡوِيلِهِۦٓۖ إِنَّا نَرَىٰكَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ٣٦

قَالَ لَا يَأۡتِيكُمَا طَعَامٞ تُرۡزَقَانِهِۦٓ إِلَّا نَبَّأۡتُكُمَا بِتَأۡوِيلِهِۦ قَبۡلَ أَن يَأۡتِيَكُمَاۚ
ذَٰلِكُمَا مِمَّا عَلَّمَنِي رَبِّيٓۚ إِنِّي تَرَكۡتُ مِلَّةَ قَوۡمٖ لَّا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَهُم
بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ هُمۡ كَٰفِرُونَ ٣٧

وَٱتَّبَعۡتُ مِلَّةَ ءَابَآءِيٓ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَۚ مَا كَانَ لَنَآ أَن نُّشۡرِكَ
بِٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٖۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِن فَضۡلِ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيۡنَا وَعَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ
لَا يَشۡكُرُونَ ٣٨

يَٰصَٰحِبَيِ ٱلسِّجۡنِ ءَأَرۡبَابٞ مُّتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيۡرٌ أَمِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡوَٰحِدُ
ٱلۡقَهَّارُ ٣٩

مَا تَعۡبُدُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَسۡمَآءٗ سَمَّيۡتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمۡ
وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلۡطَٰنٍۚ إِنِ ٱلۡحُكۡمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِۚ أَمَرَ أَلَّا
تَعۡبُدُوٓاْ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلۡقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يَعۡلَمُونَ ٤٠

يَٰصَٰحِبَيِ ٱلسِّجۡنِ أَمَّآ أَحَدُكُمَا فَيَسۡقِي رَبَّهُۥ خَمۡرٗاۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلۡأٓخَرُ فَيُصۡلَبُ
فَتَأۡكُلُ ٱلطَّيۡرُ مِن رَّأۡسِهِۦۚ قُضِيَ ٱلۡأَمۡرُ ٱلَّذِي فِيهِ تَسۡتَفۡتِيَانِ ﴿٤١﴾

[36-41] Two[31] other slaves also entered into the prison along with him.[32] One day one of them said, "I dreamed that I am pressing grapes into wine," and the other said, "I dreamed that I am carrying loaves of bread on my head, of which birds are eating. " Then both of them said, "Tell us their interpretations, for we have seen that you are a righteous man."[33] Joseph replied, "I will tell you their interpretations before the food you get comes to you. This ability of making interpretations is a part of the knowledge that my Lord has bestowed on me. The fact is that I do not follow the ways of those people who do not believe in Allah, and deny the Hereafter. I follow the Way of my forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: it is not for us to associate anyone with Allah as partner. This is Allah's bounty upon us and upon all mankind (that He has not made us the servants of any other than Himself), yet most people are not grateful. O my fellow prisoners, say, which, is better: various gods or the One Omnipotent Allah? The gods you worship other than Him are nothing more than mere names you and your forefathers have invented, for Allah has sent down no authority for them. Sovereignty belongs to none but Allah. He has commanded that you shall not worship anyone but Him. This is the right and straight Way, but most people do not know this. My fellow prisoners, here are the interpretations of your dreams. One of you will serve wine to his lord (the king of Egypt): as for the other, he shall be crucified and birds will eat of his head. Thus has that matter been decreed whereof you inquired."[34]

وَقَالَ لِلَّذِي ظَنَّ أَنَّهُۥ نَاجٖ مِّنۡهُمَا ٱذۡكُرۡنِي عِندَ رَبِّكَ فَأَنسَىٰهُ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ
ذِكۡرَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِي ٱلسِّجۡنِ بِضۡعَ سِنِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[42] Then to the one who he thought would be released. Joseph said, "Mention me to your lord (the king of Egypt)". But Satan made him so neglectful that he forgot to mention him to his lord, and so Joseph remained in the prison for several years.[35]

وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلِكُ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰ سَبْعَ بَقَرَٰتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَسَبْعَ سُنۢبُلَٰتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَٰتٍ ۖ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِى فِى رُءْيَٰىَ إِن كُنتُمْ لِلرُّءْيَا تَعْبُرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

قَالُوٓا۟ أَضْغَٰثُ أَحْلَٰمٍ ۖ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحْلَٰمِ بِعَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[43-44] One[36] day the king said, "I saw in a dream seven fat cows whom seven lean cows were devouring. Likewise I saw seven green ears of corn, and seven withered ones. O my courtiers, tell me the interpretation of my dream, if you understand the meanings of dreams"[37] They answered, "These are the result of confused nightmares and we do not understand their meaning."

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِى نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَٱدَّكَرَ بَعْدَ أُمَّةٍ أَنَا۠ أُنَبِّئُكُم بِتَأْوِيلِهِۦ فَأَرْسِلُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾

[45] Then one of the two prisoners who had been released remembered the dung after a long time and said, "I will tell you its interpretation: just send me (to Joseph in the prison.[38])"

يُوسُفُ أَيُّهَا ٱلصِّدِّيقُ أَفْتِنَا فِى سَبْعِ بَقَرَٰتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ
وَسَبْعِ سُنۢبُلَٰتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَٰتٍ لَّعَلِّىٓ أَرْجِعُ إِلَى ٱلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

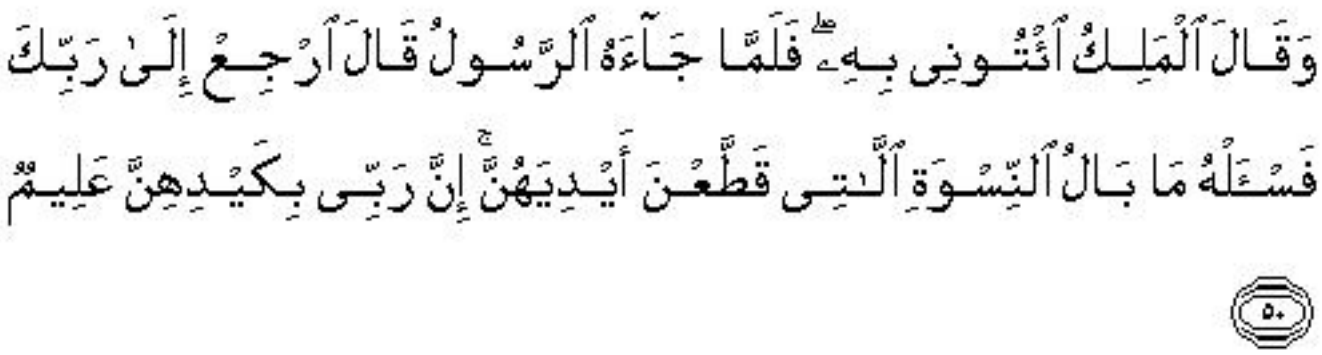
قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَأَبًا فَمَا حَصَدتُّمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِى سُنۢبُلِهِۦٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِّمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

ثُمَّ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ سَبْعٌ شِدَادٌ يَأْكُلْنَ
مَا قَدَّمْتُمْ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّمَّا تُحْصِنُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

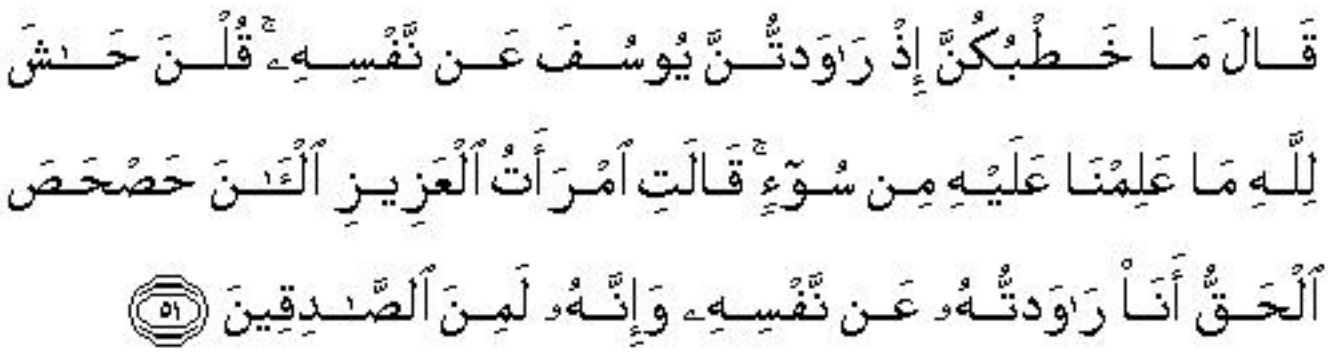
ثُمَّ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يَعْصِرُونَ
﴿٤٩﴾

[46-49] Going to Joseph, he said, "Joseph, O man of righteousness![39] tell me the meaning of the dream of seven fat cows whom seven lean cows are devouring, and of seven green ears of corn and seven withered ones. Maybe I go back to those people and they might understand it."[40] Joseph answered, "You will cultivate land for seven consecutive years as usual. During this period thrash out of the harvest you reap only that much grain that might suffice for your food and leave the rest in the ears. Then, after this, there shall come upon you seven hard years. Then you will eat up all that corn you might have kept for that period except that you will have reserved in the store. After that will come another year in which there will be abundant rainfall in answer to the prayer of the people and

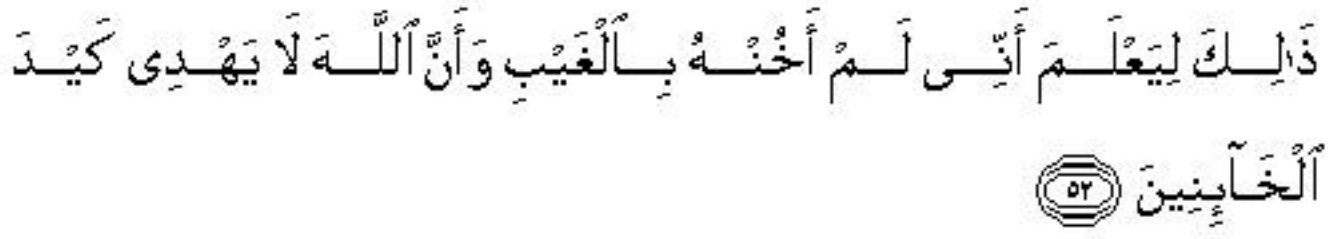
they will press (juice and oil.)"[41]



[50] The king said, "Bring him to me." But when the royal envoy came to him, Joseph said,[42] "Go back to your lord and ask him to inquire about the matter of the women who cut their hands. Indeed my Lord has full knowledge of their cunning."[43]



[51] The king questioned the women,[44] saying, "What do you say about the incident when you tried to entice Joseph?" They all cried out with one voice, "God protect us! we found no tinge of evil in him. " Then the wife of Al-`Aziz also confessed, "Now that the truth has come to light, it was I who tried to entice him. In fact, he is absolutely in the right."[45]



۞ وَمَآ أُبَرِّئُ نَفۡسِيٓۚ إِنَّ ٱلنَّفۡسَ لَأَمَّارَةُۢ بِٱلسُّوٓءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّيٓۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي
غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٥٣

[52-53] (Joseph said[46]) "By this inquiry, I meant to let him (Al-`Aziz) know that I did not play him false secretly and that Allah does not lead to success the machinations of deceivers. Yet I am not holding my soul to be immune from sin, for the soul incites to evil, except of the one on whom my Lord shows mercy. Indeed my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful."

وَقَالَ ٱلۡمَلِكُ ٱئۡتُونِي بِهِۦٓ أَسۡتَخۡلِصۡهُ لِنَفۡسِيۖ فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُۥ قَالَ إِنَّكَ
ٱلۡيَوۡمَ لَدَيۡنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٞ ٥٤

[54] The king said, "Bring him to me so that I may attach him exclusively to myself."

قَالَ ٱجۡعَلۡنِي عَلَىٰ خَزَآئِنِ ٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٞ ٥٥

[55] When Joseph had a talk with the king, he said, "From now you have an honorable place with us, and you will enjoy our full confidence."[47] Joseph said, "Please place all the resources of the land under my trust for I know how to guard them and also possess knowledge."[47a]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ يَتَبَوَّأُ مِنۡهَا حَيۡثُ يَشَآءُۚ نُصِيبُ
بِرَحۡمَتِنَا مَن نَّشَآءُۖ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجۡرَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ٥٦

وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَكَانُواْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

[56-57] Thus did We give power to Joseph in the land: he had every right to take possession of any piece of it that he desired.[48] We bestow Our bounty upon anyone We will. We do not let go waste the reward of the righteous people; yet the reward of the life in the Hereafter is much better for those who believed and behaved in a God-fearing manner.[49]

وَجَآءَ إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُواْ عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُۥ مُنكِرُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

وَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُم بِجَهَازِهِمْ قَالَ ٱئْتُونِى بِأَخٍ لَّكُم مِّنْ أَبِيكُمْ ۚ أَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنِّىٓ أُوفِى ٱلْكَيْلَ وَأَنَا۠ خَيْرُ ٱلْمُنزِلِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

فَإِن لَّمْ تَأْتُونِى بِهِۦ فَلَا كَيْلَ لَكُمْ عِندِى وَلَا تَقْرَبُونِ ﴿٦٠﴾

قَالُواْ سَنُرَٰوِدُ عَنْهُ أَبَاهُ وَإِنَّا لَفَٰعِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

وَقَالَ لِفِتْيَٰنِهِ ٱجْعَلُوا۟ بِضَٰعَتَهُمْ فِى رِحَالِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْرِفُونَهَآ إِذَا
ٱنقَلَبُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[58-62] Joseph's brothers came to Egypt and presented themselves before him.[50] He recognized them but they did not.[51] When he had them given the provisions due to them and they were leaving, he said, "Bring your step brother to me. Do you not see that I give full measure and am the best of hosts? But if you do not bring him to me you shall have no grain from me: nay you should not even come near me."[52] They replied "We will try our very best to persuade his father to send him with us. This we will surely do." Joseph spoke aside to his slaves. "Place secretly in their saddle bags the goods they have bartered for corn. " Joseph did this in the hope that when they would return home to their people, they would come to know of it; maybe they should come back again.

فَلَمَّا رَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِيهِمْ قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَا مُنِعَ مِنَّا ٱلْكَيْلُ فَأَرْسِلْ
مَعَنَآ أَخَانَا نَكْتَلْ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

قَالَ هَلْ ءَامَنُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا كَمَآ أَمِنتُكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَخِيهِ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ فَٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ
حَٰفِظًا ۖ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

وَلَمَّا فَتَحُوا۟ مَتَٰعَهُمْ وَجَدُوا۟ بِضَٰعَتَهُمْ رُدَّتْ إِلَيْهِمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَا مَا نَبْغِى ۖ
هَٰذِهِۦ بِضَٰعَتُنَا رُدَّتْ إِلَيْنَا ۖ وَنَمِيرُ أَهْلَنَا وَنَحْفَظُ أَخَانَا وَنَزْدَادُ كَيْلَ
بَعِيرٍ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ كَيْلٌ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٦٥﴾

قَالَ لَنۡ أُرۡسِلَهُۥ مَعَكُمۡ حَتَّىٰ تُؤۡتُونِ مَوۡثِقٗا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لَتَأۡتُنَّنِي بِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ
أَن يُحَاطَ بِكُمۡۖ فَلَمَّآ ءَاتَوۡهُ مَوۡثِقَهُمۡ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٞ ٦٦

وَقَالَ يَٰبَنِيَّ لَا تَدۡخُلُواْ مِنۢ بَابٖ وَٰحِدٖ وَٱدۡخُلُواْ
مِنۡ أَبۡوَٰبٖ مُّتَفَرِّقَةٖۖ وَمَآ أُغۡنِي عَنكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٍۖ إِنِ ٱلۡحُكۡمُ إِلَّا
لِلَّهِۖ عَلَيۡهِ تَوَكَّلۡتُۖ وَعَلَيۡهِ فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلۡمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ٦٧

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُواْ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ أَمَرَهُمۡ أَبُوهُم مَّا كَانَ يُغۡنِي عَنۡهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٍ
إِلَّا حَاجَةٗ فِي نَفۡسِ يَعۡقُوبَ قَضَىٰهَاۚ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَذُو عِلۡمٖ لِّمَا عَلَّمۡنَٰهُ وَلَٰكِنَّ
أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ٦٨

[63-68] When they returned to their father, they said "Dear father now that corn has henceforth been denied to us, please send our brother with us so that we may fetch corn, and we take full responsibility for his safety." The father replied "Should I entrust him to you as I entrusted his brother to you before? Allah is the best Guardian and He is the most Merciful. " When they opened their saddle-bags they found that their merchandise had also been returned to them. Seeing this, they cried with joy, "Dear father, look here! What more do we desire? Here is our merchandise returned to us. Therefore we will go back and bring provisions of food for our family; we will take good care of our brother and obtain an extra camel load of corn. Such an addition will be made easily." Their father replied, "I will never send him with you until you give me a pledge in Allah's name that you shall bring him back to me unless it be that you are rendered helpless by circumstances." When they had given him their solemn pledges he said, "Note it well that Allah is guarding and watching over this pledge of ours." Then he said "O my children, do not enter the capital of Egypt by one gate but go into it by different gates.[53] However know it well that I cannot ward off from you Allah's will for none other than He has any authority whatsoever. In Him I have put my trust and all who want to rely upon anyone should put their trust in Him alone. " And it so happened that when they entered the city by different

gates as their father had advised them the precautionary measure proved ineffective against Allah's will. Of course Jacob had done his best to avert the fear he had in his heart. Indeed he possessed knowledge because of what We had taught him: but most people do not understand the reality of the matter.[54]

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ ءَاوَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ أَخَاهُ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَنَا۠ أَخُوكَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا
كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

[69] When they presented themselves before Joseph he called his brother alone to himself and said to him "I am the same brother of yours (who was lost). Now you need not grieve for what they have been doing."[55]

فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُم بِجَهَازِهِمْ جَعَلَ ٱلسِّقَايَةَ فِى رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ
أَيَّتُهَا ٱلْعِيرُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَٰرِقُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

قَالُوا۟ وَأَقْبَلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِم مَّاذَا تَفْقِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

قَالُوا۟ نَفْقِدُ صُوَاعَ ٱلْمَلِكِ وَلِمَن جَآءَ بِهِۦ حِمْلُ بَعِيرٍ وَأَنَا۠ بِهِۦ زَعِيمٌ
﴿٧٢﴾

قَالُوا۟ تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُم مَّا جِئْنَا لِنُفْسِدَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا كُنَّا سَٰرِقِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

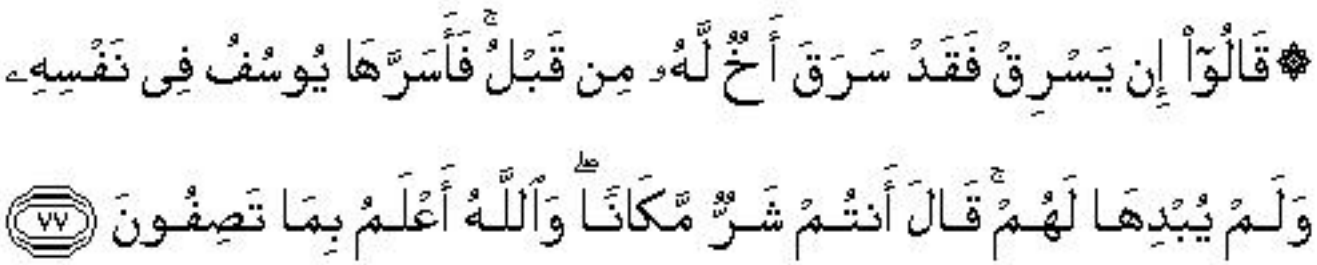
قَالُوا۟ فَمَا جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥٓ إِن كُنتُمْ كَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

قَالُوا۟ جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥ مَن وُجِدَ فِى رَحْلِهِۦ فَهُوَ جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

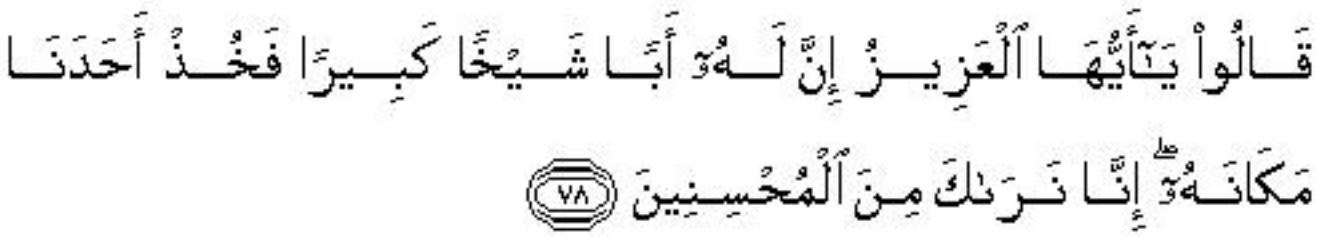
فَبَدَأَ بِأَوْعِيَتِهِمْ قَبْلَ وِعَآءِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِن وِعَآءِ أَخِيهِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كِدْنَا لِيُوسُفَ ۖ مَا كَانَ لِيَأْخُذَ أَخَاهُ فِى دِينِ ٱلْمَلِكِ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَٰتٍ مَّن نَّشَآءُ ۗ وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِى عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾

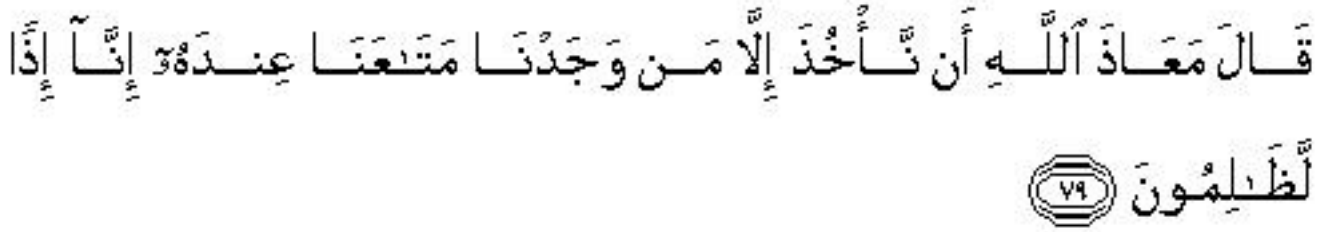
[70-76] While Joseph was arranging for the loading of the packs of his brothers, he put his cup in the pack of his own brother.[56] Afterwards a herald shouted, "Ho, cameleers! you are thieves![57] Turning back, they asked, "What is it that you are missing?" The royal servants replied, "We do not find the cup of the king." (And their headman added,) "The one, who would restore it, will be awarded a camel load of corn. I guarantee this." The brothers replied, "By God, you know it well that we have not come for spreading disorder in this country, and we are no thieves." At this, they said, "Very well, what shall be the punishment of the thief, if you are found to be liars?" They replied, "His punishment should be that he himself be made a bondsman, if the thing is found in his pack. At home we punish such offenders like this."[58] Then Joseph first began to search the packs of his step-brothers before searching the pack of his own brother. At last he took it out from the pack of his brother. Thus We supported Joseph with Our plan:[59] or it did not behoove Joseph to seize his brother (by the king's law) except that Allah willed it so.[60] We raise

high the ranks of those We will, and there is the One Whose knowledge is far greater than the knowledge of all others.


۞ قَالُوٓاْ إِن يَسۡرِقۡ فَقَدۡ سَرَقَ أَخٞ لَّهُۥ مِن قَبۡلُۚ فَأَسَرَّهَا يُوسُفُ فِي نَفۡسِهِۦ وَلَمۡ يُبۡدِهَا لَهُمۡۚ قَالَ أَنتُمۡ شَرّٞ مَّكَانٗاۖ وَٱللَّهُ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ ٧٧

[77] At this discovery the brothers remarked, "There is nothing strange in it that he has committed a theft, for his brother (Joseph) also committed a theft before this."[61] Hearing this, Joseph suppressed his feelings and did not reveal the secret to them, but said only this in an under tone, "What a bad people you are! you are accusing me (to my face) of the thing the truth of which Allah knows best."


قَالُواْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡعَزِيزُ إِنَّ لَهُۥٓ أَبٗا شَيۡخٗا كَبِيرٗا فَخُذۡ أَحَدَنَا مَكَانَهُۥٓۖ إِنَّا نَرَىٰكَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ٧٨


قَالَ مَعَاذَ ٱللَّهِ أَن نَّأۡخُذَ إِلَّا مَن وَجَدۡنَا مَتَٰعَنَا عِندَهُۥٓ إِنَّآ إِذٗا لَّظَٰلِمُونَ ٧٩

[78-79] Then they said, "O exalted sir,[62] he has a very aged father: therefore take one of us in his stead. We see that you are a very generous man." Joseph replied, "God forbid that we should seize any other than the one with whom we have found our property:[63] for, if we do this, we shall be unjust."

فَلَمَّا ٱسْتَيْـَٔسُوا۟ مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا۟ نَجِيًّا ۖ قَالَ كَبِيرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ
أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُم مَّوْثِقًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمِن قَبْلُ مَا فَرَّطتُمْ فِى يُوسُفَ ۖ فَلَنْ أَبْرَحَ
ٱلْأَرْضَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْذَنَ لِىٓ أَبِىٓ أَوْ يَحْكُمَ ٱللَّهُ لِى ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلْحَـٰكِمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

ٱرْجِعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِيكُمْ فَقُولُوا۟ يَـٰٓأَبَانَآ إِنَّ ٱبْنَكَ سَرَقَ وَمَا
شَهِدْنَآ إِلَّا بِمَا عَلِمْنَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِلْغَيْبِ حَـٰفِظِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَسْـَٔلِ ٱلْقَرْيَةَ ٱلَّتِى كُنَّا فِيهَا وَٱلْعِيرَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَقْبَلْنَا فِيهَا ۖ وَإِنَّا لَصَـٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[80-82] When they despaired of moving Joseph, they went to a corner and conferred together. The eldest of them said, "You know that your father has taken a solemn pledge from you in the name of Allah, and you also know that you had wronged Joseph before this. I will not, therefore, leave this land until my father gives me permission or Allah decides in my favor, for Allah is the best of all those who decide. Go back to your father and say, `Dear father, your son committed a theft. We did not see him stealing: we are simply stating what we have come to Know and we could not guard against the unforeseen. You may inquire from the people of that town and from the caravan in which we traveled back home. We are surely telling the truth'."

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ عَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَنِى
بِهِمْ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَٰٓأَسَفَىٰ عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَٱبْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ
مِنَ ٱلْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿٨٤﴾

قَالُواْ تَٱللَّهِ تَفْتَؤُاْ تَذْكُرُ يُوسُفَ حَتَّىٰ تَكُونَ حَرَضًا أَوْ تَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْهَٰلِكِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أَشْكُواْ بَثِّى وَحُزْنِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

يَٰبَنِىَّ ٱذْهَبُواْ فَتَحَسَّسُواْ مِن يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَاْيْـَٔسُواْ مِن رَّوْحِ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يَاْيْـَٔسُ مِن رَّوْحِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْقَوْمُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

[83-87] Hearing this story, the father said, "Your souls have made another thing easy for you.[64] Well, I will bear this, too, patiently with good grace. Maybe Allah will bring them all to me, for He knows everything and all His works are based on wisdom." Then he turned his face from them and cried, "Alas for Joseph! "-He was sorely oppressed with suppressed sorrow and his eyes had become white with grief. - The sons exclaimed, `By Allah! You have not ceased to think of Joseph and now things have come to such a pass that you will ruin your health or kill yourself with grief for him. " He replied, "I complain to Allah alone of my sorrow and grief. And I know from Allah what you do not know. My children, go and make a search for Joseph and his brother. Don't despair of Allah's mercy, for it is the unbelievers alone who despair of His mercy."

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْعَزِيزُ مَسَّنَا وَأَهْلَنَا ٱلضُّرُّ وَجِئْنَا بِبِضَٰعَةٍ
مُّزْجَىٰةٍ فَأَوْفِ لَنَا ٱلْكَيْلَ وَتَصَدَّقْ عَلَيْنَآ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَجْزِى ٱلْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

قَالَ هَلْ عَلِمْتُم مَّا فَعَلْتُم بِيُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ إِذْ أَنتُمْ جَٰهِلُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

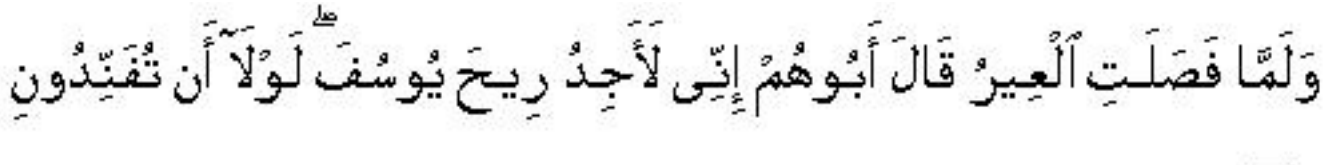
قَالُوٓا۟ أَءِنَّكَ لَأَنتَ يُوسُفُ ۖ قَالَ أَنَا۠ يُوسُفُ وَهَٰذَآ أَخِى ۖ قَدْ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَآ ۖ
إِنَّهُۥ مَن يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

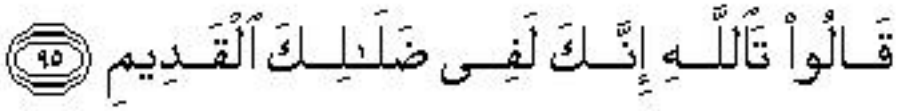
قَالُوا۟ تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدْ ءَاثَرَكَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِن كُنَّا لَخَٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٩١﴾

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۖ يَغْفِرُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ
ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

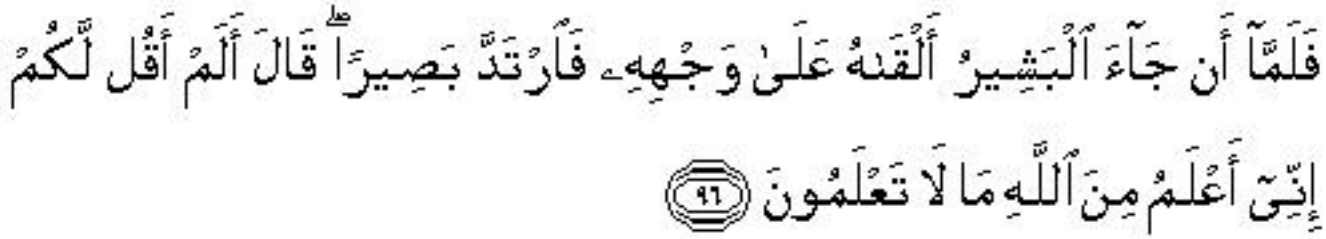
ٱذْهَبُوا۟ بِقَمِيصِى هَٰذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ أَبِى يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا وَأْتُونِى
بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

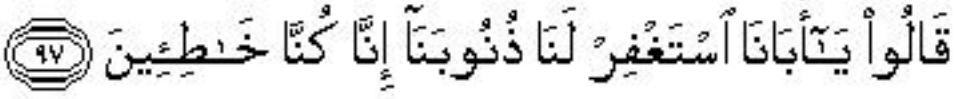
[88-93] When they went back to Egypt and presented themselves before Joseph, they humbly. said, "Exalted sir! we and our family are in great distress: though we have been able to bring only goods of scant worth for barter, we request you to give us full measure of grain, and be charitable to us:[65] for Allah rewards richly those who are charitable." At this Joseph. who could contain himself no longer, exclaimed, "Do you know what you did with Joseph and his brother, when you were ignorant?" This took them by surprise and they cried, "Why! are you indeed Joseph"? He replied, "Yes, I am Joseph, and here is my brother. Allah has been very gracious to us. The fact is that Allah does not let go waste the recompense of such righteous people as practice piety and fortitude." They said, "By God! Allah has exalted you above us, and we have indeed been sinful." He replied, "Today no penalty shall be inflicted on you. May Allah forgive you! He is the most Merciful of all. Go, take this shirt of mine, and cast this over the face of my father and he shall recover his sight. Then bring all the members of your family to me."





[94-95] When this caravan departed (from Egypt), their father said (in Cana'an), "I am surely perceiving the smell[66] of Joseph, though you might think me to be in the dotage." The people of the house answered, "By God, you are still suffering from your old illusion."[67]





قَالَ سَوۡفَ أَسۡتَغۡفِرُ لَكُمۡ رَبِّيٓۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلۡغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ٩٨

[96-98] But when the bearer of the good tidings arrived there. he cast Joseph's shirt on Jacob's face, and his sight came back to him. Then he said, "Didn't I say to you that I know from Allah what you do not know?" They exclaimed all together" Dear father, pray for the pardon of our sins, for we have indeed been sinful." He replied, "I will implore my Lord to forgive you, for He is Forgiving and Merciful."

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُواْ عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ ءَاوَىٰٓ إِلَيۡهِ أَبَوَيۡهِ وَقَالَ ٱدۡخُلُواْ مِصۡرَ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ ٩٩

[99] And when they came to Joseph,[68] he seated his parents along with himself and said (to the people of his family), "Now proceed to the city. God willing, you will live in peace."

وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيۡهِ عَلَى ٱلۡعَرۡشِ وَخَرُّواْ لَهُۥ سُجَّدٗاۖ وَقَالَ يَٰٓأَبَتِ هَٰذَا تَأۡوِيلُ رُءۡيَايَ مِن قَبۡلُ قَدۡ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقّٗاۖ وَقَدۡ أَحۡسَنَ بِيٓ إِذۡ أَخۡرَجَنِي مِنَ ٱلسِّجۡنِ وَجَآءَ بِكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡبَدۡوِ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ أَن نَّزَغَ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ بَيۡنِي وَبَيۡنَ إِخۡوَتِيٓۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٞ لِّمَا يَشَآءُۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ١٠٠

۞ رَبِّ قَدْ ءَاتَيْتَنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِى مِن تَأْوِيلِ
ٱلْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ فَاطِرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ أَنتَ وَلِيِّۦ فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِى مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٠١﴾

[100-101] (After entering the town,) he raised his parents to the throne,[69] and seated them along with himself and all of them spontaneously bowed down before him.[70] Joseph said, "Dear father, This is the interpretation of the dream I dreamed long before: my Lord has now turned that into reality. It is His grace that He took me out of the prison and brought you to me from the desert after Satan had stirred up strife between me and my brothers. It is a fact that my Lord fulfills His designs in mysterious ways, for He is All-Knowing, All-Wise. Lord, Thou hast given me kingdom and taught me how to probe into problems. Creator of the earth and the heavens ! Thou art my Guardian in this world and the Hereafter: Let me die as a Muslim, and join me with the righteous in the end."[71]

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ أَجْمَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُمْ
وَهُمْ يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

وَمَآ أَكْثَرُ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

وَمَا تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ
﴿١٠٤﴾

[102-104] O Muhammad! this story which We are revealing to you is of those things that were not known to you: for you were not with the brothers when they had conspired together a plot against Joseph. Yet most of the people are

not going to believe it, howsoever eager[72] you may be, and may even demand no recompense for this Message: it is simply an instruction for all the people of the world.[73]

وَكَأَيِّن مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ يَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهَا
وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِٱللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُّشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

أَفَأَمِنُوٓا۟ أَن تَأْتِيَهُمْ غَٰشِيَةٌ مِّنْ عَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ
تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

[105-107] And[74] many are the Signs in the heavens and the earth; yet they pass by and pay no heed to them.[75] So, most of them who believe in Allah join other deities also with Him.[76] Do they feel secure that Allah's scourge shall not overwhelm them, or that the hour of Doom will not come upon them suddenly when they are unaware?[77]

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى ۖ وَسُبْحَٰنَ
ٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

[108] Tell them plainly, "This is my way. I invite you to Allah. I myself see my Way in full light and my followers see it, too. And Allah is free from any defect,[78] and I have nothing to do with those who practice shirk."

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالٗا نُّوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِم مِّنۡ أَهۡلِ ٱلۡقُرَىٰٓۗ أَفَلَمۡ يَسِيرُواْ
فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَيَنظُرُواْ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡۗ وَلَدَارُ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ
خَيۡرٞ لِّلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَواْۗ أَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُونَ ١٠٩

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا ٱسۡتَيۡـَٔسَ ٱلرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوٓاْ أَنَّهُمۡ قَدۡ كُذِبُواْ جَآءَهُمۡ نَصۡرُنَا فَنُجِّيَ
مَن نَّشَآءُۖ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأۡسُنَا عَنِ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ١١٠

[109-110] O Muhammad! All the Messengers, whom We sent before you, were also human beings, and lived in the same habitations, and to them We sent Our Revelations. Have these people, then, not traveled in the land and seen what has been the end of those who have passed away before them ? Surely, the abode of the Hereafter is far better for those who (believed in the Messengers and) adopted the attitude of piety. What! Will you not understand it even now?[79] (It also happened like this with the former Messengers: they went on conveying the Message for a long time- but the people did not listen to them,) till the Messengers despaired of the people and the people also thought that a falsehood had been presented to them: then suddenly Our succor reached the Messengers. And when such an occasion comes, We deliver whomsoever We will, but Our scourge cannot be averted from the criminals.

لَقَدۡ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمۡ عِبۡرَةٞ لِّأُوْلِي ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِۗ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثٗا يُفۡتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن
تَصۡدِيقَ ٱلَّذِي بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡهِ وَتَفۡصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ وَهُدٗى وَرَحۡمَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ
يُؤۡمِنُونَ ١١١

[111] There is an object lesson in these stories of the former people for those, who possess common sense. That thing which is being sent down in the Qur'an is not a forgery, but (is absolutely genuine and) it confirms the previous Scriptures, gives details[80] of everything, and is a guidance and blessing for the Believers.

1The Arabic word (Qur`an: "to read") is originally the infinitive form of the verb When the infinitive form of a verb in Arabic is used as a name, it implies that that thing (or person) possesses the characteristics in their perfection. This Book has been named "Qur'an" to indicate that it is meant to be read by all and sundry and is to be read often and over and over again.

2This does not mean that this Book has been sent down exclusively for the Arabs. What it means is only this: "Of all the people, O Arabs, you should understand the excellences of the Qur'an, which are a sure proof of its being Divine Revelation, for it is in your own language and you have no excuse to put forward that it is in a foreign language which you do not understand. "

Some people wrongly infer from this verse that this Book had been sent down for the Arabs and not for the non-Arabs; therefore, they assert, it cannot be claimed that it is the Guidance for the whole mankind. But obviously this is a frivolous objection raised by hose who do not understand its real significance. It is obvious that a book, though meant for universal guidance, will necessarily have to be put in words in some language so that the people speaking that language should understand its teachings and then become the means of conveying its guidance to other peoples. This is the only natural way of spreading the message of a movement on a universal scale.

3This was to impress indirectly on the unbelievers of Makkah the fact that the Messenger did not know anything about the story of the settlement of the Israelites in Egypt, but was being informed of this by Revelation from Allah. This introduction was necessary because, as has been stated in the preface to this Surah, the disbelievers had put an abrupt question concerning this matter in order to "expose" the Holy Prophet by this test. The answer is to this effect: "Tell them, O Muhammad, that, though you did not know anything about the settlement of the Israelites in Egypt before this, you have now received a Revelation about this from Us."

4As the meanings of the dream were quite obvious, Prophet Jacob had a genuine fear that Joseph's ten step-brothers would become all the more envious of him when they would hear this: So he warned his righteous son not to mention his dream to his brothers, for he knew that those sons of his did not bear the moral character worthy of the sons of a Prophet, and, therefore, they were up to any evil design against him out of mere envy. As regards the dream, the "sun" in it was Prophet Jacob, the "moon" his wife, (Prophet Joseph's step-mother) and the "eleven stars" his eleven brothers.

5That is, "Bless him with Prophethood."

6The Arabic words of the Text do not mean merely "the interpretation of dreams", as has been generally understood. They are comprehensive and imply also this: "Allah will bless you with the full understanding of the problems of life and their solutions and will give you the insight to reach at the reality of every

matter."

7Here it should be noted that the response of Prophet Jacob to the dream of Prophet Joseph, according to the Bible and the Talmud, was quite different froth this: "And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" (Gen. 37: 10). Even a little thinking will help one to arrive at the conclusion that his reaction as narrated in the Qur'an is worthy of the high character of Prophet Jacob and not the one found in the Bible and the Talmud. For Prophet Joseph had not expressed any personal ambition of his but merely narrated Iris dream. If the dream was a true one, and it is obvious that Prophet Jacob interpreted it, believing it to be true, there was no reason why he should rebuke his own son, for it meant that it was the will of God and no his own ambition that he should one day rise to a high rank. Can then one expect from any reasonable person, not to mention a Prophet, that he would take it ill and rebuke the one who dreamed such a dream? And can there ever be such a noble "father" who would say bitter and stinging things to his own son for the "sin" of telling him a true dream, prophesying his future greatness?

8This brother was Benjamin. He was the real younger brother of Prophet Joseph, and was his junior by many years. Their mother had died at the birth of Benjamin. That is why Prophet Jacob paid special attention to these two motherless children. Besides, Joseph was the only son, in whom he had discerned signs of righteousness and capabilities. Accordingly, when Prophet Joseph narrated his dream to him, he was all the more convinced of his future greatness, and was perturbed at the idea lest his brothers conspired against him out of envy, if they came to know of his dream, which was self-explanatory. For Prophet Jacob knew that his other ten sons were not of the right type, and this was proved by the subsequent events. Therefore, naturally he was not happy with them. It is, however, strange that the Bible gives a different reason for the envy his brothers bore against Prophet Joseph. They were filled with envy against him because "Joseph gave unto his father their evil report."

9In order to grasp the full significance of the "grievance" the ten sons had against their father for "neglecting" them, we should keep in view the conditions of the clannish life. As there was no established state, each clan led its own independent life side by side with other clans. It is obvious that the power of the head of the clan depended entirely on the number of sons and grand-sons, and brothers and nephews he had to defend the life, honor and property of the family. Therefore, the one leading the clannish life naturally paid more attention to one's own grown up sons, etc., than to children and women of the family. As Prophet Jacob was leading clannish life, these sons of his expected a preferential treatment from him, but the Prophet thought otherwise. So they remarked, "Truly our father seems to have lost his balance of mind; otherwise he could not have neglected us, and loved our two younger brothers more than us, for we are strong young men and can stand him in good stead at the time of need while these youngsters are useless as they themselves stand in need of protection."

10This sentence depicts the true psychology of those people who give themselves up to the lusts of their

hearts, and, at the same time, do not want to break away completely from faith and religion. This is how a person of this type behaves. Whenever he is tempted to do a certain evil thing, he makes up his mind to do it first and puts off the demands of his faith for the time-being. And if his conscience pricks him, he tries to soothe it, saying, "Have a little patience. Let me first do this evil thing, which is an obstacle in my way. Then I will repent and become as good as Thou desirest to see me." As the brothers of Prophet Joseph belonged to this type, they soothed their pricking consciences, saying, "After doing away with Joseph, who is the chief obstacle in our way, we will again become righteous."

11In this thing also the Qur'an differs from the Bible and the Talmud, according to which it was not the brothers, who requested their father to send Joseph with them but Prophet Jacob himself sent him with an errand to Shechem, where they were feeding their father's flocks. Obviously the version of the Qur'an is more realistic, for Prophet Jacob could never have thought of sending his beloved son with there, because he knew it full well that they were envious of him, and sending him there would have been sending Joseph deliberately into the jaws of death.

12The Arabic words ("they do not understand") may very appropriately mean three things. First, "We were comforting Joseph, and his brothers were quite unaware of this that a Revelation was being sent to him." Second, "You will let them know of this evil act of theirs in such circumstances that they can never even imagine you to be there." Third, "Today they are committing an evil act, but they do not know its future consequences."

There is no mention of this in the Bible and the Talmud that Allah sent a Revelation to comfort Prophet Joseph at that time of his affliction. On the contrary, the Talmud says that when he was thrown into the well, Prophet Joseph wept and cried aloud and implored his brothers for mercy, as if he was no better than any other lad of the desert, who would weep and cry if he were to be thrown into a well. But the picture the Qur'an depicts is that of a young man, who is destined to play the part of a great personality in history.

13The literal meaning of "good patience" which implies a patience that enables one to endure all kinds of troubles and afflictions in a calm, self-possessed and unemotional manner, without complaining or crying or weeping, as is worthy of great minds.

14Prophet Jacob's reaction to the news of Joseph's death, as depicted in the Qur'an, is also different from that given in the Bible and the Talmud. According to them he was upset by the sad news and behaved like an ordinary father. The Bible says, "And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins. And mourned for his son many days." (Gen. 37: 34). And the Talmud says that at the sad news Jacob gave himself up to the abandonment of grief, and lay with his face to the ground.... and refused to be comforted, and cried, 'Some wild beast has devoured Joseph and I shall never see him more'; and he mourned for Joseph for many years. (The Talmud, H. Polano, pp. 78, 79).

When we contrast this picture with the one depicted in the Qur'an, we clearly see that the Qur'anic picture is that of a dignified and great personality. He is not upset in the least at hearing the sad news of his beloved son but at once gets to the bottom of the matter, and tells the envious brothers, "Your tale is false and fabricated." Then he shows "good patience" as a Prophet should and puts his trust in the help of God. "

15Though the matter of the disposal of Prophet Joseph by his brothers was simple, the Bible has made this very complicated. It is obvious that the brothers threw Joseph into the well and went away. Afterwards a caravan came there and pulled him out and carried him to Egypt where they sold him. But the Bible says that the brothers cast him into a pit: then a company of Ishmaelites came there and they agreed to sell him to them. But in the meantime the Midianite merchantmen had drawn and lifted up Joseph and sold him to the Ishmaelites who brought him into Egypt. (Gen. 37: 25-28). But the authors of the Bible forget this sale transaction and further on in v. 36 say that Prophet Joseph was sold in Egypt by the Midianites and not by the Ishmaelites as stated in v. 28. But the Talmudic version of the matter is a little different from this. It says that the Midianites drew Joseph up from the pit and carried him along with them. As they passed by, the sons of Jacob saw Joseph with them and accused them of stealing their slave. At this a furious quarrel arose and they were ready to enter upon a bloody fray. But a bargain was concluded and the sons of Jacob sold their brother to the Midianites for twenty pieces of silver, who afterwards sold him to the Ishmaelites for the same amount. Then the Ishmaelites took him into Egypt and sold him there. Incidentally, it is this Talmudic version that has given rise to the tradition among some Muslims that the brothers of Joseph had sold him. But it should be noted that the Qur'an does not confirm this tradition.

16According to the Bible his name was Potiphar. But the Qur'an mentions him merely by the title (Al-'Aziz). As the Qur'an uses the same title for Prophet Joseph, when he rose to a high rank, it appears that the person held a high office or rank in Egypt, for the word (`Aziz) stands for a powerful person who cannot be opposed and disobeyed. The Bible and the Talmud say that he was an officer of Pharaoh's body guards and captain of the guard. And according to a tradition from Hadrat Ibn `Abbas, related by Ibn Jarir, he was the officer of the royal treasury.

17According to the Talmud the name of his wife was Zuleikha and she is known by the same name in the Muslim traditions. As regards the other tradition among the Muslims that Prophet Joseph married her afterwards, it is neither based on the Qur'an nor on the history of the Israelites. And the fact is that it is below the dignity of a Prophet to have married such a woman about whom he had personal knowledge that she was of a bad character. And this opinion is confirmed by this general statement of the Qur'an: "Women of bad character are for men of bad character and men of bad character are for women of bad character. And the women of pure character are for men of pure character, and the men of pure character for the women of pure character.... " (XXIV : 26.)

18The fact that Potiphar had a very high opinion of Prophet Joseph from the very beginning is also confirmed by the Talmud and the Bible. The Talmud says that at this time Joseph was about eighteen years of age (and) Potiphar was very favorably impressed with his bearing and appearance. So he came to the conclusion that he belonged to some noble family and had been made a slave by the force of adverse circumstances. When the Midianites carried him before Potiphar, he said...."He does not look like a slave and I fear he has been stolen from his country and his home." That is why Potiphar did not treat him like a slave, but put him in charge of his house and all his possessions. Likewise the Bible says, "And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat." (Gen. 39: 6).

19This verse alludes to the special training Prophet Joseph needed at that time for the performance of the duties of the high rank to which he was destined to rise. Up to that time, he had been brought up in the desert, under the environment of a semi-nomadic life of a shepherd. There was neither any settled state in Canaan and Northern Arabia nor had there been any appreciable progress in culture and civilization, for it was inhabited by different independent clans with no settled government. Thus it is obvious that the training that Prophet Joseph had received in Canaan, had equipped him with the good characteristics of nomadic life coupled with the qualities of God-worship and high morality of the family of Prophet Abraham. But this was not enough to enable him to direct the affairs of Egypt, which was at that time one of the most cultured and civilized countries of the known world and required a different experience and training for the conduct of its affairs. The All-Powerful Allah made arrangements for this training and sent him to the house of an officer of a very high rank in Egypt, who entrusted him with full powers over his house and estate. This enabled him to develop all those latent abilities that were needed to fulfill his destiny, and he gained the experience that was required for the efficient conduct of the affairs of the kingdom of Egypt in the years to come.

20By the use of such words as the Qur'an usually means, "We bestowed on him Prophethood," for the Arabic word (hukmun) stands for both judgment and "authority" and (`ilmun) hen stands for that Knowledge which is directly revealed to the Prophets by Allah. Thus, the Arabic words of the Text will mean: "We gave him the power and the authority and the knowledge needed for judging rightly the affairs of the people."

21Generally the commentators and translators are of the opinion that Prophet Joseph used (Rabbi "My Lord") for the master of the house, and what he meant to imply by way of argument was this: "My Lord has treated me very kindly and kept me well in the house. How can I, then, be so disloyal and ungrateful as to commit adultery with his wife?" I, however, strongly differ with such a translation and commentary. Though the Arabic usage of (rabb) admits of such a meaning, I have two strong reasons against this here. First, it is far below the dignity of a Prophet to refrain from a sin because of the regard he had for some person other than Allah. Second, there is not a single instance in the Qur'an that a Prophet ever called anyone other than Allah his "rabb." Prophet Joseph himself differentiates between his creed and that of the Egyptians making it plain that his ("rabb" = Lord) was Allah, while they had made other human

beings their "rabb". Then this verse should be considered from another point of view: when ("rabbi") may also mean "My Lord", Prophet Joseph might have invoked Allah. Why should then one take the other meaning, "my master", which most surely implies something that is against the right creed?

22"His Lord's argument" means inspiration from Allah to rouse his conscience to the fact that it was not worthy of him to yield to the temptation by the woman. As regards the question, "What was that argument", it has been stated in the preceding verse, that is, "My Lord has shown much kindness towards me. Should I, then, misbehave like this? Such workers of iniquity never fare well. " This was the "Divine argument" that saved Prophet Joseph in the prime of youth from that great temptation. The significance of "Joseph also would have advanced towards her, had he not seen his Lord's argument" is this: "Even a Prophet like Joseph (Allah's peace be upon him) could not have been able to save himself from sin, had not Allah guided him rightly with His argument. Incidentally, this verse makes plain the nature of the "Immunity" of Prophets from sin. It does not mean that a Prophet is infallible and incapable of committing any error, offense or sin or doing wrong or making a mistake. What it means is this: though a Prophet possesses passions, emotions, and carnal desires like other human beings, and is capable of committing a sin, he is so virtuous and God-fearing that he never deliberately cherishes any evil intentions, for he is endowed with such great arguments from his Lord as do not allow the lusts of the flesh over-power the voice of his conscience. And if ever he succumbs inadvertently to any of the human weaknesses, Allah at once sends a Revelation to him to set him on the right path. For the consequences of his error do not remain confined to his own person but react on the whole mankind, for even his slightest error might mislead the world to the most horrible sins.

23"....so that We may remove indecency and immodesty from him" implies two things. First, "It was because of Our grace that he could perceive Our argument, and save himself from sin, for We willed to remove indecency and immodesty from Our chosen servant. " The second meaning is rather deeper: This incident took place in the life of Joseph because this was essential for his spiritual training: "It was Our will to pass him through this hard test so that he should become immune from indecency and immodesty, for he would have to apply all his powers of piety to withstand such a great temptation, and thus become really so strong as not to yield to such things in future as well" . The importance and the need of such a hard training becomes quite obvious, if we keep in view the moral conditions of the Egyptian society of that period. We can have a glimpse of this from vv. 30-32. It appears that the women in general and the "ladies" of high society in particular, enjoyed almost the same sexual freedom as is rampant today in the "civilized" West and in the Westernized East. Allah made arrangements for the special training of Prophet Joseph in the house of his master because he had to perform his Divine Mission in a perverted society, and that too as a ruler and not as a common man. It is thus obvious from the behavior of those "ladies" of high rank, who did not feel any shame nor modesty in openly admiring the beauty of the young slave and from that of the "lady" of the house who was not ashamed of confessing openly that she did her best to tempt him and would continue to do so, that they would have done all they could to allure the young handsome ruler. Thus Allah not only made Prophet Joseph strong enough to resist such temptations in future by passing him through the hard test, but also filled the ladies

with despair of gaining any "success" in this matter.

24It appears that when the master of the house came on the scene, he was accompanied by a person of his wife's household. When he heard the story of the incident, he made this proposal: "As each of them accuses the other and there is no eye-witness of what happened between the two, the matter should be decided by the help of the circumstantial evidence, by examining the condition of Joseph's shirt." Obviously this was a very reasonable way of deciding the matter, and there was, therefore, no need to resort to a miracle. According to some traditions this witness was an infant, lying in the cradle, whom Allah had given the power of speech for giving this evidence. As this story is not supported by any authority, there is no reason why the obvious, plain and reasonable thing should not be accepted that the witness was a wise and experienced member of the family of the wife, instead of having resort to a miracle based on an unauthentic tradition.

25This is what was implied in the evidence: "If Joseph's shirt is torn from the front, it means that Joseph is the aggressor and she has struggled to defend her honor. But if the shirt is rent from the back, it is obvious that he must have been running away from her and she must have been tugging from behind" . The circumstantial evidence implied another thing. As the witness invited the master's attention to Prophet Joseph's shirt only, it meant that there was no sign at all of violence on the garments of the woman, for had he been the aggressor, there must have been some signs of violence on her garments.

25aA comparative study of the story as given in the Qur'an and in the Bible and the Talmud will be worthwhile.

The Bible says, "And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, that she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home...And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound." (Gen. 39: 12-16, 19-20).

The clumsy manner of the above version is obvious. It appears from this that Prophet Joseph's garment was so shaped that the whole of it fell into her hands when she tugged it. Then he ran away all naked, leaving it with her, as if to supply her with a clear proof of his own guilt.

Now let us turn to the Talmud. It says `....hearing the accusation, Potiphar commanded at once that the lad should be whipped severely. Then he carried Joseph before the judges.....They ordered that the torn garment should be brought to them and upon an examination of the same, they pronounced Joseph

"not guilty". (The Talmud Selections, H. Polano, pp. 81-82). Obviously this version is also faulty, for it cannot be imagined that a person of such a high rank would himself take the case to a court that his own slave had tried to assault his wife criminally. Incidentally, this Qur'anic version of the story is a clear proof of the fact that it has no copied stories from the Israelite traditions as the pseudo-orientalists allege, but has, on the other hand, corrected them and told the real facts to the world.

26The ancient Egyptians used to place pillows and cushions in such feasts for the guests to recline. And this is confirmed by the archaeological remains in Egypt.

There is no mention at all of this banquet in the Bible but it has been described in the Talmud in a way quite different from that of the Qur'an. Needless to say that while this narrative in the Qur'an is natural, life-like and teaches moral lessons, the one in the Talmud lacks all these things.

27This open demonstration of her love and declaration of her immoral designs show that the moral condition of the higher class of the Egyptian society had declined to the lowest ebb. It is quite obvious that the women whom she had invited must have been ladies belonging to the upper most stratum of the society. The very fact that she presented her beloved before them without any hesitation in order to convince them of his beauty and youth that had urged her to fall in love with him, shows that there was nothing uncommon in this demonstration. Then these ladies did not reproach her but themselves practically demonstrated that, in those circumstances, they themselves would have done the same that she did. Above all, the hostess did not feel that it was immodest to declare openly, "No doubt, I sought to seduce him and he succeeded in escaping from me. Yet I am not going to give him up. If he will not do as I bid him, he shall be cast into prison and humbled and disgraced".

28In order to grasp the full significance of this prayer of Prophet Joseph, we should try to form a mental picture of the circumstances in which he was placed at that time. In the light of this passage the picture will be something like this. "There is the handsome young man of twenty in the prime of his life, who has brought health and vigor of youth from the desert into Egypt, after passing through the ordeal of forced slavery and exile. Fortune has placed him in the house of one of the highest dignitaries in the capital of the most civilized country of the world at the time. There this handsome young man meets in the prime of life with a strange experience. The lady of the house in which he has to live day and night falls passionately in love with him and begins to tempt and seduce him. Then the fame of his beauty spreads all over the capital and the other ladies of the town also become enamored of him. Now this is the critical position. He is surrounded on all sides by hundreds of beautiful snares that have been spread to entrap and catch him unawares. All sorts of devices are employed to excite his passions and entice him: wherever he goes he encounters sin lying in ambush with all its charms and allurements and waiting for an opportune moment to make a surprise attack upon him. Such are the circumstances that are tempting him with sin, but the pious young man successfully passes through the ordeal, set for him by Satan, with the self-control that is praiseworthy indeed. But it is all the more praiseworthy that he does not feel any pride for showing such extraordinary piety in such trying and tempting circumstances. On the other hand,

he very humbly invokes his Lord to protect him from those traps of sin, for he is afraid of the common human weaknesses and cries out, "My Lord, I am weak! I fear lest these temptations should over-power me, I would rather prefer imprisonment to doing such an evil thing into which they are tempting to ensnare me."

In fact, that was the most important and critical period of Prophet Joseph's training, and this hard ordeal helped to bring forth all his latent virtues of which he himself was unaware up to that time. Then he himself realized that Allah had endowed him with the high and extraordinary qualities of honesty, fidelity, piety, charity, righteousness, self-control, balance of mind, and he made full use of these when he gained power in Egypt.

29Allah warded off their guile from Prophet Joseph by strengthening his character in such a way as to make ineffective all their devices to ensnare him, This also implies that Allah opened the door of prison for him in order to keep him safe from their tricks and temptations.

30It occurred to them to imprison Prophet Joseph in order "to save face" after they had seen clear proofs of his innocence and of the guilt of their own women, for no other alternative was left, in their opinion, to undo the scandal that was spreading fast in the land. But it did not occur to them that in fact his imprisonment was his moral victory and the moral defeat of the rulers and the dignitaries of Egypt. By that time, Prophet Joseph had not remained an unknown person, for all and sundry had heard stories of his beauty and piety, and of the love the "ladies" had shown towards him. Therefore when those "wise" courtiers put into practice their plausible device to imprison him in order to reverse the doings of their "ladies", the common people must have drawn their own conclusions for they knew Prophet Joseph to be a man of pure, strong and high character. So it was obvious to them that he had committed no "crime" to merit imprisonment, and that he had been imprisoned because it was an easier way of escape for the chiefs of Egypt than to keep their own ladies under control.

Incidentally, this shows that imprisonment of innocent people without trial and due procedure of law is as old as "civilization" itself. The dishonest rulers of to-day are not much different from the wicked rulers who governed Egypt some four thousand years ago. The only difference between the two is that they did not imprison people in the name and for the cause of "democracy" but they committed unlawful acts without any pretext of law. On the contrary, their modern descendants make use of the specious pretenses of honesty when they are acting unjustly. They first enact the necessary unlawful laws to justify their unlawful practices and then "lawfully" imprison their victims. That is to say, the Egyptian rulers were honest in their dishonesty and did not hide the fact that they were imprisoning people to safeguard their own interests, and not those of the community. But these modern disciples of Satan cast innocent people into prison to ward off the "danger" they feel from them, but proclaim to the world that their victims are a menace to the country and the community. In short, they were mere tyrants but these are shameless liars as well.

31At the time when Prophet Joseph was sent to prison, probably he was about twenty years old. This has been inferred from two statements in the Qur'an and the Talmud. The Qur'an (v. 42) says that `....he remained in the prison for a decade or so' and the Talmud says that `....Joseph was thirty years old when he was elevated to his honorable and trustworthy position.

32One of the two prisoners, according to the Bible, was the chief of the butlers of the king of Egypt, and the other the chief of the bakers. And according to the Talmud, they were condemned to the prison because during a feast stone grits were found in the bread and a fly in the wine.

33The fact that two prisoners attested his righteousness shows that Prophet Joseph was held in high esteem in the prison. Otherwise there was no reason why the two should have requested him alone to interpret the dreams and paid their homage like this: "We have seen that you are a righteous man". It clearly means that the events narrated in the preceding verses had reached all and sundry and the people inside the prison and outside it, knew that he had not been guilty of any crime or sin. On the other hand, he had proved himself to be a noble soul who had come out successful in the hardest test of his piety. So much so that there was not the like of him in piety, not even among their own religious leaders in the whole country. That was why not only the prisoners but also the officers and officials of the prison looked upon him as an honorable man and had full confidence in him. The Bible confirms this: "And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand." (Gen. 39: 22-23).

34This discourse, which is the soul of this story, and is one of the best on the doctrine of Tauhid in the Qur'an itself, finds no place at all in the Bible and the Talmud. This is because they regard him merely as a wise and pious man and not as a Prophet. That is why Rev. Rodwell has, in regard to this passage, accused Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) of putting his own doctrine and conviction into the mouth of Joseph (Allah's peace be upon him). But the Qur'an not only puts forward and presents these two aspects of his life in a much better and clearer way but also presents him as a Prophet, who had started propagating the Message even in the prison.

As this discourse suggests several' very important things, it will be worthwhile to consider these one by one:

(1) This is the first occasion on which Prophet Joseph appears to have begun the preaching of the true Faith. For before this, the Qur'an reveals him in the different stages of his life as a man of high morality but does not say anything to show that he conveyed the Message also. From this it is clear that those stages were of a preparatory nature and the mission of Prophethood was entrusted to him at the stage of his imprisonment and this was his first discourse as a Prophet.

(2) Moreover, this was the first occasion when he revealed his identity to others. Before this, we find him bearing patiently everything that happened to him without revealing anything about his relationships with Prophet Abraham and others. He kept silent when the caravan made him a slave and carried him to Egypt: when Al-`Aziz bought him and when he was sent to prison. As Prophet Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Allah's peace be upon them all) were quite well-known, he might have used their names to advantage. The members of the caravan, both the Ishmaelites and the Midianites, were closely related to his family, and the Egyptians were, at least, familiar with the name of Prophet Abraham. Nay, the way in which Prophet Joseph mentioned their names in this discourse, shows that the fame of. his father, grandfather and great grandfather had reached Egypt. But in spite of this, Prophet Joseph did not use their names on any of the critical occasions to save himself from the plight in which he was placed. This shows that probably he himself knew that these things were inevitable for his training for the Mission for which Allah had chosen him. Now it was absolutely necessary for him, for the sake of his Mission, to reveal this fact in order to show that he was not presenting any new Faith but the same Faith that was preached by Prophets Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Allah's peace be upon them all). This was necessary because the Message demanded that it should not be presented with the claim that it was a new and novel thing but that it was the same universal and eternal Truth that has always been presented by its bearers.

(3) This teaches us that one can, like Prophet Joseph, carve out a way for the propagation of the Message, if one has the intention and the required wisdom. The two men pay their homage to him and request him to interpret their dreams. In answer to this he says, "I will tell their interpretations but let me first inform you about the source of my knowledge that enables me to understand dreams" . Thus he takes advantage of their request and preaches his own Faith to them. We learn from this that if a person is imbued with the true and strong desire for propagating the Truth, he can very gracefully turn the direction of the conversation towards the Message he desires to convey. On the contrary, if a person has no strong desire for the propagation of the Message, he never "finds" any opportunity for it, even though hundred and one such opportunities might have come his way which could have been utilized for this purpose. But one must be on one's guard to discriminate between the right use of an opportunity by a wise man from the crude "propagation" of a foolish and un-cultured person, who tries to thrust the Message into the ears of unwilling hearers and succeeds only in creating aversion for it in their minds because of his crude way of presentation.

(4) This also teaches the right procedure that should be followed in presenting the Message. Prophet Joseph does not present, at the very start, the details of the creed and regulations of the Faith but the most fundamental thing that distinguishes a Believer from a non-Believer, that is, the distinction between Tauhid and shirk. Then he presents it in such a rational manner as cannot fail to convince any man of common sense. And his argument must have impressed deeply on the minds of the two slaves. "Which is better: various gods or One Omnipotent Allah?" They knew it from their personal experience that it was much better to serve one master than a number of them. Therefore it was far better to serve the Lord of the universe than His servants. Moreover, he does not invite them directly to accept his Faith and discard their own faith, but he very wisely draws their attention to this fact; "This is Allah's bounty upon us and

upon all mankind that He has not made us the servants of any other than Himself, yet most of the people are not grateful to Him. Instead of serving Him alone, they invent gods for themselves and worship them" . Then it is also noteworthy that his criterion of the faith of his addressees is based on wisdom and has no tinge of bitterness in it. He says, "The gods whom you call `the god of wealth' or `the god of health' or 'the god of prosperity' or `the god of rain' etc. are mere names you have given them without any reality behind them. The real Owner of everything is the Supreme Allah Whom you also acknowledge as the Creator and the Lord of the whole universe. He has sent no authority and given no sanction to anyone for Godhead and worship, but has reserved all the powers, all the rights and all the authorities for Himself, and commanded, `Serve and worship none but Me."

(5) It may also be inferred from this discourse that Prophet Joseph must have made full use of this "opportunity" of a decade for the propagation of the Message. Some people think that that was the only time when he extended the invitation to the Message. This is wrong for two reasons. First, it is absurd to imagine that a Prophet could have been neglectful of his Mission for a long period. Second, it cannot be imagined that the person who availed himself of the opportunity when two men approached him for the interpretation of their dreams, could ever have passed a decade of imprisonment without propagating the Message entrusted to him by his Lord.

35Some commentators have interpreted it like this: "Satan made Prophet Joseph neglectful of his Lord, Allah, so he placed his confidence in a man rather than Allah and desired him to mention him to his lord, the king, for his release. So Allah punished him by letting him languish several years in the dungeon" In fact, such an interpretation is absolutely erroneous for as 'Allamah Ibn Kathir and some early commentators like Mujahid, Muhammad-bin-Ishaq and some others say, the pronoun "him" refers to that person who he thought would be released. Therefore it will mean: "Satan made him (the would-be free man) so neglectful that he forgot to mention him (Prophet Joseph) to his lord (the king)." They also cite a tradition in support of their interpretation to this effect. The Holy Prophet said, "If Prophet Joseph had not said that which he said, he would not have remained in imprisonment for several years." But `Allamah Ibn Kathir says, "This Hadith cannot be accepted because all the ways in which it has been reported arc weak. Moreover, two of the reporters, Sufyan-bin-Waki`i and Ibrahim-bin-Yazid, are not trustworthy". Besides being weak on technical grounds, it is also against the dictates of common sense: if a wronged person adopted some measures for his release, he cannot be considered to be neglectful of God and guilty of the lack of trust in Allah.

36Leaving the account of the events of the intervening years of imprisonment, the story has been resumed from the time when Prophet Joseph began to rise in worldly rank.

37According to the Bible and the Talmud, the king was greatly disturbed troubled and confused in mind because of these dreams. So he proclaimed throughout the whole land of Egypt, and called upon all the wise men, and the sooth-sayers, and magicians of the land to interpret his dreams.

38The Qur'an has told in brief the essence of the request of the chief butler, but the Bible and the Talmud have given its details. According to these (and it stands to reason that it must have been so), he told the king of the life of Prophet Joseph in prison and how he interpreted their dreams rightly and prayed the king to give hits leave to see Prophet Joseph in prison for that purpose.

39The Arabic word (Siddiq) is used for the one who is an embodiment of truth and righteousness. Thus it shows that the butler had been so deeply impressed with the pure character of Prophet Joseph that even years had failed to blot it from his heart. (For its fuller meaning please refer to E.N. 99 of An-Nisa).

40That is, "They might understand your true worth and realize their own error in keeping you in prison without any just cause. And in a way I may get the opportunity of fulfilling the promise I made with you during my imprisonment."

41The literal meaning of is: "they will press." Here it has been used to denote that state of verdure which was going to prevail after the famine years because of rainfall and flood in the Nile. For, when the land will be watered, there will be abundance of seed to press oil, and abundance of fruit to press juice and abundance of fodder for cattle to press milk out of them. It should be noted that Prophet Joseph not only interpreted the king's dream but also told them how to preserve and reserve grain during the first seven years of prosperity for the subsequent seven years of famine. Moreover he foretold the good news of prosperity after the seven years of famine, though there was no hint of this in the dream of the king.

42There is no mention in the Bible and the Talmud of this most important part of the story that Prophet Joseph declined to quit the prison till his character was cleared. On the other hand, according to the Bible, "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh" . And the Talmud depicts even a more degrading picture of the event. It says, "The king ordered that Joseph should be brought before him. But he commanded his officers to be careful not to frighten the lad, lest through fear he should be unable to interpret correctly. And the servant of the king brought Joseph forth from his dungeon, and shaved him and clothed him in new garments, and carried him before the king. The king was seated upon his throne, and the glare and glitter of the jewels which ornamented the throne dazzled and astonished the eyes of Joseph. Now the throne of the king was reached by seven steps, and it was the custom of Egypt for a prince or noble who held audience with the king, to ascend to the sixth step; but when an inferior or a private citizen of the land was called into his presence, the king descended to the third step and from there spoke with him." (The Talmud, H. Polano, pp. 87-88).

A comparison of the degrading picture in the Talmud with this self -respecting grand, and noble picture depicted in the Qur'an will convince every unbiased critic that the one in the Qur'an is worthy of a Prophet of God. Moreover the picture in the Talmud is open to a grave objection: Had Prophet Joseph behaved like a frightened and cringing lad who was so dazzled by the glitter and glare of the jewels of the throne

that he bowed to the ground, how was it that the king and the courtiers were so impressed by him that they declared, "..... the Hebrew has proved himself wise and skillful and through his wisdom shall our country be saved the pangs of want"? So much so that the king appointed him, without demur, as "governor" over the land, "second only to himself". All this shows that by that time he had proved his moral and mental superiority and had enhanced it by his refusal to quit the prison without proving his innocence. Otherwise, they would have never raised him to the highest rank in such a civilized and advanced country as Egypt.

43He demanded an inquiry into the matter not because he himself had any doubt of his innocence, but because he was perfectly confident of this: "My Lord has full knowledge of my innocence and of their cunning. But your lord should also make a thorough inquiry as to why I had been sent to prison, for I do not want to go before the public with any blemish or blot on my reputation. Therefore a public inquiry should be held to prove that I was an innocent victim of the injustice of the chiefs and nobles of the country, who had cast me into prison in order to cover up the guilt of their own ladies."

The words in which the demand was made clearly show that the king was already fully acquainted with the details of the incident that had happened at the banquet of the wife of Al-'Aziz. That is why a mere reference to it was enough.

Another note-worthy thing in this demand was that Prophet Joseph did not in any way hint at the part the wife of Al-`Aziz had played in the event. This is another proof of his noble character that he did not like to involve and entangle the wife of his benefactor in the matter, even though she had done him her worst.

44As regards the way in which this inquiry was held, it is just possible that the king might have summoned the women to his presence or got their evidence through a trusted officer of his court.

45The inquiry and the evidences must have helped to pave the way for Prophet Joseph's rise in the land by concentrating the public attention on him, especially under the circumstances when the inquiry had been demanded by him. He had interpreted the dream of the king, when all the wise men, sooth-sayers and the magicians had failed. Then he had refused to quit prison even though the king himself had ordered that he should be brought before him, and, instead of this, demanded an inquiry of the matter which had been the cause of his imprisonment. Naturally this thing would have filled the people with wonder and they would have been looking eagerly for the result of the inquiry. Thus it can be imagined how the evidences and the result of the inquiry raised his prestige so high that the king and his courtiers declared that he was the only fit person to save the country from the coming calamity. It is no wonder, then, that Prophet Joseph proposed that all the resources of the land should be placed in his hands, and the king accepted this proposal as soon as it was made. For, had it been merely the matter of the interpretation of a dream, the most he would have deserved was some reward and Iris release from prison. But he could not have said, "Place the resources of the land in my hands" and the king would not have readily acceded to his proposal and given him all the powers in the land, as is contained in vv. 55-

56, and confirmed by the Bible and the Talmud.

46Prophet Joseph might have said these words in the prison when he came to know the result of the inquiry. But some commentators, including great scholars like Ibn Taimiyyah and Ibn Kathir, regard this sentence to be a continuation of the preceding speech of the wife of Al-'Aziz. They argue that this sentence has been placed contiguous to her preceding speech without any dividing word between them to indicate that her speech had ended at "he is absolutely in the right", and that the succeeding words were spoken by Prophet Joseph. They construe that if two speeches made by two different persons are placed in contiguity, they must be separated by means of Borne definite word, or there must be some definite clue to it. As neither of these two things exists in this case, it may rightly be construed that the words contained in v. 52 are the continuation of her preceding speech in v. 51. I, however, am surprised how a great scholar of Ibn Taimiyyah's insight has missed this point that the characteristic of a speech is in itself a clear and self-sufficient clue. Her confession in v. 51 fits in with her low character, but obviously the succeeding dignified and grand speech in v. 52 is too high for her. That fits in only with the noble character of Prophet Joseph. It is obvious that this must have been uttered by one, who was righteous, generous, humble and God-fearing. It is by itself a clear evidence that it could not have come out of the mouth of the one, who said, "Come here", and "What punishment does the one deserve, who shows evil intentions towards your wife?" and ".....if he will not yield to my bidding, he shall be cast into prison." On the other hand, such a pure speech fitted in with the one who said, "May Allah protect me! My Lord has shown so much kindness towards me. Should I, then, misbehave like this?" and " my Lord! I prefer imprisonment to that to which they invite me. If Thou dost not ward off their cunning devices from me, I might be caught in their snares." Therefore one cannot ascribe such a pure speech to the wife of Al-'Aziz unless there is a clear clue showing that by that time she had repented and believed and mended her ways, but there is no such clue. Thus it is clear that this speech must have been made by Prophet Joseph (Allah's peace be upon him).

47It implied this: "We have such a high opinion of you that we can safely entrust you with the highest office of responsibility in the country."

47aAs this verse has given rise to some important questions, let us consider these one by one.

The first question is: "Was it an application made by Prophet Joseph to the king for some post ?" In the light of the preceding Explanatory Notes, it would have become obvious that it was neither an application nor a request made by an ambitious person who had been on the look-out for an opportune moment for its submission, and no sooner did the king express his approval of him than he presented his request before him. As a matter of fact, this was a sort of proposal, giving his assent to the great desire of the king and the courtiers that he should be appointed as governor over the land. For, according to the Talmud, "the Hebrew has proved himself wise and skillful," and " ....surely there can be none more discrete than myself to whom God has made known all these things." The king, his courtiers, his princes, officers, and men of rank, had by that time, come to know and recognize his true worth and had had

experience of his moral superiority during the last decade of the vicissitudes of his life. He had proved that there was none equal to him in honesty, righteousness, forbearance, self discipline, generosity, intelligence and understanding. They knew and believed that he was the only one who knew how to guard and utilize the resources of the land and could be safely entrusted with them. Therefore, as soon as he showed his willingness, they heartily put these in his trust. This is also confirmed by the Bible that the king had formed a very high opinion of Prophet Joseph. He said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the spirit of God is?" Above all, he said to Prophet Joseph, "There is none so discreet and wise as thou art." (Gen. 41: 38-39). Accordingly, therefore, the king, of his own accord, set him over his house and land. (Gen. 41: 41).

Let us now take up the second question: "What was the nature of the powers that were entrusted to Prophet Joseph?" This is important because those who are not well versed in the Qur'an have been misled by the words in this verse and by his subsequent work of the distribution of grain. They wrongly conclude from these that this post was like the present day posts of a "Treasury Officer" or a "Famine Commissioner" or a "Finance Minister" etc. etc. In fact, it was none of these, for, according to the Qur'an and the Bible and the Talmud, Prophet Joseph had been invested with the full powers and privileges of a ruler. That is why he sat on the throne (v. 100) and they used the title of malik (king) for him. (v. 72). He himself was grateful to Allah for bestowing the kingdom on him. (v. 101). Above all, Allah Himself testifies to this fact: "Thus We gave power to Joseph in the land, so he had every right to take possession of any piece of it, if he so desired." (v. 56). As regards the Bible, it says, "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, `Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.... and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt,' and called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah (savior of the world)." (Gen. 41: 40-45). And according to the Talmud, when his brothers returned w their father, Prophet Jacob, from Egypt, they said about Prophet Joseph, "The king of Egypt is mighty potentate, over his people he is supreme; upon his word they go out and upon his word they come in; his word governs, and the voice of his master, Pharaoh, is not required."

Another pertinent question is: What was the object for which Prophet Joseph made a proposal for powers in the land? Did he offer his services for the enforcement of the laws of a non-Muslim state? Or did he intend to establish the cultural, moral and political systems of Islam by taking the powers of government in his own hands? As for its answer let us quote the comments on this verse (55) by `Allamah Zamakhshari in his ¦Kashshaf'. He says, "When Prophet Joseph proposed, `Please place all the resources of the country under my trust', he meant to get an opportunity for enforcing the Commandments of Allah and for establishing truth and justice, and to gain that power which is essential for fulfilling the Mission for which the Messengers are sent. He did not make this demand for the love of kingdom or for worldly desires and ambitions. He did this because he knew full well that there was none else who could perform that work.

To be frank, the above question leads to very important and basic issues. These are: Was Joseph a

Prophet of Allah or not ? If he was, does the Qur'an put forward such a conception of a Prophet that he himself should (as they allege Prophet Joseph did) offer his services to a system of unbelief to carry on its work on un-Godly principles? Nay, it leads to a more delicate and important question Was he a righteous person or not ? and, if he was, could it ever be expected that he would (according to their interpretation,) practically accept the theory that Sovereignty belongs to the king and not to Allah, whereas in the prison he preached, "Sovereignty belongs to none but Allah (v. 40) ?" for if, as they interpret, he submitted an application for service to the king, it meant that he did so against his own principles which he inculcated while in prison: " . . . . which is better: various gods or the One Omnipotent Allah?"As the king of Egypt was one of the "gods" they had set up, so to offer services to carry on the work of the un-Islamic system under the existing un-Islamic law would have been tantamount to acknowledging the king as his Lord. Are they prepared to place Prophet Joseph in that position?

It is an irony that such Muslims as interpret this verse in this way, lower the character of Prophet Joseph. They have evinced the same mentality that the Jews had developed during the period of their degeneration. When they became morally and mentally depraved, they deliberately began to represent their Prophets and saints as people of low character like themselves in order to justify their own degraded characters and to make room for excuses for going still lower. Likewise, when the Muslims came under the sway of non-Muslim governments, they wanted to serve under them, but the teachings of Islam and the patterns of their worthy forefathers stood in their way and they felt ashamed of this. So, in order to pacify their consciences, they sought refuge in this verse and by its misinterpretation thought that that great Prophet had made an application for a post to serve under a non-Muslim under un-Islamic laws. Whereas the Prophet's own life taught the lesson that even a single Muslim could all by himself bring about the Islamic revolution in a whole country by his pure Islamic character, his Faith, intelligence and wisdom and that a true Believer is able to conquer, by the proper use of his moral character, a whole country without any army, ammunition or material provisions.

48This is to show that the whole land of Egypt was under his complete control, as if it belonged to him and he could claim any piece of it as his, and there was no piece of it that could be withheld from him. The early commentators have also made the same comment on this verse. For instance, 'Allamah Ibn Jarir Tabari, on the authority of Ibn Zaid, says that this verse means: "We made Joseph the owner of all those things that were in Egypt, and in this part of the world he could do whatever he liked and wherever he liked for he had been given complete authority over this land. So much so that he could bring Pharaoh under his sway and become his master, if he so desired". He has quoted another thing from Mujahid, who is one of the most learned commentators, to the effect that the King of Egypt had embraced Islam through Prophet Joseph.

49This is a warning against a misunderstanding that one might have had from the preceding verse that kingdom and power were the real ultimate rewards for virtue and righteousness, for the best reward that a Believer should desire and strive for will be the one that Allah will bestow upon Believers in the Hereafter.

50The events of several years after his coming into power have been left out for the sake of brevity, and the story has been resumed from the time when the brothers of Prophet Joseph came to Egypt, and paved the way for the eventual settlement of the Israelites in Egypt. It will, however, be worthwhile to have a glimpse of those events. During the first seven years of his reign, there was abundance of corn as he had predicted while interpreting the dream of the king. Accordingly he adopted all the measures he had put before the king concerning the years of plenty. Then the seven years of scarcity began and famine reigned not only over Egypt but all over the adjoining countries. Accordingly, Syria, Palestine, Trans-Jordan and the Northern part of Arabia began to suffer from the scarcity of food, but there was plenty of it in Egypt in spite of famine because of the wise steps Prophet Joseph had taken as a safeguard. That was why his brothers, like other neighboring people, were forced by circumstances to go to Egypt and present themselves before him. It appears that Prophet Joseph had so arranged things that no foreigner was allowed to buy corn without a special permit from him. Therefore when the brothers reached Egypt, they might have had to present themselves before him for obtaining the special permit for buying the fixed quantity allowed under the famine regulations.

51It is no wonder that his brothers could not recognize Prophet Joseph, for, when they cast him into the well, he was merely a lad of seventeen and at the time of their meeting, he was a grown up man of thirty-eight years or so. Naturally, he must have changed in form during this long period. Besides, they could never have imagined that the brother whom they had cast into the well had become the ruler of Egypt.

52As the Qur'an has omitted the details, someone might be at a loss to know as to how he brought Benjamin into the conversation with his brothers, and why he insisted on them to bring him with them, when he intended to keep his own identity secret from them. For, obviously these things might have led to the revelation of that secret. But a little thinking will show that he could have very easily and naturally led the conversation up to Benjamin without arousing their curiosity. As there were strict restrictions on the purchase of corn, everyone was permitted to buy only a fixed quantity of it. Most probably the ten brothers had applied for corn for their father and the eleventh brother as well. At this Prophet Joseph might have asked the reason why their father and brother had not personally come for it. Then he might have accepted the excuse for their father that he was old and blind but he would have expressed his doubts about their excuse for their brother that he was their step-brother and the father would not send him with them and so forth. Then he might have declared, "Well, this time we give you as much corn as you have asked for, but the next time you come here you should bring your step-brother with you; otherwise you will not get any corn at all because of this false statement of yours." Along with this threat, he tried to win them over by reminding them of his liberal and generous treatment with them, because he yearned for the sight of his younger brother, and was anxious to know how his family had fared during his absence.

The above is a simple and natural explanation of the matter. Thus this part of the story as given in the Bible (Gen. chapters 42 and 43) appears to be far fetched, exaggerated, unreal and, therefore, un-

reliable.

53Prophet Jacob's great concern over this journey of his sons was due to the fact that his youngest son, Benjamin, was to accompany them. He was anxious about his safety because he had already had a sad experience of his son Joseph. Naturally his heart must have been full of such misgivings that that might be his last meeting with his other beloved son. Though he had full trust in Allah and was patiently resigned to His will, he, as a human being, advised his sons to take certain precautionary measures. In order to understand the significance of this precautionary measure of entering the capital by different gates, we should have a glimpse of the political conditions of that period. As the Israelites lived on the Eastern frontier of Egypt as independent clans, they were looked at with suspicion like all frontier people. Therefore Prophet Jacob feared that if they entered the city in a group, they might be taken for a gang of suspects, especially during that time of famine. Thus there was an apprehension of some severe action being taken against them as if they had come there for organized robbery. That was why he gave them this allowance that if under such adverse circumstances there was any trouble, he would not accuse them of breach of the pledge for the safety of Benjamin.

54"Most people do not understand. . . . " how Prophet Jacob was able to hold the balance between "trust in Allah" and adoption of precautionary measures. This was because Allah had favored him with the real knowledge. That was why he took all those measures which were dictated by common sense, deep thinking and experience. He admonished them for their ill treatment with their brother Joseph so that they should not dare repeat it in the case of Benjamin. He took a solemn pledge from them in the name of Allah that they would take good care of the safety of their step-brother. Then he advised them to be on their guard against the dangerous political situation and to enter the capital by different gates so as not to give cause for alarm and suspicion. In short, as far as it was humanly possible, he took all the precautionary measures to avoid every possible risk. On the other hand, he always kept this thing in view (and expressed it) that no human precautionary measure could avert the enforcement of Allah's will, and that the real protection was Allah's protection: and that one should not rely on the precautionary measures but on the favor of Allah. Obviously only that person who has the real knowledge can keep such a balance in his words and deeds, who knows what kind of efforts are demanded of his human faculties bestowed by Allah for the solution of worldly problems, who also realizes that it is Allah alone Who has the power to make them a success or a failure. This is "what most people do not understand" . Some of them rely merely on their efforts and measures and discard trust in Allah; while there are others who rely merely on "trust in Allah" and do not adopt any practical measure to solve their problem.

55The whole story of their reunion after a separation of twenty years or so has been summed up in this brief sentence. In all probability Prophet Joseph aught have told him the story of the vicissitudes that ultimately had led to his high rank, and Benjamin in his turn might have related the story of the ill-treatment of the heartless step-brothers. Then Prophet Joseph might have reassured him that he would not be allowed to go back with them but remain with him. It is also possible that the plan to retain him there, without disclosing the secret of Prophet Joseph's identity, would have then been thought out and

decided upon.

56In all probability, Prophet Joseph put the cup in his brother's pack with his knowledge and consent, as may be inferred from the preceding verse. Obviously. Prophet Joseph desired to free his brother from the oppression of the cruel step-brothers and he himself was reluctant to go back with them. But this could not be done directly and openly without disclosing his own identity, which was not then expedient under the circumstances. Therefore both the brothers might have thought out this plan, though this would have put the younger brother in an embarrassing situation for the time being because of his involvement in a case of theft. But they had adopted this plan because afterwards both the brothers could clear it easily by disclosing the real matter.

57There is nothing in this verse nor in the succeeding verses to show that Prophet Joseph took his servants in his confidence in regard to this matter, and instructed them to bring a false accusation against the travelers. The simple explanation of the incident may be this. The cup might have been quietly and secretly put in the pack. Afterwards when the servants did not find it, they might have come to the inevitable conclusion that it must have been stolen by the travelers who were staying there.

58It should be kept in mind that these people were the descendants of Prophet Abraham. Therefore they put forward his law regarding a thief, that is, the thief should be made the bondsman of the one whose goods he had stolen.

59Now let us consider the question: How did Allah directly support Prophet Joseph with His plan? It is obvious that the plan of placing the cup in Benjamin's pack was thought out and executed by Joseph himself. And it is also obvious that the royal servants checked their packs as a matter of routine for such is the procedure that is generally followed on such occasions. There is nothing in this passage that might be called supernatural support by Allah except that the servants asked the brothers to prescribe the punishment for the thief, and they answered that he should be made a bondsman. The sentence that follows also confirms this interpretation.

60Had Allah willed it, He would not have removed the flaw in the plan of Prophet Joseph. It was this: he could seize his brother according to his plan only by the help of the king's law, but it was not worthy of a Prophet of Allah to apply that un-Islamic law to his own personal case. For he had taken political power in his hands in order to establish gradually the Islamic law and not to enforce and keep the king's law in vogue. Had Allah willed it, He would have left no other course for His Prophet except to have resort to the un-Islamic law. But He did not will it so because He did not like to tarnish the fair name of His Prophet. Therefore he made the servants inquire from the brothers (an unusual thing) about the punishment of a thief and they stated the Law of Prophet Abraham. Thus not only was the flaw removed, but also no room was left for the brothers to raise any objection against this on the plea that they were not Egyptians, and therefore the law of the land could not be applied against them. As has already been pointed out, this

was the support of Allah to which He has referred in the two subsequent verses as a token of His favor and a sign of the perfection of His knowledge.

The favor of Allah was that He saved Prophet Joseph from applying the un-Islamic law of the king of Egypt to his personal case, for he was liable to do so under the stress of human weakness. And there can be no greater favor for one than this that Allah Himself should arrange to guard his high moral position. It should, however, be noted that such a high rank is awarded only to those who prove themselves to be "righteous" in very hard trials.

By removing the flaw in his plan, Allah showed that His knowledge was far superior to the knowledge of those, whom (like Prophet Joseph) He had endowed with knowledge.
In this connection, there are some other points worthy of consideration and we will deal with them briefly:

(1) Generally the words are translated like this: "Joseph could not seize his brother by the law of the king", or "Joseph was not authorized to seize his brother according to the law of the king. " In other words, it means, "He could not do this, as there was no provision for it in the king's law." Whereas it means this: "He ought not to have seized him by the king's law, as it did not behoove him to do so." This version is open to two objections. Firstly, this is against the Qur'anic usage which usually means, "It did not behoove him", "It was not right for him" and "He ought not to have done this." For instance, this is what it means in the following verses

"Indeed, Islam alone is the Right Way in the sight of Allah." (III: 18). "Whosoever will adopt any other way than the way of Islam, it shall not be accepted...." (III:85).

Secondly, such a version is meaningless, for there could have been no reason why he had not the power to seize him for theft according to the law of the king. Can there be any kingdom without having a law for taking action against a thief?

(2) As the Qur'an uses the word which connotes "the king's way of life" in addition to "the king's law", it helps to understand the meaning of the sentence under discussion. For it is obvious that the Prophet was sent to establish the way of Allah and not the un-Islamic way of the king. Though by that time he had only partially succeeded in this Mission, it was not proper and worthy of a Prophet to adopt "the way of the king" for his own personal case. Though there was no legal hindrance in his way to seize his brother according to the king's law, nevertheless, it was inappropriate for him, as a Prophet, to adopt the king's way which he had hitherto scrupulously avoided as far as his own person was concerned. Thus it is clear that its appropriate interpretation will be this: "It did not behoove Joseph to seize his brother by the king's law."

(3) Besides this, by using the word for the "law of the land", Allah has denoted the vast comprehension of the word (din) and this cuts at the root of the conception of din of those people who confine the scope of

the Message of the Prophets to mere worship of One Allah and believe that it has nothing to do with the cultural, political, social, judicial, legal and other mundane affairs of life. Or, they opine that, if at all it has any concern with those matters, it is merely to give some instructions of an optional nature in regard to these, and leave it to the believers to adopt these or their own man-made laws, because, they think, there is no harm even in adopting the latter course. This erroneous conception of din, which has been in vogue among the Muslims for a long time, has been responsible for rendering them neglectful of making exertions for the establishment of the Islamic Way of life. As a result of this misconception of din, they became reconciled to un-Islamic ways of unbelief and ignorance. Nay, they considered this misconception of theirs to be the pattern set by Prophet Joseph and became willing helpers and servants of these un-Islamic systems. Whereas this verse categorically refutes this misconception by declaring that the "law of the land" is as much a part of the din of Allah as Salat, Haj, Fast, and Zakat are. Therefore, the demand of the acceptance of (ad-Din) made in v. 19 and v. 85 of Al-i'Imran, that is, "Indeed, Islam alone is the Right Way, in the sight of Allah" and "Whosoever will adopt any other way than the' Way of Islam, it shall not be accepted", includes laws as well as Salat and other obligatory duties prescribed by Allah. Therefore the exclusion of this part of din from any system would incur the displeasure of Allah.

(4) The above interpretation, however, is open to one objection. It does, at least, imply that an un-Islamic way was in vogue in Egypt at the time, when Prophet Joseph was, even according to the present commentator, the supreme head of the country. It is, therefore, a proof that that Prophet himself was enforcing the un-Islamic law of the king. What difference, then, could it have made, if Prophet Joseph had followed, in his personal case too, the system of law of the king which he himself was enforcing instead of the system of law of Prophet Abraham? Most certainly this would have made a vast difference because it would have compromised his position as a Prophet, because he was trying to establish the Islamic Way of life, which naturally could have been accomplished gradually in course of time, during which the king's law would have inevitably remained in vogue. The same thing happened in Arabia during the Mission of the Holy Prophet in Madinah, which took nine years to establish the Islamic System in its entirety. During that period, several un-Islamic laws remained in vogue. For instance, drinking, interest, the un-Islamic laws of inheritance and marriage and some wrong ways of trade, etc., had to continue for some time. Likewise the civil and penal codes of Islam took some time for their complete introduction. So there is nothing strange in this that the king's law continued to be in vogue during the first nine years or so of Prophet Joseph's reign. But the continuance of the un-Islamic law of the king during the period of transition is no argument to prove that Allah's Prophet was sent to follow the way of the king and not to establish the Way of Allah.

61As regards the question why it was not worthy of Prophet Joseph to apply the king's law to his personal case, its best answer is again found in the practice of the Holy Prophet. During the interim period, when the laws of ignorance had not yet been replaced by Islamic Laws, other Muslims went on drinking wine and taking interest as before, but the Holy Prophet never practiced any of these things. Likewise some un-Islamic laws of marriage, such as taking in marriage of real sisters at one and the same time, were

practiced, but the Holy Prophet never practiced any such thing. Thus it is clear, that there was a difference between leaving in vogue some un-Islamic laws during the period of the evolution of the Islamic Law and practicing the same. Had Prophet Joseph applied the king's law to his own case, it would have meant that he had lent his seeming sanction to that law. But it is obvious that a Prophet, who is sent to eliminate the ways of ignorance. cannot follow these even under the temporary leave that is given to others.

Their position and dissociated themselves from Benjamin, declaring that he was a thief like his brother Joseph. It is obvious that this was a false accusation the clever brothers had invented on the spot. But it is an instance of the malice these brothers bore to their two step-brothers, and is also the answer to the question why Prophet Joseph desired to keep his brother with him.

62The use of the title ("The exalted one") with which they addressed Prophet Joseph has given rise to the confusion that he held the same office as the husband of Zuleikha held before him. Then this misunderstanding let the commentators to the invention of further comments, such as. Al-'Aziz had died and Prophet Joseph was appointed in his place, and Zuleikha was rejuvenated by a miracle and married to him by the king. They have not stopped at this: they have, somehow or other, discovered even the conversation that took place between Prophet Joseph and Zuleikha in the first night of their marriage. In fact. all this is mere fiction, for, as has already been pointed out, the word was the Arabic translation or equivalent of some Egyptian title, and was not the designation of any particular office. It was merely a title used for the high ones in Egypt like "His Excellency" or "Your Excellency", etc. As regards the said marriage, this fiction has been built on the story of Prophet Joseph's marriage in the Bible and the Talmud. According to these, he was married with Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah. As the name of the husband of Zuleikha was Potiphar, the two names got confused together. Accordingly, when the story was handed down from the traditions of the Israelites from one commentator to the other, the name Potiphar got interchanged with Poti-pherah because the two were so like each other in sound. Consequently, the daughter in the story was replaced by "wife". Then Potiphar was "killed" in order to facilitate the marriage. Then the only remaining difficulty, that is,the disparity of their ages, was got over with the help of a miracle. She was rejuvenated so completely as to enable her to become the worthy wife of the "ruler" of the land.

63The use of the words "with whom we have found our property" instead of the word "thief" is very significant. Prophet Joseph avoided the use of the word "thief" for his brother because he was not really a thief. This is called (touriyah), that is, to put a cover over a reality or "to hide a reality." Such a practice is allowed by the Muslim Law under certain conditions and with certain limitations. It may be practiced not to gain any selfish end, but to ward off some evil or to protect and save an oppressed person from some oppressor, provided that no other course might have been left except saying something against the truth or of having a resort to a deceitful device. It is obvious that in such a case, a righteous person will not tell a blunt lie or resort to an open deceit. Instead, he will say something or do something that might not be strictly truthful or strictly right, yet at the same time is not a blunt lie, so that he might hide the reality to

ward off the evil. Such a practice is lawful, legally and morally, provided that it is not practiced to gain some personal or selfish ends but to ward off a greater evil with a lesser evil. Accordingly, Prophet Joseph scrupulously fulfilled all the conditions in this case. He placed the cup in the pack of his brother with his consent, but he did not ask his servants to make a search of his pack and accuse him of theft. After this, when the servants brought the brothers before him as suspects, he quietly rose from his seat and began to make a search of their packs. Then afterwards, when the brothers requested that one of them should be taken instead of Benjamin, he answered them back in their own words that he would detain only that person in whose possession the cup was found and none else.

Instances of such a practice during his campaigns are found in the life history of the Holy Prophet. And this cannot be regarded as morally objectionable according to any moral or legal standard.

64That is, "You readily believed that my son, whom I know to be of a noble character, had committed the theft of a cup: you have behaved in his case just as you behaved in the case of his elder brother. You made away with him and then pretended, without any pangs of conscience, that a wolf had devoured him and now, with the same ease, you tell me that the other brother has committed a theft".

65That is, "It will be charitable of you if you give us that much grain as we require to fulfill our needs, because the goods we have brought for its barter are of less value than of the grain we require."

66This is an instance of the extraordinary powers the Prophets possess. Prophet Jacob perceive in Cana'an the smell of Prophet Joseph's shirt from such a distant place as Egypt as soon as the caravan started on the journey. At the same time it also. shows, by contrast, that these powers of the Prophets are not inherent or personal characteristics but are bestowed on them by Allah as and when He wills. That is why Prophet Jacob could not perceive the smell of the clothes of Prophet Joseph as long as Allah did not will it, when he had been living in Egypt.

In this connection, it should also be noted that in contrast to the Qur'an which represents Prophet Jacob as a great Prophet who was able to perceive the smell of Prophet Joseph from such a long distance, the Bible represents him as an ordinary uncultured father. According to Genesis 45: 26-27, when they told him, saying, "Joseph is yet alive and he is governor over all the land of Egypt-Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not .... and only when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived."

67This remark shows that no member of his family except Prophet Joseph appreciated the true worth of Prophet Jacob. He himself was aware of the low state of their mental and moral condition. And it is one of the ironies of fate that the majority of the great personalities who made history got very little appreciation at home.

68It is worthwhile to take notice of the total number of Prophet Jacob's family members that migrated to Egypt with him, for it is closely connected with the problem that is raised concerning the total number of the Israelites who emigrated from there some five hundred years after this. According to the Bible, the total number of the family members was 70, including Prophet Joseph and his two sons, and excluding those daughters-in-law who did not belong to the family of Prophet Jacob. But according to the census figures given in Numbers, their number was about two million when they were counted in the wilderness of Sinai in the second year, "after they were come out of the land of Egypt" . The problem is this: how is it possible that "these three score and ten souls of his house" had multiplied into two million souls during five hundred years or so?

It is obvious that no family can multiply to such a large number in five hundred years merely by the generative process. Thus the only other way in which their number could have been increased was proselytism. And there are sound reasons to believe that this must have been so. The Israelites were the descendants of Prophets. They had migrated to Egypt because of the power Prophet Joseph enjoyed there. And we have seen that he made full use of every opportunity he got for carrying out the work of the Mission of Prophethood. Therefore it may reasonably be expected that the Israelites would have done their very best to convert the Egyptians to their faith of Islam during the five centuries of their power in Egypt. As a result of this the Egyptian converts to Islam would not only have changed their religion but also their culture so as to make them look quite different from the other Egyptians and look like the Israelites. Naturally the non Muslim Egyptians would have declared them to be foreigners just as the Hindus treat the Indian Muslims of today. By and by they themselves would have accepted this position and become members of the Israelite nationality. Afterwards, when the Egyptian nationalists began to persecute the alien Israelites, the Muslim Egyptians were also made a target of their tyranny. So when the Israelites migrated from Egypt, they, too, left their country along with them and began to be counted among them.

The above mentioned explanation is confirmed by the Bible also. For instance, it says that when they left Egypt, "the children of Israel journeyed from Remases to Suceoth....and a mixed multitude went up also with them...." (Exodus 12: 37-38) and "the mix multitude that was among them fell a lusting" . (Numbers 11: 4). Then by and by these non-Israelite converts to Islam began to be called "the stranger". "One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and the one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you. " (NUMBERS 15: 15-16). "And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him." (DEUT. 1: 16).

Now it is not an easy thing to find out the exact term which was applied in the original Scriptures to the Egyptian converts to Islam, and which was afterwards changed into the "stranger" by that translators.

69According to the Talmud, "When Joseph learned that his father was upon the way, he gathered

together his friends and officers, and soldiers of the realm, attired in rich garments, ... and formed a great company to meet Prophet Jacob on the way and escort him to Egypt. Music and gladness filled the land, and all the people, the women and the children, assembled on the house-tops to view the magnificent display." (H. Polano, p. 111).

70The interpretation of this verse has given rise to some serious misunderstandings, which are against the very fundamentals of the Divine Guidance. So much so that some people have gone to the extreme of making it lawful to prostrate before kings and saints as a mark of respect. Others more strict on this point have explained it away, saying, "In the former Divine Laws, it was unlawful only to prostrate in worship before others than Allah, though it was permissible to prostrate before others if it was done without the intention of worship, but now in the Divine Law given to Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) it has been made absolutely unlawful".

Such misunderstandings as these have resulted from taking the words in this verse to mean "to perform sajadah"in the technical sense in which it is now used in the Islamic code, that is, "lying flat in such a way that the hands, the knees and the forehead touch the ground," whereas the word (sujjadan) has been used here in its literal meaning of sajud "to bow down". The parents and brothers of Prophet Joseph bowed down before him in accordance with the ancient custom among the people of the age, (and the custom is still in vogue among some people), who used to bow down before others to show their gratitude, or welcome them, or merely to salute them by placing their hand on the breast. There are many instances of this in the Bible. "....and when he (Abraham) saw them (the three men) corning towards him, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself towards the ground. " (Please refer to Arabic translation: Gen. 18: 32). Further on it says that when the children of Heath gave a field and a cave as a burying place for Sarah, Prophet Abraham was so grateful to them that "he stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth," (Gen. 23: 7) and "Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land." (Gen. 23: 12). In both cases the words `bowed down' have been translated into (Sajada).

These and other like instances in the Bible are a conclusive proof of the fact that in this verse (100), the Qur'an has not used the word in its technical Islamic sense but in its literal sense.

Besides, those commentators arc absolutely wrong who suppose that in the former laws, sajadah in the present Islamic sense was allowed as a mark of respect laws. For instance, during the Babylonian captivity of the Children of Israel, king Ahasuerus promoted Haman above all the princes and commanded all his servants to bow and reverence him, but Mordecai, who was a holy and righteous man among the Jews, bowed not, nor did him reverence. (Esther3: 1-2). The Talmud has elaborated this point in a way that is worth reading:

The servants of the king said to Mordecai: "Why wilt thou refuse to bow before Haman, transgressing thus the wishes of the king? Do we not bow before him?" "Yea are foolish," answered Mordecai, "aye,

wanting in reason. Listen to me. Shall a mortal, who must return to dust be glorified? Shall I bow down before one born of woman, whose days are short? When he is small he cries and weeps as a child; when he grows older sorrow and sighing are his portion; his days arc full of wrath and anger, and at the end he returns to dust. Shall I bow to one like to him? No, I prostrate myself before the Eternal God, who lives for ever. To Hun the great Creator and Ruler of the Universe, and to no other will I bow." (The Talmud Selections by H. Polano, p. 172).

This speech which was made by a Believer from among the Israelites a thousand years before the Revelation of the Qur'an, is conclusive on the point. Thus there is absolutely no room for the performance of "sajadah" before any other than Allah.

71The few sentences that were uttered by Prophet Joseph (Allah's peace be upon him) at the happiest occasion of his life help depict the most graceful pattern of the virtues of a true Believer. There is the man from the desert, whom his own brothers had, out of jealousy, attempted to kill, now sitting on the throne after passing through many vicissitudes of life. All the members of his family have been forced by famine to come before him for help. The same jealous brothers, who had made an attempt on his life, are now standing before him with down-cast heads. Had there been a "successful man of the world" in his place, he would have used this opportunity for boasting of his greatness and bragging of his successes, and giving vent to his grievances and hurling malicious taunts at his defeated enemies. In utter contrast to this, the we man of God behaves in a quite different way. Instead of boasting and bragging of his own greatness, he is grateful to his God Who had shown grace to him by raising him to such a high position of power, and for arranging his meeting with his people after such a long period of separation. Instead of giving vent to his grievances against his brothers, making taunts at them for their ill-treatment, he does not make even a mention of such things but puts up a defense for them, saying that it was all due to Satan, who had stirred up strife between them: nay, he even puts it forward as a blessing in disguise, being one of the mysterious ways of Allah by which He had fulfilled His design of raising him to the throne. After saying these things in a few concise sentences, he at once turns to his Lord in gratitude for bestowing on him kingdom and wisdom, instead of letting him rot in the prison, and prays to Him to keep him as His faithful and obedient servant as long as he was alive, and to join him with the righteous people after his death. What a pure and high pattern of character!

It is strange that this speech of Prophet Joseph has neither found a place in the Bible nor in the Talmud, though these books are full of irrelevant and unimportant details of this story and others. It is an irony that these Books are void of those things that teach moral values and throw light on the real characters and the Mission of the Prophets.

Now that this story has come to an end, the readers arc again reminded that this story of Prophet Joseph as given in the Qur'an is not a copy of the story given in the Bible and the Talmud for there are striking differences between them. A comparative study of these Books will show that the story in the Qur'an differs from that given. in the other two Books in several very important parts. The Qur'an contains

additional facts in some cases and omits certain facts in other cases or even refutes some parts as contained in the Bible and the Talmud. Therefore there is absolutely no room for anyone to allege that Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) related this story merely in the form he heard it from the Israelites.

72In order to grasp the full significance of the underlying admonition implied in it, we must keep in view the background of the Revelation of this story given in the introduction to this Surah. The Quraish themselves had invited the Holy Prophet to a meeting that had been arranged for putting him to a test which was to show whether he was a we Prophet or not. When he arrived there, they put him this question without any previous notice or intimation: why did the Israelites go to Egypt? In answer to this, the Holy Prophet recited this Surah then and there. As they themselves knew that this was an abrupt question and there had been no preparation for its answer beforehand, it was expected that they would 'believe in his Prophethood. But they were so obdurate that they did not believe in him even then. As Allah was aware of their intentions, he informed His Messenger beforehand, as if to say, "Though you have come out successful in the test, to which they themselves put you, yet most of them are not going to believe it because they are not sincere in their quest for the truth. That is why they will not believe even now when the revelation of this Surah has proved conclusively that the Qur'an is not being forged by you but is being sent down by Allah Himself. As their real aim and intention is to reject your Message anyhow, they will now invent another excuse for their denial."

This is not meant to remove any misunderstanding the Holy Prophet might have cherished, but is merely an indirect warning to the questioners that Allah knew their intentions well. This was meant to warn them like this: "O obdurate people! this Surah has been placed before you to serve as a mirror for you. You demanded a proof from Our Messenger that he was not forging the Qur'an: had you been reasonable and sincere people, you would have accepted the truth that has been established according to your own test, but you are obdurate people and are still denying it. "

73This is another admonition more subtle than the one given above. Though this, too, has been addressed to the Holy Prophet, it is meant for the unbelievers, as if to say, "O people ! consider your attitude towards the Message from another point of view. Had you noticed anything in the Mission and the Message of Our Prophet that might have smelt of any self-interest whatever, you would have been justified in rejecting it as the work of a selfish person. But you yourselves have experienced it that he has absolutely no self-interest in his work and demands no recompense for the Message, which is nothing but instruction for all the people of the world. Therefore you should listen to it and consider it without prejudice and make your decisions about it on merit and merit alone."

74Now that the story of Prophet Joseph (Allah's peace be upon him) has come to an end, the Qur'an has made use of the opportunity for conveying its basic Message, for it does not tell stories merely for the sake of story-telling. As they themselves had invited the Prophet and were attentively listening to the story, the essence of the Message was presented in a few concise sentences (vv. 105-111).

75This is to arouse people from their apathy towards the Signs of Allah that lie scattered all over the earth and the heavens and to urge them to make a search for the Reality by making right observations. As each and everything is not merely a "thing"' but also a Sign which points to the Reality, a seeker after it should look at these with a look different from that of animals. This is because even an animal sees a tree, a mountain and water and takes it as a mere tree, a mountain or water, and with the help of his senses makes use of these according to his needs. But Allah has endowed man with a mind that is able to consider things in other than their physical and material aspects so that he may think deeply and make a search for the Reality by means of these Signs of Allah. The reason why people fail to discover the Reality and go astray is that they do not consider things as "Signs" and pay no heed to this aspect. Had they not deliberately shut their minds against the Message of the Prophets, it would not have been difficult for them at all to understand it and get guidance from it.

76They associate other deities with Allah because they do not pay heed to His Signs, which serve as pointers to the Right Way. So they go astray from it and get lost in thorny bushes. Nevertheless, many of them do not lose sight of the Reality entirely, and do not disbelieve in Allah as their Creator and Sustainer, but they get involved in shirk. That is, they do not deny the existence of God, but they believe that there arc other deities who are also partners in His Being, His Attributes, His Powers, and His Rights. They should never have been involved in shirk, had they considered these Signs in the heavens and the earth from this point of view, for in that case they would have discovered everywhere, in each and every one of them, the proofs of the Oneness of Allah.

77This question has been posed to rouse the people from their care-fret attitude towards lift produced by temporary security from dangers, and by a feeling that there is a long life to enjoy: so the problems can be postponed safely to a distant "future". This is obviously a wrong attitude, for no man has any guarantee that he will live up to a certain age: for no one knows when, where and how one would die. Therefore the questions meant to ask, "Does not your daily experience tell you that you knew nothing even a minute beforehand what your. future was hiding for you ? Therefore, wisdom demands that you should make preparations for it now, and consider seriously whether the path you are treading is the right path. Have you any real proof to show that it is right? Do you find any sound argument in the heavens and the earth to support your decision? Did the people who trod such a path before you reach their destinations safely and securely? Finally, do the results of following such a path, which are appearing in your own time and culture, confirm that you are treading the right path?"

78That is "Allah is absolutely fret from such things that are ascribed to Him: He is free from the weaknesses and shortcomings which every believer in shirk ascribes to Him; He is fret from all defects, evils and errors that must necessarily be ascribed to Him as a logical result of the conception of God hold by mushriks."

79A very comprehensive subject has been condensed here into a couple of sentences, which may be expanded like this: "O Muhammad !these people do not listen to you because it is not an easy thing for them to believe you to be a Messenger of Allah just because you arc a mere human being who was born in their own city among themselves and brought up like other people. But there is nothing strange in this, for this is not the first instance of its kind. All the Prophets, whom We sent before you, were also human beings and lived in the same habitations to which they were sent. It never happened that a stranger came to a town and declared, "I have been sent as a Messenger to you. On the other hand, all the Prophets-Jesus, Moses, Abraham and Noah (Allah's peace be upon them all)-who were raised for the reform of the people, were human beings who wen born and brought up in their own habitations" . Then it addresses the disbelievers directly, as if to say, "Now it is for you to judge and decide whether you should accept the Messenger or reject him on such flimsy grounds as these. You have traveled abroad and seen the end of those people who rejected the Message of their Prophets and followed their own lusts. You have seen, on your journeys, the ruined habitations of the people of 'Ad, Thamud, Midian, Lot, and others. Have you not observed these as object lessons, for these warn you that they would meet with far worse consequences in the Hereafter, and that conversely, those who are pious and God-fearing will have a very happy life?"

80That is, "It gives details of everything that is required for the guidance of man. " Some people take "details of everything" to mean the details of everything in the world. So, when they do not find in it the details of mathematics, physics, medicine etc. etc. they become skeptical. Whereas the Qur'an claims to give the details of only one `subject', "Guidance", for which it has been sent down, and it does give the details of everything that is essential for it.

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13. Surah Ar Ra'ad (The Thunder)

Name

This Surah takes its name from the word (*ar-Ra'ad*) (thunder) that occurs in v. 13. It is merely the symbolic name of the Surah and does not in any way mean that the Surah deals with the scientific problems connected with thunder.

Period of Revelation

The internal evidence (vv. 27-31 and vv. 34-48) shows that this Surah was revealed in the last stage of the Mission of the Holy Prophet at Makkah and during the same period in which Surahs Yunus, Hud and Al- A'araf were sent down. The manner of speech indicates that a long time had passed since the Holy Prophet had been conveying the Message. On the one hand, his opponents had been contriving different devices to defeat him and his Mission, and, on the other, his followers had been expressing a desire that by showing a miracle the disbelievers might be brought to the Right Way. In answer, Allah impressed on the Believers that it is not His way to convert people by this method and that they should not lose heart, if He is giving the enemies of the Truth a rope long enough to hang themselves. Otherwise, He is able to show such signs as may bring the dead out of their graves and make them speak (v. 31), but even then these obdurate people will invent an excuse to explain this away. All this decisive evidence clearly proves that this Surah was revealed during the last stage of the Prophet's Mission at Makkah.

Central Theme

The first verse enunciates the main theme of this Surah, that is, "The Message of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is the very Truth, but it is the fault of the people that they are rejecting it." This is the pivot on which the whole Surah turns. This is why it has been shown over and over again in different ways that the basic components of the Message -- *Tauhid*, Resurrection and Prophethood-are a reality: therefore they should believe sincerely in these for their own moral and spiritual good. They have been warned that they shall incur their own ruin if they reject them, for *kufr* by itself is sheer folly and ignorance. Moreover, the aim of the Surah is not merely to satisfy

the minds but also to appeal to the hearts to accept the Faith. Therefore it does not merely put forward logical arguments in support of the truth of the Message and against the people's wrong notions, but at appropriate intervals it makes frequent use of sympathetic and earnest appeals to win over their hearts by warning them of the consequences of ***kufr*** and by holding out the happy rewards of Faith so that the foolish people should give up their obduracy.

Besides this, the objections of the opponents have been answered without any mention of them, and those doubts which are proving a hindrance in the way of the Message or were being created by the opponents have been removed. At the same time, the Believers; who had been passing through long and hard ordeal and were feeling tired, and waiting anxiously for Allah's succor, have been comforted and filled with hope and courage.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلٓمٓرٓ ۚ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ۗ وَٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ٱلْحَقُّ
وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾

[1] Alif. Lam. Mim. Ra. These are the verses of the Divine Book, and that which has been sent down to you from your Lord is the very truth, but most (of your) people do not believe in this.[1]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى رَفَعَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۗ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۗ
وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ ۗ كُلٌّ يَجْرِى لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ
يُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُم بِلِقَآءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢﴾

[2] It is Allah Who raised up the heavens without such pillars as you could see:[2] then He sat Himself upon the

Throne of His Kingdom:[3] He subjected the sun and the moon to a law.[4] Everything in the universe is running its course to its fixed term.[5] And Allah alone is directing the whole affair. He makes His signs plain:[6] perhaps you may be convinced of meeting your Lord.[7]

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى مَدَّ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ وَأَنْهَٰرًا ۖ وَمِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ
جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ ٱثْنَيْنِ ۖ يُغْشِى ٱلَّيْلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾

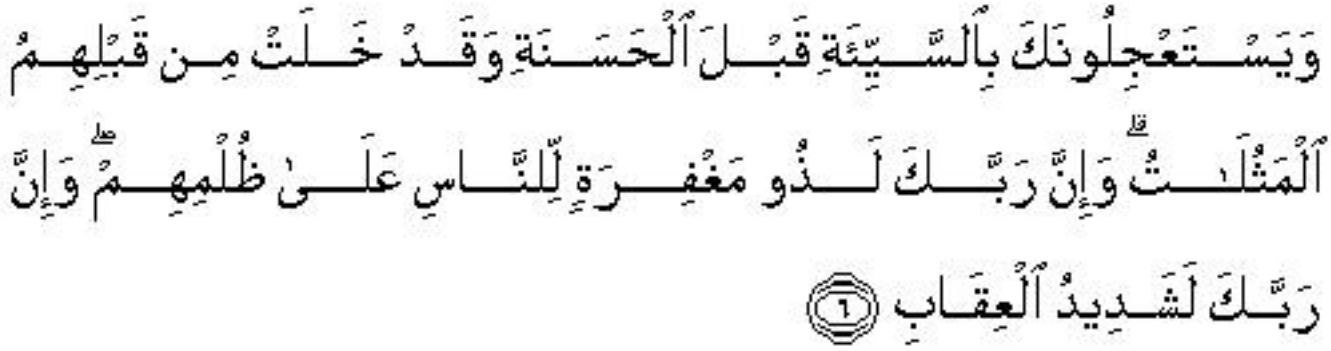
[3] And it is He Who has spread out the earth, and fixed the immovable mountains in it, and made the rivers flow on it. He has created in pairs every kind of fruit, and He covers the day with the veil of night.[8] Surely there are great Signs in these for those who reflect upon them.

وَفِى ٱلْأَرْضِ قِطَعٌ مُّتَجَٰوِرَٰتٌ وَجَنَّٰتٌ مِّنْ أَعْنَٰبٍ وَزَرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ
صِنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنْوَانٍ يُسْقَىٰ بِمَآءٍ وَٰحِدٍ وَنُفَضِّلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِى
ٱلْأُكُلِ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

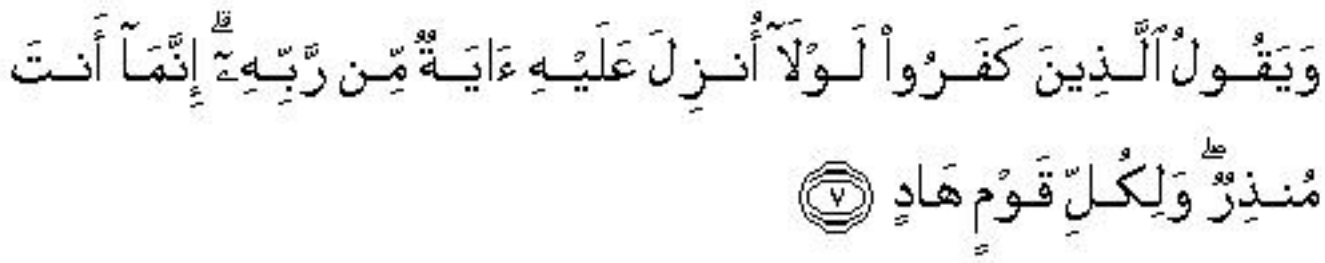
[4] And behold! there are different regions on the earth close to one another;[9] there are vineyards, corn fields and groves of date-palm with single or double trunk.[10] All are irrigated with the same water, but We make some more tasteful than others. Most surely there are many Signs in all these things for those who use their common sense.[11]



[5] Now, if there is anything for you to marvel at, you should marvel at their saying: "What! when we have become dust, shall we then be raised to a new life again?" These are the people who have denied their Lord:[12] they are those who shall have collars around their necks:[13] they shall be the dwellers of Hell and therein they shall dwell for ever.



[6] They demand from you the hastening of evil rather than good,[14] though indeed there have been instances of exemplary punishments before them (of the wrath of God on the people who adopted the same attitude.) The fact is that your Lord shows forbearance to the people despite their transgressions, and it is also the fact that your Lord is stern in retribution.



[7] These people who have rejected your Message, say, "Why has no Sign been sent down to this person from His Lord"[15] You are a warner only and every people has its guide.[16]

ٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ مَا تَحۡمِلُ كُلُّ أُنثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ ٱلۡأَرۡحَامُ وَمَا تَزۡدَادُۖ وَكُلُّ شَيۡءٍ
عِندَهُۥ بِمِقۡدَارٍ ﴿٨﴾

عَٰلِمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلۡكَبِيرُ ٱلۡمُتَعَالِ ﴿٩﴾

سَوَآءٞ مِّنكُم مَّنۡ أَسَرَّ ٱلۡقَوۡلَ وَمَن جَهَرَ بِهِۦ وَمَنۡ هُوَ مُسۡتَخۡفِۭ بِٱلَّيۡلِ
وَسَارِبُۢ بِٱلنَّهَارِ ﴿١٠﴾

لَهُۥ مُعَقِّبَٰتٞ مِّنۢ بَيۡنِ يَدَيۡهِ وَمِنۡ خَلۡفِهِۦ يَحۡفَظُونَهُۥ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوۡمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمۡۗ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِقَوۡمٖ
سُوٓءٗا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَالٖ ﴿١١﴾

[8-11] Allah knows what every female bears in her womb: He is fully aware of what is taking shape in the womb and also what decrease or increase occurs therein.[17] Everything has its fixed measure with Him. He has perfect knowledge both of the visible and the invisible. He is the Great and the Supreme Being. Alike to Him are all of you, whether One of you whispers or speaks aloud or one hides oneself under the cover of the darkness of night or walks about in the broad day light. For each person has guardians before him and behind him, who watch over him by Allah's command.[18] The fact is that Allah does not change a people's lot unless they themselves change their own characteristics: and when Allah decides to bring about retribution to a people, none can ward it off, nor can they find any defender or helper against Allah.[19]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُرِيكُمُ ٱلْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنشِئُ ٱلسَّحَابَ
ٱلثِّقَالَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَيُسَبِّحُ ٱلرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِۦ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِۦ وَيُرْسِلُ ٱلصَّوَٰعِقَ
فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَن يَشَآءُ وَهُمْ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِى ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْمِحَالِ ﴿١٣﴾

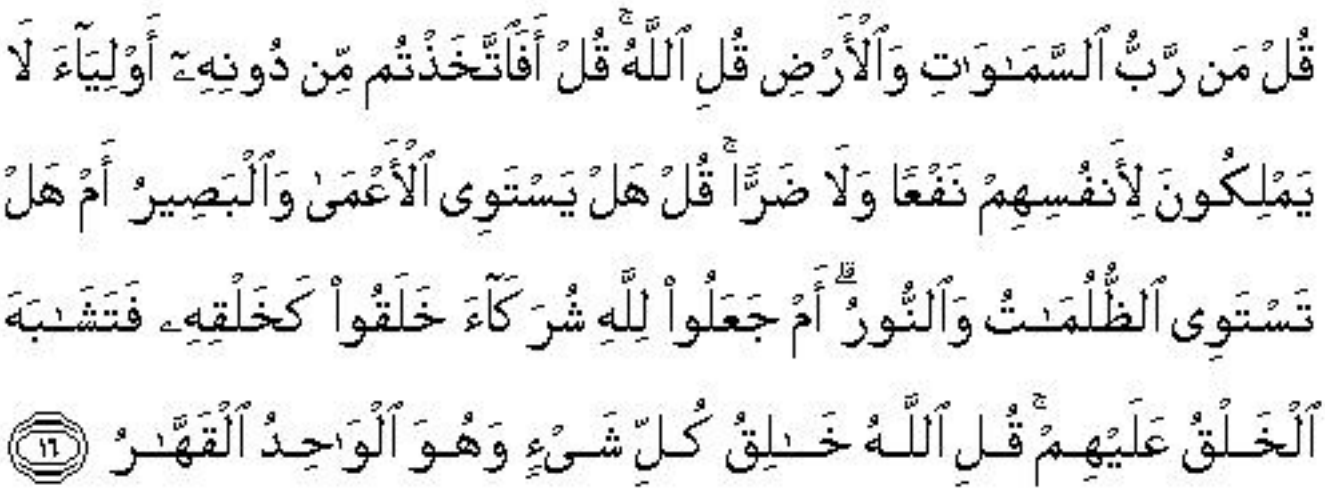
[12-13] It is He Who makes the lightning flash before you to fill you both with fear and with hope: it is He Who produces clouds laden with water. The thunder glorifies Him with His praise[20] and the angels, too, glorify Him in awe of Him.[21] He lets loose thunderbolts and (often) smites with them whomsoever He wills, while they are wrangling about Allah. The fact is that His plan is very effective.[22]

لَهُۥ دَعْوَةُ ٱلْحَقِّ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُم بِشَىْءٍ إِلَّا
كَبَٰسِطِ كَفَّيْهِ إِلَى ٱلْمَآءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَٰلِغِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا دُعَآءُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ ﴿١٤﴾

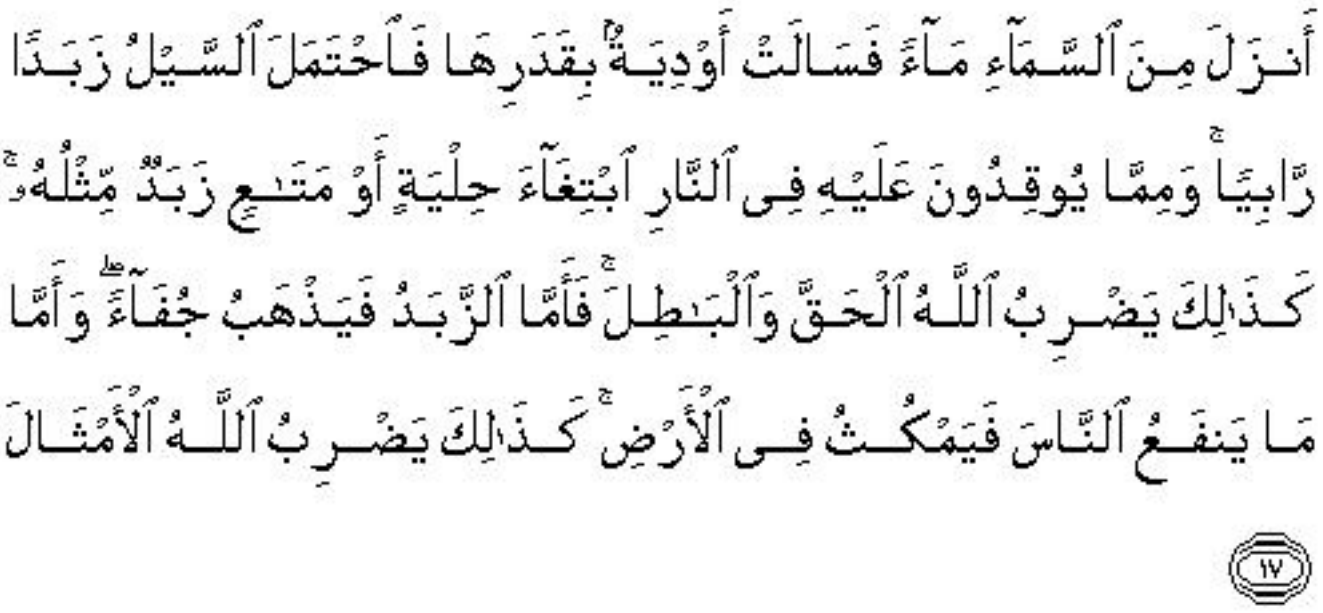
وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا
وَظِلَٰلُهُم بِٱلْغُدُوِّ وَٱلْءَاصَالِ ﴿١٥﴾

[14-15] To invoke Him alone is the right thing.[23] As regards the other deities whom they invoke apart from Him, they cannot give any answer to their prayers. It is as if a man were to stretch his hands towards water and ask it to come

to his mouth, when it cannot reach his mouth in this way; likewise the prayers of the disbelievers are nothing but aimless efforts. For it is Allah alone before Whom everything in the heavens and the earth bows down willingly or unwillingly,[24] and the shadows of all things bow down before Him in the morning and the evening.[25]



[16] Ask them, "Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth ?" Say, "Allah."[26] Then say to them, "When this is the fact, have you then made beside Him such deities your protectors as can do neither good nor harm even to themselves ?" Say, "Are the blind man and the seeing man alike?[27] Are light and darkness alike?"[28] And if it is not so, have the partners, they have set up with Allah, created anything like His creation so as to make the matter of creation doubtful for them?[29] Say, Allah alone is the Creator of everything; and He is the Unique, the Almighty. [30]



[17] Allah sent down water from the sky and every system carried it along according to its capacity: then there was flood and a swelling foam[31] came to the surface. Likewise there arises a scum out of the metals which are melted in

the furnace for making ornaments and utensils.[32] By such similitudes, Allah makes the truth distinct from falsehood. That which is the foam vanishes and that which is beneficial for the people remains on the earth. In this way Allah cites similes to make His Message clear.

لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَهُۥ لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُم
مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُۥ مَعَهُۥ لَٱفْتَدَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوٓءُ
ٱلْحِسَابِ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿١٨﴾

[18] There is an excellent reward for those who responded to the call of their Lord. As for those who rejected His call, they would willingly give for their ransom all the wealth the earth contained, if they possessed it, and as much more besides (in order to escape retribution).[33] Those are the people who shall have the heavy reckoning;[34] their abode shall be Hell-a wretched resting place.

۞ أَفَمَن يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ٱلْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰٓ ۚ
إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿١٩﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَنقُضُونَ ٱلْمِيثَٰقَ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦٓ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ
سُوٓءَ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢١﴾

[19-21] Well, how can the one who believes that this Book which has been sent down to you from your Lord, is the

Truth, be like the one who is blind to this fact?[35] It is the wise people alone who take advice from this:[36] they fulfill their Covenant with Allah, and break it not after confirming it.[37] They join together what Allah has bidden to join:[38] they fear their Lord and dread lest they should be called upon to render a heavy reckoning.

وَٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ ٱبْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا
رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى
ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٢٢﴾

جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۖ
وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَ ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مِيثَٰقِهِۦ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ
ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦٓ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۙ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ
سُوٓءُ ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٢٥﴾

[22-25] They show fortitude to win the approval of their Lord.[39] They establish Salat and expend openly and secretly out of what We have bestowed upon them and ward off evil with good.[40] Their's shall be the abode of the Hereafter: Gardens wherein they will live for ever. They will enter into them along with the righteous from among their

forefathers, wives and descendants. The angels will come to welcome them from every side, saying, "Peace be upon you.[41] You have won this blessing because of what you steadfastly endured in the world." How blessed is this abode of the Hereafter! As for those who break their Covenant with Allah after confirming it, who cut asunder what Allah has bidden to be joined, and spread chaos on the earth, their's shall be the curse, and they shall have a wretched abode in the Hereafter.

ٱللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ وَفَرِحُوا۟ بِٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ
ٱلدُّنْيَا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ إِلَّا مَتَٰعٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

[26] Allah gives abundantly His provisions to whom He will and sparingly to whom He pleases.[42] These people are wholly absorbed in the joys of this life, whereas the life of this world is but a paltry thing as compared with the life of the Hereafter.

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن
يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِىٓ إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أَنَابَ ﴿٢٧﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ
ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمْ وَحُسْنُ مَـَٔابٍ
﴿٢٩﴾

[27-29] Those people who have rejected (Muhammad as a Prophet) say, "Why has no Sign been sent down to him from his Lord?[43] Say, "Allah leads astray whom He will; and He leads to Himself only those who turn to Him."[44] Such are the people who have accepted (the Message of this Prophet,) and their hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Note it well that it is Allah's remembrance alone that brings comfort to hearts. Blessed are those who have accepted the Message and done righteous deeds: they have a good end.

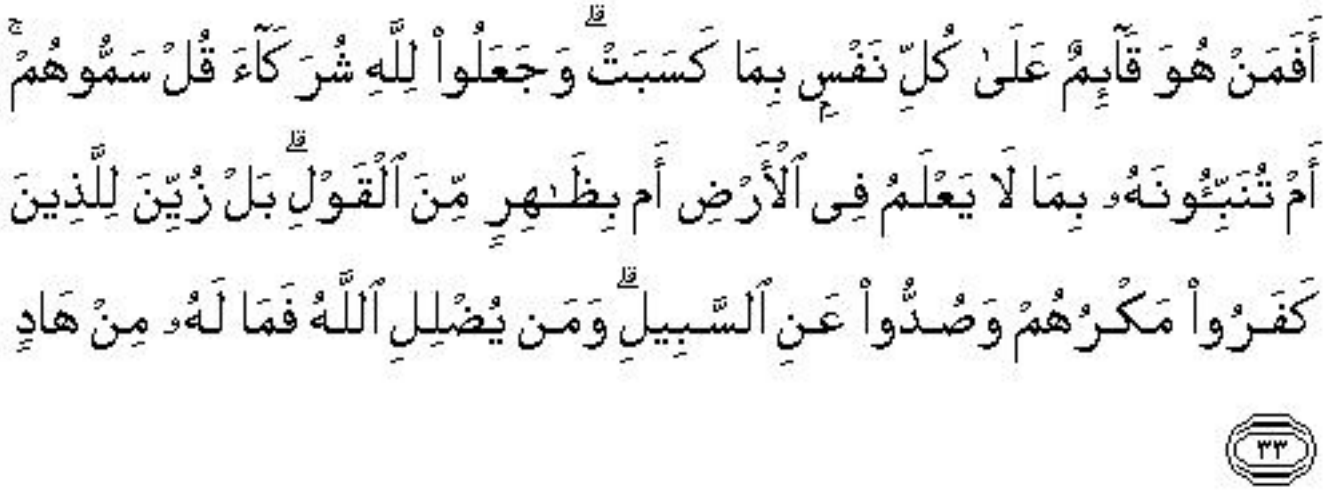
كَذَٰلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ فِىٓ أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهَآ أُمَمٌ لِّتَتْلُوَا۟ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ۚ قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ
تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ ﴿٣٠﴾

[30] O Muhammad ! We have sent you as a Messenger in this way[45] among a people before whom many peoples have passed away so that you should recite to them the Message which We have sent down to you; yet they are rejecting the most Compassionate Lord.[46] Say to them, "My Lord is He: there is no deity but He: I have placed my full trust in Him and He is my sole Resort."

وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْءَانًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ ٱلْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِّعَتْ بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضُ أَوْ كُلِّمَ بِهِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۗ
بَل لِّلَّهِ ٱلْأَمْرُ جَمِيعًا ۗ أَفَلَمْ يَاْيْـَٔسِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَن لَّوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ لَهَدَى ٱلنَّاسَ
جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ تُصِيبُهُم بِمَا صَنَعُوا۟ قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا
مِّن دَارِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ وَعْدُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿٣١﴾

وَلَقَدِ ٱسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَأَمْلَيْتُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ ۖ
فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾

[31-32] And what (do you think) would have been the result, if We had sent a Qur'an that would have caused the mountains to move or cleft the earth asunder or made the dead speak?[47] (It is not difficult at all to show such Signs) for Allah has full power over everything.[48] Have the Believers (still any expectations of a Sign in answer to the demand of the disbelievers and) not given up all hope, (knowing) that Allah could have guided all mankind aright,[49] if He had so desired? As for the disbelievers, because of their misdeeds, one affliction or the other does not cease to visit them every now and then, or come near their home. It will go on like this until Allah's threat come to pass. Indeed, Allah does not fail to bring about His threat. Other Messengers have also been mocked before you, but I have always given respite to the disbelievers and then seized upon them at its end. Just see how terrible had been My Scourge!



[33-35] What! are they (so audacious that they are) setting up partners with Him Who is watching minutely over the actions of each and every soul?[50] [51] O Prophet say to them, "(If God has Himself set them up as His partners) just

tell me their names. Do you mean to inform Him of something new that He Himself is unaware of on His earth? Or do you merely utter empty words?[52] Indeed for those who rejected the Message their fraud[53] has been made to appear fair to them and they have been debarred froth the Right Way:[54] and there is none to show the Right Way to those whom Allah lets go astray. There is a torment for them in the life of this world but the torment in the Hereafter is still more painful; and there is none to protect them from Allah. As regards the Paradise which the God fearing have been promised it is like this: canals flow beneath it, its fruits are eternal and its shade is perpetual. Such is the reward of the righteous but the reward of the disbelievers is the tire of Hell.

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ يَفۡرَحُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَۖ وَمِنَ ٱلۡأَحۡزَابِ
مَن يُنكِرُ بَعۡضَهُۥۚ قُلۡ إِنَّمَآ أُمِرۡتُ أَنۡ أَعۡبُدَ ٱللَّهَ وَلَآ أُشۡرِكَ بِهِۦٓۚ
إِلَيۡهِ أَدۡعُواْ وَإِلَيۡهِ مَـَٔابِ ٣٦

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ حُكۡمًا عَرَبِيّٗاۚ وَلَئِنِ ٱتَّبَعۡتَ أَهۡوَآءَهُم بَعۡدَمَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ
ٱلۡعِلۡمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِيّٖ وَلَا وَاقٖ ٣٧

[36-37] O Prophet! some of those people whom We gave the Book before you rejoice in the Book We have sent down to you while there are others among the different sections who reject some of the things contained in this. Tell them plainly "I have been commanded to worship Allah alone and prohibited from setting up a partner with him. Therefore I invite you to Him and myself turn to Him."[55] It is with this instruction that We have sent this Command in Arabic to you. Now if you follow the desires and lusts of the people in spite of the knowledge you have received there shall be none to defend you nor to protect you against Allah.

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا رُسُلٗا مِّن قَبۡلِكَ وَجَعَلۡنَا لَهُمۡ أَزۡوَٰجٗا وَذُرِّيَّةٗۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ
أَن يَأۡتِيَ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِۗ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٖ كِتَابٞ ٣٨

يَمْحُوا۟ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيُثْبِتُ ۖ وَعِندَهُۥٓ أُمُّ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ﴿٣٩﴾

[38-39] We have sent many Messengers before you and We assigned to them also wives and children:[56] and no Messenger had the power to show any Sign without the sanction of Allah.[57] Every age had its Book: Allah abrogates whatever He pleases and keeps intact whatever He wills and He has the Original Book[58] with Him.

وَإِن مَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْبَلَٰغُ وَعَلَيْنَا ٱلْحِسَابُ ﴿٤٠﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا نَأْتِى ٱلْأَرْضَ نَنقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقِّبَ لِحُكْمِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٤١﴾

وَقَدْ مَكَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْمَكْرُ جَمِيعًا ۖ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ۗ وَسَيَعْلَمُ ٱلْكُفَّٰرُ لِمَنْ عُقْبَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٤٢﴾

[40-42] And O Prophet! Rest assured that We will carry out the threat We are holding out to them whether a part of it should happen during your lifetime or We should cause you to die before its fulfillment. Anyhow your duty is only to convey the Message and it is for Us to do the reckoning.[59] Do these people not see how We are advancing in the land and shrinking its boundaries (for them) on all sides ?[60] Allah rules and there is none to revise His decrees and He is swift at His reckoning. Indeed those who went before them also devised schemes,[61] but the decisive plan is wholly in the hand of Allah. He knows what every soul earns and the disbelievers will soon come to know who will have a good end.

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا ۚ قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًۢا بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ
وَمَنْ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ﴿٤٣﴾

[43] These disbelievers say, “You are not a Messenger of Allah.” Say, “Allah suffices for a witness between me and you, and every such person who has the knowledge of the Book.”[62]

1This is the introduction to this Surah, in which its aim and object has been enunciated in a few words. Allah has addressed the Holy Prophet to this effect: "O Prophet! most of your people arc rejecting the teachings of the Qur'an for one reason or the other, but the fact is that what We are sending down to you is the Truth whether people believe it or not."

After this brief introduction, the discourse deals with the main subject of the Surah, which consists of three basic things. First, "The whole of the universe belongs to Allah alone, and none besides Him has any right to service and worship" . Second, "There is another life after this life, in which you shall have to render an account of all your actions." Third, "I am a Messenger of Allah: whatever I am presenting before you is not from myself but from Allah." As the people were rejecting these three things, these have been reiterated over and over again in various forms to remove doubts and objections from the minds of the disbelievers.

2In other words, "Allah keeps the myriads of heavenly bodies in space without any visible and perceptible support." Though there is nothing apparent and visible that is supporting these bodies, yet there is an invariable and imperceptible Power which is not only holding and keeping each and everyone of these huge bodies including the earth we inhabit in their proper places and orbits but also does not let any collision take place between them.

3For the fuller details of "He sat Himself on the Throne of His Kingdom," please refer to E.N. 41 of Al-Aaraf. Here the purpose will be served if it is understood that this thing has been mentioned in the Qur'an at many places in order to bring out clearly the fact that Allah has not only created the earth, but also rules over His Kingdom, and that His universe is a factory that is not working automatically as some ignorant people seem to think nor is it being ruled by many gods as other ignorant people seem to believe. But it is a regular system that is being run and ruled over by its Creator.

4It should be noted here that the addressees themselves accepted the truth of all the claims that have been made in this verse. Therefore no proofs were required of the facts that it is Allah Who raised up the heavens without any visible support and subjected the sun and the moon to a fixed order. These things

have been mentioned here only as arguments to prove that Allah is the sole Sovereign and ruler of the whole universe.

Now let us consider this question: How can such an argument as this convince those who do not believe at all in the existence of God nor acknowledge that He is the Creator of the universe and the Director of all its affairs ? The answer is that the arguments in support of the Doctrine of Tauhid advanced in the Qur'an to convince the mushriks equally apply against the atheists to prove the existence of God. It is like this: The whole of the universe-the earth, the moon, the sun and the countless heavenly bodies-constitute a perfect system which is working, under the same all-powerful Law. This is a proof that such a system must have been designed by some All-Powerful Sovereign, Who possesses wisdom and unerring knowledge. This proves conclusively the existence of that Allah Who has no other equal nor associate nor partner. For there can be no system without an administrator, no law without a ruler, no wisdom without a sage, and no knowledge without the possessor of that knowledge. Above all, no one can ever conceive that there can be any creation without a Creator except the one who is obdurate or has no sense left in him at all.

5This system is not only a standing proof of the fact that an All-Powerful Sovereign is ruling over it, but is also an evidence of the great wisdom underlying it; it also bears witness that there is nothing ever-lasting in it. Everything in it remains for a fixed term after which it comes to an end. This is equally true for each and every component part of it as well as for the whole system. It is quite evident from its physical structure that there is nothing ever-lasting and immortal. There must be some fixed term for the system as a whole, after the expiry of which it shall come to an end. Then there shall be another world: therefore it is most likely that there shall be Resurrection as predicted in the Qur'an: nay, its inevitability is beyond any doubt.

6Allah makes plain those Signs which help prove the truth of what the Holy Prophet was informing them. These Signs are spread all over the universe and everyone who observes these with open eyes can perceive that the realities towards which the Qur'an invites the people are testified by these Signs.

7The preceding Signs have been cited to prove two things. First, the universe has only one Creator and Administrator. Second, there shall be life in the Hereafter in which everyone shall be judged in the Divine Court and awarded rewards and punishments on merit. As the first thing was quite obvious, it has not been mentioned in the conclusion drawn from the Signs. But the second thing, life in the Hereafter, has been mentioned because that was rather hidden from perception. Therefore it has specifically been stated that these Signs have been made plain in order "to convince you that you shall meet your Lord in the Hereafter and render an account of all your actions in this world."

Now let us consider how these Signs help prove life in the Hereafter. These make it evident in two ways:

(1) When we consider how big heavenly bodies as the sun and the moon are completely subject to the

will of Allah, our hearts feel convinced that Allah Who has created these things and regulated their movements so orderly around their orbits, has undoubtedly the power to bring to life the whole human race after its death.

(2) The terrestrial system also proves that its Creator is All-Wise. Therefore it can never be imagined that the All-Wise Creator could have created man and endowed him with wisdom and intelligence and invested him with power and authority, and then left him free to do what he liked with these, without being responsible and accountable for their use or abuse. For His Wisdom demands that He should take full account of all the acts and deeds of man in this world. It requires that. He should take to task those who committed aggressions and compensate their victims and He should give rewards to those who practiced virtue and punishments to those who did wicked deeds. In short, His Wisdom requires that He should call to account every human being and demand: "How did you carry out the trust that was placed in your hands in the shape of your wonderful body with its wonderful faculties and the numerous resources of the earth?" It may be that a foolish and unjust ruler of this world might entrust the affairs of his kingdom in the hands of his agents and then forget to call them to account, but such a thing can never be expected from the All-Wise and All-Knowing Allah.

It is this way of observing and considering the heavenly bodies that can convince us that life in the Hereafter is both possible and inevitable.

8After citing some heavenly Signs in support of the doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter, a few Signs are being cited from the earth for the same purpose. Briefly the following are the arguments for Tauhid, Resurrection and Accountability:

(1) Tauhid: The fact that the earth is closely connected with the heavenly bodies (which help create life on it), and the fact that the mountains and the rivers are so inter-related with that life are clear proofs that all these things have not been created by separate and different gods nor are being governed, by gods with independent powers and authorities. Had it been so, there could not have been so much harmony, congruity, accord and unity of purpose among them; nor could these relationships have continued for such a long time. For it is quite obvious that if there had not been One All-Powerful and All-Wise Allah, it could not have been possible and practicable for different gods to sit together and evolve out such a harmonious system of the universe without any discord or conflict between its myriads of bodies.

(2) Resurrection: This wonderful planet, the earth, is itself a great proof that its Creator is All-Powerful and can, therefore, raise the dead whenever He will. For it is floating in space round the sun and it has high mountains fixed in it and has large rivers flowing on its surface: it produces countless fruit-bearing trees and it brings about the cycles of the day and the night with precise regularity.

All these things bear witness to the boundless power of its Creator. It would, therefore, be sheer folly to doubt that such All-Powerful Creator is incapable of raising mankind to life after death.

(3) Accountability: The earth, with all its wonderful and purposeful signs, is a clear evidence of the fact that its Creator is All-Wise. Therefore it cannot even be imagined that He has created man, His noblest creation, without any purpose. Just as His wisdom is apparent from the structure of the earth, its mountains, its rivers, the pairs of its trees and fruits, its night and day, so it is quite obvious that it has not been made the habitation of man without any purpose, nor will it be brought to naught without the fulfillment of that purpose. Clearly mankind shall be accountable to its Creator for the fulfillment of that Divine purpose.

9That is, "If you observe carefully, you will find Divine wisdom, design and purpose in the diversity of the structure of the earth. Though it has countless regions adjoining one another, they are different from one another in their shapes, colors, component parts, characteristics, potentialities, productive capacity and source of minerals. This diversity has countless points of wisdom and advantage. Let alone other creatures, if we consider the diversity of regions from the point of the good it has done to mankind, we shall have to acknowledge that this is the result of the well-thought and well-planned design of the All-Wise Creator. For this diversity has helped the growth of human civilization so much that only an unreasonable person can assign this to mere accident.

10Some of the date-palm trees have only a single trunk from the root while others have two or more stems from the same root.

11The things mentioned in this verse contain many other Signs besides the proofs of Tauhid and the boundless powers and All-Comprehensive Wisdom of Allah. Let us consider one of these, that is the diversity in the universe, including mankind. There is the one and the same earth but all its regions are quite different from one another. Then there is one and the same water but it helps to produce different kinds of corn and fruits. Then one and the same tree bears fruits which, in spite of likeness, differ from one another in shapes, sizes, and other features. Then there is one and the same root from which sometimes one and at others two trunks sprout up, with their own different characteristics. If one considers these aspects of diversity, one shall come to the conclusion that the Divine wisdom demands the same kind of diversity in the natures, temperaments and inclinations of human beings, and, therefore, in their conducts. So, one need not worry about the existence of this diversity. As it has been stated in v. 31, if Allah had willed, He could have created all human beings alike and virtuous by birth. But the wisdom that underlies the creation of the universe, including mankind, requires diversity and not uniformity. Otherwise, all this creation would have become meaningless.

12They "have denied their Lord": their denial of the Hereafter is, in fact, the denial of the Power and Wisdom of Allah. As they say that it is impossible to bring them again to life after their death, it implies that, God forbid, their Allah Who has created them lacks not only power but wisdom, too.

13As a collar around the neck is a symbol of imprisonment, the words "collars around their necks" have been used here idiomatically to show that they are slaves of ignorance, obduracy, lust and are blind followers of their forefathers. As their thinking is influenced by their prejudices, they cannot believe in the Hereafter and would deny this, though there is every reason to believe that it is inevitable.

14This refers to the demand of the Quraish from the Holy Prophet "If you are a true Prophet of God, why don't you hasten to bring that scourge of God on us of which you have been threatening us, when we are flouting and denying you ?" They did this in different ways. Sometimes they would invoke God mockingly and say, "O Lord, settle our accounts now and do not postpone these to the Day of Resurrection" . At another time, they would say, "Our Lord, if what Muhammad says be true, and be from Thee, then stone us from the sky or send down some other scourge upon us from the sky or send down some other painful torment upon us." In this verse an answer has been given to such impudent demands of the disbelievers. They have been admonished to refrain from such foolish demands and avail of the respite that was being given to them and mend their ways, for they were incurring the wrath of God by adopting the attitude of rebellion.

15This showed their mentality. The only criterion of judging whether Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was a true Prophet or not according to these disbelievers, was whether he would perform a miracle to order. This was because they would not judge his Message by rational arguments: they would not learn a lesson from his high character nor from the moral revolution that was being brought about among his Companions by his Message and noble example: nor would they carefully consider the rational arguments given in the Qur'an to prove the errors of their religion of shirk and superstitions of ignorance. They would ignore these rational things and demand a miracle to decide the issue.

16This is the concise answer to their demand, though it has not been directly addressed to the disbelievers but to the Messenger. It is this: "O Prophet, you should not worry at all about some miracle which you might show to these people in order to convince them, for it is not a part of your Mission. Your duty is only to warn the people of their negligence and of the evil consequences of their wrong ways. And for this purpose, We have always sent a guide to every people. Now you, too, are performing this duty, and it is for them to open their eyes and judge the truth of your Message." After giving this concise answer, Allah overlooks their demand but warns them, in the succeeding verses, that they have to deal with the All-Knowing Allah Who has full knowledge about everyone of them from the time they were in the wombs of their mothers, and Who keeps a keen watch over everything they do. Therefore their fates shall be decided strictly with justice in accordance with their merits and that there is no power on the earth and in the heavens that can influence in the least His decisions and judgments.

17When amplified the verse will mean : Allah remains fully aware of all the developments that take place in the child while in its mother's womb, and He watches over the decrease or increase in each of its limbs, and its potentialities, capabilities and powers.

18That is, "Allah not only directly watches over whatever each person does, and is fully aware of everything he does, but He has also appointed such Guardians as accompany him everywhere and keep a full record of all his deeds." This has been stated here to warn those people who live their lives under the delusion that they have been left absolutely free to do whatever they like and shall not be required to render an account of what they did in this worldly life. The warning is that such people invite their own retribution.

19This is to warn them further that they should not remain under any delusion that some holy person or saint or angel has the power to rescue them froth Divine Retribution, for there is none who could defend them against Allah, even though they might have been paying homages and making offerings to their so-called patrons and protectors in the hope that they would rescue them froth punishment from Allah on the Day of Judgment.

20The thunder is a proclamation of Tauhid for those who have ears to hear the real meaning of its loud noise which follows the flash of lightning, though it is merely a kind of noise for those who hear it like animals. For it proclaims that Allah Who raises clouds from the oceans and carries them wherever He wills, and makes the lightning flash from the clouds and then turns them into rain so as to supply water to the dwellers of the earth, is perfect and worthy of all praise, is All-Wise and All-Powerful and is flawless in every respect and has do partner whatsoever.

21The mention of the fact that the angels are filled with awe of their Lord, and they proclaim His praise has a special significance here. This is to refute the shirk of the ignorant people who have always worshiped the angels as gods and deities and believed them to be partners with God in His Godhead. It has been stated that they are not partners with Allah but His most obedient servants; so much so that they praise Him and are filled with awe of Him.

22He has countless plans and measures which are so effective and sudden that He can smite any one with any one of them from any side He will. So much so that the intended victim is absolutely unaware of it. This is a proof that those people, who say absurd things about such All-Powerful Being, are absolutely void of sense.

23"To invoke Him alone is the right thing," for Allah alone has the power and the authority to give help and remove difficulties.

24"... everything in the heavens and the earth bows down before Allah" in the same sense that every creation of His has to obey and submit to His Physical Law in every detail. The only difference between the submission of a Believer and an unbeliever is that the former submits to it with a willing heart while the latter is forced to do so against his will, for it is absolutely beyond his power to oppose it.

25"The shadows bow down" in the sense that they fall to the west in the morning and to the cast in the evening and so on. This shows that they, too, have to submit to some Law.

26It will be worth while to note that though the question, "Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?" was put to the disbelievers, Allah told the Holy Prophet to answer it himself and say, "Allah". This was because the disbelievers hesitated to answer it one way or the other. They could not say that it was not Allah for they themselves believed that Allah was the Creator of everything. On the other hand, they could not acknowledge this fact in so many words in answer to such question, for, they would, then, have to acknowledge the doctrine of Tauhid for no basis could have been left in favor of shirk. As they realized their weak position, they would not give any answer to such questions. That is why Allah asks His Messenger to put such questions to the disbelievers: "Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth? Who is the Lord of the Universe? Who sustains you with provisions of life?" When they do not give any answer to such questions, Allah asks His Messenger to say "Allah" in answer. He then proceeds on with this argument: "When Allah does all these things, how do the deities you worship come in?"

27The blind man is the person who cannot see any of the countless signs of the Oneness of Allah, though these lie spread over before him in the universe. On the other hand, the seeing man is the person who can see in every particle of the universe and in every leaf of grass and tree Signs pointing to their Creator. Thus the question that has been posed means: "O disbelievers ! if you are blind to the Signs, why should the one who can see the Signs should behave like a blind man and stumble along like you?"

28Here "light" means the light of the knowledge of the Truth which the Holy Prophet and his followers possessed. In contrast to this, there was the "darkness" of ignorance in which the disbelievers were wandering about. The question that has been posed means to ask this: "Why should those, who have got the `light', extinguish it and wander about in the darkness like you? Well, if you do not know the worth of the `light', you may choose to wander in the darkness, but how can you expect the one who has got the 'light', who appreciates the difference between the light and the darkness, and who is seeing the right way as if in broad daylight, to Dave the light and wander about in the darkness?"

29The question is intended to impress on the disbelievers that there is absolutely no reason why they should practice shirk. When they themselves admit that their gods did not create even an iota in the universe and that they have not even the smallest and most insignificant share in the creation, there remains no ground for them to cherish any doubts about it. Why should, then, their false gods and deities share the rights and powers of the Real Creator?

30The Arabic word (Qah-har) literally means "the one who rules over all by virtue of one's own power, and keeps all under one's complete control."

This fact that "He is the Unique, the Almighty" follows naturally from the preceding fact that "Allah alone is

the Creator of everything," for this fact was also acknowledged by the mushriks and was never denied by them. This is so because the Creator of everything should logically be Unique, and every other thing or being must necessarily be His creation. Therefore nothing could be the equal of the Creator or partner in His Being, attributes, powers and rights. Likewise, the Creator must have complete power and control over His Creation.

For it can never be imagined that the Creator would create anything over which He has not full control. Therefore, the one who acknowledges Allah to be the Creator must also acknowledge Him to be the Unique and the All-Powerful. After this, there remains no reason why one should worship any one other than the Creator or invoke some one else for help in resolving one's difficulties and fulfilling one's needs.

31In this simile the Knowledge which had been sent down. by Allah to the Holy Prophet has been likened to the rain from the sky, and the Believers to the streams, rivulets and rivers. Just as the streams etc. , fill themselves with rain-water, each according to its capacity, so his followers gained knowledge from him, each according to his ability. On the other hand, the hue and cry that was raised by the opponents of the Islamic Movement has been likened to the swelling foam etc., that begins to dance about on the surface of flood water, but soon vanishes away.

32As it is but natural that scum should appear on the surface when are melted in the furnace for purification, likewise bad people would come surface and take prominent part in persecuting the good people who are passed through the furnace of persecution for their purification.

33This shows that the disbelievers would be in such a sad plight that they would not hesitate to give their all for their redemption.

34".... they shall have the heavy reckoning": they shall have to bear the full consequences of their evil deeds. No sin, no shortcoming, in short, nothing will be forgiven and no evil shall go unpunished.

We learn from the Qur'an that the rebels of Allah shall have to render a reckoning, whereas there shall be a "light" reckoning from those who have been faithful and obedient to their Lord. In consideration of their loyal services, their cases will be dealt with leniently, and taking their general goodness into account many of their shortcomings will be forgiven.

This is further amplified by a Tradition of the Holy Prophet. Hadrat 'A'ishah relates, "I said, O Messenger of Allah! the most dreadful verse of the Qur'an is this: Whoso shall commit an evil, he shall be punished for it'. (IV :123). The Holy Prophet answered, O `A'ishah! don't you know how Allah clears the accounts of His faithful and obedient servant? Whatever harm or trouble he receives in this world-even so much as the pricking of a thorn-is taken by Allah as atonement for one or the other of his sins. As regards the Hereafter, everyone, who shall be called upon to render an account of any sin, shall be punished for it' .

At this Hadrat `A'ishah asked, `Then what is meant by light reckoning in this verse: Whoso shall be given his `Conduct Register' in his right hand, he will render a light reckoning?' (LXXXIV:?-8). The Holy Prophet answered, `This means merely the presentation of his whole conduct, that is, all his deeds-good and bad-shall be presented before Allah but he shall not be called upon to clear the account of all his deeds; for the one who shall be called upon to clear the whole of his account, shall be totally ruined."

The same thing is happening even in this world. A master deals very leniently with his faithful and obedient servant and connives at his minor faults and even forgives his major faults in consideration of his meritorious services. On the other hand, if a servant is proved to be treacherous and dishonest, no consideration is given even to his services, and he is punished both for his minor and for major faults.

35That is, "As the attitude of the two in this world will be different from each other, so shall be their ultimate end in the Hereafter."

36That is, "Those who listen to the Message that has been sent down by Allah, and accept His Messenger, are really very wise people. This is why their conduct in this world is quite different from those foolish people who are blind to its merits: and so is their ultimate end in the Hereafter, as stated in the subsequent verses".

37This Covenant is the same that was made by Allah with the whole of mankind at the beginning of the creation that they would worship Him alone. (Please refer to E.N.'s 134 and 135 of Al-A`araf). As this Covenant has been made with every human being, it has been imbued firmly in human nature. When a human being is born in this world, he, so to say, confines the same Covenant because he owes his creation to the same Allah with Whom he had made that Covenant: then he is brought up by His Providence and fed and nourished with His Provisions, and uses the powers and faculties endowed by Him. AII these things bind him by themselves into a covenant of bondage with his Lord. It is obvious that wise, loyal and faithful people fulfill their Covenant and dare not break it except that they might break it unconsciously and unwillingly.

38That is, "All those social and civil relations that are conducive to the correct and right conduct of collective human life."

39"They show fortitude": they remain self-possessed and keep under control all their desires and lusts and do not transgress the bounds, and they do not yield to temptations to disobey their Lord in order to gain advantages and gratify their desires: nay, they bear with calm courage and endurance losses and afflictions that are inevitable in the obedience of Allah. If we consider the life of a believer from this point of view, we shall find that the whole of his life is the life of endurance and fortitude, for he keeps himself under control in very trying circumstances in this world in the hope of winning the approval of his Lord and in the expectation of gaining permanent benefits in the Hereafter: so he fights with fortitude every

temptation to sin.

40That is, "If others do evil to them, they do not do evil in return but do good instead: they do not fight mischief with mischief but with virtue. Howsoever unjust one may be to them, they do justice in every case. Likewise, they remain truthful and honest even in the cast of those who tell lies against them and show dishonesty towards them."

There is a Tradition of the Holy Prophet to the same effect: "You should not imitate others in your conduct towards other people, for it is wrong to say, 'We will do goodness to others, if they do goodness to us and we will do injustice to them if they are unjust to us.' (On the other hand,) you should follow this principle: if others do goodness to you, you should do goodness to them, but if they do evil to you, you should not be unjust to them."

There is another Tradition, which begins with the words: "My Lord has bidden me to do nine things. Four of these things are, I should behave justly towards everyone whether I am pleased or offended with him. I should render the right even of the one who violates my rights. I should pay the dues even of the one who depraves me of my due. I should forgive the one who has been unjust to me." There is yet another Tradition to the same effect: "Don't be faithless even to the one who has been faithless to you." There is also a saying of Hadrat 'Umar that amounts to the same thing. "The best way of punishing the one, who does not fear God in his dealings with you, is that you should fear God in your dealings with him."

41This implies two things. The angels will come in large numbers from every side and give them this good news: "Now you have come to a place where there is peace for you. Here you arc immune from every affliction, every trouble, every hardship, and every danger and worry." (For details please see E.N. 29 of Al-Hijr).

42This verse refutes the wrong criterion by which the disbelievers of Makkah (and all other foolish people of the world) judged whether one was or was not a favorite of God. They judged a man's worth by his wealth and worldly prosperity and not by his faith and righteous conduct. They thought that the one who was enjoying all the good things of life was a favorite of God, even if he had erroneous beliefs and did wicked deeds. On the other hand, they considered the one who was poor and indigent to be under the wrath of God, even though he was righteous. That is why in their judgment the chiefs of the Quraish were far superior to the followers of the Holy Prophet. They would say, "You can see for yourselves that God is with the chiefs of the Quraish."

In this verse, Allah has warned there that they are absolutely wrong in drawing such a conclusion from the worldly conditions of the people. Allah gives His provision to the people abundantly or sparingly for reasons different from those which they presumed and richness or poverty is no criterion by which to judge the worth of people. The real criterion of judging the worth of people is their beliefs and deeds. The one, who has righteous beliefs and does good deeds, shall be higher in rank than the one who has wrong

beliefs and does evil deeds. Thus the real criterion is the quality of one's deeds and not the possession or the lack of wealth.

43Please also keep in view the answer that has been given to this question in v.7.

44This is the answer to their question. It is not due to the lack of signs that they were going astray, but it is the lack of any desire in them to seek right guidance. For Allah does not force one to follow the Right Way, if he deliberately turns away from it. He lets such persons wander on the wrong ways they choose to wander. Nay, even all those things that should serve as a means to guidance for a seeker of truth, become the means of deviation for the one who seeks deviation. So much so that that very torch which helps show the way to the former, dazzles the eyes of the latter. This is how Allah Leads astray a person.

This answer to the demand of a Sign is matchless in its eloquence. It says to them, "O foolish people! it is not due to the lack of Signs that you are not finding the right path, but it is due to the lack of any desire in you for it. You do not see any of the countless Signs that lie scattered all around you because you have no desire to go to the Right Way. How can then any Sign be helpful to you ? For you would not see any of those Signs. However, those who seek the Right Way to Allah, see these Signs and find the Right Way with their help."

45That is, In this way that We have not given you a Sign they demanded.

46That is, "Instead of serving that most Compassionate Lord, they are discarding His service and setting up other partners in His attributes, powers, rights and giving thanks to others for His blessings."

47This verse has been addressed to the Believers who were feeling uneasy that no such Sign was being sent as was demanded by the disbelievers. They thought that such a Sign would convince the disbelievers and they would accept Islam. Therefore when no such Sign was sent, they became all the more uneasy for the lack of the fulfillment of the demand that gave rise to doubts about the Prophethood of the Messenger. The question posed in this verse is meant to remove that uneasiness of the Muslims. It is like this: "Do you think that they would have embraced Islam if such and such Signs had been shown to them all of a sudden along with a Surah of the Qur'an ? Are you under the delusion that they are quite ready to accept Islam and are waiting only for such a Sign ? Do you think that those people who have failed to see the light of the Truth in the teachings of the Qur'an, in the phenomena of the universe, in the pure and spotless life of the Holy Prophet and in the wonderful change in the lives of his Companions, would see the light of the Truth in the moving of the mountains, in the cleavage of the earth and in the coming out of the dead from the graves?"

48"Allah has full power over everything" and can show any Sign if He so desires. He is not showing any Sign for it does not fit in the scheme laid down for the guidance of Man. As the real object is to show

Guidance to mankind through the Prophet and not to compel them to believe in the Prophethood of a Prophet, He desires that the people should gain guidance by thinking and observing wisely and not by seeing Signs.

49That is, "If the object had been to make human beings Believers even without consciously understanding it, Allah could have created them Believers by birth."

50That is, "They are so audacious that they set up partners with Allah Whose knowledge is All-Comprehensive and Who is aware of even the minutest details of the good and bad actions of each individual."

51These are the audacious things they do. They ascribe partners and equals to Him: they believe that some of His creatures are a part and parcel of His Being, and have attributes and rights like Him: they presume that they shall not be called to account for whatever they do, even though they live in His Kingdom.

52That is, "You give empty names to the partners you ascribe to Him for you have no real knowledge about them." For you could get this knowledge only in one of the three following ways:

First, You might have received some authentic information that Allah had made such and such people as His partners in His attributes, powers and rights. If it is so, please let us also know their names and the source of your information.

The second possibility is that Allah might have remained ignorant that some beings have become His partners. Therefore you are going to inform Him about this. If it is so, please say it clearly in so many words so that it may be decided whether there are some foolish people who can believe in such a nonsensical claim.

Obviously the above two suppositions are absurd. Therefore the only alternative is that, "You are ascribing partners to Him without any rhyme or reason, and you without any knowledge make one the relative of God, another the hearer of supplications, and still another the helper and fulfiller of certain needs and the ruler of a certain region etc."

53Shirk has been called "fraud" because none of the angels, spirits, saints, heavenly bodies, to whom they ascribe Divine attributes and powers or render Divine rights, ever claimed to possess these attributes or powers, nor did they ever demand these rights from the people nor told the people that they would fulfill their desires and wants, if they would perform some rituals of worship before them. As a matter of fact, some clever people invented these gods in order to practice willful deception and dishonesty so that they might wield powerful influence over the common people and exploit them and

deprive them of a part of their hard earned possessions. Accordingly, they made the common people credulous followers of the gods of their inventions and set themselves up as their representatives to get money, etc.., from them by this fraud.

The second reason why shirk has been called "fraud" is that a worldly man pretends to believe in it not because he wants to believe in it but in order to free himself from all moral restraints to enable him to lead an irresponsible life of treed and lust.

The third reason is given below in E. N . 54.

54Shirk is also `fraud' in the sense that it has been made to appear fair for them and so leads them into deviation and prevents them from coming back to the Right Way. It is like this: When mushriks adopt wrong ways of deviation that suit the kind of lives they wish to lead, they have to invent arguments to pacify their consciences and convince other people that they are on the right way. Naturally this fraud confirms them on the way of deviation and they are debarred from the Right Way.

55This is in reply to a specific objection which was then raised by the disbelievers. They would say, "If he has brought the same Message that was brought by the Messengers before him (as he claims). why don't the Jews and the Christians who are the followers of the former Prophets come forward and welcome it?" The verse answers the objection and says that the taste followers of the former Prophets really rejoice in the Message of the Qur'an, but the false ones have been offended at it. Then it asks the Holy Prophet not to worry at all about this, saying, "O Prophet, you should not mind at all whether they are pleased or offended at it. Tell them plainly that this is the Guidance I have received from my Lord and I will follow it at all costs."

56This is the answer to another objection. The disbelievers said that Ire could not be a Prophet of Allah because he had wives and children, for they argued that Prophets had nothing to do with carnal desires.

57This is the answer to yet another objection: "Had he been a taste Prophet, he would have shown a Sign like the shining hand and the miraculous staff of Prophet Moses or he would have restored sight to the blind or cured lepers like Prophet Jesus, or brought a Sign like the she-camel of Prophet Salih". The answer is this: "None of the former Messengers had any power to show any Sign nor has this Prophet: Allah showed a Sign whenever and through whomsoever He considered it to be necessary and will show any Sign whenever He will consider it necessary, and that I have not claimed to possess any such power that such a demand might be made from me."

58This is the answer to another objection raised against the Revelation of the Qur'an. The disbelievers said, "What was the need of this new Book, when there already existed the former revealed Books? You say that this need has arisen because the former Books have been tampered with; therefore Allah has

abrogated them and commanded that this new Book should be followed. This position you have taken is wrong for how can any one tamper with the Book of Allah and how is it possible that any Book of Allah might be tampered with? Why did not Allah protect these Books from such things as these? You say that this Book has been revealed by the same Allah Who revealed the Torah and the Gospel. Haw is it then that your way is different from that of the Torah? You consider certain things lawful while they are unlawful according to the Torah, etc. etc." Detailed answers to these objections have been given in other Surahs but here only a brief and comprehensive answer has been given to them.

The Arabic word ((Umm-ul-Kitab) literally means "the Mother Book", that is, the Original Book which is the Source and Origin of all the revealed Books.

59This is to console the Holy Prophet, as if to say, "O Prophet, you need not concern yourself as to the end of these disbelievers who have rejected the Truth. You should go on performing with peace of mind the Mission that has been entrusted to you and leave it to Us to give them suitable punishment." Though this has been addressed to the Holy Prophet, it is obvious that it is really meant to warn the opponents of the Truth, who were demanding definitely from the Holy Prophet by way of a challenge to bring about the scourge about which threats were being held out to them.

60"We are advancing in the land"= this is a very subtle way of warning the opponents of the Truth: "The fact that Our Message is spreading fast in Arabia does, in fact, mean that We Ourselves are advancing very fast in the country against you for We are with those who are carrying Our Message."

"We are shrinking its boundaries for them"= "We are causing the influence of Islam to spread fast in the land and are thus reducing the boundaries of the influence of its opponents. Are not these things the portents of their coming disaster?"

61That is, "These people, who are now devising schemes to defeat the Message of the Truth, do not take a lesson from the sad end of the people who devised similar schemes before them to suppress the voice of the Truth by falsehood, fraud and persecution."

62That is "Everyone who has the knowledge of the Divinely revealed Books will bear witness to the fact that my teachings are the same that were imparted by the former prophets."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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14. Surah Ibrahim (Abraham)

Name

The Surah takes its name from v. 35 in which mention has been made of Prophet *Ibrahim* (Abraham). But it does not mean that it contains the life story of Prophet Abraham. The name is merely a symbol lid the names of many other surahs, i.e., the Surah in which Abraham's mention has been made.

Period of Revelation

It appears from the tone of the Surah that it belongs to that group of the Surahs which were revealed during the last stage of the Makkan period. For instance, v. 13 ("The disbelievers warned their Messengers, 'you shall have to return to our community or we will assuredly expel you from our land'") clearly indicates that the persecution of the Muslims was at its worst at the time of the revelation of this Surah, and the people of Makkah were bent on expelling the Believers from there like the disbelievers of the former Prophets. That is why in v. 14 they have been warned, "We will destroy these evil doers," and the Believers have been comforted as were the believers before them, "and after them settle you in the land" Likewise the stern warning contained in the concluding portion (vv. 43-52 also confirms that the Surah relates to the last stage of the Makkan Period.)

Central Theme and Purpose

This Surah is an admonition and a warning to the disbelievers who were rejecting the Message of the Holy Prophet and devising cunning schemes to defeat his Mission. But warning, reproof, censure and reproach dominate admonition. This is because a good deal of admonition had already been made in the preceding Surahs, but in spite of this their obduracy, enmity, antagonism, mischief, persecution etc. had rather increased.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓرۚ كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ ٱلنَّاسَ مِنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ
إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَمِيدِ ﴿١﴾

ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِي لَهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِۗ وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ مِنْ
عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] Alif Lam Ra. O Muhammad! This is a Book which We have sent down to you so that you may bring mankind by the help of their Lord out of the dark ways (of ignorance) into the Light (of knowledge) to the Way of that God,[1] Who is All-Powerful and inherently worthy of All Praise[2] and the Owner of whatever is in the heavens and the earth.

ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَحِبُّونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا عَلَى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًاۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِي ضَلَٰلٍۭ
بَعِيدٍ ﴿٣﴾

[3] And there is a painful torment for those who reject the Truth: who love the life of this world more than the life pf the Hereafter:[3] who debar people from Allah's Way and want to make this Way crooked[4] (to suit their wishes). They have gone far astray from the Way of Allah.

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوۡمِهِۦ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمۡۖ فَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَهۡدِي مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٤

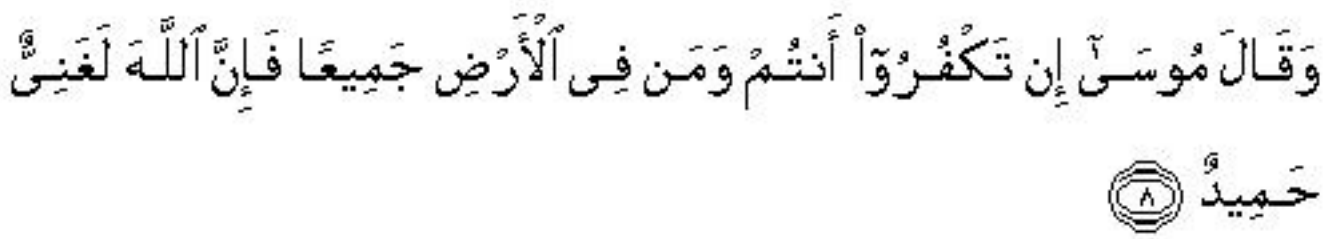
[4] Whenever We sent a Messenger to convey Our Message, he delivered it in the language of his people so that he may make it plain to them.[5] Then Allah lets go astray whomsoever He wills and shows Guidance to whomsoever He desires.[6] He is All-Powerful, All-Wise.[7]

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مُوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أَنۡ أَخۡرِجۡ قَوۡمَكَ مِنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ
وَذَكِّرۡهُم بِأَيَّٰمِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَٰتٖ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٖ شَكُورٖ ٥

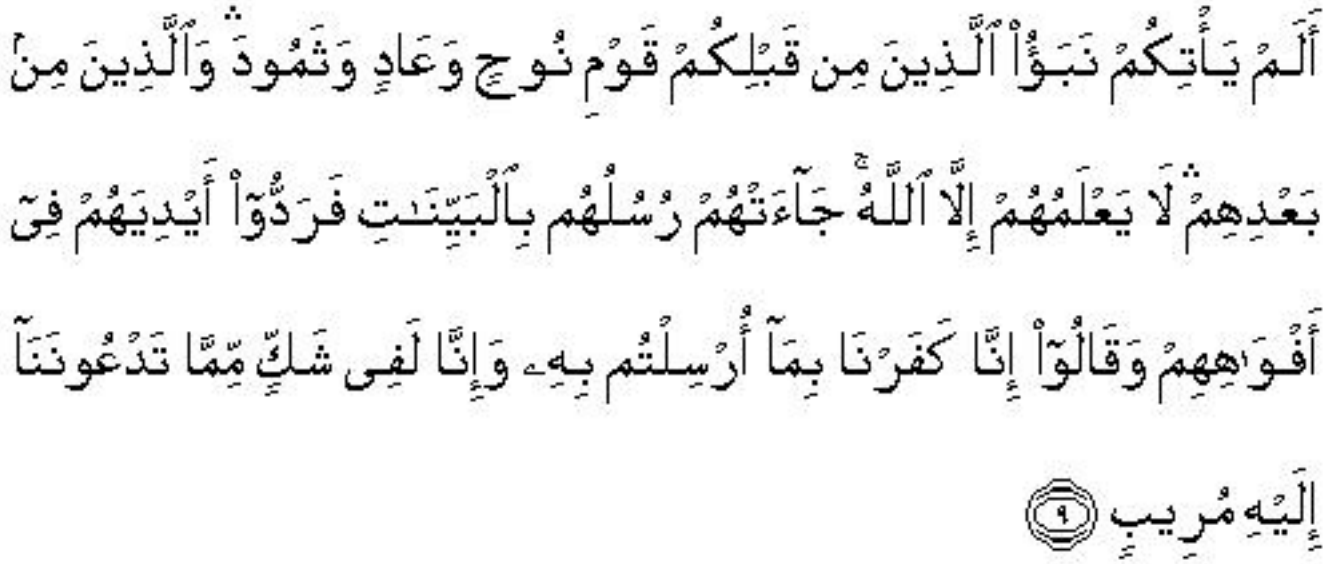
[5] We sent Moses also before this with Our Signs: and We commanded him, "Bring your people out of all kinds of darkness into Light and admonish, them to learn lessons from the Divine History."[8] There are great Signs[9] in this for every steadfast and grateful person.[10]

وَإِذۡ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوۡمِهِ ٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيۡكُمۡ إِذۡ أَنجَىٰكُم مِّنۡ ءَالِ
فِرۡعَوۡنَ يَسُومُونَكُمۡ سُوٓءَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ وَيُذَبِّحُونَ أَبۡنَآءَكُمۡ وَيَسۡتَحۡيُونَ
نِسَآءَكُمۡۚ وَفِي ذَٰلِكُم بَلَآءٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ عَظِيمٞ ٦

وَإِذۡ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمۡ لَئِن شَكَرۡتُمۡ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمۡۖ وَلَئِن كَفَرۡتُمۡ إِنَّ
عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٞ ٧



[6-8] Recall (the time) when Moses said to his people, "Remember Allah's favor on you: He delivered you from Pharaoh's people who oppressed you with cruel afflictions: they slaughtered your sons and let your females live. In this there was a hard trial for you from your Lord. And remember also that your Lord forewarned, `If you be grateful[11] I will increase My favors on you, and if you be ungrateful (you should know that) My chastisement is severe indeed'!"[12] And Moses said, "If you prove thankless, you and all the dwellers of the earth know that Allah does not stand in need of any of you, for He is All Sufficient and worthy of all praise by Himself."[13]



[9] Has[14] not the story reached you of those who have gone before you of the people of Noah and Ad and Thamud, and of those who came after them? Allah alone knows their number. When their Messengers came to them with plain teachings and manifest Signs, they thrust their hands into their mouths,[15] saying, "We reject the Message with which you have been sent and we have a disquieting doubt about that thing[16] to which you are inviting us."

۞ قَالَتۡ رُسُلُهُمۡ أَفِي ٱللَّهِ شَكّٞ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ يَدۡعُوكُمۡ لِيَغۡفِرَ
لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمۡ وَيُؤَخِّرَكُمۡ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمّٗىۚ قَالُوٓاْ إِنۡ أَنتُمۡ إِلَّا بَشَرٞ
مِّثۡلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعۡبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا فَأۡتُونَا بِسُلۡطَٰنٖ مُّبِينٖ
١٠

قَالَتۡ لَهُمۡ رُسُلُهُمۡ إِن نَّحۡنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُكُمۡ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ
مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦۖ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَآ أَن نَّأۡتِيَكُم بِسُلۡطَٰنٍ إِلَّا بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِۚ وَعَلَى
ٱللَّهِ فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ١١

وَمَا لَنَآ أَلَّا نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وَقَدۡ هَدَىٰنَا سُبُلَنَاۚ وَلَنَصۡبِرَنَّ عَلَىٰ
مَآ ءَاذَيۡتُمُونَاۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلۡمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ١٢

[10-12] The Messengers said, "Do you have doubt about the existence of Allah. Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth?[17] He calls you that He may forgive you your sins and give you respite till your appointed term."[18] They answered, "You are no more than human beings like ourselves.[19] You intend to debar us from the worship of the deities whom our forefathers have been worshiping. Well, bring a clear Sign."[20] The Messengers replied, "It is true that we are no more than human beings like you, but Allah shows His favor to anyone of His servants He pleases.[21] And it is not in our power to bring any Sign for you. A Sign can come only by Allah's permission. And in Allah alone should the believers put their trust. And why should we not put our trust in Allah when He has guided us in the ways of our lives? We will bear with fortitude your persecutions of us and the trustful should have trust in Allah alone."

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِنَآ أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِى مِلَّتِنَا ۖ
فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَلَنُسْكِنَنَّكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِى وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ
﴿١٤﴾

وَٱسْتَفْتَحُوا۟ وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ ﴿١٥﴾

مِّن وَرَآئِهِۦ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَىٰ مِن مَّآءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾

يَتَجَرَّعُهُۥ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُۥ وَيَأْتِيهِ ٱلْمَوْتُ مِن كُلِّ
مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ ۖ وَمِن وَرَآئِهِۦ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾

[13-17] At last the disbelievers said to their Messengers, "You shall either return to our religion[22] or we will banish you from our land. " Then their Lord revealed to them, "We will destroy these evil-doers and after them settle you in the land.[23] This is the reward of the one who dreads that he is accountable to Me and is afraid of the threat of My punishment." They had sought a judgment (and the judgment was passed on them) and every tyrant, the enemy of the Truth, suffered ignominy.[24] Then after this Hell lies before him where he shall get tainted water to drink, which he shall try to gulp down, but will scarcely swallow it. Death shall surround him on all sides, yet he shall not die; and before him there shall be a grievous torment.

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِرَبِّهِمْ ۖ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ ٱشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ ٱلرِّيحُ فِى
يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ ۖ لَّا يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلضَّلَٰلُ ٱلْبَعِيدُ
١٨

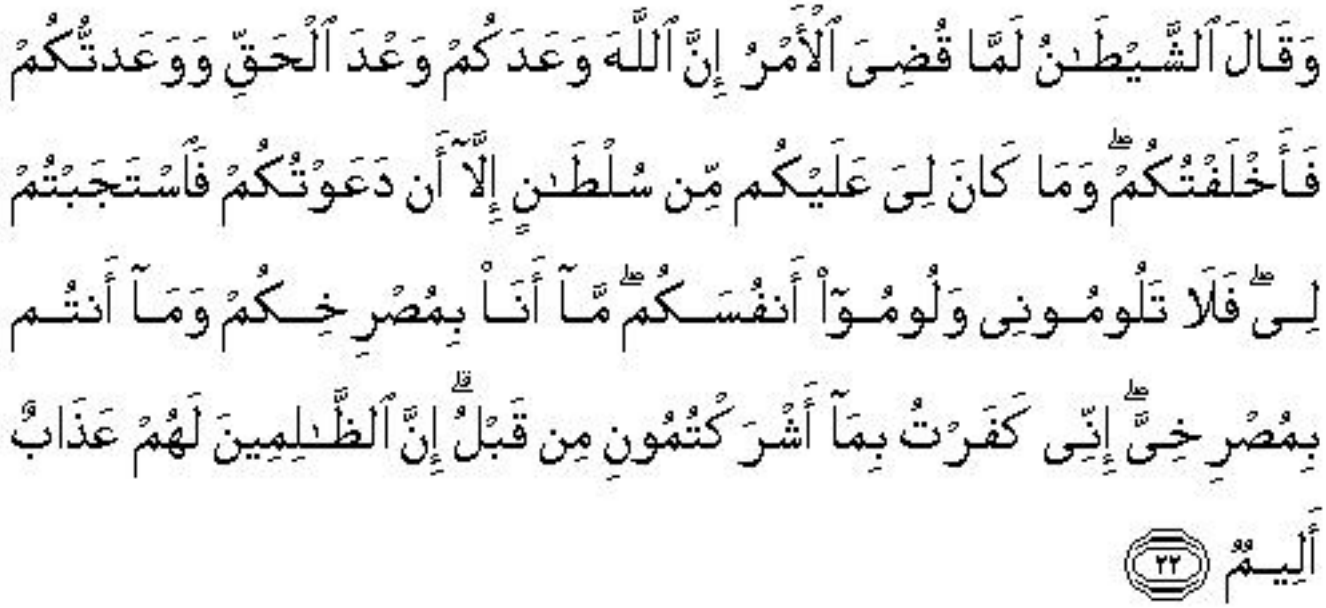
أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ
وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ١٩

وَمَا ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ٢٠

[18-20] The works of those who disbelieved may be likened, to the ashes which the wind scatters on a stormy day. They shall not be able to gain anything from what they did.[25] This is the extreme deviation. Do you not see that Allah has based the creation of the heavens and the earth on truth?[26] If He will, He can put you away and bring in a new creation in your place. And that is not at all a difficult thing for Allah.[27]

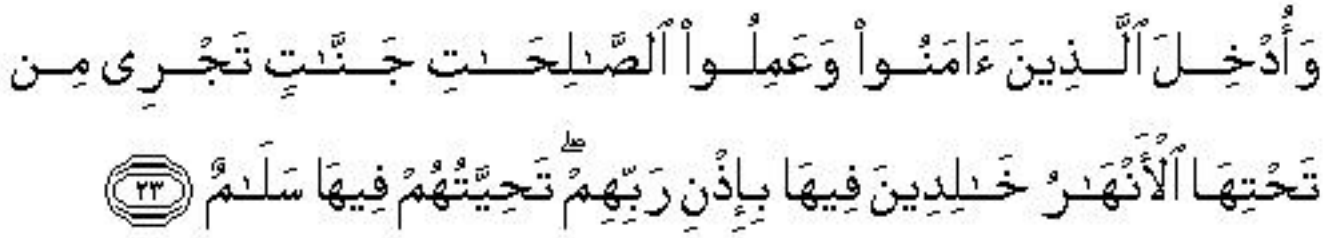
وَبَرَزُوا۟ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ ٱلضُّعَفَٰٓؤُا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ
تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ قَالُوا۟ لَوْ
هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ لَهَدَيْنَٰكُمْ ۖ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ أَجَزِعْنَآ أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِن
مَّحِيصٍ ٢١

[21] And when those people shall all be exposed together before Allah,[28] then those who were weak in this world will say to those who had posed as big ones."As we followed you in the world, can you now do anything to relieve us from the torment of Allah?" They will reply, "Had Allah guided us to the way of salvation, we would have certainly guided you to it. Now it is all the same whether we bewail it or bear it with patience: there is for us no way of escape."[29]



[22] And when Our judgment has been passed, Satan will say, “The fact is that the promises Allah had made with you. were all true. I, too, made some promises with you but I failed to keep any of them.”[30]

Yet I had no power over you; I did nothing but to invite you to my way and you accepted my invitation.[31] So do not now blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you here, nor can you help me. I dissociate myself from your making me a partner with God before this.[32] Such wrong-doers are sure to receive a grievous torment."



أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً
كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴿٢٤﴾

تُؤْتِىٓ أُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍۭ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا ۗ وَيَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ ٱجْتُثَّتْ مِن فَوْقِ ٱلْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِن
قَرَارٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ۚ وَيَفْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ

﴿٢٧﴾

[23-27] And (in contrast to the transgressors), those who have believed and done righteous deeds, shall be admitted to Gardens underneath which canals flow. They shall abide there for ever by the permission of their Lord, and they shall be welcomed there by "peace be on you."[33] Do you not see to what Allah' has likened the Pure Word? [34] It is like a good tree which has got deep roots into the earth and whose branches have spread high up into heaven.[35] It bears good fruit every moment by the permission of its Lord.[36] Allah cites these parables for the benefit of people so that they learn a lesson from them. And an evil word[37] may be likened to an evil tree; which is torn out

from the earth and has no stability.[38] Allah makes the believers steadfast in the life of this world and of the Hereafter with the firm Word[39] but lets the transgressors go astray.[40] Allah has full power to do as He wills.

۞ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ ٱلْبَوَارِ ﴿٢٨﴾

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْقَرَارُ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَجَعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ أَندَادًا لِّيُضِلُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۗ قُلْ تَمَتَّعُوا۟ فَإِنَّ مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٣٠﴾

[28-30] You have seen those people who repaid the bounty of Allah with ingratitude and hurled their people (along with themselves) into the abode of perdition-Hell, wherein they shall enter and it is the most wretched abode to live! And they set up equals with Allah so that they should lead them astray from the way of Allah. Tell them, "Well, you may enjoy yourselves for a while for ultimately you shall have to return to the Fire of Hell."

قُل لِّعِبَادِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلَا خِلَٰلٌ ﴿٣١﴾

[31] O Prophet! Tell My servants who have believed, to establish Salat, and expend openly and secretly (on good works) out of what We have given them[41] before that Day comes when there shall be no buying and selling and no friendly help.[42]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِۦ
مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِىَ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۖ
وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرَ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ دَآئِبَيْنِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَءَاتَىٰكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَتَ
ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

[32-34] Allah is He[43] Who has created the heavens and the earth, and He sent down rain water from the sky where with He produced different kinds of fruits to provide you with food. It is He Who subdued the ship for you that it may sail in the seas by His order and likewise He subdued the rivers for you. It is He Who subdued the sun and the' moon so that they should steadfastly pursue their courses and He subdued day and night for you.[44] It is He Who fulfilled all your requirements;[45] so much so that you cannot count His bounties, if you tried to number them. The fact is that man is very unjust and ungrateful.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْ هَٰذَا ٱلْبَلَدَ ءَامِنًا وَٱجْنُبْنِى وَبَنِىَّ
أَن نَّعْبُدَ ٱلْأَصْنَامَ ﴿٣٥﴾

رَبِّ إِنَّهُنَّ أَضْلَلْنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۖ فَمَن تَبِعَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنِّى ۖ وَمَنْ عَصَانِى
فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

رَّبَّنَآ إِنِّىٓ أَسْكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِى زَرْعٍ عِندَ بَيْتِكَ ٱلْمُحَرَّمِ
رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱجْعَلْ أَفْـِٔدَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ تَهْوِىٓ إِلَيْهِمْ وَٱرْزُقْهُم مِّنَ
ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَا نُخْفِى وَمَا نُعْلِنُ ۗ وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴿٣٨﴾

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى وَهَبَ لِى عَلَى ٱلْكِبَرِ إِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ ۚ
إِنَّ رَبِّى لَسَمِيعُ ٱلدُّعَآءِ ﴿٣٩﴾

رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْنِى مُقِيمَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِى ۚ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَآءِ ﴿٤٠﴾

رَبَّنَا ٱغۡفِرۡ لِي وَلِوَٰلِدَيَّ وَلِلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ يَوۡمَ يَقُومُ ٱلۡحِسَابُ ﴿٤١﴾

[35-41] Recall the time, when Abraham prayed,[46] saying, "Lord! make this city[47] a city of peace, and protect me and my descendants from the worship of idols. Lord! these have turned away[48] many people from the Right Way (and they might turn away my descendants as well. Therefore, only those of them) who follow my way, belong to me, but (I leave to Thee) those who follow a different way from mine, for Thou art very Forgiving and Merciful.[49] Lord! I have settled some of my descendants in a barren valley near Thy Sacred House. Lord! I have done this in the hope that they would establish Salat there. So turn the hearts of the people towards them, and provide fruits for their food.[50] It is expected that they will become grateful. Lord! Thou hast full knowledge of all that we hide and disclose."[51] And[52] the fact is that nothing in the earth and heavens is hidden from Allah. "All praise be to Allah Who has given me sons like Ismail and Isaac in my old age. Indeed, my Lord hears all prayers. Lord! help make me establish Salat and from among my descendants (raise those who should do this work). Lord! grant my prayer. Lord! forgive me and my parents and the believers on the Day when reckoning will take place."[53]

وَلَا تَحۡسَبَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَٰفِلًا عَمَّا يَعۡمَلُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمۡ لِيَوۡمٖ
تَشۡخَصُ فِيهِ ٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرُ ﴿٤٢﴾

مُهۡطِعِينَ مُقۡنِعِي رُءُوسِهِمۡ لَا يَرۡتَدُّ إِلَيۡهِمۡ طَرۡفُهُمۡۖ وَأَفۡـِٔدَتُهُمۡ هَوَآءٞ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَأَنذِرِ ٱلنَّاسَ يَوۡمَ يَأۡتِيهِمُ ٱلۡعَذَابُ فَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ رَبَّنَآ أَخِّرۡنَآ إِلَىٰٓ
أَجَلٖ قَرِيبٖ نُّجِبۡ دَعۡوَتَكَ وَنَتَّبِعِ ٱلرُّسُلَۗ أَوَلَمۡ تَكُونُوٓاْ أَقۡسَمۡتُم مِّن قَبۡلُ
مَا لَكُم مِّن زَوَالٖ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَسَكَنتُمْ فِي مَسَٰكِنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمْ
كَيْفَ فَعَلْنَا بِهِمْ وَضَرَبْنَا لَكُمُ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَقَدْ مَكَرُواْ مَكْرَهُمْ وَعِندَ ٱللَّهِ مَكْرُهُمْ وَإِن كَانَ مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَزُولَ
مِنْهُ ٱلْجِبَالُ ﴿٤٦﴾

[42-46] Do not think that Allah is unaware of what these unjust people are doing; He is only deferring their case to the Day when all eyes shall stare with consternation. They shall be running in terror with heads uplifted and eyes fixed upwards[54] and hearts becoming void. O Muhammad, fore-warn them of the Day when Our scourge will overtake them: then these wrong-doers will say, "Our Lord! give us a little more respite: we will respond to Thy Message and follow the Messengers." (But it will be said to them decisively,) "Are you not the same people who swore before this that you will never meet with a decline, whereas you had lived in the habitations of those who had wronged their souls and seen how We had dealt with them; and We held them up to you as examples? They had tried all their cunning devices to outwit Us but Allah had the remedy to counteract their devices, even though these were so powerful as to move mountains."[55]

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِۦ رُسُلَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ ٱلْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ۖ وَبَرَزُواْ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ
﴿٤٨﴾

وَتَرَى ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٤٩﴾

سَرَابِيلُهُم مِّن قَطِرَانٍ وَتَغْشَىٰ وُجُوهَهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ ﴿٥٠﴾

لِيَجْزِىَ ٱللَّهُ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٥١﴾

[47-51] So, O Prophet. Never imagine that Allah will ever go against the promises made to His Messengers.[56] Allah is All Powerful and capable of revenge. Warn them of the Day when the Earth and the Heavens shall be totally transformed,[57] and all of them shall stand exposed before Allah, the One, the Almighty. On that Day you will see the criminals with their hands and feet in fetters. They shall be in garments of tar[58] and the flames of fire shall be covering their faces. This will happen so that Allah may recompense everyone for what one earned: Allah is prompt at reckoning.

هَٰذَا بَلَٰغٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَلِيُنذَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَلِيَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ وَلِيَذَّكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٥٢﴾

[52] This is a Message for mankind so that they may be warned by it and realize that in fact there is but One God, and that men of understanding may learn a lesson from it.

1This is the purpose for which the Holy Prophet had been sent. He was entrusted with the mission that he should bring mankind back from the ways of darkness (ways of wickedness) into the Way of God by the help of the Light of the Qur'an. For everyone, who is not on the Way of God, is, in fact, wandering about in the ways of the darkness (of ignorance), even though he might consider himself to be very enlightened and full of knowledge. On the other hand, the one who finds the Way of Allah, comes into the Light of Knowledge, even though he might be an illiterate person.

As regards "by the help of their Lord", this implies that the most a missionary of Islam (even though he be

a Messenger of Allah) can do is to present the Right Way. It is not in his power to bring anyone forcibly to the Way, for this can only happen by the help and permission of Allah. That is why only that person whom Allah helps and permits gets guidance: otherwise even a perfect Missionary like a Messenger fails to bring a person to the Way. As regards the Divine Law, according to which Allah helps and permits a person to gain guidance, we learn from different passages of the Qur'an that Allah gives help only to that person who himself has a desire to get guidance: who frees himself from obduracy, obstinacy and prejudice: who is not a follower of his lust, nor a slave of his desires: who is inclined to see with open eyes) and hear with open cars and think with a clear mind, and is ready w accede to any reasonable thing.

2The word (Hamid) is more comprehensive than (Mahmud). A person will be entitled to be Mahmud only when he is praised. But the Being Who is Hamid, is naturally and permanently worthy of praise, whether anyone praises Him or not, because the element of praise is inherent in Him and is inseparable from Him.

3Those who reject the Truth are the people whose interests arc entirely bound with the life of this world, and who do not care at all for the interests of the life of the Hereafter: who are prepared to undergo any punishment in the Next World for the sake of the interests, pleasures and comforts of this world: who, on the other hand, cannot bear the sacrifice of even the smallest pleasure in this world, nor are ready to bear any loss or encounter danger or trouble in this world for the sake of the joys of the Next World. In short, such are the people who have coolly considered and weighed the pleasures of this world against the joys of the Next World, and decided in favor of this world: therefore, they readily sacrifice the interest. of the Next World whenever there is a clash between the two.

4That is, "They do not want to follow the Way of Allah, but endeavor that Allah's Way should follow their desires: it should adjust itself in such a way as to include all their conjectures, theories and whims as its part and parcel, and exclude every creed that does not suit their way of life: it should provide sanction for all their habits, customs and manners: it should not demand from them anything which they do not like: in short, the Way of Allah should be their obedient slave and turn in the direction their devilish lusts want it to turn: nay, it should neither criticize them nor ask them to follow Allah's injunctions. This is their condition for accepting the Guidance of Allah."

5This implies two things: First, Allah sent down His Message in the language of the people from among whom a Prophet was raised so that they might not have any excuse left that they could not understand the language of the Message. Secondly, this ruled out the presumption that a Messenger was ever given the Message in a different language merely for the sake of a miracle. For Allah considered it more important to make the people understand the Message and guide them rightly than to satisfy their curiosity. Obviously the purpose could best be served only if the Message was sent down to them in their own language by their Prophet and not in any other.

6That is, "Although the Messenger conveys the Message in the mother tongue of the people, which is understood by everyone of them, yet all of them are not guided aright. This happens because of the fact that all of those who understand a Message do not necessarily accept it. For it is entirely with Allah to show guidance by means of His Message to anyone He wills and to let go astray anyone in spite of it."

7As Allah is All-Powerful, no one is able by oneself to get guidance or to go astray, for none is completely independent but is under the power of Allah. But as He is All-Wise, He does not use His power blindly so as to show guidance to anyone He wills and to let go astray anyone He desires without rhyme or reason. In fact, the one who gets guidance from Him gets it on merit and the one who is let go astray is deprived of guidance because he himself deliberately chooses deviation.

8The Arabic word (ayyam) technically means memorable historical events. Therefore (Ayyam-u-Allah) (Divine History) implies all those eventful chapters of human history which mention the rewards and punishments that were meted out to the great personalities and nations according to their deeds in the past ages.

9Those historical events are Signs in this sense that their proper and intelligent study provides proofs of the fact that there is only one God: and that the Law of Retribution is universal and is based absolutely on the differentiation between the knowledge and moral practice of the Truth and falsehood: that this Law also requires another world (the Hereafter) for its due fulfillment. Moreover, these events contain Signs that serve as warnings against the evil consequences of building up systems of life on false creeds and theories, and help one to learn lessons from them.

10Though these Signs are always there, only those persons learn lessons from them who remain steadfast in trials and appreciate the blessings of Allah rightly and are grateful to Him. Obviously, frivolous and ungrateful persons cannot learn any lesson from these Signs, even though they might grasp their significance.

11That is, "If you are grateful, you will appreciate Our favors and make right use of them, and will not rebel against Our Commandments, but will surrender and submit to Us to show your gratitude to Us."

12Deuteronomy (Bible) contains a long and detailed discourse to this effect. According to it, Prophet Moses, on the eve of his death, reminded the Israelites of all important events from their history, and reiterated all the Divine Commandments of the Torah which Allah had sent to them through him. Then he told them in a long speech that if they obeyed their Lord, they would be given great rewards. But if they adopted the attitude of disobedience, they would get a terrible punishment. This discourse spreads over chapters 4, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 2830. Some of these passages arc so impressive and instructive that it will be worthwhile to quote a few of them:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. . . . " (Deut. 6: 47)

"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways; and to love him, and to serve the Lord Thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good ? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is thy Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is." (Deut. 10: 12-14)

"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face....The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto....The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself....And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee....and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath...." (28: 1-13).

"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all those curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.. . . The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do. . . . The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, ... And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron....The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them :....Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof. Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes....Therefore. shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee....And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other :...." (Deut: 28: 15-64).

13It should be noted that a reference to Prophet Moses and his people has been made here to warn the people of Makkah of the consequences of their ingratitude towards this favor of Allah that He had raised Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) from among them. This was a timely warning, for at that

time they were showing ingratitude by rejecting that Message. They were, therefore, warned to learn a lesson from the miserable condition of the Israelites, which was the result of their ingratitude to and rebellion against Allah's favors.

As the Quraish themselves could see the consequences of that rebellious attitude of the Israelites, they were, so to say, asked this question: "Do you also desire to meet with the same consequences by showing ingratitude towards the Message. which is a great favor to you?"

Obviously, the great favor which was shown to the Quraish was that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was raised from among them with that Message about which he assured them over and over again: "Accept this Message of mine: all the Arabs and the non-Arabs will surrender and submit to you?"

14The speech of Prophet Moses ended with v. 8. From here begins a direct address to the disbelievers of Makkah.

15There has been a great deal of difference of opinion in regard to the meaning of the Arabic words of the Text and different commentators have assigned different meanings to them. But we arc of the opinion that these express merely the intolerance and perplexity and a bit of anger that was being shown by the disbelievers towards the Message and this is confirmed by the subsequent sentence.

16They had a "disquieting doubt" about the Message because it had taken away their peace of mind. This was because invitation to the Message always makes the minds uneasy, for it becomes hard even for its opponents to reject it out-right or oppose it with peace of mind. Howsoever they might give vent to their doubts about it and oppose it tooth and nail the force of its truth and its sound arguments, its frankness and candor and its winning manners of exposition produce a great agitation in the minds of its bitterest opponents: then the pure and spotless character of the Messenger and the marked change for the better brought about in his followers produce such an accumulative effect on their minds that even their most bitter antagonists begin to feel uneasy about their own stand. Thus, those who try to disturb the peace of mind of the upholders of the Truth are themselves deprived of their own peace of mind.

17The Messengers posed this question to those who rejected the Message in order to bring home to them the absurdity of their stand with regard to God. For though . the mushriks of every age believed in the existence of God and acknowledged that He was the Creator of the heavens and the earth, they did not accept the Message, its logical result, that He alone was entitled to their worship. That is why the Messengers. asked them, "Do you have any doubt about the existence of Allah?"

18In the case of individuals, the `appointed term' may be either the time of one's death or the Doomsday. As regards the `appointed term' for the rise and fall of communities, it is determined by their collective behavior. For instance, if a capable community degenerates before the expiry of its term, the assigned

period is shortened and it is deposed. On the other hand, if a degenerate community changes its ways for the better, its term is extended, So much so that it may extend even to the Doomsday. This same thing is implied in v. 11 of Ar-R'ad:"...The fact is that Allah does not change a people's lot unless they themselves change their own characteristics."

19The disbelievers meant to imply: "You are a human being like us in every respect: you eat, drink and sleep like us and have wife and children like us. You feel hungry and thirsty, and suffer from heat and cold, disease and calamities like us. In short, you have every human limitation like us, and we see nothing unusual and extraordinary in you to induct us to accept you as a Prophet and believe that God communicates with you and sends His angels to you."

20That is, "If you still insist that you are a Prophet, bring a tangible proof of your appointment so as to convince us that you have really been sent by God and your Message is from Him."

21That is, "No doubt we are human beings like you but it is Allah's will that He has chosen us from among you and blessed us with the knowledge of the Truth and keen discernment. And this is Allah's will and He has full powers to bestow anything on anyone He wills. We are not in a position to ask Him to send that blessing to you or to anyone else: nor can we deny the realities which have been shown to us."

22It will be wrong to conclude from this demand of theirs that the Prophets professed the religion of their people before their appointment to the Divine Office. This only meant that their people thought so because before their appointment they led a quiet life and did not propagate a new religion nor refuted the religion in vogue at that time. That is why their people were under the wrong impression that the Prophets also professed the religion of their forefathers, and, therefore, accused them of apostasy. The fact, however, is that they had never followed the religion of their mushrik forefathers and were not guilty of apostasy.

23This was to reassure the Prophets that they should not worry at all about the threat that the disbelievers would banish them from their country, as if to say, "We will uproot them from their land, and establish you and your followers firmly in their place."

24In order to grasp the real significance of these historical events, it should be kept in view that these are being related here as answers to those objections which the disbelievers of Makkah raised before the Holy Prophet. As the conditions there at the time of the revelation of this Surah were exactly like those of the peoples of the former Prophets, they have been cited here to warn the Quraish along with the other mushriks of Arabia of the consequences,' as if to say, "The former disbelievers challenged their Messengers and were destroyed and the Believers were established in the land. Likewise your future also entirely depends on the attitude you adopt towards the Message of your Prophet. If you accept this, you will be allowed to remain in the land of Arabia, and if you reject it you shall be utterly uprooted from

here." The subsequent events proved that this prophecy was literally fulfilled within fifteen years after this, for there remained not a single mushrik in the whole of Arabia.

25That is, "Those who were perfidious, faithless, and disobedient to the Divine Message, and refused to adopt that Way to which the Messengers invited, will find in the end that all the deeds and earnings of their lives were as worthless as a heap of ashes. Just as each and every particle of a high mound of ashes formed during a long course of years is scattered by the wind on a stormy day, likewise all their grand works will prove on the stormy Doomsday to be no more than a mound of ashes. Their dazzling culture, their grand civilization, their wonderful kingdoms and states, their magnificent universities, their sciences and their literatures, nay, even their hypocritical worship, and so-called virtuous deeds, their charitable and reformative works of which they were very proud in the worldly lift, shall prove to be as worthless as a heap of ashes, and will be scattered by the "Storm" of the Day of Resurrection. So much so that there shall not remain a single particle of their works worthy of being placed in the Divine scale on that Day in their favor.

26This is the proof of the preceding statement that the works of the disbelievers arc worthless like ashes. The question implies: "Why are you skeptical of this ? Do you not see that .the grand system of the earth and the heavens is based on the survival of Truth and not on the survival of falsehood. Everything bears witness to the fact that anything which is not based on truth and reality but rests on unreal speculation and guess-work cannot continue W live long. Therefore anyone who builds his works on the latter will most surely fail in his designs. For it is obvious that such a person builds his works on sand and should not, therefore, expect that they can last long. Likewise those who discard the truth and reality and build their works on false theories and presumptions should not expect at all that they can have any lasting value for they are bound to be scattered like worthless ashes. If this is obvious as it is, why should you cherish any doubts about the fact that anyone who builds the system of his life on the basis that he is independent of Allah or on the god-head of someone else (whereas there is no other God) shall inevitably find all his works to be worthless? When the fact is that man is not absolutely independent in this world nor is he the servant of anyone else than Allah, why should you not expect that anyone who builds his works on this falsehood, shall find that all his works were worthless like the heap of ashes that was scattered all over by the wind?"

27This is by way of admonition that follows immediately the proof of the statement in the preceding verse. This removes also any doubt that might arise concerning that decisive statement. One might question it like this: "If the creation is really based on the survival of truth, why is it that every follower of falsehood and every wrong-doer is not destroyed forthwith?" This is the answer: "O foolish man! Do you think that it is difficult for Allah to destroy such a person? Or, do you think that Allah does not destroy him because he has some close relationship with Him? If this is not so, and you yourself know that it is not so, you should understand it well that any community that follows falsehood and commits wicked deeds is always in danger of being removed to make room for a better community to work in its stead. If respite is given and the threat does not take a practical shape it does not mean that there is no danger at all. Instead of being

neglectful, you should make use of every moment of this respite and realize that the false system which you arc following is not stable and durable. You should, therefore, build it on stable and durable foundations."

28The word (baruz) means `to emerge' and also implies `to become known'. That is why it has been translated into "shall be exposed before Allah", for it implies both these meanings. As a matter of fact, all the people are fully exposed all the time before Allah but they do not realize it. They will, however, realize it on the Day of Judgment when they shall be presented before the "Greatest of all Judges" that they were fully exposed before Him all along. So much so that every deed they did and each and everything they thought and desired is known to Him.

29This is to serve as a warning to all those people who follow others blindly or obey and submit to tyrants because they say, "We are weak." They are warned, as if to say "You should note it well that those leaders, saints, officers and rulers whom you arc following blindly today, will not be able to protect you at all from the chastisement of Allah. Therefore, you should consider it well today where such people, whom you are following or obeying, are themselves going and where they are leading you."

30When the criminals will charge Satan with leading them astray, he will plead guilty, as if to say, "You yourselves see now that all the promises and warnings made by Allah have come out true and all the promises which I made have proved to be false. I also confess that it was all deception that I gave you false assurances of prosperity, beguiled you by greed and enticed you in the snare of great expectations. I assured you that in the first instance there will be no life in the Hereafter, and that, if there be any you will go scot-free by the intercession of such and such a saint. The only thing you have to do is to make offerings before him: then you may do whatever you please, for he will deliver you from all the consequences. I repeat that I said all these things and asked my agents to say the same. "

31That is, "You cannot say and prove that it was I who forced you to follow the wrong way, whereas you wanted to follow the Right Way. You will yourselves admit that it is not so. I did no more than this that I invited you to falsehood in opposition to the invitation to the Truth and tempted you to vice instead of virtue. But I had no power to force you to the wrong way, if you desired to follow the Right Way. when you had the power and the option to follow either of the ways. Now I am ready to bear the burden of the wicked invitation I extended to you, but you are not justified in any way to throw on me the burden of accepting my invitation for you did it on your own responsibility. You should, therefore, yourselves bear all its consequences."

32This is a clear proof of shirk in practice, as apart from shirk in creed. As Satan will charge his followers with making him a partner with God, it is obvious that as far as creed is concerned there is no one who makes Satan a partner with God in His Godhead or His worship: nay, every one curses him for his evil ways. Nevertheless, people obey and submit to him and follow him blindly, as if he were their "god" and

that is what has been termed shirk.

Let us now consider this thesis from the opposite point of view. Some one might say that this does not hold good, for this is based on a mere saying of Satan which has been cited here. First, this objection is not sound because Allah Himself would have refuted it, had it been baseless. Secondly, this is not the only instance of shirk in practice in the Qur'an. Here are a few more instances of this:

(a) It charges the Jews and Christians with shirk because they set up their priests and monks as their "Lords" besides Allah. (IX: 31).

(b) Those who follow the superstitious customs have been called mushriks. (VI: 136-139).

(c) Those who follow their lusts have been charged with making their "selves" their "god". (XXV: 43).

(d) Those who are disobedient to Allah have been accused of worshiping "Satan". (XXXVI: 60).

(e) Those who follow man-made laws without Allah's sanction have been reproved for setting up the makers of the laws without Allah's sanction as partners with God. (XLI: 21).

All the above instances are clear proofs of the fact that shirk is not confined to this creed alone that one might set up a partner with Allah in His Godhead as an article of faith. But it is also shirk that one should follow and surrender to some one other than Allah without any Divine sanction or in spite of a Divine prohibition. Such a one shall be guilty of shirk even though the follower might be at the same time cursing the one whom he follows and obeys. The only difference between the two kinds of shirk may be the extent of the crime and not its nature.

33The Arabic word (tahiyyah) is literally a "prayer for long life," but in usage it is a greeting at meeting. Therefore, the expression may mean: "they will welcome one another with 'peace be on you' or will be welcomed with these words" . It may also be noted that the word (salam) implies both a prayer for "peace" and a congratulation on it.

34Though the expression literally means "Pure Word," here it stands for "Truthful Saying and Righteous Creed". According to the Qur'an, this 'Saying' and 'Creed" are the acceptance of the doctrine of Tauhid, belief in Prophethood and Revelation, and in the lift of the Hereafter, for it declares these things to be the fundamental truths.

35This is to show the strength and extent of the "Pure Word". As the entire system of the universe hangs upon the Reality contained in this "Pure Word" which the believer Professes, the earth and its entire system co-operates with him and the heaven with its entire system welcomes him. There is, therefore, no

conflict between him and the Law of nature, and everything in its very nature extends its help to him.

36That is, the "Pure Word" is so fruitful that every person (or community) who bases his system of life on it, gets benefit from it every moment for it helps to produce clearness in thought, balance in temperament, strength in character, purity in morals, firmness in conduct, righteousness in talk, straightforwardness in conversation, good temperament in social behavior, nobility in culture, justice and equity in economy, honesty in politics, nobility in war, sincerity in peace; confidence in promises and pledges. In short, it is the elixir that changes everything into gold if one makes the proper use of it.

37"Evil word" is the opposite of "Pure Word" It may be applied to everything that is unreal and wrong but here it stands for any false creed that one might adopt as a basis of one's system of life, irrespective of whether it be atheism or heresy or disbelief or shirk or idol-worship or any other "ism" that has not been brought by a Messenger.

38And "evil word" (false creed) has no stability because it is against the Law of nature. Therefore, everything in the universe opposes it and refutes it, as if the earth hates it and is ready to spit out its seeds every time they are sown in it, and if some need succeeds in growing an evil tree, heaven suppresses down its branches. In fact, false creed could never have been allowed to develop, if man had not been given the freedom of choice and respite for work for the sake of his trial. That is why when same foolish people exert to establish a system of life on it, it is allowed to grow to a certain extent, but it produces nothing but harmful results as long as it lasts. And no sooner does it encounter with adverse circumstances than it is thoroughly uprooted from the earth.

The distinction between the "Pure Word" and the "evil word" is so apparent that anyone who makes a critical study of the religious, moral, intellectual and cultural history of the world can perceive it easily. For the "Pure Word" has always been the one and same during the whole history of mankind and has never been uprooted. On the contrary, there have been innumerable "evil words" but each and every one has been so uprooted that there has remained hardly anything of it except its name in the pages of history. Nay, some of these had proved to be so absurd that if these are mentioned today one wonders how one could have followed such nonsensical things.

There has been another noteworthy difference between the two "words". Whenever and wherever the "Pure Word" has been adopted by an individual or a community, its blessings had not been confined to that individual and community but had benefited all around them. On the contrary, whenever and wherever an evil word has been adopted by an individual or a community, its evils had spread chaos and disorder all around them.

In this connection, it should also be noted that the parable of the "Pure Word" and the "evil word" explains the same theme that had been explained by the similitudes of the mound of ashes that is blown away by the "wind" of the stormy day (v. 18) and of the "foam of flood", and the "scum of the melted metals." (XIII:

17)

39That is, "The believers remain steadfast during the life of this world because of their stable system of life based on this "Pure Word" For this gives than a straight point of view, a sound system of thought and a comprehensive theory of life, and it serves as a master key to the unraveling of all knots and the solving of all problems. With its help, they acquire that strength of character and that firmness of conduct which keep them steady in the face of every vicissitude of life. This provides them also with such solid principles of life which give them peace of mind and heart, and prevent them from deviation and caprice. Above all, when, after the life of this world, they will enter into the life of the Hereafter, they will remain perfectly calm without any tinge of fear or anxiety, for they will find everything therein to be in accordance with their expectations, as if they were fully acquainted with every aspect of it before they entered into it. For they had been .fully informed of, and therefore fully prepared for every stage and phase of this life. That is why they will pass through every stage with perfect calmness and firmness in contrast to the disbelievers who built their worldly lives on an "evil word" and will, therefore, be taken aback to find everything against their expectations.

40That is, "Allah lets the transgressors, who discard the "Pure Word" and follow an "evil word", go astray by creating confusion in their minds and misdirecting their efforts because of this deviation. That is why they cannot find the right way of thought and action and so fail miserably."

41That is, "The believers should adopt an attitude of gratitude in contrast to the disbelievers (v. 29). The practical form their gratitude should take is that they should establish Salat and expend their wealth in the Way of Allah."

42That is, "On that Day none shall be able to rescue himself either by ransom or by intercession."

43That is, "It is the same Allah Whose bounties they are repaying with ingratitude and disobedience and with Whom they are setting up equals. though He has been so bountiful as to..."

44The words of the Text in vv. 32-33 have misled those people. who have translated these into "subjected to you" . So much so that some of them interpret these verses to mean that the chief aim of the life of man is to bring the earth and heavens under his subjection, whereas their real meaning is "subjected to (laws) for you". As a matter of fact Allah has subjected all these things to such laws as are beneficial for man. Had not a ship been subjected to certain physical laws, there could have been no navigation at all: had not a river been subjected to certain laws, it could not have been possible to take out canals from them; likewise if the heavenly bodies (the sun and the moon, etc.) and the earth and day and night had not been subjected to certain fixed laws, life could not have been possible, not to speak of civilized life!

45"He fulfilled all your requirements" : He has provided for everything that is required for your life, its development and evolution.

46In the preceding verses (32-35), an appeal was made to the Quraish to be grateful to that Allah Who has bestowed so many bounties on mankind in general. But in this passage the same appeal is being made on the plea that Allah had bestowed His special bounties on the Quraish in particular. They have been asked to remember that Prophet Abraham had settled their forefathers near the Ka'abah and made their city, Makkah, a "City of Peace" and Allah showered His blessings on the Quraish in answer to the prayer of Prophet Abraham. They have been admonished to remember those "bounties" and mend their ways.

47Makkah.

48This is a figurative way of saying that idols have been the means of turning many people away from Allah's Way into the ways of deviation.

49This forbearance shown towards those who followed a different way from the Right Way is an instance of Prophet Abraham's leniency to mankind. He left their case to the Forgiveness and Mercy of Allah for he could not bear to see them under Divine scourge. Another instance of this has been cited in Surah Hud. When the angels were on their way to destroy the wicked people of Lot, Prophet Abraham began to plead for them: "Abraham began to dispute with Us concerning the people of Lot for he was tender-hearted and merciful."(XI: 74-75) Likewise Prophet Jesus was so tender-hearted that even when Allah will show to him that his followers had deviated from the Right Way, he will plead their case: "Now if you punish them, they are your own servants, and if you forgive them, you are All- Mighty and All-Wise" (v: 118).

50Allah granted this prayer of Prophet Abraham. That was why people from the whole of ' Arabia used to come there for Haj and `Umrah at the time of the revelation of this Surah, and now people gather there from all over the world.

Besides this, there is plenty of food and fruit in all-seasons of the year, though the valley is absolutely barren and no vegetation grows in it even for animals.

51That is, "Lord: Thou hearest what I utter with my tongue and also hast full knowledge of my thoughts and feelings."

52This parenthetical clause has been inserted to confirm the statement of Prophet Abraham.

53Prophet Abraham included his mushrik father in his prayer because he had made promise that the

would pray to his Lord for his forgiveness (XIX: 48). But afterwards when he realized that he should not pray for his forgiveness because he was an enemy of Allah, he absolved himself of that promise. (IX: 114).

54This graphic picture depicts the horrible plight of the wrongdoers on the Day of Reckoning. When they will realize the situation, they will be so taken aback that they will have their looks fixed straight in front of them without seeing anything.

55That is, "You have seen that the former people who violated the Divine Law, and who opposed the Message, devised very effective and cunning schemes to avert the consequences of their iniquity, but Allah defeated them with His single counter-device. You did not give up your crafty schemes against the Message of Truth in the vain hope that your "strong" measures would succeed where the schemes of your predecessors had failed.

56Though this has been addressed to the Holy Prophet, it is really meant for his opponents. They are being warned that they should not delude themselves because of the delay in their punishment. they should note it well that Allah fulfilled the promises He made to the former Messengers and defeated them opponents. Likewise He will surely fulfill the promises He had made to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

57It is obvious from this verse and some hints in the Qur'an that on the occasion of Resurrection, the Earth and the Heavens will not be totally destroyed but at the blowing of the "First Trumpet", the existing physical system shall be disarranged. After this, between the blowing of the "First" and the "Last Trumpet" (Allah alone knows how long this interval will last), the present form and aspect of the earth and the heavens shall be transformed and a new physical system with new physical laws will come into existence. That will be the world of the Hereafter. When the "Last Trumpet" will be blown, all human beings from Adam to those born before the "First Trumpet", shall be brought to life and appear before Allah. The Qur'an calls this (Hashr) which literally means "to muster and gather together". It appears from the wording of the Qur'an and some clear statements in the Traditions that this will take place on this Earth. The "Seat of Judgment" and the "Scales" will be established on the Earth and the decisions will be passed here. This is also clear from the Qur'an and the Traditions that the life in the Hereafter will not merely be a spiritual life but the very physical and spiritual life which we are living now on this earth; and every individual shall receive his reward or punishment exactly in that "personality" in which he or she is living in the life of this world.

58Some commentators and translators are of the opinion that stands for "sulphur" or "molten copper" but actually it stands for "tar" and the like.

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15. Surah Al Hijr (The Rocky Tract)

Name

This Surah takes its name from v. 80.

Period of Revelation

It is clear from its topics and style that the period of its revelation is about the same as that of Surah Ibrahim, for two things are quite prominent in its background. First, it appears from the repeated warnings in this Surah that in spite of the fact that the Holy Prophet had been propagating the Message for many years, his people in general had not shown any inclination towards its acceptance nay, they had become more and more obdurate and stubborn in their antagonism, enmity and ridicule with the passage of time. Secondly, by that time the Holy Prophet had begun to feel a little tired of making strenuous efforts to eradicate disbelief and opposition of his people. That is why Allah has consoled and comforted him over and over again by way of encouragement.

Topics and the Central Theme

Though the main topics of the surah are:

1. warning to those who rejected his Message, opposed it tooth and nail, and ridiculed him, and

2. comfort and encouragement to the Holy Prophet,

It does not mean that this Surah does not contain admonition and instructions. As a matter of fact, the Quran never confines itself to mere warning; rebuke and censure, but resorts to precept in every suitable place. Accordingly, this Surah contains brief arguments for *Tauhid* on the one hand, and admonition in the story of Adam and Satan on the other.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓر ۚ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَقُرْءَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١﴾

[1] Alif Lam Ra. These are the verses of the Divine Book and the lucid Quran.[1]

رُّبَمَا يَوَدُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٢﴾

ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا۟ وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ وَيُلْهِهِمُ ٱلْأَمَلُ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣﴾

وَمَآ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا وَلَهَا كِتَابٌ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٤﴾

مَّا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَـْٔخِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

[2-5] The time is not far when the same people who have today refused to accept (the Message of Islam) will regret and say, "we wish we had surrendered to it!" Leave them alone to eat, drink and be merry and to be deluded by false hopes. They will soon realize it. We had prescribed a respite for every habitation that we destroyed before this.[2] No community is destroyed before the expiry of its respite nor it is allowed to survive it.

وَقَالُوا۟ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِى نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٦﴾

لَّوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ ﴿٧﴾

مَا نُنَزِّلُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةَ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَمَا كَانُوٓا۟ إِذًا مُّنظَرِينَ ﴿٨﴾

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَـٰفِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[6-9] They say, "You, upon whom the Divine word[3] has been sent down, are surely insane. Why do you not bring angels before us, if what you say be true?" We do not send down angels in this way. When they come down,[4] they come down with truth, and then the people are not given respite.[5] As regards this Admonition, it is We Who have sent it down, and We Ourself will preserve it.[6]

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِى شِيَعِ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

وَمَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١١﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ نَسْلُكُهُۥ فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۖ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ سُنَّةُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَابًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَظَلُّوا۟ فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

لَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا سُكِّرَتْ أَبْصَٰرُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَّسْحُورُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

[10-15] O Muhammad! Already We have sent Messengers before you among many of the ancient peoples. But they mocked at each of the Messengers who came to them. Though We cause it (Admonition) to enter into their hearts (like a rod), they would not believe in it.[7] And the same has been the way of such people since ancient times. Even if We had opened a gate for them in heaven, and they had begun to ascend through it higher during day time, they would have said. "Our eyes have been dazzled; nay, we have been bewitched."

وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ بُرُوجًا وَزَيَّنَّٰهَا لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

وَحَفِظْنَٰهَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْطَٰنٍ رَّجِيمٍ ﴿١٧﴾

إِلَّا مَنِ ٱسْتَرَقَ ٱلسَّمْعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُۥ شِهَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾

[16-18] It is We Who have divided the heavens into many fortified spheres[8] for the sake of administration and adorned and decked them out fair to the beholders,[9] and guarded them from every accursed Satan.[10] No Satan can pass through them except that an eaves-dropper might hear something,[11] but a fiery flame pursues that eaves-dropper.[12]

وَٱلْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَٰهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ وَأَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مَّوْزُونٍ ﴿١٩﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَٰيِشَ وَمَن لَّسْتُمْ لَهُۥ بِرَٰزِقِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[19-20] We stretched forth the Earth, and set mountains firmly upon it, and caused to grow therein every kind of vegetable in balanced measure.[13] And We provided therein means of sustenance for you and for many other creatures for whom you do not provide.

وَإِن مِّن شَىْءٍ إِلَّا عِندَنَا خَزَآئِنُهُۥ وَمَا نُنَزِّلُهُۥٓ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٢١﴾

[21] There is not a thing whose treasures are not with Us, and We send down each thing in appropriate measure.[14]

وَأَرْسَلْنَا ٱلرِّيَٰحَ لَوَٰقِحَ فَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَسْقَيْنَٰكُمُوهُ وَمَآ أَنتُمْ لَهُۥ بِخَٰزِنِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[22] It is We Who send the fertilizing winds: then We send down' water from heaven, and then We give it to you to drink; and it is not you who hold the store of this wealth.

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ نُحْيِۦ وَنُمِيتُ وَنَحْنُ ٱلْوَٰرِثُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا ٱلْمُسْتَقْدِمِينَ مِنكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا ٱلْمُسْتَـْٔخِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

[23-25] It is We Who give life and death and We will be the inheritors of all.[15] We have full knowledge about those who lived before you, and We are keeping watch over their successors. Most surely your Lord will gather them together for He is All-Wise, All-Knowing.[16]

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن صَلْصَٰلٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَٱلْجَآنَّ خَلَقْنَٰهُ مِن قَبْلُ مِن نَّارِ ٱلسَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّى خَٰلِقٌۢ بَشَرًا مِّن صَلْصَٰلٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ﴿٢٨﴾

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُۥ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِى فَقَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَسَجَدَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ مَعَ ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

قَالَ يَٰٓإِبْلِيسُ مَا لَكَ أَلَّا تَكُونَ مَعَ ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

قَالَ لَمْ أَكُن لِّأَسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ خَلَقْتَهُۥ مِن صَلْصَٰلٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

قَالَ فَٱخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ ٱللَّعْنَةَ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٣٥﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنظِرۡنِيٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ يُبۡعَثُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُنظَرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡوَقۡتِ ٱلۡمَعۡلُومِ ﴿٣٨﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ أَغۡوَيۡتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَأُغۡوِيَنَّهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنۡهُمُ ٱلۡمُخۡلَصِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

قَالَ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ عَلَيَّ مُسۡتَقِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيۡسَ لَكَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ سُلۡطَٰنٌ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلۡغَاوِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[26-43] We created Man from dried clay of rotten earth:[17] and before him We had created Jinn from the flame of heat.[18] Then recall to mind the time when your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to create a man from dried clay of rotten earth. When I have brought him to perfection and breathed of My spirit[19] into him, you should bow down before him all together." Accordingly all the angels bowed down except Iblis: he refused to join those who bowed down.[20] The Lord said, "O Iblis! What is the matter with you that you have not joined those who have bowed down?" He replied, "It does not behoove me to bow down before this man whom you have created from dried clay of rotten earth." The Lord said, "Get away from here, for you have become accursed: the curse shall rest upon you till the Day of Retribution."[21] .At this he requested, "My Lord! then give me respite till that Day when mankind shall be resurrected." Allah said, "Well! you are given respite till the Day of predestined time." Iblis replied, "Lord, because Thou hast beguiled me, I will create allurements for them[22] and seduce them except those of Thy servants whom Thou hast chosen for Thyself from amongst them. " Allah replied, "This is the straight way that reaches Me.[23] Indeed, thou shalt have no power over My sincere servants. Thou wilt succeed only in beguiling those who shall follow thee,[24] and they shall all be destined for Hell."[25]

لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِّكُلِّ بَابٍ مِّنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَّقْسُومٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ آمِنِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ

﴿٤٧﴾

لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[44-48] This Hell (with which the followers of Iblis have been threatened) has seven gates, and each gate has been specified for a separate group of them.[26] In contrast to them the pious people[27] shall go to the gardens and fountains. (It will be said to them), "Enter into these in peace and security." We will remove from their hearts even the little bit of spite that will be therein,[28] and they will become like brethren, and sit face to face on couches. They will have no toil to weary them nor will they be cast out from there.[29]

۞ نَبِّئْ عِبَادِيٓ أَنِّيٓ أَنَا ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَأَنَّ عَذَابِي هُوَ ٱلْعَذَابُ ٱلْأَلِيمُ ﴿٥٠﴾

[49-50] O Prophet! tell My servants, "I am Forgiving and Merciful, but at the same time My chastisement is also a severe chastisement."

وَنَبِّئْهُمْ عَن ضَيْفِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿٥١﴾

إِذْ دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا۟ سَلَٰمًا قَالَ إِنَّا مِنكُمْ وَجِلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

قَالُوا۟ لَا تَوْجَلْ إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَٰمٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٥٣﴾

قَالَ أَبَشَّرْتُمُونِي عَلَىٰٓ أَن مَّسَّنِيَ ٱلْكِبَرُ فَبِمَ تُبَشِّرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

قَالُوا۟ بَشَّرْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْقَٰنِطِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

قَالَ وَمَن يَقْنَطُ مِن رَّحْمَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلضَّآلُّونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّآ أُرْسِلْنَآ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

إِلَّآ ءَالَ لُوطٍ إِنَّا لَمُنَجُّوهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ قَدَّرْنَآ إِنَّهَا لَمِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[51-60] And tell them the story of the guests of Abraham.[30] When they came to him, they said, "Peace be to you". But he replied, "We are afraid of you."[31] They said, "Do not be afraid of us. We give you the good news of a

sagacious son."[32] Abraham said, "What! do you give me the good news of a son in my old age? Just consider what kind of good news you are giving me." They replied, "We are giving you a true good news; you should not be of those who despair". Abraham replied, only those who go astray, despair of their Lord's Mercy?' Then he asked them, "O Messengers of Allah! What is the expedition for which you have been sent?"[33] They said, "We have been sent to (punish) a criminal people[34] with the exception of Lot's family; we will rescue all of them except his wife, who (Allah says) has been destined to remain with those who will stay behind."

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ ءَالَ لُوطٍ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّنكَرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

قَالُوا۟ بَلْ جِئْنَٰكَ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

وَأَتَيْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَإِنَّا لَصَٰدِقُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

فَأَسْرِ بِأَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱتَّبِعْ أَدْبَٰرَهُمْ وَلَا يَلْتَفِتْ مِنكُمْ أَحَدٌ وَٱمْضُوا۟ حَيْثُ تُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

وَقَضَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْأَمْرَ أَنَّ دَابِرَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَقْطُوعٌ مُّصْبِحِينَ ٦٦

[61-66] Afterwards when these envoys came to the house of Lot,[35] he said, "You appear to be strangers."[36] They answered, "Nay, but we have come to you with that concerning which these people had doubts. We tell you the truth that we have come to you with the truth. You should, therefore, depart with your people in the last hours of the night and you yourself should follow them in their rear;[37] let none of you turn round to look behind;[38] go straight where you are being bidden." And We informed him of Our decree that they shall be utterly destroyed by the next morning.

وَجَآءَ أَهْلُ ٱلْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ٦٧

قَالَ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ضَيْفِى فَلَا تَفْضَحُونِ ٦٨

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُخْزُونِ ٦٩

قَالُوٓا۟ أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ٧٠

قَالَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِىٓ إِن كُنتُمْ فَٰعِلِينَ ٧١

[67-71] And the people of the town rushed rejoicing to the house of Lot.[39] He said, "Brethren! These are my guests:

therefore do not dishonor me. Fear God and do not put me to shame." They replied, "Have we not forbidden you to plead for all and sundry?" At last Lot pleaded, "Here are my daughters,[40] if you are bent on it."

لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

[72] By your life, O Prophet, they were at that time so intoxicated with lust as to be quite beside themselves with passion.

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُشْرِقِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

فَجَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

[73-74] At last a severe blast overtook them at dawn. Then We turned their habitations up-side-down and We rained stones of baked clay upon them.[41]

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

وَإِنَّهَا لَبِسَبِيلٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

[75-77] There are big Signs in these events for men of understanding. And the smitten territory still lies on the high

way.[42] Indeed there is an admonition in it for true believers.

وَإِن كَانَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْأَيْكَةِ لَظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

فَٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمَا لَبِإِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

[78-79] As the people of Al Aikah[43] were unjust, We took vengeance on them. And the ruined habitations of these two Communities lie upon the open highway.[44]

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْحِجْرِ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَكَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَكَانُوا۟ يَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا ءَامِنِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

[80-84] The people of Al Hijr[45] also treated the Messengers as impostors and We sent Our Revelations and showed Our Signs to them, but they went on ignoring all these things. They hewed their dwellings into the mountains and apparently lived in full security. But at last a violent blast over took them with the approach of the morning, and all that they had achieved proved of no avail to them.[46]

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَءَاتِيَةٌ ۖ
فَٱصْفَحِ ٱلصَّفْحَ ٱلْجَمِيلَ ﴿٨٥﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ ٱلْخَلَّٰقُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٦﴾

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَٰكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ ٱلْمَثَانِى وَٱلْقُرْءَانَ ٱلْعَظِيمَ ﴿٨٧﴾

لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

وَقُلْ إِنِّىٓ أَنَا ٱلنَّذِيرُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٨٩﴾

كَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى ٱلْمُقْتَسِمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا۟ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ عِضِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْـَٔلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

عَمَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[85-93] We have not based the creation of the Earth and the Heavens and everything but truth,[47] and our judgment is sure to come. So O Muhammad, overlook . (their misbehavior) in a gracious manner. Indeed your Lord is the Creator of all and is All-Knowing.[48] We have given you seven verses that are worthy of recitation over and over again,[49] and We have also bestowed on you the glorious Qur'an.[50] Do not even look at the worldly wealth We have given to different people from among them nor grieve at their condition.[51] Leave them alone and attend to the Believers. Tell (the disbelievers), "I am a plain warner only. This warning is like the warning We sent to the schismatics, who have caused divisions in their Qur'an"[52] So by your Lord, We will surely take account from them concerning what they had been doing.

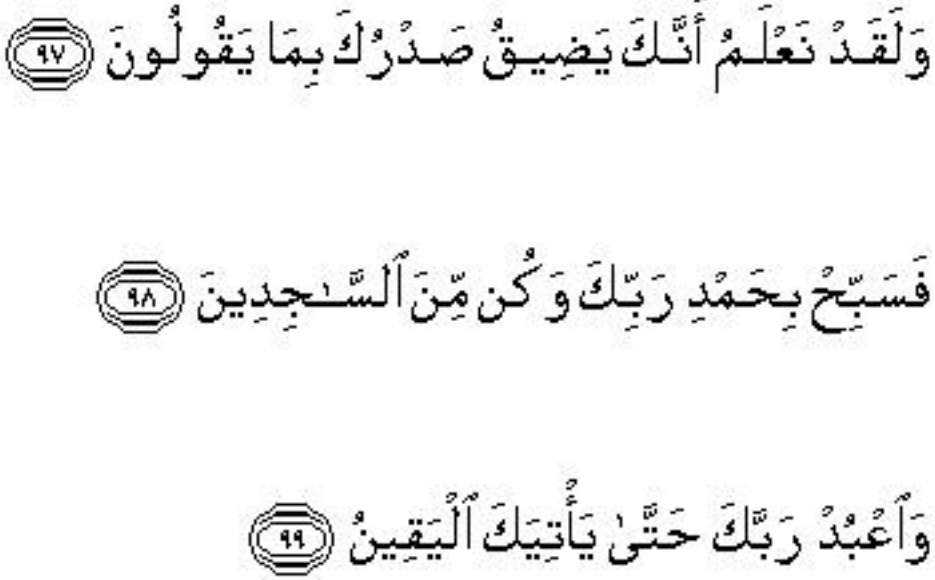
فَٱصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

إِنَّا كَفَيْنَـٰكَ ٱلْمُسْتَهْزِءِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَجْعَلُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَـٰهًا ءَاخَرَ ۚ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

[94-96] So, O Prophet, proclaim publicly what you are being bidden, and never mind those who practice shirk. We

suffice on your behalf to take to task those who have set up other gods along with Allah: they will come to know shortly (their folly).



[97-99] We know that your heart is distressed at the things they say against you. (This is the remedy:) you should glorify your Lord with His praise, and fall in prostration before Him, and serve your Lord till that last hour which is sure to come.[53]

1This verse is the brief introduction to the Surah, and immediately after this begins its theme. "These are the verses of the lucid Qur'an": These are the verses of that Qur'an which makes its meaning lucid and understandable.

2This is to refute the fallacious argument of the disbelievers that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was not a true Prophet because they had received no prompt punishment for their disbelief. It is like this: "We have never seized a community at the first committal of kufr.

We prescribe a limit for every community to hear and understand the message and reform its ways. Then We tolerate its mischief and evil deeds up to that limit and allow it full freedom to do as it likes, and give it respite till the term expires. That is why We are tolerating their attitude of ridicule and denial. (For the full meaning of respite, please refer to E.N. 18 of Surah Ibrahim).

3The word (Zikr) literally means "to cause to remember, "to caution" and "to give advice". But the Qur'an has used it as a technical term for "Admonition", which comes as a precept. Thus all the Books that had been sent down to the Messengers were Zikr, and the Qur'an is also Zikr.

4This was a sarcastic remark that was made by the opponents, for they did not acknowledge that the

"Admonition" had been sent down to the Holy Prophet: otherwise they could not say that he was "insane". What they really meant by this remark was: "You, who claim that the "Admonition" has been sent down to you, are insane". A similar remark was also made by Pharaoh concerning Prophet Moses. Addressing his courtiers, he said, "The Messenger who has been sent to you is insane". (XXVI: 27)

5"We do not send down the angels in this way": We do not send down the angels for the mere fun of it in response to the request of the people: nor are they sent to unveil the Reality before them in order to show to them all the "unseen" things to which the Messengers invite them to believe. As a matter of fact, angels are sent down on that occasion when it is decreed to pass judgment on sane wicked people. At that time the judgment comes into operation without extending. any invitation to the condemned people to accept the Message, for their period of respite ends as soon as the "Reality" is unveiled before them.

"they come down with truth" = "they bring down truth with them." That is they come down to eradicate falsehood and to establish truth in its stead. Or, in other words, it means, “they come down to put into force the judgment of Allah.”

6That is, "You should note it well that it is We Who have sent this `Word'. Thus it is not Our Messenger whom you are calling `insane' but in fact this abusive remark applies to Us. Moreover, you should know that it is Our Word and We are preserving it; therefore, you can do no harm to it; nor can you discredit it by your ridicules, taunts and objections: nor can you hamper its progress, whatever you may do against it: nor will anyone be ever able to change or tamper with it."

7The majority of the translators and commentators are of the opinion that the pronoun `it' in ".... cause it" in v. 12, refers to their "mockery", occurring in v. 11, and in “would not believe in it” in v. 13, refers to the "Admonition" occurring in v. 9. Then vv. 12-13 will be rendered like this: "Thus we cause mockery enter into the hearts of the criminals and they do not believe in the Admonition .... " Though grammatically there is nothing wrong with this version, yet our version of "it" will be better even grammatically. According to this v. 12 will mean, "When the Admonition enters into the hearts of the believers it gives them peace of mind and comfort of heart. But when the same enters into the hearts of the criminals it becomes a hot rod, and burns their minds and hearts.”

8In the preceding verses (14-15) it was stated that the disbelievers had become so hardened against the Qur'an that they would not have believed in it even if they had ascended the Heaven and seen with their own eyes the Signs mentioned in it. Now in vv.16-22, some of the Signs arc being cited in order to convince there of its truth.

"Fortified spheres" (buruj) are Signs of Allah for it is not possible to pass through one sphere of the Heaven into another, as each sphere of the space has been fortified by invisible boundaries. In this connection, it may be noted that literally the Arabic word burj means "a fortified place" but as a technical

term of ancient astronomy this stood for each of the twelve Signs of the Zodiac, which marked the sun's path through the heavens. This has led some of the commentators to form the opinion that in this verse the word buruj refers to the same. But there are some others who think that it means "planets". However, if we consider this word in the context of v. 19, we are led to the conclusion that probably it stands for "spheres".

9"We have adorned and decked the "fortified spheres": "We have placed a shining star or planet in each of these spheres and made them look beautiful". In other words, it means; "We have not made the boundless universe dismal, desolate and frightful, but so beautiful that one finds marvelous order and harmony in it everywhere, and sights therein are. so attractive that each one of these charms hearts and minds. This wonderful structure of the universe is a clear proof of the fact that its Creator is not only Great and All-Wise but is also a perfect Artist". The Qur'an has also stated this aspect of the Creator in XXXII: 7: “(Allah is) that God Who has created in perfect beauty everything He has created.”

10That is, "These spheres are so fortified that they are beyond the reach of every Satan, for all Satans including those of jinns, have been confined to that sphere in which the Earth has been placed and they enjoy no more access to visit other spheres than the other dwellers of this sphere. This has been mentioned in order to remove a common misunderstanding. The common people believed, .and still believe, that Satan and his descendants have a free access to every place in the universe. On the contrary, the Qur'an says that Satans cannot go beyond a certain limit and they have no unlimited power of ascension.

11This is the answer to the false claim of the soothsayers, diviners, hermits, conjurers and the like who pretended to receive communications from the Heaven. The Qur'an says that in fact they do not possess any means of obtaining information about unseen things. Satans, however, try to eaves-drop because they are by nature more like angels than human beings, but in reality, they succeed in obtaining very little information about it.

12In Arabic the word shihab-i-mubin literally means "fiery flame". In XXXVII: 10, the same thing has been called shihab-i-thaqib ("flame that pierces through darkness"). 'This may or may not necessarily be a "meteor" for it is just possible that it may be some type of rays such as "Cosmic Rays" or even a stronger type which we have not been able to discover as yet. Anyhow if the "fiery flame" that pursues Satans may be taken to be a meteor, a countless number of these can form a fortification around our sphere of the universe. Scientific observations made with the help of the telescope have shown that billions of these meteors are rushing from space in mass of "rainfall" towards the earth's atmosphere. Such a scene was witnessed in an eastern pan of North America on November 13, 1833. This is so strong a fortification that it can prevent Satans from passing through any fortified sphere.

With the help of the above, one can form a mental picture of the "fortified spheres" . Though there is no visible "wall" to keep distinct and separate one sphere from the others, Allah has securely guarded each

of these spheres by invisible "walls" against each other. That is why our "planet" has remained safe in spite of the occasional "rainfall" of countless meteors. For as soon as they cross the protective wall of our sphere, they are burnt to ashes. But sometimes a meteorite reaches the earth from outer space as if to warn the dwellers of this planet of the existence of the "power" of the Creator. For instance, the biggest of these weighs 645 pounds and it is obvious from this that if the earth had not been made safe and secure by means of "fortified spheres" the rain of the shooting stars would have utterly annihilated it long long ago. It is these "fortified spheres" which the Qur'an calls "buruj."

13The growth of every kind of plant in a limited extent is another Sign of the wisdom and power of Allah. For the generative power of every vegetable plant is so great that if free growth had been allowed to even one kind of plant, it would have covered the whole surface of the Earth. But it is by the design of the All-Wise and All-Powerful Creator that every kind of vegetable is produced in a balanced measure. There is another aspect of the vegetable life. Each and every kind of it is allowed to grow only to a fixed size, height, and thickness, which is a proof of the fact that the Creator himself prescribed the structure, the shape, the size, the height, the leaves and branches, and the number of each and every plant, and no plant is allowed to go beyond any of these fixed limits.

14This is to bring home the fact that it is not vegetable life alone that has a fixed limit to its growth, etc: The same is true of everything that exists, whether it be air, water, light, heat, cold, mineral, vegetable. animal or power or energy, in short, each and every thing exists in the prescribed quantity, number, etc. , which neither decreases nor increases. It is this "determined course", in each and every thing, which has produced appropriate balance and proportion in the entire system of the universe to such a perfection that one is led to the inevitable conclusion that the whole thing has been designed by its All-Wise Creator. For, had the universe come into existence by mere accident or had it been created by many gods, it was impossible to have such a perfect balance and appropriate proportion with perpetual consistence in so many different things and powers.

15It is to impress this: "your worldly life and all you possess are transitory and temporary, and Allah alone is Eternal. Your end shall come sooner or later, and you shall leave everything behind in this world, which will again become a part of Our treasure."

16"He is All-Wise", therefore His Wisdom demands that He should gather the whole of mankind and reward or punish each individual in accordance with his deeds. And "He is All-Knowing" : therefore no individual, whosoever he be, can escape from Him. As each and every particle of each and every individual is in His knowledge, He is able to bring the whole of mankind to life in the Hereafter. Thus anyone who denies "Life-in-the-Hereafter" is really ignorant of the Wisdom of Allah; and anyone who considers it impossible that those particles of the human body, which wen all scattered about, could again be brought together in the form of the body that was alive, is ignorant of the All Comprehensive knowledge and power of Allah.

17The Arabic word "salsal" means the dried clay which produces a sound like pottery."

"Hams " is "the black mud which has become so rotten as to be in a fermented state."

"Masnun" has a double meaning: (a) "rotten clay which has become greasy" (b) clay which has been molded into a shape." It is clear from the wording of the text that at first the image of man was made of clay from rotten earth and when it dried up, soul was breathed into it. Thus the Qur'an positively refutes the Darwinian theory of Evolution that man came into existence after passing through continuous genetic adaptations. It will, therefore, be a futile attempt, as some modernized commentators have done, to prove that theory from the Qur'an.

18As `samum' is not wind, `nar-i-samum" will mean "flame of heat" ("intense heat") and not of "fin." This is the explanation of those passages in which it has been stated that jinns have been created from fire.

19"....(when I have) breathed of My spirit into him...." = "....(when I have) cast a reflection of My Divine characteristics on him.... " This shows that the soul of man implies "life, knowledge, power, will, discretion and other human characteristics in the aggregate. These are in reality a slight reflection of Divine characteristics that has been cast on the human body, which was originally created from dried clay. And it is this Divine reflection on the human body which has raised him to the position of the Vicegerent of Allah and made him that worthy being before whom angels and every earthly thing should bow down.

As a matter of fact, the source of each characteristic of everything is one Divine characteristic or the other, as is borne by a Tradition: “Allah divided Mercy into one hundred parts: then He reserved ninety-nine parts for Himself and sent down the remaining one part to the Earth. It is because of that one part that the creatures show mercy to one another. So much so that it is due to this that an animal refrains from placing the hoof on its young ones.”

In this connection one has to be on strict guard against the notion that the possession of a part of any Divine characteristic amounts to the possession of a part of Godhead. This is because Godhead is absolutely beyond the reach of each and every creation.

20Please compare this passage (vv. 30-43) with II: 30-39, IV: 117-120 and VII: 11-25 and also refer to E. N.'s appended to these.

21That is, "You shall remain accused up to the Resurrection. Then you shall be punished for your disobedience on the Day of Judgment."

22That is, "Thou hast beguiled me by commanding me to bow down before a creature who is inferior to me: for it is obvious that I could not obey such an order. Therefore, I will now beguile them and disobey

Thee." In other words, Iblis meant to say, "I will make the worldly life, its enjoyments and its transitory benefits so alluring for man that he will forget the responsibilities of the Vicegerent of Allah, and that he shall have to render his account in the Hereafter. They will also forget Thee and will disobey Thee, even though they would profess to remember Thee."

23This verse (41) may have another meaning: "This is the right thing: I also will stick to this."

24This verse (42) also may have another meaning: "You will have no power over My servants (common people) to force them to disobey Me. However, We will give freedom of action to those who will willingly or deliberately follow you, and we will not forcibly prevent them from your way, if they intended to follow you."

According to the first rendering, these verses will mean this: "The way followed by My sincere servants is the only straight way to reach Me. Satan will have no power over those people who follow it, for I will choose them to be My own servants." Satan himself admitted that he will not be able to entice them. On the contrary, he will succeed in beguiling those people, who themselves will deviate from the way of obedience. They will then wander farther and farther away following his temptations and allurements.

According to the second meaning, the passage will mean this: "When Satan challenged that he would beguile people from the Way of Allah by making this worldly life very tempting to them, Allah accepted his challenge but made it clear to him that he was being allowed only to beguile people with temptation, but was not being given any power to force them to deviate from the Right Way. At this, Satan clarified that his challenge did not apply to those people whom Allah will choose for Himself. As this exception might have led to a misunderstanding that Allah may choose any people for Himself to keep them safe and secure from the reach of Satan, Allah clarified it, saying "Only that person will follow you, who himself will deviate from the Right Way. " As a corollary to this, "That person, who will not deviate from the Right Way will not follow you, and will, thus become Our servant, whom We will choose for Our-self."

25In order to comprehend the purpose for which the story of Prophet Adam and Satan has been related here, we should keep in mind the context in which this has occurred. In the preceding verses (1-25), it has been stated that the disbelievers were following the ways of deviation that would lead them to perdition. This story has been related to warn them that the ways they were following were the ways of Satan, their eternal enemy, so as to say, "You should realize the consequences of following Satan, who has enticed you in this snare, and is leading you to the lowest depths of degradation because of this enmity and envy. In contrast to this, Our Prophet is doing his utmost w free you from his snare and lead you to the height of success, which as a man you should desire to achieve. But it is a pity that you are regarding your enemy (Satan) as your friend, and your friend (Our) as your enemy."

Secondly, the story also makes quite clear to them this thing:

"There is only one way of salvation and that is the Way of obedience to Allah. If you discard this Way, every other way will be a way of Satan which will take you directly to Hell."

Than this story is meant to bring home to them this fact: You yourselves are responsible for your wrong deeds and not Satan; for, the most he can do is to beguile you from the obedience of Allah and hold temptations before you It is therefore, your own concern and responsibility to be beguiled or not to be beguiled by Satan. "

26Sinners will be divided into different groups in accordance with their different sins for their entry into Hell from seven different gates specified for each different sin. For instance, the group of atheists shall enter into Hell by one of the seven gates specified for their group. Likewise, mushriks, hypocrites, self-seekers, sensualists, tyrants, propagandists and leaders of disbelief, etc., etc., shall each enter into Hell through the gates specified for their group.

27The pious people are those who did not follow Satan but feared Allah and lived lives of obedience to Him.

28That is, "If any spite might have been caused in their hearts in this world because of misunderstandings between the pious people, it shall be removed at the time of their entry into Paradise and they will bear no ill-feelings there against each other." (Please refer also to E.N. 320 of Al-A'araf.)

29This verse is explained by the following Tradition: "It will be announced to the dwellers of the Gardens, `Now you will remain hale and hearty for ever and shall never fall ill: now you will enjoy eternal life and shall never die: now you will remain young for ever and never grow old, and now you will remain for ever in Paradise and shall never have to move away from it' . " There arc other Traditions that further elucidate lift in Paradise to this effect: "The dwellers shall have no toil to perform for their livelihood and necessities of lift. They will get everything without any labor whatsoever."

30The story of Prophets Abraham and Lot has been related to tell the disbelievers of Makkah how angels come down with truth. This was in response to their demand. "Why do you not bring angels before us, if what you say be true?" (v. 7). Then, only this brief answer was given: "We do not send down angels in this way. When they come down, they come down with truth" (v. 8). Now these two events arc cited as two concrete forms of "truth" with which the angels came, as if to ask the disbelievers, "Now decide for yourselves which of these two forms of truth you want angels to bring to you. It is obvious that you do not deserve that "truth" which was sent to Prophet Abraham. Do you then desire that `truth" which the angels brought to the' people of Prophet Lot?"

31Please compare this story of Prophet Abraham with that contained in XI: 6 9-76.

32" ... a sagacious son" : Prophet Isaac . His name has been mentioned in connection with this good news in XI: 71.

33It appears from the question of Prophet Abraham that angels are sent down in human shape only on extraordinary occasions and on some important expedition.

34The fact that the angels did not name the people of Lot but merely referred to them as "the wicked people", shows that these people had become so notorious for their wicked deeds that there was no need to mention them by name before Prophet Abraham, who was well acquainted with the moral condition of all the people around him.

35Please compare this with VII: 80-84 and XI: 77-83.

36Here the story has been related in brief. But we learn from XI: 77-83 that Prophet Lot was greatly perturbed and distressed at the visit of the angels. He said to himself, "This is a day of woe." The reason why he was distressed, as implied in the Qur'an and explicitly expressed in the Traditions, was that the angels had come to Prophet Lot in the shape of beautiful boys, and he knew how perverse and wicked his people were. He was distressed for he could not send them away because they were his guests, and because he did not know how to protect them from those villains.

37That is, “You should walk behind your people lest anyone of them should stay behind.”

38It did not mean: "look not behind thee, lest thou be consumed."as stated in the Bible. But it merely meant to warn them: "None of you should turn round to see what was happening behind them lest you should stop to see the fun, when you heard the cries of the smitten people. For it is neither the time of enjoying "fun", nor of shedding tears of regret. If you stop even for a minute in the territory of the smitten people you also might get hurt from the rain of stones."

39This shows that those People had gone to the lowest depths of immorality. No sooner did they hear the news of the arrival of handsome strangers in their town than they rushed rejoicing to the house of Prophet Lot and impudently demanded that he should hand over his guests to them for the gratification of their lust. The pity is that there had remained not a single person among them to make a protest against such a heinous sin. Moreover, this shows that all of them, as a community, had totally lost every sense of decency, and they felt no shame at all to make such a wicked demand on him openly. The very fact, that they felt no hesitation in making such a wicked demand brazen- facedly from a pious and holy man like Prophet Lot, shows that the heinous crime was so common among them that they would not spare anyone.

The Talmud records many instances of the all-round moral degradation of the people of Lot. Once a

stranger was passing through their territory. He was forced by coming darkness to pass the night near Sodom. As he had his own provisions with him, he did not stand in any need of help from the towns-folk; so he lay under a tree to pass the night. But a Sodomite entreated him to accompany him to his house. During the night he did away with the ass and merchandise of the stranger. When he began to cry for help in the morning, the towns-folk came there not to help him but to rob him of what had been left with him.

On one occasion Hadrat Sarah sent her slave to Sodom to inquire after Prophet Lot's household. When the slave entered the town, he saw that a Sodomite was beating a stranger. Naturally the slave of Hadrat Sarah tried to rouse his sense of decency, saying, "why do you ill-treat helpless strangers like this?" In answer to this appeal, his head was broken in public.

On another occasion a poor man happened to come to Sodom but no one gave him anything to eat. When he was half dead with starvation, he fell to the ground in a helpless plight. A daughter of Prophet Lot saw him and sent some food for him. At this the Sodomites reproached Prophet Lot and his daughter and threatened to expel them from there, if they would not refrain from such "deeds"!

After citing several similar incidents, the Talmud says that those people had become so cruel, so deceitful and so dishonest in their dealings that no traveler could pass safe through their territory nor could a poor person expect any food or help from them. Many a time it so happened that a poor stranger came there, and died from hunger. Then they would strip the clothes from his body and bury him naked! If a foreigner committed the blunder of visiting their territory, they would publicly rob him of everything, and make fool of him if he appealed to them to redress the wrong. Then they would openly commit shameless deeds in the gardens which they had grown in their valley because there was none to rebuke them except Prophet Lot. The Quran has summed up the whole of their wicked story in two concise sentences:(1) ".They had already been committing very wicked deeds" XI: 78, and (2) "You gratify your lust with males: you rob travelers, and you commit wicked deeds publicly in your assemblies."

40In E.N. 87 of Surah Hud, it has been explained what Prophet Lot meant by this. It may also be added that such words as these were uttered by an honorable man like him in the last resort, when all his entreaties and earnest requests had failed to prevent those people from their evil designs towards his guests.

Here it will be worthwhile to clear the significance of the words which were uttered by Prophet Lot as they occur in Surah Hud (v. 78). When he entreated those wicked people not to molest his guests, saying, "Here are my daughters....", he was unaware that his guests were angels in the disguise of handsome boys. The angels revealed their identity only when the wicked crowd gathered at the residence of his guests and began to threaten them with their wicked designs, and Prophet Lot began to lament, "I wish I had the power to set you right or I could find some strong support for refuge." It was then that the angels revealed themselves, saying, "We are envoys sent by your Lord.... " This sequence of events shows that

Prophet Lot had made that "offer" only when he had felt to be utterly helpless.

It is very important to keep this in view because the sequences of events in this Surah is different from that in Surah Hud. One is liable to have a misunderstanding as to why Prophet Lot wailed and lamented when he knew all the while that his guests were angels and could defend themselves against those wicked people.

As regards the apparent difference between the two sequences, it may be pointed out that here the important thing to be stated is that the angels come with the truth. Therefore that part of the story (vv. 61-66) has been related first in order to make the point more prominent.

41These "stones of baked clay" might have been meteoric showers or volcanic eruptions that flew and rained upon them, or these might have been blown by a strong wind.

42That is, "That smitten territory lies on the high road from Hijaz (Arabia) to Syria and Egypt" . Travelers come across these Signs of destruction which are very prominent in the territory that lies to the south-east of the Dead Sea. The geographers are of the opinion that there is no other land on the surface of the Earth which looks desolate as this territory, especially its southern part.

43The people of Al-Aikah were the community of Prophet Shu`aib and were called Midianites after the name of their capital city and their territory. As regards Al-Aikah, it was the ancient name of Tabuk and literally means a “thick forest.”

44Midian lay on the route from Hijaz to Palestine and Syria.

45Al-Hijr was the capital city of the people of Thamud, and its ruins are found near the modern city of Al-'Ula' which is to the north west of Al-Madinah, and lies on the route from AI-Madinah to Tabuk. Though the caravans had to pass through the valley of Al-Hijr, the Holy Prophet had forbidden the Muslims to stay in the valley on their journey.

When Ibn Batutah reached there in the eighth century of Hijrah on his way to Makkah, he wrote: "I have seen the buildings of Thamud hewed into red mountains; the paintings look so bright as if they have been put on only recently....and rotten bones of human beings are found in them even today." (See E.N. 57 of VII.)

46That is, "Their strong and secure buildings, which they had hewed into the mountains, could not protect them from the blast."

47This was to reassure the Holy Prophet that ultimately he would come out successful because he was

propagating the Truth, and the whole of the universe was based on truth. Such an assurance was urgently needed because at that tithe falsehood appeared to be triumphant over the Truth. This implies, "O Prophet, do not worry at all at the apparent "success" of falsehood for this is temporary. Likewise the difficulties, the obstacles and the troubles in the way of truth are not permanent. Take courage, and have confidence in the cause of the Truth and you will triumph over falsehood because the whole system of the universe is akin to truth and averse to falsehood. Therefore, truth is permanent and falsehood is perishable" (Please refer to E.N.'s 25 26,35-39 of Surah Ibrahim).

48These attributes of Allah have been mentioned to reassure the Holy Prophet as if to say, "As Allah is the Creator, He has complete power over all his creatures, and no one is able to escape His punishment. Moreover, He is All Knowing: He is fully aware that you are exerting your utmost for their reform, and He knows also their evil machinations against your efforts for reform. Therefore, you need not worry on this account, but you should wait patiently and with confidence that at the appropriate time they will be dealt with justly."

49These seven verses which are recited over and over again in every prescribed salat are the verses of Al-Fatihah. Though some of the commentators are of the view that this “Al-Mathani,” refers to the seven Surahs which contain two hundred or more verses, that is, II-VII and (VIII-IX) or X. But the majority of the early commentators opine that it refers to Al-Fatihah. Imam Bukhari has cited two authentic Traditions in support of the view that it refers to Al-Fatihah.

50The mention of the precious gift of the Glorious Qur'an has been made also to console the Holy Prophet and his followers that they should not even look at the worldly wealth of their opponents because that was nothing as compared with this precious wealth. In order to grasp the full significance of this, one should keep in view the fact that at that time the Holy Prophet and his Companions were suffering badly from poverty. The trading activities of the Holy Prophet had almost come to an end during the period in which he had been engaged in his Mission. Besides this, he had almost used up the whole wealth of Hadrat Khaijah. As regards his Companions, some of the young men had been turned out of their homes and reduced to poverty. The economic boycott had mined the business of those who were engaged in trade. There were others who were mere slaves or proteges of the Quraish and had no economic position whatever. In addition to their sad economic plight, all the Muslims, along with the Holy Prophet, were suffering persecution from the people of Makkah and its surroundings, In short, they were so much persecuted, ridiculed and insulted that no one of them was safe from physical and mental torture. On the other side, the Quraish, their opponents and persecutors, enjoyed all the good things of this world, and lived lives of happiness and luxury. This is the background of the reassurance given to the Believers, as if to say, "Why should you feel disheartened at this? We have given you "wealth" which surpasses all kinds of worldly riches. Therefore, your opponents should envy your knowledge and high morals; you need not envy their ill-canned wealth and their wicked enjoyments, for when they will go before their Lord, they themselves will find that they had not brought such wealth as carries any value there. "

51That is, "Do not grieve that they consider you as their enemy, though you .are their sincere well-wisher; that they regard their vices as their virtues; that they are not only themselves following but leading their followers on that way which inevitably leads to destruction: nay, they are doing their worst to oppose the reformative efforts of the one who is showing them the way of peace."

52The schismatics were the Jews for they had split their religion into many parts and caused division in it. They believed in certain parts and rejected the other parts, and detracted some things from it and added others to it. Thus they had been divided into many sectarian groups, which were opposed to one another.

"They have cut their Qur'an (Torah) into pieces" = "They believe in certain parts of it and reject other parts. " The same thing has been stated in II: 85 like this: ".... Do you then believe in one part of the Scriptures and disbelieve in the other parts .... "

" .... this warning is like the warning We sent to the schismatics (Jews)." This is meant to warn the disbelievers that they should learn a lesson from the plight of the Jews who neglected the warning that was given to than by God, and persisted in their wrong ways, as if to say, "You are beholding the degradation of the Jews. Do you like to meet with the same end by neglecting this warning?"

53That is Salat and worship of your Lord are the only means which can generate in you that power of sustenance which is required to stand resolutely against the troubles and afflictions you will inevitably encounter in the propagation of the Message of the Truth and reform of humanity. This will comfort you, fill you with courage and enable you to perform that Divine Mission on which you have been sent in the face of abuse, derision and obstacles."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

16. An Nahl (The Honey Bee)

Name

The name, An-Nahl, of this Surah has been taken from v. 68. This is merely to distinguish it from other Surahs.

Period of Revelation

The following internal evidence shows that this Surah was revealed during the last Makkan stage of Prophethood:

1. v. 41 clearly shows that persecution had forced some Muslims to emigrate to Habash before the revelation of this Surah.

2. It is evident from v. 106 that at that time the persecution of the Muslims was at its height. Therefore a problem had arisen in regard to the utterance of a blasphemous word, without actual disbelief, under unbearable conditions. The problem was that if one did so how he should be treated.

3. vv. 112-114 clearly refer to the end of seven year famine that had struck Makkah some years after the appointment of the Holy Prophet as Allah's Messenger.

4. There is a reference to v. 116 of this Surah in VI: 145, and v. 118 of this Surah contains a reference to VI: 146. This is a proof that both these Surahs (VI and XVI) were sent down in the same period.

The general style of the Surah also supports the view that this was revealed during the last stage at Makkah.

Central Theme

All the topics of the Surah revolve round different aspects of the Message, ie., refutation of *shirk*, proof of *Tauhid*,

and warning of the consequences of the rejection of and opposition and antagonism to the Message.

Topics of Discussion

The very first verse gives direct and strict warning to those who were rejecting the Message outright, as if to say, "Allah's decision has already been made concerning your rejection of the Message. Why are you then clamoring for hastening it? Why don't you make use of the respite that is being given to you!" And this was exactly what the disbelievers of Makkah needed at the time of the revelation of this Surah. For they challenged the Holy Prophet over and over again: "Why don't you bring that scourge with which you have been threatening us! For we have not only rejected your Message but have been openly opposing it for a long time." Such a challenge had become a by-word with them, which they frequently repeated as a clear proof that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was not a true Prophet.

Immediately after this warning they have been admonished to give up *shirk*, for this false creed was the main obstacle in the way of the Message. Then the following topics come over and over again, one after the other:

1. Very convincing proofs of *Tauhid* and refutation of *shirk* have been based on the plain signs in the universe and in man's own self.

2. The objections of the disbelievers have been answered, their arguments refuted, their doubts removed and their false pretexts exposed.

3. Warnings have given of the consequences of persistence in false ways and antagonism to the Message.

4. The moral changes which the Message of the Holy Prophet aims to bring practically in human life have been presented briefly in an appealing manner. The *mushriks* have been told that belief in Allah, which they also professed, demanded that it should not be confined merely to lip service, but this creed should take a definite shape in moral and practical life.

5. The Holy Prophet and his companions have been comforted and told about the attitude they should adopt in the face of antagonism and persecution by the disbelievers.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

أَتَىٰٓ أَمۡرُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَسۡتَعۡجِلُوهُۚ سُبۡحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشۡرِكُونَ ١

يُنَزِّلُ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ بِٱلرُّوحِ مِنۡ أَمۡرِهِۦ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦٓ أَنۡ أَنذِرُوٓاْ
أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱتَّقُونِ ٢

[1-2] Allah's "Judgment" has come:[1] so do not clamor for hastening it; He is free from every defect, and exalted high above the shirk that they are practicing.[2] He sends down by His command through His angels the Spirit[3] on that one of His servants whom He chooses,[4] (bidding), “warn the people that there is no other deity than I. Therefore, fear Me.”[5]

خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ بِٱلۡحَقِّۚ تَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشۡرِكُونَ ٣

[3] He has based the creation of the heavens and the Earth on truth; He is exalted high above that shirk which they are practicing.[6]

خَلَقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مِن نُّطۡفَةٖ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٞ مُّبِينٞ ٤

وَٱلۡأَنۡعَٰمَ خَلَقَهَاۚ لَكُمۡ فِيهَا دِفۡءٞ وَمَنَٰفِعُ وَمِنۡهَا تَأۡكُلُونَ ٥

وَلَكُمۡ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرِيحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسۡرَحُونَ ٦

وَتَحۡمِلُ أَثۡقَالَكُمۡ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٖ لَّمۡ تَكُونُواْ بَٰلِغِيهِ إِلَّا بِشِقِّ ٱلۡأَنفُسِۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمۡ لَرَءُوفٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٧

وَٱلۡخَيۡلَ وَٱلۡبِغَالَ وَٱلۡحَمِيرَ لِتَرۡكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةٗۚ وَيَخۡلُقُ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ٨

وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ قَصۡدُ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَمِنۡهَا جَآئِرٞۚ وَلَوۡ شَآءَ لَهَدَىٰكُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ٩

[4-9] He created Man from an insignificant sperm-drop, and behold, by and by he became a manifest disputant.[7] He has created cattle, which provide you with clothing and food, and there are other benefits also for you in them; they look pleasant when you drive them to the pasture in the morning and bring them home in the evening. They carry your burdens to far-off lands, which you could not reach without painful toil. Indeed your Lord is All-Compassionate and All-Merciful. He has created horses, mules and donkeys so that you may ride them, and they may add splendor to your life. He creates for you many other things, of which you have no knowledge at all.[8] Allah has taken upon Himself to show the Right Way, when there exist crooked ways too.[9] He would have guided all of you aright, if He had so willed.[10]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ لَّكُم مِّنۡهُ شَرَابٞ وَمِنۡهُ شَجَرٞ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ ١٠

يُنۢبِتُ لَكُم بِهِ ٱلزَّرۡعَ وَٱلزَّيۡتُونَ وَٱلنَّخِيلَ وَٱلۡأَعۡنَٰبَ وَمِن
كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ١١

[10-11] It is He, Who sends down for you water from the sky, which provides drinking water for you and brings forth fodder for your cattle. And thereby He grows for you crops and olives and date-palms and vines and different kinds of many other fruits. Surely there is a great Sign in this for those people who ponder.

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيۡلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ وَٱلشَّمۡسَ وَٱلۡقَمَرَۖ وَٱلنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَٰتُۢ بِأَمۡرِهِۦٓۗ
إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَٰتٖ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَعۡقِلُونَ ١٢

وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مُخۡتَلِفًا أَلۡوَٰنُهُۥٓۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَذَّكَّرُونَ
١٣

[12-13] He has subjected to your service the day and the night and the sun and the moon: likewise all the stars are subjected by His Command. In this there are many Signs for those who make use of their common sense. And in the things of different colors He has created for you in the Earth, there is indeed a Sign for those who learn lessons from them.

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ ٱلْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا۟ مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا۟ مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً
تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى ٱلْفُلْكَ مَوَاخِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

[14] It is He Who has subjected the sea to your service so that you may get fresh flesh from it to eat and bring out of it articles of ornament, which you wear, and you see that the ship sails her course through it. He has done all this so that you may seek of His bounty[11] and show gratitude to Him.

وَأَلْقَىٰ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ رَوَٰسِىَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَٰرًا وَسُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ
﴿١٥﴾

وَعَلَٰمَٰتٍ ۚ وَبِٱلنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

[15-16] He has driven mountains firmly into the earth lest it should turn away from its usual course along with you:[12] He has caused rivers to flow and made natural ways[13] so that you may be directed aright. He has placed landmarks[14] to direct people, and by stars, too, they are directed aright.[15]

أَفَمَن يَخْلُقُ كَمَن لَّا يَخْلُقُ ۗ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَإِن تَعُدُّواْ نِعۡمَةَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحۡصُوهَآۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَغَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ١٨

وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّونَ وَمَا تُعۡلِنُونَ ١٩

[17-19] Is, then, He, Who creates, like those who create nothing?[16] Do you not understand even this much? If you try to reckon up Allah's blessings, you cannot count them. Indeed, He is Forgiving and Compassionate[17] though He knows all that you conceal and all that you reveal.[18]

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَخۡلُقُونَ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُمۡ يُخۡلَقُونَ ٢٠

أَمۡوَٰتٌ غَيۡرُ أَحۡيَآءٖۖ وَمَا يَشۡعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبۡعَثُونَ ٢١

[20-21] And the other beings, whom the people invoke, create nothing; nay, they are themselves created. They are dead, not living, and they do not know at all when they shall again be raised to life.[19]

إِلَٰهُكُمۡ إِلَٰهٞ وَٰحِدٞۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مُّنكِرَةٞ وَهُم مُّسۡتَكۡبِرُونَ ٢٢

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعۡلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعۡلِنُونَۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا
يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُسۡتَكۡبِرِينَ ٢٣

[22-23] Your Deity is One Allah, but the hearts of those, who do not believe in the Hereafter, are given to denial, and they are puffed up with pride.[20] Surely Allah has full knowledge of all their deeds, both secret and open. He does not like those people, who are puffed up with pride.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم مَّاذَآ أَنزَلَ رَبُّكُمۡۙ قَالُوٓاْ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ٢٤

لِيَحۡمِلُوٓاْ أَوۡزَارَهُمۡ كَامِلَةٗ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۙ وَمِنۡ أَوۡزَارِ ٱلَّذِينَ
يُضِلُّونَهُم بِغَيۡرِ عِلۡمٍۗ أَلَا سَآءَ مَا يَزِرُونَ ٢٥

قَدۡ مَكَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ فَأَتَى ٱللَّهُ بُنۡيَٰنَهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡقَوَاعِدِ فَخَرَّ
عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلسَّقۡفُ مِن فَوۡقِهِمۡ وَأَتَىٰهُمُ ٱلۡعَذَابُ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ لَا يَشۡعُرُونَ ٢٦

[24-26] And[21] when they are asked, "What is it that your Lord has sent down?" they say these are mere fairy tales of the ancients.[22] They say such things so that they should bear the full brunt of their own burdens on the Day of Resurrection together with some of the burdens of those whom they are leading astray in their ignorance. Behold! what a heavy responsibility they are taking on themselves! Many of those who have gone before them also contrived such cunning devices to defeat the Truth, but behold! Allah smote the edifice of their evil designs at its foundations and its roof fell down upon their heads from above them, and the scourge overtook them from the direction they little dreamed that it would come.

ثُمَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يُخْزِيهِمْ وَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تُشَٰٓقُّونَ
فِيهِمْ ۚ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ إِنَّ ٱلْخِزْىَ ٱلْيَوْمَ وَٱلسُّوٓءَ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
﴿٢٧﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ فَأَلْقَوُا۟ ٱلسَّلَمَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِن
سُوٓءٍ ۚ بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

فَٱدْخُلُوٓا۟ أَبْوَٰبَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ فَلَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

[27-29] Then on the Day of Resurrection Allah will disgrace and degrade them. He will say to them: "Now where are My partners concerning whom you used to dispute (with the truthful)?"Those,[23] to whom Knowledge had been given in the world, will say, "Today there is ignominy and misery for the disbelievers." Yes[24] , this is for those disbelievers, who, while they are still engaged in wronging themselves, shall surrender themselves when seized by the angels,[25] saying, "We were doing nothing wrong at all." The angels will retort, "What, dare you deny this! Allah is fully aware of what you were doing. Now, go and enter the gates of Hell, where you shall abide for ever."[26] The fact is that a very miserable abode it is for the haughty ones.

۞ وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ مَاذَآ أَنزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ ۚ قَالُوا۟ خَيْرًا ۗ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ فِى
هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۚ وَلَدَارُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ ۚ وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ يَدۡخُلُونَهَا تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُۖ لَهُمۡ فِيهَا مَا يَشَآءُونَۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَجۡزِي ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡمُتَّقِينَ ٣١

ٱلَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَۙ يَقُولُونَ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱدۡخُلُواْ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ٣٢

[30-32] On the other hand, when the God-fearing people are asked, "What is it that has been sent by your Lord?" they say, "It is the best thing that has been sent down."[27] There is good for those righteous people who do good works in this world, and far better is their abode in the Hereafter." Blessed indeed is the dwelling place for the pious people. There will be gardens for their permanent residence into which they will enter: canals will be flowing underneath them: above all, they will find there everything as they would desire:[28] this is the reward for those pious people whose souls are received in a pure state, by the angels, who welcome them, saying, "Peace be on you: enter into Paradise as the reward of your good deeds."

هَلۡ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَن تَأۡتِيَهُمُ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوۡ يَأۡتِيَ أَمۡرُ رَبِّكَۚ كَذَٰلِكَ فَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡۚ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمۡ يَظۡلِمُونَ ٣٣

فَأَصَابَهُمۡ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا عَمِلُواْ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ يَسۡتَهۡزِءُونَ ٣٤

[33-34] O Muhammad! are these people still waiting, though now nothing has been left but that angels should come or your Lord's judgment be passed on them?[29] Many people before them behaved audaciously like them, and had to take the consequence: it was not Allah Who was unjust to them but they were unjust to themselves. In the end their evil deeds brought upon them the consequences and that very thing, they used to scoff at, overwhelmed them.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشۡرَكُواْ لَوۡ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَا عَبَدۡنَا مِن دُونِهِۦ مِن شَيۡءٖ نَّحۡنُ وَلَآ
ءَابَآؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمۡنَا مِن دُونِهِۦ مِن شَيۡءٖۚ كَذَٰلِكَ فَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡۚ فَهَلۡ
عَلَى ٱلرُّسُلِ إِلَّا ٱلۡبَلَٰغُ ٱلۡمُبِينُ ٣٥

وَلَقَدۡ بَعَثۡنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٖ رَّسُولًا أَنِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ
ٱللَّهَ وَٱجۡتَنِبُواْ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَۖ فَمِنۡهُم مَّنۡ هَدَى ٱللَّهُ وَمِنۡهُم مَّنۡ حَقَّتۡ
عَلَيۡهِ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةُۚ فَسِيرُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَٱنظُرُواْ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ
ٱلۡمُكَذِّبِينَ ٣٦

إِن تَحۡرِصۡ عَلَىٰ هُدَىٰهُمۡ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهۡدِي مَن يُضِلُّۖ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ
٣٧

[35-37] The mushriks say, "Had Allah willed, neither we nor our forefathers would have worshiped any other than Allah nor made anything unlawful without His will."[30] Such excuses were put forward also by those who went before them.[31] Have the Messengers any more responsibility than to convey the Message clearly? Accordingly, we sent to every community a Messenger, saying, "Worship Allah and keep away from the taghut."[32] After that Allah showed guidance to some of them, while deviation took hold of others.[33] So, roam about in the earth and behold what has

been the end of the rejectors of the Messengers.[34] O Muhammad! howsoever desirous you may be of their guidance, (know) that Allah does not show guidance to those whom He lets go astray, and such people have no helpers.

وَأَقْسَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ ۚ بَلَىٰ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ
حَقًّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

[38] They solemnly swear by God with their most sacred oaths that "Allah will never raise him who once is dead". Why will He not raise? It is a promise He has made binding on Himself, but most people do not know it.

لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى يَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟
كَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَىْءٍ إِذَآ أَرَدْنَٰهُ أَن نَّقُولَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٠﴾

[39-40] And It must be fulfilled so that He may reveal to them that thing about which they are differing, and that the disbelievers might know that they were liars.[35] (As regards its possibility.) when We desire to bring a thing into existence, We need only say, "Be", and it is there.[36]

وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا۟ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ
وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمۡ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[41-42] As for those, who after persecution, left their homes for the sake of Allah, We will give them a good abode in this world, but the reward in the Next World is far better.[37] Would that those who have borne oppression with fortitude, and are performing their mission with full trust in their Lord, knew (what a happy end awaits them!)

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالٗا نُّوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِمۡۚ فَسۡـَٔلُوٓاْ أَهۡلَ ٱلذِّكۡرِ إِن كُنتُمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلزُّبُرِۗ وَأَنزَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ ٱلذِّكۡرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[43-44] O Muhammad! whenever We sent before you Messengers to whom We revealed Our Messages, they were but human beings.[38] You (people of Makkah) may inquire from the people who possess Admonition[39] if you do not know this yourselves. We sent the former Messengers with clear Signs and Books, and now We have sent the Admonition to you (O Muhammad!), so that you should make plain and explain to the people the teachings of the Book which has been sent for them;[40] and so that they (themselves) should ponder over it.

أَفَأَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مَكَرُواْ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن يَخۡسِفَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ أَوۡ يَأۡتِيَهُمُ ٱلۡعَذَابُ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ لَا يَشۡعُرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

أَوۡ يَأۡخُذَهُمۡ فِي تَقَلُّبِهِمۡ فَمَا هُم بِمُعۡجِزِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

أَوۡ يَأۡخُذَهُمۡ عَلَىٰ تَخَوُّفٖ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمۡ لَرَءُوفٞ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

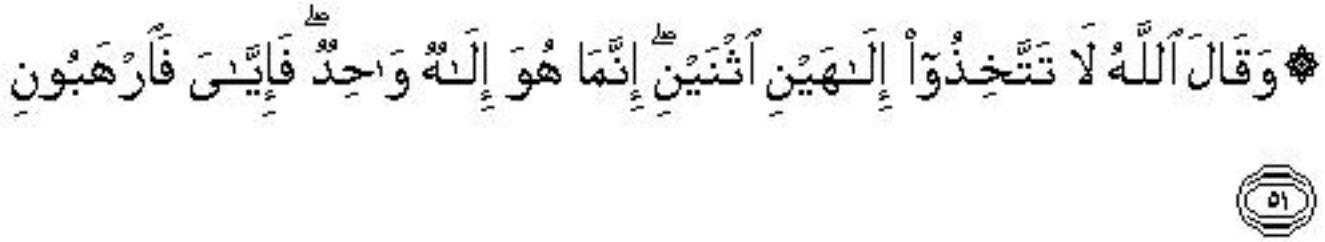
[45-47] What! Do those people, who are practicing evil devices (to oppose the Message), feel fully secure from the danger that Allah will cause them to sink into the earth? Or that He will bring scourge upon them from whence they little suspect that it will come, or that He will seize them all of a sudden while they are roaming about fearlessly, or that He will seize them when they themselves are on the alert about the impending danger? These people have no power to frustrate His plans. The fact is that your Lord is very Lenient and Compassionate.

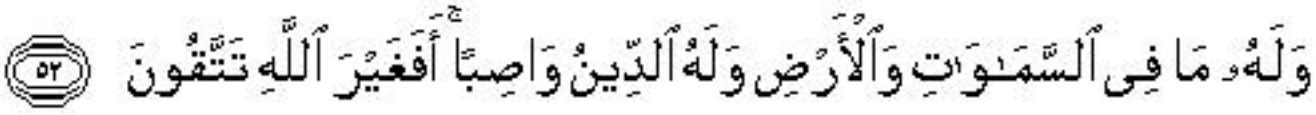
أَوَلَمۡ يَرَوۡاْ إِلَىٰ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ مِن شَيۡءٖ يَتَفَيَّؤُاْ ظِلَٰلُهُۥ عَنِ ٱلۡيَمِينِ وَٱلشَّمَآئِلِ سُجَّدٗا لِّلَّهِ وَهُمۡ دَٰخِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَلِلَّهِ يَسۡجُدُ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مِن دَآبَّةٖ وَٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُمۡ لَا يَسۡتَكۡبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

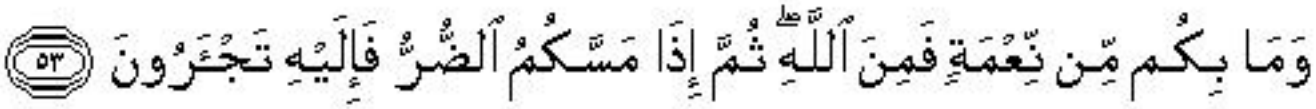
يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن فَوۡقِهِمۡ وَيَفۡعَلُونَ مَا يُؤۡمَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

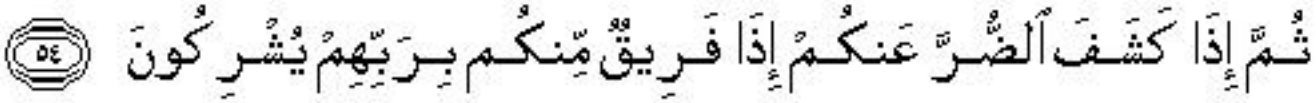
[48-50] And don't they observe anything created by Allah how it casts its shadow right and left, prostrating itself before Allah?[41] Thus all things express their humility. All the animate creation in the heavens and the earth and all the angels prostrate themselves in adoration before Allah;[42] they do not show any arrogance at all; they fear their Lord Who is above them, and do whatever they are bidden.

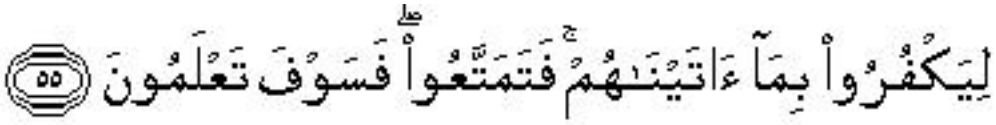




[51-52] Allah has enjoined: "You shall not take to yourselves two gods;[43] for He is the only One God: so fear Me." To Allah belongs everything in the heavens and the earth: His way is being followed in the universe.[44] Will you, then, fear any other than Allah?[45]







[53-55] Whatever blessing you enjoy is from Allah alone; then, when you have a hard time, you with your supplications, run to Him for help.[46] But no sooner does He relieve you of your distress than some of you begin to associate others with Him (in gratitude[47] for this favor), to show ingratitude for Allah's favor. Well! you may enjoy yourselves for a while for you shall soon come to know (its consequences.)

وَيَجۡعَلُونَ لِمَا لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ نَصِيبٗا مِّمَّا رَزَقۡنَٰهُمۡۗ تَٱللَّهِ لَتُسۡـَٔلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمۡ تَفۡتَرُونَ ٥٦

[56] These people assign shares from Our provisions to those, of whom they know nothing.[48] [49] By God, you shall most surely be called to account about the falsehood you had forged.

وَيَجۡعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ ٱلۡبَنَٰتِ سُبۡحَٰنَهُۥ وَلَهُم مَّا يَشۡتَهُونَ ٥٧

[57] They assign daughters to Allah;[50] praise be to God! as for themselves, they would like to have what they desire.[51]

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِٱلۡأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجۡهُهُۥ مُسۡوَدّٗا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٞ ٥٨

يَتَوَٰرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ مِن سُوٓءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِۦٓۚ أَيُمۡسِكُهُۥ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمۡ يَدُسُّهُۥ فِي ٱلتُّرَابِۗ أَلَا سَآءَ مَا يَحۡكُمُونَ ٥٩

لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ مَثَلُ ٱلسَّوۡءِۖ وَلِلَّهِ ٱلۡمَثَلُ ٱلۡأَعۡلَىٰۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٦٠

[58-60] When anyone of them is given the good news of a daughter, his face grows dark after this news and he chokes with inward gloom: he hides himself from people because of this disgrace, asking himself whether he should

suffer his daughter with disgrace or bury her alive. What an evil judgment they have about Allah![52] Bad attributes should be ascribed to those who do not believe in the Hereafter. As regards Allah, all excellences are for Him; for He is the All-Powerful, the All Wise.

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِم مَّا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ
وَلَٰكِن يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَـْٔخِرُونَ
سَاعَةً ۖ وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ وَتَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُهُمُ ٱلْكَذِبَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ
لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلنَّارَ وَأَنَّهُم مُّفْرَطُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[61-62] Had Allah seized people on the spot for their transgression, He would not have left alive any living creature on the Earth: but He respites all for an appointed term. When their appointed time comes, they shall not be able to put it back or forward by a single moment. Yet they assign to Allah what they themselves dislike, and their tongues utter the lie that their lot shall be a fair one anyhow. Nay, only one thing awaits them, and that is the fire of Hell, wherein most certainly they shall be hastened.

تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ
فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

وَمَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلَّذِي ٱخۡتَلَفُواْ فِيهِۖ وَهُدٗى وَرَحۡمَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٦٤

[63-64] By God, O Muhammad, We sent Messengers before you to many communities (and it has always been so that) Satan made their evil deeds seem fair to them, (and so they did not believe in the Message). The same Satan has this day become their patron also and they are incurring the most painful punishment. We have sent down this Book to you so that you may reveal to them the reality of the differences in which they are involved. Moreover, this Book has been sent down as guidance for and blessing to those who believe in it.[53]

وَٱللَّهُ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ فَأَحۡيَا بِهِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَآۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَسۡمَعُونَ ٦٥

[65] (In every rainy season you see that) Allah sent down water from heaven, and by it gave life to the earth after it had been dead: indeed there is a Sign in this for those who listen (to the Message).[53a]

وَإِنَّ لَكُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَنۡعَٰمِ لَعِبۡرَةٗۖ نُّسۡقِيكُم مِّمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِۦ مِنۢ بَيۡنِ فَرۡثٖ وَدَمٖ لَّبَنًا خَالِصٗا سَآئِغٗا لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ ٦٦

[66] And surely there is a lesson for you in the cattle: We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies between filth and blood, that is, pure milk,[54] which is very pleasant to those who drink it.

وَمِن ثَمَرَٰتِ ٱلنَّخِيلِ وَٱلۡأَعۡنَٰبِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنۡهُ سَكَرٗا وَرِزۡقًا حَسَنًاۗ إِنَّ فِي
ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَعۡقِلُونَ ٦٧

[67] (Likewise) We give you from date-palms and vines a drink from which you derive intoxicants and also pure food:[55] indeed there is a Sign in this for those who make use of their. common sense.

وَأَوۡحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلنَّحۡلِ أَنِ ٱتَّخِذِي مِنَ ٱلۡجِبَالِ بُيُوتٗا وَمِنَ
ٱلشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعۡرِشُونَ ٦٨

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ فَٱسۡلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلٗاۚ يَخۡرُجُ مِنۢ
بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٞ مُّخۡتَلِفٌ أَلۡوَٰنُهُۥ فِيهِ شِفَآءٞ لِّلنَّاسِۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٦٩

[68-69] And behold! Your Lord has inspired the bee[56] with this "Build thy hive in the mountains, trees and in the creepers over trellises: then drink nectar from every kind of fruit, and follow the ways made smooth by the Lord."[57] From its belly comes out a fluid of varying hues wherein is healing for mankind.[58] Here is indeed a Sign for those people who ponder over it.[59]

وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمۡ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّىٰكُمۡۚ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَرۡذَلِ ٱلۡعُمُرِ لِكَيۡ لَا
يَعۡلَمَ بَعۡدَ عِلۡمٖ شَيۡـٔٗاۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٞ قَدِيرٞ ٧٠

[70] And consider this: Allah created you: then He causes your death;[60] and some one from among you is carried on to abject old age so that after knowing all he could, he may no longer have any knowledge of it.[61] The fact is that Allah alone is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.

وَٱللَّهُ فَضَّلَ بَعۡضَكُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ فِي ٱلرِّزۡقِۚ فَمَا ٱلَّذِينَ فُضِّلُواْ بِرَآدِّي
رِزۡقِهِمۡ عَلَىٰ مَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُهُمۡ فَهُمۡ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌۚ أَفَبِنِعۡمَةِ ٱللَّهِ يَجۡحَدُونَ
٧١

[71] Consider also this: Allah has favored some of you above others with provisions, but those who have been favored with this, do not give away their provisions to their slaves so that both may become equal in the provision. What! do they then deny to acknowledge Allah's favor?[62]

وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنۡ أَنفُسِكُمۡ أَزۡوَٰجٗا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنۡ
أَزۡوَٰجِكُم بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةٗ وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِۚ أَفَبِٱلۡبَٰطِلِ يُؤۡمِنُونَ
وَبِنِعۡمَتِ ٱللَّهِ هُمۡ يَكۡفُرُونَ ٧٢

وَيَعۡبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمۡلِكُ لَهُمۡ رِزۡقٗا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ شَيۡـٔٗا
وَلَا يَسۡتَطِيعُونَ ٧٣

فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

[72-74] It is Allah alone, Who has made wives for you from your own species and He alone bestowed upon you sons and grandsons from those wives, and provided you with good things to eat. What, do they then (even after seeing and knowing all this,) believe in falsehood,[63] and deny Allah's favors[64] and, instead of Allah, worship those who do not provide them with anything from the heavens or the earth, nor have any power to do so? Make no comparisons, therefore, with Allah.[65] Allah knows but you do not know.

۞ ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا عَبْدًا مَّمْلُوكًا لَّا يَقْدِرُ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ وَمَن رَّزَقْنَٰهُ مِنَّا رِزْقًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ يُنفِقُ مِنْهُ سِرًّا وَجَهْرًا ۖ هَلْ يَسْتَوُۥنَ ۚ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

[75] Allah cites a similitude[66] (of two men): one of them is a slave, who is owned by another and has no power over anything. There is the other man whom We Ourselves have provided with a fair provision from which he freely spends openly and secretly. (Ask them): "Are these two men equal?"May God be praised![67] But most people do not understand (this simple thing).[68]

وَضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ أَحَدُهُمَآ أَبْكَمُ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ وَهُوَ كَلٌّ عَلَىٰ مَوْلَىٰهُ أَيْنَمَا يُوَجِّههُّ لَا يَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ ۖ هَلْ يَسْتَوِى هُوَ وَمَن يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۙ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

[76] Allah cites another similitude of two men. One of them is dumb and deaf and cannot do any work, and has become a burden upon his master; wherever he dispatches him, he does nothing useful. There is the other one, who enjoins justice and follows the Right Way. (Ask them): "Are these two men equal?"[69]

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَآ أَمْرُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ إِلَّا
كَلَمْحِ ٱلْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ
٧٧

[77] Allah alone has the knowledge of all the "unknown" things of the heavens and the earth.[70] As regards the coming of the Resurrection, it will not take more time than is taken in the twinkling of an eye rather less than this;[71] the fact is that Allah has power over all things.

وَٱللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّنۢ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمْعَ
وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۙ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ٧٨

[78] Allah brought you out of your mothers' wombs in this state that you knew nothing: He gave you ears and eyes and thinking minds[72] so that you may be grateful.[73]

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ إِلَى ٱلطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَٰتٍ فِى جَوِّ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ٧٩

[79] Have they never observed how the birds are poised in the vault of heaven? Who holds them up but Allah? There are many Signs in this for those people who believe.

وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنۢ بُيُوتِكُمۡ سَكَنٗا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّن جُلُودِ ٱلۡأَنۡعَٰمِ بُيُوتٗا
تَسۡتَخِفُّونَهَا يَوۡمَ ظَعۡنِكُمۡ وَيَوۡمَ إِقَامَتِكُمۡۙ وَمِنۡ أَصۡوَافِهَا وَأَوۡبَارِهَا
وَأَشۡعَارِهَآ أَثَٰثٗا وَمَتَٰعًا إِلَىٰ حِينٖ ٨٠

[80] Allah has made your homes places of rest and peace for you: and from the skins of cattle He has made for you houses[74] which you find light during your journey and at the time of your halt.[75] And from their soft fur and wool and hair, He has furnished you with many things for clothing and domestic service which are very useful to you during your prescribed term of life.

وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّمَّا خَلَقَ ظِلَٰلٗا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلۡجِبَالِ أَكۡنَٰنٗا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمۡ سَرَٰبِيلَ تَقِيكُمُ ٱلۡحَرَّ وَسَرَٰبِيلَ
تَقِيكُم بَأۡسَكُمۡۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُتِمُّ نِعۡمَتَهُۥ عَلَيۡكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُسۡلِمُونَ
٨١

فَإِن تَوَلَّوۡاْ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيۡكَ ٱلۡبَلَٰغُ ٱلۡمُبِينُ ٨٢

يَعۡرِفُونَ نِعۡمَتَ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنكِرُونَهَا وَأَكۡثَرُهُمُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ٨٣

[81-83] Allah has made for you from the many things He has created shelter from the sun. He has created for you places of refuge in the mountains and blessed you with such garments as protect you from heat[76] and garments

which shield you in your fights.[77] Thus He perfects His blessings on you,[78] so that you should submit to Him. But if they give no heed to you, O Muhammad! (you need not worry) for your only responsibility is to convey the plain Message of truth. They recognize the blessing of Allah, yet they deny it,[79] for the majority of them are not inclined to accept the Truth.

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا ثُمَّ لَا يُؤْذَنُ
لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَإِذَا رَءَا ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

وَإِذَا رَءَا ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ شُرَكَآءَهُمْ قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ
شُرَكَآؤُنَا ٱلَّذِينَ كُنَّا نَدْعُوا۟ مِن دُونِكَ ۖ فَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَوْلَ
إِنَّكُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

وَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلسَّلَمَ ۖ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ زِدْنَٰهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ
ٱلْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يُفْسِدُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

[84-88] (Do they realize what will happen) on the Day when We shall raise up a witness[80] from every community? Then the disbelievers shall not be given any opportunity to put forward any excuses[81] nor shall they be asked to show penitence.[82] When once the transgressors will see the torment, their punishment shall neither be lightened for them after this nor shall any respite be given to them. When the people, who had committed shirk in this world, will see those whom they had made associates with Allah, they will say, "Our Lord! here are those associate-deities whom we used to invoke beside Thee". At this their deities will retort, "You are liars."[83] At that time all of them will proffer submission before Allah and all they used to forge in this world shall vanish from them.[84] We will inflict double torment[85] on those who followed the way of disbelief and hindered others from the Way of Allah on account of the chaos they spread in this world.

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا
عَلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ ۚ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً
وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

[89] (O Muhammad, warn them of) the Day when We shall call a witness from among every community to testify against it. And We shall call you to testify against these people; (that is why) We have sent down .to you this Book which makes plain everything[86] and is guidance, blessing and good news to those who have surrendered themselves entirely.[87]

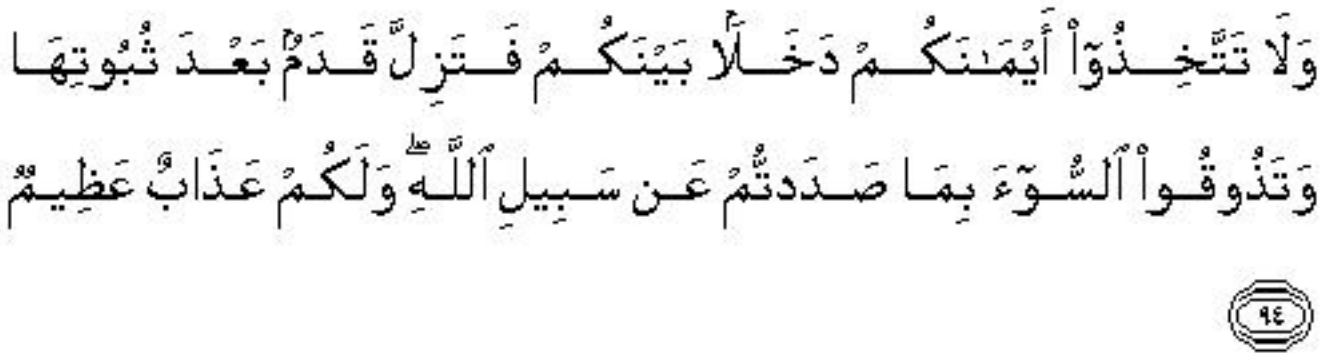
۞ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدتُّمْ وَلَا تَنقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا
وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

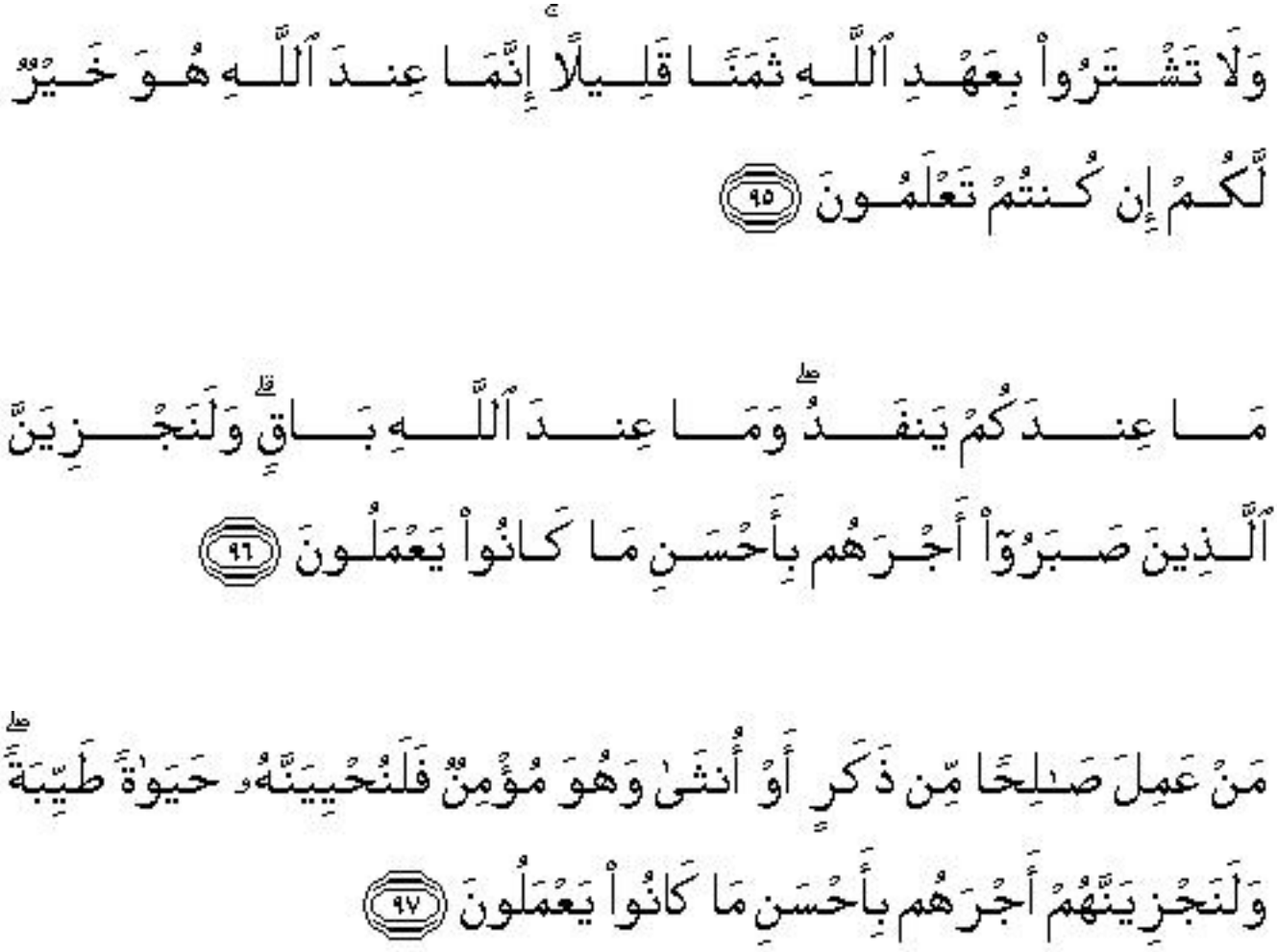
وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّتِى نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنۢ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ
أَنكَٰثًا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا بَيْنَكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِىَ أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ
أُمَّةٍ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَلَيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَا كُنتُمْ
فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِى مَن
يَشَآءُ ۚ وَلَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[90-93] Allah enjoins justice, generosity and kind treatment with kindred,[88] and forbids indecency, wickedness and oppression.[89] He admonishes you so that you may learn a lesson. Fulfill your covenant with Allah when you have made a Covenant with Him, and do not break your oaths after they have been confirmed and you have made Allah your witness. Allah is fully aware of all your actions. Do not behave like that woman who had spun yarn laboriously and then had herself broken it into pieces.[90] You make your mutual oaths a means of mutual deceit in your affairs so that one people might take undue advantage over the other whereas Allah puts you to trial by these pledges.[91] Allah will certainly reveal to you the truth about all your differences on the Day of Resurrection.[92] Had Allah so willed (that you may not have any differences,) He would have made you all a single community,[93] but He leads astray whom He will and shows guidance to whom He will.[94] And be sure that He will take you to account for all your doings.



[94] And (O Muslims,) do not make your oaths the means of deceiving one another lest (someone's) foot should slip after being firmly fixed[95] and you may suffer the consequences of debarring other people from the Way of Allah, and undergo a severe torment.



[95-97] Do not barter away the Covenant[96] of Allah for paltry gains:[97] Indeed what is with Allah is far better for you if you knew it. Whatever is with you is transitory and whatever is with Allah is ever-lasting. And We will reward those, who practice fortitude[98] according to their best deeds. Whosoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female,

provided he is a Believer, We will surely grant him live a pure life in this world.[99] And We will reward such people (in the Hereafter) according to their best deeds.[100]

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَٱسْتَعِذْ بِٱللَّهِ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ٱلرَّجِيمِ ﴿٩٨﴾

إِنَّهُۥ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ سُلْطَٰنٌ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

إِنَّمَا سُلْطَٰنُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِهِۦ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

[98-100] Then, when you begin to recite the Qur'an, seek Allah's refuge against the accursed Satan,[101] for no power has he over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord; he has power only over those who make him their patron and practice shirk by his temptation.

وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَآ ءَايَةً مَّكَانَ ءَايَةٍ ۙ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُفْتَرٍۭ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

قُلْ نَزَّلَهُۥ رُوحُ ٱلْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

[101-102] And when We send down one verse to elaborate upon the other-and Allah knows best what to send down, they say, "You forge this Qur'an yourself."[102] The fact is that most of them do not know the reality. Tell them, "The Holy Spirit has brought it down piecemeal[103] intact from my Lord so that He may make firm the faith of those who have believed,[104] and to show the Right Way,[105] and to give good news to those who surrender themselves to Allah."[106]

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُۥ بَشَرٌ ۗ لِّسَانُ ٱلَّذِى يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ
أَعْجَمِىٌّ وَهَٰذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِىٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَهْدِيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِى ٱلْكَذِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلْكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

[103-105] We know very well what they say about you: "Surely a certain person teaches him."[107] But the person to whom they allude speaks a foreign tongue, and this (Qur'an) is in plain Arabic. It is a fact that Allah does not show guidance to those who do not believe in His Revelations, and there is a painful torment for them. (The Prophet is not forging any false thing but) those, who do not believe in the Revelations of Allah, are inventing falsehoods[108] they are indeed the liars.

مَن كَفَرَ بِٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِيمَٰنِهِۦٓ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُۥ مُطْمَئِنٌّ
بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ وَلَٰكِن مَّن شَرَحَ بِٱلْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ
ٱللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ ٱسْتَحَبُّوا۟ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا عَلَى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ طَبَعَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَٰرِهِمْ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

[106-109] Whoso is forced to disbelieve after believing, while his heart is convinced of the Faith, (he shall be absolved) but whosoever accepts disbelief willingly, he incurs Allah's wrath, and there is severe torment for all such people.[109] This is because they preferred the life of this world to the life in the Hereafter, and Allah does not show the Way of salvation to those people who are ungrateful! Allah has sealed the hearts, the ears and the eyes of such people and they have become neglectful: therefore, it is inevitable that they should be losers in the Hereafter.[110]

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا۟ ثُمَّ جَٰهَدُوا۟ وَصَبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

۞ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ تُجَادِلُ عَن نَّفْسِهَا وَتُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

[110-111] On the other hand, Allah is most surely Forgiving and Compassionate towards those people who, when they were persecuted (because of their Faith), left their homes and migrated and struggled hard in the Way of Allah and practiced fortitude.[111] (All these will be judged) on the bay when everyone will be pleading for himself only and everyone will be recompensed fully for one's deeds and none shall be unjustly dealt with in the least.

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ آمِنَةً مُّطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِّن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

[112-113] Allah cites the instance of a habitation: it was enjoying a life of peace and security and was receiving its provisions in abundance from every quarter. Hut when it began to show ingratitude towards the favors of Allah, He made its inhabitants taste the consequences of their doings, and inflicted misfortunes of hunger and fear on them. A Messenger came to them from among themselves but they treated him as an impostor. At last a torment overtook them while they had become guilty of iniquity.[112]

فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ حَلَٰلًا طَيِّبًا وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ إِن
كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَيْتَةَ وَٱلدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ ٱلْخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ بِهِۦ ۖ
فَمَنِ ٱضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ ٱلْكَذِبَ هَٰذَا حَلَٰلٌ وَهَٰذَا
حَرَامٌ لِّتَفْتَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ لَا
يُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

مَتَٰعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

[114-117] So, O people, eat of the lawful and pure provisions with which Allah has blessed you and show gratitude[113] to Allah for His favors, if you are sincerely obedient to Him.[114] Allah has forbidden only these things: do not eat what dies of itself nor blood nor swine flesh nor what has been slaughtered in any name other than Allah. But if forced by hunger one eats of any of these forbidden things, provided he has no intention of breaking the Divine Law or of transgressing the limits by taking more than what is absolutely indispensable, one may expect mercy, for Allah is very Forgiving and very Compassionate.[115] Do not ascribe lies to Allah by decreeing with your tongues, "This is lawful and that is unlawful"[116] for those people who ascribe lies to Allah can never come to any good. (They should remember that) the pleasures of this world are transitory and in the end there is a painful torment for them.

وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُواْ حَرَّمۡنَا مَا قَصَصۡنَا عَلَيۡكَ مِن قَبۡلُۖ وَمَا ظَلَمۡنَٰهُمۡ
وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓاْ أَنفُسَهُمۡ يَظۡلِمُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُواْ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِجَهَٰلَةٖ ثُمَّ تَابُواْ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ
ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصۡلَحُوٓاْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهَا لَغَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٩﴾

إِنَّ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةٗ قَانِتٗا لِّلَّهِ حَنِيفٗا وَلَمۡ يَكُ مِنَ ٱلۡمُشۡرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

شَاكِرٗا لِّأَنۡعُمِهِۚ ٱجۡتَبَىٰهُ وَهَدَىٰهُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ﴿١٢١﴾

وَءَاتَيۡنَٰهُ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا حَسَنَةٗۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ
﴿١٢٢﴾

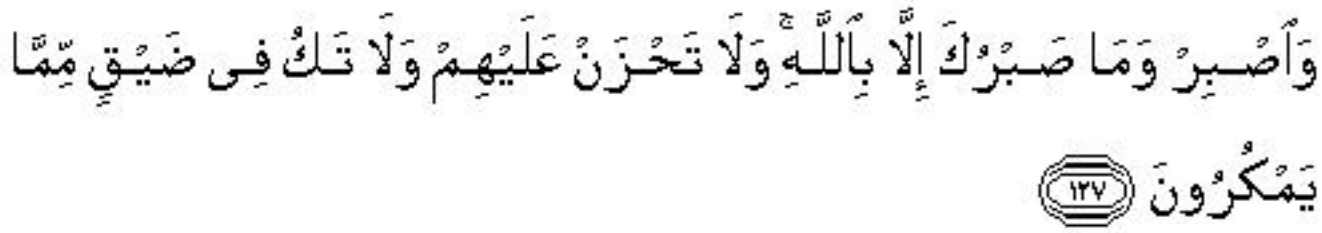
ثُمَّ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ أَنِ ٱتَّبِعۡ مِلَّةَ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ حَنِيفٗاۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُشۡرِكِينَ
﴿١٢٣﴾

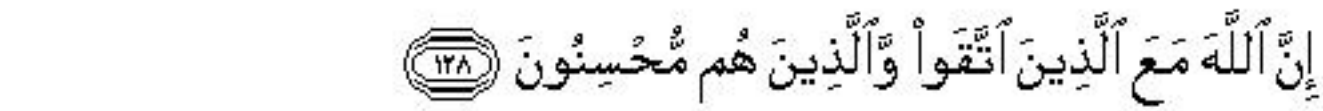
إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ ٱلسَّبۡتُ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱخۡتَلَفُواْ فِيهِۚ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَحۡكُمُ بَيۡنَهُمۡ يَوۡمَ
ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُواْ فِيهِ يَخۡتَلِفُونَ ١٢٤

[118-124] To the Jews We had especially forbidden the things[117] We have already related to you,[118] and it was not We who imposed this hardship on them, but they imposed the hardship themselves. Nevertheless, your Lord is Forgiving and Compassionate towards those who have repented and mended their ways after they had committed evil in ignorance. The fact is that Abraham was a community in himself:[119] he was obedient to Allah and had turned to Him exclusively. He was never a mushrik. he was always grateful for Allah's favors. Accordingly Allah chose him and showed him the Right Way. Allah blessed him with goodness in this world and most surely he will be among the righteous in the Hereafter. Then We sent down this Revelation to you: "Follow the way of Abraham exclusively" and he was not one of the mushriks.[120] As regards the Sabbath, We imposed this on those who differed about its observance.[121] Surely your Lord will decide between them on the Day of Resurrection about all those things in which they have been differing.

ٱدۡعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلۡحِكۡمَةِ وَٱلۡمَوۡعِظَةِ ٱلۡحَسَنَةِۖ وَجَٰدِلۡهُم بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ
أَحۡسَنُۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِٱلۡمُهۡتَدِينَ
١٢٥

وَإِنۡ عَاقَبۡتُمۡ فَعَاقِبُواْ بِمِثۡلِ مَا عُوقِبۡتُم بِهِۦۖ وَلَئِن صَبَرۡتُمۡ لَهُوَ خَيۡرٞ
لِّلصَّٰبِرِينَ ١٢٦





[125-128] O Prophet invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and excellent admonition[122] and discuss things with people in the best manner.[123] Your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Way and He knows best who is rightly guided. And if you retaliate, let your retaliation be to the extent that you were wronged, but if you endure it with patience, it is indeed best for those who endure with patience. O Muhammad, go on performing your mission with fortitude-and you can practice fortitude only with the help of Allah-do not be grieved at their doings and do not distress yourself at their intrigues, for Allah is with those people who fear Him and adopt the righteous attitude.[124]

1That is, "The time for final `Judgment' has come near." As regards the use of the past tense in the original, this may be to show certainty of its occurrence in the near future or to emphasize the fact that the rebellion and the wrong deeds of the Quraish had become so unbearable that they warranted that the time for decisive action had come.

Here question arises as to what that "Judgment" was and how it came. We are of the opinion (and true knowledge is with Allah alone) that that "Judgment" was Hijrat (the Migration) of the Holy Prophet from Makkah. For a short time after this Revelation he was bidden to emigrate from there. And according to the Qur'an, a Prophet is bidden to leave his place only at that time when the rebellion and antagonism of his people reaches the extreme limit. Then their doom is sealed, for after this Allah's punishment comes on them either as a direct scourge from Him, or they are destroyed by the Prophet and his followers. And this did take place actually. At the occasion of the Migration, the people of Makkah regarded it as a victory for themselves, but in fact it turned out to be a defeat for shirk and disbelief which were totally uprooted within a decade or so after the Migration not only from Makkah but from the rest of Arabia as well.

2In order to understand the interconnection between the first and the second sentences, one should keep in view the background. The challenge of the disbelievers to the Prophet, `to hasten Divine Judgment', was really based on their assumption that their own religion of shirk was true and the religion of Tauhid presented by Muhammad (Allah's peace be on him) was false; otherwise, they argued, the Divine scourge with which he threatened them would have come upon them long before because of their

disbelief and rebellion, if there had been the authority of Allah behind it. That is why after the declaration of the "Judgment," their misunderstanding about the cause of delay in the punishment was removed, as if to say, "You arc absolutely wrong to assume that punishment has not been inflicted on you because your creed of shirk is true, for Allah is fret from and far above shirk and has no partner."

3This means "the Spirit of Prophethood with which a Prophet is imbued in order to fulfill his Mission by word and deed. The Qur'an has called this the Spirit in several places, for this has the same relation to the Mission of a Prophet and his moral life, which the soul has to the physical human life."

4As one of the things, which prompted the disbelievers to challenge the Holy Prophet for scourge, was their presumption that he was not a true Prophet, Allah told them categorically that he was a true Prophet, who had been imbued with the "Spirit" which We Ourself had sent down on him.

"Allah sends down the Spirit on..... He chooses." This is the answer to the objections which the chiefs of the Quraish used to raise against the Holy Prophet: Had Allah wanted to send a Messenger to them, was there no one better than Muhammad (Allah's peace be on him), son of `Abdullah, for this mission? Why did He not choose one of the big chiefs of Makkah or Taif for the purpose? Such absurd objections needed no other answer than this that is why such an answer has been given in several places of the Qur'an as if to say "Allah knows best how to do His work, and does not stand in need of any advice from you. He chooses for His mission anyone whom He considers fit for it.

5This verse declares the essence of the "Spirit" of Prophethood, which is this: Godhead belongs to one Allah alone: so only He is worthy of fear. Therefore, there is no other anchor that might make fast and hold together human moral system than His fear. For it is the fear of His displeasure and His punishment, and the fear of the consequences of His disobedience which alone can act as a strong deterrent to restrain one from deviation. That is why mankind has been admonished: "Fear Me."

6That is to say, "The whole system of the Earth and the heavens is a witness to the truth of the doctrine of Tauhid and to the negation of shirk. You may look at anything in the universe and consider the system from any point of view you like, you will find proof of this fact that it is being run by one God and not by many gods. Then how is it that you believe in shirk when there is no proof whatsoever of this in the universe?

As a fitting sequence of this, proofs of Tauhid and refutation of shirk have been given from Man himself and from other signs in the universe, and it has also been shown that Prophethood is based on Truth.

7This has two meanings and both are meant here.

(1) Though Allah created man from an insignificant sperm-drop, he is capable of arguing and giving

reasons in support of his claim.

(2) Man who has such an insignificant origin, has become so vain that he does not hesitate to dispute even with his Creator.

If considered in its first sense, it is a chain in the series of arguments given in many succeeding verses to prove the truth of the Message of the Holy Prophet. (Please refer to E.N. 15). If taken in the second sense, it is meant to warn man that he should not forget the insignificant origin of his existence while engaged in his rebellious arguments against his Creator. If he remembered the different stages of his humiliating birth and growth, he would consider many times before he assumed a haughty and rebellious attitude towards his Creator.

8That is, "There are many agencies which are working for the good of man but he is quite unaware of such servants and the services rendered by them."

9This contains an argument for Prophethood along with a proof of Tauhid and of Allah's Compassion and Providence. The argument is this:

There are many divergent ways of thought and action open for man to choose from. Obviously all these divergent ways cannot be straight ways, because there can be only one straight way; therefore, there can be only one right theory of life which is based on that way, and only one right way of life which is based on that right theory . Thus it is clear that the choice of the right way of life is man's most important and basic need, for its wrong choice would inevitably lead to his ruin. This is because all other things fulfill his animal needs only, but this is the greatest necessity of his life as a human being and without its fulfillment his life would be an utter failure.

Now, it cannot be expected that Allah Who made so many provisions, and on such a large scale, for the fulfillment of the animal life of man, did not make any arrangement for the fulfillment of this real and greatest necessity of man. Just as He has provided for all the necessities of his life, so He has also provided for this greatest need of his through Prophethood. If Prophethood is denied then it should be pointed out in what way Allah has fulfilled this basic need of man. Experience of centuries has shown that mankind has always blundered whenever it. has chosen a way of life by itself. This is because Man's wisdom and intelligence are limited, and he cannot depend on these for the choice of the right way of life. Above all, one cannot say that Allah has made no arrangement for this basic need of man, for this will be the greatest misconception of Allah that He may make most elaborate arrangements for man's animal life but should leave him in the lurch to search out a way for himself for the fulfillment of this most important and basic need.

10Here a question arises: "Why didn't Allah will to guide all the people aright inherently when He had taken upon Himself to show the Right Way ?" It is true that Allah could have imbued Man, like other

creatures, with the inborn instinct and enabled him to choose the Right Way without conscious thought, experience or teaching. But this would have been against His will which was to create a being, having will and power and freedom to follow the Right Way or the wrong way, whichever he chose for himself. This is why he has been endowed with different means of knowledge and powers of conscious thought, deliberation and will, and has been empowered with the authority to make use of all powers in him and all things around him. Moreover, He has placed in him and all around him such factors as might lead him to guidance or deviation. All these things would have become meaningless, had he been created righteous by birth, and he could never have attained the heights of progress, which can be achieved only by the right use of freedom. That is why Allah has chosen Prophethood for Man's guidance, and left him free to follow or reject a Prophet. This is a test by means of which Allah judges whether Man accepts the guidance that is presented to him in a rational way."

11That is, "try to get your sustenance in lawful ways."

12This shows that the real function of mountains is to regulate the motion and speed of the Earth. We have come to this conclusion, for the Qur'an has made this benefit of mountains very prominent in many places. Therefore, their other benefits should be regarded as incidental.

13Natural ways are those routes which are formed along the banks of streams, ravines and rivers. Though the importance of these ways is great even in the plains, one feels their sore need, especially in the mountainous regions.

14This is a Sign of Allah that He has broken the monotony of land by placing conspicuous landmarks on it to distinguish different regions from one another. These have many benefits and one of these is to help guide travelers and navigators to their destinations. One also realizes the importance and value of these landmarks, when one is traveling through a sandy desert where there are hardly any objects to guide on the way, and one is liable to lose the way any time. One feels the lack of landmarks much more in the sea voyage. It is in the deserts and the seas that people realize the true significance of ".....by stars, too, they arc directed aright to their destinations."

This verse contains arguments for Tauhid. Providence, and Compassion of Allah, and also a proof of Prophethood. For the mind is instinctively turned towards this question: Can it be possible that Allah who has made so elaborate arrangements for man's guidance to fulfill his physical needs has neglected to provide for his moral and spiritual needs?" It cannot be so, for it is obvious that even the greatest loss of some physical necessity due to the adoption of a wrong way is nothing as compared with the loss of spiritual and moral values due to deviation froth the Right Way. It would be nothing less than having doubt in Allah's Compassion and Providence to think that He, Who had made so elaborate provision for man's guidance on land and sea by creating mountains, rivers, stars and other objects, would have neglected to make provision for his moral and spiritual guidance; any, it stands to reason, that He must

have provided prominent beacons of light to guide Man to that Right Way of life which is indispensable to his true success.

15In vv. 4-16, some Signs have been mentioned in succession in order to focus people's attention on the Creation of man himself and of the Earth and the. heavens. They will thus find that everything supports the truth of the doctrines taught by the Holy Prophet. A critical study of all these Signs shows that these must have been designed and created by an All-Wise Being, and One Being alone, and there could not have been any partner or associate to help Him. Let us consider this theme from the point of view of Man, the central figure in the Creation. This wonderful being who is able to speak with his tongue and is capable of arguing his case with it, has been created from an insignificant sperm - drop. Then many animals have been created to satisfy the necessities of his life. They provide food, clothing and conveyance for him and help satisfy his aesthetic taste as well. Then there is a remarkable system of rain water from the sky to produce corn crops, fruits and verdure, etc., on the earth to fulfill man's needs. Then there is the creation of regular days and nights and seasons, which are closely connected with all kinds of production of the earth, and also with Man's general well being. Then there are oceans, which help fulfill many of his physical and aesthetic demands and provide water ways for traffic. Likewise mountains have been created to provide man with many benefits. Then there are landmarks on the earth and stars in the heavens to guide travelers and navigators to the destinations. In short, there are innumerable Signs in the Earth and the heavens which are closely interconnected and are also indispensable to man's welfare, nay, to his very existence. All these arc clear proofs that only One Being has designed the whole universe and created it in accordance with that design. It is He Who is all the time creating new things to fit in that scheme, and working this wonderful universe that spreads from the Earth to boundless heavens. Who can then claim, except a foolish or obdurate person, that all this has come into existence by a mere accident? Or, who can say that these different aspects, which are working under a perfect system and are intimately connected with one another and are well balanced, have been created by different gods and are under the control of different guardians?

16That is, "If you, people of Makkah, acknowledge (and they acknowledged this just as other mushriks did) that Allah alone is the Creator of all of you and everything, and no one of the partners, you have set up with Him, has created anything in the universe, how is it, then, that you ascribe to the created, a status equal to or like that of the Creator in the system of universe created by Him? How can it be possible that the powers and the rights of the created should be equal to the powers and the rights of the Creator in the universe created by Himself? How can it be believed that the Creator and the created possess the same qualities and characteristics, or can have such relationship as of father and son?"

17Here the connection of Allah's attributes, "Forgiving and Compassionate" , with the preceding verse is so obvious that it has been left unmentioned. It is this: "Though Allah goes on showering countless blessings upon people, they behave in an ungrateful, faithless and rebellious manner towards Him. He does not punish them immediately, but gives them respite, for He is Forgiving and Compassionate" . This is true of both individuals and communities. There are people, who deny even the existence of God, yet

He goes on bestowing His favors on them for years on end. There are others who set up partners with Him in his attributes, powers and rights, and show their gratitude to others than Him for His blessings, yet He does not withhold His favors from them; there are still others who profess to acknowledge Him as their Creator and Benefactor, yet rebel against Him and are disobedient to Him and consider freedom from Him w be their birth right, but in spite of all this He continues to shower His countless blessings on them as long as they live.

18A grave misunderstanding might arise as to why Allah's blessings should continue to be showered even on those who deny Him and set up partners with Him and are disobedient to Him. The foolish people are liable to conclude from this that He does not withhold His favors from such people because He has no knowledge of their wicked deeds, The Qur'an declares: ".....Even though He has full knowledge of all the deeds of the people, whether these are done secretly or openly, He does not discontinue His blessings on the sinners, for He is Forgiving, Compassionate and Merciful. Therefore, O foolish people! , get rid of this misunderstanding, and reform yourselves."

19The words employed here to refute man-made deifies clearly indicate that these deities were deceased prophets, saints, martyrs and pious and other extraordinary beings buried in their graves and not angels, jinns, devils or idols. For the angels and devils are alive: therefore, the words, "They are dead, not living" cannot apply to them, and it is out of the question to say about idols of stone or wood that "They do not know at all when they shall again be raised to life" in the Hereafter. As regards the objection to this version that there were no such deities in Arabia, this is based on the lack of knowledge of the history of the pre-Islamic period. It is well known that there was a large number of Jews and Christians living among many clans of Arabia, who used to invoke and worship their Prophets, saints, etc. It is also a fact that many gods of the mushriks of Arabia were human beings, whose idols they had set up for worship after their death. According to a Tradition cited in Bukhari on the authority of Ibn ' Abbas, "Wadd, Sua`, Yaghuth, Ya`uq, and Nasr were pious human beings, whom the succeeding generations had made gods." In another Tradition, related by Hadrat 'A'ishah, Asaf and Na'ilah were human beings. There are also traditions to the same effect about Lat, Munat and 'Uzza. So much so that according to some traditions of the mushriks, Lat and `Uzza were the beloved ones of Allah who used to pass His winter with Lat and summer with `Uzza. But "Allah is absolutely free from such (absurd) things they attribute to Him."

20That is, "Those who do not believe in the life in the Hereafter, have become so irresponsible, care-free and intoxicated with the life of this world, that they feel no hesitation or pang in denying any reality, and they put no value on or attach no worth to truth. That -is why, they are not prepared to impose any moral restraint on themselves and feel no need to investigate as to whether the way, they are following, is right or wrong.

21In the preceding verse (23) those puffed up people, who were rejecting the Message were warned that Allah had full knowledge of all their "deeds." Now from v. 24 the Qur'an takes up those "deeds" one by one and deals with the arguments they presented against the Messenger, the objections they raised and

the lame excuses they invented for their rejection, and reproaches and admonishes them.

22One of their cunning devices was to create doubts about the Qur'an. Whenever outsiders came to visit Makkah, they would naturally make inquiries about the Qur'an, which the Holy Prophet declared, was being sent down to him by Allah. The disbelievers would answer that it contained merely fairy-tales of the ancients. They would say such things in order to create doubts in the minds of the inquirers so that they should not take any interest in the Message of the Holy Prophet.

23There is a gap between this answer and the preceding question which has been left for the reader to fill. When Allah will ask, "Now where are My partners?" there will be dead silence in the Plain where the whole of mankind shall have to gather on the occasion of Resurrection. The disbelievers and the mushriks will be dumb-founded for they will be at a loss to find an answer to this. Then those who had been given knowledge will make the assertion, "Today, there is ....."

24This is Allah's addition to the previous assertion, and not its continuation. Those commentators who have wrongly considered this as continuation of the preceding sentence, are unable to offer any satisfactory explanation for their opinion.

25That is, "When the angels take possession of their souls at the time of death....."

26This verse (28) and verse 32, and several other verses in the Qur'an, clearly and definitely assert that immediately after death, souls suffer torment or enjoy peace in the world of Barzakh. The Traditions use the word "qabar" (grave) metaphorically for this existence of the souls. This is the world in which souls enter immediately after death and will remain therein up to the Day of Resurrection. Yet the disbelievers of the Traditions declare that after death souls will remain in a dormant state up to the time of Resurrection, and will neither feel any pain nor joy, nor will be conscious of anything at all. Obviously, this is a wrong opinion, for according to v. 28, just after death when the disbelievers will be conscious of the fact that they had been leading an evil life, they will try to make the angels believe that they had not done any evil deed. The angels will rebuke them at this "boldness" and will tell them that they shall have to go into Hell. On the other hand, according to verse 32, just after their death, the pious believers are welcomed by the angels and given the good news that they will enter into Paradise. Besides these verses, there is the mention of a dialogue between the angels and those Muslims, who did not migrate to Al-Madinah, after their souls were seized by the angels in IV: 97. Above all, according to XL: 45-46, the people of Pharaoh have been encircled by a torment and are exposed before the Fire of Hell every morning and every evening. This will go on up to the Day of Resurrection when they shall be sentenced to eternal torment.

In fact, both the Qur'an and the Traditions present the same kind of picture of the condition of the soul after death up to Resurrection. Death causes merely the separation of the soul from the body but does

not annihilate it. The soul lives with the same personality that was formed by the different experiences and the mental exercises and moral activities it had in its worldly life in co-operation with the body. This nature of the consciousness, feelings, observations and experiences of the soul, during the waiting period, is similar to that, in a dream. Just as a criminal sentenced to death suffers from mental torture on the eve of his crucifixion, in the same way the angels take to task the guilty as in a dream, torture it and take it to the horrible Hell in order to make it fore-taste the impending torture. In contrast to this, the pure soul is welcomed by the angels and is given the good news of entry into paradise and is made to enjoy its pleasant breeze and smell, and to feel happy like the faithful servant who is invited to the headquarters to receive his reward. But this "life" in the world of Barzakh will suddenly come to an end on the second blowing of the Trumpet of Resurrection. When the guilty souls will again enter into their former bodies and muster in the Plain, they will cry in horror, "Oh! woe to us! who has roused us from our sleeping places ?" But the true Believers will say with perfect peace of mind, "This is exactly what the Beneficent had predicted, and the Messengers had told the truth." (XXXVI: 52).

This has been further elucidated in Chapter XXX.

As the guilty ones will be under the delusion that they had been lying in their death-bed for an hour or so and had been roused from given Knowledge and Faith, will say. "According to the Record of Allah, you have remained after death till this Day of Resurrection and this is the same Day of Resurrection, but you did not know this." (XXX: 55-56).

27In contrast to the disbelievers (v. 24), the righteous people spoke highly of the Holy Prophet and of the teachings of the Qur'an to the people coming from the suburbs of Makkah. Unlike the former they did not delude the people nor created misunderstandings in the minds. They were full of praise for them and told the truth about the Holy Prophet.

28This is the best blessing of Paradise. The dweller will get there whatever he will desire and wish and there will be nothing at all to offend him. This is the blessing that has never been attained even by the richest and the most powerful people in this world. On the contrary, every dweller of Paradise will enjoy this blessing to his fill because he will always have everything to his desire and liking, and will have each and every wish and desire fulfilled.

29This is to admonish the unbelievers to this effect: "Why are they still hesitating to accept the Message which is very simple and clear ? We have tried every method to present each aspect of the Truth clearly with arguments and brought witnesses thereof from the whole system of the universe, and have left no room for any man of understanding to stick to shirk. Now what they are waiting for is nothing more than this that the angel of death should come before them: and then they will accept the Message at the last moment of their lives. Or, do they wait for the scourge of God to overtake them and make them accept the Message?"

30In order to understand the significance of this argument the reader should keep in view vv. 148-150 and E.N.'s 124-126 of Chapter VI, for this has been cited and answered there.

31That is, "Your argument" is not a new one but the same old one which had always been offered by erroneous people who went before you. Today you arc, like them, excusing yourselves for your deviation and evil conduct, saying that it is the will of God. You know that this is a lame excuse that has been invented to delude yourselves, and to escape from admonition."

This answer also contains a subtle retort to the objection of the disbelievers that the Qur'an consisted merely of old stories of the ancients (v. 24). They meant to imply that the Prophet had nothing new to offer. So he was repeating the same old stories that had been repeated over and over again since the time of Prophet Noah. The retort is this: "If the Holy Prophet was not presenting anything new but was reciting the old stories of the ancients, you yourselves are not putting forward any new excuse in defense of your evil deeds, but the same old excuse that was put forward by the people who went before you."

32That is, "You are not justified in excusing yourselves for these sins, saying that it is the will of God for We sent Messengers to every ummat, who told the people in plain words that they should worship Us and none else, and should not follow and obey taghut. Besides this, We have already warned you that We do not approve of your deviations. Why should you then put forward this excuse for your deviations ? Do you mean to say that We ought to have sent such Messengers as would have forced you to follow the Right Way instead of bringing you to it by preaching?" (Please refer to E.N. 80 of Al-A am VI for the distinction between God's "will" and God's "approval. ")

33That is, Whenever a Messenger came to a people, they were divided into two groups:

(1) Those who accepted the Message (and that, too, could not have been possible except with the will of Allah.)

(2) Those who rejected it and stuck to their deviation. (For fuller explanation, please consult E.N. 28 of Al-An am VI.

34That is, "You can see for yourselves the lesson of human history. It is this that the people, who rejected the Message, incurred the scourge of Allah like Pharaoh and the people of Pharaoh, while Prophet Moses received the blessings of Allah."

35In v. 39 those two things have been stated which rationally and morally require that there must be Resurrection and Life-after-death, that is: (1) to reveal what the reality was, and (2) to reward or punish people in accordance with the right or wrong stand they took about it in this world. It is common knowledge that since the creation of Man on the Earth there have been many differences regarding the

Reality which have been sowing dissension between families, nations and races. These have also led to the formation of many different societies, cultures and creeds on different theories. In every age millions of the torch-bearers of each of these theories have been putting at stake their all-life, property, honor-to propagate and defend their favorite theory. Nay, there has always been such a bitter conflict between them that each group tried to annihilate the other, who, in his turn, stuck to it to the last. This being the case, common sense demands that such far-reaching and serious differences should be cleared some time or other, so as to decide with certainty what was right and what was wrong, who was in the right and who was in the wrong. Obviously, it is not possible to lift the curtain from the Reality in this world so as to reveal things in their true perspective. This is because the system on which this world has been created does not allow this. Therefore, there should be another world to fulfill this demand of common sense.

This is not the demand of common sense alone but also of the moral sense, which requires that the partners in this conflict should be rewarded or punished according to right or wrong, just or unjust part they played in it. For, some of these committed cruelties on the others, who had to make sacrifices for their cause. Then each one should also bear the responsibility for formulating and practicing a moral or immoral philosophy which influenced millions and billions of others for better or worse. Moral sense demands that there should be a time for the moral consequences to take their due course. As this is not possible in this world there should be another world for the purpose.

36This is the answer to those who imagined that it was the most difficult thing to raise the dead, and that, too, to raise together at once all the people who had died at any time. They have been told that it is an easy thing for Allah, Who has the power to bring into existence anything He desires, merely by His command, "Be," for He does not stand in need of any provisions, any means and any favorable environment for this. His mere Command produces necessary provisions, means and environment. This world was brought into existence by His mere Command, "Be," and likewise the Next world will at once come into existence by His single Command.

37This is to comfort the Muslim emigrants from Makkah to Habash, who were forced to leave their homes because of the unbearable persecution they suffered at the hands of the disbelievers. The change of the scene from the disbelievers to the emigrants to Habash contains a subtle warning to the disbelievers that they should not remain under any delusion that they would get off scot-free from punishment for their cruel behavior towards those Muslims, so as to say, "O cruel people! there shall be Resurrection to reward the oppressed Believers and to punish you for your persecution of them."

38This is the answer to the objection of the mushriks of Makkah (which has not been cited here j that they could not believe that Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him), was a Prophet of God, because he was a human being like them. They have been told that the same objection had been raised against all the Prophets who came before him.

39"....people who possess Admonition" are the scholars of the people of the Books and others, who,

though not scholars in the strict sense had sufficient knowledge of the teachings of the revealed Books and were acquainted with the stories of the former Prophets.

40In this connection, it is worthwhile to note that this duty of making plain and explaining the teachings of the Book' was to be performed by Prophet not only by word of mouth but also practically. It was required that he should organize, under his own guidance, a Muslim Community and establish it in accordance with the principles of the Book. This duty of the Holy Prophet has been stated here especially to show the wisdom of sending a man as a Messenger, for, otherwise the Book could have been sent through the angels or could have been printed and sent directly to each man. But in this way; that purpose for which Allah in His Wisdom and Bounty and Providence designed to send the Book could not have been served. For, that purpose demanded that the Book should be Brought by a perfect man, who should present it piece by piece, explain its meaning, remove the difficulties and doubts, answer objections, etc. , and above all, he should show towards those who rejected and opposed it that kind of attitude which is worthy of the bearer of this Book. On the other hand, he should guide those who believed in it in every aspect of life and set before them his own excellent pattern of life. Then he should train them individually and collectively on the principles of the Book; so as to make them a model society for the rest of mankind.

Let us now consider this verse (43) from another point of view. Just as it cuts at the root of the argumentation of those who rejected the Creed that a human Prophet could bring the Book, in the same way, it repudiates the view of those who plead that the Book should be accepted without any exposition of it from the Prophet. This latter view is contradictory to this verse, whatever be the position taken by its exponents. They might either be of the opinion that (a) the Prophet did not give any explanation of the Book he presented or that (b) the only acceptable thing is the Book and not any "Exposition" thereof by the Prophet, or that (c) now the Book alone suffices us, for its "Exposition" by the Prophet has lost its utility or that (d) now the Book alone is authentic for the "Exposition" by the Prophet has ceased to exist, or if it does exists, it cannot be relied upon.

If they take the position (a), it will mean that the Prophet did not fulfill the purpose for which he was chosen to be the bearer of the Book: otherwise Allah could send it through an angel or directly to each person.

If they take the position (b) or (c), (God forbid) they will be accusing Allah of doing a useless thing by sending His Book through a Prophet, when He could have printed copies of the Qur'an and sent those directly to the people.

In case, they take the position (d), they, in fact, repudiate both the Qur'an and its "Exposition by the Holy Prophet. Then the only rational course left for them would be to accept the view of those who believe in the necessity of a new Prophet and a new revelation; whereas Allah Himself considers the "Exposition" of the Book by the Prophet as an essential thing, and puts it forward as an argument for the necessity of a Prophet. Now if the view of the rejectors of Tradition that the Explanation of the Holy Prophet has

disappeared from the world is to be accepted, then two conclusions are inevitable; First, the Prophethood of Muhammad (May Allah's peace be upon him) as a pattern for us has ceased to exist, and the only relation we have with him is the same that we have with the other former Prophets, e.g. Hud, Salih, Shu`aib, etc. (May Allah's peace be upon them). That is, we have only to testify that they were Prophets but we have no obligation to follow their patterns, for we have none with us. This position obviously leads to the need of a new Prophet, for it automatically refutes the doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood. The second inevitable conclusion will be that a new Book is needed because in that case the Qur'an alone could not, according to its author, suffice. Thus in the face of this verse, there is no argument left to prove that the Qur'an is self-sufficient to explain itself, for it itself says that there is no need of a Prophet to explain it. Thus it is absolutely necessary that a new Book must be sent down. May Allah destroy such people ! In their enthusiasm to repudiate Tradition, they are really cutting at the very root of Islam itself.

41The argument is this: The fact that everything-a man, an animal, a tree or a mountain-casts its shadow, is a clear proof of its material nature, and everything which is made of matter, is a creation of Allah and is subject to a universal law. In this case the law is that every material thing casts its shadow, which is symbolical of its servitude, and it cannot have any share whatsoever in Godhead.

42That is, "Not only all things on the earth alone but also all things in the heavens, including all those whom people have been regarding as gods and goddesses. and considering to be closely related to Allah arc subservient to God, and have no share whatsoever in His Godhead."

Incidentally, it implies the existence of living creatures not only on the earth but in the planets, too.

43Negation of two gods by itself negates the existence of more than two gods.

44In other words it means that the whole system of the universe exists on its obedience to Him.

45That is, "When it is so, will you then make the fear of any other than God the basis of the system of your life?"

46That is, "The fact, that you run to Allah for help in your distress and not to anyone else, is a clear proof of the Oneness of Allah, which has been embedded in your own hearts. At the time of your affliction, your true nature, which had been suppressed by the gods you had forged, involuntarily comes to the surface and invokes Allah, for it knows no other god or lord or master, having any real power. (For further details please refer to E.N.'s 29 and 41 of Chapter VI).

47That is, "At the time of showing gratitude to Allah for removing his affliction, he begins to make offerings also to some god, goddess or saint to show that Allah's kindness to him was due to the intercession of his patron, for he imagines that otherwise Allah would not have removed his distress.

48They assign shares to those patrons about whom they have no authentic knowledge that God has made them His partners and allotted some duties of Godhead to them and made them governors of some territories in His Kingdom.

49That is, "They set apart a portion of their incomes and land products to make offerings of this to their patron."

50This refers to a tradition of the ancient Arabs. They regarded their goddesses and angels as daughters of God.

51That is, "sons."

52This attitude of contempt towards daughters has been mentioned to bring home to them the height of their folly, ignorance and impudence in regard to God. This is why they did not hesitate to assign daughters to Allah, though they themselves felt that to have daughters was a matter of disgrace for theta. Besides this, it shows that they had a very low estimation of Allah, which had resulted from their ways of shirk. So they felt nothing wrong in ascribing such foolish and absurd things to Allah Who is above such things.

53That is, "This Book has afforded them an excellent opportunity to resolve their differences which have been caused by the superstitious creeds of their forefathers, and which have divided, them into warring factions. They can then unite on the permanent basis of the Truth presented by the Qur'an, but those foolish people preferring their former condition even after the coming of this blessing, shall meet with disgrace and torment. On the other hand, only those, who believe in this Book, will find the Right Way and blessed with mercy and favors from Allah."

53aThat is, " Had you listened to the Message of the Prophet, and observed those Signs carefully, you would have cried from the core of your heart, 'These Signs support his Message' . Year after year you witness these Signs. There is the land, all barren before you, without any sign of life-no blade of grass, no bud or flower, and no insect. Then comes rain. All of a sudden, the same land is covered with life. There crop upon numerous kinds of insects of which no vestige had been left. You witness this process of life and death, and death and life, repeated year after year. Yet you doubt this when the Prophet tells you that Allah will again bring to life all human beings after their death. This is because you see these Signs as animals do, who do not see the wisdom of the Creator underlying this phenomenon; otherwise you would have discovered that these signs support the Message of the Prophet."

54"....between filth and blood.....":This refers to the most wonderful process of the formation of pure milk in the bellies of the she-cattle, for, the fodder they eat turns into blood, filth and pure milk, which is

altogether different from the first two in its nature, color and usefulness. Some she-cattle produce milk in such abundance that after suckling their young-ones a large quantity of it is left to make excellent human food.

55Incidentally it implies that the juice of the fruits of date-palms and vines contains two things. One is that which is pure and wholesome food for man and the other is that which turns into alcohol after it becomes rotten. But it has been left to the choice of man to obtain pure healthy food from this providence or to drink it as intoxicant wine to excite him and make him lose his self-control. This also contains a hint as to the prohibition of wine.

56The lexical meaning of the Arabic word ('wahi) is secret inspiration which is felt only by the one who inspires and the other who is inspired with. The Qur'an has used this word both for the instinctive inspiration by Allah to His creation in general and for the Revelation towards His Prophets in particular. Allah sends His "wahi " to the heavens with His Command and they begin functioning in accordance with it (XL: 12). He will send this to the Earth with His Command and it will relate the story of all that had happened on and in it. (XCIX: 4-S). He sends wahi to the bee and inspires it with faculties to perform the whole of its wonderful work instinctively (v. 68). The same is true of the bird that learns to fly, the fish that learns to swim, the newly born child that learns to suck milk, etc., etc. Then, it is also wahi with which Allah inspires a human being with a spontaneous idea (XXVIII: 7). The same is the case with all the great discoveries, inventions, works of literature and art, etc. , which would not have been possible without the benefit of wahi. As a matter of fact, every human being at one time or the other feels its mental or spiritual influence in the form of an idea or thought or plan or dream, which is confirmed by a subsequent experience to be the right guidance from the unseen wahi.

Then there is the wahi (Revelation) which is the privilege of the Prophets. This form of wahi has its own special features and is quite distinct from all' its other forms. The Prophet, who is inspired with it, is fully conscious and has his firm conviction that it is being sent down from Allah. Such a Revelation contains doctrines of creed, commandments, laws, regulations and instructions for the guidance of mankind.

57" . . . . follow the ways made smooth by thy Lord" : ". . . . . work in accordance with the methods which have been taught to thee by Allah's wahi for the smooth running of hive life" . It is Allah's wahi (instinctive inspiration) that has taught the bees how to build their wonderful factory with separate combs to rear brood, combs to turn nectar into honey, combs to store food, in short, separate combs to fulfill every aspect of hive life. It is wahi that has taught the bees how to organize themselves into a co-operative society for collective effort to run the "factory" with the queen and thousands of workers to perform a variety of specific tasks. All these things have been made so smooth for them by wahi that the bees never feel the necessity of ever thinking about it. They have been running smoothly their factory with their collective effort for thousands of years with perfect accuracy.

58Though honey is a wholesome food with a sweet taste and has medicinal power as well, its latter

quality has been mentioned only because the former is too obvious. It is used as a medicine to cure several diseases because it contains the juice and glucose of flowers and fruits in the best form. Besides this, it is also used in preparing and preserving other medicines because it does not rot. It also preserves other things from decay. That is why it has been used for centuries as a substitute for alcohol. And if the bee-hive is built at a place, which abounds in certain medicinal herbs, its honey does not remain mere honey, but becomes also the essence of that herb. It is expected that if bees are used methodically for extracting essence from herbs, etc. , that essence will prove to be much better than the one obtained in the laboratories.

59This passage (vv. 48-69) contains proofs of Tauhid and Life-after death. These were necessitated, for the disbelievers and .he mushriks were bitterly opposed to the Holy Prophet mainly because of these two doctrines. The acceptance of the first doctrine demolished the whole system of life based on shirk or atheism because to acknowledge Allah to be the sole Providence, the Helper and the protector left no room for the worship of any god or goddess. The proof of Tauhid is based on the observance of the structure of the cattle, the bees, the date-palms and vine-yards and their usefulness to mankind. Naturally the question arises: Who has designed these in the manner and for the purpose they have been created? The only obvious answer is that it is the All-Wise and All-Beneficent Allah Who has designed all these things for the benefit of mankind to produce such varieties of food that are so wholesome and so tasty. The Prophet, therefore, rightly demanded, "When you yourselves admit, and you cannot but admit, that it is Allah alone Who has provided milk, honey, dates, grapes and the like, He and none but He is worthy of your worship, praise, gratitude and allegiance. Why do you then insist on making offerings to your self-made gods and goddesses?"

The second doctrine to which the disbelievers took strong objection was that there is surely the Life-after-death. They were against this doctrine for its acceptance changed the whole moral system and they were not prepared to change their immoral ways. Their objection was based on the presumption that it was impossible to bring to life anyone after death.

They have been asked to observe that the barren land, which once had been covered with vegetable life, was again covered with it after rainfall and they have been watching such repetition of life year after year. That Allah, Who could so easily bring to life the dead vegetable, could do the same and bring to life all the dead without any difficulty at all.

60It is to emphasize this: Allah not only provides you with the necessities and good things of life (as stated in the preceding verses), but also has full power over your life and death. None else has any power to give lift or cause death.

61This fact has been mentioned to bring home to the disbelievers and the mushriks that knowledge, which gives superiority to man over all creatures on this Earth, has been given by Allah, as if to say, "You

yourselves have seen that when a man, who once possessed much knowledge, becomes very old, he is reduced to a mere lump of flesh. Then that man who once taught knowledge to others loses all his senses and cannot look even after his own self."

62It will be worthwhile to give deep thought to the meanings of this verse, for some modern commentators of the Qur'an have founded strange economic theories and systems on it. Their interpretation is an instance of perverting the meaning of the Qur'an by isolating verses from their context and treating it as a separate whole in order to formulate a new philosophy and law of Islamic Economics. In their opinion the verse implies this: Those people to whom Allah has given more provisions than others, should share these equally with their servants and slaves: otherwise they shall be guilty of ingratitude to Allah in regard to the wealth with which He had blessed them. This commentary on the verse is obviously wrong and far-fetched because in the context it occurs there is no mention at all of any law of economics. The whole passage in which this verse occurs deals with the refutation of shirk and proof of Tauhid. The same themes are continued in the subsequent verses. There seems to be no reason why an economic law should have been inserted here, which would have been absolutely irrelevant, to say the least. On the contrary, when the verse is considered in its context, it becomes quite obvious that it is no more than the statement of a fact to prove the same theme that is contained in this passage. It argues like this: "When you yourselves do not make your servants and slaves equal partners in your wealth-which in fact is given to you by Allah-how is it that you join other gods with God in your gratitude to Him for the favors with which He has blessed you. You know that these gods have no powers to bestow anything on anyone, and, therefore, have no right in your worship of Allah, for they are after all His slaves and servants."

This interpretation of the verse under discussion is corroborated by XXX: 28: "Allah sets forth to you an instance from your own selves: Do your slaves share with you the wealth We have bestowed on you so that you and they become equals in this? And do you fear them as you fear one another? Thus We make clear Our Signs to those who use their common sense." A comparison of the two verses makes it quite clear that these have been cited to bring home to the mushriks that they themselves do not associate their slaves with themselves in their wealth and status, but they have the impudence and folly to set up His own creature as partner with God.

It appears that the erroneous interpretation has been strengthened by the succeeding sentence: "What! do they then deny to acknowledge Allah's favor? As this sentence immediately follows the similitude of the rich people and their slaves, they conclude that it will be ingratitude on the part of those, who possess more wealth not to share it equally with those who have less. As a matter of fact, everyone who has studied the Qur'an critically knows that ingratitude to Allah is to show gratitude to others than Allah for His blessings. This interpretation is so patently wrong that those who are well-versed in the teachings of the Qur'an can have no misconception about it. And such verses as these can mislead only those who have a cursory knowledge of the Qur'an.

Now that the significance of the ingratitude towards Allah's blessing has become plain, the meaning of the verse will be quite clear, and it is this: "When the Mushriks understand the implication of the difference between the master and his slave and observe this distinction in their own lives, why do they then persist in ignoring the immense difference between the Creator and His creatures and set up the latter as His partners and pay homage of gratitude to them for the blessings bestowed on them by Allah.

63" .... they believe in falsehood .....": they have this false and baseless belief that there are certain gods and goddesses, jinns and saints, dead and alive, who possess the power to make or mar their fates, fulfill their desires and answer their prayers, give them children, cure their diseases and help them win law suits.

64" .... they deny Allah's favors" by associating others with Allah in offering gratitude to Him for His favors, though they did not have any proof or authority that their false gods had played any part in regard to those favors. The Qur'an considers such an association to be the denial of Allah's favors. It puts forward the fundamental principle: It is the denial of the favor of the real benefactor to offer gratitude for his favor to anyone who has not done that favor, or to presume without any proof or reason that the real benefactor has nor granted that favor of his own accord but because of the mediation or regard or recommendation or intercession of this or that person.

Even a little thinking will show that both of the above-mentioned fundamental things are absolutely just and rational. Let us suppose, for the sake of illustration, that A, out of sympathy, helps B, a needy person, but at that very moment B stands up in A's presence, and offers gratitude for that kind act to another person who had no share at all in it. A being a generous person may not take any notice of B's absurd response, and may even continue to help him as before, but he cannot help having a very low opinion of B character and considering him to be an ungrateful wretch. Then on inquiry reveals that he was grateful to the other person for A had done that kindness to B because of him. Naturally A will take it ill, for he knows that B's assumption is absolutely wrong: nay, he will take this as an insult to himself because it meant that B has a very low opinion of him that he is not a generous and kind-hearted man but merely does such deeds to please his friends. It means that A helps a needy person only if he brings recommendation of his friends; otherwise none can expect any goodness from him.

65"Make no comparisons with Allah" : You should not compare Allah with others nor consider Him to be unapproachable like worldly kings and rulers, to whom none can have access without the mediation and intercession of their courtiers and servants. As Allah is not surrounded by angels, saints, favorites, etc., everyone can have direct access to Him without mediation by anyone.

66In the preceding verse, the mushriks were told not to make comparisons between Allah and His creatures, for there is nothing like Him. As the bases of their comparison were wrong, their conclusions were also misleading. In this verse appropriate similitudes have been cited and right comparisons have been made to lead them to Reality.

67Between the last question and "May God be praised! " there is a gap which is to be filled with the help of the latter. When the question was posed, obviously the mushriks could not say that the two men were equal. So some of them would have admitted that they were not equal, while the others would have kept quiet for fear that in case of admission, they would have to abide by its logical conclusion, that is, the admission of refutation of the doctrine of shirk. Therefore, the words, "May God be praised !" have been put in the mouth of the Prophet in answer to both kinds of the response to the question. In the first case, it would mean: "May God be praised! you have admitted at least so much" . In the second case, it would mean: "May God be praised! you have kept quiet in spite of all your obduracy and have not had the audacity to say that both were equal."

68"...most people do not understand (this simple thing)" that while they feel and carefully observe the distinction between those who have powers and those who are powerless, they neither feel nor observe the clear distinction between the Creator and His creation. That is why they associate the creatures with the Creator in His Attributes and Powers and show the kind of allegiance to them as is the exclusive right of the Creator. The pity is that in their everyday life, they would beg for sane thing from the master of the house and not from the servants but in contrast to this, they would beg for their needs from the servants of Allah and not from Him.

69In the first similitude, distinction between Allah and false gods has been made clear in regard to the possession of powers and the lack of these. In the second one, the emphasis is on the use of those powers. Allah is not only All Powerful, but also hears all the prayers and fulfills all the needs, while the slave is utterly powerless. He does not and cannot hear prayers, nor can make a response to them nor has the power to do anything at all. He is totally dependent on the Master and quite incapable of doing anything by himself. On the other hand, the Master is All-Powerful and All-Wise. He enjoins justice on the world: whatever He does is right and accurate. Ask them, "Is it then a point of wisdom to regard such Master and such a slave as equal?"

70The subsequent sentence shows that this is the answer w a question which was frequently put to the Holy Prophet by the disbelievers of Makkah. The question which has not been cited was this: If the Resurrection you so often talk of is really coming, let us know the date of its coming.

71That is, "Don't be under the delusion that the Resurrection will come gradually and take a long time: you will neither be able to sec it coming at a distance nor guard against it and make preparations to meet it. For it will come suddenly without any previous notice, in the twinkling of an eye or even take less time than this. Therefore, now is the time to consider this matter seriously and to decide about your attitude towards it. You should not depend upon this false hope that there is still a long time in the coming of the Resurrection and you will set matters right with Allah when you will see it coming."

It may be pointed out that the Resurrection has been mentioned here during the discussion on Tauhid in order to warn the people that the choice between the doctrines of Tauhid and shirk is not merely a theoretical question. For that choice determines different courses of life for which they will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection. They have also been warned that it will come all of a sudden at some unknown time. Therefore, they should be very careful to make that choice which will determine their success or failure on that Day.

72This is to remind them that when they were born they were more helpless and ignorant than the young-one of an animal, but Allah gave them ears to hear, eyes to see and minds to think and reflect. These have enabled them to acquire every kind of information and knowledge to carry on their worldly affairs efficiently. So much so that these sensory faculties are the only means which help man attain so much progress as to rule over everything on the earth.

73That is, "You should be grateful to that Allah Who has bestowed upon you such blessings as these. It will be ingratitude on your part if you hear everything with your ears except the Word of God, and see everything with your eyes except the Signs of Allah and consider seriously about all the matters except your Benefactor Who has blessed you with these favors.

74Houses: tents of skin which are in common use in Arabia.

75That is, "When you want to start on a journey, you can easily fold your tents and carry them, and when you want to make a short halt, you can easily unfold them and pitch them for shelter and rest."

76The Qur'an has not mentioned protection from cold for either of the two reasons: (1) Because the use of garments in the summer season is a symbol of cultural perfection and obviously there is no need to mention the lower stages of culture. Or (2) the use of garments in hot countries has specially been mentioned because the main use of garments there is for protection from the hot pestilential furious wind. Therefore, one has to cover one's head, neck, ears, and the whole of ones body to protect it from the hot wind which would otherwise scorch one to death.

77That is, "Armour."

78"He perfects His blessings on you": Allah makes provision for the minutest needs and necessities of every aspect of human life. For example, let us take the instance of the protection of the human body from external influences. We find that Allah has made such elaborate arrangements as require a complete book to relate them. These arrangements reach their perfection in the case of clothing and housing arrangement. Or, if we consider the food requirements we realize that it is of many varieties which fulfill every need. More than this: the means Allah has provided for food requirements of man are so numerous that the list of the varieties and the names of different kinds of food require a big volume.

This is the perfection of the blessing of food. Likewise, one would see perfection of the blessings of Allah in the fulfillment of each and every human need and necessity.

79Here the denial of the blessings of Allah refers to practical denial by the disbelievers of Makkah. For they did not deny that all these blessings were from Allah but along with this they believed that their saints and gods also had contributed towards them. This is why they associated their intercessors in their gratitude to Allah for these blessings. Nay, they were even more grateful to them than to Allah. Allah regards this association as denial of His blessings, ingratitude and forgetfulness of His favors.

80The witness will be the Prophet of that community or his follower who invited that community to Tauhid and God-worship and warned it of the consequences of shirk and superstitious rites and customs and cautioned it against the accountability on the Day of Resurrection. He will bear witness of the fact that he had conveyed the true Message to those people, and that they committed evils deliberately and not in ignorance.

81This does not mean that the criminals will not be given any opportunity to clear themselves but it means that their crimes will be proved to the hilt by means of irrefutable evidence which will leave no room for excuses.

82That is, "They will not be given the opportunity to beg pardon of their Lord for their crimes. For that will be the time of judgment as the time of begging pardon would have ended long before this." The Qur'an and the Traditions are explicit on this point that the place for penitence is this world and not the Next World. Even in this world the opportunity is lost as soon as signs of death begin to appear, for the penitence at that time will be of no avail when a person knows that the time of his death has come. Respite for deeds expires as soon as one enters into the boundary of death, and the only thing that remains after that is the award of reward and punishment.

83It does not mean that they would deny the fact that the mushriks used to invoke their help. They will call them liars in the sense that they had made them deities without their knowledge, information and permission, as if to say, "We never told you to leave Allah aside and pray to us for help. As a matter of fact, we never approved of this, nay, we were utterly unaware of this that you were invoking us. It was an utter lie that you considered us to be able to hear your prayers, answer them and help you out of your difficulties. As you yourselves were responsible for this shirk, why arc you involving us in its consequences?"

84That is, "All those things on which they had relied will prove to be false, for they will not find anyone to hear their supplication nor anyone to remove their hardships. Nay, there will be none who will come forward and say, "These. are my dependents: so no action should be taken against them."

85Double torment: one for their own disbelief and the other for hindering others from the Way of Allah.

86The Qur'an makes manifest everything on which depends guidance or deviation, success or failure: whose knowledge is essential for following the Right Way: which clearly distinguishes Truth from false hood.

In this connection one should guard against that meaning of this sentence and the like in the Qur'an according to which some people interpret "everything" to mean "the knowledge of all sciences, arts, etc.," and in order to prove the correctness of their interpretation, they have to pervert the real meaning of the Qur'an.

87This Book is a guidance for those who surrender to it as a Divine Book and follow it in every aspect of life. Then it will bring Allah's blessings upon them, and will give them the good news that they will come out successful in the Court of Allah on the Day of Judgment. Or. the contrary, those people who reject it shall not only be deprived of guidance and blessing but will also find it as a testimony against themselves on the Day of Resurrection when Allah's Messenger will stand up to testify against them. This Book will prove to be a strong argument against them, for Allah's Messenger will say that he had conveyed its Message which made manifest the distinction between Truth and falsehood.

88In this brief sentence Allah has enjoined three most important things on which alone depends the establishment of a sound and healthy society:

The first of these is justice which has two aspects.

To make such arrangements as may enable everyone to get one's due rights without stint. Justice does not, however, mean equal distribution of rights, for that would be absolutely unnatural. In fact, justice means equitable dispensation of rights which in certain cases may mean equality. For example, all citizens should have equal rights of citizenship but in other cases equality in rights would be injustice. For instance, equality in social status and rights between parents and their children will obviously be wrong. Likewise those who render services of superior and inferior types cannot be equal in regard to wages and salaries. What Allah enjoins is that the full rights of everyone should be honestly rendered whether those be moral, social, economic legal or political in accordance with what one justly deserves.

The second thing enjoined is "ihsan" which has no equivalent in English. This means to be good, generous, sympathetic, tolerant, forgiving, polite, cooperative, selfless, etc. In collective life this is even more important than justice; for justice is the foundation of a sound society but ihsan is its perfection. On the one hand, justice protects society from bitterness and violation of rights: on the other, ihsan makes it sweet and joyful and worth living. It is obvious that no society can flourish if every individual insists on exacting his pound of flesh. At best such a society might be free from conflict but there cannot be love,

gratitude, generosity, sacrifice, sincerity, sympathy and such humane qualities as produce sweetness in life and develop high values.

The third thing which has been enjoined is good treatment towards one's relatives which in fact is a specific form of ihsan. It means that one should not only treat one's relatives well, share their sorrows and pleasures and help them within lawful limits but should also share one's wealth with them according to one's means and the need of each relative. This enjoins on everyone who possesses ample means to acknowledge the share of one's deserving relatives along with the rights of one's own person and family. The Divine Law holds every well-to-do person in a family to be responsible for fulfilling the needs of all his needy kith and kin. The Law considers it a great evil that one person should enjoy the pleasures of life while his own kith and kin are starving. As it considers the family to be an important part of society, it lays down that the first right of needy individuals is on its well-to-do members and then on the others. Likewise it is the first duty of the well-to-do members of the family to fulfill the needs of their own near relatives and then those of others. The Holy Prophet has emphasized this fact in many Traditions, according to which a person owes rights to his parents, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, other relatives, etc., in accordance with the nearness of their relationships. On the basis of this fundamental principle, Caliph Umar made it obligatory on the first cousins of an orphan to support him. In the case of another orphan he declared that if he had no first cousins he would have made it obligatory on distant cousins to support him. Just imagine the happy condition of the society every unit of which supports its every needy individual in this way-most surely that society will become high and pure economically, socially, and morally.

89In contrast to the above-mentioned three virtues, Allah prohibits three vices which ruin individuals and the society as a whole:

(1) The Arabic word fahsha applies to all those things that are immodest, immoral or obscene or nasty or dirty or vulgar, not fit to be seen or heard, because they offend against recognized standards of propriety or good taste, e.g., adultery, fornication, homo-sexuality, nakedness, nudity, theft, robbery, drinking, gambling, begging, abusive language and the like. Likewise it is indecent to indulge in giving publicity to any of these evils and to spread them, e.g., false propaganda, calumny, publicity of crimes, indecent stories, dramas, films, naked pictures, public appearance of womenfolk with indecent make-ups, free mixing of sexes, dancing and the like.

(2) Munkar applies to all those evils which have always been universally regarded as evils and have been forbidden by all divine systems of law.

(3) Baghy applies to those vices that transgress the proper limits of decency and violate the rights of others, whether those of the Creator or His Creation.

90In this verse, Allah has enjoined three kinds of Covenants which have been mentioned in the order of

their importance. The first of these Covenants is the one between man and his Allah which is the most important of all. The second in importance is the Covenant between one man or one group of men and another man or another group of men, which is taken with Allah as a witness or in which the name of God has been used. The third Covenant is that which has been made without using Allah's name. Though this is third in importance, its fulfillment is as important as that of the first two and the violation of any of these has been prohibited.

91In this connection it should be noted that Allah has rebuked the people for the worst form of violation of treaties which has been creating the greatest disorder in the world. It is a pity that even "big" people consider it to be a virtue to violate treaties in order to gain advantages for their people in political, economic and religious conflicts. At one time the leader of one nation enters into a treaty with another nation for the interest of his own people but at another time the same leader publicly breaks the very same treaty for the interest of his people, or secretly violates it. It is an irony that such violations are made even by those people who are honest in their private lives. Moreover, it is regrettable that their own people do not protest against them; nay, they eulogize them for such shameful feats of diplomacy. Therefore, Allah warns that every such treaty is a test of the character of those who enter into it, and of their nations. They might gain some apparent advantage for their people in this way, but they will not escape their consequences on the Day of Judgment.

92This is to warn that decision about differences and disputes that lead to conflict, will be made on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, these should not be made an excuse to break agreements and treaties. Even if one is wholly in the right and the opponent is wholly in the wrong, it is not right for the former to break treaties or make false propaganda or employ other deceitful methods to defeat the other. If one does so, it will go against him on that Day because righteousness demands that one should not only be right in one's theories and aims but should also use right methods and employ right means. This warning has especially been given to those religious groups and sects who always suffer from this misunderstanding that they have a right to defeat their opponents because they are on the side of God and their opponents are rebels against Allah: therefore, there is no obligation on them to stick to their treaties with their opponents. This was what the Arab Jews practiced, declaring, "There is no moral obligation on us in regard to the pagan Arabs, and we are rightly entitled to practice dishonesty and deceit that might be of advantage to us and harmful to the disbelievers."

93This further supports the previous warning. It means that it would be wrong for any champion of Allah's religion to arrogate to himself the use of every sort of method and means irrespective of whether they are right or wrong to propagate his own religion (considering it to be Allah's Religion) and try to destroy opposite religions. For this would be utterly against the will of Allah: if Allah had willed that there should be no religious differences, He could have deprived mankind of the freedom of choice. In that case, there would have been no need for Allah to get help of any such up-holder of His Religion, who uses disgraceful means for this purpose. Allah could have created all mankind to be inherent believers and obedient servants by depriving them of the power and option of disbelief and sin. Then there would have

been none who could have dared to deviate from belief and obedience.

94This is to show that Allah Himself has given man the power and freedom to follow any out of the many ways. That is why Allah makes arrangements for the guidance of the one who intends to follow the right way, and lets go astray the one who desires to deviate.

95That is, "Someone,who might have been convinced of Islam, seeing your dishonest conduct should become disgusted and hold back from joining the Believers." For he might argue like this:"As these Muslims are not much different from the disbelievers in their morals and dealings, there is no reason why I should join them."

96That is, "The Covenant that you may make in the name of Allah as a representative of His religion."

97It does not mean that they should barter away Allah's Covenant for some big gain. What it implies is that any worldly gain howsoever great, is insignificant as compared with the worth of Allah's Covenant. Therefore, it will be a losing bargain to barter that away for any worldly gain, which is after all paltry.

98Those who practice fortitude are the people who will always stand Finn in the struggle between right and truth on one side and greed and lust on the other. They bear every loss for the sake of righteousness and spurn away every gain that they might obtain by adopting unlawful means. They patiently wait for the rewards of their good deeds in the Hereafter.

99This verse removes the wrong notions of both the Muslims and the disbelievers who are of the opinion that those who adopt a just honest and pious attitude, are most surely losers in this world, though they might be gainers in the Hereafter. Allah removes this misunderstanding, as if to say, "This presumption of yours is wrong. The righteous attitude not only leads to a happy life in the Hereafter, but it also guarantees, by Allah's grace, a pure and happy life even in this world. " And this is a fact: those people who are sincerely righteous, honest, pure and fair in their dealings. Enjoy a much better life in this world, for they enjoy that confidence and real honor and respect because of their spotless character, which is not enjoyed by those who lack these virtues. They obtain such pure and outstanding successes as are denied to those who employ dirty and disgusting ways to win success. Above all, they enjoy, even though they might be living in huts, that peace of mind and satisfaction of conscience which is denied to the wicked dwellers of mansions and palaces.

100That is, "Their rank in the Hereafter shall be determined according to their best deeds". In other words, "If a person has done both small and great virtues," he will be awarded that high rank which he would merit according to his greatest virtues.

101This does not mean that one should merely repeat the Arabic words: (I seek Allah's refuge against

the accursed Satan). It means that one should have a sincere desire and do one's utmost to guard against Satan's evil suggestions when one is reciting the Holy Qur'an and should not allow wrong and irrelevant doubts and suspicions to enter one's heart. One should try to sec everything contained in the Qur'an in its true light, and refrain from mixing it up with one's self-invented theories or ideas foreign to the Qur'an so as to construe its meaning against the will of Allah. Moreover, one should feel that the most sinister and avowed design of Satan is that the reader should not obtain any guidance from the Quran. This is why Satan tries his utmost to delude the reader and pervert him from getting guidance from it, and mislead him into wrong ways of thinking. Therefore, the reader should be fully on his guard against Satan and seek Allah's refuge for help so that Satan should not be able to deprive him of the benefits froth this source of guidance, for one who fails to get guidance from this source, will never be able to get guidance from any where else. Above all, the one who seeks to obtain deviation from this Book, is so entangled in deviation that he can never get out of this vicious circle.

The context in which this verse occurs here is to serve as an introduction to the answers to the questions which the mushriks of Makkah were raising against the Qur'an. They have been warned that they could appreciate the blessing of the Qur'an only if they would try to see it in its true light by seeking Allah's protection against Satan's misleading suggestions, and not by raising objections against it. Otherwise Satan does not let a man understand the Qur'an and its teachings.

102This may also mean, "To send down one Commandment to elaborate upon the other, for the Commandments were sent down piecemeal in the Qur'an". For instance, the Commandments about "prohibition" and fornication were sent down gradually one after the other during several years. But We hesitate to accept this interpretation because An-Nahl is a Makki Surah and to the best of our information there is no instance to show that Commandments were sent down piecemeal at Makkah. Therefore, we prefer the other interpretation. The Qur'an has added details of one theme and explained the same with different kinds of illustrations at different places. Likewise it has related a story in different words at different places and presented its different aspects and details at other places. It has put forward one argument at one place to prove a theme and another at another place to prove the same theme. It has related one theme concisely at one place and in detail at the other. That is what the disbelievers of Makkah put forward as proof that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) forged the Qur'an himself. They argued like this: "Had the Qur'an been the Word of Allah it would have related in full one thing at one place, for Allah's knowledge is not defective that He should have to think out gradually the details of a theme and to give different versions to explain the same thing. In contrast to this, the knowledge of a human being is defective. A man has to think out gradually as has been done in the case of the Qur'an which is a clear proof that you have forged it yourself."

103The Holy Spirit': `fibril'. Instead of using the name of the Angel who brought Revelation, his title has been deliberately mentioned to warn the disbelievers that the 'Holy Spirit' who brought Revelation, is free from human frailties. He is neither dishonest that he should add something to or take away something from the Message he brought, nor is he a liar and forger that he should invent and state something in the

name of Allah. Nor does he suffer from any human lust that he should practice a deceit. He is wholly pure and holy and conveys the Word of Allah intact.

104That is, "The fact that Allah sends down His Message piecemeal does not mean that Allah's knowledge and wisdom are defective as you consider because of your folly. Allah sends His Revelations gradually because human intelligence and capacity to grasp are limited and defective which do not let him understand the whole theme at one and the same time and make it firm in his mind. Therefore, Allah in His wisdom conveyed His Revelation piecemeal through the Holy Spirit. He sends a theme gradually and gives its details by and by and uses different methods and .ways to make it plain to human beings so that they might grasp it according to their abilities and capabilities and become firm in their faith and knowledge.

105The second practical wisdom of sending down the Qur'an piecemeal was that those Believers, who obediently followed it, should get necessary instructions for the propagation of Islam and the solution of other problems of life at the time when they were actually needed. It is obvious that if those instructions had been sent down before time and at one and the same time they would not have been useful.

106The third practical wisdom of not sending down the Qur'an as a whole at one and the same time was to give good tidings and encouragement to the obedient servants who were suffering from persecution and encountering great obstacles because they needed it over and over again. That is why they were assured of ultimate success time and again to fill them with hope to carry on their mission.

107In this connection, traditions mention the names of several persons, one of whom (Jabar), according to the disbelievers of Makkah taught the Holy Prophet; however, one thing particularly noteworthy about all these persons is that they were non-Arab slaves. Whosoever he might be, the fact that he used to recite the Torah and the Gospel and had an acquaintance with the Holy Prophet, gave an opportunity to the disbelievers for spreading this false report that it was the particular slave who was the real author of the Holy Qur'an, but Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) presented it as the Word of God. This not only shows that his opponents were very impudent in spreading false accusations against the Holy Prophet but also that, in general, people are not just in judging the worth of their contemporaries. They were ill-treating like this that great personality who has had no parallel in history. Nevertheless, these people who had become blind in their opposition, preferred to attribute the authorship of the matchless Arabic Qur'an to a non-Arab slave who had a smattering of the Torah and the Gospel. Instead of accepting the claim of the Holy Prophet, who was an embodiment of truth, they attributed its authorship to an insignificant foreign slave.

108This verse can also be rendered like this: "A Prophet does not forge any false thing but those, who do not believe in the Revelations of Allah, invent falsehoods."

109This verse deals with the case of those Muslims who were being persecuted with cruelty and were being-subjected to unbearable torments to force them to give up their Faith. They are being told that if at any time they are forced to utter words of disbelief to save their lives, when in fact in their hearts they are secure against disbelief, they will be pardoned. On the other hand, if they accepted unbelief from the core of their hearts, they shall not escape the torment of Allah even if they succeed in saving their lives.

It does not, however, mean that one should utter words of disbelief to save one's life. This is merely a permission but not the ideal thing for a Believer. According to this permission if one utters such a thing, he shall not be taken to account. In fact, the ideal for a Believer is to utter words of truth in any case whether his body is cut into pieces. There are instances which show that during the period of the Holy Prophet some acted upon the ideal while others took advantage of the permission. There was Khabbab bin Art (May Allah be pleased with him) who was made to lie on embers of fire until the fire was extinguished by the melting of his fat, but he remained firm in his Faith. Then there was Bilal Habashi (May Allah be pleased with him) who was made to put on an armor and stand in the scorching heat. Then he was dragged on the burning sand but he went on saying, "Allah is one." There was another Believer, Habib Gin Zaid bin `Asim, whose limbs were cut one by one by the order of Musailimah, the Liar. Each time his limb was severed it was demanded of him that he should acknowledge the Liar as a prophet but each time he refused to bear witness to his claim of prophethood until he breathed his last. On the other hand, there was the instance of Ammar bin Yasir (May Allah be pleased with him) whose parents were mercilessly butchered before his eyes. After this he himself was put to such unbearable torture that, in order to save his life, he had to utter the same words of unbelief that were demanded of him. Afterwards when he came crying to the Holy Prophet, he said, "O Messenger of Allah, they did not let me go until I spoke evil of you and praised their deities" . The Holy Prophet asked him, "How do you feel about this, in your heart?" He replied humbly, "My heart is fully convinced of the Faith." At this the Holy Prophet replied, "If they put you to the same torture again, you may utter the same words" .

110These words apply to those people who gave up their Faith, when they felt that they could not bear hardships of the Right Way and so they again joined their unbelieving, mushrik people.

111They were those Believers who migrated to Habashah.

112That habitation has not been specified here nor have the commentators definitely pointed out which that habitation was. However, there is a saying of Ibn `Abbas (which seems to be correct) that the place referred to is Makkah itself. In that case, "hunger and fear" will mean the famine which prevailed over the people of Makkah for several years during the Prophethood of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

113This shows that the above mentioned famine had come to an end at the time of the revelation of this Surah.

114Here the observation of the lawful and the unlawful has been made the test of worship of Allah. Those who claim to be the servants of Allah will eat what is lawful and pure and show gratitude to Him and will scrupulously refrain from what is forbidden and impure.

115Please refer also to II: 173, V: 3 and VI: 145.

116This verse clearly shows that none but Allah has the right to declare a thing to be lawful or unlawful. Or, in other words, the right of making laws exclusively rests with Allah. Therefore, any person, who will dare to decide about the lawful and the unlawful, will transgress his powers. Of course, a person, who acknowledges the Divine law as the final authority, may deduce from it whether a certain thing or action is lawful or unlawful.

The arrogation of the right of determining the lawful and the unlawful has been declared to be a falsehood on Allah for two reasons: (1) Such a person, so to say, claims that what he declares to be lawful or unlawful disregarding the authority of the Divine Book, has been made lawful or unlawful by God or (2) he means to claim that Allah has given up the authority of making lawful and unlawful and has thus left man free to make his own laws for the conduct of life. It is obvious that each of these claims will be a "falsehood" and a false imputation to Allah.

117In this paragraph (vv. 118-124), answers to the objections raised by the disbelievers of Makkah concerning the Commandments contained in vv. 114-117 have been given. Their first objection was: "Besides the above-mentioned unlawful things, there are other unlawful things in the Jewish Law which have been made lawful by you. If that law was from Allah and yours is also from Allah why do they then contradict each other?" Their second objection was: "You have abrogated the sanctity of the Sabbath of the Israelites. Have you done this of your own accord or by Allah's Command? In the latter case then will be an obvious contradiction in the two laws. Or has Allah Himself given two contradictory Commandments?"

118This refers to: "And We prohibited all animals with claws to those people who had adopted Judaism...." (VI: 146). In this verse (117) Allah has stated that certain things were made unlawful because of the disobedience of the Jews.

Here a question arises: Which of the two Surahs, Al-An`am or An-Nahl, was first revealed? This is because in verse 118, a reference has been made to verse 146 of Al-An`am and in verse 119 of Al-An`am, "And why should you not eat that thing over which Allah's name has been mentioned, when He has already given you a detail of those things that have been declared to be unlawful for you except m case of extremity....?", a reference has been made to verse 115 of AnNahl. This is because these are the only two Makki Surahs in which details of unlawful things have been given. As regards the question, we are of the opinion that An-Nahl was revealed earlier than Al-An`am, for verse 119 of the latter contains a

reference to verse 115 of the former. It appears that after the revelation of Surah Al-An`am, the disbelievers raised objections in regard to these verses of An-Nahl. So they were referred to verse 146 of Al-An`am in which a few things were made unlawful, especially for the Jews. As this answer concerned An-Nahl, so verse 118, though it was revealed after the revelation of Al-An`am, was inserted as a parenthetical clause in An-Nahl.

119"Abraham was a community in himself" for at that time he was the only Muslim in the whole world who was upholding the banner of Islam, while the rest of the world was upholding the banner of unbelief. As that servant of Allah performed the Mission which is ordinarily carried out by a whole community, he was not one person but an institution in himself.

120This is the complete answer to the first objection (E.N. 117) raised by the disbelievers. This has two parts:

(1) There is no contradiction in the Divine Law as you seem to presume on the apparent variance in the Jewish and the Islamic Law. As a matter of fact a few things had been made unlawful especially for the Jews as punishment to them because of their disobedience; therefore, there was no reason why others should be deprived of those good things.

(2) Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was commanded to follow the way of Abraham and not the way of the Jews, and they themselves knew than these things were not unlawful in the law of Abraham. For instance, the Jews did not eat the flesh of camel but this was lawful according to Abraham. Likewise, ostrich, hare, duck, etc., were unlawful in the Jewish law, but they were lawful according to Abraham. Incidentally the disbelievers of Makkah have been warned that neither they nor the Jews had any relationship with Prophet Abraham for he was not a mushrik while both of them were practicing shirk. Prophet Muhammad and his followers were the only true followers of Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon them) for there was no tinge of shirk in their creed or in their practice.

121This is the answer to their second objection. Obviously, there was no need to state that the restrictions about the Sabbath applied only to the Jews and had nothing to do with the law of Prophet Abraham, because they themselves knew it. The restrictions were imposed upon the Jews because of their mischiefs and violations of the law. In order to understand fully the significance of this reference one is requested to read those passages of the Bible in which Commandments about the Sabbath have been stated, e.g., Exodus 20: 8-11, 23: 12-13,31: 1-17, 35: 23, and Numbers 15: 32-36. Besides this, one should also be acquainted with the impudent violations of the Sabbath. See Jeremiah: 17: 21-27 and Ezekiel. 10: 18-24.

122This instruction is very important for those who are engaged in the propagation of Islam. They should always keep in view two things- "wisdom" and "excellent admonition". "Wisdom" implies that one should

use discretion in the work of propagation and should not do this blindly like foolish people. Wisdom demands that one should keep in view the intelligence, capability and circumstances of the addressees and convey the Message in accordance with the requirements of the occasion. Moreover, one should refrain from applying one and the same method to each and every person or group but should first diagnose the real disease of the addressee and then cure it by appealing to his head and heart.

"Excellent admonition" implies two things: (1) One should not be content with convincing the addressee with arguments alone but should also appeal to his feelings. Likewise one should not confine oneself merely to arguments in condemning evils and deviations but should try to convince the other of their repugnance that lies embedded in the human nature. One should also warn of the worst consequences of those evils. Besides, one should not only try to convince the addressee rationally of the soundness and excellence of guidance and righteous deeds but should also create in him interest and love for them. (2) Admonition should be administered in such a manner as to show sincere concern for and the welfare of the addressee. Nothing should be said or done to create the impression that the admonisher is looking down upon him and taking pleasure in his own feeling of superiority. On the contrary, he should feel that the admonisher is filled with the strong desire for his reform and welfare.

123"Best manner" implies that one should have a sweet tongue, show noble character and give reasonable and appealing arguments, and refrain from indulging in polemics, argumentation and controversies. The one who discusses things with people in the best manner, does not resort to accusations, crooked arguments, taunts, nor makes fun of the opponent in order to defeat him and to win applause for his own superiority in argument. For these things will produce obduracy and obstinacy. In contrast to this, he will try to convince the other in a simple and humble way, and when he feels that the other person has come down to crooked arguments, he will leave him alone lest the other should go further and further astray in his deviation.

124"Allah is with those who fear Him" because they scrupulously refrain from evil ways and always adopt the righteous attitude, for they know that their actions and deeds are not determined by the evils others do to them but by their own sense of righteousness; so they return good for evil."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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7. Surah Al Isra (The Night Journey), also known as Surah Bani Israil (The Children of Israel)

Name

This Surah takes its name (Bani Israil) from v. 4. But this name is merely a distinctive appellation like the names of many other surahs and not a descriptive title, and does not mean that "Bani Isra'il" is the theme of this Sarah.

Period of Revelation

The very first verse indicates that this Surah was revealed on the occasion of *Mi`raj* (Ascension). According to the Traditions and books on the life of the Holy Prophet, this event happened one year before Hijrah. Thus, this Surah is one of those which were revealed in the last stage of Prophethood at Makkah.

Background

The Holy Prophet had been propagating *Tauhid* for the previous twelve years and his opponents had been doing all they could to make his Mission a failure, but in spite of all their opposition, Islam had spread to every corner of Arabia and there was hardly any clan which had not been influenced by his invitation. In Makkah itself the true Believers had formed themselves into a small community and were ready and willing to face every danger to make Islam a success. Besides them, a very large number of the people of Aus and Khazraj (two influential clans of Al-Madinah) had accepted Islam. Thus the time had come for the Holy Prophet to emigrate from Makkah to Al-Madinah and there gather together the scattered Muslims and establish a state based on the principles of Islam.

These were the conditions when *Mi`raj* took place and on his return the Holy Prophet brought down the Message contained in this Surah.

Theme and Topics

This Surah is a wonderful combination of warning, admonition and instruction, which have been blended together in a balanced proportion.

The disbelievers of Makkah had been admonished to take a lesson from the miserable end of the Israelites and other communities and mend their ways within the period of respite given by Allah, which was about to expire. They should, therefore, accept the invitation that was being extended by Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and the Quran. Otherwise they shall be annihilated and replaced by other people. Incidentally, the Israelites, with whom Islam was going to come in direct contact in the near future at Al-Madinah have also been warned that they should learn a lesson from the chastisements that have already been inflicted on them. They were warned, "Take advantage of the Prophethood of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) because that is the last opportunity which is being given to you. If even now you behave as you have been behaving, you shall meet with a painful torment."

As regards the education of mankind, it has been impressed that human success or failure, gain or loss, depends upon the right understanding of *Tauhid*, life-after- death and Prophethood. Accordingly, convincing arguments have been put forward to prove that the Quran is the Book of Allah and its teachings are true and genuine the doubts of the disbelievers about these basic realities have been removed and on suitable occasions they have been admonished and rebuked in regard to their ways of ignorance.

In this connection, those fundamental principles of morality and civilization on which the Islamic System of life is meant to be established have been put forward. Thus this was a sort of the Manifesto of the intended Islamic state which had been proclaimed a year before its actual establishment. It has been explicitly stated that that was the sketch of the system on which Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) intended to build human life first in his own country and then in the outside world.

Besides these, the Holy Prophet has been instructed to stick firmly to his stand without minding the opposition and difficulties which he was encountering and should never think of making a compromise with unbelief. The Muslims who sometimes showed signs of impatience, when they met with persecution, calumny, and crooked arguments, have also been instructed to face adverse circumstances with patience and fortitude and keep full control over their feelings and passions. Moreover, salat was prescribed in order to reform and purify their souls, as if to say, "This is the thing which will produce in you those high qualities of character which are essential for everyone who intends to struggle in the righteous way Incidentally, we learn from Traditions that Mi'raj was the first occasion on which the five daily Prayers were prescribed to be offered at fixed times.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

سُبۡحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَسۡرَىٰ بِعَبۡدِهِۦ لَيۡلٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡمَسۡجِدِ ٱلۡحَرَامِ
إِلَى ٱلۡمَسۡجِدِ ٱلۡأَقۡصَا ٱلَّذِي بَٰرَكۡنَا حَوۡلَهُۥ لِنُرِيَهُۥ
مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِنَآۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡبَصِيرُ ١

[1] Glory be to Him, Who transported His Servant one night from the Masjid-i-Haram to the distant Temple, whose surroundings We have blessed, so that we might show him some of Our Sings:[1] the fact is that He alone is All-Hearing and All-Seeing.

وَءَاتَيۡنَا مُوسَى ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ وَجَعَلۡنَٰهُ هُدٗى لِّبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ أَلَّا تَتَّخِذُواْ
مِن دُونِي وَكِيلٗا ٢

ذُرِّيَّةَ مَنۡ حَمَلۡنَا مَعَ نُوحٍۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَبۡدٗا شَكُورٗا ٣

وَقَضَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لَتُفۡسِدُنَّ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
مَرَّتَيۡنِ وَلَتَعۡلُنَّ عُلُوّٗا كَبِيرٗا ٤

فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ أُولَىٰهُمَا بَعَثْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ عِبَادًا لَّنَآ أُوْلِى بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ فَجَاسُوا۟
خِلَٰلَ ٱلدِّيَارِ ۚ وَكَانَ وَعْدًا مَّفْعُولًا ﴿٥﴾

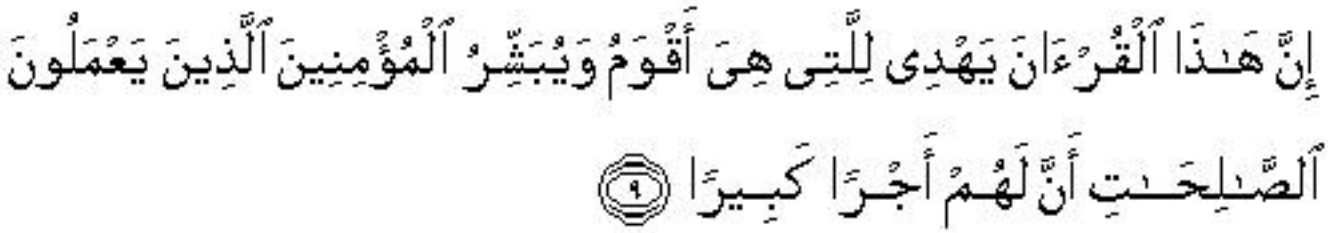
ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ ٱلْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنَٰكُم بِأَمْوَٰلٍ وَبَنِينَ وَجَعَلْنَٰكُمْ
أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا ﴿٦﴾

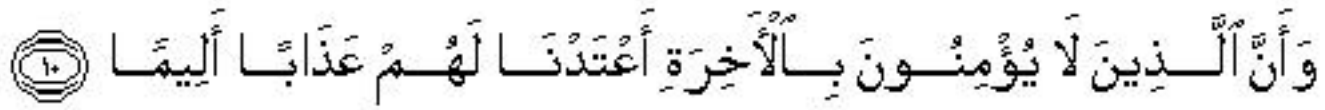
إِنْ أَحْسَنتُمْ أَحْسَنتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا ۚ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ
لِيَسُۥٓـُٔوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَلِيُتَبِّرُوا۟
مَا عَلَوْا۟ تَتْبِيرًا ﴿٧﴾

عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يَرْحَمَكُمْ ۚ وَإِنْ عُدتُّمْ عُدْنَا ۘ وَجَعَلْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
حَصِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

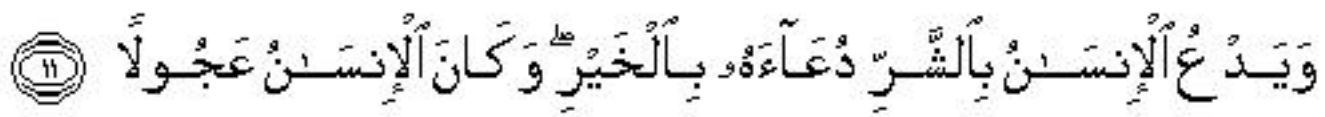
[2-8] Before this We had given the Book to Moses and made it a means of guidance for the Israelites[2] with this Command: "Do not make .any other guardian than Myself.[3] You are the descendants of those whom We bore in the Ark with Noah,[4] and he was truly a grateful servant". Besides this, We forewarned the Israelites in the Scriptures:[5] You will work great mischief twice in the land and will become overbearingly arrogant.[6] When the occasion of the first of the two mischiefs came, O Israelites, We raised against you such of Our servants who were very mighty and formidable; so they penetrated through all parts of your country. This was a warning that was bound to be fulfilled.[7]

Then after this We afforded you an opportunity to over-power them and helped you with abundance of riches and children and increased you far more in numbers than before.[8] Behold! If you did good it proved to be good for yourselves and if you committed evil it proved to be bad for your own selves. Then, when the time came for the fulfillment of the second warning, We set other enemies on you so that they might disfigure your faces and enter into the Temple just as the former enemies had entered and destroyed whatever they could lay their hands on.[9] Now again your Lord may show compassion on you; but if you again repeat your former behavior; We will again visit you with. Our punishment, for We have prepared Hell to serve as a prison-house for the ungrateful people.[10]

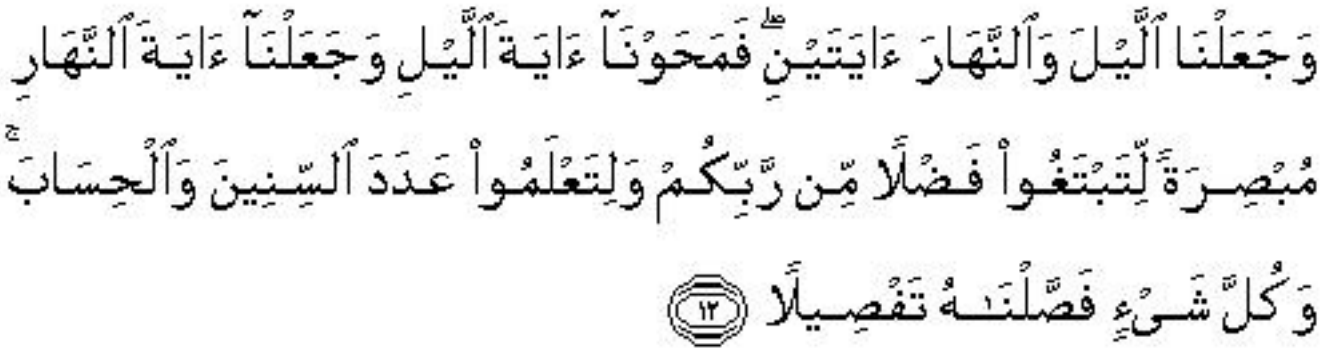




[9-10] Indeed the Qur'an shows that way which is perfectly straight: To those who believe in it and do good deeds, it gives the good news that there is a great reward for them and to those who do not believe in the Hereafter, it gives the warning that a painful torment has been made ready for them.[11]



[11] Man invokes evil instead of goodness for he is very hasty and impatient.[12]



[12] Behold! We have created day and night as two signs: We have deprived the sign of night of light and made the sign of day bright to enable you to seek bounty of your Lord and to reckon months and years. Thus We have made everything manifestly distinct.[13]

وَكُلَّ إِنسَٰنٍ أَلْزَمْنَٰهُ طَٰٓئِرَهُۥ فِى عُنُقِهِۦ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ
كِتَٰبًا يَلْقَىٰهُ مَنشُورًا ﴿١٣﴾

ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾

[13-14] We have fastened the augury of every man to his own neck,[14] and on the Day of Resurrection We will bring forth a writing which he will find like an open book. (It will be said to him,) "Here is your record: read it. Today you yourself suffice as reckoner against yourself."

مَّنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِى لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا
يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۗ وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ
رَسُولًا ﴿١٥﴾

[15] Whosoever adopts the righteous way, his righteous conduct will be for his own good, and whosoever goes astray, his deviation shall bring its consequences on him.[15] No bearer will bear the burden of another.[16] And We do not inflict punishment until We have sent a Messenger[17] (to make Truth distinct from falsehood.)

وَإِذَآ أَرَدْنَآ أَن نُّهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا۟ فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَـٰهَا تَدْمِيرًا ﴿١٦﴾

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ نُوحٍ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿١٧﴾

[16-17] When We decree that a habitation should be destroyed, We give Commands to its well-to-do people and they show disobedience; then that habitation incurs just torment and We totally exterminate it.[18] Just see how many generations have been destroyed by Our Command after Noah. Your Lord is fully aware of the sins of his servants and is seeing everything.

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُۥ فِيهَا مَا نَشَآءُ لِمَن نُّرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَىٰهَا مَذْمُومًا مَّدْحُورًا ﴿١٨﴾

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا ﴿١٩﴾

كُلًّا نُّمِدُّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مِنْ عَطَآءِ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَآءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا

٢٠

ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلَلْءَاخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَٰتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا

٢١

[18-21] If a person hankers after the immediate good things of this worldly life,[19] We give him whatever We will; then We condemn such a one to Hell, wherein he will burn, accursed and deprived of mercy.[20] On the other hand, whoso desires the life of the Hereafter and strives for it as best as one should strive, and is a believer, the endeavor of every such person will be appreciated.[21] As regards the provisions of this worldly life, We bestow them on these and on those; this is a gift of your Lord and there is none to withhold the gift of your Lord.[22] But in spite of this you can see that We have exalted one people above the others and in the Hereafter these grades will be far greater, and their superiority will be far higher.[23]

لَّا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَقْعُدَ مَذْمُومًا مَّخْذُولًا

٢٢

[22] Do not associate another deity with Allah,[24] otherwise you shall he reduced to a state of ignominy and helplessness.

۞ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا ۚ إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ ٱلْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

٢٣

وَٱخۡفِضۡ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ ٱلذُّلِّ مِنَ ٱلرَّحۡمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ٱرۡحَمۡهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرٗا ﴿٢٤﴾

[23-24] Your Lord has enjoined the following:[25]

1. You should not worship anyone but Him.[26]

2. Treat your parents with great consideration; if either or both of them live with you in their old age, do not say even "fie" to them: nor rebuke them, but speak kind words to them; treat them with humility and tenderness and pray: "Lord, be merciful to them just as they brought me up with kindness and affection."

رَّبُّكُمۡ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا فِي نُفُوسِكُمۡۚ إِن تَكُونُواْ صَٰلِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُۥ كَانَ لِلۡأَوَّٰبِينَ غَفُورٗا ﴿٢٥﴾

وَءَاتِ ذَا ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلۡمِسۡكِينَ وَٱبۡنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرۡ تَبۡذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلۡمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوٓاْ إِخۡوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِۖ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ كَفُورٗا ﴿٢٧﴾

[25-27] Your Lord best knows what is in your minds. if you live righteously, He surely forgives and turns towards all such people as are penitent and obedient.[27]

3. Fulfill your obligations towards your relatives and the indigent and the wayfarer.

4. Do not be a spendthrift because the spendthrifts are the brethren of Satan and Satan has been ungrateful to his Lord.

وَإِمَّا تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُل
لَّهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّيْسُورًا ﴿٢٨﴾

[28] 5. If you have to put them (the needy persons) off because you are still waiting for Allah's favor that you are expecting, put them off with tenderness.[28]

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا
كُلَّ ٱلْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا ﴿٢٩﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ
كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

[29-30] 6. Do not tie your hand to your neck nor stretch without any restraint lest you should become blameworthy and left destitute.[29] Your Lord provides plentifully to whom He wills and withholds His provisions from anyone He pleases, for He is fully aware of the condition of His servants and observes them closely.[30]

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓاْ أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَٰقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْـًٔا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾

[31] 7. Do not kill your offspring for fear of want: for it is We Who provide them and you as well. Indeed their killing is a heinous crime.[31]

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلزِّنَىٰٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً ۖ وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾

[32] 8. Do not even go near fornication for it is a very indecent flung and a very evil way.[32]

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَمَن قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لِوَلِيِّهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا فَلَا يُسْرِف فِّى ٱلْقَتْلِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مَنصُورًا ﴿٣٣﴾

[33] 9. Do not kill any soul whose killing has been forbidden by Allah[33] except by right:[34] and if one is killed unjustly We have granted the right of retribution to his guardian.[35] So he should not transgress the limits in retaliation,[36] for he shall be helped.[37]

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ مَالَ ٱلْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَوْفُوا۟ بِٱلْعَهْدِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٤﴾

وَأَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا۟ بِٱلْقِسْطَاسِ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٣٥﴾

[34-35] 10. Do not go near the property of an orphan except in the best manner until he reaches the age of maturity.[38]

11. Keep your pledges, for you shall be accountable for your pledges.[39]

12. Give full measure when you measure and weigh with even scales[40] when you weigh. This is the best way and will prove to be the best in the end.[41]

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٦﴾

[36] 13. Do not follow that of which you have no knowledge for you shall be questioned for (the use) of your eyes, ears and minds.[42]

وَلَا تَمْشِ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ ٱلْجِبَالَ
طُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾

[37] 14. Do not strut about in the land for you can neither cleave the earth nor attain the height of the mountains.[43]

كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ﴿٣٨﴾

ذَٰلِكَ مِمَّآ أَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةِ ۗ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا
ءَاخَرَ فَتُلْقَىٰ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَّدْحُورًا ﴿٣٩﴾

أَفَأَصۡفَىٰكُمۡ رَبُّكُم بِٱلۡبَنِينَ وَٱتَّخَذَ مِنَ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنَٰثًاۚ إِنَّكُمۡ لَتَقُولُونَ
قَوۡلًا عَظِيمٗا ٤٠

[38-40] The evil aspect of each of these Commandments is odious in the sight of your Lord.[44] These are the things of wisdom which your Lord has revealed to you.

And behold! do not associate any other deity with Allah lest you should be cast into Hell reproached and deprived of every good[45] What! has your Lord favored you with sons and adopted angels as daughters for Himself?[46] Indeed it is a big lie that you are uttering.

وَلَقَدۡ صَرَّفۡنَا فِي هَٰذَا ٱلۡقُرۡءَانِ لِيَذَّكَّرُواْ وَمَا يَزِيدُهُمۡ إِلَّا نُفُورٗا ٤١

قُل لَّوۡ كَانَ مَعَهُۥٓ ءَالِهَةٞ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذٗا لَّٱبۡتَغَوۡاْ إِلَىٰ ذِي ٱلۡعَرۡشِ سَبِيلٗا
٤٢

سُبۡحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ عُلُوّٗا كَبِيرٗا ٤٣

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ٱلسَّبۡعُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّۚ وَإِن مِّن شَيۡءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ
بِحَمۡدِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَفۡقَهُونَ تَسۡبِيحَهُمۡۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورٗا ٤٤

[41-44] We have admonished the people in different ways in the Qur'an so that they may take warning, yet they are running further and further away from the Truth. O Muhammad, tell them that if there had been other deities beside Allah, as they assert, they would surely have tried to find a way to (dethrone) the Master of the Throne.[47] He is free from and far above the things they say about Him. The seven heavens and the Earth and all the things therein[48] are chanting hymns of His glory[49] along with His praise but you do not understand their hymns. The fact is that He is very Forbearing and Forgiving.[50]

وَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ حِجَابًا
مَّسْتُورًا ﴿٤٥﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۚ وَإِذَا ذَكَرْتَ
رَبَّكَ فِى ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَحْدَهُۥ وَلَّوْا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَـٰرِهِمْ نُفُورًا ﴿٤٦﴾

نَّحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَسْتَمِعُونَ بِهِۦٓ إِذْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذْ
هُمْ نَجْوَىٰٓ إِذْ يَقُولُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا
﴿٤٧﴾

ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا۟ لَكَ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا۟ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٨﴾

[45-48] When you recite the Qur'an, we place an invisible curtain between you and those who do not believe in the Hereafter and we cover their hearts with a covering so that they understand nothing and we make their ears hard of hearing.[51] And when in the Qur'an you mention your one Lord only, they turn their faces away in aversion.[52] We

know best what they really wish to hear, when they listen to you, and also what they say, when they sit together in secret conversation. These wrongdoers say to one another, "The man you are following is really bewitched"[53] Behold! what epithets they apply to you! They have gone astray, so they cannot find the Right Way.[54]

وَقَالُوٓاْ أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَٰمٗا وَرُفَٰتًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبۡعُوثُونَ خَلۡقٗا جَدِيدٗا ٤٩

۞قُلۡ كُونُواْ حِجَارَةً أَوۡ حَدِيدًا ٥٠

أَوۡ خَلۡقٗا مِّمَّا يَكۡبُرُ فِي صُدُورِكُمۡۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ مَن يُعِيدُنَاۖ قُلِ ٱلَّذِي
فَطَرَكُمۡ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٖۚ فَسَيُنۡغِضُونَ إِلَيۡكَ رُءُوسَهُمۡ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هُوَۖ قُلۡ
عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ قَرِيبٗا ٥١

يَوۡمَ يَدۡعُوكُمۡ فَتَسۡتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمۡدِهِۦ وَتَظُنُّونَ إِن لَّبِثۡتُمۡ إِلَّا
قَلِيلٗا ٥٢

[49-52] They say, "What! shall we really be raised up again into a new creation, when we are reduced to bones and dust?" Say to them, ("yes, most certainly you shall be brought back to life,) even if you be stone or iron or even something harder than this which you consider in your minds impossible to be brought to life." At this they will ask, "Who is he who will bring us back to life?" Say to them, "The same Being Who brought you to life in the first instance." Then they will shake their heads at you and ask.[55] "Well, when will this happen?" Say, "That time may be near at hand. On the Day when He will call you, you will rise up in response to it, praising Him, and you will think, "We have remained in this state only for a little while."[56]

وَقُل لِّعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا۟ ٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ يَنزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ كَانَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾

رَّبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ ۖ إِن يَشَأْ يَرْحَمْكُمْ أَوْ إِن يَشَأْ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ ۚ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿٥٤﴾

[53-54] And O Muhammad!, say to My servants,[57] "They should utter only that which is the best of all.[58] In reality, it is Satan who tries to sow discord between human beings. The fact is that Satan is the avowed enemy of man.[59] Your Lord is fully aware of everything concerning you. If He will, He may show mercy to you, and if He will, He may give you severe chastisement."[60] And, O Prophet, We have not sent you to be the guardian over people.[61]

وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ ٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ عَلَىٰ
بَعْضٍ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ زَبُورًا ﴿٥٥﴾

[55] Your Lord is fully aware of all the creatures in the heavens and the earth. We have exalted some Prophets above the others in ranks,[62] and We gave the Psalms to David.[63]

قُلِ ٱدْعُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ فَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ كَشْفَ ٱلضُّرِّ عَنكُمْ
وَلَا تَحْوِيلًا ﴿٥٦﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ ٱلْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ
رَحْمَتَهُۥ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا ﴿٥٧﴾

[56-57] Say to them, "You may invoke for help those deities whom you consider to be (your helpers) beside Allah: They will not be able to relieve you of any trouble nor change it."[64] In fact those whom these people invoke for help themselves seek means of approach to their Lord and vie with one another to be nearer to Him and hope for His mercy and fear His chastisement.[65] The fact is that the chastisement of your Lord is a thing to be dreaded.

وَإِن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا نَحْنُ مُهْلِكُوهَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُوهَا عَذَابًا
شَدِيدًا ۚ كَانَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مَسْطُورًا ﴿٥٨﴾

[58] There is no habitation which We shall not destroy before the Day of Resurrection or punish with a severe chastisement.[66] This has been ordained in the Eternal Record.

وَمَا مَنَعَنَآ أَن نُّرْسِلَ بِٱلْءَايَٰتِ إِلَّآ أَن كَذَّبَ بِهَا ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ ۚ وَءَاتَيْنَا
ثَمُودَ ٱلنَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوا۟ بِهَا ۚ وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِٱلْءَايَٰتِ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا ﴿٥٩﴾

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لَكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ أَحَاطَ بِٱلنَّاسِ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا ٱلرُّءْيَا ٱلَّتِىٓ أَرَيْنَٰكَ إِلَّا
فِتْنَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَٱلشَّجَرَةَ ٱلْمَلْعُونَةَ فِى ٱلْقُرْءَانِ ۚ وَنُخَوِّفُهُمْ فَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا
طُغْيَٰنًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٦٠﴾

[59-60] And nothing has hindered Us from sending Signs[67] except that the former people refused to acknowledge them as such. (For example,) We sent the She-camel as an open Sign to Thamud but they treated her with cruelty;[68] whereas We send Signs only by way of warning.[69] Call to mind, O Muhammad! We told you at the very beginning that your Lord is encircling these people.[70] And We made what We have shown you now[71] and also the Tree which has been cursed in the Qur'an[72] as a trial for these people." We are giving them warning after warning but each warning helps only to increase their insurrection.[73]

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ قَالَ ءَأَسْجُدُ لِمَنْ
خَلَقْتَ طِينًا ﴿٦١﴾

قَالَ أَرَءَيْتَكَ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى كَرَّمْتَ عَلَىَّ لَئِنْ أَخَّرْتَنِ إِلَىٰ
يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَأَحْتَنِكَنَّ ذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٦٢﴾

قَالَ ٱذْهَبْ فَمَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ جَزَآؤُكُمْ جَزَآءً مَّوْفُورًا ﴿٦٣﴾

وَٱسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُم بِصَوْتِكَ وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِم بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ
وَشَارِكْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَوْلَٰدِ وَعِدْهُمْ ۚ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا
﴿٦٤﴾

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنٌ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ
وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٥﴾

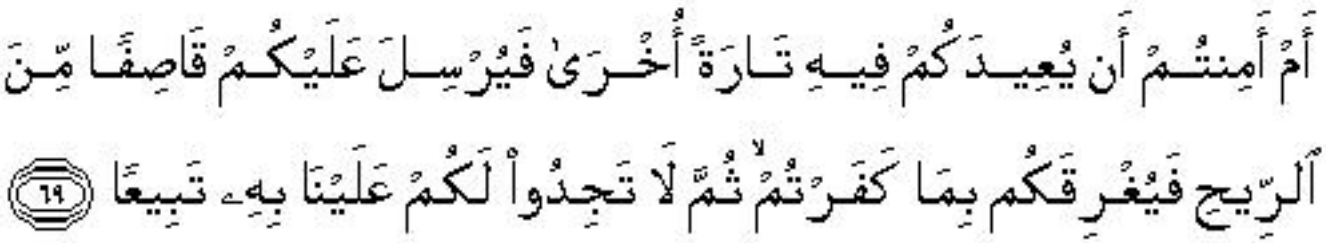
[61-65] And remember: when We commanded the angels, "Bow yourselves before Adam," all bowed down except Iblis.[74] He replied, "Should I bow before the one whom you have created of clay?" Then he added, "Just consider this: Was he worthy of this that you have exalted him over me ? If you give me respite up to the Day of Resurrection, I will uproot the whole of his progeny;[75] there shall be only a few of them who will be able to save themselves from me." Allah replied, "Well, get away. Hell is your ample reward and the reward of those who follow you. You may try to allure with your invitation whomsoever you can.[76] Rally against them your horsemen and your footmen:[77] set a partner with them in their wealth and children[78] and entice them with your false promises And Star's promises are nothing but deception.[79] Indeed you will have no power over my servants."[80] And your Lord suffices for you as a guardian.[81]

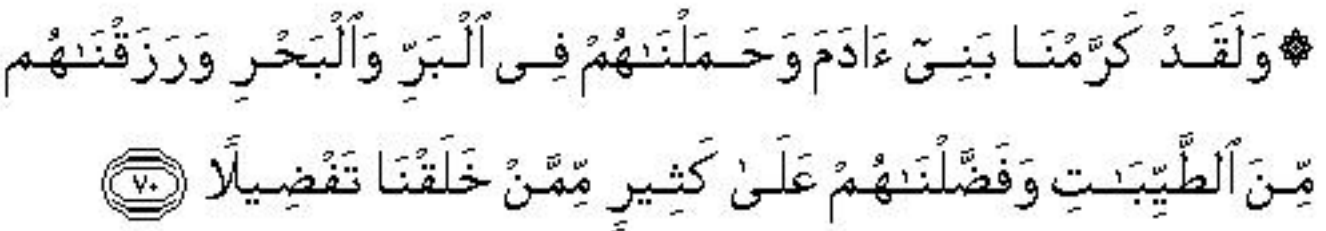
رَّبُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِي يُزْجِي لَكُمُ ٱلْفُلْكَ فِي ٱلْبَحْرِ لِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ
إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٦﴾

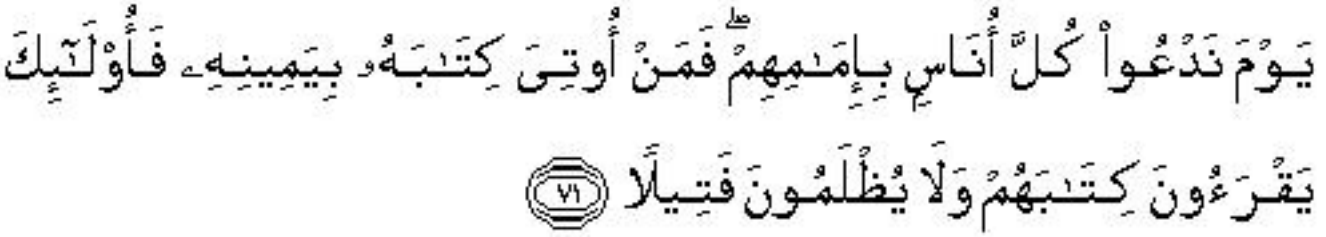
وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ ٱلضُّرُّ فِي ٱلْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَن تَدْعُونَ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ ۖ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰكُمْ إِلَى
ٱلْبَرِّ أَعْرَضْتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ كَفُورًا ﴿٦٧﴾

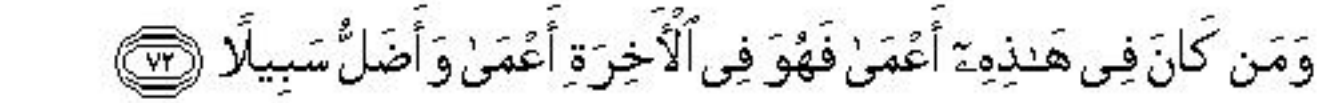
أَفَأَمِنتُمْ أَن يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ جَانِبَ ٱلْبَرِّ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا
ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُوا۟ لَكُمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٨﴾

[66-68] Your (real) Lord is the One, Who drives your ship across the sea[82] so that you may seek His bounty.[83] The fact is that He is very merciful towards you. When a misfortune befalls you on the sea, all of those whom you invoke for help fail you but He (is there to help you[84]): yet when He brings you safe to land, you turn away from Him. Indeed man is very ungrateful. What, do you feel quite secure that sometimes Allah would not cause you to sink underground even on land, or send a deadly whirlwind charged with stones toward you, and you may not find anyone to protect you from it?









[69-72] Or, are you not afraid that God may again send you to the sea and smite you with a violent tempest and drown you for your ingratitude, and you may not find any one to question Us in regard to this end of yours? It is a favor that We have honored the sons of Adam and blessed them with conveyances on land and sea and provided them with good and pure things and exalted them above many of Our other creatures.[85] Just imagine the scene on the Day, when We will summon every community with its leader: then those, who will be given their records in their right hands, will read their records[86] and will not be wronged in the least; on the other hand, the one, who leads his

life in this world as if he were blind shall be blind in the Hereafter. nay, he shall fare even worse than a blind person in finding the way.

وَإِن كَادُوا۟ لَيَفْتِنُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ لِتَفْتَرِىَ عَلَيْنَا غَيْرَهُۥ ۖ
وَإِذًا لَّٱتَّخَذُوكَ خَلِيلًا ﴿٧٣﴾

وَلَوْلَآ أَن ثَبَّتْنَٰكَ لَقَدْ كِدتَّ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْـًٔا قَلِيلًا ﴿٧٤﴾

إِذًا لَّأَذَقْنَٰكَ ضِعْفَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ وَضِعْفَ ٱلْمَمَاتِ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُ لَكَ عَلَيْنَا
نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

[73-75] O Muhammad these people have left no stone unturned to tempt you away from that which We have revealed to you so that you might fabricate something in Our name.[87] Had you done that, they would have made you their friend. It was just possible that you might have inclined a little towards them, if We had not given you strength. But if you had done so, We would have made you taste double chastisement in this world as well as in the Hereafter: then you would have found no helper against Us.[88]

وَإِن كَادُوا۟ لَيَسْتَفِزُّونَكَ مِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ لِيُخْرِجُوكَ مِنْهَا ۖ وَإِذًا
لَّا يَلْبَثُونَ خِلَٰفَكَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٧٦﴾

[76] And these people have persistently been trying to uproot you from this land and exile you from it, but if they do so, they will not be able to stay here much longer.[89]

سُنَّةَ مَن قَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِن رُّسُلِنَا ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ لِسُنَّتِنَا تَحْوِيلًا

٧٧

[77] This has always been our Way with the Messengers whom We sent before you.[90] and you will find no change in Our way.

أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ لِدُلُوكِ ٱلشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ غَسَقِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَقُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ ۖ إِنَّ قُرْءَانَ ٱلْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

٧٨

وَمِنَ ٱلَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِۦ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

٧٩

[78-79] Establish Salat[91] from the declining of the sun[92] to the darkness of the night,[93] and be particular about the recital of the Qur'an[94] at the dawn of the morning, for the recital of the Qur'an at the dawn is witnessed.[95] Besides this, offer Tahajjud Prayer[96] at night: this is an additional prayer for you.[97] That time is not far when your Lord may exalt you to a laudable position.[98]

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَدْخِلْنِى مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَأَخْرِجْنِى مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَٱجْعَل لِّى مِن لَّدُنكَ سُلْطَـٰنًا نَّصِيرًا

٨٠

[80] And pray. "Lord, whereto Thou takest me, take me with truth, and where from Thou takest me out cause me to

go out with truth:[99] and grant me a power from Thee to help me."[100]

وَقُلْ جَآءَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا ﴿٨١﴾

[81] And declare, "The Truth has come and falsehood has vanished: for falsehood is a thing that must by its nature vanish."[101]

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَآءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۙ وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٨٢﴾

وَإِذَآ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَـَٔا بِجَانِبِهِۦ ۖ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ كَانَ يَـُٔوسًا ﴿٨٣﴾

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَىٰ شَاكِلَتِهِۦ ۖ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

[82-84] We are sending down to you through the revelation of the Qur'an what is a healing and mercy to the Believers, though it adds nothing but loss to the workers of iniquity.[102] Man is a (strange) creature: when We bestow favor on him, he behaves arrogantly and turns his back, but when misfortune befalls him, he begins to despair. O Prophet, say to them, "Everyone is following his own way but your Lord alone knows best who is on the right way."

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾

[85] They ask you about "The Spirit."[103] Say, "This Spirit comes by the command of my Lord, but you have been given only a little of the Knowledge."

وَلَئِن شِئْنَا لَنَذْهَبَنَّ بِٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُ لَكَ بِهِۦ عَلَيْنَا وَكِيلًا ﴿٨٦﴾

إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ إِنَّ فَضْلَهُۥ كَانَ عَلَيْكَ كَبِيرًا ﴿٨٧﴾

قُل لَّئِنِ ٱجْتَمَعَتِ ٱلْإِنسُ وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَأْتُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِۦ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

[86-88] O Muhammad, We may, if We so will, take back from you all of what We have revealed to you: then you will find none to help you in getting it back from Us. All that you have received is by the favor of your Lord. Indeed His favor to you is very great.[104] Declare this, "Even if human beings and jinns should cooperate with one another to bring forth a book like the Qur'an, they will never be able to bring anything like it, even though all of them help one another."[105]

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِى هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ فَأَبَىٰٓ أَكْثَرُ ٱلنَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴿٨٩﴾

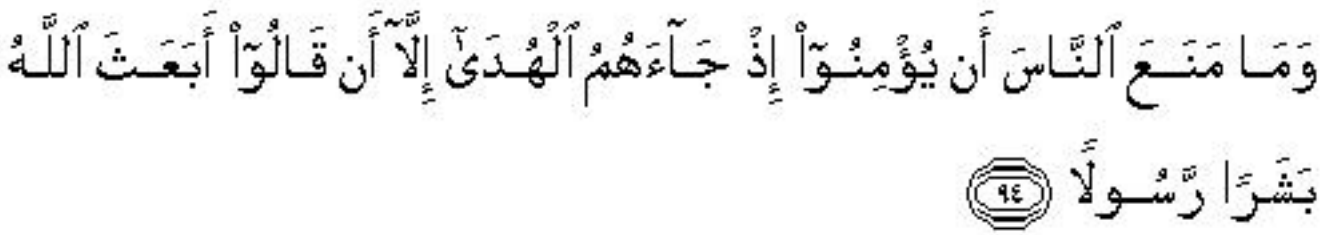
وَقَالُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ يَنۢبُوعًا ﴿٩٠﴾

أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ فَتُفَجِّرَ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرَ خِلَٰلَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ﴿٩١﴾

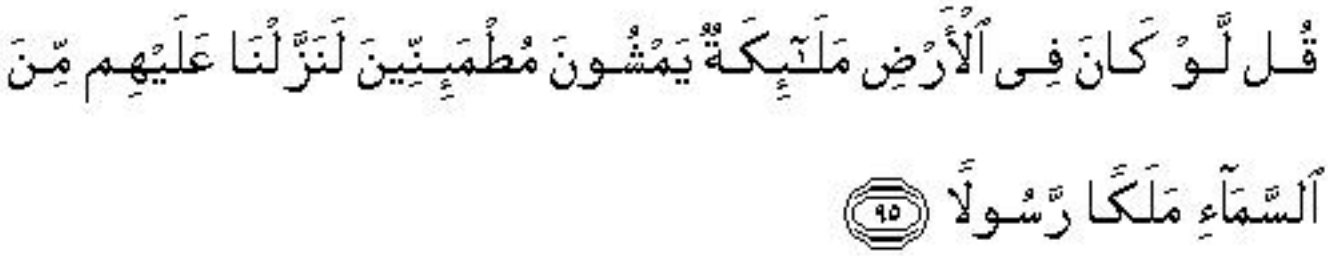
أَوْ تُسْقِطَ ٱلسَّمَآءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا أَوْ تَأْتِىَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ قَبِيلًا ﴿٩٢﴾

أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِّن زُخْرُفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَىٰ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَن نُّؤْمِنَ لِرُقِيِّكَ حَتَّىٰ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَٰبًا نَّقْرَؤُهُۥ ۗ قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّى هَلْ كُنتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٣﴾

[89-93] In this Qur'an, We employed different ways to make the people understand the Message, but the majority of them persisted in unbelief, and they said, "We will not believe in what you say until you cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us, or a garden of date-palms and vines be created for you, and you cause canals to flow in it; or until you cause the sky to fall on us in fragments, as you threaten us; or you bring Allah and the angels face to face before us or a house of gold comes into being for you or you ascend the sky, and we are not going to believe in your ascension until you bring down to us a writing that we may read"O Muhammad, Say to them, "My Lord be glorified! have I ever claimed to be anything more than a human Messenger?"[106]

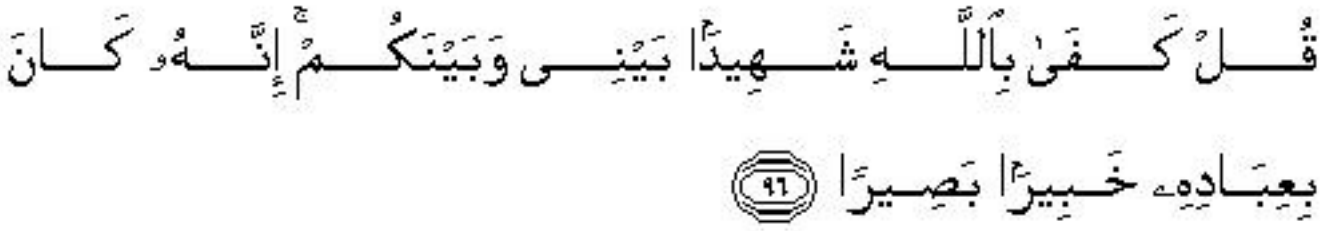


وَمَا مَنَعَ ٱلنَّاسَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوٓاْ إِذْ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓاْ أَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٤﴾



قُل لَّوْ كَانَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ يَمْشُونَ مُطْمَئِنِّينَ لَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَلَكًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٥﴾

[94-95] Whenever Guidance came before the people nothing prevented them from believing in it except this (excuse): they said: "Did Allah send a human being as His Messenger?"[107] Say to them, "Had angels settled on the Earth and moved about in peace, We would certainly have sent an angel as a Messenger to them."[108]



قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًۢا بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٩٦﴾

[96] O Muhammad, say to them, "Allah suffices for a witness to judge between you and me: for He is fully aware of and is observing what His servants are doing."[109]

وَمَن يَهْدِ ٱللَّهُ فَهُوَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِ ۖ وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَلَن
تَجِدَ لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِهِۦ ۖ وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ
ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمْيًا وَبُكْمًا وَصُمًّا ۖ مَّأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ كُلَّمَا
خَبَتْ زِدْنَٰهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾

ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَقَالُوٓا۟ أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَٰمًا
وَرُفَٰتًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا ﴿٩٨﴾

۞ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ
قَادِرٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَهُمْ أَجَلًا لَّا
رَيْبَ فِيهِ فَأَبَى ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾

[97-99] Whomsoever Allah guides, he alone is rightly guided and whomsoever He lets go astray, you will find for such people no other protector and helper besides Him.[110] On the Day of Resurrection, We will muster them prostrate upon their faces, blind, dumb and deaf.[111] Their abode will be Hell: whenever its fire abates, We will rekindle it for them. This is their recompense, for they rejected Our Signs and said, "What! shall we really be raised up anew, when we have been reduced to bones and dust?" Could they not perceive that the same Allah, Who created the Earth and the Heavens, has the power to create the like of them? He has ordained a time for resurrecting them which shall inevitably come, but these workers of iniquity persist in their disbelief.

قُل لَّوۡ أَنتُمۡ تَمۡلِكُونَ خَزَآئِنَ رَحۡمَةِ رَبِّيٓ إِذٗا لَّأَمۡسَكۡتُمۡ خَشۡيَةَ ٱلۡإِنفَاقِۚ وَكَانَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ قَتُورٗا ١٠٠

[100] O Muhammad, say to them, "Had the treasures of your Lord's blessings been in your possession, you would have held them back lest they should be spent up. Indeed man is very narrow minded."[112]

وَلَقَدۡ ءَاتَيۡنَا مُوسَىٰ تِسۡعَ ءَايَٰتِۭ بَيِّنَٰتٖۖ فَسۡـَٔلۡ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ إِذۡ جَآءَهُمۡ فَقَالَ لَهُۥ فِرۡعَوۡنُ إِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ مَسۡحُورٗا ١٠١

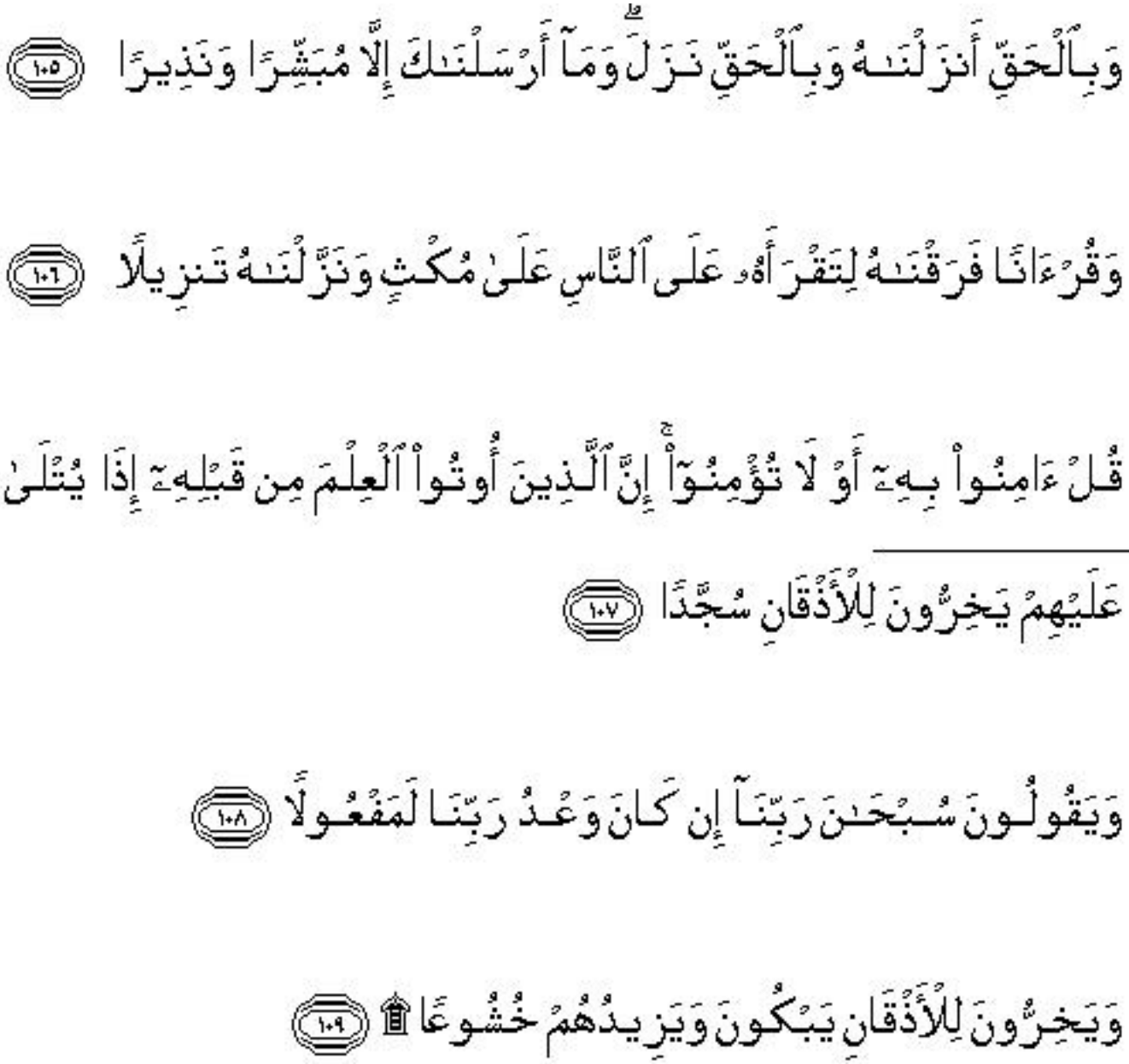
قَالَ لَقَدۡ عَلِمۡتَ مَآ أَنزَلَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِلَّا رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ بَصَآئِرَ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَٰفِرۡعَوۡنُ مَثۡبُورٗا ١٠٢

فَأَرَادَ أَن يَسۡتَفِزَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَأَغۡرَقۡنَٰهُ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥ جَمِيعٗا ١٠٣

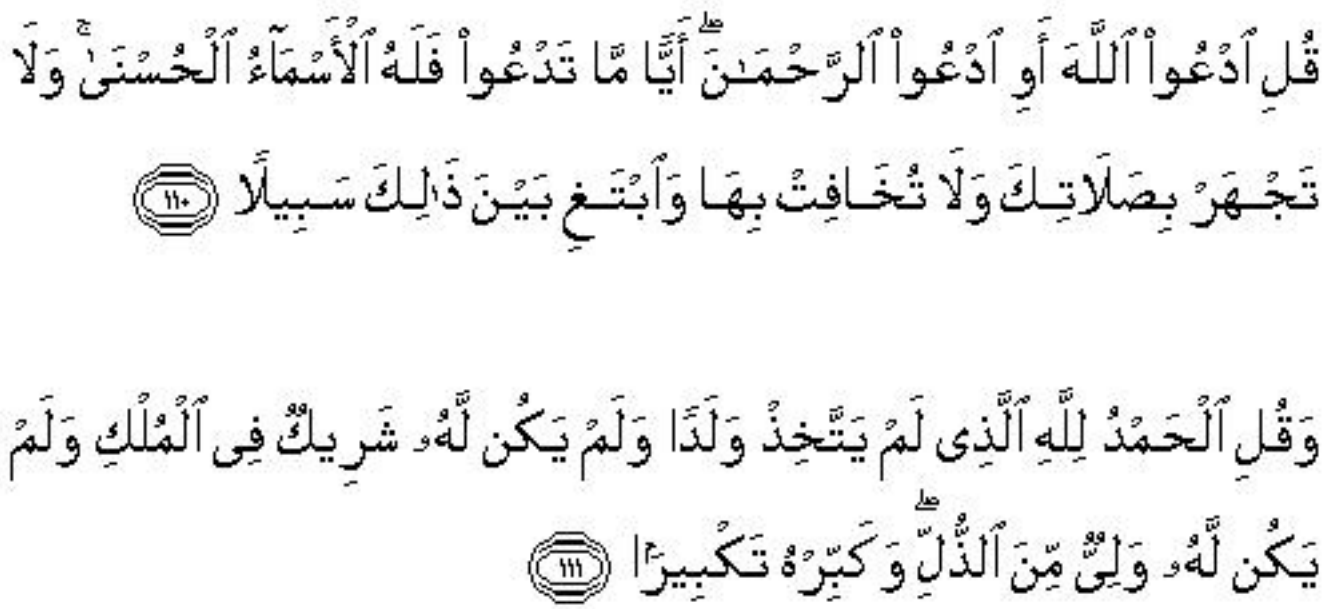
وَقُلۡنَا مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦ لِبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱسۡكُنُواْ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعۡدُ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ جِئۡنَا بِكُمۡ لَفِيفٗا ١٠٤

[101-104] And We gave to Moses nine Signs which were quite manifest.[113] Now you yourself may inquire from the children of Israel about it: when those Signs came before Pharaoh, he uttered these very words: “O Moses, I

consider you to be a bewitched man."[114] Moses replied, "You know it full well that none but the lord of the Heavens and the earth had sent down these signs as eye-openers,[115] and O Pharaoh, I consider you indeed to be a doomed person."[116] At last Pharaoh resolved to uproot Moses and the Israelites from the land but We drowned him and his followers all together. Then we said to the Israelites, "Now you should settle down in the land[117] and when the prescribed time of Resurrection comes about, We will gather all of you together."



[105-109] We have sent down the Qur'an with the truth and with the truth it has come down; and O Muhammad, We have sent you only to give good news (to the Believers) and warning (to the disbelievers).[118] And we have sent down this Qur'an piecemeal so that you may recite it to the people gradually piece by piece, and We have sent it down by gradual Revelations[119] (to suit particular occasions).O Muhammad, say to these people, "Whether you believe in it or not, those who were given the knowledge before this,[120] fall prostrate on their faces when it is recited to them and cry out, "Our lord is glorious and His promise was surely to be fulfilled." And they fall down on their faces, weeping when they listen to it, and this increases their Humility[121] all the more.[122]



قُلِ ٱدْعُواْ ٱللَّهَ أَوِ ٱدْعُواْ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُواْ فَلَهُ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَلَا
تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَٱبْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١١٠﴾

وَقُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ شَرِيكٌ فِى ٱلْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ
يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلِىٌّ مِّنَ ٱلذُّلِّ ۖ وَكَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيرًا ﴿١١١﴾

[110-111] O Prophet, say to them, “You may call Him by any name, Allah or Rahman, for it is all the same by whichever name you call Him because all His names are most excellent.[123] And do not raise your voice high in your Prayer nor make it very low but adopt the middle way[124] between these two and say, “Praise is for that Allah who has begotten no son nor has any partner in His Kingdom nor is helpless to need any supporter,”[125] And glorify Him in the most glorious way.”

1The event referred to in this verse is known "Mi`raj" and "Isra'". According to authentic traditions, this took place a year before Hijrah. In the traditional and biographical literature, its details have been related by a large number (25) of the Companions. Anas bin Malik, Malik bin Sa`asa`ah, Abuzar Ghifari, and Abu Hurairah (Allah be pleased with them all) have related details of the event. Besides them, `Umar, `Ali, `Abdullah bin Mas`ud.....(Allah be pleased with them) have also related some parts of this event.

In this verse, the Qur'an mentions only a part of the Journey, i.e., from Masjid-i-Haram to the Temple at Jerusalem. The object of this journey as stated here was that Allah willed to show His servant some of His signs. The Qur'an does not give any details other than this but we find further details in the traditions, which are to this effect:

One night the Angel Jibril transported the Holy Prophet on al-Buraq from Masjid-i-Haram to Masjid-i-Aqsa (the Temple). There the Holy Prophet offered his prayers along with the other Prophets. Then he took him towards the higher spheres, where he met some of the great Prophets in different spheres. At last he reached the Highest Place in the Heavens, and was received in audience by Allah. It was there that besides other important instructions five daily Prayers were prescribed. Then he returned to the Temple and from there came back to Masjid-i-Haram. During this Journey, according to many traditions, Paradise and Hell were shown to him. We also learn from authentic traditions that on the following day when he

mentioned this event, the disbelievers of Makkah scoffed at him, and some of the Muslims also were skeptical about this.

The above additional details based on the traditions cannot be said to be against the Qur'an, for these are additions to the details given in the Qur'an; therefore, the details related in the traditions cannot be. rejected on the plea that they are against the Qur'an. Nevertheless, if one rejects any part of those details which are given in the traditions, one cannot be declared a renegade. On the other hand, if one rejects the details given in the Qur'an, one does become a renegade.

There are different versions of this Journey. Some say that this happened in a dream, while others are of the opinion that the Holy Prophet was fully awake and went on the Journey with his own physical body; some others say that it was merely a mystic vision which was shown to him. The opening words of this verse: "Glory be to Him, who transported His Servant..." however, clearly show that it was a super-natural event which was brought about by the unlimited power of Allah. It is quite obvious that if the event had been merely a mystic vision, it would not have been introduced by the words which imply that the Being Who brought about this event is free from each and every kind of weakness and defect. Again the words "transported His servant one night" also show that this was not a dream or a vision but a physical journey in which Allah arranged that the Holy Prophet should make observation of His Signs with his physical eyes. Therefore, one is bound to admit that this was not a mere spiritual experience but a physical journey and visual observation which Allah arranged for His Prophet.

It is strange that some people are of the opinion that this extraordinary journey could not be possible, but now when man with his limited-very limited power has been able to reach the moon, it is absurd to deny that Allah with His limitless powers could enable His Messenger to make this journey in the extraordinary short time it took.

Above all, the question whether a thing is possible or not, can arise only in the `case of human beings whose powers are after all limited, but such questions cannot be raised where the All-Powerful Allah is concerned. Only such a person who does not believe that Allah is able to do everything can raise objections against this wonderful Journey about which Allah Himself says that He transported His Servant one night from Masjid-i-Haram to Masjid-i-Aqsa. Likewise all the objections raised against the various details which are given in the traditions are frivolous, except two, which are plausible:

First, if we accept these details, then we shall have to admit drat Allah is confined to a certain place: otherwise there was no need that His Servant should be transported for this purpose to a certain place. Secondly, according to traditions, the Holy Prophet was enabled to observe Paradise and Hell where he saw some people suffering from torment. The objection is: why should sane people be awarded punishments or rewards before the Final Judgment after Resurrection?

As regards the first objection, it is true that Allah is Infinite by Himself, but in dealing with His creation, He

employs those means which suit His imperfect creation not because of any limitation of His, but because of the limitations of His creation. For instance, when He speaks to any of His creature, He adopts the same limited mode of conversation as the addressee can understand, though He has limitless modes of speech. Likewise, when He desires to show some of the wonderful Signs of His Kingdom to a servant. He transports him to the place where the' Signs are to be shown. It is obvious that the servant cannot see at one and the same time the whole of the universe as Allah does, for Allah has no need to go to any place at all for this purpose but the servant has. The same applies to the appearance of the servant before the Creator. Though Allah is not confined to any locality, it is necessary for the servant to go to the place where His manifestations have been concentrated for his observation because it is not possible for the servant with his limited powers to go in His Presence in His Infinite Capacity.

As regards the second objection, it is based on the lack of understanding the thing: many of the Signs which were shown to the Holy Prophet were symbolical. For instance, a small hole from which a fat ox came out but could not go back into it, represented mischief personified. In the same way the adulterers were shown as if they had fresh meat before them but instead of that they were eating rotten flesh. Similarly punishments for evil deeds shown to him were only symbolic observations of the punishments in the Hereafter so that he might see in advance the things which would take place in the Hereafter.

In regard to the Mi `raj it should be kept in view that all the Prophets were enabled by Allah to see His Signs in the heavens and the earth according to their ranks. And for this purpose all the material curtains were lifted so that they could see with their naked eyes the unseen realities, to which they were required to invite the people.

This was done so that the Prophets could say with full conviction what they had seen with their own eyes. For this experience would distinguish there from a philosopher who bases all his theories on guess-work and cannot say that he bears witness to what he claims. In contrast to philosophers, Prophets could say that they bore witness to the things which they presented because they had seen them with their own eyes.

2As this verse has no apparent connection with the event of Mi'raj, it may appear to a cursory reader that either of the two verses has been misplaced here. But if we try to understand the matter in the context of the theme of the whole Surah, we can easily understand the connection between the two. .The main object of this Surah is to give a warning to the disbelievers of Makkah. That is why the mention of Mi`raj has been made in the very first verse, as if to say, "The person whom you dub as an impostor and reject the Book sent down to him, has just now seen with his naked eyes great Signs of Allah. So you should learn a lesson from the history of the Israelites who discarded the Book of Allah and therefore, were given painful punishment."

3The Arabic word "vakil" (guardian) denotes a person who is trustworthy and can be depended upon in regard to one's affairs and may be turned to for guidance and help.

4That is, "You are the descendants of Noah and his companions;" therefore ,you should behave in a manner as behooves such people. You should make Allah alone your Guardian, for your ancestors escaped death from the flood only because they had made Allah their Guardian."

5The original Arabic word "Al-kitab"does not stand here for the Torah but for all the Divine Books.

6Such warnings have been given in different Books of the Bible. As regards their first mischief and its evil consequences, the Israelites were warned in the Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the warnings about their second mischief and its severe punishments are found in Matthew and Luke. Below are given extracts to confirm this statement of the Qur'an.

Prophet David was the first to warn the Israelites in his Psalms of their first mischief:

"They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the Lord commanded them: But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters ....Therefore, was the. wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. And he gave them into the hand of the heathen;" Psalms: Chapter 106, vv. 34-38, 40; 41. The above events have been described in the past tense as if they had already actually happened. The Scriptures employ this mode of expression to emphasize the importance of the prophesies.

When this mischief actually carne to pass, Prophet Isaiah warned them of its ruinous consequences: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that arc corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: everyone loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore, saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel. Ah I will case me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers. Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore, the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts. Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn: and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground. Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: That

this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: Therefore, this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, ... And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a shred to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit." (Isaiah, Chapter 1:verses 4-5; 21-24,Chapter 2:verses 6,8; Chapter 3: verses 16-17, 25-26; Chapter 8: verse 7; Chapter 30: verses 9-10, 12-14.)

After this Prophet Jeremiah raised his voice when the flood of corruption swept away everything before it.

"Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity and are become vain?

And I brought you into a plentiful country to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination. For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy hands: and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest,,playing the harlot. As the thief is ashamed when he is found. so is the house of Israel ashamed: they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets, Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us. But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble; for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah. The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with sticks. Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgments that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbor's wife. Shall I not visit for these things? Saith the Lord: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understand what they say. Their quiver is an open sepulchre, they arc all mighty men. And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should cat: they shall cat up thy flocks and thine herds; they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword. And the carcases of this people shall

be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away. Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of- the bridegroom and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.

And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the Lord; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy." (Jeremiah, Chapter 2: verses 5-7, 20, 26-28; Chapter 3: verses 6-9; Chapter 5: verses 1,7-9 15-17; Chapter 7: verses 33, 34; Chapter 15: verses 2, 3.)

Then Prophet Ezekiel was raised to warn them in time. Addressing Jerusalem he said:

The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself. Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood. In thee they have set light by father and mother: in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow. Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my Sabbaths. In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood: and in thee they eat upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they commit lewdness. In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution. And one hath committed abomination with his neighbor's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter. In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbors by extortion and hast forgotten me, can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and disperse thee in the countries, and will consume thy filthiness out of thee. And thou shalt take thine inheritance in thyself in the sight of the heathen, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." (Ezekiel, Chapter 22: verses 3, 6-12, 14-16.)

Besides the above mentioned warnings which were given to Israelites at the time of their first mischief, Prophet Jesus Christ warned them of the consequences of their second' great mischief. In a forceful address he criticized their morel degeneration like this:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gatherth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. " (Matthew, Chapter 23: verses 37, 38; Chapter 24: verse 2.)

Then, when the Roman officials were taking Prophet Jesus out for crucifixion, and a great company of

people including women were following him bewailing and lamenting, he addressed them and gave his final warnings:

But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say; Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. (Luke, Chapter 23: verses 2830.)

7This refers to the terrible destruction that the Israelites suffered at the hands of the Assyrians and Babylonians. One cannot fully appreciate the historical background of this merely from the extracts that have been reproduced above from the Books of the Prophets. A brief history of the Israelites is also needed so that a student may become acquainted with all the causes and circumstances on account of which Allah removed this nation, that professed to believe in a revealed Book, from the leadership of mankind and turned it into a humiliated, condemned and backward community.

When, after the death of Prophet Moses, the Israelites entered Palestine it was inhabited by the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzittes, Hivites, Jebusites, the Philistines, etc. These communities had adopted the worst kind of idolatry, their supreme deity being Ayl whom they regarded as the father of gods and who was usually represented by the bull-images. His consort was called Asherah from whom had descended a whole line of gods and goddesses, about 70 in number. The most powerful god among them was Baal who was regarded as the god of rain and growth and the lord of the earth and heavens. In the northern regions his consort was called Anathoth and in Palestine Ashtaroth. These two were the goddesses of love and procreation. Besides them, there was a god of death, a god of disease and famine, and a goddess of health, and thus all the worldly powers and agencies stood divided among a large number of deities. The people had ascribed such dirty and base qualities and acts to these deities that even a worst offender against morality would shun being known by them. Obviously the people who have adopted such mean deities for worship and devotion cannot remain secure from the worst kind of moral degeneration and the modern excavations have shown this conclusively.

Child sacrifice was a common thing among them. Their places of worship had turned into brothels, where women were kept as religious prostitutes and illicit relations with them were regarded as a part of worship and devotion.

The Israelites had clearly been told in the instructions given in the Torah that they should destroy those communities and wrest the land of Palestine from them, and that they should avoid mixing up with those people and ward off their moral and ideological weaknesses:

But when the Israelites entered Palestine they set this guidance aside. They not only did not establish a united kingdom of their own but fell a prey to tribal parochialism. Each of their tribes was content to take a part of the captured land and become a separate and independent state. This disunity among them did

not leave any of the tribes strong enough to purge its territory completely of the idolaters, and therefore they had to allow them to live side by side with them in the same land. Not only this, but there had remained in the conquered territories a cumber of small city states of these idolatrous communities which the Israelites had nor been able to subjugate. It is this very thing which has been complained against in the extract of the Psalms reproduced above in the beginning of E.N. 6.

The first consequence of intermixing with those communities, was that the Israelites also became idolatrous, and gradually began to adopt other moral evils also. This has been complained about in the Book of Judges as below: "And the children of Israel did evil, in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger. And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth". (Judges, 2: 11-13.)

The second consequence suffered by the Israelites was that the communities whose city-states they had left unconquered and the Philistines whose land they had not at all touched set up a united front against them and drove them out of a major part of Palestine by incessant attacks, so much so that they deprived them of the Holy Ark of their Lord. At last, the Israelites felt the need of Establishing a united kingdom of their own under one ruler, and on their request Prophet Samuel appointed Saul as their king in 1020 B.C. (For details see vv. 246-48 and E.N.'s. 268-270 of AI-Baqarah.)

This united kingdom was ruled by three kings: Saul (1020 B.C. to 1004. B.C.), Prophet David (1004 to 965 B.C.) and Prophet Solomon (365 to 926 B.C.). These kings brought to completion the mission that had been left incomplete by the Israelites after the death of Prophet Moses. They annexed all the territories except the Phoenician state on the northern and the Philistine state on the southern coast, which, of course, became tributaries.

After the death of Prophet Solomon the Israelites again adopted the ways of the world and fought among themselves and split into two independent kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel in the northern Palestine and Jordan with Samaria ,as its capital, and the kingdom of Judah in the southern Palestine and Edom with Jerusalem as its capital. These kingdoms were strife-ridden from the very . beginning and this state of affairs persisted till the end.

The rulers and people of the kingdom of Israel were the first to be affected grievously by the ideological and moral weaknesses of the neighboring communities. Specially after the marriage of its ruler, Ahab, with the idolatrous princess Jezebel of Zidon, idolatry and other evils began to spread unchecked among the Israelites under the official patronage. Prophets Elias and Elisha tried their very best to check this deluge but the Israelites who were rapidly degenerating, did not heed their warning. At last the wrath of Allah overtook the kingdom of Israel in the shape of the Assyrians who started subjecting Palestine to incessant attacks from 900 B.C. downward. During this period, Prophet Amos (787-747 B.C.) and them

Prophet Hosea(747-735 B.C.) rose and warned the Israelites again and again but the wretched, depraved people did not heed their warnings at all, and transgressed all limits. Prophet Amos was banished by the king of Israel from the realm of Samaria and warned not to preach his mission in the country Not very long after this the wrath of Allah burst upon the kingdom of Israel and its people. The Assyrian king Sargon took Samaria in 721 B.C.and put an end to this northern kingdom. Thousands of Israelites were put to the sword and 27 thousand of their leading men were driven out of their homeland and scattered in the eastern districts of the Assyrian empire and replaced by settlers from other parts of the empire. When the remaining Israelites intermixed with the settlers they also lost gradually their national and cultural identity.

The other kingdom of the Israelites, called the kingdom of Judah, which was set up in southern Palestine also began to adopt godless ways soon after the death of Prophet Solomon, though its moral degeneration took place at a slower pace than that of Israel. Therefore, it was allowed to exist for a longer period. Then, like the kingdom of Israel, it also began to be subjected to continual attacks, its cities ruined and its capital besieged, but this kingdom could not be wholly destroyed by the Assyrians; it only became a tributary. Afterwards, when in spite of the best reformatory efforts of Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah the people of Judah did not give up idol-worship and other moral evils, king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked and captured the whole of Judah in 598 B.C. including Jerusalem and took the king of Judah as prisoner. Even then the Israelites did not mend their ways and paid no heed to the warnings and guidance of Prophet Jeremiah: Instead of reforming their ways, they started making plans to change their fate by revolting against Babylon. At last in 587 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar punished them heavily by invading Judah and destroyed all its important cities. He razed Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple to the ground and did not leave a wall of it standing in place. He drove a large part of the Israelite population out of their land and scattered them into the adjoining countries. The people who were left behind were cursed and subjected to all kinds of humiliations by the neighboring communities.

This was the first calamity that came as a warning to the Israelites and the first chastisement that they suffered as a result therof.

8This refers to the lease of time that the Israelites (That is the people of Judah) got after their release from the captivity of Babylon. As for the people of Israel and Samaria, they did not rise again after their moral and spiritual degeneration. But among the people of Judah there still were some people who practiced the truth and invited others also to follow it. They carried on their work of invitation to the truth among the remaining Israelites in Judah and exhorted those also to repent and follow the truth who had been driven out into Babylon and other lands. At last the mercy of Allah came to their help. The downfall of Babylon started. The Persian king, Cyrus, took Babylon in 539 B.C. and in the following year issued a decree allowing the Israelites to return to and re-settle in their homeland. The Israelites began to return home in caravan after caravan, and ties continued for along time. Cyrus also allowed the Israelites to rebuild the Temple of Solomon but the neighboring communities who had settled in this land resisted it. At last Darfius I appointed Zerubbabel, a grandson of the last king of Judah, governor of Judah in 522 B.

C. who got the Temple rebuilt under the care of Prophet Haggai, Prophet Zechariah and Joshua. In 458 B. C. Ezra arrived in Judah along with an exiled group and the Persian king Artaxerxes made the following decree.

"And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.

And whosoever will not do the law of thy God and the law of the king let judgment be executed speedily upon him whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment. "(Ezra, 7:25-26).

Taking advantage of this decree, Ezra carried out the revival of the religion of Prophet Moses. He gathered together all the righteous and good people from the Israelites and set up a strong organization. He compiled and spread the Pentateuch which contained the Torah, made arrangements for the religious education of the Israelites, enforced the law and started purging the people of moral and ideological weaknesses which the had adopted by intermixing with the other communities. He compelled they Jews to divorce the idolatrous wives they had married, and took a covenant from them that they would worship God alone and follow His Law only.

In 455 B.C. an exiled group came back to Judah under Nehemiah whom the Persian king appointed as the ruler of Jerusalem and ordered him to build the wall round the city. Thus, after 150 years the Holy city was fully restored and became the center of Jewish religion and culture, But the Israelites of northern Palestine, and Samaria did not benefit by the work of revival done by Ezra. They built a rival sanctuary on Mount Gerizim, and tried to make it the religious center for the people of the Book. This caused a further, and perhaps the final, split Between the Jews and the Samaritans.

The Jews suffered a set-back for a while with the fall of the Persian Empire and the conquests of Alexander the Great and the rise of the Greeks. After the death of Alexander, his kingdom was subdivided into three empires. Syria tell to the lot of the Seleucide empire, with Antioch as its capital, whose ruler Antiochus III incorporated Palestine into his dominions in 198 B.C. These Greek conquerors who were idolatrous by precept and freelance morally felt greatly ill at ease with the Jewish religion and culture. So, they began to propagate the rival Greek way of life and culture by political and economic pressure, and were able to win over a strong section of the Israelites who became their helpers. This external interference caused a split in the Jewish nation. One group among them readily adopted the Greek dress, the Greek language, the Greek way of life and the Greek sports, while the other persistently stuck to their own culture and way of life.

In 175 B.C. when Antiochus IV (who was called Epiphanes, that is, the manifestation of God) came to the throne, he used all his power and authority to stamp out the Jewish religion and culture. He got idols

installed in the Holy Temple at Jerusalem and forced the Jews to prostrate themselves before them. He strictly forbade the rite of offering the sacrifices at the altar, and commanded the Jews to offer sacrifices to idolatrous deities instead. He proposed death penalty for those who would keep the Torah in their houses, or observe the Sabbath or perform circumcision of their children. But the Jews did not yield to this coercion, and started a powerful resistance movement, known in history as the revolt of the Maccabees. Though in this struggle the sympathies of the Greece-oriented Jews were with the Greeks, and they fully cooperated with the despots of Antioch to crush the Maccabean revolt, the common Jews who still retained the religious fervor of the days of Ezra sided with the Maccabees, who were ultimately able to drive out the Greeks and establish a free religious state which remained in power till 67 B.C This state prospered and in time extended to all those territories which had once been under the control the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. It was able to annex a part of the land of the Philistines which had remained unconquered even in the days of Prophets David and Solomon (Peace be upon them).

This is the historical background of the verse of the Qur'an under commentary.

9The historical background of the second degeneration and its chastisement is as follows:

The moral and religious fervor with which the Maccabees had started their movement gradually cooled down and was replaced by love of the world and empty external form. A split appeared among them and they themselves invited the Roman General, Pompey, to come to Palestine. Pompey turned his attention to this land in 63 B.C. and, taking Jerusalem, put an end to the political freedom of the Jews. But the Roman conquerors preferred to rule their dominions through the agency of the local chiefs rather than by direct control. Therefore, a local government was set up in Palestine which eventually passed into the hand of Herod, a clever Jew, in 40 B.C. This ruler is well known as Herod the Great. He ruled over the whole of Palestine and Jordan from 40 to 4 B.C. On the one hand Herod patronized the religious leaders to please the Jews, and on the other, he propagated the Roman culture and won the goodwill of Caesar by showing his loyalty and faithfulness to the Roman Empire. During, his reign, the Jews degenerated and fell to the lowest ebb of moral and religious life.

On the death of Herod his kingdom was subdivided into three parts. His son, Archelaus, became the ruler of Samaria, Judea and northern Edom. In A.D. 6. however, Caesar Augustus deprived him of his authority and put the state under his Roman governor, and this arrangement continued up till A.D. 41. This was precisely the time when Prophet Jesus (Peace be upon him) appeared to reform the Israelites whose religious leaders opposed him tooth and nail and even tried to get him the death sentence by the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate.

The second son of Herod, Herod Antipas, became the ruler of Galilee and Jordan in northern Palestine, and he was the person who got Prophet Yahya (John) (Peace be upon him) beheaded at the request and desire of a dancing girl.

Herod's third son, Philip, succeeded to the territories bounded on one side by river Yermuk and on the other by Mount Hermon. Philip had been much more deeply influenced by the Roman and Greek cultures than his father and brothers. Therefore the preaching of the truth could not have even so much effect in his land as it had in the other parts of Palestine.

In A.D. 41, the Romans appointed Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, ruler of the territories that had once been under Herod himself. Coming into power this man did whatever he could to persecute the followers of Prophet Jesus (Peace be upon him) and used all the forces at his disposal to crush the movement that was functioning under the guidance of the Disciples to inculcate fear of God in the people and reform their morals.

In order to have a correct estimate of the condition of the common Jews and their religious leaders, one should study the criticisms leveled by Prophet Jesus on them in his sermons contained in the four Gospels. Even a religious man like Prophet John was beheaded before their eyes and not a voice was raised in protest against this barbarity. Then all the religious leaders of the community unanimously demanded death sentence for Prophet Jesus, and none but a few righteous men were there to mourn this depravity. Above all, when Pontius Pilate asked these depraved people, ' which condemned prisoner he should release, according to the custom, at Passover, Jesus or Barabbas the robber', they all cried with one voice 'Barabbas'. This was indeed the last chance Allah gave to the Jews, and then their fate was sealed.

Not long after this, a serious conflict started between the Jews and the Romans, which developed into an open revolt by the former between A.D. 64 and G6. Both Herod Agrippa II and the Roman procurator Floris failed to put down the rebellion. At last, the Romans crushed it by a strong military action and in A. D. 70 Titus took Jerusalem by force. About 1,33,000 people were put to the sword, 67 thousand made slaves, and thousands sent to work in the Egyptian mines and to other cities so that they could be used in amphitheaters for being torn by wild beasts or become the "practice-target" for the sword fighters. All the tall and beautiful girls were picked out for the army of conquest and the Holy City of Jerusalem and the Temple were pulled down to the ground. After this the Jewish influence so disappeared from Palestine that the Jews could not regain power for two thousand years, and the Holy Temple could never be rebuilt.. Afterwards the Roman Emperor, Hadrian, restored Jerusalem but renamed it Aelia. The Jews, however, were not allowed to enter it for centuries. This was the calamity that the Jews suffered on account of their degeneration for the second time.

10Though this admonition has been given as a parenthesis at the end of the address to the children of Israel, it does not mean that this and the address itself are solely meant for them. As a chatter of fact, the whole address is really directed towards the disbelievers of Makkah but, instead of addressing them directly, some important historical events from the history of the children of Israel have been cited in order to serve as admonition for them.

11This means to warn those persons or people or nations who do not take a lesson from the admonitions of the Qur'an to be ready to undergo that chastisement which Israelites had to suffer.

12This is in answer to the foolish demands of the disbelievers of Makkah who repeatedly demanded from the Holy Prophet to bring about that torment with which he threatened them. It is closely connected with the preceding verse, as if to say, "O foolish people instead of asking goodness you demand the torment: can't you realize the sufferings of the community which is visited by God's torment?"

It also contains a subtle warning to those Muslims who prayed for punishment for those disbelievers who persecuted them and rejected the Message obdurately; there were still among those disbelievers many such people who afterwards embraced Islam and became its standard bearers in the world. That is wiry Allah says, "Man does so because he is very hasty and impatient; " He prays to Allah for all such things as are the immediate need of the time, though often subsequent experience shows that if Allah had granted his prayer, it would have been very harmful to him.

13Allah invites man to study the wisdom that underlies variety in the world and not get confused and long for monotonous uniformity. In fact, the whole system is based on variety, distinctiveness and diversity in things. For the sake of illustration let us take the case of the signs of day and night: "You see these underlying opposite things daily in your life. If you just consider the underlying wisdom, you will find that without this variety there would have been hardly any activity in the world. Likewise great wisdom lies in the creation of the people with different temperaments, thoughts and inclinations. If Allah had made all men righteous by birth or annihilated disbelievers and wicked people and left only believers and submissive people in the world, the purpose of men's creation could not leave been realized. Therefore, . it is wrong to desire that there should only be day and no night. The righteous thing is that these people, who have got the light of guidance, should exert their utmost to remove the darkness of deviation. It is their duty that if they find darkness like that of night, they should pursue it like the sun so that the light of guidance should re-appear."

14"We have fastened the augury of every man to his own neck": therefore one does not need to take omens from a bird. : This is to remove the superstition of the disbelievers who used to take omens from birds etc., as if to say, "The causes and consequences of good fortune or bad fate exist in man's own person. He merits good fortune because of his own good conduct and good judgment, and likewise, suffers the consequences of evil fate by the lack of these". This was necessitated because foolish people always try to attribute their misfortunes to external causes, when in fact our fate depends on our own deeds, good or bad. If they probe into the causes, they will find that their fate was decided by their own good or bad qualities and judgments.

15This is to impress that if a person adopts the right way, he does not do any favor to God or His Messenger or a reformer but he himself gets its benefits. On the other hand, if a person deviates from the

right way, he can do no harm to God or His Messenger or a reformer, for they desire only to protect men from wrong ways and guide him on to the Right Way, and not for any selfish ends. Therefore, the right course for a wise man is to adopt the righteous way, when it becomes distinct to him what is truth and what is falsehood. On the other hand, if he rejects Truth because of his prejudices and self-interest, he will be his own enemy and not a well-wisher.

16The Qur'an has laid great stress on the doctrine of personal responsibility at several places, for one cannot follow the Right Way scrupulously without understanding fully its implication. It means that, everyone is solely responsible for one's moral conduct and is accountable to God as an individual in one's own person and no other person can share the burden of responsibility with him. As an instance, we they take the case of a particular action or a particular way of conduct in which a generation or a community or a large number of people had collaborated. When the people will assemble before Allah on the Day of Judgment their collective action will be analyzed so as to lay the burden of its responsibility on each and every person who had been conducive to it, and rewarded or punished in accordance with it. Neither will a person be punished for. the part another had played in its performance nor shall the burden of the sin of one individual laid on the shoulders of another. This doctrine has been emphasized over and over again so that a wise man should not act in imitation of another or justify Iris own conduct by similar deeds of others. If a particular person feels the sense of his own responsibility, he will act in such a way as to come out successful on the Day of Judgment, regardless of what the others do.

17This is another doctrine which has been impressed on the minds by the Quran in different ways. This is to emphasize the basic importance that a Messenger has in the dispensation of Divine justice because this is determined in the light of the Message brought by him. This will be employed as an argument in favor of or against the concerned people. Otherwise the infliction of punishment on the people would be unjust for in that case they could argue that they should not be punished as the knowledge of the righteous way had not been conveyed to them. But after the Message had been conveyed to a particular people, and they had rejected it, there would be left. no excuse for them.

It is an irony that instead of accepting the Message some foolish people are misled by reading verses like these and they ask such absurd questions: "What will be the position of those, who might not have received the message of any Prophet?" The wise course for such persons would have been to ask themselves what their own position will be on the Day of Judgment, because they themselves had received the Message. As regards other people, Allah knows best who has received the Message, and when, how and to what extent and what attitude a certain person adopted towards it. In short, Allah alone is aware of whether a particular person received the Message in such a way as to fulfill the required condition for punishment.

18Here a definite form of Divine procedure for the destruction of a people has been stated. When the well-to-do people of a habitation become disobedient, it is a portent that it is doomed to destruction. After their persistent and continuous transgression, the well-to-do people become so obdurate in their disobedience

that they begin to discard the instinctive dictates of their conscience. The same thing has been stated in v. 16: "When We decree that a habitation should be destroyed We give Commands to its well-to-do people and they show disobedience." This is because Allah has created conscience for the guidance of man. Therefore, the dictates of conscience are really the commands of Allah. Thus it has become quite obvious that by "When We decree that a habitation should be destroyed" is not meant that Allah intends to destroy it without any reason. It is destroyed because after their disobedience "that habitation incurs Our just wrath and We totally exterminate it." The habitation deserves such a punishment because its common people follow the well-to-do people who are the factual leaders of a community and are mainly responsible for the corruption of the community. At first the well-to-do people commit acts of disobedience, wickedness, mischief, cruelty and tyranny and then the common people follow them and incur the torment of Allah. Incidentally, this is a warning for every community that it should be very discreet and prudent in choosing and electing its leaders and rulers, for if the latter are mean and wicked, they will inevitably lead the community to destruction.

19The Arabic word Ajilah literally means something which can be had immediately, but the Qur'an employs it as a term for "This World" which yields its advantages and results in this worldly life. Its antonym is Akhirat (Hereafter) which will yield its advantages and results after death in the life of the Next World.

20The person who does not believe in the life of the Hereafter deserves Hell, because he strives only for the successes and good things of this world and his endeavors are confined to material objects. Consequently, such a person becomes a mere worshiper of this world and adopts wrong conduct, for he has no sense of personal responsibility and accountability to God and ultimately deserves the torment of Hell.

21"His endeavors will be appreciated": he will be rewarded for the efforts he had made for success in the Hereafter.

22Allah gives the provisions of this world both to those who strive for this world and to those who strive for the Hereafter, but it is the gift of Allah alone and not of anyone else. It does not lie in the power of the worshipers of the world to deprive the seekers after the Hereafter of these provisions: nor have the seekers after the Hereafter any power to withhold these provisions from the worshipers of the world.

23This is to show that the seekers after the Hereafter have been exalted over the worshipers of the world even in this worldly life. However, this exaltation is not in regard to the good things of this world -rich food and dress, palatial dwellings, limousines, helicopters and other grand things, but it is from another point of view. They enjoy that true honor, love and good-will which is denied to the tyrants and the rich people in spite of the fact that they may be indigent. This is because whatever the seekers after the Hereafter get in this world, it is earned in righteous and honest ways, while the worshipers of the world amass wealth

by employing dishonest and cruel ways. Then the former spend what they get with prudence and righteousness. They fulfill the obligations they owe to others. They spend their money in the Way of Allah and to please Allah on the needy .and the indigent. In contrast to them, the worshipers of this world spend their money in .the enjoyment of luxuries, wicked works, corruption and spreading other evil things. This makes the former models of God-worship and purity in every respect and distinguishes them so clearly, from the worshipers of the world that they shine in exaltation over the latter. These things clearly indicate that in the next world the grades of the seekers after the Hereafter will be far greater and their superiority far higher than those of the worshipers of the world.

24Or it can be rendered like this: "Do not invent another deity besides Allah", or "Do not set up another as a deity beside Allah."

25In the succeeding verses, those main basic principles have been put forward on which Islam desires to build the whole structure of human life. These form, so to say, the Manifesto of the Invitation of the Holy Prophet declared by him at the end of the Makki stage of his mission, on the eve of the new stage at Al-Madinah so that it should be known to all that the new Islamic Society and State were going to be built on such and such ideological, moral, cultural economic and legal principles. (Please also refer to vv. 151-153 and E.N.'s thereof of Chapter VI).

26This commandment is very comprehensive. It prohibits not only the worship of anyone except Allah but also implies that one should obey and serve and submit to Allah alone without question: one should accept His Commandments and Law alone to be worthy of obedience and His authority to be supreme above all. This was not merely an instruction confined to a religious creed and individual practice but it served as the foundation of the moral, cultural, and political system which was practically established in Al-Madinah by the Holy Prophet. Its first and foremost principle was that Allah alone is the Master, Sovereign and Law-giver.

27This verse enjoins that after Allah's right, the greatest of all the human rights is the right of parents: therefore, the children should obey and serve and respect their parents. The collective morality of society should make it incumbent on children to be grateful and respectful to their parents, they should serve them as they nursed and brought them up in their childhood. Above all, this verse is not merely a moral recommendation but is the basis of the rights and powers of parents the details of which we find in the Books of Hadith and Fiqh. Moreover, respectful behavior and obedience to and observance of the rights of parents comprise the most important element of the material education and moral training in the Islamic Society and civilization. Incidentally, all these things have determined for ever the principle that the Islamic State shall make the family life sound and secure by laws, administrative regulations and educational policy and prevent its disintegration.

28These three articles (3-5) are meant to impress that a man should not reserve his earnings and his

wealth exclusively for his own person. He should do his utmost to fulfill his own necessities of life in a moderate way and render the rights of his relatives, neighbors and other needy persons as well. This attitude will help create the spirit of cooperation, sympathy and justice in the collective Islamic life. Thus every relative will cooperate with the other and every well-to-do person will help the needy in Iris neighborhood and a wayfarer would find himself an honorable guest among generous hosts. The conception of rights should be so extensive that every person should consider that all other human beings have rights on his person and his property so that he should serve them with the idea that he is rendering their rights and is not doing any favor to them. In that case one would beg pardon of the other if one was unable to serve him and would pray to God to send his blessings upon him to enable him to serve His servants.

These articles of the Islamic Manifesto were not merely confined to moral teachings but these formed the basis of the Commandments of Zakat and voluntary charity. The laws of inheritance and of making will and endowments were based on these articles. The rights of the orphans were determined by these and it was made obligatory on every habitation to entertain a wayfarer gratis for at least three days. Subsequently the whole moral system was formed so as to create the feelings of generosity, sympathy and cooperation. So much so that the people began to realize the importance of and observe voluntarily the moral rights which could neither be demanded legally nor enforced by law.

29"Do not tie your hand to your neck" is the 'literal translation of the Text which means: "Do not be parsimonious" ; "nor stretch it without any restraint" means, "Do not be extravagant" . If verses 27 and 29 are read together, it becomes obvious that the Qur'an desires the people to follow the golden mean, i.e., they should neither be so parsimonious as to prevent the circulation of wealth nor so extravagant as to destroy their own economy. On the contrary, they should learn to behave in a balanced manner so that they should spend money wherever it should be spent and refrain from becoming spendthrifts so as to involve themselves into trouble. As a matter of fact, it is ingratitude towards Allah's favor to spend money for the sake of show, luxury and sinful acts and similar things which are neither man's real necessities nor useful. Therefore, those people who spend money lavishly on such things as these are the brethren of Satan

These clauses coo, are not merely meant to be moral instructions for individuals. They are intended to safeguard the Islamic Society against extravagance by moral instruction, collective pressure and legal restrictions. Accordingly, in the Islamic State of Al-Madinah practical steps were taken to safeguard the community against extravagance. First, many forms of extravagance and luxury were forbidden by law. Secondly, legal measures were taken against it. Thirdly. social reforms were introduced to put an end to those customs which involved extravagance. The Government was empowered to prevent people from the obvious forms of extravagance. Above all, Zakat and voluntary charity helped to break parsimony and the lust of hoarding money. Besides these measures, a public opinion was created that enabled the people to discriminate between generosity and extravagance and thrift and parsimony: so much so that parsimonious people were looked down upon as ignominious and the thrifty people were regarded as

honorable. This moral and mental attitude became a part and parcel of the Muslim society, and even today the parsimonious people and boarders are looked down upon in the Muslim society, while the generous people are respected everywhere.

30That is, "Man cannot realize the wisdom of the disparity of wealth among the people" : therefore, man should not try to interfere by artificial means with the natural distribution of wealth. It is wrong to level down natural inequality or to aggravate it by artificial means so as to make it unjust. Both the extremes are wrong. The best economic system is that which is established on the Divine Way of the division of wealth.

As a result of the realization of the wisdom of economic disparity, no such problems arose which might have made that disparity an evil in itself so as to demand the creation of a classless society. On the contrary, in the righteous society established at Al-Madinah on these Divine principles which are akin to human nature, the economic differences were not artificially disturbed. But by means of moral and legal reforms these became the means of many moral, spiritual and cultural blessings and benefits instead of becoming the means of injustice. Thus, the wisdom of the disparity created by the Creator of the Universe was practically demonstrated at Al-Madinah.

31This verse cuts at the very root of the movement of birth control, which has been going on from ancient times to our present age. It was the fear of want that induced people to kill their children or resort to abortion. In our age another plan has been added to these, i.e., contraception. This article of the Islamic Manifesto prohibits the people from reducing the number of mouths by artificial means taut exhorts them to increase the means of production according to the natural methods enjoined by .Allah. According to this article, it is one of the biggest mistakes of man to check birth rate as a solution to the want and scarcity of provisions: therefore, it warns him, as if to say, "O man, it is not you who make arrangement for food, but Allah, Who settled you in the land and has been providing for you and will provide for those who will come after you". History tells us that the food resources have always expanded in proportion to the number of inhabitants of a country: nay, often they have exceeded far snore than the needs of the inhabitants. Thus it is a folly on the part of man to interfere with the arrangements of Allah.

It is very significant that as a result of this teaching no movement has ever been started to control birth nor has there been any inclination to infanticide among the Muslims ever since the revelation of the Qur'an.

32"Do not even go near fornication." This commandment is meant both for individuals and society as a whole. It warns each individual not only to guard against adultery or fornication itself but against all those things that lead to or stimulate it. As regards society as a whole the commandment enjoins it to make such arrangements as prevent adultery and eradicate the means and stimulants that lead to adultery. Therefore, the society should employ all those legal and educative means that help develop such an environment as prevents and eradicates indecency.

Finally, this article formed the basis of laws and regulations of the Islamic system of life. In order to fulfill its implications adultery and false accusation of adultery were made criminal offenses: regulations about "Purdah" were promulgated: the publication of indecent things was banned and drinking of intoxicants was made unlawful: restrictions on music, dancing and pictures which are conducive to adultery were imposed. Then such laws were enacted as made marriage easy, and cut at the root of adultery.

33"Do not kill any soul" includes not only the prohibition of the killing of other souls but also one's own soul as well for it is also included in the prohibition that immediately follows this command. Thus suicide is regarded as heinous a sin as murder. Some foolish people object to the prohibition of suicide saying that they themselves are the masters of their souls. Therefore, there is nothing wrong in killing one's own self or in destroying one's own property. They forget that every soul belongs to Allah, and none has any right to destroy it, nay, even to abuse it, for this world is a place of trial, where we should undergo the test up to the end of our lives in accordance with the will of Allah. It does not matter whether our circumstances are favorable or adverse for trial. Therefore, it would be wrong to run away from the place of test, not to speak of committing such a heinous crime as suicide (which Allah has prohibited) to escape it, for it means that the one who commits suicide tries to run away from small troubles and ignominies towards greater affliction and eternal torment and ignominy.

34When the Islamic State was established, "killing by right" was confined to five cases only: To punish (1) a willful murderer for retribution, (2) opponents of the true religion during war, (3) those who attempt to overthrow the Islamic system of government, (4) a man or woman guilty of adultery and (5) an apostate.

35We have translated the Arabic word "sultan" into "the right of retribution". Here it stands for "a ground for legal action". This also lays down the legal principle that in a case of murder, the real plaintiff is not the government but the guardian or the guardians of the murdered person who are authorized to pardon the murderer or receive blood-money instead of taking his life.

36Transgression in killing would be to kill more persons than the murderer or to kill the criminal by degrees with torment or to disfigure his dead body or to kill him after receiving blood-money, etc. All these things have been forbidden.

37It has not been defined how succor will be given because at the time of its revelation the Islamic State had not yet been established. After its establishment it was made clear that a guardian was not authorized to enforce retribution by murdering the criminal. The Islamic Government alone is legally authorized. to take retribution; therefore, succor for justice should be demanded only from it.

38This too, was not merely a moral instruction. When the Islamic State was established, legal and administrative methods were adopted to safeguard the rights of orphans, the details of which are found in

the literature of Hadith and Fiqh. Then this principle was extended to cover the cases of all those citizens who were unable to safeguard their own rights. The Holy Prophet himself declared, "I am the guardian of the one who has no guardian" . And this is the basis of many rules and regulations of the Islamic Law.

39"Fulfillment of pledges" was not meant to be merely a moral instruction for individuals but afterwards when the Islamic State was established, this became the guiding principle for the conduct of all internal; and external affairs by the Muslim Community and the Islamic Government.

40This instruction was not confined to individuals only but it has been made a part of the duties of an Islamic Government to supervise transactions in the markets and streets to see that exact measures and weights are being observed, and prevent their breach and violation by the force of law. Afterwards it was made one of the duties of the government to eradicate dishonesty in all commercial dealings and economic transactions.

41That is, "Its end will be best in this world and it will be best in the Hereafter." It is best in this world because it produces mutual rust between sellers and buyers. As a result of this, commerce prospers and there is a general prosperity. As regards the Hereafter, there the end depends wholly on honesty, piety and fear of God.

42The meanings of "Do not follow that of which you have no knowledge" are very comprehensive. It demands that both in individual and collective life, one should not follow mere guess work and presumption instead of "knowledge". This instruction covers all aspects of Islamic life, moral, legal, political, administrative and applies to science, arts and education. It has thus saved the society from numerous evils which are produced in human life by following guesswork instead of knowledge. The Islamic moral code demands: Guard against suspicion and do not accuse any individual or group without proper investigation. In law, it has been made a permanent principle that no action should be taken against anyone without proper investigation. It has been made unlawful to arrest, beat or imprison anyone on mere suspicion during investigation. In regard to foreign relations, the definite policy has been laid down that no action should be taken without investigation, nor should rumors be set afloat. Likewise in education the so-called sciences based on mere guess-work, presumptions and irrational theories have been disapproved. Above all, it cuts at the very root of superstitions, for this instruction teaches the Believers to accept only that which is based on the knowledge imparted by Allah and His Messenger.

43This instruction warns against the ways of tyrants and vain people and is not merely meant for the individual but also for the collective conduct of the Muslim Community. It was because of this guidance that the rulers, governors and commanders of the Islamic State which was established on the basis of this Manifesto, were free from every tinge of tyranny, arrogance, haughtiness, pride and vanity, so much so that even in the battlefield they never uttered a word which had the slightest indication of any of these vain things. Their gait, dress, dwelling and conveyance showed humility. In short, their ways of conduct

were not those of "big ones" but those of humble persons. That is why they never tried to overawe the people of a conquered city by show of pomp and pride.

44That is, "Allah disapproves of the commission of anything that has been prohibited" or, in other words, "He disapproves of disobedience to any of these Commandments."

45Though this has been addressed to the Holy Prophet, the real addressee is every human being as in the case of many such verses.

46Please refer to verses 57-59 and their E.N's.

47That is, "They would have themselves tried their best to become masters of the Throne". This is because if there had been more than one partners in Godhead, it would produce one of the two results: (1) If they were all independent gods, it was not conceivable that they would agree and co-operate with one another in the management of the boundless universe and there could never have been unanimity, uniformity and balanced proportion in its functioning. There would have been conflict at every step and everyone would have tried to dominate others in order to become its sole master. or (2) if one of them had been the supreme god and the others his obedient servants whom he had delegated some of his powers, then, according to the maxim "power corrupts", they would never have been content with remaining obedient servants of the supreme god and would have conspired to become the supreme god themselves.

Whereas the fact is that in this universe not even a grain of wheat or a blade of grass can grow unless and until everything in the earth and the heavens cooperate with one another for its production. Therefore, only an utterly ignorant and block headed person can conceive that there are more than one independent or semi-independent rulers, who carry on the management of this universe. Anyone who has tried to understand the nature and functioning of the universe will most surely arrive at the conclusion that there is One and only One Sovereign ruling over this universe, and there is absolutely no likelihood of any one else to be a co-partner in this at any stage.

48That is, "The whole of the universe and everything in it bear witness to the fact that their Creator and Guardian is free from each and every fault, defect and weakness, and that He is far above this that there should be any partner or associate in His Godhead.

49Everything is not only singing hymns of the glory of its Creator but is affording the proof that He is perfect in every respect and worthy of all praise. Everything is an embodiment of the proof that its Creator and Administrator is the one in whom there is perfection of every quality. Therefore, He alone is worthy of praise.

50That is, "It is due to His forbearance and forgiveness that though you are persistently insolent to Him and go on inventing one false thing or the other against Him, He forbears and forgives you,. He neither withholds provisions from you nor deprives you of His favors nor strikes an insolent person instantly dead with a thunderbolt. Above all, He is so forbearing and forgiving that He gives long enough respite to the individuals and communities to mend their ways, sends His prophets and reformers for their admonition and guidance and forgives all the past mistakes and errors, if one sincerely repents and adopts the Right way.

51This refers to the Divine law according to which those people, who do not believe in the Hereafter, cannot benefit from the Qur'an. Allah has attributed this law to Himself, as if to say, "The natural result of disbelief in the Hereafter is that the heart of such a man becomes dull and his ears become deaf to the Message of the Qur'an, for Qur'an bases its invitation on the belief in the Hereafter. So it warns the people that they should not be deluded by this apparent aspect of the worldly life if there appears to be none to call them to account here; for it does not mean they are not at all accountable and answerable to anyone. Likewise if Allah allows freedom of belief to practice shirk, atheism, disbelief or Tauhid with impunity in this world, and their practice does not appear to make any practical difference in this world, it does not mean that these things do not produce any results at all. For, in fact, everyone shall be accountable and answerable but after death in the Next World. Then every one will realize that the doctrine of Tauhid alone is true and all other doctrines are false. For, if at present the consequences of deeds do not appear after death they shall inevitably appear, but now the Reality has been hidden behind an invisible curtain. There is an inevitable moral law according to which submission to it will bear its fruit and disobedience shall incur its losses. As decisions according to this moral law will be made in the Hereafter, you should not be enticed by the charms of this transitory life. You should, therefore, keep in view that ultimately you shall have to render an account of all your deeds in this world before your Lord, and adopt that true creed and moral attitude which may be conducive to your success in the Hereafter."

From this it must have become obvious that if a man does not believe in the Hereafter, he will never consider the message of the Qur'an worth his while but will hanker after this world and its joys which he can feel and experience. Naturally his ears will not listen to the Message and it will never reach the depths of his heart. Allah has stated this psychological fact in this verse.

In this connection, it should be remembered that the words contained in this verse were uttered by the disbelievers of Makkah as quoted in verse 5 of Surah 41: "They say, O Muhammad, a covering has fallen over our hearts, and our ears are deaf for the Message you give and there is a curtain between you and us. You may go on with your work and we will do whatever we desire." Here the same words have beer cited, as if to say, "You consider this state of yours to be a virtue, whereas this is a curse which has fallen on you according to the Divine Law because of your disbelief of the Hereafter."

52That is, "They do not like it at all that you should consider Allah alone as your Lord and not mention the Lords they have set up. " They seem to think it strange that one should go on praising Allah and never

mention the "miracles" of their elders and saints nor praise them for their favors. For, according to them, Allah has delegated the powers of His Godhead to their great ones. Therefore, they say, "What a strange fellow he is! He believes that the knowledge of the unknown, and all the power and authority belong to One Allah alone. Why does he not pay tribute to those who give us children, cure us of diseases, and help make our commerce flourish, in short, fulfill all our wishes and desires?"

53This refers to those devices which they conspired against the Message of the Holy Prophet. They would secretly listen to him, and then hold consultations in order to counteract this. Sometimes it so happened that they suspected that someone had been influenced by the Qur'an. Then they would sit together and try to dissuade him, saying, "How is it that you have been influenced by a person who himself is bewitched by some enemy and talks like this?"

54This is to say that they expressed different opinions at different times which contradicted each other. Sometimes they said, "You are a sorcerer" and at other times, "You have been bewitched by someone, or you are a poet or you are possessed of some evil spirit." These contradictory things were a proof that they did not know the reality. Otherwise, they would not have invented a different name to suit each occasion. This also shows that they themselves were not sure of the `charge' they leveled against him. If they called him by one epithet one day, they themselves felt afterwards that it did not fit in. Then they would invent the second epithet and then the third and so on. Thus every new epithet contradicted the previous ones and showed that there was no truth in them, but in their enmity they were inventing one falsehood after the other.

55"They will shake their heads at you" in astonishment or to express doubt or disapproval or to scoff at you.

56That is, "You will feel as if the intervening period between death and coming again to life on the Day of Resurrection was only a few hours or so, for you will think that you had just woken up after a short sleep by the sudden noise produced on the Day."

As regards "……you will rise up praising Him," it is a subtle hint towards a great reality: at the time of rising up from death both the believer and the unbeliever will be uttering the praise of Allah. The believer will do so because in the worldly life also he believed in this creed and practiced it. As regards the unbeliever, he will have the urge to do so because of the inherent and ingrained tendency in him which he had been suppressing by his folly. In the new life all those deliberate suppressions will vanish away and he will involuntarily utter the praise of Allah.

57"The believers."

58The believers have been enjoined to say only the best things even in their discussion with the

disbelievers and other opponents of their Faith. They should neither use harsh words nor make exaggerated statements. They should be cool in their conversation and say only what is true and dignified in spite of the provoking behavior of the opponents.

59The believers have been forewarned to guard against the provocations of Satan, as if to say, "While answering your opponents, if you feel that you are being aroused to anger, you should at once understand that it is Satan who is exciting you in order to do harm to your dispute, in which he wants to engage human beings for sowing discord between them."

60This is to warn the believers to refrain from making claims of piety so as to assign Paradise to themselves and Hell to their opponents. It is Allah alone Who has the power to decide these things because He is fully aware of the known and secret and the present and future things about all human beings. It is He Who will decide whether to show mercy to anyone or give chastisement. However, a man may say in the light of the Divine Book that a certain kind of human beings deserve mercy and another kind of people incur chastisement but none has any right to say specifically that a particular man will be given chastisement and another will get salvation.

61This is to declare that a Prophet is sent to convey the Message and not to decide whether a person will receive mercy or get chastisement. It does not, however, mean that, God forbid, the Holy Prophet himself did such a thing and Allah had to warn him. In fact, this is to warn the Muslims that when the Prophet himself is not in a position as to decide the fates of the people, they should never think of such a thing as to assign Paradise and Hell to anyone.

62Though this has apparently been addressed to the Holy Prophet, in fact the real addressees arc the disbelievers of Makkah. This is to rebuke them for the low opinion they held in regard to the Holy Prophet. As it commonly happens contemporaries, in general, and opponents, in particular, do not see anything great and noble in a person of their own time. The same was the case with the contemporaries of the Holy Prophet who could not see anything extraordinary or great in him. He appeared to be merely a common man of their habitation. On the other hand, they were full of praise in regard to the famous personalities who had lived in the past few centuries and imagined them to be the perfection of greatness. That is why, they raised frivolous objections against his claim to Prophethood, as if to say, "Look at this man who considers himself to be a Prophet whereas he cannot stand in comparison with the former great Prophets who are held in high esteem by all. " Allah has answered their objection, as if to say, "We are fully aware of all Our creatures in the heavens and the earth, and We know their ranks but you do not know. We know whom to favor with Prophethood, as We have been favoring the former Prophets and exalting some Prophets above others in rank."

63It appears that Prophet David has been particularly mentioned to show that Prophethood does pot mean that one should have nothing to do with the life of this world. This was the answer to the objection

they were raising against the claim to Prophethood by Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), that he was a man of the world. It means to say, "Though David was a king who had to engage himself in worldly affairs more than a common man, he was favored by Allah with Prophethood, and given the Book, the Psalms. Likewise Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) could be favored with Prophethood in spite of the fact that he had wife and children and passed his life like other common people and was engaged in buying and selling in the market, in short, in performing all those duties that a man of the world has to perform to meet his necessities of life. This was necessitated because according to the disbelievers of Makkah, such a man of the world could not be considered to be even a pious man, much less a Prophet, for pious people should have nothing to do with the worldly affairs but should sit in seclusion and remember God whereas the Holy Prophet had to work to fulfill the necessities of life.

64This warning helps to elaborate the Doctrine of Tauhid and negate shirk. According to this, shirk is not confined merely to falling prostrate before any other than Allah but it is also shirk to pray to or invoke the help of any other than Allah; for praying to or calling for help any other than Allah is in reality a kind of worship. Therefore, the one who invokes for help any other than Allah is as much guilty of shirk as the worshiper of an idol. This verse also shows clearly that none other than Allah has any power to attend to prayers and relieve any one of trouble or alter any one's bad condition. Hence, if one believes that some one other than Allah has any power, he shall be guilty of shirk.

65The words of the text are a clear proof that the deities and the helpers referred to in this verse were not idols of stone but were either angels or dead saints. It is clearly implied in this that no prophet, no saint and no angel, whom the people invoke for help, has the power to hear prayers and help anyone. They themselves hope for mercy from Allah and dread His punishment and vie with one another in seeking means for nearness to Him.

66This is to remove the delusion of the disbelievers that their habitations were immune from danger or chastisement. This verse warns that every habitation will be destroyed as a matter of course or by Allah's chastisement.

67Here "Signs" mean those visible miracles which are presented as a proof of Prophethood. The disbelievers from among the Quraish were demanding such Signs over and over again.

68This is to warn the disbelievers, as if to say, "It is the mercy of Allah that He is not showing such a Sign so that you might mend your ways but in your folly you presume that such a Sign cannot be presented. You should know that a Sign is not being sent because its denial inevitably brings chastisement and the community is annihilated. You can learn from the past History that those communities which disbelieved in the open Signs were utterly destroyed, such as the people of Thamud.

69That is, "Miracles are not shown for fun. These are meant to warn the people that the Prophet is being

helped by the Almighty and that they should realize the terrible consequences of disobedience."

70That is, "At the very beginning of your Prophethood, when the disbelievers of the Quraish had started opposition to your message, We declared that We are encircling them. They might try their worst to obstruct your Message, but they will inevitably fail in this and your Mission will succeed in the teeth of opposition. Can't they see that this declaration has come out true as a miracle, for their opposition has failed to hinder your Message, and they have not been able to do any harm to you at all ? This was a clear Sign of the fact that the Mission of the Holy Prophet was being supported by the Almighty God."

As regards the declaration that Allah is encircling the disbelievers and helping he mission of the Prophet, it occurs in several Surahs of the first stage of Prophethood at Makkah. For instance, in vv. 17-20 of LXXV, Allah says, "These disbelievers do not learn a lesson from the stories of the people of the Pharaoh and Thamud but are rejecting the Message here as Allah is encircling them on all sides."

71This refers to Mi`raj (Ascension) for here word "ru'ya " does not mean "seeing things in a dream" but seeing things actually with physical eyes. It is quite obvious that if it had been a mere "dream" and the Holy Prophet had presented it as a dream to the disbelievers, there was no reason why it should have become a trial for them. Everyday people see strange dreams and relate them to the people but these dreams never become such a curious thing as to make people scoff at the dreamer and accuse him of making a false claim or of being a mad person.

72This cursed tree, Az-Zaqqum " which has been mentioned in vv 43-4 of Surah XLIV, grows at the bottom of Hell and its dwellers shall have to eat it. This has been called a cursed tree because it is not given to people to eat as a mercy from Allah but as a symbol of His curse so that the accursed people should eat it and get more sore, for this will, so to speak, burn in their bellies like the boiling water.

73That is, We showed you such things during the Mi'raj so that they should have the first hand knowledge of the Reality from a truthful and honest man like you and be warned by it to the Right Way. They, however, began to make fun of you, though We had already warned them through you that their evil ways would force them to eat of the Az-Zaqqum. Instead of this they began to scoff at you, saying, Just consider the logic of this man: on the one hand, he says that there an awful fire burning in Hell and, on the other, he says that trees are growing in it."

74Please also refer to II: 30-39, IV: 117-122, VII: 11-25, XIV: 22, XV:26-43

This story has been cited here to impress upon the disbelievers that their attitude of arrogance and indifference towards Allah is exactly the same as was adopted by Satan; As a matter of fact, they were following Satan who is the avowed enemy of man, and were being entangled in the snare spread by him who had challenged the progeny of Adam at the very beginning of human history that he would allure and

ruin them.

75That is, "I will uproot them from the high position of Divine Vicegerency which demands steadfastness in obedience. Their removal from that high position is just like the tearing of a tree from its roots."

76The literal meaning of the Arabic Text is, "You may sweep away those whom you find superficial and weak-minded."

77Here, Satan has been likened to that robber who assaults a habitation with horsemen and footmen, and orders one to rob this thing add the other to plunder that thing and so on-The horsemen and the footmen of Satan are those jinns and human beings who are engaged in numerous forms and positions in carrying out his mission.

78This is a very meaningful sentence which depicts a true and perfect picture of the relationship between Satan and his followers. On the one hand, Satan becomes a partner with the one who follows him in the earning and spending of his money without putting in any labor in it; on the other, he does not become a partner in bearing the consequences of his error, crime and sin. But his foolish dupe follows his instructions as if he were a partner, nay, a stronger party. Again in regard to the children of such a man, the father himself bears the whole burden of bringing them up, but under the misguidance of Satan he trains them in wrong and unmoral ways as if he alone was not their father but Satan as well was a partner in it.

79Satan entices them with false promises of success and entangles them in the snare of false expectations.

80It has two meanings: (1) "You will have no power over human beings to force them to follow your way. What you are allowed to do is that you may delude them by false counsel and entice them by false promises, but they will have the option to follow or not to follow your counsel. You will not have the power over them to force them to follow your way against their will. " (2) "You will not succeed in 'alluring My righteous people. Though the weak-minded will be enticed by you, My righteous people who are steadfast in My obedience will not succumb to you."

81That is, "Those who will trust in Allah and believe in His guidance and help, will not stand in need of any other support in their trial by Satan for Allah will guide them, protect them and help them to be safe from his allurements. On the other hand, those people, who will place their trust in their own power or that of any other than Allah, will not come out successful in their trial by Satan."

82This passage (vv. 66-72) is closely connected with the previous one. It tells man that if he wants to protect himself from the allurements, temptations and false promises of Satan who has been his avowed

enemy from the day of his creation, he should recognize his real Lord and be steadfast in His obedience. Satan intends to prove that man is not worthy of the honor with which Allah has blessed him. Therefore if he follows any other way he cannot escape the snares of Satan.

In this passage, arguments of Tauhid have been put forward in order to make man steadfast in his Faith and refrain from shirk.

83That is, "Try to avail of the economic, social, educational and intellectual benefits which are provided by the sea voyages."

84That is, "This is a proof of the fact that your real nature knows no other Lord than Allah, and you feel in the depths of your hearts that He alone possesses the real power of every gain or loss. Had it not been so, man would never have invoked Allah at the time when he realized that no other helper could remove his misfortune."

85That is, "It is an obvious fact that the superiority man enjoys over all other beings on the Earth and all that is in it, has not been bestowed upon him by a jinn or an angel or a prophet. Most surely that is Allah's blessing and favor. Is it not then the height of folly and ignorance that after having achieved such a high rank, man should bow down before any creature of Allah instead of Him?"

86We learn from the Qur'an that on the Day of Resurrection, the righteous people will be given their records in their right hands and they will be overjoyed to have a look at it and will show it to others. As regards the wicked people, they will get their records in their left hands and in their shame will try to hide it behind their backs. (Please refer to LXIX: 19-28, LXXXIV: 7-13).

87In order to understand the significance of this verse. we should keep in view the circumstances through which the Holy Prophet had been passing at Makkah during the preceding decade or so. The disbelievers of Makkah were exerting their utmost to turn the Holy Prophet awry, somehow or other, from his Message of Tauhid, which he was presenting, and to force him to make a compromise with shirk and the customs of ignorance. In order to achieve this end, they tempted him in several ways. They practiced deception upon him, and tempted him with greed, held out threats, and raised a storm of false propaganda against him, and persecuted him and applied economic pressure and social boycott against him. In short, they did all that could be done to defeat his resolve.

88This review implies two things: (1) "If you had compromised with falsehood after recognizing the Truth, you might have pleased your degenerate people but would have incurred the wrath of Allah and would have received double chastisement both in this world and in the Hereafter." (2) "No man, not even a Messenger of Allah, can fight single-handed against the deceitful methods of falsehood, unless he receives the succor of Allah." It was the fortitude which Allah had bestowed upon the Holy Prophet, which

helped him to retrain steadfast on the right position he had taken, so that no persecution, howsoever great, could turn him away in the least from that position.

89This was a clear prophecy which was made at the time when it appeared to be no more than a mere threat, but it was fulfilled literally in a decade or so. A year after the revelation of this Surah, the disbelievers of Makkah compelled the Holy Prophet to Leave his home. Then within eight years he entered Makkah as a conqueror, and within two years after this, the whole of Arabia was totally freed from mushriks. Then whosoever stayed in that country, he remained there as a Muslim and not as a mushrik.

90That is, "This is how Allah has always dealt with the people who killed or exiled His Messengers. They never survived in the land after this. They were either annihilated by the scourge of Allah or were brought under the sway of an enemy or wen subdued by the followers of the Messenger."

91The Muslims have been commanded to establish Salat immediately after the mention of obstacles and adversities. This implies that the perseverance required to face adverse circumstances is obtained by the establishment of Salat.

92We have translated the words of the Arabic Text into "the declining of the sun." Though some of the Companions and their followers are of the opinion that it means "the sunset", the majority of them are of the opinion that it means "the declining of the sun from its zenith." Caliph 'Umar, Ibn `Umar, Anas bin Malik, Abu Barza-tal-Aslami, Hasan Basri, Sha'abi, Ata', Mujahid and, according to a Tradition, Ibn `Abbas (Allah be pleased with them all) are of this opinion and Imam Muhammad Baqir and Imam Ja`afar Sadiq also are of the same opinion. Besides this, there are some Traditions from the Holy Prophet to the same effect, though they are not so authentic.

93According to some, the original words of the Arabic text mean "complete darkness of the night", while others take it to mean "midnight" If the first opinion is accepted, it will imply the beginning of the time of the 'Isha' Prayer and according to the other it will mean "the last limit of the time of "Isha."

94The literal meaning of the word fajr is "dawn", that is, "the beginning of the morning after the darkness of night."

Here the "recital of the Qur'an in the morning" stands for the Morning Prayer. At some places the Quran has used the word Salat for 'Prayer' and at other places a particular part of Salat for Prayer as a whole, e. g., tasbih, hamd, zikr, qayam, ruku', sajud etc. Likewise, here "recital of the Qur'an at dawn" does not mean the mere recital of the Qur'an but its recital during the Prayer. Thus, the Qur'an has also incidentally referred to the different parts of which Salat is composed and these guided the Holy Prophet to prescribe the definite form of Salat in which it is performed by the Muslims to-day.

95The recital of the Qur'an at dawn is witnessed by the angels of Allah to testify it, as has been explained in the Traditions. Though the angels witness each prayer and each good deed the special mention of their being witnesses at the time of the recital of the Qur'an during the Morning Prayer gives it a particular Importance. That is why the Holy Prophet used to recite long passages from the Qur'an during the Morning Prayer. His example was followed by the Companions, and the succeeding Muslim scholars held it to be a desirable thing.

In this verse, it has been briefly stated how to establish Salat which was made obligatory on the occasion of Mi `raj at the prescribed timings. It has been ordained that the first Prayer is to be offered before the sunrise and the remaining four after the declining of the sun till the darkness of the night. Afterwards Angel Jibril was sent to the Holy Prophet to define the limits of the timings of each Prayer. According to a Tradition of Abu Da'ud and Tirmizi related by Ibn 'Abbas, the Holy Prophet said, "Jibril led me in the five Prayers twice near the Ka`abah. On the first day, he offered the Dhuhr Prayer just after the declining of the sun, when the shadow of everything was the shortest. Then he offered the 'Asr Prayer when the shadow of each thing was equal to its own length; then the Maghrib Prayer at the time when one breaks one's fast, and the 'Isha' Prayer was offered just at the time when twilight had disappeared, and Faj rPrayer at the time when it becomes unlawful to eat and drink anything for the one who intends to observe a Fast. The next day he offered the Dhuhr Prayer at the time when the shadow of each thing became equal to its own length and the 'Asr Prayer when the shadow had doubled. The Maghrib Prayer was offered as on the previous day and the Isha' Prayer when one-third of the night had passed away, and the Morning Prayer when light had spread all over. After this Jibril turned towards me and said. 'O Muhammad, these are the timings of Salat of the Prophets and the right tunings are between these two extreme limits."

The Qur'an has also pointed to these five times of Salat on different occasions:

(1) "And listen; establish Salat at the two ends of the day and in the early parts of the night..." (IX: 114).

(2) "...And glorify your Lord with His praise before the sunrise (Fajr) and before sunset ('Asr) and then glorify Him during the night (`Isha') and then at the ends of the day (Fajr, Dhuhr and Maghrib)..." (XX: 130).

(3) "So glorify Allah when it is evening for you (Maghrib), and when it is morning (Fajr). praise is only for Him in the heavens and the earth and glorify him in the later part of the afternoon ('Asr) and in the afternoon (Dhuhr). "(XXX. 17-18).

There is great wisdom in this system of the timings of Salat. One of these is to avoid the timings of the worship of the sun-worshipers. This is because the sun has always been in every age one of the greatest deities of the mushriks, who worshiped it especially at the time of sunrise and sunset. Therefore, these two times have totally been forbidden for Salat. Besides this, they worshiped the sun at the time of its

zenith. That is why Islam has ordained that the Muslims should offer their two Prayers during the day-time after the sun has declined and the Fajr Prayer before the sunrise. The Holy Prophet himself has stated this wisdom of the timings of Prayer in several Traditions. For instance, in the Tradition related by 'Amar bin `Abasah, the Holy Prophet is reported to have replied to a qua"soon to this effect: "Offer your Morning Prayer, but refrain from it when the sun is about to rise until it has risen high. For the sun rises between the horns of Satan and the unbelievers fall prostrate before it at that time.

Then after mentioning the `Asr Prayer, he said:

"After `Asr Prayer, refrain from any Prayer until the sunset, for during that time the sun sets between the horns of Satan and the unbelievers fall prostrate before it."

The rising and the setting of the sun between the horns of Satan is a symbolic expression that has been used in this Tradition. This implies that both these times are used by Satan as temptations for the people. This is, as if to say, that Satan is so pleased with the worship of the unbelievers at the time of sunrise and sunset that he appears to carry the sun on his head as a mark of approval. This interpretation of the Tradition is based on this remark of the Holy Prophet: "The unbelievers fall prostrate before it."

96The literal meaning of "Tahajjud" is to rise up by breaking sleep. Therefore, the sentence has been translated into "Offer Tahajjud Prayer", which means "Rise up from sleep after the passing of a part of night and then offer your Prayer."

97"Nafl" literally means "something done in addition to an obligatory duty". This shows that the Tahajjud Prayer is in addition to the five prescribed Prayers.

98"...may exalt you to a laudable position" = "You may attain such a high position in this world and in the next world that people from everywhere may be full of praise for you, and you may become a praiseworthy personality." This is, as if to say, "Now your opponents are engaged in calling you names and arc trying to defame you throughout the country, and have raised a storm of false accusations against you but that time is not far when the world will ring with the echoes of your praise and in the Hereafter you will become worthy of praise by all creatures. " The exaltation of the Holy Prophet to the high position of intercession on the Day of Resurrection is also a part of that "laudable position."

99This prayer clearly shows that the time of Hijrah (Migration) had come near. That is why Allah has instructed the Holy Prophet to this effect: You should follow the truth wherever and in whatever condition you be. If you migrate from a place, you should migrate for the sake of the truth, and wherever you go, you should go for the sake of the truth.

100That is, "Either grant me power and authority or make some government my helper so that I may use

its power to reform the corrupt world. " This is because power is required to check indecency and sin and to enforce the law of justice.

Hasan Basri and Qatadah have made the same interpretation of this verse, and the great commentators like Ibn Jarir and Ibn Kathir have adopted the same. This is supported by a Tradition of the Holy Prophet: "Allah eradicates by the power of government those evils, which arc not eradicated by the teachings of the Qur'an." This is a clear proof that according to Islam, political power is also required to introduce reform, for admonition alone is not enough for this. Besides this, when Allah Himself has taught this prayer to His Prophet for the establishment of His Way and enforcement of His Law, it is not only lawful but desirable to acquire power and those, who consider this to be a worldly thing, are obviously in the wrong. What is really "worldliness" is that one should desire and acquire power for one's own interest. On the contrary. the desire of power for the sake of Allah's Way is not the worship of the world but the worship of God.

101At the time of this declaration, the persecution of the Muslims was at its height. A large number of them had emigrated to Habash, and those who had remained behind were suffering from untold hardships at Makkah and its suburbs: so much so that the life of the Holy Prophet himself was always in danger. Therefore, to all appearances, falsehood was prevailing everywhere and there was no sign to show that the truth would ever overpower falsehood. That is why the disbelievers took it for a boastful talk and scoffed at it when this declaration was trade. But this prophecy of victory did come out true in less than a decade when the Holy Prophet entered the same city of Makkah as a conqueror, and entered the Ka'abah where he made the same declaration while he was breaking the three hundred and sixty idols. According to a Tradition of Bukhari, related by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas`ud, "On the day of the conquest of Makkah the Holy Prophet went on striking idols and uttering these words: “The Truth has come and falsehood has vanished; for falsehood is a thing that must by its nature vanish. The Truth has come and falsehood will never reappear nor return.”

102That is, "Those people who make the Qur'an their guide and their book of law, are favored with the blessing of Allah and arc cured of all their mental, psychological, moral. and cultural diseases. On the other hand, those wicked people who reject this and turn their back on its guidance, in fact, are unjust to themselves. Therefore, the Qur'an does not allow them to remain even in that bad condition in which they were before its revelation or its knowledge but involves them in a greater loss than before. This is because before the revelation of the Qur'an or their acquaintance with it, they suffered from ignorance alone but when the Qur'an came before them and made distinct the difference between Truth and falsehood, no excuse was left with them to remain in their previous condition of. ignorance. After this, if they reject its guidance and persist in their deviation, it is a clear proof that they are not ignorant but workers of iniquity and worshipers of falsehood, which arc averse to the Truth. For then their position is of the one who, when presented both poison and elixir, makes a choice of poison. Therefore, they themselves are in that cast fully responsible for their deviation and whatever crimes they commit after that, shall incur their full punishment. It is obvious that the consequent loss of wickedness must be far

greater than the loss of ignorance. The Holy Prophet has summed this up in this concise and comprehensive sentence: "The Qur'an is either an argument in your favor or against you."

103It is generally understood that the Arabic word "Ruh"stands here for "soul"' as if the people asked the Holy Prophet about the soul of man in regard to its nature, and the answer was that it came by the Command of Allah. But we have great hesitation in accepting this meaning for it could be taken only if the verse be isolated from its context; otherwise these words would become quite incoherent for there is no reason why the question about "soul" should have intervened between the preceding three verses and following verses which deal with the theme of the Qur'an.

If we read the verse in its context, it becomes quite obvious that here the word "Ruh" (The Spirit) stands for the angel who brings Revelation. This was in answer to the question of the mushriks, "Where from do you bring the Qur'an?" as if to say, "O Muhammad, these people ask you about "The Spirit', that is, the source of the Qur'an or the means of acquiring it", so tell them, "This Spirit comes to me by the Command of my Lord but your knowledge is so little that you cannot distinguish between the nature of human words and the Divinely revealed words. That is why you suspect that this has been fabricated by some man."

The above interpretation is to be preferred, because it fits in excellently between the preceding and the succeeding verses. This is also supported by the Qur'an itself: " ...He sends down by His Command ` The Spirit" to any of His servants He wills so that they should warn the people of the Day, when they shall be assembled together." (XL: 15) "And likewise We have sent down "The Spirit' to you by Our Command: you did not know what the Book was and what the Faith ..." (XLII: 52).

Besides this, Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah and Hasan Basri (may Allah bestow His mercy upon them all) have also adopted the same interpretation. Ibn Jarir has attributed the same thing to Ibn `Abbas on the authority of Qatadah, but at the same time he tells a strange thing that Ibn `Abbas stated this thing only in secret. Again the author of Ruh-ul-Ma'ani cites these words of Hasan and Qatadah: "By ruh is meant Jibril: the question was about the nature of his coming down and inspiring the heart of the Holy Prophet with Revelation."

104Though these words arc apparently addressed by the Holy Prophet, they are in fact meant for the disbelievers who considered the Holy Qur'an to be either the invention of the Holy Prophet himself or of some other man, who secretly taught him the Qur'an. They are being told that this is the Word of Allah, as if to say, "Our Prophet has not fabricated the Qur'an but We have bestowed this on him, and if We take it back from him, the Prophet has no power to invent such a thing nor has any other man the power to help the Prophet to present such a miraculous Book."

105This challenge occurs at several other places in the Qur'an: (II: 23, X: 38-39, XL: 13-14, LII: 33-34). At all these places, this has been cited as an answer to the charge of the disbelievers that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) has himself invented the Qur'an but is presenting it as Allah's Word. Besides

this, the same has also been refuted in X: 16: “Say also, “Had not Allah willed that I should recite the Qur'an to you, I could not have recited it to you, nor could I have been able to give you any information about it: already have I lived a lifetime among you before its revelation. Do you not use your common sense?”

Now let us turn to the three arguments contained in these verses as a proof that the Qur'an is the Word of Allah.

(1) The Qur'an is such a miracle in regard to its language, style, arguments, themes, topics, teachings and prophecies that it is beyond any human power to produce the like of it, as if to say, "You say that a man has invented this but We challenge that even the whole of mankind combined cannot produce a Book like this: nay, even if the jinns, whom the mushriks worship as deities and whom this Book openly attacks, should come to the help of the disbelievers, they cannot produce a Book like this to refute this challenge."

(2) As regards the charge that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) has himself invented this Book, the Qur'an refutes their claim, as if to say, "Muhammad is one of you and not a foreigner. He has lived among you for forty years before the revelation of the Qur'an. Did you ever hear words like those of the Qur'an from him even a day before his claim of Prophethood, or did you ever hear him discussing themes and problems contained in the Qur'an? If you consider the matter from this point of view, it will become obvious to you that the sudden change which has come about in the language, ideas, information, style and the way of thinking of Muhammad, could not take place without Divine Guidance."

(3) "Can you not see that after the recital of the Qur'an he does not disappear but lives among you? You hear other things than the Qur'an from him. Do you not notice that the distinction between the two different styles of expression is so obvious that no man can successfully adopt the two styles at one and the same time?" The distinction can also be noticed, even today, between the language of the Qur'an and that of the Traditions of the Holy Prophet. Anyone well-versed in the Arabic language and literature notices the difference which is so marked that one can categorically say that these modes of expression cannot belong to one and the same person. (For further reference please also see E.N. 21 of X 16).

106This is the second answer to the demand of the disbelievers for a miracle. The first answer is contained in V. 59. The eloquence of this concise answer is above praise: "You demand from me that I should cause a spring to gush forth, or in the twinkling of an eye should bring into being a garden in full bloom with canals flowing in it: or I should cause the heaven to fall into pieces on those of you who are rejecting the message: or I should cause to build a furnished palace of gold: or I should call Allah and the angels to stand before you and testify to this effect: ' We Ourselves have sent down Muhammad as Our Messenger' : or I should go up to the sky in your presence and bring down, addressed to you, the letter of authority of my appointment duly signed by Allah so that you may touch it with your hands and read it with your own eyes. " The concise answer to these big demands was this, "My Lord be glorified! Have I

ever claimed to be anything more than a human Messenger?" It may be expanded like this: "O foolish people! have 1 claimed to be God that you are demanding such things from me? Did I ever say that I am all-powerful and am ruling over the Earth and the Heavens? From the very first day my claim has been that I am a human being who is bringing the Message from God. Therefore, if you want to judge the authenticity of my claim, you may judge it from my Message. If you are convinced that it is based on the Truth and is absolutely rational, then you should believe in it without making foolish demands. On the other hand, if you find any defect in it, you may reject it. If you want to test whether my claim is based on truth, you should judge it by the standard of my conduct and morals as a human being and my mission. Is it not a folly that, instead of this, you are demanding from me to cleave the earth and cause the sky to fall? Is there any connection whatsoever of Prophethood with things like that?"

107It implies that this misunderstanding has always been common among the ignorant people of every age that a human being could not be a Messenger of Allah: They rejected a Messenger just because he was a human being and took his meals and had wife and children like themselves. In contrast to this, after the passage of the time the credulous followers of a Messenger began to claim that he was not a human being at all because he was a Messenger. That is why some people made their Messenger their God, others the son of God and still others the incarnation of God. In short, the ignorant people had never been able to understand that a human being could be a Messenger of Allah.

108This is to say that Messenger does not merely convey the Message but is sent to reform human life in accordance with it. He has to apply the principles of the Message to the circumstances of human beings and has himself to demonstrate practically those principles. Moreover, he has to remove the misunderstandings of those people who try to listen w and understand his Message. Besides this, he has to organize and train the Believers to create a society based on the teachings of his Message. He has to struggle against those who reject and oppose his Message in order to subdue those powers that are bent upon corruption, and bring about that reformation for which Allah has sent His Messenger. As all these things have to be done in a society of human beings only a human Messenger can perform the mission. If an angel had been sent as a Messenger, the most he could have done was to convey the message, for he could not live among human beings and share their life and problems in order to reform them. It is thus clear that a human Messenger only could be suitable for this purpose.

109That is, "Allah is fully aware of all my efforts which I am expending in order to reform you, and He is fully aware of the efforts you are making against my mission. His witness is sufficient because He will pass the final judgment."

110In this verse, the Qur'an has enunciated a Divine principle. Allah guides to the Right Way only that person who intends to follow His Guidance, and lets go astray that person who intends W go astray. Thereafter none is able to bring back to the Right Way the one against whom Allah has closed the door of guidance because of his own persistent deviation and obduracy. It is obvious that if a man turns his back against the truth and rests content with falsehoods there is no power in the world to make him turn away

from falsehood and come to the truth.

This is because after this depravity Allah provides for that wicked person such means as increase his aversion to truth and his love for falsehood.

111On the Day of Resurrection, they will be raised up blind, dumb and deaf because they behaved like such people in this world and would not see the Truth nor listen to the Truth nor speak the Truth.

112This verse also suggests the same thing that has already been mentioned in V . 55. This hints at the real psychological reason why the disbelievers of Makkah were not inclined to accept Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), their contemporary, as a Prophet. For thus they would have to acknowledge his superiority and one does not easily acknowledge the superiority of one's contemporary. This verse may be expanded like this: "Those people who are so narrow-minded that they are unwilling even to acknowledge the real superiority of another, cannot be expected to be generous in spending on others, if they possessed the keys of the treasures of Allah's blessings."

113It should be noted that this is the third answer to the demand of the disbelievers of Makkah for Signs. They said, "We will not believe in you until you do this and do that before our eyes." In answer to this demand, they are being warned: "Nine clear Signs, like the ones you are demanding, were shown one after the other to Pharaoh before you and you also know full well what he said, simply because he did not want to believe in Moses; you also know that when he rejected the Prophet, even after seeing the Signs, We drowned him."

The nine Signs mentioned here have also been mentioned in VII: 133. These were: (1) The staff which turned into a monster snake. (2) Moses' bright hand which shone like the sun. (3) The public defeat of the sorcery of the magicians. (4)Universal famine. (5) Storm. (6) Locusts. (7) Lice. (8) Frogs. (9) Rain of blood.

114This has been particularly mentioned here because the mushriks of Makkah attributed the same epithet to the Holy Prophet as contained in V. 47. "These wrong-doers say to each other, 'The man, you are following, is a bewitched person' . "Here they are being warned that in this they were following Pharaoh, who gave the same epithet to Prophet Moses.

In this connection, we want to make a brief reference to an objection which has been raised by the modernists against a Tradition according to which the Holy Prophet once came under the influence of sorcery. They say that this Tradition confirms that the epithet "bewitched" applied to the Holy Prophet by the Quraish was correct, whereas the Qur'an refutes this as false: They forget that the same argument could be applied to the case of Prophet Moses whom Pharaoh accused of being bewitched, for the Qur'an says, in XX: 66-67: "When the magicians threw down their cords and rods (instruments of their

sorcery), it seemed to Moses as if they were running, as a result of which Moses conceived in his mind a sort of fear. " If the words of the Tradition were to be considered against the Qur'an, do not these words of the Qur'an contradict its own words that the charge of Moses being bewitched was false? Do these modernists consider this verse to confirm Pharaoh's charge?"

As a matter of fact, these objectors do not know the sense in which the disbelievers of Makkah and Pharaoh called the Holy Prophet and Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon them) bewitched. What they meant was that some enemy had so bewitched them that they had lost their senses and so in their insanity claimed to be prophets and delivered a curious message. The Qur'an refutes this charge as false. As regards the temporary influence of magic on same person or a part of him has not been denied, for the influence of magic is like the effect produced on a person who is hit with a stone. The fact that some prophet was temporarily influenced by magic, does not in any way affect his prophethood adversely. Just as poison produced its effect on a prophet, or a prophet was wounded, so a prophet could also temporarily come under the influence of magic. Such a temporary magic could not cause any defect in his prophethood. God forbid, had magic produced any adverse effect on his reasoning and thinking faculties, one might have been skeptical about the authenticity of the Message. And when Pharaoh and the disbelievers of Makkah said that Prophet Moses and the Holy Prophet were bewitched, they meant that they had lost their senses under the influence of magic. The Qur'an refutes this charge brought against the Prophets.

115Moses could say these words categorically that the Signs were from the Lord of the Universe because the calamities which visited Egypt could not be brought about by magic or by any human device. For it is not possible for any human power to bring about frogs over vast areas or to cause all granaries in the land to be eaten up by weevils. Then it should also be kept in view that Prophet Moses warned beforehand of an impending Sign, warning Pharaoh to give up his obduracy, and the calamity did come exactly as he had predicted. In these circumstances only a mad or obdurate person could say that those calamities were sent by any other than the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth.

116That is, "I am not a bewitched man but you are indeed a doomed person. As you have been persistent in your disbelief even after seeing such obvious Divine Signs, you are surety doomed to destruction."

117This part of the story of Pharaoh has been related here because it applied exactly to the mushriks of Makkah who were doing their worst to uproot the Holy Prophet and the Believers from the land of Arabia. This story, so to say, tells them, "Pharaoh resolved to uproot Moses and the Israelites but was himself completely annihilated along with his followers and Moses and his followers settled down in the land. Likewise, if you persist on the same way, you will surely meet with the same end."

118That is, "It is not your responsibility to cause, in a supernatural manner, springs to gush forth or gardens to grow or pieces of the sky to fall down in order to convince those people who do not fudge the

Qur'an by its teachings nor decide between the Truth and falsehood on merit. As the Qur'an has been sent down with truth, you should present it before the people and tell them plainly that the one, who believes, does so for his own good and the one who rejects it, does it at his own peril."

119This is an answer to this objection: "Why has not Allah sent down His Message as a whole? Why is He sending it piecemeal? Has Allah any need to think deliberately what to send down?" As the answer to this objection has been given in XVI: 101-102 and in the Explanatory Notes 104-106 added to them, there is no need to repeat the same here.

120This refers to those people of the Book who were well-versed in the Scriptures and could judge them from their themes and wording.

121That is, "When they listen to the Qur'an, they at once recognize that its bearer is the promised Prophet mentioned in the Books of the former Prophets."

122This attitude of the righteous people of the Book has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'an, e.g., III: 113-114, 199, V: 83-84.

123This is the answer to another objection of the disbelievers. They said, "We have heard the name Allah for the Creator but where from have you brought the name Rahman?" This was because the name "Rahman " was not used for Allah and they did not like it.

124This instruction was given at Makkah. Ibn 'Abbas relates that when the Holy Prophet or his Companions offered their Prayers, they recited the Qur'an jn a loud voice. At this the disbelievers would raise a hue and cry and often called them names. Therefore, they wen enjoined that they should neither say their Prayers in such a loud voice as might incite the disbelievers nor should they say it in such a low voice that their own Companions might not hear it. This instruction was discontinued under the changed conditions at Al-Madinah. However, if the Muslims they have to face the same conditions, at any place or at any time, they should observe the same instruction.

125A subtle sarcasm is implied in the sentence. The mushriks believed that Allah had appointed assistants and deputies for the administration of His Kingdom. Obviously this meant that Allah was helpless and powerless to carry out the administration of His Kingdom: therefore, He needed supporters to help Him in the work of His Godhead. This sentence negates their false creeds, saying, “He does not stand in need of any gods and saints in order to delegate to them the different departments of His Godhead or make them governors in different parts of His Kingdom.”

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18. Surah Al Kahf (The Cave)

Name

This Surah takes its name from v. 9 in which the word (*al-kahf*) occurs.

Period of Revelation

This is the first of those Surahs which were sent down in the third stage of Prophethood at Makkah. We have already divided the life of the Holy Prophet at Makkah into four stages in the Introduction to Chapter VI. According to that division the third stage lasted from the fifth to the tenth year of Prophethood. What distinguishes this stage from the second and the fourth stages is this. During the second stage the Quraish mainly resorted to ridiculing, scoffing, threatening, tempting, raising objections and making false propaganda against the Holy Prophet and his followers in order to suppress the Islamic Movement. But during the third stage they employed the weapons of persecution, man handling and economic pressure for the same purpose. So much so that a large number of the Muslims had to emigrate from Arabia to Habash, and those who remained behind were besieged in Shi'ib Abi Talib along with the Holy Prophet and his family. To add to their misery, a complete social and economic boycott was applied against them. The only redeeming feature was that there were two personalities, Abu Talib and Hadrat Khadijah, whose personal influence had been conducive to the support of two great families of the Quraish. However, when in the tenth year of Prophethood these two persons died, the fourth stage began with such revere persecutions as forced the Holy Prophet and all his Companions to emigrate from Makkah.

It appears from the theme of the Surah that it was revealed at the beginning of the third stage when in spite of persecutions and opposition, migration to Habash had not yet taken place. That is why the story of "*Ashab-i-Kahf*" (the Sleepers of the Cave) has been related to comfort and encourage the persecuted Muslims and to show them how the righteous people have been saving their Faith in the past.

Subject and Topics

This Surah was sent down in answer to the three questions which the *mushriks* of Makkah, in consultation with the people of the Book, had put to the Holy Prophet in order to test him. These were: (1) Who were "the Sleepers of' the Cave"? (2) What is the real story of Khidr? and (3) What do you know about Zul-Qarnain? As these three questions and the stories involved concerned the history of the Christians and the Jews, and were unknown in Hijaz, a choice of these was made to test whether the Holy Prophet possessed any source of the knowledge of the hidden and unseen things. Allah, however, not only gave a complete answer to their questions but also employed the three stories to the disadvantage of the opponents of Islam in the conflict that was going on at that time at Makkah between Islam and un-belief:

1. The questioners were told that "the Sleepers of the Cave" believed in the same doctrine of *Tauhid* which was being put forward in the Quran and that their condition was similar to the condition of the persecuted Muslims of Makkah. On the other hand, the persecutors of the Sleepers of the Cave had behaved in the same way towards them as the disbelievers of the Quraish were behaving towards the Muslims. Besides this, the Muslims have been taught that even if a Believer is persecuted by a cruel society, he should not bow down before falsehood but emigrate from the place all alone, if need be, with trust in God. Incidentally the disbelievers of Makkah were told that the story of the Sleepers of the Cave was a clear proof of the creed of the Hereafter, for this showed that Allah has the power to resurrect anyone He wills even after a long sleep of death as He did in case of the Sleepers of the Cave.

2. The story of the Sleepers of the Cave has also been used to warn the chiefs of Makkah who were persecuting the small newly formed Muslim Community. At the same time, the Holy Prophet has been instructed that he should in no case make a compromise with their persecutors nor should he consider them to be more important than his poor followers. On the other hand, those chiefs have been admonished that they should not be puffed up with the transitory life of pleasure they were then enjoying but should seek after those excellences which are permanent and eternal.

3. The story of Khidr and Moses has been related in such a way as to supply the answer to the question of the disbelievers and to give comfort to the Believers as well. The lesson contained in this story is this "You should have full faith in the wisdom of what is happening in the Divine Factory in accordance with the will of Allah. As the reality is hidden from you, you are at a loss to understand the wisdom of what is happening, and sometimes if it appears that things are going against you, you cry out, 'How and why has this happened'. The fact is that if the curtain be removed from the "unseen", you would yourselves come to know that what is happening here is for the best. Even if some times it appears that something is going against you, you will see that in the end it also produces some good results for you.

4. The same is true of the story of Zul-Qarnain for it also admonishes the questioners, as if to say, "0 you vain chiefs of Makkah you should learn a lesson from Zul-Qarnain. Though he was a great ruler, a great conqueror and the owner of great resources, yet he always surrendered to his Creator, whereas you are rebelling against Him even though you are insignificant chieftains in comparison with him. Besides this, though Zul-Qarnain built one of the strongest walls for protection, yet his real trust was in Allah and not in the "wall". He believed that the wall could protect him against his enemies as long as it was the will of Allah and that there would be crack and holes in it, when it would be His will : whereas you who possess only insignificant fortified abodes and dwellings in comparison with him, consider yourselves to be permanently

safe and secure against all sorts of calamities."

While the Quran turned the tables on the questioners who had tried to "expose" the Holy Prophet, in the end of the Surah the same things have been reiterated that were stated at its beginning: "*Tauhid* and the Hereafter are absolutely true and real and for your own good you should accept these doctrines, mend your ways in accordance with them and live in this world with this conviction that you are accountable to Allah: otherwise you shall ruin your life and all your doings shall be set at naught."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَل لَّهُۥ عِوَجَا ۜ ﴿١﴾

قَيِّمًا لِّيُنذِرَ بَأْسًا شَدِيدًا مِّن لَّدُنْهُ وَيُبَشِّرَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ﴿٢﴾

مَّٰكِثِينَ فِيهِ أَبَدًا ﴿٣﴾

وَيُنذِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَدًا ﴿٤﴾

[1-4] All praise is for Allah, Who has sent down this Book to His Servant, and assigned nothing crooked to it.[1] This Book says everything directly so that he may warn the people of the severe chastisement of Allah and give good news to the Believers, who do righteous deeds, that they will have an excellent recompense, which they will always enjoy and that he should warn those people who say, “Allah has begotten a son.”[2]

مَّا لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا لِأَبَآئِهِمْ ۚ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ ۚ إِن
يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا ﴿٥﴾

[5] Neither had they any knowledge of this[3] nor their forefathers; it is a monstrous word that comes out of their mouths: they utter a sheer lie.

فَلَعَلَّكَ بَٰخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِمْ إِن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهَٰذَا ٱلْحَدِيثِ
أَسَفًا ﴿٦﴾

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴿٧﴾

وَإِنَّا لَجَٰعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا ﴿٨﴾

[6-8] Well, O Muhammad, it may be that you will consume your life for their sake out of sorrow, if they do not believe in this message.[4] The fact is that whatsoever is on the earth, We have made it as its adornment so that we may test the people as to which of them does best deeds. In the end, We will turn all that is in it into a bare plain.[5]

أَمۡ حَسِبۡتَ أَنَّ أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلۡكَهۡفِ وَٱلرَّقِيمِ كَانُواْ مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِنَا عَجَبًا ٩

إِذۡ أَوَى ٱلۡفِتۡيَةُ إِلَى ٱلۡكَهۡفِ فَقَالُواْ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحۡمَةٗ وَهَيِّئۡ لَنَا مِنۡ أَمۡرِنَا رَشَدٗا ١٠

فَضَرَبۡنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاذَانِهِمۡ فِي ٱلۡكَهۡفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدٗا ١١

ثُمَّ بَعَثۡنَٰهُمۡ لِنَعۡلَمَ أَيُّ ٱلۡحِزۡبَيۡنِ أَحۡصَىٰ لِمَا لَبِثُوٓاْ أَمَدٗا ١٢

[9-12] Do you consider “the Sleepers of the Cave,”[6] and the bearers of the “Inscription”[7] to be among Our strange Signs?[8] When those few young men took refuge in the Cave, they said, "Our Lord! have a special mercy on us from Thyself and guide us out of our ordeal aright." Accordingly We lulled them to a deep sleep in the Cave for a number of years. Then We raised them up in order to test which of them were able to calculate correctly the period of their stay there.

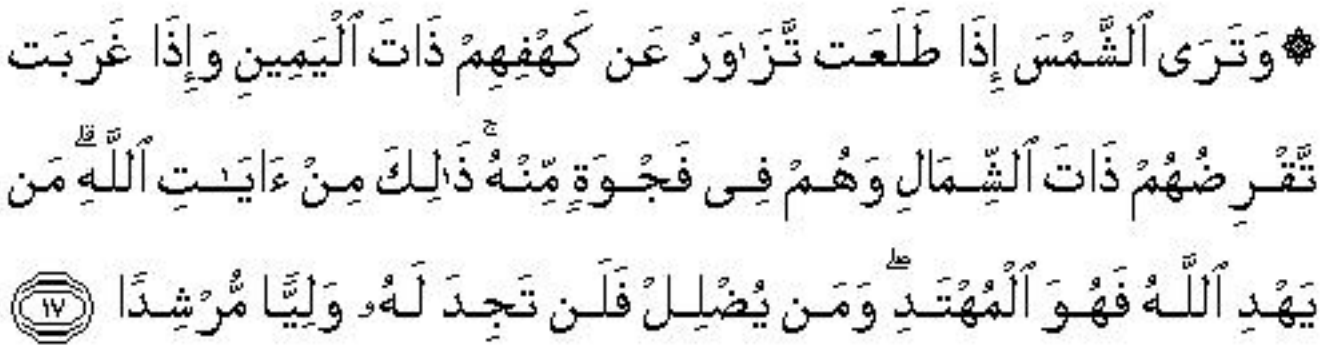
نَّحۡنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيۡكَ نَبَأَهُم بِٱلۡحَقِّۚ إِنَّهُمۡ فِتۡيَةٌ ءَامَنُواْ بِرَبِّهِمۡ وَزِدۡنَٰهُمۡ هُدٗى ١٣

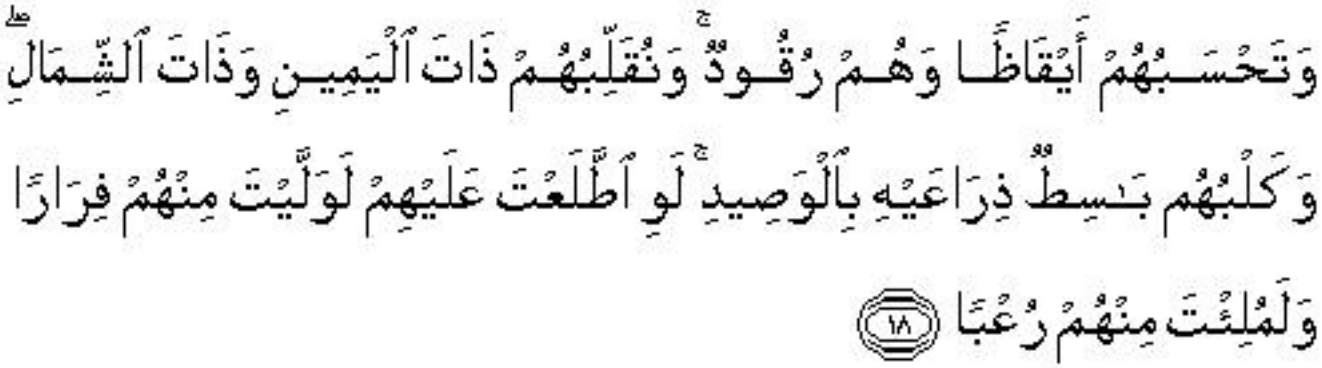
وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَن نَّدْعُوَ مِن دُونِهِ إِلَٰهًا لَّقَدْ قُلْنَا
إِذًا شَطَطًا ﴿١٤﴾

هَٰؤُلَاءِ قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِ آلِهَةً لَّوْلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِسُلْطَانٍ
بَيِّنٍ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ﴿١٥﴾

وَإِذِ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأْوُوا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنشُرْ لَكُمْ
رَبُّكُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيُهَيِّئْ لَكُم مِّنْ أَمْرِكُم مِّرْفَقًا ﴿١٦﴾

[13-16] Now We tell you their real story.[9] They were a few young men who believed in their Lords, and We increased them in their guidance.[10] We strengthened their hearts, when they rose up, and they declared, “Our Lord is the One Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will not invoke any other deity than Him. It will be the most improper thing if we do so.” (Then they held mutual consultations, saying,) “These people of ours have given up the Lord of the universe and adopted other deities. Why do they not bring forward any clear argument in support of their creed? Well, who can be more wicked than the one who forges a lie against Allah? Now that you have forsaken them and discarded the deities they worship besides Allah, let us go to such and such a cave for refuge.[11] Your Lord will extend to you His mercy, and order your affairs for you for the best.”





[17-18] If you had looked at them in the Cave,[12] it would have appeared to you that when the sun rose, it left the Cave to one side and inclined towards the right, and when it set, it turned away from them and went to the left while they lay in the spacious place inside the Cave.[13] This was one of the Signs of Allah. Whomsoever Allah guides aright, he is guided aright, and whomsoever Allah lets go astray, you will find no guardian to direct him. If you had seen them, it would have appeared to you as if they were awake, whereas in fact they were asleep. We turned them about to the right and the left sides.[14] And their dog was sitting at the entrance of the Cave with outstretched forelegs. If you had looked at them, you would have turned on your heels and their sight would have struck you with terror.[15]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ بَعَثْنَٰهُمْ لِيَتَسَآءَلُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَبِثْنَا
يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۚ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ فَٱبْعَثُوٓا۟ أَحَدَكُم
بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَٰذِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنظُرْ أَيُّهَآ أَزْكَىٰ طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُم
بِرِزْقٍ مِّنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿١٩﴾

إِنَّهُمْ إِن يَظْهَرُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِى مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَن
تُفْلِحُوٓا۟ إِذًا أَبَدًا ﴿٢٠﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَعْثَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ
وَأَنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَآ إِذْ يَتَنَٰزَعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ ۖ فَقَالُوا۟
ٱبْنُوا۟ عَلَيْهِم بُنْيَٰنًا ۖ رَّبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ ۚ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ
أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا ﴿٢١﴾

[19-21] And in the same miraculous way We raised them up again[16] so that they may ask one another (about their wonderful experience). One of them asked, “Well, how long have you remained in this condition?” The others answered, “May-be, we have remained so for a day or a part of a day.” Then they declared, “Your Lord knows best how long we have remained in this condition. So let us send one of us with this silver coin to the city, and he should look for a place wherein he can get the best food so that he may bring something to eat. He should, however, conduct himself with caution lest anyone should discover our whereabouts; for if they succeed in over-powering us,

they will surely stone us to death or force us back into their Faith, and in that case we will never be able to obtain true success." In this way We revealed their secret to the people of the city[17] so that they should know that Allah's promise is true and that there is no doubt about (the coming of) the Hour of Resurrection.[18] (But it is a pity that instead of considering this aspect of the matter) they were at that time disputing among themselves with regard to them (the Sleepers of the Cave). Some of them said, "Let us build a wall against them, for then Lord alone knows best about them"[19] But those people who prevailed in their matter,[20] said, "We will build a place of worship as a memorial for them"[21]

سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَٰثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًۢا
بِٱلْغَيْبِ ۖ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ ۚ قُل رَّبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِم مَّا
يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ۬ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَآءً ظَٰهِرًا وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِم مِّنْهُمْ
أَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَاْىْءٍ إِنِّى فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾

إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَىٰٓ
أَن يَهْدِيَنِ رَبِّى لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَٰذَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

وَلَبِثُوا۟ فِى كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَٰثَ مِاْئَةٍ سِنِينَ وَٱزْدَادُوا۟ تِسْعًا ﴿٢٥﴾

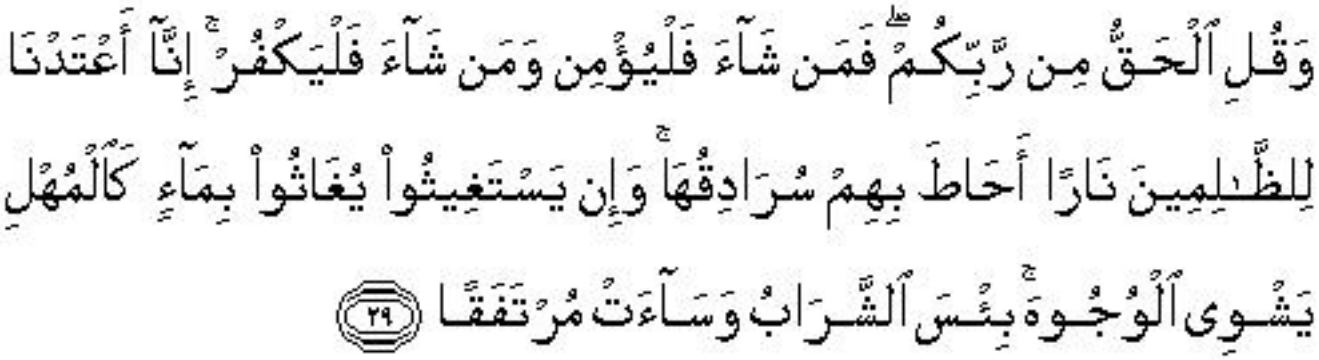
قُلِ ٱللَّهُ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُواْۖ لَهُۥ غَيۡبُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ أَبۡصِرۡ بِهِۦ وَأَسۡمِعۡۚ مَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَلِيّٖ وَلَا يُشۡرِكُ فِي حُكۡمِهِۦٓ أَحَدٗا ٢٦

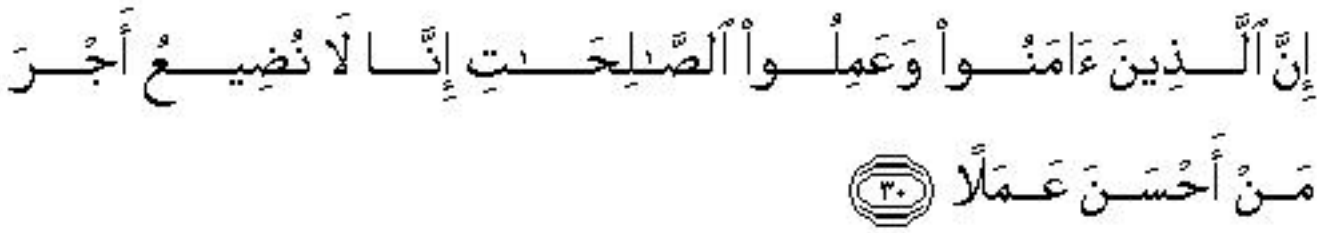
[22-26] Some people will say, “They were three and the fourth was their dog,” and some others will say, “They were five and the sixth was their dog.” These are mere irrelevant guesses. There are still others who say, “They were seven and the eighth was their dog.”[22] Say, "My Lord alone knows best how many they were." "There are a few people only who know their correct number: so you should not enter into discussions with them about their number except in a cursory way: nor ask anyone about them[23] and never say about any matter, “I will do this tomorrow (for you cannot do anything) except that Allah wills it.” If ever you inadvertently utter anything like this, you should at once remember your Lord and say, “I hope that my Lord will guide me[24] in this matter with that thing which is nearest to the right way for me”and some people say that they remained in their Cave for three hundred years and some others add nine more years[25] (to the reckoning of the period). O Prophet, say, “Allah knows best about the period of their stay there, for He is fully aware of all that is hidden in the heavens and the earth.” What an excellent Seer and Hearer He is! There is no other guardian of the creation in the heavens and the earth, and He does not associate anyone with Himself in His authority.

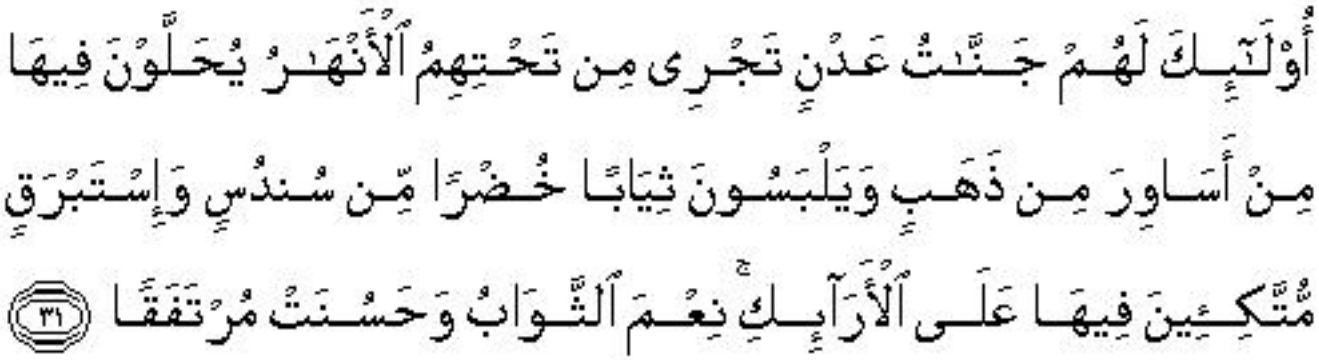
وَٱتۡلُ مَآ أُوحِيَ إِلَيۡكَ مِن كِتَابِ رَبِّكَۖ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦ وَلَن تَجِدَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مُلۡتَحَدٗا ٢٧

وَٱصۡبِرۡ نَفۡسَكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدۡعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلۡغَدَوٰةِ وَٱلۡعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجۡهَهُۥۖ وَلَا تَعۡدُ عَيۡنَاكَ عَنۡهُمۡ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَاۖ وَلَا تُطِعۡ مَنۡ أَغۡفَلۡنَا قَلۡبَهُۥ عَن ذِكۡرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمۡرُهُۥ فُرُطٗا ٢٨

[27-28] O Prophet,[26] recite (the very same) that has been revealed to you in the Book of your Lord, for no one is authorized to make any change whatsoever in the Word of your Lord and (if you will make any change to please any one) you will find no place of refuge to protect you from Him.[27] And keep yourself whole-heartedly content with those who pray to their Lord morning and evening in order to win His approval, and do not turn your attention away from them. Do you desire the allurements of the world?[28] Do not follow the one"[29] whose heart We have made neglectful of Our remembrance and who follows his own lust and goes to extremes in the conduct of his affairs.[30]


وَقُلِ ٱلۡحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمۡۖ فَمَن شَآءَ فَلۡيُؤۡمِن وَمَن شَآءَ فَلۡيَكۡفُرۡۚ إِنَّآ أَعۡتَدۡنَا
لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمۡ سُرَادِقُهَاۚ وَإِن يَسۡتَغِيثُواْ يُغَاثُواْ بِمَآءٖ كَٱلۡمُهۡلِ
يَشۡوِي ٱلۡوُجُوهَۚ بِئۡسَ ٱلشَّرَابُ وَسَآءَتۡ مُرۡتَفَقٗا ٢٩


إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجۡرَ
مَنۡ أَحۡسَنَ عَمَلًا ٣٠


أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهِمُ ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوۡنَ فِيهَا
مِنۡ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٖ وَيَلۡبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضۡرٗا مِّن سُندُسٖ وَإِسۡتَبۡرَقٖ
مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلۡأَرَآئِكِۚ نِعۡمَ ٱلثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتۡ مُرۡتَفَقٗا ٣١

[29-31] Proclaim, “This is the Truth from your Lord: now whosoever will, he may accept it and whosoever will, he may reject it.”[31] (As for those who reject this,) We have prepared for such workers of iniquity a fire whose flames have encircled them.[32] If they will ask for water there, they will be treated with such a drink as will have its residue like that of oil[33] and burn their lips: what an evil drink and what an evil abode! As regards those, who accept it and do righteous deeds, they should rest assured that We do not let go waste the reward of such people: they will have evergreen gardens with canals flowing beneath them: they will be adorned with bracelets[34] of gold and will wear

green colored robes of silk and rich brocade and will be reclining upon raised thrones.[35] What an excellent reward and what an excellent abode!

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

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

وَكَانَ لَهُۥ ثَمَرٞ فَقَالَ لِصَٰحِبِهِۦ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُۥٓ أَنَا۠ أَكۡثَرُ
مِنكَ مَالٗا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرٗا ٣٤

وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُۥ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٞ لِّنَفۡسِهِۦ قَالَ مَآ أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ
هَٰذِهِۦٓ أَبَدٗا ٣٥

وَمَآ أَظُنُّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةٗ وَلَئِن رُّدِدتُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيۡرٗا مِّنۡهَا مُنقَلَبٗا
٣٦

[32-36] O Muhammad, present a parable[36] before them. There were two persons; to one of those We gave two gardens of vine and surrounded them with a fence of date-palm trees and We kept a piece of land between them for cultivation. Both of the vine-yards yielded abundant fruit and did not fail anywise in bringing forth their produce, and We caused a canal to flow in their midst. And the owner of the gardens got much benefit. In spite of all this, while conversing with his neighbor, he said, “I have more of wealth than you and have mightier men at my service.” Then he entered his “Paradise,”[37] while he was unjust to himself, and said, “I don't think that this wealth of mine will ever perish, and I do not believe that the Hour of Resurrection will ever come. Anyhow if ever I am returned to my Lord, I will get even a grander place than this.”[38]

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

لَّٰكِنَّا۠ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ رَبِّى وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّىٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٣٨﴾

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

فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّىٓ أَن يُؤْتِيَنِ خَيْرًا مِّن جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
فَتُصْبِحَ صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا ﴿٤٠﴾

أَوۡ يُصۡبِحَ مَآؤُهَا غَوۡرٗا فَلَن تَسۡتَطِيعَ لَهُۥ طَلَبٗا ﴿٤١﴾

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

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

هُنَالِكَ ٱلۡوَلَٰيَةُ لِلَّهِ ٱلۡحَقِّۚ هُوَ خَيۡرٞ ثَوَابٗا وَخَيۡرٌ عُقۡبٗا ﴿٤٤﴾

[37-44] His neighbor rebuked him during the conversation, saying, "What! Do you disbelieve in the Being Who has created you from clay, then from sperm drop and shaped you as a perfect man?[39] As for myself; Allah alone is my Lord and I set up no partners with Him. And when you were entering your garden, why didn't you say, `Only that shall happen what He will: neither I nor any one else has any power.[40] If you find me now less in wealth and offspring than you, my Lord may bestow on me a better garden than yours and send from heaven on your garden a catastrophe that might turn it into a barren plain, or its water might sink into the earth and you may not be able to bring it out in any way." At last (it so happened that) all his fruit produce was destroyed and, seeing his vines overturned on the trellises, he began to wring his hands at the loss of what he had spent on it, saying, "I wish I had not associated a partner with my Lord! "He was so helpless that neither could he find any host to help him against Allah, nor was himself able to avert that catastrophe-It was then that he realized that all the power of helping rests with Allah, the True One. That reward is the best Which He bestows and that end is the-best to which He leads.

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

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

وَيَوۡمَ نُسَيِّرُ ٱلۡجِبَالَ وَتَرَى ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَارِزَةٗ وَحَشَرۡنَٰهُمۡ فَلَمۡ
نُغَادِرۡ مِنۡهُمۡ أَحَدٗا ﴿٤٧﴾

وَعُرِضُواْ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ صَفّٗا لَّقَدۡ جِئۡتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقۡنَٰكُمۡ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةِۭۖ بَلۡ زَعَمۡتُمۡ أَلَّن نَّجۡعَلَ لَكُم مَّوۡعِدٗا ﴿٤٨﴾

وَوُضِعَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ فَتَرَى ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ مُشۡفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَٰوَيۡلَتَنَا
مَالِ هَٰذَا ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّآ أَحۡصَىٰهَاۚ وَوَجَدُواْ مَا
عَمِلُواْ حَاضِرٗاۗ وَلَا يَظۡلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدٗا ٤٩

[45-49] And O Prophet, bring home to them the reality of this worldly life by a parable. It is like the vegetation of the earth that flourished luxuriantly when We sent down rain water from the sky, but afterwards the same vegetation was turned into chaff, which is blown away by the wind: Allah has power over everything.[41] Likewise this wealth and the offspring are mere transitory adornment of worldly life: in fact the abiding good deeds are best in the sight of your Lord in regard to their end, and hold out for you greater hopes. The only thing, for which you should prepare, is the Day when We will set the mountains in motion,[42] and when you will find the Earth quite naked,[43] and We will muster together all human beings in a way as to leave none at all behind,[44] and all shall be presented before your Lord in rows-Well! you may see that you have come before Us in the same condition in which We created you at first:[45] You were under the delusion that We had not fixed any time of appointment with you-Then the record of deeds shall be set before them. At that time you will see that the criminals will be afraid of the record of their book of life and will say, "Woe to us! What sort of a book this is! It has left nothing unrecorded of our doings, small or great." They will see before them everything, whatsoever they had done, and your Lord will not be unjust to anyone in the least.[46]

وَإِذۡ قُلۡنَا لِلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسۡجُدُواْ لِأٓدَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓاْ إِلَّآ إِبۡلِيسَ كَانَ
مِنَ ٱلۡجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنۡ أَمۡرِ رَبِّهِۦٓۗ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُۥ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ أَوۡلِيَآءَ مِن
دُونِي وَهُمۡ لَكُمۡ عَدُوُّۢۚ بِئۡسَ لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَدَلٗا ٥٠

[50] Remember! When We said to the angels, "Bow down before Adam". They bowed down but Iblis did not.[47] He was one of the jinns, so he chose the way of disobedience to his Lord's Command.[48] What, would you then discard Me and make him and his offspring your patrons, though they are your enemies? What a bad substitute it is that these workers of iniquity are taking!

۞ مَّآ أَشۡهَدتُّهُمۡ خَلۡقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَا خَلۡقَ أَنفُسِهِمۡ
وَمَا كُنتُ مُتَّخِذَ ٱلۡمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدٗا ٥١

[51] I did not call them to witness the creation of the heavens and the earth nor did I associate them in their own creation.[49] It is not for Me to make My supporters those who lead others astray.

وَيَوۡمَ يَقُولُ نَادُواْ شُرَكَآءِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ زَعَمۡتُمۡ فَدَعَوۡهُمۡ فَلَمۡ يَسۡتَجِيبُواْ لَهُمۡ
وَجَعَلۡنَا بَيۡنَهُم مَّوۡبِقٗا ٥٢

وَرَءَا ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ ٱلنَّارَ فَظَنُّوٓاْ أَنَّهُم مُّوَاقِعُوهَا وَلَمۡ يَجِدُواْ عَنۡهَا مَصۡرِفٗا
٥٣

[52-53] What they will do on the Day when their Lord will say to them: “Now call all those whom you considered to be My partners.”[50] They will call them but they will not respond and come to their help, and We will set a gulf of perdition common between them.[51] All the criminals will see the Fire on that Day and will have a foreboding that they are going to fall into it, but will not find any place of escape.

وَلَقَدۡ صَرَّفۡنَا فِي هَٰذَا ٱلۡقُرۡءَانِ لِلنَّاسِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٖۚ وَكَانَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ أَكۡثَرَ
شَيۡءٖ جَدَلٗا ٥٤

وَمَا مَنَعَ ٱلنَّاسَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوٓاْ إِذْ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُواْ رَبَّهُمْ
إِلَّآ أَن تَأْتِيَهُمْ سُنَّةُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ قُبُلًا ﴿٥٥﴾

[54-55] We have devised different ways in the Qur'an to make the people understand its Message, but man is by nature very contentious. (The question is) what kept them back from accepting guidance when it came before them and from asking the forgiveness of their Lord? It is nothing more than this that they are waiting for the same thing to happen to them that visited the former communities; or that they should see the scourge of Allah coming before them![52]

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ ۚ وَيُجَٰدِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُواْ بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُواْ بِهِ ٱلْحَقَّ ۖ وَٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ ءَايَٰتِى وَمَآ أُنذِرُواْ
هُزُوًا ﴿٥٦﴾

[56] The only mission for which We send the Messengers is to convey good news and stern warning,[53] but the disbelievers employ weapons of falsehood to defeat the Truth, and they hold up to ridicule My servants and the warnings that have been sent to them.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن ذُكِّرَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِۦ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا
وَنَسِىَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ ۚ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِىٓ
ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۖ وَإِن تَدْعُهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ فَلَن يَهْتَدُوٓاْ إِذًا أَبَدًا ﴿٥٧﴾

[57] Now, who can be more unjust than the person before whom his Lord's Revelations are recited to admonish him, and he turns away from them and forgets the evil end to which he has paved the way with his own hands? As regards those people, who have adopted such an attitude, We have put coverings over their hearts which do not let

them listen to the Qur'an, and We have produced heaviness in their ears. While in this state, they will never be guided aright howsoever you may invite them to the Guidance.[54]

وَرَبُّكَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ذُو ٱلرَّحْمَةِ ۖ لَوْ يُؤَاخِذُهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوا۟ لَعَجَّلَ لَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۚ
بَل لَّهُم مَّوْعِدٌ لَّن يَجِدُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦ مَوْئِلًا ﴿٥٨﴾

[58] Your Lord is very Forgiving and very Merciful: Had He willed to seize them for their evil deeds, He would have sent immediately a scourge on them but He has appointed a time for its fulfillment, and they will find no way out to escape from it.[55]

وَتِلْكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ أَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا۟ وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَهْلِكِهِم مَّوْعِدًا ﴿٥٩﴾

[59] These habitations which were stricken with the scourge are before you:[56] when they committed iniquity We annihilated them, and We had appointed a term for their annihilation.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِفَتَىٰهُ لَآ أَبْرَحُ حَتَّىٰٓ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِىَ
حُقُبًا ﴿٦٠﴾

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَٱتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُۥ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ
سَرَبًا ﴿٦١﴾

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَىٰهُ ءَاتِنَا غَدَآءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِن سَفَرِنَا هَٰذَا نَصَبًا ﴿٦٢﴾

قَالَ أَرَءَيْتَ إِذْ أَوَيْنَآ إِلَى ٱلصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّى نَسِيتُ ٱلْحُوتَ وَمَآ أَنسَىٰنِيهُ إِلَّا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُۥ ۚ وَٱتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُۥ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿٦٣﴾

قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغِ ۚ فَٱرْتَدَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا ﴿٦٤﴾

فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ عِبَادِنَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا وَعَلَّمْنَٰهُ مِن لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

[60-65] (Now relate to them the event regarding Moses,) when Moses said to his attendant, “I will not bring my journey to an end until I reach the confluence of the two rivers: otherwise I will continue my journey for years.”[57] And it so happened that when they reached the confluence, they became neglectful of their fish and it burrowed its way to the river as through a tunnel. When they had passed on further, Moses said to his attendant, “Let us have our breakfast, for we are dead tired because of to-day's journey.” The attendant said, “Did you not notice what a strange thing happened when we were taking rest by the side of that rock? I totally forgot about the fish and satan made me so neglectful of it that I could not mention it to you: the fish slipped into the river in a marvelous manner.” Moses replied, “That is exactly what we were seeking.”[58] Accordingly, they both went back, retracing their footsteps, and there they found one of our servants whom We had blessed with special favor and had given him a special knowledge from Ourselves.[59]

قَالَ لَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُعَلِّمَنِ مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴿٦٦﴾

قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾

وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ خُبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾

قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِيٓ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَآ أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا ﴿٦٩﴾

قَالَ فَإِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِي عَن شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ أُحْدِثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٧٠﴾

[66-70] Moses said to him, “May I accompany you, so that you may teach me also that Wisdom, which has been taught to you?” He answered, “You cannot bear with me, and you cannot have the patience with regard to that matter of which you have no knowledge.” Moses said, “If Allah wills, you will find me patient and I will not disobey you in any matter.” He said, “Well, if you want to accompany me, you should ask me no questions about anything until I myself mention it to you.”

فَٱنطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي ٱلسَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا ۖ قَالَ أَخَرَقْتَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ أَهْلَهَا

لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْـًٔا إِمْرًا ﴿٧١﴾

قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٢﴾

قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي عُسْرًا ﴿٧٣﴾

[71-73] So they proceeded on until they boarded a boat, and that person bored a hole in the boat. Moses cried out, “What! have you bored a hole in it so that all the passengers may be drowned? This is a grievous thing that you have done.” He answered, “Didn't I tell you that you would not be able to bear with me patiently?” Moses replied, “Please do not rebuke me for my forgetfulness, and do not take me to task in regard to my conduct.”

فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ قَالَ أَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَّقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا نُّكْرًا ﴿٧٤﴾

[74] Then they journeyed on until they met a boy and that person slew him. Moses cried out, “Have you killed an innocent person, though he had killed nobody? Surely this is a horrible deed that you have committed.”

۞ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

قَالَ إِن سَأَلْتُكَ عَن شَيْءٍ بَعْدَهَا فَلَا تُصَاحِبْنِي ۖ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِن لَّدُنِّي عُذْرًا ﴿٧٦﴾

[75-76] He answered, “Didn't I tell you that you would not be able to bear with me patiently?” Moses said, “If after this, I ask anything of you, you may not let me accompany you. Well, now I have afforded you with an excuse from myself.”

فَٱنطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَتَيَآ أَهۡلَ قَرۡيَةٍ ٱسۡتَطۡعَمَآ أَهۡلَهَا فَأَبَوۡاْ أَن يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا
فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارٗا يُرِيدُ أَن يَنقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُۥۖ قَالَ لَوۡ شِئۡتَ لَتَّخَذۡتَ عَلَيۡهِ
أَجۡرٗا ٧٧

قَالَ هَٰذَا فِرَاقُ بَيۡنِي وَبَيۡنِكَۚ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأۡوِيلِ مَا لَمۡ تَسۡتَطِع عَّلَيۡهِ
صَبۡرًا ٧٨

أَمَّا ٱلسَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتۡ لِمَسَٰكِينَ يَعۡمَلُونَ فِي ٱلۡبَحۡرِ فَأَرَدتُّ أَنۡ أَعِيبَهَا
وَكَانَ وَرَآءَهُم مَّلِكٞ يَأۡخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصۡبٗا ٧٩

وَأَمَّا ٱلۡغُلَٰمُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤۡمِنَيۡنِ فَخَشِينَآ أَن يُرۡهِقَهُمَا طُغۡيَٰنٗا وَكُفۡرٗا
٨٠

فَأَرَدْنَآ أَن يُبْدِلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُ زَكَوٰةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴿٨١﴾

وَأَمَّا ٱلْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَٰمَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ
تَحْتَهُۥ كَنزٌ لَّهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَٰلِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَن
يَبْلُغَآ أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُۥ عَنْ
أَمْرِى ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِع عَّلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

[77-82] Then they traveled on until they reached a certain habitation and requested its inhabitants to give them some food but they declined to entertain them. There they saw a wall which was about to fall down. That person set it up again. Moses said, “Had you wanted, you could have demanded payment for your labor.” The other said, "That will do: we must now part company. Now I explain those things about which you could not keep patience. As regards the boat, it belonged to a few poor persons who toiled on the river. I intended to damage it because further on there was the territory of a king who forcibly seized every boat. As for the boy, his parents were true Believers and we feared lest he should trouble them with his rebellion and unbelief. Therefore we, wished that in his stead their Lord may grant them another child who may be more righteous and filial. As regards the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys, who reside in this city. A treasure for them lies buried under this wall. As their father was a righteous man, your Lord willed that when these children attain their maturity, they should dig out their treasure. All this has been done as a mercy from your Lord: I have not done anything of my own authority. This is the interpretation of those things about which you could not keep patience.[60]

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَن ذِى ٱلْقَرْنَيْنِ ۖ قُلْ سَأَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٨٣﴾

[83] And O Muhammad, they ask you about Zul-Qarnain:[61] tell them, “I am going to recite to you an account of him.”[62]

إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ سَبَبًا ﴿٨٤﴾

فَأَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿٨٥﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ ٱلشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِى عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ وَوَجَدَ عِندَهَا
قَوْمًا ۗ قُلْنَا يَٰذَا ٱلْقَرْنَيْنِ إِمَّآ أَن تُعَذِّبَ وَإِمَّآ أَن تَتَّخِذَ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا ﴿٨٦﴾

قَالَ أَمَّا مَن ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُۥ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ فَيُعَذِّبُهُۥ عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا ﴿٨٧﴾

وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلَهُۥ جَزَآءً ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ وَسَنَقُولُ لَهُۥ
مِنْ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

[84-88] We had established his power on the Earth and had provided him with every kind of ways and means. At first, he made preparations for an expedition (to the West and marched on) till he reached the limit where the sun set,[63] and found it setting in black waters,[64] and there he saw a people. We said to him, “O Zul-Qarnain! You have the power to punish them and also the option to treat them generously.”[65] He said, “We will punish that one of them who will commit iniquity: then he shall be returned to his Lord and He will inflict on him a grievous torment: And as for the one, who will believe and do righteous deeds, there is a generous recompense and We will prescribe for him easy tasks.”

ثُمَّ أَتۡبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿٨٩﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطۡلِعَ ٱلشَّمۡسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطۡلُعُ عَلَىٰ قَوۡمٖ لَّمۡ نَجۡعَل لَّهُم مِّن دُونِهَا سِتۡرٗا ﴿٩٠﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ وَقَدۡ أَحَطۡنَا بِمَا لَدَيۡهِ خُبۡرٗا ﴿٩١﴾

[89-91] Then he made preparations (for another expedition and marched on) till he reached the limit where the sun rose. There he saw the sun rising on a people, whom We had not given any shelter from sun shine.[66] This was their condition and We know well whatever Zul-Qarnain possessed.

ثُمَّ أَتۡبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿٩٢﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيۡنَ ٱلسَّدَّيۡنِ وَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمَا قَوۡمٗا لَّا يَكَادُونَ يَفۡقَهُونَ قَوۡلٗا ﴿٩٣﴾

قَالُواْ يَٰذَا ٱلۡقَرۡنَيۡنِ إِنَّ يَأۡجُوجَ وَمَأۡجُوجَ مُفۡسِدُونَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَهَلۡ نَجۡعَلُ لَكَ خَرۡجًا عَلَىٰٓ أَن تَجۡعَلَ بَيۡنَنَا وَبَيۡنَهُمۡ سَدّٗا ﴿٩٤﴾

قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ
رَدْمًا ﴿٩٥﴾

ءَاتُونِي زُبَرَ ٱلْحَدِيدِ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ ٱلصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ ٱنفُخُوا۟ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا
جَعَلَهُۥ نَارًا قَالَ ءَاتُونِيٓ أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا ﴿٩٦﴾

فَمَا ٱسْطَٰعُوٓا۟ أَن يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا ٱسْتَطَٰعُوا۟ لَهُۥ نَقْبًا ﴿٩٧﴾

قَالَ هَٰذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّي ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُۥ دَكَّآءَ ۖ
وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا ﴿٩٨﴾

[92-98] Then he made preparations (for another expedition and marched on) till he reached between two mountains,[67] where he found a people who could hardly understand any language.[68] They said, “O Zul-Qarnain, Gog and Magog[69] spread chaos in this land; should we then pay a tribute to you so that you may build a bulwark between us and them” He said, “What my Allah has granted me is more than enough. You should help me only with manual labor and I will build a barrier between you and them.[70] Come, bring sheets of iron for me. "When he had filled the space between the two mountains, he said to the people, “Now, ply your bellows.” They did so till that (iron-wall) became red-hot and he said, “Now let me pour molten brass upon it.” This was such a barrier that Gog and Magog could not scale over it, nor were they able to dig through it. Zul-Qarnain said, “This is a mercy from my Lord; but when the time of my Lord's promise shall come, He will level it to dust[71] and the promise of my Lord is true.”[72]

۞ وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ ۖ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمْعًا ﴿٩٩﴾

وَعَرَضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْكَافِرِينَ عَرْضًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَن ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا ﴿١٠١﴾

[99-101] And on that Day,[73] We will let loose the people to come close together tumultuously (like the waves of an ocean), and the trumpet shall be blown, and We will gather together all mankind. On that Day Hell shall be brought before the unbelievers who had become blind to My admonition and turned a deaf ear to it.

أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَن يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِن دُونِي أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نُزُلًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

[102] What,[74] do these people, who have disbelieved, presume that they would make My servants their helpers beside Me?[75] We have prepared Hell for the hospitality of such people.

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعۡيُهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَهُمۡ يَحۡسَبُونَ
أَنَّهُمۡ يُحۡسِنُونَ صُنۡعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمۡ وَلِقَآئِهِۦ فَحَبِطَتۡ أَعۡمَٰلُهُمۡ فَلَا
نُقِيمُ لَهُمۡ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ وَزۡنٗا ﴿١٠٥﴾

ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمۡ جَهَنَّمُ بِمَا كَفَرُواْ وَٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ ءَايَٰتِي وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَانَتۡ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلۡفِرۡدَوۡسِ نُزُلًا
﴿١٠٧﴾

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبۡغُونَ عَنۡهَا حِوَلٗا ﴿١٠٨﴾

[103-108] O Muhammad, say to them, "Should We tell you who are the most unsuccessful people and miserable failures in regard to their deeds? They are those, whose endeavors, in the worldly life, had all gone astray from the Right Way[76] but all along they were under the delusion that everything they were doing, was rightly directed: those are the people who rejected the Signs of their Lord and did not believe that they would ever go before Him. Therefore all their deeds were lost, for We will assign no weight to them on the Day of Resurrection.[77] Their recompense is Hell for the disbelief they showed and for the mockery they adopted in regard to My Signs and My Messengers. However, for the hospitality of those people who did righteous deeds, there will be gardens of Paradise wherein they will abide for ever and they will never desire to go anywhere out of them.[78]

قُل لَّوۡ كَانَ ٱلۡبَحۡرُ مِدَادٗا لِّكَلِمَٰتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ ٱلۡبَحۡرُ قَبۡلَ أَن تَنفَدَ
كَلِمَٰتُ رَبِّي وَلَوۡ جِئۡنَا بِمِثۡلِهِۦ مَدَدٗا ١٠٩

[109] O Muhammad, say to them, "If the waters of the ocean were to become ink to write the Words[79] of my Lord, it would exhaust but the Words of my Lord will not exhaust: nay, even if We brought as much ink again, it will not suffice for that."

قُلۡ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُكُمۡ يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمۡ إِلَٰهٞ وَٰحِدٞۖ فَمَن كَانَ
يَرۡجُواْ لِقَآءَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلۡيَعۡمَلۡ عَمَلٗا صَٰلِحٗا وَلَا يُشۡرِكۡ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَحَدَۢا
١١٠

[110] O Muhammad say to them, “I am a human being like you: it has been revealed to me that your Deity is only One Allah. Therefore the one who expects to meet his Lord, should not associate with Him any other deity in His worship.”

1That is, "There is nothing intricate or complicated in it that may be beyond anyone's understanding nor is there anything that deviates from the straight path of the Truth and thus cause hesitation in the mind of a truth-loving person."

2"Those people" includes the Christians, the Jews and the mushrik Arabs who assigned offspring to Allah.

3_____

4This refers to the real cause of the anxiety of the Holy Prophet at the time of the revelation of this Surah . It clearly shows that the Holy Prophet did not grieve at the persecution from which he and his Companions were suffering but at the deviation and moral degeneration of his people. What was consuming him was that, though he was trying to bring them out from their disgraceful state, they persisted in it. He was grieved because he was convinced that their deviation would inevitably lead them

to destruction and scourge of Allah. Therefore he was working day and night to save them but it appeared that they were bent upon incurring the chastisement of Allah. The Holy Prophet himself has described this state of his mind in a Tradition to this effect: "I may describe this thing in a parable. A person kindled a fire to spread light but the moths persist in falling over it to burn themselves alive. He vies to save them from the fire but the moths reduce his efforts to failure. The same is true of me and you. I hold you by your skirts to keep you away from the fire, but you are bent upon falling into it." (Bukhari, Muslim).

Though apparently it is merely stated "..... it may be that you will consume your life for their sake out of sorrow...." it also contains a sort of consolation for the Holy Prophet, as if to say, "As you are not responsible for forcing them to believe, why should you consume yourself for their sake? Your only duty is to give good news and warning and not to turn people into Believers. Therefore you may go on carrying out your mission of giving good news to the Believers and warning of the bad consequences to the disbelievers."

5V. 6 was addressed to the Holy Prophet, but vv. 7-8 have been directed to the disbelievers indirectly, as if to say, "You must understand it clearly that all the things that you see in the world and which allure you, are a transitory adornment which has been arranged merely to test you, but it is a pity that you have been involved in the misunderstanding that all these things have been created to cater for your pleasure and enjoyment. That is why the only aim and object of life you have set before you is: "Eat, drink and be merry.." As a result of this you do not pay any attention to your true and real well-wisher. You must understand it well that these things have not been provided for pleasure but are actually a means of testing you. You have been placed among them to see which of you is allured by these from the real aim of life and which of you keeps steadfast in the worship of Allah, for which you have been sent to the world. All these things and means of pleasure shall come to an end on the Day your examination is over and nothing will remain on the earth because it will be turned into a bare plain."

6The Arabic word (Kahaf) literally means a vast cave.

7There is a difference of opinion about the meaning of ar-raqim. Some Companions and their followers opined that it was the name of that habitation where this event took place and that it was situated somewhere between Aylah and Palestine. There are other commentators who take it to mean the "Inscription" that had been set up at the Cave as a memorial to "the Sleepers of the Cave". Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, in his commentary, Tarjmanul-Qur'an, has preferred the first meaning and opined that it is the same place which has been called Rekem in the Bible (Joshua, 18: 27). Then he identifies it with the ancient historical city of Petra. But he has not considered the fact that Rekem, as mentioned in the Bible, belonged to the children of Benjamin and according to the Book of Joshua, the territory of this clan was situated to the west of river Jordan and the Dead Sea and that the ruins of Petra are situated to the south of Jordan. That is why the modern archaeologists do not believe that Petra and Rekem are one and the same place. (Please refer to Encyclopedia Britannica, 1946, Vol XVII, page 658). We are also of the

opinion that by "Ar-raqim"is meant "the inscription."

8This question has been posed to expose the skeptical attitude of the disbelievers towards the “Sleepers of the Cave,” as if to say, “Do you think that Allah, Who has created the heavens and the earth, does not have the power to keep a few persons in a state of sleep for a couple of hundred years and then to raise them up as hale and hearty as they were at the time of going to sleep? If you ever had pondered over the wonderful creation of the sun and the moon and the earth, you would never have expressed any doubt that such a thing was anything difficult for Allah.”

9The oldest evidence of this story is found in a homily written in Syriac by Jacob of Sarug, a Christian priest of Syria, who was born in A.D. 452, a few years after the death of "the Companions of the Cave." The homily which describes the legend in great detail was composed by him in or about A.D. 474. On the one hand, this same Syriac version came into the hands of our early commentators, and Ibn Jarir Tabari cited it in his commentary with various authorities, and on the other, it reached Europe where its translations and abridged versions were published in Greek and Latin. The abridged story as told by Gibbon in Chapter 33 of his The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire under the heading, "The Seven Sleepers", so closely resembles the story told by our commentators that both the versions seem to have been drawn from the same source. For instance, the name of the king, whose persecutions made the Seven Christian youths of Ephesus take refuge in the cave, was Emperor Decius according to Gibbon. He ruled the Roman Empire from A.D. 249 to 251 and whose reign is very notorious because of his persecution of the followers of Prophet Jesus Christ, while our commentators call him `Decanus', `Decaus', etc. The city, where this event happened, was `Aphesus', or `Aphesos' according to our commentators, while according to Gibbon it was Ephesus, which was the biggest Roman city and sea-port on the west coast of Asia Minor. The ruins of this city can still be seen 20 to 25 miles south of the modern Turkish city of Izmir. (Please see Map No. 1 for reference). Again the name of the king, during whose reign "the Companions of the Cave" awoke was `Tezusius' according to the Muslim commentators and Theodosius II according to Gibbon. He ruled over Rome from A.D. 408 to 450, after the Roman Empire had accepted Christianity.

The resemblance between the two versions is so close that even the name of the companion whom the Sleepers sent to the city to buy food after waking up has been mentioned as `Jamblicha' by the Muslim scholars and Jamblichus by Gibbon. The details of the story in both the versions are also similar which are briefly as follows:

When during the reign of the Emperor Decius the followers of Prophet Jesus Christ were being mercilessly persecuted, the Seven Christian youths hid themselves in a cave and fell into a sleep. Then in the 38th year of the reign of the Emperor Theodosius II (approximately in A.D. 445 or 446) they awoke when the whole of the Roman Empire had become Christian. Thus, they slept in the cave for nearly 196 years.

On this ground some orientalists have rejected that the above-mentioned story is the same as that given in the Qur'an because the period of their stay in the cave according to the Qur'an (v. 25) was 309 years. We have, however, answered this objection in E.N. 25.

There are a few minor differences between the Quranic and Syriac versions, on the basis of which Gibbon has charged the Holy Prophet with "ignorance". However, the Syriac version, on the basis of whose authenticity he has committed this gross insolence, was even according to him written thirty to forty years after the event by a Syrian. He has not taken the trouble to consider the fact that verbal versions of events do change a bit during such a long time while they are communicated from one country to the other. Therefore it is wrong to take such a version of the story for granted and literally true and to charge the Qur'an with discrepancy for any main difference with it. Such an attitude is worthy only . of those people who are so blinded by religious prejudices that they discard even the most ordinary demands of reason.

The city of Ephesus where the event of the Sleepers of the Cave took place, was built about 11th century B.C. and became a great center of idol worship, its chief deity being the moon goddess, Diana, whose temple was regarded as a wonder of the ancient world. Most of her devotees belonged to Asia Minor and the Roman Empire also had accepted her as one of its deities.

After Prophet Jesus when his message started reaching different parts of the Roman Empire, a few youths of Ephesus also gave up idol worship and accepted God as their only Lord. Gregory of Tours has collected details about these Christian youths in his Meraculorum Liber, which are briefly as follows:

"They were seven youths. When the Emperor Decius heard of their change of faith, he summoned them and questioned them about their new religion. ht spite of knowing that the Emperor was deadly against the followers of Christ, they frankly admitted before him that their Lord is the Lord of the earth and heavens, and that they recognized none else as Deity for if they did so, they would be committing a grave sin. The Emperor became furious to hear this, and warned that he would have them killed, but then considering their tender age, he granted them three days in which they were counseled to revert to their old faith, otherwise they would be put to death.

"The seven youths took advantage of the situation and fled the city to conceal themselves in a cave in the mountains. On the way a dog also followed them: they did their best to scare it away, but it would not leave them. At last they found a spacious cave as a suitable refuge and hid in it, and the dog sat at the entrance. Being tired they soon fell into a deep slumber. This happened in about 250 A.D. After about 197 years, in 447 A.D., during the reign of Emperor Theodosius II, they awoke suddenly when the whole Roman Empire had embraced Christianity and the Ephesians had given up idolatry.

"At this time a fierce controversy was going on among the Romans regarding the reality of the life-after-death and Resurrection, and the Emperor himself was anxious to eradicate somehow the disbelief in the

life-after-death from the minds of his people. So much so that one day he prayed that God in His mercy may show a sign which tray help restore and correct the people's belief. In precisely the same days the Seven Sleepers awoke in the cave.

"After waking up the youths started asking one another about how long they might have slept. Some said it might have been a day: others said it was a part of a day. When they reached no conclusion, they stopped arguing, leaving the knowledge of the exact period to God.

Then they sent Jean, a companion, to the city with a few silver coins to buy food, and warned him to be on his guard lest the people should recognize him, for they feared that if they were discovered the Ephesians would force them to bow before Diana. But when Jean came to the city he was astonished to see that the world had changed: the whole population had embraced Christianity, and there was nobody in the city to worship Diana. He came to a shop and wanted to buy a few loaves of bread. When he paid in a coin bearing the image of Emperor Decius, the shopkeeper could not believe his eyes and asked the stranger from where he had obtained that coin. When the young man said that it was his own, a dispute began between them and soon a crowd gathered around them, and the matter reached the chief officer of the city. The officer himself was puzzled and wanted to know the whereabouts of the treasure-house from where the young man had taken the coin, but the latter insisted that it belonged to him. The officer did not believe him because he thought that a young man like him could not possibly possess a centuries-old coin which had not even been seen by the elders in the city. When Jean came to know that the Emperor Decius had died., he was pleasantly surprised. He told the crowd that he and his six companions had fled the city only the other day and taken refuge in a cave to escape Decius' persecution. The officer was greatly surprised and followed the young man to see the cave where his companions lay in hiding. And a great crowd followed behind them. When they came to the cave, it was fully established that the youths really belonged to the Emperor Decius' period. Consequently, Emperor Theodosius was informed and he also visited the cave to receive grace. Then the seven youths went back into the cave and lay down and breathed their last. Seeing this clear sign the people's belief in the life-after-death was restored, and a monument was ordered to be built over the cave by the Emperor."

The story of the Sleepers of the Cave as narrated above, corresponds so closely with that mentioned in the Qur'an that the seven youths can easily be regarded as "Ashab-i-Kahf" (the Companions of the Cave). Some people, however, have raised the objection that this story concerns a city of Asia Minor, and the Qur'an does not discuss or refer to any event that might have taken place outside Arabia; therefore it would be against the Quranic style and spirit to label this Christian story as the story of Ashab-i-Kahf'. In our opinion this objection is not correct. The Qur'an means to impress and warn the Arabs by relating stories concerning the various ancient tribes who had transgressed from the right path and with whom they were familiar, whether they lived and flourished inside Arabia or outside it. It is for this very reason that a mention has been made of the ancient history of Egypt in the Qur'an, whereas Egypt has never been a part of Arabia. The question is that when the history of Egypt can be mentioned in the Qur'an, why cannot Rome and the Roman history with which the Arabs were as familiar as with the Egyptian history?

The Roman frontiers adjoined the northern Hijaz and the Arab caravans traded with the Romans almost throughout the year. Then there were a number of Arab tribes who were directly under Roman domination and the Roman Empire was in no way unknown to the Arabs, a fact which is fully borne nut by Surah Ar-Rum. Another thing which should be borne in mind is that the story of the Sleepers of the Cave has been related in the Qur'an in response to a query raised by the disbelievers of Makkah, who had been prompted by the Jews and Christians to question the Holy Prophet on such matters as were wholly unknown to the Arabs in order to test his Prophethood.

10That is, when they had believed sincerely, Allah increased their faith in the guidance and enabled them to become firm and steadfast on the way of the Truth even at the risk of their lives rather than surrender before falsehood.

11When these God-worshiping youths fled the habitations to take refuge in the hills, the city of Ephesus was the principal center of idol-worship and sorcery in Asia Minor. There was a great temple dedicated to the goddess Diana, which was well-known in the whole world and attracted devotees from far end wide. The sorcerers, workers of magic and occult arts, sooth-sayers and amulet writers of Ephesus were well-known and their black business had spread throughout Syria and Palestine, even as far as Egypt. The Jews also had a big share in it, who attributed this art to Prophet Solomon. (Please see Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature under `Ephesus', for details). The predicament in which the righteous people living in an environment of idolatry and superstition were involved can well be imagined from the remark of "the Companions of the Cave¦ that occurs in v. 20: "..... if they succeed in over-powering us, they will surely stone us to death or force us back into their Faith."

12It has not been mentioned that in accordance with this mutual resolve, they left the city and went to a secret Cave in the mountains in order to escape from death or forced apostasy.

13This is to show that the mouth of the Cave faced the north. That is why the light of the sun could not enter inside the Cave and the one who passed by it could not see who was inside it.

14That is, "If some one could have peeped at the Seven Persons from outside and seen them turning from one side to the other at intervals, he would have thought that they were not asleep but were relaxing themselves."

15Allah had so arranged their refuge that none dared go inside the Cave and know about them for it was pitch dark in the Cave and the dog was keeping watch at the entrance. If someone ever peeped into the Cave and saw the Sleepers, he took them for some robbers and at once turned on his heels. This was the reason why their refuge remained a secret to the outer world for such a long period.

16They were roused from their sleep in the same miraculous way that was employed in sending them to

sleep and keeping them hidden from the outer world.

17The secret of their sleep was revealed when one of them went to Ephesus to buy food for them and offered a coin of the period of Emperor Decius. As it was a changed world, he naturally attracted attention for he was wearing a costume of 300-year old fashion and spoke a language different from that in vogue. This was because during those two centuries the language, culture, dress etc., had undergone a marked change. So the shopkeeper looked askance at him and, according to a Syriac tradition, suspected that he had dug up some ancient treasure. Accordingly, he gathered some people of his neighborhood and they took him before the ruler. On questioning, it was discovered that he was one of those followers of Christ, who had fled the city 300 years ago to save their Faith. As most of the population had embraced Christianity, the news immediately spread throughout the city and a big crowd of the people along with the Christian Roman Ruler, arrived at the Cave. It was then that the Sleepers of the Cave came to know that they had slept for about three hundred years. So after making salutations to their Christian brothers they lay down and their souls left their bodies.

18According to the Syriac tradition, at the time of this occurrence, hot discussions were going on in Ephesus about Resurrection and the Hereafter. Though the people had embraced Christianity under the influence of the Roman Empire, yet traces of shirk and idolatry of the Romans and the effects of the Greek philosophy were still very powerful. So in spite of the Christian creed of the Hereafter, many people denied this, or at least were skeptical about this. To add to this the Sadducee sect of the Jews, who formed a great part of the population of the city, openly denied the Hereafter and professed to base this on the Torah. The Christian scholars, however, could not put forward any strong arguments to refute them: so much so that the reports of the polemical discussion given in Matthew, Mark and Luke, attributed to Prophet Christ, are admittedly very weak even according to the Christian scholars. (Please refer to Matthew 22: 23-33, Mark 12: 18-27, Luke 20: 27-40). That is why the disbelievers in the Hereafter were having the upper hand and even the believers were being involved in doubts about it. It was at that time that the Sleepers of the Cave were raised up and furnished an absolute proof of the life-after-death and turned the scales in favor of the believers in this dispute.

19It appears from the context that this was the saying of the righteous people from among the Christians. They were of the opinion that a wall should be raised at the entrance of the Cave in order to let the Sleepers remain in the same condition in which they were, for they argued that their Lord alone knew best about their rank and position and the reward they deserved.

20The people "who prevailed in their matter" were the Roman rulers and the priests of the Christian Church, who did not let the righteous Christians have their way. This was because by the middle of the fifth century, the common people, especially the orthodox among the Christians, had become fully involved in shirk and the worship of saints and tombs. They used to visit the tombs of the saints to worship them and kept the statues of Jesus, Mary and the apostles in their churches: so much so that a few years before the rising up of the Sleepers of the Cave, in 431 A.D., a great council of the

representatives of the Christian World had been held in Ephesus itself, in which it was resolved that the creed of the divinity of Christ and of Mary as the mother of God, should be included in the articles of the Christian Church. If we keep in view the year 431, it becomes clear that by "those who prevailed in their matter" are meant the leaders of the Church and the officers of the government, who had the reins of the religious and political powers in their hands. In fact these were the people who were the upholders of shirk and who decided that a mausoleum should be built over the Cave of the Sleepers to make it a place of worship.

21It is an irony that some people among the Muslims have misconstrued this verse of the Qur'an so as to make it lawful for themselves to build mausoleums, monuments and mosques over the tombs of the righteous persons and saints. The Qur'an has, in fact, pointed out the deviation of the workers of iniquity who prevailed upon others and built a place of worship over the Cave of the Sleepers, who were indeed a Sign of Resurrection and of the life-after-death. But they abused this good opportunity and produced another means of practicing shirk.

One fails to understand how anyone can deduce from this verse an argument for the legality of building mosques over the tombs of the righteous people, when the Holy Prophet has categorically prohibited this:

(1) "Allah has cursed those women who visit tombs and those people who build mosques over them and burn lights over them" (Ahmad, Tirmizi, Abu Dawud, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah).

(2) "Beware that the people, who have passed before you, made the tombs of their Prophets the places of their worship. I forbid you to do that." (Muslim)

(3) "Allah has cursed the Jews and the Christians, for they made the tombs of their Prophets the places of their worship." (Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i).

(4) "The behavior of those people was strange: if a righteous person from among them, died they would build a mosque over his grave and draw his pictures. They will be treated as worst criminals on the Day on Resurrection." (Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i).

Thus, it is clear from the above Sayings of the Holy Prophet that building of the places of worship over the tombs is utterly unlawful; the Qur'an has merely stated as a historical fact the sinful act of the Christian priests and the Roman rulers and has not sanctioned such a thing. Therefore no God-fearing person can turn this into an argument for building mosques over the tombs.

Incidentally, it will be worth while to cite a statement of Rev. T. Arundell who published his Discoveries in Asia Minor in 1834. He says that he had seen the remains of the Mausoleums of Mary and the Seven Sleepers on a hillock near the remains of the ancient city of Ephesus.

22This shows that about three hundred years after this event, at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, different stories had become current among the Christians about the Sleepers of the Cave, but generally these stories had no authentic source behind them.' This was because that was not the age of the press in which authentic books might have been published. Therefore naturally the stories of events were carried from place to place by means of oral traditions, and with the passage of time many tales of fiction got mixed up with the real story.

23This is meant to impress that the real thing in this story is not the number of the Sleepers but the lessons it teaches: (1) A true believer should not on any account turn away from the truth and bow before falsehood. (2) A believer should not merely rely on the material means but on Allah. He should trust in God and follow the right way, even though the outward adverse circumstances might appear to be unfavorable. (3) It is wrong to suppose that Allah is bound by any so-called "Law of Nature", for He is able to do any thing He wills even though that might seem to be against some common experience. He has the power to change any so-called law of nature, whenever and wherever He wills and bring about any extraordinary "supernatural" thing. So much so that He can raise up anyone who might have been asleep for two hundred years, as if he had slept only for a few hours, without letting any change take place in his appearance, dress, health, indeed in anything, during the passage of time. (4) This teaches us that Allah has the power to bring to life all the generations-past, present and future all together as asserted by the Prophets and Divine Scriptures. (5) It teaches us that ignorant people have always been perverting the Signs of Allah which are sent for the right guidance of the people. That is how the miracle of the Sleepers of the Cave, which had been shown as a proof of the Hereafter, had been turned into a means of shirk, as if they were some saints who had been sent only for this purpose.

It is obvious from the above-mentioned real lessons, which one can learn from the story of the Sleepers, that a wise man will pay his attention to these things and not divert it in search of their number, their names, the color of their dog and the like. Only those people, who have no interest for the reality but for superficial things, will spend their time and energy in making investigations about such things. That is why Allah instructed the Holy Prophet: "You should not enter into useless and irrelevant discussions about such things, if other people try to involve you in them. Instead of wasting your time in such useless things, you should concentrate your attention only on your mission." That is why Allah has not Himself told their exact number lest it should encourage such people as are always hankering after useless things.

24This is a parenthetical clause which has been inserted here because of its relevancy to the preceding verse, in which it was asserted that the correct number of the Sleepers of the Cave is known only to Allah and a research into it is a useless task. Therefore one should refrain from investigating into unimportant things, nor enter into discussions about them. This has led to the instruction contained in the parenthetical clause for the benefit of the Holy Prophet and the Believers who have been told never to make a positive assertion like this: "I will do this thing tomorrow", for you do not know whether you will be able to do that thing or not: you have neither the knowledge of the unknown nor have full powers to do

what you like. If ever inadvertently you utter anything like this, you should at once remember your Lord and say, "Insha Allah." Besides this you do not know whether there will be any good for you in the thing about which you say, “I will do this.” It is possible that you may do another thing better than that. Therefore you should trust in God and say, "I hope that my Lord will guide me in this matter with that thing which is nearer to the right way for me."

25This sentence is connected with the theme preceding the parenthetical clause like this: "Some people wilt say, `They were three and the fourth was their do:.....' and some people will say that they remained in the Cave for three hundred years and some others would add nine more years (to the reckoning of the period)". We are of the opinion that the number of the years "300 and 309" have not been stated by Allah Himself but Allah has cited these as sayings of the people. "this opinion is based on this succeeding sentence: "Allah knows best about the period of their stay there. If the number of years, given in v. 25, had been from Allah, this succeeding sentence would have been meaningless. hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas has also opined that this is not the saying of Allah but that of the people which has been cited as a part of the story.

26After relating the story of the Sleepers of the Cave, the Qur'an begins to review the condition of the Muslims of Makkah at the time of the revelation of the Surah.

27This does not mean at all that, God forbid, the Holy Prophet was inclined to make any changes in the Qur'an to please the disbelievers of Makkah and was thinking of some formula of compromise with the chiefs of the Quraish which necessitated a warning that he was not authorized to do so. As a matter of tact, though this was apparently addressed to the Holy Prophet, it was really meant for the disbelievers that they should not entertain any hope whatsoever for anything like this, as if to say, "You must understand it once for all that Our Messenger is nut authorized to make any changes in Our Revelation, for he has to precisely just as it is sent down to him. If you want to accept it, you will have to accept it in its entirety as it is being sent by the Lord of the Universe: and if you want to reject it, you may do so but you must understand it well that no modification even in the least, will be made in it to please you. " This was the answer to the repeated demand of the disbelievers. "If you do insist, O Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), that we should accept your Message in its entirety, then make certain modifications in it to accommodate some creeds and customs of our forefathers, and we will accept your Message. This is our offer for a compromise and this will save our people from dis-union. " This demand of the disbelievers has been cited in the Qur'an at several places and the same answer has been given, e.g. "When Our clear Revelations are recited to them, those who do not expect to meet Us, say, `Bring an other Qur'an in its stead or make some amendments in it' ...." (X: 15)

28Though these words have also been addressed to the Holy Prophet, they are really meant for the chiefs of the Quraish. According to a Tradition related by Ibn `Abbas, the chiefs of the Quraish would say to the Holy Prophet that they considered it below their dignity to sit with such people as Bilal, Suhaib,

'Ammar, Khabbab, Ibn-Mas`ud and the like who generally remained in his company: and that if he should send them away, they would be willing to attend his meetings in order to learn about his Message. At this Allah revealed this verse: "And keep yourself whole-heartedly content with those who pray to their Lord morning and evening in order to win His approval and do not turn your attention away from them: (Do you desire to discard these sincere but poor people so that the chiefs of the Quraish, the well-to-do people, should come and sit near you?)" This was meant to warn the chiefs of the Quraish to this effect: "Your wealth, your pomp and show of which you are so proud, has no value at all in the sight of Allah and His Messenger; nay, those poor people are really more worthy in their sight, for they are sincere and always remember Allah." The same was the attitude of the chiefs of Prophet Noah's people, who said, "And we see also that none but the meanest and the most shallow of our people have become your followers. " .... (Noah replied,) "I am not going to drive away those who have believed in me, nor can I say about those whom you disdain, `Allah has not bestowed any good on them' . . . " (XXI: vv. 27, 29, 31)

29That is, "Do not yield to what he says, nor submit to him, nor fulfill his desire, nor follow his bidding."

30The original Arabic text may also mean, "Who discards the truth, breaks all moral limits and rushes on headlong." But in both cases it comes to this: "The one, who is neglectful of Allah and becomes a slave of his lust, inevitably transgresses all limits and becomes a victim of immoderation. Therefore the one,who will submit to him, will also follow the same way and wander about in deviation after him.

31This verse makes it quite plain that the story of the Sleepers of the Cave has been related to tell the opponents of Islam: "This is the Truth from your Lord: now whosoever wills, he may accept it and whosoever wills, he may reject it. But people must understand that no compromise will be made in regard to the Truth just as the Sleepers of the Cave did not make any compromise with regard to their creed. They did not make any compromise in regard to the Doctrine of Tauhid after they had believed in it and categorically declared, "Our Lord is the One Who alone is the Lord of the heavens and the earth." After this declaration they did not in any way accede to the making of any compromise with their people, who had gone astray, but firmly declared, "We will not give Him up and pray to other deities, because it will be the most improper thing, if we do so." After making this declaration they left their people and deities and took refuge in the Cave without taking any provisions with them. After' this when they rose up, the only thing about which they showed any anxiety, was that their people might not succeed in forcing them back to their own faith. After relating these things, the Qur'an addresses the Holy Prophet to the effect (though these words are really meant for the opponents of Islam): "It is absolutely out of question whether any compromise can be made with mushriks and disbelievers. present the truth intact to them whether they accept it or not. If they do not accept it, they themselves will meet with an evil end. As regards those, who have accepted the Truth (whether they be youngsters or poor, indigent people or slaves or laborers,) they are really those people who have a worth with Allah, and they alone will be honored. Therefore you should not discard them and prefer the chiefs and the rich people who may be neglectful of Allah and be slaves of their lust, even though they might be possessors of worldly grandeur."

32The Arabic word (Suradiq) literally means sides of a tent but, as used in the case of Hell, it may mean its external boundaries to which its flames and heat may reach. According to some commentators, it applies to the future reuse "...its flames will encircle them" so as to refer to the flames of Hell in the Hereafter. But we are of the opinion that its flames have already encircled, in this very world, these workers of iniquity, who have turned away from the Truth and that they cannot escape them.

33The Arabic word (muhl) has several lexical meanings. According to some people, it means "the residue of oil"; according to others, "lava", which is formed by the melting of things in the earth; according to some, "molten matter" and according to others "pus and blood"

34The dwellers of Paradise will be adorned with bracelets of gold like the kings of ancient times. This will be to show that they will be adorned like the kings of this world, whereas an unbeliever and wicked king will be disgraced there.

35The Arabic word (ara aik) is plural of arikah which is that kind of throne that is covered with an umbrella. This is also to show that in Paradise the Believers will sit on thrones like the kings of this world.

36In order to understand the significance of this parable we should keep in view v. 28 in which arrogant chiefs , of Makkah were told that the poor Companions of the Holy Prophet would not be discarded to please them.

37He considered his gardens to be "Paradise". Thus he behaved like those mean persons, who, when rise to power and wealth, are always involved in the misunderstanding that they are enjoying "Paradise" in this world; therefore they do not stand in need of any other Paradise.

38That is, “I don't think there is any life-after-death, but supposing there be one, 1 shall fare even better there than in my present life, for my prosperity is a clear proof that I am a favorite of God.”

39This shows that "unbelief " in Allah is not confined to the denial of the existence of God in so many words, but arrogance, pride, vanity and the denial of the Hereafter are also kufr. Although that person did not deny the existence of Allah, may be he professed it as is apparent from his words ("If ever I am returned to my Lord-"), yet in spite of his profession, his neighbor charged him with unbelief in Allah. This is because the person, who considers his wealth and his grandeur etc., to be the fruits of his own power and capability and not the favors of Allah, and who thinks that they are everlasting and none can take than away from hint and that he is not accountable to anyone, is guilty of "unbelief in Allah,” even though he might profess belief in Him, for he acknowledges Allah as a Being and not as his Master, Owner and Sovereign. In fact, belief in Allah demands not merely the profession of His existence but also the acknowledgment of His Sovereignty, Mastery, Rule and the like.

40That is, "If we are able to do anything, it is by the help and support of Allah alone."

41"Allah has power over everything": He gives life and also death: He causes the rise and the downfall: It is by His command that the seasons change. Therefore, O disbelievers, if you are enjoying prosperity today, you should be under no delusion that this condition will remain for ever. That God, by Whose command these things have been bestowed on you, has the power to snatch away all this by another command.

42The mountains will begin to move about like clouds when the gravitation of the earth shall be brought to an end. The Qur'an has described the same thing in XXVII: 88 in this way: "When you see the mountains, you consider them to be firmly fixed, but they shall be floating about like clouds at that time."

43"You will find the Earth quite naked": You will find no vegetation and no building on it and it will become a barren plain. It is the same thing that has been stated in v. 8 of this Chapter.

44That is, "We will muster together every human being from the first Man, Adam, to the last one born in the last moment of the Day of Resurrection: even that child which had breathed the first breath after its birth, shall be resurrected and all shall be mustered at one and the same tune."

45This thing will be addressed to those who denied the Hereafter, as if to say, "Well, now you see that the information given by the Prophets has come out to be true. They told you that Allah would bring you to life again as He first brought you out from the wombs of your mothers but you disbelieved in it. Now say whether you have been brought to life for the second time or not."

46"Your Lord will not be unjust to anyone in the least": Neither will an evil deed not committed by someone have been recorded in his Conduct Register, nor shall anyone be punished more than one deserved for his crime, nor shall an innocent person be punished at all.

47The reference to the story of Adam and Iblis has been made here to warn the erring people of their folly. It is an obvious folly that people should discard their Prophets, who were their well-wishers, and get entangled in the snare set by their eternal enemy, Iblis, who has been jealous of man ever since he refused to bow down before Adam and became accursed.

48It was possible for Iblis to disobey Allah because he was not one of the angels but one of the jinns. It must be noted that the Qur'an is very explicit that the angels are inherently obedient:

(1) "They do not show arrogance; they fear their Lord Who is above them, and do whatever they are bidden." (XVI: 50)

(2) "..... They do not disobey the Command that is given to them by their Lord and do whatever they are bidden to do." (LXVI: 6)

In contrast to the angels, the jinns have been, like human beings, given the option to obey or not to obey. Therefore they have been given the power to believe or disbelieve, to obey or not to obey. This thing has been made explicit here by saying that Iblis was one of the jinns, so he deliberately chose the way of disobedience. Incidentally, this verse removes all those misunderstandings that are generally found among the common people that Iblis was one of the angels and not an ordinary angel but the instructor of the angels. As regards the difficulty that arises because of this statement of the Qur'an, "When We said to the angels, `Bow down before Adam. They bowed down but Iblis did not'," it should be noted that the Command to the angels was meant for all those on the Earth who were under the administration of the angels so that they should also be made submissive to man. Accordingly all these creatures bowed along with the angels but Iblis refused to bow down along with them.

49This thing has been asserted to impress on the disbelievers that the satans were not entitled to their submission and worship, for they had no share at all in the creation of the heavens and the earth, nay, they themselves were the creation of Allah: therefore Allah alone was worthy of worship.

50This theme has already been stated at several places in the Qur'an. This is to impress that it is shirk to discard the commandments and the guidance of Allah and to follow the orders and guidance of any other than Allah, though one may not be professing with one's tongue that there is any partner of Allah: nay, if one might be cursing others but at the same time following their orders instead of Divine Commandments, even then that one shall be guilty of shirk. For instance, we see that everyone in this world curses satans but still follows them. According to the Qur'an, in spite of cursing them, if people follow satans, they shall be guilty of setting up satans as partners with Allah. Though this will not be shirk in so many words, it will be tantamount to the practice of shirk and the Qur'an denounces this as shirk.

51Generally the commentators have assigned two meanings to this. The one is the same that we have adopted in our translation and the other is this: "We will cause enmity between them." That is, "Their friendship in this world shall be turned into bitter enmity in the Hereafter."

52This is to warn the people that the Qur'an has left no stone unturned in making the Truth plain. It has employed all kinds of arguments, parables, similitudes and used all the possible effective ways to appeal to the heart and the mind of man, and adopted the best possible style. In short, nothing has been left that could persuade the people to accept the Truth. If, in spite of this, they do not accept the truth, it is obvious that they are waiting for God's scourge like the one that visited the former communities to make them realize their error.

53This verse has two meanings:

(1) We send Our Messengers to forewarn the people before the coming of the judgment of the good results of obedience and the evil consequences of disobedience. But these foolish people are not taking advantage of these forewarnings and insist on seeing the same evil end from which the Messengers desire to save them.

(2) It' they insist on meeting with the scourge, they should not demand this from the Messenger because the Messenger is sent not to bring a scourge but to warn the people beforehand to escape from it.

54Allah puts a covering over the heart of a person and makes his ears hard of hearing the Truth when he adopts the attitude of contention, dispute, wrangling and argumentation towards the admonition of a well-wisher and tries to defeat the truth with the weapons of falsehood and cunning. Naturally this attitude produces in him obduracy and obstinacy so that he turns a deaf ear towards guidance, and is unwilling to realize his error before seeing his evil end. For such people pay no heed to admonition and warning and insist on falling into the abyss of perdition: then and then alone they are convinced that it was perdition towards which they were rushing headlong.

55This is to warn the foolish people that they should not be deluded by the respite that is given to them and presume that they will never be taken to task whatever they may go on doing. They forget that Allah gives them respite because He is Forgiving and Forbearing and does not punish the evil-doers on the spot, for His Mercy demands that the evil-doers should be given respite so that they may mend their ways.

56The ruined habitations were of Saba, Thamud, Midian and the people of Prophet Lot, which were visited by the Quraish during their trade journeys, and which were quite well known to other Arabs also.

57Though this story was told in answer to the question of the disbelievers, it has been used to impress a very important truth on the minds of both the disbelievers and the believers. It is this: those people who draw their conclusions only from the seeming aspects of events, make a very serious error in their deductions, for they only see what is apparent and do not go deep into the Divine Wisdom that underlies them. When they daily see the prosperity of the tyrants and the afflictions of the innocent people, the affluence of the disobedient people and the indigence of the obedient people, the enjoyments of the wicked people and the adversity of the virtuous people, they get involved in mental conflicts, nay, they become victims of misunderstandings because they do not comprehend the wisdom behind them. The disbelievers and the tyrants conclude from this that the world is functioning without any moral laws and has no sovereign, and, if there is one, he must be senseless and unjust: therefore one may do whatever one desires for there is none to whom one shall be accountable. On the other hand, when the believers see those things, they become so frustrated and disheartened that sometimes their faiths are put to x very hard trial. It was to unravel the wisdom behind this mystery that Allah slightly lifted the curtain from the Reality governing His factory, so that Moses might see the wisdom behind the events that are

happening day and night and how their seeming aspect is quite different from the Reality.

Now let us consider the question: when and where did this event take place? The Qur'an says nothing about this. There is a tradition related by Aufi in which he cites a saying of Ibn 'Abbas to this effect: "This event happened after the destruction of Pharaoh when Prophet Moses had settled his people in Egypt". But this is not supported by other more authentic traditions from Ibn 'Abbas which Dave been cited in the collection of Bukhari and other books of Traditions, nor is there any other source which may prove that Prophet Moses ever settled in Egypt after the destruction of Pharaoh. On the contrary, the Qur'an says explicitly that Prophet Moses passed the whole of his life after Exodus from Egypt in the desert (Sinai and At-Tilt). Therefore the tradition from 'Aufi cannot be accepted. However, if we consider the details of this story, two things are quite obvious: (1) These things would have been demonstrated to Prophet Moses in the earlier period of his Prophethood because such things are needed in the beginning of Prophethood for the teaching and training of the Prophets. (2) As this story has been cited to comfort the Believers of Makkah, it can be reasonably concluded that these demonstrations would have been shown to Prophet Moses, when the Israelites were encountering the same conditions as the Muslims of Makkah did at the time of the revelation of this Surah. On the basis of these two things, we are of the opinion (and correct Knowledge is with Allah alone) that this event relates to the period, when the persecution of the Israelites by Pharaoh was at its height and, like the chiefs of the Quraish, Pharaoh and his courtiers were deluded by delay in the scourge that there was no power above them to take them to task, and like the persecuted Muslims of Makkah, the persecuted Muslims of Egypt were crying in their agony, as if to say, "Our Lord! how long will the prosperity of these tyrants and our adversity continue ?" So much so that Prophet Moses himself cried out: ".... Our Lord, Thou hast bestowed on Pharaoh and his nobles splendor and possessions in the worldly life; O our Lord, hast Thou done this drat they might lead astray the people from Thy Way?..." (X: 88)

If our conjecture is correct, then it may be concluded that probably this event took place during Prophet Moses' journey to Sudan, and by the confluence of the rivers is meant the site of the present city of Khartum where the Blue Nile and the White Nile meet together.

The Bible does not say anything about this event but the Talmud does relate this though it assigns it to Rabbi Jochanan, the son of Levi, instead of to Prophet Moses, and according to it the other person was Elijah who had been taken up alive to heaven and joined with the angels for the purpose of the administration of the world. (The Talmud Selections by H. Polano, pp. 313-16).

It is just possible that like the events, which happened before the Exodus. this event also might not have remained intact but during the passage of centuries changes and alterations might have been made in it. But it is a pity that some Muslims have been so influenced by the Talmud that they opine that in this story Moses does not refer to Prophet Moses but to some other person bearing the same name. They forget that every tradition of the Talmud is not necessarily correct, nor have we any reason to suppose that the Qur'an has related the story concerning some unknown person bearing the name "Moses". Above all,

when we learn from an authentic Tradition related by Ubayy-bin-Ka`ab that the Holy Prophet himself made it clear that in this story, by Moses is meant Prophet Moses, there is absolutely no reason why any Muslim should consider any statement of the Talmud at all.

The Orientalists have, as usual, tried to make a "research" into the "sources" of this story and have pointed out that "The Kuranic story may be traced back to three main sources:'(1) The Gilgamesh Epic, (2) The Alexander Romance and (3) The Jewish Legend of Elijah and Rabbi Joshua hen Levi (Encyclopaedia of Islam new edition and Shorter Erlcyclopaedia of !slam under the heading Al Khadir). This is because these malicious "scholars" decide beforehand that their "scientific research" must lead to the conclusion that the Qur'an is not a revealed book: therefore they have, anyhow or other, to produce a proof that whatever Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) has presented as Revelation, has been plagiarized from such and such "sources". In this these people brazen facedly use "facts" and "quotations" so cunningly and cleverly as to achieve their mean end and one begins to have nausea at their "research". If that is research what these bigoted forgers make, then one is compelled to curse their "knowledge and research."

We ask them to answer our questions in order to expose their "research":

(I) What proof have you got to make the claim that the Qur'an has based a certain statement on the contents of a couple of ancient books? Obviously it will not be "research" to build this claim on the scant basis that a certain statement trade in the Quran is similar to the one found in these books.

(2) Do you possess any knowledge that at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an there was a library at Makkah from which the Holy Prophet collected material for the Qur'an? This question is pertinent because if a list were to be trade of the numerous books in different languages, which you allege were sources of the stories and statements contained in the Qur'an, it will become long enough for a big library. Have you got any proof that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) had arranged for such translators as translated into Arabic those books from different languages for his use? If it is not so and your allegation is based on a couple of journeys which the Holy Prophet made outside Arabia, a question arises: How many books did the Holy Prophet copy or commit to memory during these trade journeys before his Prophethood? And how is it that even a day before he claimed to be a Prophet, no sign at all was displayed in. his conversation that he had gathered such information as was revealed in the Qur'an afterwards?

(3) How is it then that the contemporary disbelievers of Makkah and the Jews and the Christians, who like you, were always in search of such a proof, could not put forward even a single instance of plagiarism? They had a goad reason to produce an instance of this because they were being challenged over and over again to refute the claim that the Qur'an was a revealed book and it had no other source than Divine Knowledge and that if they said that it was a human work, they were to prove this by bringing the like of it. Though this challenge had broken the back of the contemporary opponents of Islam, they could not point

out even a single plausible source that might prove reasonably that the Qur'an was based on it. In the light of these facts one may ask, "Why had the contemporaries of the Holy Prophet failed in their research and how have the opponents of Islam succeeded in their attempt today after the passage of more than a thousand years?"

(4) The last and the most important question is: Does it not show that it is bigotry and malice that has misled the opponents of Islam to discard the possibility that the Qur'an may be a revealed book of Allah and to concentrate all their efforts to prove that it is not so at all ? The tact that its stories are similar to those contained in the former books, could be considered equally in this light that the Qur'an was a revealed book and was relating them in order to correct those errors that had crept into them during the passage of time. Why should their research be confined to prove that those books are the real source of the stories of the Qur'an and not to consider the other possibility that the Qur'an itself was a revealed book?

An impartial person who will consider these questions will inevitably arrive at the conclusion that the "research" which the orientalists have presented in the name of "knowledge" is not worth any serious consideration.

58That is, "The same was the sign of the place of our destination". This shows that Prophet Moses had taken this journey at Allah's behest to meet His Servant. He had been told that he would meet the Servant at the place where the fish would disappear.

59The name of this Servant has been stated to be “Khidr” in all the authentic books of traditions. Thus there is no reason why it should be considered at all that his name was Elijah, as some people have asserted under the influence of the Israelite traditions. Their assertion is incorrect not only because it contradicts the assertion of the Holy Prophet but it is also absurd because Prophet Elijah was born several hundred years after Prophet Moses. Though the Qur'an does not mention the name of the attendant of Prophet Moses, according to some traditions he was Joshua, the son of Nun, who succeeded him.

60In connection with this story, a very hard problem arises to which an answer must be found: Two of the three things done by Hadrat Khidr are obviously against those commandments of the Law which have always been in force since the creation of man. No law allows anyone the right to damage the property of another and kill an innocent person. So much so that if a man were to know by inspiration that some usurper would illegally seize a certain boat, and that a certain boy would be involved in a rebellion and unbelief, even then no law, sent down by Allah, makes it lawful that one should bore a hole in the boat and kill the innocent boy by virtue of one's inspiration. If in answer to this, one were to say that Hadrat Khidr committed these two acts by the Commands of Allah, this does not solve the problem, for the question is not this, "By whose command did Hadrat Khidr commit these acts"? but it is this: "What was the nature of these commands"? This is important because Hadrat Khidr did these acts in accordance

with Divine Command, for he himself says that these acts of his were not done by his own authority, but were moved by the mercy of Allah, and Allah Himself has testified this by saying: "We gave him a special knowledge from Ourselves". Thus it is beyond any doubt that these acts were done by the Command of Allah, but the question about the nature of the command remains there, for it is obvious that these commands were not legal because it is not allowed by any Divine Law, and the fundamental principles of the Qur'an also do not allow that a person should kill another person without any proof of his guilt. Therefore we shall have to admit that these commands belonged to one of those decrees of Allah in accordance with which one sick person recovers, while another dies: one becomes prosperous and the other is ruined. If the Commands given to Hadrat Khidr were of this nature, then one must come to the conclusion that Hadrat Khidr was an angel (or some other kind of Allah's creation) who is not bound by the Divine Law prescribed for human beings, for such commands as have no legal aspect, can be addressed to angels only. This is because the question of the lawful or the unlawful cannot arise about them: they obey the Commands of Allah without having any personal power. In contrast to them, a man shall be guilty of a sin whether he does any such thing inadvertently by intuition or by some inspiration, if his act goes against some Divine Commandment. This is because a man is bound to abide by Divine Commandments as a man, and there is no room whatsoever in the Divine Law that an act may become lawful for a man merely because he had received an instruction by inspiration and had been informed in a secret way of the wisdom of that unlawful act.

The above-mentioned principle has been unanimously accepted by scholars of the Divine Law and the leaders of Sufism. `Allamah Alusi has cited in detail the sayings of 'Abdul Wahhab Shi`irani, Muhy-ud-Din ibn-`Arabi, Mujaddid Alf Thani, Shaikh 'Abdul-Qadir Jilani, Junaid Baghdadi, Sirri Saqti, Abul-Hussain An-nuri, Abu Said-al-Kharraz, Ahmad ud-Dainauri and Imam Ghazzali to this effect that it is not lawful even for a sufi to act in accordance with that inspiration of his own which goes against a fundamental of law. (Ruh-ul-Ma ani, Vol. XVI, pp. 16-18). That is why we have come to the conclusion that Hadrat Khidr must be an angel, or some other kind of Allah's creation, exempted from human law, for he could not be the only exception to the above-mentioned formula. Therefore we inevitably come to the conclusion that he was one of those Servants of Allah who act in accordance with the will of Allah and not in accordance with the Divine Law prescribed for human beings.

We would have accepted the theory that Hadrat Khidr was a human being, if the Qur'an had plainly asserted that the "servant" to whom Prophet Moses was sent for training, was a man, but the Qur'an does not specifically say that he was a human being but says that he was “one of Our Servants” which does not show that he was necessarily a human being. Besides this, there is no Tradition which specifically says that Hadrat Khidr was a human being. In the authentic traditions related by Said bin Jubair, Ibn `Abbas, Ubayy bin Ka`ab from the Holy Prophet, the Arabic word, ,}i~ (rajul) has been used for Hadrat Khidr, which though generally used for human beings, is not exclusively used for human beings. In the Holy Qur'an itself, this word has been used for Jinns also (LXXIII 6). It is also obvious that when a jinn or an angel or an invisible being will come before a human being, he will surely come in human shape and, in that form; he will be called a bashar (man), just like the angel who came before Mary in the

shape of a human being (XIX: 17). Thus the word rajul, used for Hadrat Khidr in the above mentioned Tradition by the Holy Prophet, does not necessarily mean that he was a human being. Therefore we are quite justified in the light of the above discussion to believe that Hadrat Khidr was one of the angels or some other kind of Allah's creation who is not bound by the Divine Law prescribed for human beings. Some of the former scholars of the Qur'an have also expressed the same opinion which . has been cited by Ibn Kathir in his Commentary on the authority of Mawardi.

61It is quite obvious that the conjunction "wao " joins this story with the previous story of Khidr. Thus it is a self-evident proof that the previous two stories of the "Sleepers of the Cave" and "Moses and Khidr" were also related in answer to the queries of the disbelievers of Makkah who, in consultation with the people of the Book, had put these questions to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) as a test of his Prophethood.

62The identification of Zul-Qarnain has been a controversial matter from the earliest times. in general the commentators have been of the opinion that he was Alexander the Great but the characteristics of Zul-Qarnain described in the Qur'an are not applicable to him. However, now the commentators are inclined to believe that Zul-Qarnain was Cyrus, an ancient king of Iran. We are also of the opinion that probably Zul-Qarnain was Cyrus, but the historical facts, which have come to light up to this time, are not sufficient to make any categorical assertion.

Now let us consider the characteristics of Zul-Qarnain in the light of his story as given in the Quran:

(1) The title Zul-Qarnain ("The Two-Horned") should have been quite familiar to the Jews, for it was at their instigation that the disbelievers of Makkah put this question to the Holy Prophet. Therefore we must turn to the Jewish literature in order to learn who was the person known as "The Two-Horned" or which was the kingdom known as "The Two-Horned."

(2) Zul-Qarnain must have been a great ruler and a great conqueror whose conquests might have spread from the East to the West and on the third side to the North or to the South. Before the revelation of the Qur'an there had been several persons, who were such great conquerors. So we must confine our research for the other characteristics of Zul-Qarnain to one of these persons.

(3) This title should be applicable to such a ruler who might have constructed a strong wall across a mountain pass to protect his kingdom from the incursions of Gog and Magog. In order to investigate this thing, we will have to determine as to who were Gog and Magog. We will also have to find out when such a wall was built and by whom and to which territory it was adjacent.

(4) Besides possessing the above-mentioned characteristics, he should also be a God-worshiper and a just ruler, for the Qur'an has brought into prominence these characteristics more than anything else.

The first of these characteristics is easily applicable to Cyrus, for according to the Bible Prophet Daniel saw in his vision that the united kingdom of Media and Persia was like a two-horned ram before the rise of the Greeks. (Dan. 8: 3,"20). The Jews had a very high opinion of "The Two-horned" one, because it was his invasion which brought about the downfall of the kingdom of Babylon and the liberation of the Israelites (Please also refer to E.N. 8 of Chapter XVII).

The second characteristic is applicable to him to a great extent but not completely. Though his conquests spread to Syria and Asia Minor in the West and to Bakhtar (Balkh) in the East, there is no trace of any of his great expeditions to the North or to the South, whereas the Qur'an makes an explicit mention of his third expedition. Nevertheless, this third expedition is not wholly out of question for history tells us that his kingdom extended to Caucasia in the North. As regards Gog and Magog, it has been nearly established that they were the wild tribes of Central Asia who were known by different names: Tartars, Mongols, Huns and Scythians, who 'had been making inroads on settled kingdoms and empires from very ancient times. It is also known that strong bulwarks had been built in southern regions of Caucasia, though it has not been as yet historically established that these were built by Cyrus.

As regards the last characteristic, Cyrus is the only known conqueror among the ancient rulers, to whom this may be applicable, for even his enemies have been full of praise for him for his justice, and, Ezra, a book of the Bible, asserts that he was a God-worshiper and a God-fearing king who set free the Israelites because of his God-worship, and ordered that the Temple of Solomon should be rebuilt for the worship of Allah, Who has no partner.

In the light of the above, we admit that of all the conquerors, who had passed away before the revelation of the Qur'an, Cyrus alone is the one to whom the characteristics of "Zul-Qarnain" are most applicable, but we need more evidence to determine specifically that Cyrus is definitely "Zul-Qarnain." Anyhow, there is no other conqueror to whom the characteristics stated in the Qur'an are as much applicable as to Cyrus.

Historically it is enough to say that Cyrus was a Persian ruler, whose rise began about 549 B.C. In a few years, he conquered the kingdom of Media and Lydia and afterwards conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. After this no powerful kingdom was left to oppose him. His conquests extended to Sind and the territory known as Turkistan on one side, and to Egypt and Libya and to Thrace and Macedonia and to Caucasia and Khawarzam in the North. In fact, the whole civilized world was under his sway.

63"The limit where the sun set" does not mean the "place" of the setting of the sun. According to Ibn Kathir, it means that he marched to the West conquering one country after the other till he reached the last boundary of the land, beyond which there was ocean.

64"He found the sun setting in black muddy waters of the sea": if Zul Qarnain was Cyrus, then that place would be the western limit of Asia Minor and the "black waters" would be the Aegean Sea. This

interpretation is supported by the use of the word "`ain"instead of "bahr" in the Qur'an.

65"We said to him" does not necessarily mean that Allah directly revealed to him these words, and that Zul-Qarnain was a Prophet or was the one who received inspiration from Allah, and the same is the reasonable conjecture. This concerns the time when Zul-Qarnain had taken possession of the land as a conqueror and the conquered people were utterly at your mercy. Then Allah posed a question before his conscience, as if to say, "Now is the time of your trial. These people are utterly at your mercy, and you have the option either to behave unjustly towards them or to treat them generously."

66That is, “When he advanced towards the East, conquering one country after the other, he reached a territory where the limits of the civilized world had come to an end and beyond which was the territory of barbaric people, who had no shelter at all of tents or buildings.”

67The "two mountains" must have been parts of that mountain range which runs between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea (as stated in v. 96). This must be so because beyond them was the territory of Gog and Magog.

68That is, "It was difficult to communicate with them: their language was almost foreign to Zul-Qarnain and his companions, and, as they were quite barbaric, none could understand their language, nor were they acquainted with any foreign language."

69As has already been pointed out in E.N. 62, Gog and Magog were the wild tribes of North Eastern Asia which, from the very early times had been making inroads on settled kingdoms and empires in Asia and Europe and ravaging them. According to Genesis (Chapter 10), they were the descendants of Japheth, the sort of Noah, and the Muslim historians have also accepted this. And according to the book of Ezekiel (Chapters 38, 39), they inhabited the territories of Meshech (Moscow) and Tubal (Tubalsek). According to the Israelite historian Josephus, they were the Scythians and their territory spread to the north and the east of the Black Sea. According to Jerome, Magog inhabited the territory to the north of Caucasia near the Caspian Sea.

70That is, "As a ruler it is my duty to protect you from the ravages of your enemies: therefore it is not lawful for me to levy any extra taxes on you for this purpose. The treasury that Allah has placed in my custody, suffices for this purpose. You shall, however, have to help me with your manual labor."

71That is, "Though I have built a very strong iron-wall, as far as it was possible for me, it is not ever-lasting, for it will last only as long as Allah wills, and will fall down to pieces when the time of my Lord's promise shall come. Then no power in the world shall be able to keep it safe and secure."

As regards the time of Allah's promise, it has two meanings: (1) It may mean the time of the destruction of

the wall, and (2) it may also mean the time of the death and destruction of everything destined by Allah at the end of the world i.e., the Hour of Resurrection.

Some people have entertained the misunderstanding that the wall attributed here to Zul-Qarnain refers to the famous Wall of China, whereas this wall was built between Derbent and Dar'yal, two cities of Daghestan in the Caucasus, the land that lies between the Black Sea and the Caspian. There are high mountains between the Black Sea and Dar'yal having deep gorges which cannot allow large armies to pass through them. Between Derbent and Dar'yal, however, there are no such mountains and the passes also are wide and passable. In ancient times savage hordes from the north invaded and ravaged southern lands through these passes and the Persian rulers who were scared of them had to build a strong wall, 50 miles long, 29 feet high and 10 feet wide, for fortification purposes, ruins of which can still be seen. Though it has not yet been established historically who built this wall in the beginning, the Muslim historians and geographers assign it to ZulQarnain because its remains correspond with the description of it given in the Qur'an. Ibn Jarir Tabari and Ibn Kathir have recorded the event, and Yaqut has mentioned it in his Mu jam-ul-Buldan that when after the conquest of Azerbaijan, Hadrat `Umar sent Suraqah bin `Amr, in 22 A.H. on an expedition to Derbent, the latter appointed `Abdur Rehman bin Rabi`ah as the chief of his vanguard. When 'Abdur Rehman entered Armenia, the ruler Shehrbraz surrendered without fighting. Then when `Abdur Rehman wanted to advance towards Derbent, Shehrbraz informed him that he had already gathered full information about the wall built by Zul-Qarnain, through a man, who could supply all the necessary details and then the man was actually presented before `Abdur Rehman. (Tabari, Vol. III, pp. 235-239; Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah, Vol. VII, pp. 122-125, and Mu jam-ul-Buldan, under Bab-ul-Abwab: Derbent).

Two hundred years later, the Abbasid Caliph Wathiq (227-233 A.H.) despatched a party of 50 men under Sallam-ul-Tarjuman to study the wall of Zul Qarnain, whose observations have been recorded in great detail by Yaqut in Mu jam-ul-Buldan and by Ibn Kathir in Al-Bidayah. They write that this expedition reached Samarrah from where they reached Tiflis (the present Tbilisi) and then through As-Sarir and Al-Lan, they reached Filanshah, from where they entered the Caspian territory. From there they arrived at Derbent and saw the wall. (AlBidayah Vol. II, p. 111, Vol. VII, pp. 122-125; Mu jam-ul-Buldan: under Bab-ulAbwab). This clearly shows that even up till the third century of Hijrah the Muslim scholars regarded this wall of the Caucasus as the wall of Zul-Qarnain.

Yaqut in his Mu jam-ul-Buldan has further confirmed the same view at a number of places. For instance, under Khazar (Caspian) he writes:

"This territory belongs to the Turks, which adjoins the Wall of Zul Qarnain just behind Bab-ul-Abwab, which is also called Derbent." In the same connection, he records a report by Ahmad bin Fadlan, the ambassador of Caliph Al-Muqtadar-billah, who has given a full description of the Caspian land, saying that Caspian is the name of a country whose capital is Itil (near the present Astrakhan) right through which flows River Itil, which joins the Caspian front Russia and Bulghar.

Regarding Bab-ul-Abwab he says that this city is called both Al-Bab and Derbent, which is a highly difficult passage for the people coming from the northern lands towards the south. Once this territory was a part of the kingdom of Nausherwan, and the Persian rulers paid particular attention to strengthening their frontiers on that side.

72Here the story of Zul-Qarnain comes to an end. Though this story has been related in answer to the questions put by the disbelievers of Makkah as a test along with the stories of the "Sleepers of the Cave" and "Moses and Khidr", the Qur'an has utilized this story, too, for its own aim and object, as if to say, “Zul Qarnain, about whose glory you have heard from the people of the Book, was not merely a conqueror, but also a believer of the doctrines of Tauhid and the life after-death and acted upon the principles of justice and generosity. He was not a mean person like you who have been puffed up by the possession of petty estates, and give yourselves airs of superiority.”

73"On that Day": "The Day of Resurrection". As if to continue the theme of life-after-death to which Zul-Qarnain referred as the "time of my Lord's promise", the Qur'an has added verses 99-101 to it.

74This is the conclusion of the whole Surah and is not connected with the story of Zul-Qarnain only but with the subject-matter of this Surah as a whole. That theme was enunciated at the beginning of the Surah (1-8): The Holy Prophet invited his people (1) to give up shirk and adopt the doctrine of Tauhid instead, (2) to give up the worship of the world and to believe in the life of the Hereafter. But the chiefs of his people, who were puffed up with their wealth and grandeur, not only rejected his invitation but also persecuted and insulted those righteous people who had accepted his invitation. The discourse deals with the Same themes and utilizes in an excellent manner the. three stories which were related in answer to the questions put by the opponents of Islam as a test of his Prophethood.

75That is, "Do they still stick to their presumption even after hearing all this, and believe that their attitude will be profitable for them?"

76This verse has two meanings. The one is the same that we have adopted in the translation. The other meaning is this: "...those who confined all their endeavors to the worldly life". That is, whatever they did, they did for this world without paying any regard to God and the Hereafter. As they considered the worldly life to be the real life, they made the success and prosperity in this world their sole aim and object. Even if they professed the existence of Allah, they never paid any heed to the two implications of this profession: to lead their lives in a way to please Allah and to come out successful on the Day they shall have to render an account of what they did in this world. This was because they considered themselves to be mere rational animals who were absolutely independent and free from every kind of responsibility and had nothing else to do but to enjoy the good things of the world like animals in a meadow.

77"All their deeds were lost" in the sense that they will be of no avail to them in the life-after-death, even

though they might have considered them as their great achievements but the fact is that they will lose all their value as soon as the world shall come to an end. When they will go before their Lord, and all their deeds shall be placed in the Scales, they will have no weight at all whether they had built great palaces, established great universities and libraries, set up great factories and laboratories, constructed highways and railways, in short, all their inventions, industries, sciences and arts and other things of which they were very proud in this world, will lose their weights in the Scales. The only thing which will have weight there will be that which had been done in accordance with the Divine instructions and with the intention to please Allah. It is, therefore, obvious that if all of one's endeavors were confined to the worldly things and the achievement of worldly desires whose results one would see in this world, one should not reasonably expect to see their results in the Hereafter, for they would have gone waste with the end of this world. It is equally obvious, that only the deeds of the one, who performed them strictly in accordance with His instructions to win His approval with a view to avail of their results in the Hereafter, will find that his deeds had weight in the Scales. On the contrary, such a one will find that all his endeavors in the world had gone waste.

78"...they will never desire to go anywhere (else)," because they will find no place and no condition better than those in Paradise.

79By "Words" are meant "the marvelous works, the excellences and the wonders of His Power and Wisdom."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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19. Surah Maryam (Mary)

Name

It takes its name from v. 16.

Period of Revelation

It was revealed before the Migration to Habash. We learn from authentic Traditions that Hadrat Ja'afar recited vv. 1-40 of this Surah in the court of Negus when he called the migrants to his court.

Historical Background

We have already briefly referred to the conditions of that period in the introduction to Surah Al-Kahf. Here we shall give rather fuller details of the same conditions, which will be helpful in grasping the meaning of this Surah and the other Surahs of the period. When the chiefs of the Quraish felt that they had failed to suppress the Islamic movement by ridicule, sarcasm, and by holding out promises and threats and by making false accusations, they resorted to persecution, beating and economic pressure. They would catch hold of the new Muslims of their clans and persecute them, starve them and would even inflict physical torture on them in order to coerce them to give up Islam. The most pitiful victims of their persecution were the poor people and the slaves and the proteges of the Quraish. They were beaten black and blue, were imprisoned and kept thirsty and hungry and were dragged on the burning sands of Makkah. The people would get work from the professional laborers but would not pay them their wages. As an instance we give below the story of Hadrat Khabbab bin Arat, which is given in *Bukhari* and *Muslim*:

"I used to work as a blacksmith in Makkah. Once I did some work for As bin Wa'il. When I went to ask for my wages, he said, 'I will not pay your wages unless you disown Muhammad'."

In the same connection Hadrat Khabbab says, "One day the Holy Prophet was sitting in the shadow of the Ka'abah.

I went to him and said, '0 Messenger of Allah, now persecution has gone to its extreme; why do you not pray to Allah (for relief)?' At this the Holy Prophet was greatly moved. He said, 'The believers before you were persecuted much more than you. Their bones were scraped with combs of iron and their heads were cut with saws, but still they did not give up their Faith. I assure you that Allah will fulfill this Mission, and there will come a period of such peace that one would travel from Sanna to Hadramaut, and he will have no fear from anyone, save Allah. But you people have already become impatient'." (*Bukhari*)

When the conditions became unbearable, the Holy Prophet, in the month of Rajab of the fifth year of Prophethood, gave advice to his Companions to this effect: "You may well migrate to Habash, for there is a king, who does not allow any kind of injustice to anyone, and there is good in his land. You should remain there till the time that Allah provides a remedy for your affliction".

Accordingly, at first, eleven men and four women left for Habash. The Quraish pursued them up to the coast but fortunately they got a timely boat for Habash at the sea-port of Shu'aibah, and they escaped attest. Then after a few months, other people migrated to Habash and their number rose to eighty-three men and eleven women of the Quraish and seven non-Quraish. After this, only forty persons were left with the Holy Prophet at Makkah.

There was a great hue and cry in Makkah after this Migration, for every family of the Quraish was adversely affected by this. There was hardly a family of the Quraish which did not lose a son, a son-in-law, a daughter, a brother or a sister. For instance, there were among the Migrants the near relatives of Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan and other chief of the Quraish who were notorious for their persecution of the Muslims. As a result of this, some of them became even more bitter in their enmity of Islam, while there were others who were so moved by this that they embraced Islam. For instance, this Migration left a deep mark on Hadrat Umar. One of his relatives, Laila, daughter of Hathmah, says, "I was packing my luggage for Migration, while my husband, Amr bin Rabiy'ah, had gone out. In the meantime Umar came there and began to watch me, while I was engaged in preparation for the journey. Then he said, 'Are you also going to migrate?' I answered, 'Yes by God, you people have persecuted us much. But the wide earth of Allah is open for us. Now we are going to a place where Allah will grant us peace'. At this, I noticed such signs of emotion on the face of Umar as I had never seen before. He simply said, 'May God be with you' and went away."

After the migration, the Quraish held consultations, and decided to send Abdullah bin Abi Rabiy'ah, half brother of Abu Jahl, and Amr bin As to Habash with precious gifts so as to persuade Negus to send the migrants back to Makkah. Hadrat Umm Salmah (a wife of the Holy Prophet), who was among the migrants, has related this part of the story in detail. She says, "When these two clever statesmen of the Quraish reached Habash, they distributed the gifts among the courtiers of the King and persuaded them to recommend strongly to him to send the migrants back. Then they saw Negus himself and, presenting rich gifts to him, said, "Some headstrong brats of our city have come to your land and our chiefs have sent us to you with the request that you may kindly send them back. These brats have forsaken our faith and have not embraced your faith either, but have invented a new faith". As soon as they had finished their speech, all the courtiers recommended their case, saying, "We should send such people back to their city for their people know them better. It is not proper for us to keep them here." At this the King was annoyed and said, "I am not going to give them back without proper inquiry. As these people have put their trust in my country rather than in any other country and have come here to take shelter, I will not betray them. At first I will send for them and investigate into the allegations these people have made against them. Then I will make my final decision". Accordingly, the King sent for the Companions of the Holy Prophet and asked them to come to his court.

When the migrants received the message of the King, they assembled and held consultations as to what they should say to the King. At last they came to this unanimous decision: "We will present before the King the teachings of the Holy Prophet without adding anything to or withholding anything from them and leave it to him whether he lets us remain here or turns us out of his country". When they came to the court, the King put this problem abruptly before them:"I understand that you have given up the faith of your own people and have neither embraced my faith nor any other existing faith. I would like to know what your new faith is." At this, Jafar bin Abi Talib, on behalf of the migrants, made an extempore speech to this effect: "O King! We were sunk deep in ignorance and had become very corrupt; then Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) came to us as a Messenger of God, and did his best to reform us. But the Quraish began to persecute his followers, so we have come to your country in the hope that here we will be free from persecution". After his speech, the King said, "Please recite a piece of the Revelation which has been sent down by God to your Prophet". In response, Hadrat Jafar recited that portion of Surah Maryam which relates the story of Prophets John and Jesus (Allah's peace be upon them). The King listened to it and wept, so much so that his beard became wet with tears. When Hadrat Jafar finished the recital, he said:"Most surely this Revelation and the Message of Jesus have come from the same source. By God I will not give you up into the hands of these people".

Next day `Amr bin `As went to Negus and said, "Please send for them again and ask them concerning the creed they hold about Jesus, the son of Mary, for they say a horrible thing about him". The King again sent for the migrants, who had already learned about the scheme of Amr. They again sat together and held consultations in regard to the answer they should give to the King, if he asked about the belief they held about Prophet Jesus. Though this was a very critical situation and all of them were uneasy about it, they decided that they would say the same thing that Allah and His Messenger had taught them. Accordingly, when they went to the court, the King put them the question that had been suggested by Amr bin As. So Jafar bin Abi Talib stood up and answered without the least hesitation: "He was a Servant of Allah and His Messenger. He was a Spirit and a Word of Allah which had been sent to virgin Mary." At this the King picked up a straw from the ground and said, 'Bye God, Jesus was not worth this straw more than what you have said about him." After this the King returned the gifts sent by the Quraish, saying, "I do not take any bribe". Then he said to the migrants, "You are allowed to stay here in perfect peace."

Theme and Subject

Keeping in view this historical background, it becomes quite obvious that this Surah was sent down to serve the migrants as a "provision" for their journey to Habash, as if to say, "Though you are leaving your country as persecuted emigrants to a Christian country, you should not in the least hide anything from the teachings you have received. There- fore you should plainly say to the Christians that Prophet Jesus was not the son of God."

After relating the story of Prophets John and Jesus in vv. 1-40, the story of Prophet Abraham has been related (vv. 41-50) also for the benefit of the Migrants for he also had been forced like them to leave his country by the persecution of his father, his family and his country men. On the one hand, this meant to console the Emigrants that they were following the footsteps of Prophet Abraham and would attain the same good end as that Prophet did. On the other hand, it meant to warn the disbeliever, of Makkah that they should note it well that they were in the position of the cruel people who had persecuted their forefather and leader, Abraham, while the Muslim Emigrants

were in the position of Prophet Abraham himself.

Then the mention of the other Prophets has been made in vv. 51-65 with a view to impress that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) had brought the same way of Life that had been brought by the former Prophets but their followers had become corrupt and adopted wrong ways.

In the concluding passage (vv. 66-98), a strong criticism has been made of the evil ways of the disbelievers of Makkah, while the Believers have been given the good news that they would come out successful and become the beloved of the people, in spite of the worst efforts of the enemies of the Truth.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

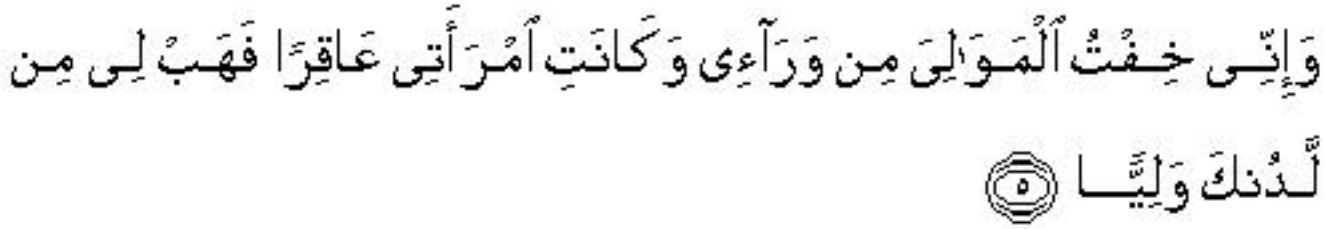
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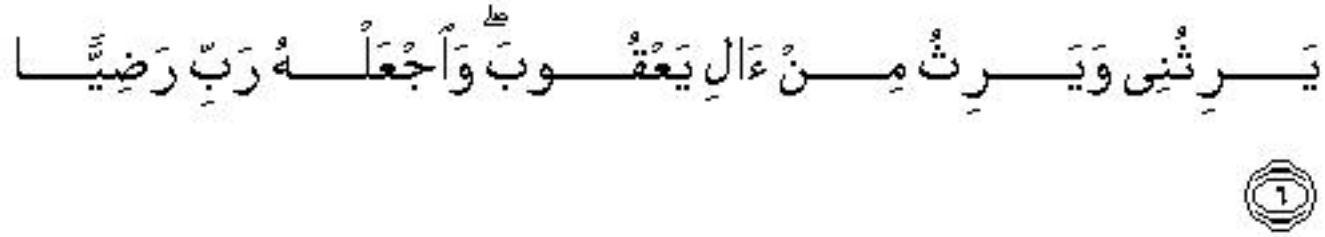
ذِكْرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُۥ زَكَرِيَّآ ﴿٢﴾

إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥ نِدَآءً خَفِيًّا ﴿٣﴾

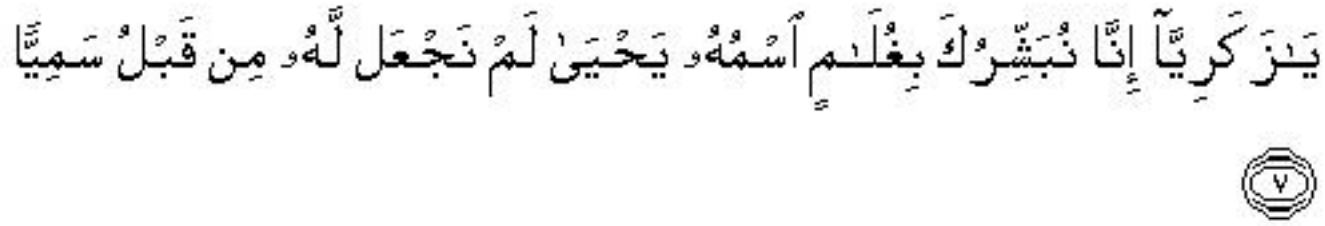
[1-3] Kaf Ha Ya Ain Sad. Here is an accounts[1] of the mercy your Lord showed to His servant Zachariah[2] when he invoked his Lord in an under tone.







[4-6] He prayed, “O my Lord! My very bones have become rotten, and my head is glistening with age. My Lord! I have never been disappointed in my prayer to Thee. I now fear (the consequences of) the evil ways of my kinsmen after me,[3] and my wife is barren! I, therefore, pray Thee to bless me by Thy grace with a successor, who may inherit my heritage and that of the descendants of Jacob;[4] and O Lord, make him a desirable person."



[7] (The answer was:) “O Zachariah, We give you the good news of a son, who will be called Yahya (John) . We have not created any other man of this name before.”[5]

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَٰمٌ وَكَانَتِ ٱمْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا وَقَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ ٱلْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا ﴿٨﴾

[8] He said, “Lord, how can I beget a son when my wife is barren, and I have become impotent because of old age?”

قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَقَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٩﴾

[9] In answer, it was said, “So shall it be. Your Lord says, `This is easy for Me, even as I created you before this, when you were nothing at all.”[6]

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱجْعَل لِّيٓ ءَايَةً ۚ قَالَ ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا ﴿١٠﴾

[10] Zachariah said, “Lord, appoint a sign for me.” He said, “The sign for you is that you shall not talk to the people for three consecutive days.”

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِمْ أَن سَبِّحُوا۟ بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ﴿١١﴾

[11] After this, he came out of the sanctuary[7] to his people, and made signs, asking them, “Glorfy God morning and evening.”[8]

يَٰيَحۡيَىٰ خُذِ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ بِقُوَّةٖۖ وَءَاتَيۡنَٰهُ ٱلۡحُكۡمَ صَبِيّٗا ١٢

[12] To John We said, “Observe the Divine Book with a firm resolve.”[9]

وَحَنَانٗا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَزَكَوٰةٗۖ وَكَانَ تَقِيّٗا ١٣

وَبَرَّۢا بِوَٰلِدَيۡهِ وَلَمۡ يَكُن جَبَّارًا عَصِيّٗا ١٤

وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَيۡهِ يَوۡمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوۡمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوۡمَ يُبۡعَثُ حَيّٗا ١٥

[13-15] We blessed him with "judgment"[10] while he was yet a child, and bestowed on him tenderness of heart[11] and purity from Ourself; and he was very pious and dutiful to his parents, and he was neither arrogant nor disobedient. Peace was on him on the day he was born and on the day he died, and peace shall be on him on the day he will be raised to life.[12]

وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ مَرۡيَمَ إِذِ ٱنتَبَذَتۡ مِنۡ أَهۡلِهَا مَكَانٗا شَرۡقِيّٗا

١٦

فَٱتَّخَذَتْ مِن دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾

[16-17] And, O Muhammad, relate in this Book the story of Mary:[13] how she had retired in seclusion from her people to the eastern side and had hung down a screen to hide herself from them.[14] There We sent to her Our Spirit ("an angel") and he appeared before her in the form of a perfect man.

قَالَتْ إِنِّىٓ أَعُوذُ بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ مِنكَ إِن كُنتَ تَقِيًّا ﴿١٨﴾

[18] Mary cried out involuntarily, "I seek God's refuge from you, if you are a pious man."

قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَٰمًا زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾

[19] He replied, "I am a mere messenger from your Lord and have been sent to give you a pure son."

قَالَتْ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِى غُلَٰمٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِى بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

[20] Mary said, "How can I bear a son, when no man has touched me, and I am not an unchaste woman?"

قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَىَّ هَيِّنٌ ۖ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُۥٓ ءَايَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِّنَّا ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾

[21] The angel replied, "So shall it be. Your Lord says, `This is an easy thing for Me to do, and We will do so in order to make that boy a Sign for the people[15] and a blessing from Us, and this must happen."

۞ فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَٱنتَبَذَتْ بِهِۦ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا ﴿٢٢﴾

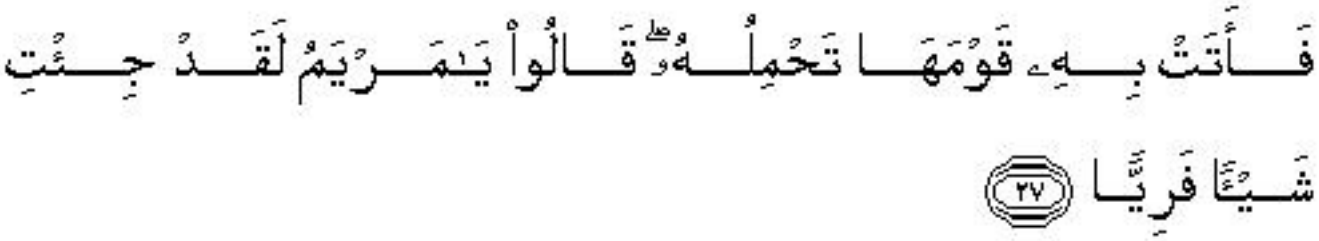
فَأَجَآءَهَا ٱلْمَخَاضُ إِلَىٰ جِذْعِ ٱلنَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَٰلَيْتَنِى مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَٰذَا وَكُنتُ نَسْيًا مَّنسِيًّا ﴿٢٣﴾

فَنَادَىٰهَا مِن تَحْتِهَآ أَلَّا تَحْزَنِى قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا ﴿٢٤﴾

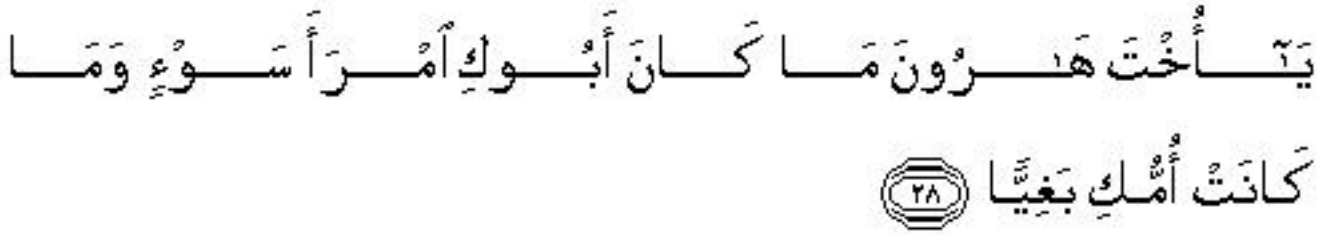
وَهُزِّىٓ إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ ٱلنَّخْلَةِ تُسَٰقِطْ عَلَيْكِ رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٥﴾

فَكُلِى وَٱشْرَبِى وَقَرِّى عَيْنًا ۖ فَإِمَّا تَرَيِنَّ مِنَ ٱلْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِىٓ إِنِّى نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِنسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾

[22-26] Accordingly, Mary conceived the child, and with it she went away to a distant place.[16] Then the throes of childbirth urged her to take shelter under a date palm. There she began to cry, "Oh! would that I had died before this and sunk into oblivion."[17] At this the angel at the foot of her bed consoled her, saying, "Grieve not at all, for your Lord has set a spring under you; as for your food, shake the trunk of this tree and fresh, ripe dates will fall down for you; so eat and drink and refresh your eyes; and if you see a man, say to him, `As I have vowed to observe the fast (of silence) for the sake of the Merciful, I will not speak to anyone today."[18]

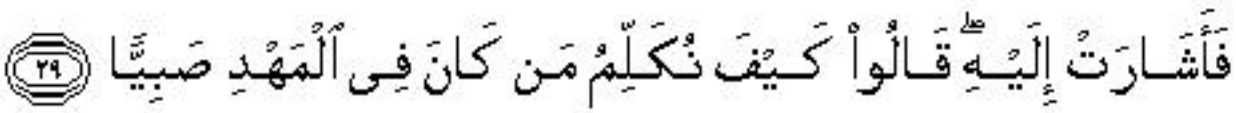


فَأَتَتْ بِهِۦ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُۥ ۖ قَالُوا۟ يَٰمَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْـًٔا فَرِيًّا ﴿٢٧﴾



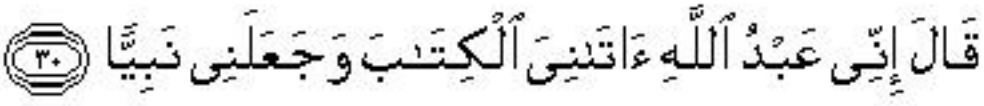
يَٰٓأُخْتَ هَٰرُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ ٱمْرَأَ سَوْءٍ وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكِ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٨﴾

[27-28] Then she brought the child to her people. They said, “O Mary! This is a heinous sin that you have committed. O sister of Aaron![19] your father was not a wicked man, nor was your mother an unchaste woman.”[19a]



فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ ۖ قَالُوا۟ كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَن كَانَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا ﴿٢٩﴾

[29] (In answer to this) Mary merely pointed towards the infant. The people said, “How shall we talk with him, who is but an infant in the cradle?”[20]



قَالَ إِنِّى عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ ءَاتَىٰنِىَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَجَعَلَنِى نَبِيًّا ﴿٣٠﴾

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُ وَأَوْصَنِي بِالصَّلَوٰةِ وَالزَّكَوٰةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴿٣١﴾

وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ﴿٣٢﴾

وَالسَّلَٰمُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدتُّ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿٣٣﴾

[30-33] Whereupon the child spoke out, "I am a servant of Allah: He has given me the Book and He has appointed me a Prophet, and He has made me blessed wherever I may be. He has enjoined upon me to offer Salat and give Zakat so long as I shall live. He has made me dutiful to my mother,[20a] and He has not made me oppressive and hard-hearted. Peace be upon me on the day I was born and peace shall be on me on the day I die and on the day I am raised to life."[21]

ذَٰلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۚ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ مِن وَلَدٍ ۖ سُبْحَانَهُ ۚ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٣٥﴾

[34-35] This is Jesus, the son of Mary, and this is the truth about him concerning which they are in doubt. It does not behoove God to beget a son for He is far above this. When He decrees a thing, He only says, "Be", and it does

come into being.[22]

وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

فَٱخْتَلَفَ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ مِنۢ بَيْنِهِمْ ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن مَّشْهَدِ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

أَسْمِعْ بِهِمْ وَأَبْصِرْ يَوْمَ يَأْتُونَنَا لَٰكِنِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ٱلْيَوْمَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَأَنذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِىَ ٱلْأَمْرُ وَهُمْ فِى غَفْلَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَرِثُ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا وَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

[36-40] (And Jesus had declared) "Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him; this is the Right Way."[23] But in spite of this, the sects began to have differences among themselves.[24] So those who adopted the ways of disbelief shall suffer a horrible woe, when they witness the Great Day. On that Day when they shall appear before Us, their ears and their eyes shall become very sharp, but today these transgressors (neither hear nor see the Truth and) have strayed into manifest deviation. O Muhammad, now that these people are not paying heed and are not

believing, warn them of the horrors of the Day, when judgment shall be passed, and they will have nothing left for them but vain regret. Ultimately, We will inherit the Earth and all that is on it, and everyone shall be returned to Us.[25]

وَٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٤١﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَٰٓأَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِى عَنكَ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٤٢﴾

يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّى قَدْ جَآءَنِى مِنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَٱتَّبِعْنِىٓ أَهْدِكَ صِرَٰطًا سَوِيًّا ﴿٤٣﴾

يَٰٓأَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ عَصِيًّا ﴿٤٤﴾

يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ أَن يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَٰنِ وَلِيًّا ﴿٤٥﴾

[41-45] And relate in this Book the story of Abraham;[26] indeed he was a righteous man and a Prophet. (Remind them of the time,) when he said to his father, "Dear father! why do you worship those things, which do not hear nor

see nor avail you anything? Dear father! I have received that knowledge which you have not got; so you should follow me and I will guide you on the Right Way. Dear father! do not serve Satan,[27] for Satan is disobedient to the Merciful. Dear father! I am afraid lest you should incur the scourge of God and become Satan's companion."

قَالَ أَرَاغِبٌ أَنتَ عَنْ ءَالِهَتِى يَـٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ ۖ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهِ لَأَرْجُمَنَّكَ ۖ وَٱهْجُرْنِى
مَلِيًّا ﴿٤٦﴾

[46] The father replied, "O Abraham! Have you renounced my deities? If you do not desist from this, I will stone you to death: so get away from me for ever."

قَالَ سَلَـٰمٌ عَلَيْكَ ۖ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِى حَفِيًّا ﴿٤٧﴾

وَأَعْتَزِلُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَدْعُوا۟ رَبِّى عَسَىٰٓ أَلَّآ أَكُونَ بِدُعَآءِ
رَبِّى شَقِيًّا ﴿٤٨﴾

[47-48] Abraham said, "I bid farewell to you; I will pray to my Lord to forgive you[27a] for He is very kind to me. I forsake all of you as well as those whom you invoke instead of Allah: I will invoke my Lord alone: I do hope that I shall not fail to gain my object' by invoking my Lord."

فَلَمَّا ٱعْتَزَلَهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَـٰقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا ﴿٤٩﴾

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٠﴾

[49-50] Accordingly, when he left those people and their deities besides Allah, We granted to him descendants like Isaac and Jacob, and We made each of them a Prophet and We bestowed on them Our Mercy and We blessed them with true high renown.[28]

وَٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مُخْلَصًا وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥١﴾

وَنَـٰدَيْنَـٰهُ مِن جَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ ٱلْأَيْمَنِ وَقَرَّبْنَـٰهُ نَجِيًّا ﴿٥٢﴾

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥ مِن رَّحْمَتِنَآ أَخَاهُ هَـٰرُونَ نَبِيًّا ﴿٥٣﴾

[51-53] And mention in this Book Moses: he was a chosen person,[29] and he was a Messenger Prophet.[30] We called him from the right side[31] of Tur, and honored him with secret talk,[32] and We made his brother Aaron a Prophet and gave to him (as an assistant).

وَٱذْكُرْ فِى ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِسْمَـٰعِيلَ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ ٱلْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾

وَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُۥ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ وَكَانَ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ مَرْضِيًّا ﴿٥٥﴾

[54-55] And make a mention in this Book of Ismail: he was true to his promise and was a Messenger Prophet. He enjoined his people to offer Salat and give Zakat, and his Lord was well pleased with him.

وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِدۡرِيسَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقٗا نَّبِيّٗا ٥٦

وَرَفَعۡنَٰهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيّٗا ٥٧

[56-57] And make a mention in this Book of Idris:[33] he was a righteous man, and a Prophet; and We had raised him to a high position.[34]

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِن ذُرِّيَّةِ ءَادَمَ وَمِمَّنۡ حَمَلۡنَا مَعَ نُوحٖ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّةِ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَمِمَّنۡ هَدَيۡنَا وَٱجۡتَبَيۡنَآۚ إِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ خَرُّواْ سُجَّدٗا وَبُكِيّٗا ۩ ٥٨

[58] These are the Messengers on whom Allah bestowed His favors: they were from the descendants of Adam, and from the seed of those whom We carried in the Ark with Noah, and from the seed of Abraham and of Israel. They were among those people whom We guided aright and made Our chosen ones. They were so tender-hearted that when the Revelations of the Merciful were recited to them, they fell down prostrate in a state of weeping.

۞ فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٌ أَضَاعُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَلۡقَوۡنَ غَيّٗا ٥٩

إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ
وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٦٠﴾

جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ٱلَّتِى وَعَدَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ عِبَادَهُۥ بِٱلْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ
وَعْدُهُۥ مَأْتِيًّا ﴿٦١﴾

[59-61] Then there came after them those degenerate people, who lost their Salat[35] and followed their lusts:[36] so they shall soon encounter the consequences of their deviation. However; those, who repent and believe and do righteous deeds, will enter the Garden and they will not be wronged in the least. They will have those everlasting Gardens, which the Merciful has promised to His servants, while yet they have not seen them,[37] and most surely that promise shall be fulfilled.

لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَٰمًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ رِزْقُهُمْ فِيهَا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ﴿٦٢﴾

تِلْكَ ٱلْجَنَّةُ ٱلَّتِى نُورِثُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا مَن كَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿٦٣﴾

[62-63] There they will not hear any idle talk but only what shall be good and sensible,[38] and they will get their provisions regularly in the morning and evening. That is the Garden which We will give as an inheritance to that one of Our servants, who leads a pious life.

وَمَا نَتَنَزَّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ ۖ لَهُۥ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَمَا خَلْفَنَا وَمَا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴿٦٤﴾

رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَٱعْبُدْهُ وَٱصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَٰدَتِهِۦ ۚ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُۥ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٥﴾

[64-65] O Muhammad,[39] we do not come down save at the bidding of your Lord; to Him belongs all that is before us and all that is behind us and all that lies between, and your Lord is never forgetful. He is the Lord, of the Heavens and the Lord of the Earth, and of all that is between them; so serve Him and be steadfast in His service.[40] Do you know of any other being equal in rank to Him?[41]

وَيَقُولُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ أَءِذَا مَا مِتُّ لَسَوْفَ أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا ﴿٦٦﴾

أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَٰهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٦٧﴾

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ ثُمَّ لَنُحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا ﴿٦٨﴾

ثُمَّ لَنَنزِعَنَّ مِن كُلِّ شِيعَةٍ أَيُّهُمْ أَشَدُّ عَلَى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ عِتِيًّا ﴿٦٩﴾

ثُمَّ لَنَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِهَا صِلِيًّا ﴿٧٠﴾

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟ وَّنَذَرُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴿٧٢﴾

[66-72] Man says, “What! After I am once dead, shall I again be brought to life?” Does not the man remember that We made him at first when he was nothing? By your Lord! We will muster them and the Satans along with them;[42] then We will gather them round Hell and throw them down on their knees: then We will pick out from every band, each one of those who had been most rebellious against the Merciful;[43] then We know very well which of them deserves most to be thrown into Hell. And there is none of you who will not be presented before the confines of Hell,[44] for this is a settled ,decree, which your Lord will bring in force; then We will deliver those who were pious (in the world), and will leave the transgressors there on their knees.

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَىُّ ٱلْفَرِيقَيْنِ خَيْرٌ مَّقَامًا وَأَحْسَنُ نَدِيًّا ﴿٧٣﴾

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَحْسَنُ أَثَٰثًا وَرِءْيًا ﴿٧٤﴾

قُلْ مَن كَانَ فِى ٱلضَّلَٰلَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ مَدًّا ۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا رَأَوْا۟ مَا
يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا ٱلْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا ٱلسَّاعَةَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضْعَفُ
جُندًا ﴿٧٥﴾

وَيَزِيدُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱهْتَدَوْا۟ هُدًى ۗ وَٱلْبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيْرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ
ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ مَّرَدًّا ﴿٧٦﴾

[73-76] When Our plain Revelations are recited to them, the disbelievers say to the Believers, "Tell us, which of the two of our parties is in a better condition and has grander meetings"[45] And how many a generation have We destroyed before them, who had more abundant riches than they and were grander in splendor! Say to them, "The Merciful gives respite to the one who falls into deviation up to the time when such people see that thing with which they had been threatened-the scourge of God or the Hour of Resurrection. Then they realize who was in worse plight and whose party was weaker. In contrast to them, Allah increases in guidance those who adopt the righteous way;[46] and the abiding deeds of righteousness are better in the sight of your Lord in regard to their reward and their end.

أَفَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى كَفَرَ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتَيَنَّ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴿٧٧﴾

أَطَّلَعَ ٱلْغَيْبَ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذَ عِندَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ عَهْدًا ﴿٧٨﴾

كَلَّا ۚ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ مَدًّا ﴿٧٩﴾

وَنَرِثُهُۥ مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِينَا فَرْدًا ﴿٨٠﴾

[77-80] Then, have you seen the person who denies Our Revelations, and boasts, “I shall continue to be blessed with riches and children?”[47] What! has the unseen been revealed to him? Or has he taken a pledge from the Merciful? By no means! We will take down whatever he boasts of,[48] and will increase his chastisement all the more and We will inherit the riches and the helpers of which he boasts of, he shall appear before Us all alone.

وَٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ءَالِهَةً لِّيَكُونُوا۟ لَهُمْ عِزًّا ﴿٨١﴾

كَلَّا ۚ سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا ﴿٨٢﴾

[81-82] These people have set up other gods than Allah so that they may become their supporters.[49] But they will have no supporter; all of them will not only disown their worship[50] but also become their opponents.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ أَزًّا ﴿٨٣﴾

فَلَا تَعۡجَلۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡۖ إِنَّمَا نَعُدُّ لَهُمۡ عَدّٗا ﴿٨٤﴾

يَوۡمَ نَحۡشُرُ ٱلۡمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ وَفۡدٗا ﴿٨٥﴾

وَنَسُوقُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وِرۡدٗا ﴿٨٦﴾

لَّا يَمۡلِكُونَ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ عِندَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ عَهۡدٗا ﴿٨٧﴾

[83-87] Do you not see that over those disbelievers We have appointed the Satans, who incite them urgently to oppose the Truth? Well, you need not become impatient for the coming of the scourge on them, for We are numbering their days.[51] The day is coming near, when We will present the righteous people like honored guests before the Merciful, and drive the criminals to Hell like thirsty flocks. At that time no one shall have the ability to intercede except the one who may have received permission from the Merciful.[52]

وَقَالُواْ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ وَلَدٗا ﴿٨٨﴾

لَّقَدۡ جِئۡتُمۡ شَيۡـًٔا إِدّٗا ﴿٨٩﴾

تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرۡنَ مِنۡهُ وَتَنشَقُّ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَتَخِرُّ ٱلۡجِبَالُ هَدّٗا ﴿٩٠﴾

أَن دَعَوْا۟ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَلَدًا ﴿٩١﴾

وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ﴿٩٢﴾

إِن كُلُّ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّآ ءَاتِى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ عَبْدًا ﴿٩٣﴾

لَّقَدْ أَحْصَىٰهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا ﴿٩٤﴾

وَكُلُّهُمْ ءَاتِيهِ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فَرْدًا ﴿٩٥﴾

[88-95] They say that the Merciful has adopted a son. What an absurd thing that you have invented! It is well nigh that the heavens might crack and the earth split asunder and the mountains crumble down at this hideous thing that they should ascribe a son to the Merciful! It does not behoove the Merciful to adopt a son. All those who are in the heavens and the earth, are going to be presented before Him as servants, for He has encircled them and kept a strict account of them; everyone shall be presented before Him individually on the Day of Resurrection.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وُدًّا ﴿٩٦﴾

فَإِنَّمَا يَسَّرْنَٰهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لِتُبَشِّرَ بِهِ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ وَتُنذِرَ بِهِۦ قَوْمًا لُّدًّا ﴿٩٧﴾

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هَلْ تُحِسُّ مِنْهُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا ﴿٩٨﴾

[96-98] Most surely the time is coming near, when the Merciful will fill the hearts with love of those who have believed and are doing righteous works.[53] So, O Muhammad, We have made this Qur'an easy, and sent it down in your tongue so that you should give good news to the pious and warn the obdurate people. We have destroyed many a people before them: do you find any trace of them or do you hear any whisper from them anywhere ?

1For comparison please see the story of Zachariah as given in vv. 34-57 of Al-i-Imran (III) and the E.N.'s thereof.

2In order to understand the position held by Hadrat Zachariah, a descendant ' of Prophet Aaron, one should be acquainted with the system of priesthood among the children of Israel.

After the conquest of Palestine, the whole land was divided among the 12 tribes of the descendants of Prophet Jacob as inheritance, and the 13th tribe (the Levites) were entrusted with religious services and duties. Even among the Levites, the house that was separated "to sanctify the most holy things .... to burn incense before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name for ever" was the house of Prophet Aaron. The other Levites were not allowed to enter the Temple "Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the Lord, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of the God .... And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the Lord in the Sabbaths, in the new moon, and on the set festivals." The descendants of Aaron were divided into 24 families, who came to serve the house of the Lord by turns. One of these families was of Abiah whose chief was Zachariah. Thus it was Zachariah's duty to go into the house on his family's turn and burn incense before the Lord. (For details, see I Chronicles, chapters 23, 24).

3That is, "I see none among my kinsmen, the family of Abiah, who is religiously and morally sound and capable of carrying on the work of the mission that has been entrusted to me."

4That is, "I do not pray for a successor to inherit me alone, but a successor who may inherit the good ways of the house of Jacob."

5In Luke the words are: "There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name." (1: 61)

6This dialogue is meant to impress that Allah is able to do whatever He wills and can make an impotent man and a barren woman give birth to a child, and likewise a virgin can be made to conceive a child.

7For the explanation of mihrab (sanctuary), see E.N. 36 of Al-i-Imran

8Below we reproduce the details of this event as given in Luke's Gospel so that the. reader may study and compare the Quranic with the Christian version. The references and additions within the brackets are ours:

"There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, (see Bani Isra'il (XVII): E.N. 9) a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abiah: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name wag Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; (there is no mention of Zacharias' prayer anywhere in the Bible) and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John (that is, Yahya). And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord (Sayyidan: a great Leader according to the Qur'an, III: 39), and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink (the Quranic version: Taqiyynr. pious and pure); and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb (the Qur'an says: `We blessed him with "judgment" while he was yet a child'). And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit of the power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

"And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. (This is different from the Qur'an, which gives it as a Sign, whereas according to Luke, it was a punishment. Moreover, the Qur'an mentions it as the silence for

`three consecutive days', but Luke says that Zacharias remained dumb till the birth of John). And the people .waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless." (Luke 1: 5-22).

9The details regarding the birth of Prophet John, according to the Divine will, and his coming of age, have been left out. Here, in one sentence, the Mission of Prophethood entrusted to him on attaining maturity has been stated, which was "to observe and follow the Torah in letter and spirit, and to exhort the Israelites as well to do the same."

10The Arabic word hukm implies ability (1) to make decisions, (2) to form right opinions, (3) to interpret the Divine Law, (4) to solve problems, and (5) it also means authority from Allah to decide affairs.

11The Arabic word hanan is almost synonymous with `mother love'. In other words, Prophet John bore in his heart the same kind of intense love for Allah's servants as a mother has for her child.

12In order to have a fuller understanding of the Mission and the pure character of Prophet John, about which brief references have been made in this Surah and Surah Al-i-`Imran, it will be useful to study this story as given in different Books of the New Testament in the following order:

According to Luke, Prophet John was older than Prophet Jesus by six months and their mothers were cousins. He was appointed a Prophet at the age of 30 years, and according to the Gospel of John, he started his mission of inviting the people toward God in Jordan. He would say: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord." (John, I: 23)

According to Mark, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptizm of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." (Mark, I: 45). He thus came to be known as John the Baptist, and the Israelites held him as a prophet. (Mat. 21: 26). Prophet Jesus said about John: "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a man greater than John the Baptist." (Mat. 11 : 11)

"John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." (Mat. 3: 4). He would say: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mat. 3: 2). By this he meant that very soon Prophet Jesus was going to start his Mission of Prophethood. The same thing has been said about him in the Qur'an: ". . . he (John) will come to confirm a Command from Allah." (III: 39). For the same reason he has been called `a sign of or pointer to' Prophet Jesus.

He urged the people to observe the Fast and Prayers. (Mat. 9: 14, Luke, 5: 33, I1: 1). He would also tell

them, ". . . He that hath two coats, let him -impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise." (Luke 3: 11). When the tax-collectors asked, "Master, what shall we do?" He said unto them, "Exact no more than that what is appointed you." (12-13), and when the soldiers sought his guidance, he said: "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." (Luke, 3: 14)'

When the corrupt scholars, Pharisees and Sadducees of the Israelites, came to be baptized by him, he rebuked them, saying: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?.. think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father... now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Mat-3 :7-10)

The Jewish ruler of his time, Herod Antipas, in whose tetrarchy he was performing his Mission of inviting the people to the Truth, had been so deeply influenced by the Roman civilization that he was causing sin and evil to spread freely in the land. He had kept Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, unlawfully in his house; when Prophet John reproved him for this and raised his voice against other evils being committed by him, Herod got him arrested and sent to jail. However, he held him in high esteem for his piety and righteousness and even feared him on account of the great respect he enjoyed among the people. On the contrary, Herodias thought that the moral consciousness that Prophet John was producing among the people was directly aimed at women like herself and pulling them down in the public eye. Thus she nursed a grudge against him and would have him killed but could not. Soon an opportunity came her way. On the birthday banquet of Herod, her daughter danced and so delighted Herod and others that the king said to her, 'Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.' The girl asked her mother what she should ask for. The mother said, `Ask for the head of John the Baptist.' The girl went back to the king and requested to have there and then the head of John the Baptist on a dish. Herod felt sorry to hear this, but could not reject the demand of the daughter of his beloved. He at once got Prophet John killed in the prison and presented his head on a dish to the dancing girl. (Mat. 14: 3-12, Mark, 6 :17-29, Luke, 3 :19-20).

13For comparison, see Al-i-Imran (III): 34-57, and An-Nina (IV) :156 and E.N.'s thereof.

14The Sanctuary where she had retired for devotion was an eastern chamber in the Temple, and as was customary she had hung a curtain to conceal herself from the people. It cannot be Nazareth as some people have wrongly taken it to be, because Nazareth is to the north of Jerusalem.

15The word "So shall it be" are very significant as has been stated in E.N. 6. The plain meaning is this: "A pure son shall be born to you just as your Lord has decreed, even though no man has touched you. " The same was the response to prophet Zachariah as stated in v. 9 above. And it is a sheer perversion to interpret it as: "So shall it be that a man will touch you and a son will be born to you." For, if it were to mean: "You will bear a son like all other women of the world," the subsequent two sentences: "Your Lord says, 'This is an easy thing for Me to do, and We will make that boy a Sign for the people'," would have

become meaningless: Had this birth been an ordinary birth like the birth of every other child, there would have been no occasion to boast: "It is an easy thing, and that it will be made a Sign (miracle). This will be so because the child will speak in the cradle."

16When she conceived the child, she left the Sanctuary and went to a distant place (Bethlehem) in order to escape the bitter criticism of the people. They would have said, "Look at the virgin daughter of the pious house of Aaron! She has conceived a child and that, too, in the Sanctuary where she had retired for devotion!" Thus she temporarily succeeded in concealing the shame of the conception, but this event itself is a proof that prophet Jesus was born without a father. Had Mary been married and had a husband, she would not have left his or her parents house by herself and chosen a distant place for the purpose of delivery.

17The words "Would that..." show the extreme state of anxiety in which Mary found herself at the time. She did not utter these words on account of the labor pains but due to the pangs of sorrow as to how she would conceal the child from her people. The angel's words---"Grieve not at all"explain why she had spoken these desperate words. When a married girl is delivering her first baby, she might be dying with pains, but she is never so sorrowful and grieved.

18That is, "You need not say anything with regard to the child. It is now Our responsibility to answer the critics." This also indicates why Mary was so sad and grieved. Had she been married and given birth to her first baby like any other mother, there was no occasion to tell her to observe "a fast of silence", though it was a common custom among the Jews."

19"Sister of Aaron" may either mean that Mary had a brother of the name of Aaron, or it may mean that she belonged to the family of Prophet Aaron. The first meaning is supported by a tradition of the Holy Prophet and the second is plausible because that is supported by the Arabic idiom. But we are inclined to the second meaning, for the wording of the said tradition does not necessarily mean that she actually had a brother named Aaron. The tradition as related in Muslim, Nasa'i, Tirmizi, etc. says that when the Christians of Najran criticized the Quranic version of stating Mary as the sister of Aaron before Hadrat Mughirah bin Shu`bah, he was not able to satisfy them, because Prophet Aaron had passed away centuries earlier. When he presented the problem before the Holy Prophet, he replied, "Why didn't you say that the Israelites named their children after their Prophets and other pious men?" That is, "You could have answered their objection like this as well." (See also E.N. 32 of Al-i-Imran).

19aHow can the people who reject the miraculous birth of Prophet Jesus, explain why Mary's whole community had come out to curse and condemn her when she had appeared before them with the child?

20People who misinterpret the Qur'an translate this verse as: "How shall we talk with him, who is but a child of yesterday?".They attribute these words to the elderly people of the Jews, who said years later,

when Jesus was a grown up boy, that they could not have any useful dialogue with a mere kid. But the person who keeps the whole context in view, will realize that this interpretation is absurd and has been given merely to avoid the miracle. As a matter of fact, the dialogue took place when the people were condemning Mary who being unmarried, had brought forth a child, and not when the child had grown up into manhood. V. 46 of AI-i-`Imran (III) and v. 110 of Al-Ma'idah (V) also support the view that Prophet Jesus had uttered these words as a baby in the cradle and not when grown up. In the first verse, the angel while giving the good news of a son to Mary, says: "He will speak to the people alike when in the cradle and when grown up"; in the other verse, Allah Himself says to Prophet Jesus: ".....you talked to the people even in the cradle as you talked when you were grown up."

20aThe words used are: ".....dutiful to my mother", and not."dutiful to my parents" . This is another proof of the fact that Jesus had no father, and for the same reason he has been called `Jesus son of Mary' everywhere in the Qur'an.

21This speech in the cradle by Jesus was the `Sign' to which the angel referred in v. 21. As Allah intended to punish the children of Israel for their continuous wicked ways and evil deeds, He made a pious virgin girl of the family of Prophet Aaron, who had devoted herself to worship in the Temple under the patronage of Zachariah, bear a child and bring it before her people in order to concentrate the whole attention of the thousands of people assembled there on this extraordinary event. Then He made this new born child speak out even in the cradle that he had been appointed a Prophet. Though they had seen this wonderful Sign of Allah, they rejected the Prophethood of Jesus and brought him to the court for crucifixion, and thus incurred the wrath of Allah. (For further details, please see Al-i-Imran (III): E.N.'s 44 and 53, and An-Nina (IV): E.N.'s 212,213).

22In vv.1-35, it has been shown that the "Doctrine of the son of God" in regard to Prophet Jesus is absolutely wrong. For just as the miraculous birth of Prophet John did not make him the `son of God', so the miraculous birth of Prophet Jesus could not make him the son of God. For the births of both were the result of the same sort of miracle as they have been mentioned together in the same context in the Gospel of Luke. Therefore, it is mere distortion that the Christians should regard one as the servant of God and the other as the son of God.

23This declaration by Jesus has been cited to tell the Christians that Jesus also taught the same Doctrine of Tauhid as was taught by all other Prophets. And it was they who had invented the doctrine of shirk by making him the son of God. (Please also refer to Al-i-`Imran (III): E.N. 68, and Al-Ma'idah (V): E.N.'s 100, 101 and 130).

24That is, the sects of the Christians.

25Here the address which was meant to be delivered before King Negus and his courtiers comes to an

end. In the Introduction to this Surah, we have already stated the historical background of this address. In order to form an idea of its great significance, it should be kept in mind that:

(a) this address was sent down at the time when the persecuted Muslims of Makkah were going to migrate to a Christian kingdom so that they may present before the Christians the true Islamic creed about Prophet Jesus. This shows that the Muslims under no circumstances should conceal the Truth;

(b) it shows a most wonderful moral courage of the Muslim Migrants to Habash that they recited this address in the royal court at the critical moment, when the courtiers who had been bribed were bent on handing them over to their enemies. They indeed were faced with the real threat that this frank Islamic criticism of the basic articles of the Christian Faith might turn the king against them and he might hand them over to the Quraish. But in spite of this, they presented the whole truth before the king without the least hesitation.

26From here the address is directed towards the people of Makkah, who had forced their own near and dear relatives to emigrate from their homes, just as Prophet Abraham had been exiled by his own father and brethren. The story of Prophet Abraham has been selected for this purpose because the Quraish professed to accept him as their religious leader and were proud of being his descendants.

27It should be noted that the literal translation of the Arabic text is: "Do not worship Satan", though Abraham's father and the other people did not worship Satan in the same sense as they worshiped idols. But as they followed and obeyed Satan, he accused them of worshiping Satan. Thus it is clear that if somebody follows and obeys , Satan, he virtually worships him. For Satan has never been a deity in the sense that people have made him an object of worship; nay, they have always been cursing him and following him at the same time. (For further details see Surah Al-Kahf (XVIII) E.N.'s 49-50).

27aFor explanation, please see Surah At-Taubah (IX): E.N. 112.

28This is to give comfort to the Migrants who had been forced to migrate from their homes. They were told that they would be honored and blessed with true renown just as Prophet Abraham had been blessed with true renown after his Migration.

29The word used is mukhlas, which means "purified". In other words, Allah had specially chosen Prophet Moses for the Mission of Prophethood.

30"Rasul" literally means `the one who is sent'; therefore it is used for an ambassador, envoy, messenger and representative. The Qur'an has used this title for angels, who are sent by Allah on a special mission, or for the human beings who brought His Message to mankind.

As regards the word "Nabi", it literally means the one who brings news, or the one who is high in rank, or the one who shows the way. This title is used for the Prophets in all the three senses. Thus Moses was a Messenger Prophet because he was a Messenger of high rank who gave news from Allah and showed the Right Way to the people.

The Qur'an does not necessarily differentiate between the use of the two titles, for sometimes it uses the title Rasul for one person at one place and the title Nabi for the same person at another place, and sometimes uses both the titles together for one and the same person. However, at some places each title has been used in a way as to show that there is some technical distinction between the two, though that has not been precisely marked out, except that every Rasul (Messenger) is a Nabi (Prophet) as well, but every Nabi may not be a Rasul, and that a Rasul has a special and more important mission to perform. This is supported by a Tradition of the Holy Prophet, which has been reported by Imam Ahmad from Abu Umamah and by Hakim from Hadrat Abu Zarr. When the Holy Prophet was asked how many "Messengers" and "Prophets" had been sent to the world, he said that the number of the Messengers was 313 or 315 and of the Prophets 124,000

31"The right side of Tur" means the eastern side of the mountain. As Prophet Moses, on his way from Midian to Egypt, was passing from the southern side of Mt. Tur, the eastern side would lie on his right and the western on his left if he faced the mountain, otherwise a mountain by itself cannot have a right or a left side.

32See E.N. 206 of Surah An-Nisa (IV)

33There is a difference of opinion as to who Prophet Idris was. Some commentators opine that he was a Prophet from among the Israelites, but the majority of them are inclined to the view that he was a Prophet before Noah. There is no authentic Tradition which may help determine his identity. The next verse (58), however, supports the view that he appeared before Prophet Noah. For of all the Prophets mentioned, he alone was the one who may be said to be "from the descendants of Adam."

The commentators are of the opinion that Idris was Enoch of the Old Testament, about whom it is said:

"And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years.... and he was not; for God took him." (Gen. 5: 21-24)

In Talmud, there are greater details about Enoch, which are briefly as follows: "Before Noah when the descendants of Adam began to degenerate, the angel of God called to Enoch, who led a pious life away from the people, and said, 'O Enoch, arise, come out from seclusion, and go about among the people of the earth, guiding them to the path which they should follow and the ways which they should adopt.'

"Receiving this Divine Command, Enoch left his seclusion and gathered the people together and preached to them what he had been commanded, with the result that they listened to him and adopted the worship of God. Enoch ruled over mankind for 353 years: his rule was based on justice and truth, and consequently God favored mankind with all kinds of blessings." (H. Polano: The Talmud Selections, pp. 18-21)

34The plain meaning is that God had favored Idris with a high rank, but according to the Israelite traditions, God took up Idris (Enoch) to heavens. The Bible says: "...and he was not; for God took him", but the Talmud has a long story to tell, which ends with the words: "Enoch ascended to heaven in a whirlwind, with chariot and horses of fire."

35It appears that the degenerate people totally discarded Salat, or they had become neglectful and careless in its observance. This is the first evil that is committed by a degenerate people; for, after this there remains no connection whatever between them and God. Here it has been stated as a universal principle that the degeneration of the people of all the former Prophets started with the abandonment of Salat by them.

36This was the inevitable result of the loss of the connection with Allah. As they became more and more neglectful of their Salat, their lusts took complete hold of them and they fell to the lowest depths of moral depravity and began to follow their whims instead of the Divine Commands.

37That is, the promised Gardens which are yet unseen by His servants.

38The word used is salam, which means ' free from defect and fault' . It implies to mean that the greatest blessing that man will enjoy in Paradise will be that there he will hear no idle, vile or indecent talk; all the dwellers of Paradise will be neat and clean and pure people and every individual will be gentle and right-minded by nature; everybody will be secure against backbiting, slander and indecent songs and other ugly sounds. Whatever men will hear will be good, sensible and right.

This is indeed a great blessing which only that person can fully appreciate, who possesses a neat and fine taste, because only such a one can feel the misery of living among a dirty society, where his ears are never immune against lies, backbiting, slander, and mischievous and sensual talk.

39This paragraph is a parenthesis, which has been inserted at the end of one theme and before the commencement of the other. It is obvious from this that this Surah was sent down after a long delay. At that time the Holy Prophet and his Companions were passing through very hard times and were always expecting a Revelation to guide and comfort them. When Gabriel (peace be upon him) came with the angels with this Revelation, he at first delivered that part of the Message which was immediately needed. Then before proceeding further, he said these words by the leave of Allah as an explanation for the delay

and to give them comfort from Allah and counsel of fortitude. This interpretation is not only borne out by the wording of the passage but also by some Traditions of the Holy Prophet, which have been cited by Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, and the author of Ruh ulMa `ani in their commentary on this passage.

40That is, You should not only follow strictly the Way of service and face all the obstacles and afflictions with patience, but also should not get uneasy, if there is a delay in Revelation and help. You should rest content with His service as an obedient servant and perform persistently the duties and responsibilities entrusted to you as a Servant and Messenger.

41The word Sami literally means a name sake. Here it implies: "Allah is the only Deity: do you know of any other deity besides Him? If there is none, and you know that there is none, then you do not have any alternative but to serve Him and obey His Commands."

42The "Satans" are the leaders who persuade the wicked people to enjoy themselves in this worldly life, for there is no life in the Hereafter, where they shall have to present themselves before Allah and give an account of their deeds.

43The leader of every rebel band.

44According to some traditions, "to be presented before the confines of Hell" means `to enter Hell', but none of these traditions is authentic. Then this interpretation goes against the Qur'an and a great many authentic Traditions, which clearly state that the true Believers will never be cast into Hell. Lexically also, vurud (being presented unto) is not synonymous with dukhul (causing to enter). Therefore, the correct meaning would be that every human being will be presented before Hell, but then, as the next verse clarifies, the pious people will be rescued and the transgressors left therein on their knees.

45In response to the recital of clear Revelations, instead of accepting their Message, the unbelievers put such questions as these to the Believers to show that they were in the right: Who has grander houses to live in? Who has a higher standard of life? Who enjoys splendid meetings? If we are enjoying all these things while you are deprived of them, you may decide for yourselves whether we, who are enjoying happy worldly lives, are in the wrong, or you who are living miserable lives of indigence are in the right? (Also see Surah Al-Kahf (XVIII): E.N.'s 37-38).

46That is, "On every critical occasion, Allah guides them to make right decisions and helps them to adopt the right way, and protects them from evil and wrong things; thus they go on making more and more progress on the right way."

47The boastful person was not a particular man but a typical chief of the disbelievers of Makkah. Everyone of them claimed, "Howsoever you may call the an erroneous and un-righteous person and

threaten me with the Divine scourge, the tact is that I am more prosperous than you today and shall continue being blessed with favors in future as well. lust have a look at my riches, at my grandeur and at my estate, and at my well-known sons, and then say where you see any signs of the wrath of God.

48That is, the boastful words of his shall also be included in the record of his crimes and he shall have to bear the consequences of his arrogant claim.

49The Arabic word 'Izzan (from 'Izat) implies a powerful and strong person whom nobody may dare do any harm; here it means a person's having such a strong supporter that no enemy or opponent of his may even cherish an evil intention against him.

50That is, they will say, "We never asked them to worship us nor were we aware that these foolish people were worshiping us."

51That is: "Endure their persecutions patiently a little more, for the time of their punishment is coming near, for We have given them respite for a fixed term, and let that term expire."

52This implies two things: (1) Intercession will be allowed only for the one who might have received permission for it from the Merciful, that is, the one who believed in Allah in the world and made himself deserving of His pardon. (2) Only that one will be able to plead intercession who might have got permission for this from the Merciful, and not those ones whom people themselves had made their intercessors without any reason.

53This is to comfort the righteous people who were being persecuted and insulted in the streets of Makkah. They are being assured that the time is coming near when the people will honor and love them because of their righteous deeds and good conduct. Hearts will be attracted towards them and the world will hold them in high esteem. And this will happen according to a universal principle. Those who are wicked, proud and haughty and try to rule over the people with falsehood and hypocrisy can never captivate the hearts of the people; on the other hand, those who invite the people to the right way with truth, honesty, sincerity and good conduct succeed in winning their hearts in the end, even though at first they might have to face the indifference and opposition of the dishonest people.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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20. Surah Ta Ha

Name

This Surah takes its name from its "first word "*Ta Ha.*" This name, like the names of many other Surahs, is merely symbolic.

Period of Revelation

The period of its revelation is the same as of Surah Maryam. It is just possible that it was sent down during the Migration to Habash or just after it. Anyhow, it is certain that this Surah was revealed before Hadrat Umar embraced Islam.

According to a well known and authentic tradition when Hadrat Umar set out to kill the Holy Prophet, he met a certain person, who said, "Before you do anything else, you should know that your own sister and brother-in-law have embraced Islam" Hearing this, he directly went to the house of his sister. There he found his sister, Fatimah, and his brother-in-law, Said bin Zaid, learning the contents of a scroll from Khabbab bin Art. When Fatimah saw him coming she hid the scroll at once, but Hadrat Umar had heard the recital, so he began to interrogate them about it. Then he began to thrash his brother-in-law, and wounded his sister, who tried to protect him. At last both of them confessed, "We have become Muslims; you may do whatever you like." As Hadrat Umar was moved to see blood running down from her head, he said, "Show me the thing you were reading." The sister asked him to promise on oath that he would not tear it, and added, "You cannot touch it unless you have a bath." Accordingly, Hadrat Umar took his bath and when he began to read the scroll, which contained this Surah, he spontaneously spoke out, "What an excellent thing!" At this Hadrat Khabbab, who had hidden himself at the sound of his footsteps, came out of his hiding and said, "By God, I have high expectations that Allah will get great service from you to propagate the Message of His Prophet, for just yesterday I heard the Holy Prophet praying to Allah, 'My Lord, make Abul Hakam bin Hisham (Abu Jahl) or Umar bin Khattab a supporter of Islam. So O Umar, turn to Allah, turn to Allah." These words proved to be so persuasive that he at once accompanied Hadrat Khabbab and went to the Holy Prophet to embrace Islam. This happened a short time after the Migration to Habash.

Theme and Topics of Discussion

This Surah begins with the enunciation of the object of the Revelation of the Qur'an to this effect:"O Muhammad, this Quran has not been sent down to you to put you unnecessarily to some great affliction. It does not demand from you to perform the impossible task of imbuing the hearts of the obdurate disbelievers with Faith. It is merely an admonition meant to guide on to the Right Path those who fear God and want to save themselves from His punishment. This Quran is the Word of the Master of the earth and the heavens and God-head belongs to Him alone:These two facts are eternal whether one believes them or not."

After this introduction, the Surah abruptly moves on to relate the story of Prophet Moses without any apparent relevancy and without even hinting at its applicability to the events of the period. However, if we read between the lines, we realize that the discourse is addressed very relevantly to the people of Makkah. But before we explain the hidden meaning of the discourse, we must keep in view the fact that the Arabs in general acknowledged Moses as a Prophet of God. This was so because they had "been influenced by the large number of the Jews around them and by" the neighboring Christian kingdoms. Now let us state those things which are hidden between the lines of the story:

1. Allah does not appoint a Prophet by the beat of drums or My celebrating the occasion in a regular and formal ceremony, as if to say, "We are appointing such and such a person as Our Prophet from today." On the contrary, He bestows Prophethood in a confidential manner just as He did in the case of Prophet Moses. Therefore you should not consider it strange if Hadrat Muhammad has been appointed as a Prophet all of a sudden and without any public proclamation.

2. The fundamental principles presented by Prophet Muhammad - *Tauhid* and the Hereafter - are just the same as were taught to Prophet Moses at the time of his appointment.

3. Prophet Muhammad has been made the standard bearer of the Message of the Truth among the people of the Quraish all by himself without material provisions, just as Prophet Moses was entrusted with the Mission to go to a tyrant king like Pharaoh and ask him to give up his attitude of rebellion. These are the mysterious ways of Allah. He catches hold of a way farer of Midian on his way to Egypt and says, "Go and fight with the greatest tyrant of the time." He did not provide him with armies and provisions for this Mission. The only thing He did was to appoint his brother as his assistant at his request.

4. You, O People of Makkah, should note it well that Pharaoh employed the same devices against Prophet Moses as you are employing against Prophet Muhammad -- frivolous objections, accusations, and cruel persecutions. You should know that Allah's Prophet came out victorious over Pharaoh, who possessed large armies and war equipments. Incidentally, the Muslims have been consoled and comforted, though not in so many words, that they should not be afraid of fighting with the Quraish against fearful odds, for the mission which is supported by Allah comes out victorious in the end. At the same time, the Muslims have been exhorted to follow the excellent example of the magicians of Egypt, who remained steadfast in their Faith, though Pharaoh threatened them with horrible vengeance.

5. An incident from the story of the Israelites has been cited to show in what ridiculous manner the idolization of false gods and goddesses starts and that the Prophets of God do not tolerate even the slightest tinge of this preposterous practice. Likewise, Prophet Muhammad is following the former Prophets in opposing *shirk* and idol worship today.

Thus, the story of Moses has been used to throw light on all those matters which were connected with the conflict between the Holy Prophet and the Quraish. Then at the end of the story, the. Quraish have been briefly admonished, as if to say, "The Quran has been sent down in your tongue for your own good. If you listen to it and follow its admonition, you will be doing so for your own good but if you reject it, you will yourselves meet with an evil end."

After this the story of Prophet Adam has been related, as if to tell the Quraish, "The way you are following is the way of Satan, whereas the right way for a man is to follow his father Adam. He was beguiled by Satan, but when he realized his error, he plainly confessed it and repented and again turned back to the service of Allah and won His favor. On the other hand, if a person follows Satan and sticks to his error obdurately in spite of admonition, he does harm to himself alone like Satan."

In the end, the Holy Prophet and the Muslims have been advised not to be impatient in regard to the punishment to the disbelievers, as if to say, "Allah has His Own scheme concerning them. He does not seize them at once but gives them sufficient respite. Therefore you should not grow impatient but bear the persecutions with fortitude and go on conveying the Message."

In this connection, great emphasis has been laid on *Salat* so that it may create in the believers the virtues of patience, forbearance, contentment, resignation to the will of God and self analysis for these are greatly needed in the service of the Message of the Truth.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

طه ﴿١﴾

مَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكَ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ لِتَشۡقَىٰٓ ﴿٢﴾

إِلَّا تَذۡكِرَةٗ لِّمَن يَخۡشَىٰ ﴿٣﴾

تَنزِيلٗا مِّمَّنۡ خَلَقَ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ٱلۡعُلَى ﴿٤﴾

ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ عَلَى ٱلۡعَرۡشِ ٱسۡتَوَىٰ ﴿٥﴾

لَهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحۡتَ ٱلثَّرَىٰ ﴿٦﴾

وَإِن تَجۡهَرۡ بِٱلۡقَوۡلِ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَعۡلَمُ ٱلسِّرَّ وَأَخۡفَى ﴿٧﴾

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَۖ لَهُ ٱلۡأَسۡمَآءُ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

[1-8] Ta Ha. We have not sent down the Qur'an to you to put you in distress. This is an Admonition for every such person who fears (God).[1] This has been sent down by that Being, Who has created the earth and the high heavens. The Merciful is sitting on the throne of the Kingdom. (of the universe)[2] He is the Owner of all that which is in the heavens and the earth and all that which is between them and under the soil. Whether you utter your supplication in a loud voice (it makes no difference) for He hears not only what is said in a low voice but also what is kept most secret.[3] He is Allah: there is no god but He; all the excellent names are for Him.[4]

وَهَلْ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٩﴾

إِذْ رَءَا نَارًا فَقَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ ٱمْكُثُوٓا۟ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّىٓ ءَاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِقَبَسٍ أَوْ أَجِدُ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ هُدًى ﴿١٠﴾

[9-10] And has the history of Moses reached you? When he saw a fire[5] he said to his family, "Wait a bit, I have seen a fire: it may be that I bring a burning brand for you, or find guidance (to the way) at the fire."[6]

فَلَمَّآ أَتَىٰهَا نُودِىَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ ﴿١١﴾

إِنِّىٓ أَنَا۠ رَبُّكَ فَٱخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ بِٱلْوَادِ ٱلْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ﴿١٢﴾

وَأَنَا ٱخْتَرْتُكَ فَٱسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَىٰٓ ﴿١٣﴾

إِنَّنِيٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدۡنِي وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ لِذِكۡرِيٓ ١٤

إِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٌ أَكَادُ أُخۡفِيهَا لِتُجۡزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفۡسِۭ بِمَا تَسۡعَىٰ ١٥

فَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكَ عَنۡهَا مَن لَّا يُؤۡمِنُ بِهَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ فَتَرۡدَىٰ ١٦

وَمَا تِلۡكَ بِيَمِينِكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ١٧

[11-17] When he reached there, a voice called out, "O Moses, I am your Lord; take off your shoes,[7] for you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa.[8] And I have chosen you: so listen to what is revealed. It is Who am Allah: there is no god but Me: so worship Me and establish Salat to remember Me.[9] The Hour of Resurrection is sure to come, but it is My will to keep the time of its coming secret so that every soul may be recompensed according to its labors.[10] Therefore let not any person who does not believe in it and has become a slave of his lusts, turn your thoughts away from it, lest you perish- And O Moses, what is this in your right hand?"[11]

قَالَ هِيَ عَصَايَ أَتَوَكَّؤُاْ عَلَيۡهَا وَأَهُشُّ بِهَا عَلَىٰ غَنَمِي وَلِيَ فِيهَا مَـَٔارِبُ أُخۡرَىٰ ١٨

[18] Moses replied, "It is my staff: I lean upon it and I beat down leaves with it for my flock, and I have quite a few other uses for it."[12]

قَالَ أَلْقِهَا يَـٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿١٩﴾

[19] He said, "Cast it down, O Moses."

فَأَلْقَىٰهَا فَإِذَا هِيَ حَيَّةٌ تَسْعَىٰ ﴿٢٠﴾

[20] So he cast it down and immediately it turned into a snake, which began to run about.

قَالَ خُذْهَا وَلَا تَخَفْ ۖ سَنُعِيدُهَا سِيرَتَهَا ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾

وَٱضْمُمْ يَدَكَ إِلَىٰ جَنَاحِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٓءٍ ءَايَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٢٢﴾

لِنُرِيَكَ مِنْ ءَايَـٰتِنَا ٱلْكُبْرَى ﴿٢٣﴾

ٱذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُۥ طَغَىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾

[21-24] He said, "Catch hold of it and do not fear for We will again restore it to its former state. Now clasp your hand under your arm-pit: it will come out shining without any hurt (to you).[13] This is the second Sign: this is because We are going to show you Our great Signs. Now go to Pharaoh for he has become rebellious.

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱشۡرَحۡ لِي صَدۡرِي ﴿٢٥﴾

وَيَسِّرۡ لِيٓ أَمۡرِي ﴿٢٦﴾

وَٱحۡلُلۡ عُقۡدَةٗ مِّن لِّسَانِي ﴿٢٧﴾

يَفۡقَهُواْ قَوۡلِي ﴿٢٨﴾

وَٱجۡعَل لِّي وَزِيرٗا مِّنۡ أَهۡلِي ﴿٢٩﴾

هَٰرُونَ أَخِي ﴿٣٠﴾

ٱشۡدُدۡ بِهِۦٓ أَزۡرِي ﴿٣١﴾

وَأَشۡرِكۡهُ فِيٓ أَمۡرِي ﴿٣٢﴾

كَىْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

وَنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

إِنَّكَ كُنتَ بِنَا بَصِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

[25-35] Moses said, "Lord, open my breast for me[14] and make my task easy for me, and remove the impediment from my tongue so that people may understand my speech,[15] and appoint a counselor for me from my own family, and strengthen my hands by means of Aaron, who is my brother,[16] and make him my associate in my work so that we may glorify Thee and remember Thee always. Thou hast always been watching over us."

قَالَ قَدْ أُوتِيتَ سُؤْلَكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَيْكَ مَرَّةً أُخْرَىٰٓ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِذْ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّكَ مَا يُوحَىٰٓ ﴿٣٨﴾

أَنِ ٱقْذِفِيهِ فِى ٱلتَّابُوتِ فَٱقْذِفِيهِ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ فَلْيُلْقِهِ ٱلْيَمُّ بِٱلسَّاحِلِ
يَأْخُذْهُ عَدُوٌّ لِّى وَعَدُوٌّ لَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَلْقَيْتُ عَلَيْكَ مَحَبَّةً مِّنِّى وَلِتُصْنَعَ
عَلَىٰ عَيْنِىٓ ﴿٣٩﴾

إِذْ تَمْشِىٓ أُخْتُكَ فَتَقُولُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن يَكْفُلُهُۥ ۖ
فَرَجَعْنَٰكَ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّكَ كَىْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۚ وَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا
فَنَجَّيْنَٰكَ مِنَ ٱلْغَمِّ وَفَتَنَّٰكَ فُتُونًا ۚ فَلَبِثْتَ سِنِينَ فِىٓ أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ ثُمَّ
جِئْتَ عَلَىٰ قَدَرٍ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾

وَٱصْطَنَعْتُكَ لِنَفْسِى ﴿٤١﴾

ٱذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَأَخُوكَ بِـَٔايَٰتِى وَلَا تَنِيَا فِى ذِكْرِى ﴿٤٢﴾

[36-42] He said, "Your request is granted, O Moses. We have shown favor to you for the second time.[17] Recall the time when We inspired your mother with this idea by means of a Revelation: `Place this child in a box and put the box in the river; the river will cast it on to the bank and My enemy and his enemy will pick it up. I Myself made you an object of love and so arranged things that you should be brought up under My supervision. Recall the time when your sister was walking along; then she said: `May I inform you of one, who will bring up this child in the best manner?' Thus We returned you to your mother so that her .eye might be cooled and she might not be grieved. And (also remember that) you killed a certain person and We freed you from its evil (consequences) and put you through

various trials and you stayed with the people of Midian for several years. Now you have come back at the right time: O Moses, I have molded you for My Mission. You and your brother should go (on the Mission) with My Signs. And see that you do not show any negligence in remembering Me."

ٱذۡهَبَآ إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ إِنَّهُۥ طَغَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾

فَقُولَا لَهُۥ قَوۡلٗا لَّيِّنٗا لَّعَلَّهُۥ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوۡ يَخۡشَىٰ ﴿٤٤﴾

[43-44] "Go both of you to Pharaoh, for he has transgressed all bounds. Talk to him in a gentle manner; may be that he is convinced by admonition or imbued with fear."[18]

قَالَا رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ أَن يَفۡرُطَ عَلَيۡنَآ أَوۡ أَن يَطۡغَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾

قَالَ لَا تَخَافَآۖ إِنَّنِي مَعَكُمَآ أَسۡمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾

فَأۡتِيَاهُ فَقُولَآ إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ فَأَرۡسِلۡ مَعَنَا بَنِيٓ
إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَلَا تُعَذِّبۡهُمۡۖ قَدۡ جِئۡنَٰكَ بِـَٔايَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكَۖ وَٱلسَّلَٰمُ عَلَىٰ
مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلۡهُدَىٰٓ ﴿٤٧﴾

إِنَّا قَدۡ أُوحِيَ إِلَيۡنَآ أَنَّ ٱلۡعَذَابَ عَلَىٰ مَن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ٤٨

[45-48] The two[18a] said, "Lord, we dread that he will behave unjustly towards us or treat us cruelly." He answered, "Have no fear: I am with you: I hear everything and see everything. Go to him and say, “We are Messengers from your Lord, so let the Israelites go with us, and do not oppress them. We have come to you with Signs from your lord; and peace is for him who follows the Right Way. We have been informed by Revelation that there is scourge for him who rejects it and turns away.”[19]

قَالَ فَمَن رَّبُّكُمَا يَٰمُوسَىٰ ٤٩

[49] Pharaoh[20] said, "Well, who is the Lord of you both, O Moses?"[21]

قَالَ رَبُّنَا ٱلَّذِيٓ أَعۡطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيۡءٍ خَلۡقَهُۥ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ ٥٠

[50] Moses replied, "Our Lord is He[22] Who has given a distinctive form to everything and then guided it aright."[23]

قَالَ فَمَا بَالُ ٱلۡقُرُونِ ٱلۡأُولَىٰ ٥١

[51] Pharaoh said, "And what was the position of the generations who have passed before?"[24]

قَالَ عِلۡمُهَا عِندَ رَبِّي فِي كِتَٰبٖۖ لَّا يَضِلُّ رَبِّي وَلَا يَنسَى ٥٢

ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّن نَّبَاتٍ شَتَّىٰ ﴿٥٣﴾

كُلُوا۟ وَٱرْعَوْا۟ أَنْعَٰمَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلنُّهَىٰ
﴿٥٤﴾

۞ مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ
﴿٥٥﴾

[52-55] Moses replied, "The knowledge of that is with my Lord, secure in a writing; my Lord neither errs nor forgets."[25]

He[26] it is Who has spread the earth as a bed for you, and made paths for you to move about (from place to place); He sent down rain water from above and produced different kinds of vegetation: eat of these and graze your cattle. Surely there is many a Sign in this for those who possess common sense.[27] We have created you from this earth and We will return you into it and then will bring you forth out of it once again.[28]

وَلَقَدْ أَرَيْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا كُلَّهَا فَكَذَّبَ وَأَبَىٰ ﴿٥٦﴾

قَالَ أَجِئْتَنَا لِتُخْرِجَنَا مِنْ أَرْضِنَا بِسِحْرِكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٥٧﴾

فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّكَ بِسِحْرٍ مِّثْلِهِۦ فَٱجْعَلْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَّا نُخْلِفُهُۥ
نَحْنُ وَلَآ أَنتَ مَكَانًا سُوًى ﴿٥٨﴾

[56-58] We showed all (kinds of) Our Signs[29] to Pharaoh, but he went on treating them as falsehood and refused to believe. He said, "O Moses, have you come to drive us out of our land by the power of your sorcery?[30] Well, we will also bring as strong a sorcery as yours. So settle with us when and where should the encounter take place; then neither should we back out of this agreement nor you. Come out in the open field."

قَالَ مَوْعِدُكُمْ يَوْمُ ٱلزِّينَةِ وَأَن يُحْشَرَ ٱلنَّاسُ ضُحًى ﴿٥٩﴾

[59] Moses replied, "Let the encounter take place on the Day of the Feast, and the people assemble after the rising of the sun."[31]

فَتَوَلَّىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فَجَمَعَ كَيْدَهُۥ ثُمَّ أَتَىٰ ﴿٦٠﴾

[60] Pharaoh then withdrew and gathered together all his devices, and came to the encounter.[32]

قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰ وَيْلَكُمْ لَا تَفْتَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا فَيُسْحِتَكُم بِعَذَابٍ ۖ
وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ ﴿٦١﴾

[61] (On the very occasion) Moses warned (his adversaries), saying,[33] "O unfortunate people, do not invent falsehoods in regard to Allah:[34] otherwise He will destroy you by a scourge: for whoso invented a falsehood, perished."

فَتَنَٰزَعُوٓاْ أَمۡرَهُم بَيۡنَهُمۡ وَأَسَرُّواْ ٱلنَّجۡوَىٰ ﴿٦٢﴾

قَالُوٓاْ إِنۡ هَٰذَٰنِ لَسَٰحِرَٰنِ يُرِيدَانِ أَن يُخۡرِجَاكُم مِّنۡ أَرۡضِكُم بِسِحۡرِهِمَا وَيَذۡهَبَا بِطَرِيقَتِكُمُ ٱلۡمُثۡلَىٰ ﴿٦٣﴾

فَأَجۡمِعُواْ كَيۡدَكُمۡ ثُمَّ ٱئۡتُواْ صَفّٗاۚ وَقَدۡ أَفۡلَحَ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ مَنِ ٱسۡتَعۡلَىٰ ﴿٦٤﴾

[62-64] Hearing this, a difference of opinion arose among them concerning the issue, and they began to hold secret consultations.[35] At last some of them decided the issue, saying,[36] "These two are no more than sorcerers. Their object is to drive you out of your homeland by the power of their sorcery, and bring to an end your ideal way of life.[37] Therefore muster up all your devices and come into the field with a united front.[38] You should realize that whoso comes out victorious today, he will win (the battle of ideology)."

قَالُواْ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِمَّآ أَن تُلۡقِيَ وَإِمَّآ أَن نَّكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنۡ أَلۡقَىٰ ﴿٦٥﴾

[65] The magicians[39] said, "O Moses, will you cast down (your things) or shall we cast down first?"

قَالَ بَلۡ أَلۡقُواْۖ فَإِذَا حِبَالُهُمۡ وَعِصِيُّهُمۡ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيۡهِ مِن سِحۡرِهِمۡ أَنَّهَا تَسۡعَىٰ ﴿٦٦﴾

فَأَوْجَسَ فِى نَفْسِهِۦ خِيفَةً مُّوسَىٰ ﴿٦٧﴾

قُلْنَا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٦٨﴾

وَأَلْقِ مَا فِى يَمِينِكَ تَلْقَفْ مَا صَنَعُوٓا۟ ۖ إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا۟ كَيْدُ سَٰحِرٍ ۖ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ
ٱلسَّاحِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ ﴿٦٩﴾

فَأُلْقِىَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سُجَّدًا قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ هَٰرُونَ وَمُوسَىٰ ﴿٧٠﴾

[66-70] Moses replied, "No, cast down (yours)."

Suddenly it so appeared to Moses that their cords and staffs were running about by the power of their magic,[40] and Moses' heart was filled with fear.[41] We said, "Don't fear for you will come out victorious. Cast down what is in your hand, and it will swallow up all their sham creation;[42] for they are mere tricks of a magician; and a magician can never succeed, howsoever skilled he may be." Accordingly, at the end of the encounter, all the magicians were cast down to prostration[43] and they cried out, "We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses."[44]

قَالَ ءَامَنتُمْ لَهُۥ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى
عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحْرَ ۖ فَلَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ
فِى جُذُوعِ ٱلنَّخْلِ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ أَيُّنَآ أَشَدُّ عَذَابًا وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿٧١﴾

[71] Pharaoh said, "Have you believed in him before I gave you permission? Obviously, he is your master who has taught you sorcery.[45] Well, now I will have your hands and feet cut off on alternate sides[46] and crucify you on the trunks of palm-trees[47] then you shall know whose punishment is more terrible and tasting (mine or that of Moses)."[48]

قَالُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْثِرَكَ عَلَىٰ مَا جَآءَنَا مِنَ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنَا ۖ فَٱقْضِ مَآ أَنتَ
قَاضٍ ۖ إِنَّمَا تَقْضِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَآ ﴿٧٢﴾

إِنَّآ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطَٰيَٰنَا وَمَآ أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلسِّحْرِ ۗ
وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿٧٣﴾

إِنَّهُۥ مَن يَأْتِ رَبَّهُۥ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ
﴿٧٤﴾

وَمَن يَأْتِهِۦ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ
ٱلدَّرَجَٰتُ ٱلْعُلَىٰ ﴿٧٥﴾

جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُاْ مَن
تَزَكَّىٰ ٧٦

[72-76] The magicians replied, "By Him Who has created us, we can never prefer you (to the Truth) after we have seen clear Signs.[49] Therefore you may do your worst, for at the most you can pass judgment concerning this worldly life. We have believed in our Lord so that He may pardon our errors, and forgive us the sin of sorcery which you forced us to practice. Allah is Best and Eternal." In fact,[50] for the one who comes before his Lord as a criminal, there shall be Hell, wherein he shall neither live nor die.[51] As for the one, who comes before Him as a Believer, who has done good deeds, all such people will have the highest ranks for them. They will dwell for ever in the evergreen Gardens beneath which canals flow. Such is the reward of the one who adopts purity.

وَلَقَدۡ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنۡ أَسۡرِ بِعِبَادِي فَٱضۡرِبۡ لَهُمۡ طَرِيقٗا فِي ٱلۡبَحۡرِ
يَبَسٗا لَّا تَخَٰفُ دَرَكٗا وَلَا تَخۡشَىٰ ٧٧

[77] We[52] sent this Revelation to Moses: "Set forth with My servants during the night and make for them a dry path across the sea.[53] Have no fear of being overtaken nor be afraid (while passing through the sea)."

فَأَتۡبَعَهُمۡ فِرۡعَوۡنُ بِجُنُودِهِۦ فَغَشِيَهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡيَمِّ مَا غَشِيَهُمۡ ٧٨

وَأَضَلَّ فِرۡعَوۡنُ قَوۡمَهُۥ وَمَا هَدَىٰ ٧٩

[78-79] Pharaoh pursued them with his hosts but the sea overwhelmed them completely.[54] Pharaoh had misled his people and had not guided them aright.[55]

يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ قَدۡ أَنجَيۡنَٰكُم مِّنۡ عَدُوِّكُمۡ وَوَٰعَدۡنَٰكُمۡ جَانِبَ
ٱلطُّورِ ٱلۡأَيۡمَنَ وَنَزَّلۡنَا عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡمَنَّ وَٱلسَّلۡوَىٰ ﴿٨٠﴾

كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقۡنَٰكُمۡ وَلَا تَطۡغَواْ فِيهِ فَيَحِلَّ عَلَيۡكُمۡ غَضَبِي ۖ
وَمَن يَحۡلِلۡ عَلَيۡهِ غَضَبِي فَقَدۡ هَوَىٰ ﴿٨١﴾

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٞ لِّمَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا ثُمَّ ٱهۡتَدَىٰ ﴿٨٢﴾

[80-82] O children of Israel,[56] We rescued you from your enemy and fixed a time for your attendance on the right side of Tur,[57] [58] and sent down manna and salva to you.[59] Eat of the pure provision We have given you and do not transgress after this; otherwise My wrath will visit you. And he who is visited by My wrath is bound to perish except the one who repents and believes and does righteous deeds and then follows the straight path, for I am very forgiving for such a one.[60]

۞وَمَآ أَعۡجَلَكَ عَن قَوۡمِكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٨٣﴾

[83] "And Moses,[61] what has hastened you to come here before your people?"[62]

قَالَ هُمۡ أُوْلَآءِ عَلَىٰٓ أَثَرِي وَعَجِلۡتُ إِلَيۡكَ رَبِّ لِتَرۡضَىٰ ﴿٨٤﴾

قَالَ فَإِنَّا قَدْ فَتَنَّا قَوْمَكَ مِنۢ بَعْدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ ٱلسَّامِرِىُّ ﴿٨٥﴾

[84-85] He said, “They are just coming behind me: I have hastened to come before Thee, O my Lord, so that Thou mayst be pleased with me.” He said, “Well, listen! We put your people to a trial after you and the Samiri[63] has misled them.”

فَرَجَعَ مُوسَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ غَضْبَٰنَ أَسِفًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ
أَلَمْ يَعِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ وَعْدًا حَسَنًا ۚ أَفَطَالَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْعَهْدُ أَمْ أَرَدتُّمْ
أَن يَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُم مَّوْعِدِى ﴿٨٦﴾

[86] Moses returned to his people in a state of anger and grief. Reaching there, he said, "O my people, did not your Lord make good promises with you?[64] Had a long time passed since those promises were fulfilled?[65] Or did you want Allah's wrath to come down upon you that you went against your Covenant with me?"[66]

قَالُوا۟ مَآ أَخْلَفْنَا مَوْعِدَكَ بِمَلْكِنَا وَلَٰكِنَّا حُمِّلْنَآ أَوْزَارًا
مِّن زِينَةِ ٱلْقَوْمِ فَقَذَفْنَٰهَا فَكَذَٰلِكَ أَلْقَى ٱلسَّامِرِىُّ ﴿٨٧﴾

فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُۥ خُوَارٌ فَقَالُوا۟ هَٰذَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ وَإِلَٰهُ مُوسَىٰ
فَنَسِىَ ﴿٨٨﴾

أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَلَّا يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَوْلًا وَلَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ﴿٨٩﴾

[87-89] They answered, "We did not go against the Covenant with you of our own accord; it so happened that we felt burdened with the ornaments of the people and we merely threw them down.[67] Then[68] the Samiri also put down something like these and forged the shape of a calf which lowed like an ox. Then the people cried out, “This is your god and the god of Moses. Moses has forgotten it.” Did they not see that it did not respond to their prayer nor had it any power to hurt and benefit them?

وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لَهُمْ هَٰرُونُ مِن قَبْلُ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنَّمَا فُتِنتُم بِهِۦ ۖ
وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى وَأَطِيعُوٓا۟ أَمْرِى ﴿٩٠﴾

قَالُوا۟ لَن نَّبْرَحَ عَلَيْهِ عَٰكِفِينَ حَتَّىٰ يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ ﴿٩١﴾

[90-91] Aaron had already warned the people, saying, "O people, you have been involved in mischief by this (calf) In fact, your Lord is Rahman, so follow me and submit to me." But they replied, "We will go on worshiping it till Moses comes back to us."[69]

قَالَ يَٰهَٰرُونُ مَا مَنَعَكَ إِذْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ ضَلُّوٓا۟ ﴿٩٢﴾

أَلَّا تَتَّبِعَنِ ۖ أَفَعَصَيْتَ أَمْرِى ﴿٩٣﴾

[92-93] (After rebuking the people, Moses turned to Aaron) and said,"O Aaron, what prevented you from following my way when you saw that they were going astray? What, did you disobey my command?"[70]

قَالَ يَبْنَؤُمَّ لَا تَأْخُذْ بِلِحْيَتِى وَلَا بِرَأْسِىٓ ۖ إِنِّى خَشِيتُ أَن تَقُولَ فَرَّقْتَ بَيْنَ
بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَلَمْ تَرْقُبْ قَوْلِى ﴿٩٤﴾

[94] Aaron said, “O son of my mother,do not seize me by my beard nor pull the hair of my head.[71] I was afraid that you might say on your return, “You sowed discord among the Israelites and did not pay due heed to my words!”[72]

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكَ يَٰسَٰمِرِىُّ ﴿٩٥﴾

[95] (Then Moses turned to Samiri) and said, "O Samiri, what have you to say about the matter?"

قَالَ بَصُرْتُ بِمَا لَمْ يَبْصُرُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَقَبَضْتُ قَبْضَةً مِّنْ أَثَرِ ٱلرَّسُولِ فَنَبَذْتُهَا
وَكَذَٰلِكَ سَوَّلَتْ لِى نَفْسِى ﴿٩٦﴾

[96] He replied, "I saw what the people did not see: so I took a handful of dust from the footprints of the Messenger, and sprinkled it (on the calf), for so did my soul prompt me."[73]

قَالَ فَٱذْهَبْ فَإِنَّ لَكَ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ أَن تَقُولَ لَا مِسَاسَ ۖ وَإِنَّ لَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَّن
تُخْلَفَهُۥ ۖ وَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِكَ ٱلَّذِى ظَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا ۖ لَّنُحَرِّقَنَّهُۥ ثُمَّ
لَنَنسِفَنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ نَسْفًا ﴿٩٧﴾

[97] Moses said, “Well, get away! now you shall have to say throughout your life: “Touch me not”[74] And there is an appointed time for your reckoning which is inevitable. And just have a look at your god which you cherished so

much: now We will burn it and shatter it and cast the ashes into the sea.”

إِنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴿٩٨﴾

[98] O people, your God is Allah alone Who has no other god beside Him: His knowledge embraces everything.

كَذَٰلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ مَا قَدْ سَبَقَ ۚ وَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَٰكَ مِن لَّدُنَّا ذِكْرًا ﴿٩٩﴾

مَّنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَحْمِلُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وِزْرًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهِ ۖ وَسَآءَ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ حِمْلًا ﴿١٠١﴾

يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِى ٱلصُّورِ ۚ وَنَحْشُرُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ زُرْقًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

يَتَخَٰفَتُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا عَشْرًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

نَّحۡنُ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذۡ يَقُولُ أَمۡثَلُهُمۡ طَرِيقَةً إِن لَّبِثۡتُمۡ إِلَّا يَوۡمٗا ﴿١٠٤﴾

وَيَسۡـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلۡجِبَالِ فَقُلۡ يَنسِفُهَا رَبِّي نَسۡفٗا ﴿١٠٥﴾

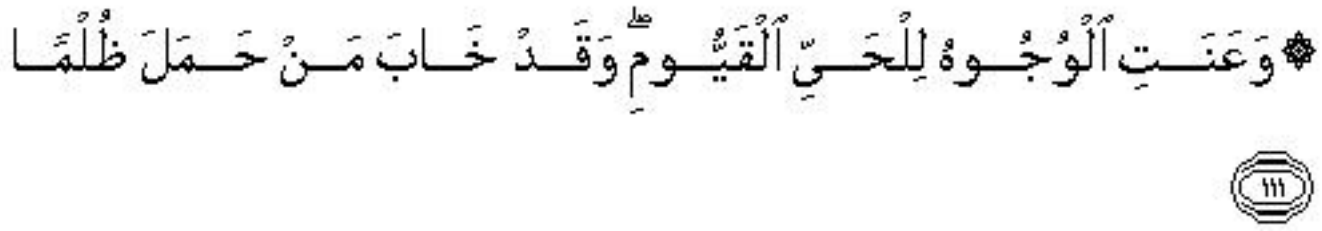
فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعٗا صَفۡصَفٗا ﴿١٠٦﴾

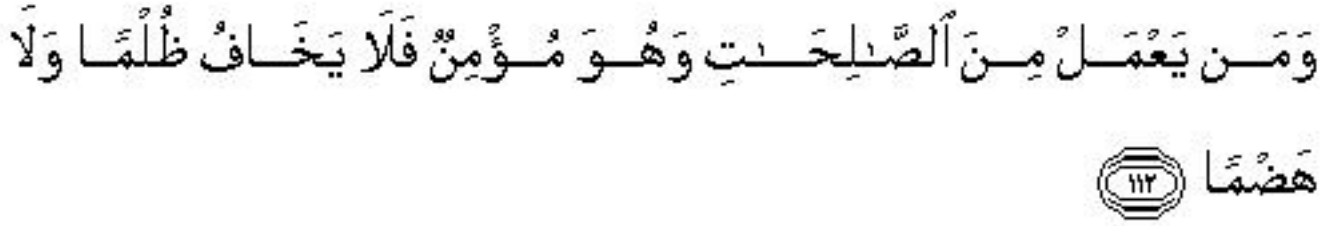
لَّا تَرَىٰ فِيهَا عِوَجٗا وَلَآ أَمۡتٗا ﴿١٠٧﴾

يَوۡمَئِذٖ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلدَّاعِيَ لَا عِوَجَ لَهُۥۖ وَخَشَعَتِ ٱلۡأَصۡوَاتُ لِلرَّحۡمَٰنِ فَلَا تَسۡمَعُ إِلَّا هَمۡسٗا ﴿١٠٨﴾

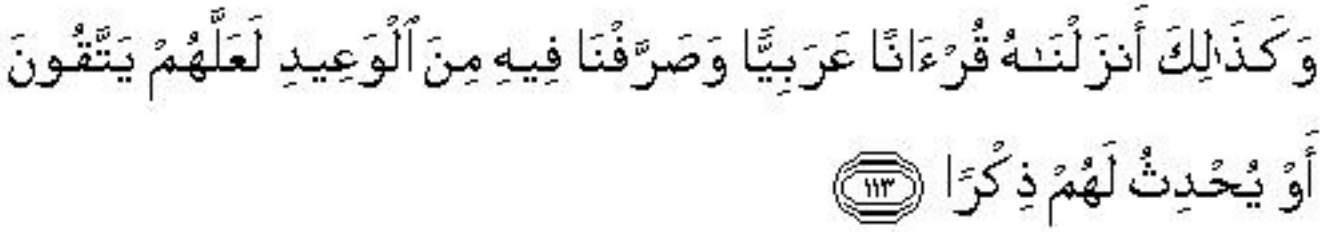
يَوۡمَئِذٖ لَّا تَنفَعُ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ إِلَّا مَنۡ أَذِنَ لَهُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ وَرَضِيَ لَهُۥ قَوۡلٗا ﴿١٠٩﴾

يَعۡلَمُ مَا بَيۡنَ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَمَا خَلۡفَهُمۡ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِهِۦ عِلۡمٗا ﴿١١٠﴾





[99-112] O Muhammad,[75] thus do We relate to you the history of the past events, and We have given you an "Admonition" from Our Own Self.[76] Whoso will turn away from it, he shall bear a heavy burden of sin on the Day of Resurrection; and all such people shall always remain under its heavy burden, and it will be a very heavy responsibility indeed that they shall have to bear on the Day of Resurrection.[77] On that Day, when the Trumpet will be blown[78] and We will muster the criminals while their eyes shall be dimmed (with terror),[79] they will whisper to one another, "You hardly stayed for ten days on the Earth."[80] We know full well[81] what they will be talking; (We also know that) at that time the most careful estimator among them will say, "No, your life on the Earth was but for a day."[82] They ask you, "Well, where will the mountains go on that Day?" Say to them, "My Lord will reduce them to fine dust and scatter it away. He will turn the Earth into an empty level plain, wherein you will neither see any curve nor crease."[83] On that Day the people will come straight to the call of the summoner; no one will dare show any haughtiness, and all the voices will be hushed before the Merciful and you will hear nothing but a whispering murmur.[84] On that Day no intercession shall avail save his whom the Merciful may allow to intercede and be pleased to give him a hearing.[85] He is fully aware of all that is before the people and of all that is behind them but others do not have full knowledge of it.[86] The people will hang their heads with awe before the Living One, the Eternal. Loser shall be the one who will be carrying the burden of the sin of an iniquity, but whoso does righteous deeds and is a Believer as well, he shall have no fear of any injustice nor shall he be deprived of his rights.[87]



[113] And, O Muhammad, thus have We sent this down as an Arabic Qur'an[88] and have given therein warnings in

various ways, perhaps these people may be saved from perverseness or that this may help arouse understanding in them.[89]

فَتَعَـٰلَى ٱللَّـهُ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْحَـقُّ ۗ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِٱلْقُرْءَانِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يُقْضَىٰٓ
إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُۥ ۖ وَقُل رَّبِّ زِدْنِى عِلْمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

[114] So, high and exalted is Allah, the True King.[90]

And see that you do not hasten to recite the Qur'an before its revelation is completed to you, and pray, "O my Lord, give me more of knowledge."[91]

وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِىَ وَلَمْ
نَجِدْ لَهُۥ عَزْمًا ﴿١١٥﴾

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ ﴿١١٦﴾

فَقُلْنَا يَـٰٓـَٔادَمُ إِنَّ هَـٰذَا عَدُوٌّ لَّكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ
فَتَشْقَىٰٓ ﴿١١٧﴾

إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَىٰ ﴿١١٨﴾

وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تَضْحَىٰ ﴿١١٩﴾

فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ ٱلْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ ﴿١٢٠﴾

[115-120] We[92] gave a command to Adam before this,[93] but he forgot it, and We did not find firmness of purpose in him:[94] Recall to mind the tithe when We said to the angels: "Bow yourselves to Adam;" they all bowed down except Iblis, who refused. At this, We said to Adam,[95] "He is an enemy to you and to your wife.[96] Be on your guard lest he should have you expelled from the Garden[97] and you find yourself in great distress. For here you have quite a few facilities: you neither starve nor remain naked nor suffer from thirst nor from sun."[98] But Satan seduced him,[99] saying "O Adam, should I show you the tree which gives eternal life and everlasting kingdom?"[100]

فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۚ وَعَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ رَبَّهُۥ فَغَوَىٰ ﴿١٢١﴾

ثُمَّ ٱجْتَبَٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ ﴿١٢٢﴾

قَالَ ٱهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًۢا ۖ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ ﴿١٢٣﴾



[121-127] At last, both of them (Adam and his wife) ate of the fruit (of the forbidden tree). As a result thereof, the nakedness of each appeared before the other, and they began to cover themselves up with leaves from the Garden.[101] Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray from the right way.[102] Afterwards his Lord chose him[103] and accepted his repentance and gave him Guidance, saying,[104] "Get down from here both of you (Man and Satan): you will remain enemies to each ether. After this, if you receive Guidance from Me; whoso will follow that Guidance, he will neither go astray nor be involved in wretchedness, and whoso will turn away from My Admonition, he shall have a wretched life[105] in the world, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection."[106] He will say, "Lord, why have you raised me blind here, whereas I was blessed with sight in the world ?" Allah will say, "Yes; you forgot Our Revelations when they came to you, (as if you were blind), so you are being forgotten today"[107] This is how We recompense (in this world)[108] those who transgress the bounds and do not believe in the Revelations of their Lord.

And the torment of the Hereafter is more terrible and more lasting.

أَفَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ يَمْشُونَ فِى مَسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ
فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلنُّهَىٰ ﴿١٢٨﴾

[128] Have these people[109] not received any guidance (from this lesson of history) that We have destroyed before them many a generation in whose (ruined) habitations they move about today? In fact, there are many Signs in this for sagacious people.[110]

وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ لَكَانَ لِزَامًا وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ﴿١٢٩﴾

فَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ
ٱلشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا ۖ وَمِنْ ءَانَآئِ ٱلَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ ٱلنَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ
تَرْضَىٰ ﴿١٣٠﴾

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿١٣١﴾

وَأۡمُرۡ أَهۡلَكَ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱصۡطَبِرۡ عَلَيۡهَاۖ لَا نَسۡـَٔلُكَ رِزۡقٗاۖ نَّحۡنُ نَرۡزُقُكَۗ
وَٱلۡعَٰقِبَةُ لِلتَّقۡوَىٰ ١٣٢

[129-132] Had not a decree been fore-ordained by your Lord and a term for respite been appointed, judgment on them would have been passed now immediately. Therefore O Muhammad, endure what they say and glorify your Lord with His praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting, and glorify Him during the hours of the night and at the extremes of the day:[111] perhaps you may feel satisfied.[112] And do not cast an envious look at the worldly property We have bestowed on different kinds of people, for We have given them all that to put them to trial, and the lawful provision[113] of your Lord is better and more lasting: enjoin Salat on the members of your family[114] and yourself also observe it strictly. We do not ask any provision of you, for it is We Ourself Who give you provision. And the ultimate good is for piety.[115]

وَقَالُواْ لَوۡلَا يَأۡتِينَا بِـَٔايَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦٓۚ أَوَلَمۡ تَأۡتِهِم بَيِّنَةُ مَا فِي ٱلصُّحُفِ ٱلۡأُولَىٰ
١٣٣

وَلَوۡ أَنَّآ أَهۡلَكۡنَٰهُم بِعَذَابٖ مِّن قَبۡلِهِۦ لَقَالُواْ رَبَّنَا لَوۡلَآ أَرۡسَلۡتَ إِلَيۡنَا رَسُولٗا
فَنَتَّبِعَ ءَايَٰتِكَ مِن قَبۡلِ أَن نَّذِلَّ وَنَخۡزَىٰ ١٣٤

قُلۡ كُلّٞ مُّتَرَبِّصٞ فَتَرَبَّصُواْۖ فَسَتَعۡلَمُونَ مَنۡ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلصِّرَٰطِ ٱلسَّوِيِّ وَمَنِ
ٱهۡتَدَىٰ ١٣٥

[133-135] They say, "Why does he not bring us a Sign from his Lord?" Has not a clear Sign come to them

containing all the teachings of the former Scriptures?[116] Had We destroyed them with a scourge before its coming, these very people would have said, "Our Lord, why did you not send a Messenger to us so that we would have followed Your Revelations before we were humiliated and disgraced?" O. Muhammad say to them, "Everyone is waiting for the ultimate result;[117] so you may also wait, for you will soon come to know who are following the straight path and who are rightly guided."

1This verse makes plain the meaning of the previous one. The object of the Revelation of the Qur'an is riot to make the Holy Prophet do something impossible and to put him to unnecessary distress by demanding from him to imbue the hearts of the obdurate people with Faith, but to admonish those people who have fear of Allah. Therefore the Holy Prophet should not waste his efforts on those people who have no fear of God left in them, and who do not bother at all about what is Truth and what is falsehood.

2That is, "After creating the universe, He is ruling over it and conducting all the affairs of its management."

3That 'is, "You need not complain to Allah in a loud voice against the persecution from which you and your companions are suffering and the mischievous machinations your enemies are devising to defeat you for Allah is fully aware of all those things, and He hears even the complaints you cherish in your hearts."

4That is, "He possesses all the excellent attributes and characteristics."

5This happened when Prophet Moses was returning to Egypt after passing several years in exile in Midian, along with his wife whom he had married there. According to the early part of his history, which has been related in Surah XXVIII (Al-Qasas), an Egyptian had been killed by Prophet Moses; so he had to leave Egypt in order to escape arrest and had taken refuge in Midian.

6It appears that this happened during a night of winter, when Prophet Moses was passing through the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula. When he saw a fire at a distance, he went towards it in the hope that he might get some of it to keep his wife and children warm during the night, or at least get some guidance concerning the direction of his journey. But instead of this it was his good fortune that he found the guidance to the Right Way.

7Probably, it is because of this that the Jews do not say their prayers with their shoes on. The Holy Prophet, however, removed this misunderstanding, saying, "Act in contrast to the practice of the Jews who do not say their prayers with their shoes or leather socks on." (Abu Da'ud). It does not, however, mean that one must say one's prayers with the shoes on, but it is merely to make it lawful to say prayers with shoes on. This is confirmed by another tradition, related by Abu Da'ud from `Amar bin `As, that he had seen the Holy Prophet saying his prayer both with and without the shoes.

There are other traditions also to this effect but it should also be kept in mind that there were no carpets, mats, etc. in the mosques in those days, not even in the Holy Prophet's Mosque. Therefore it would be improper to go with shoes on into the mosques of today which have carpets, mats, etc. However, one may say one's prayer on grassy plots or open ground with shoes on.

8In general, the commentators are of the opinion that Tuwa was the name of the valley, but according to some it means, "The valley that had been made sacred for the time being."

9This is the real object of Salat. It has been prescribed to remind people that they should not become neglectful of Allah by worldly diversions and that they should remember that man is not an unbridled free being but a servant of Allah. Salat has been prescribed five times a day to remind man of Allah's presence.

Some people are of the opinion that it means: "Establish Salat, so that I may remember you."

Incidentally, according to this verse, if one forgets to offer a prayer in time, one should offer it when one recollects it. This is also supported by a tradition related by Hadrat Anas: "If one forgets to offer a certain prayer at the proper time, he should offer it whenever he recollects this; for there is no other expiation for this omission." (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmed). There is another tradition related by Abu Hurairah to the same effect. It was inquired from the Holy Prophet: "What should we do if we remained asleep during the time of prayer?" The Holy Prophet said, "There is no sin if one remained asleep. The sin is that one should neglect one's prayer intentionally while awake. Therefore if one forgets to offer a prayer or remained asleep one should offer that prayer on remembering it or on awaking." (Tirmizi, Nasa'i, Abu Da'ud).

10After Tauhid the second thing that was revealed to all the Prophets was the reality of the "Hereafter", and they were appointed to impart its knowledge to their peoples. Here its object Gas also been stated. The Hour of Resurrection is destined to come so that every one should get the recompense in the Hereafter of what one did in this world, and that Hour has been kept secret to fulfill the requirement of the trial. For the one who believes in the Hereafter will always be on his guard against any deviation from the Right Way, and the one who does not believe in the coming of that Hour will remain engaged in other things, for he will think that he did not see any sign of the coming of the Hour.

11This question was not asked for the sake of getting any information, for Allah knew that Moses held a staff in his hand. The question was posed with a view to impressing upon him the fact that it was a staff so that he might be mentally prepared to see the miracle which was going to be performed with it.

12Prophet Moses deliberately prolonged his answer and did not stop at: "It is my staff". This was because he naturally wanted to prolong the dialogue to make the privilege meeting last longer.

13That is, "Your hand will shine brightly like the sun, but it will not cause any hurt to you. " It is strange that the Bible interprets this miracle, saying that 'his hand was leprous as snow but it was turned again as his other flesh'. The Talmud also interprets the miracle in the same way and adds that this was a miracle which was meant for Pharaoh who was suffering from leprosy. It is a pity that the same interpretation has been adopted by our own commentators, though the correct interpretation is the one that has been adopted by us, and many former commentators. Obviously, it is bad taste to attribute to a Prophet the repugnant miracle of leprosy and that, too, before a king in his court.

14That is, Fill my heart with the courage that may enable me to perform the obligations connected with the great Mission of a Messenger, and give me the confidence for its fulfillment. Prophet Moses prayed for this because he realized the grave responsibilities of the great Mission.

15Prophet Moses prayed to Allah for this because he was conscious that he was not a fluent speaker but was slow of speech. He also knew that as a Messenger he would have to be fluent in order to impress Pharaoh and his courtiers. This is confirmed by the Bible (Exodus 4: 10) but the Talmud gives a strange explanation for this impediment in his speech. According to it, when he was a child he burnt his tongue with a live coal to escape punishment from Pharaoh whose crown he had taken off from his head and put it on his own head. The same story has been adopted by many of our commentators though it is absurd on the face of it. Our interpretation is also confirmed by the Qur'an. The tact is, that at first he was not a fluent speaker and Pharaoh had also taunted him on this impediment (XLIII: 52). Prophet Moses realized the same for he said, "My brother Aaron is more fluent than I, so send him with me as a helper, so that he may support me (with his fluent speech)." (XXVIII: 34). Afterwards this impediment in his speech was removed and he was able to deliver very fluent speeches. This tray be testified by his speeches which have been cited both in the Bible and in the Qur'an for they are masterpieces of eloquence and rhetoric.

Above all, it does not stand to reason that Allah should appoint a lisper or a stammerer or a stutterer as His Messenger. That is why the Messengers have always been the best of mankind in regard to their appearance, personality and capabilities for they had to be most impressive both in their appearance and conduct, so that they could not be made the target of ridicule and contempt by the people because of such personal defects as stammering or stuttering.

16Prophet Aaron was three years older than Prophet Moses (Exodus7:7)

17Allah recounts the favors He had shown to Prophet Moses since his birth in order to impress on him the fact that he had been brought up under Divine care right from his birth for the purpose of appointing him as a Messenger. Here mere references have been made but in Surah XXVIII (Al-Qasas) details of the favors have been given.

18The only two ways of bringing a man to the Right Way are: (1) To convince him by argument and

admonition, or (2) to warn him of the consequences of deviation.

18aIt appears that they implored Allah thus before going before Pharaoh when Prophet Moses had reached Egypt and Aaron had joined him in the propagation of the Mission.

19A comparative study of this incident as given in the Bible and the Talmud will show that the Qur'an does not copy the stories from these books, but gives its own version in order to portray the Messengers in their true glory and dignity. According to the Bible, when God said to Moses that He would send him to Pharaoh, Moses replied, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3: 11). God persuaded and encouraged Moses by giving him Signs but he was still reluctant and said, "O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." (Exodus 4: 13). And the Talmud goes even further than this and says that there was an argument between God and Moses for seven days that he should become a Prophet but Moses did not accept the offer. At this God was angry with him and so made his brother Aaron a partner in his Prophethood. Moreover, He deprived the descendants of Moses of the office of priesthood and bestowed it on the descendants of Aaron. These two versions depict Allah to be suffering from human weaknesses and Prophet Moses from inferiority complex.

20Here the details have been omitted. These have been given in VII: 103-108, XXVI: 10-33, XXVIII: 28-40, LXXIX: 15-25.

As regards the necessary information about Pharaoh, see E.N. 85 of Chapter VII.

21Pharaoh addressed Prophet Moses because he was, in regard to Prophethood, the senior of the two. It is also possible that he deliberately addressed him in order to exploit his impediment in speech, and ignored Prophet Aaron, who was more fluent.

As regards the implication of this question of Pharaoh, he meant to say, "YOU say that you have brought a Message from my Lord to me. Who is that Lord? You should know that I am the Lord of Egypt and the people of Egypt" . In regard to this claim of his, see LXXIX: 24, XLIII: 51, XXVIII: 38 and XXVI: 29.

It may also be noted that by this claim Pharaoh did not mean to say that he was the sole deity of his people nor did it mean that none other was worshiped in Egypt. As a matter of fact, he himself based his right of sovereignty on his claim of being the incarnation of the sun god. And we also learn from the history of Egypt that there were many other gods and goddesses. In fact, what he claimed was that he was politically the Lord of not only Egypt but also of the whole of mankind theoretically. Therefore, he would not acknowledge that there was any supreme sovereign over him whose delegate might bring an order to him and demand its obedience from him.

22That is, "We acknowledge Him alone as our Lord in every sense: He is our Sustainer, our Maker, our Master, our Sovereign and is Supreme in everything, and there is no other lord in any sense but He."

23This concise sentence needs serious attention. It means that it is Allah alone Who has created everything and given it its distinctive structure, form, capabilities, characteristics, etc.

(1) For instance, man has been given the hands and feet which are given the most appropriate structure that was needed for their right functioning.

(2) A human being, an animal, a plant, mineral and the like, air, water and light-everything has been given that particular form which was needed for its right functioning in the universe.

(3) Then He has guided everything aright to function properly. It is He Who has taught everything the way to fulfil that object for which it has been created. He has taught the ear to hear and the eye to see; the fish to swim and the swallow to fly; the earth to grow vegetation and the tree to blossom and bear fruit. In short, He is not only the Creator of everything but also its Guide and Teacher.

Prophet Moses employed this concise and meaningful sentence to convey the Message to Pharaoh and his people. He not only gave a suitable reply to Pharaoh as to who his Lord was, but also told him why He was his Lord, and how there was no other lord than He. The argument implied in it was this: As Pharaoh and every one of his subjects was obliged to Allah for his human form and could trot live even for a moment without the functioning of the different parts of his body which were performing their functions in accordance with the guidance of Allah, so Pharaoh's claim that he was the lord of the people was absurd, and its acknowledgment by his people that he was their Lord, a folly.

Besides this, Prophet Moses also hinted at the need of Prophethood which was denied by Pharaoh. When Allah guides everything in the universe, He has also to fulfill the need of the guidance of mankind. Whereas the guidance of. the animals and birds has been provided by instinct, the guidance of rational human beings has been provided by sending Messengers who appealed to them by rational arguments.

24The question posed by Pharaoh was very subtle. He meant to say, "If there is no other lord than the One Who has given a distinctive form to everyone, then what will be the position of our forefathers who had been worshiping other deities since centuries? Were all those people in error? Did all of them deserve torment'? Did they all lack common sense?" Thus Pharaoh perhaps wanted to give vent to his anger against Prophet Moses for showing disrespect to his forefathers. At the same time he also wanted to incite his courtiers and the common people of Egypt against the Message of Prophet Moses. And this trick has always been used against the people who propagate the Truth and has always proved very effective to incite those people who lack common sense. This same trick has been mentioned here for it was being employed at the very time against the Holy Prophet by the people of Makkah.

25This answer is full of wisdom. If Prophet Moses had said, "Yes, they all lacked common sense and had gone astray and would become the fuel of Hell", this answer, though true, would have served the very purpose Pharaoh had in mind in putting the question. But the answer given by the Prophet was true and it frustrated the trick of Pharaoh as well. His answer was to this effect: "Well, those people have now gone before their Lord, and I have no means of judging their deeds and intentions. However, their whole record is safe and secure with Allah, and nothing can escape Him. Allah alone knows how to deal with them. What concerns you and me is our own position and attitude to life. We should be more concerned about our own end than of those who have already passed away into Allah's presence."

26It is quite obvious that vv, 53-55 are an addition by Allah to the foregoing answer by Prophet Moses. There are other instances of this in the Qur'an that Allah added a few sentences to the speech of someone by way of admonition. Moreover, it is connected not only with the preceding verse but also with the whole reply of Prophet Moses (vv. 50-52).

27That is, "Those, who use their common sense in their search for the Truth, find a way to the Reality by the help of these Signs, which clearly show that the universe has One Lord Who alone is sustaining it, and there is no room here for any other lord."

28That is, Every man has to pass through three stages: (1) from birth to death, (2) from death to Resurrection, and (3) from the Day of Resurrection to Eternity. According to this verse, all the three stages will take place on this Earth.

29"Signs" comprised those arguments which were based on natural phenomena and human life and those miracles which were given to Prophet Moses. These arguments are contained in the speeches of Prophet Moses which he delivered before Pharaoh, and the miracles which he showed and are mentioned at several places in the Qur'an.

30Here by sorcery are meant the miracles of the staff and the shining hand, which according to the details given in Chapters VII and XXVI, were shown to Pharaoh by Prophet Moses in his first visit to his court. On seeing these miracles Pharaoh was so upset that he cried out, "Have you come to drive us out of .our country by the power of your sorcery? although he knew that it had never happened in history that a magician had conquered a country by the power of sorcery. Moreover, there were hundreds of magicians in his own country, who used to show their feats to earn rewards and prizes. Accordingly, Pharaoh's statement that "you are a sorcerer" on the one hand, and his apprehension that "you want to snatch my kingdom" on the other, were a clear indication of his perturbed mind: In fact, Pharaoh had come to understand that the welt-reasoned speech of Moses and his miracles were bound to influence not only his courtiers, but also the common people and accordingly he tried to play upon their prejudices through falsehood and treachery. He did not admit that it was a miracle, but called it sorcery. He wanted to create an impression that any sorcerer of his empire could turn a staff into a serpent. He also incited

the people, saying: "Look! he says that your forefathers were on the wrong way and deserved perdition. So beware of him! He is not a Prophet. He simply aspires for power. He wants that the Israelites should again capture power here like the times of Joseph and wrest the reigns of government from the Copts." Pharaoh, in fact, wanted to suppress the invitation to the Truth through such devices. (For details please see E.N.'s 87 to 89 of Chapter VII; E.N. 75 of Chapter X).

31The object of Pharaoh was this: "Once the sorcerers are able to transform the staffs and ropes into serpents, the entire effect of the miracle performed by Moses would disappear from the people's minds. That was exactly to Moses' advantage, who suggested that it was no good fixing an ordinary day or place for the purpose. The Day of the Feast was at hand. People would flock on that occasion from all corners of the empire. Therefore, the encounter should be held in the open so that all might witness it, and in the day time so that every one should be able to see it clearly."

32Pharaoh and his courtiers considered the coming encounter as a decisive one as far as their own future was concerned and, therefore, they attached the utmost importance to it. Courtiers were sent throughout the country to muster round all the magicians wherever available. People were especially encouraged to come in the largest numbers to witness the magic skills so as to keep them immune From the awe inspired by the staff of Moses. It was openly said that the fate of their religion hinged on the skill of their magicians: their religion could survive only if they won; otherwise the religion of Moses would have its sway (see XXVI: 34-51).

Here one should bear in mind the fact that the religion of the royal family and the elite of Egypt was much different from that of the common people. They had separate gods and temples and different creeds and concepts about the life after death. They also differed in the practice of religion as well as in the ideologies. (Toynbee: A Study of History: Somervell's Abridgment Vols. I-VI, pp. 31-32). Moreover, there were sufficiently strong pockets of the population, who under the influence of various religious upheavals, were prone to prefer Monotheism to a creed of polytheism. Besides this, there was also a fairly large element of the worshipers of One God for the Israelites and their fellow believers were at least ten per cent of the total population. Pharaoh also remembered that about 150 years earlier a religious revolution had been brought about by Pharaoh Amenophis IV or Akhenaton (1377-1360 B.C.) by military force, which had abolished all deities except Aton, a single, universal god, which was worshiped by the king and his family. Though this religious revolution had been reversed later by another king, yet its influence retrained, and Pharaoh dreaded that Moses might bring about yet another revolution.

33The "adversaries" whom Prophet Moses addressed were Pharaoh and his courtiers who had dubbed him as a "sorcerer", and not the common people, who had yet to see the encounter between him and the magicians.

34"The falsehoods" were that they had dubbed Allah's Messenger as a "sorcerer" and his miracles as "a piece of sorcery."

35This shows that those people felt in their hearts that their position was weak and knew that the miracle shown by Prophet Moses was not a piece of magic. Therefore, they had come for the encounter with hesitation and fear. But when the timely, sudden warning of Prophet Moses shook them to the core, they began to debate the wisdom of holding the encounter on the Feast Day in an open place in the broad day light. For they thought that if they were defeated in the presence of the common people, all would come to know of the difference between magic and a miracle and they would lose the battle once for all.

36Those who were of this view must have been a few fanatics of Pharaoh's party who were prepared to go to any extent to oppose Prophet Moses. Those hot-headed people must have been preparing the public for a determined encounter, while the saner and experienced among them must have been advising caution and restraint.

37Probably those people based their argument on two things:

(1) If their magicians were also able to turn their staffs into serpents, it would be a clear proof that Moses too was a sorcerer.

(2) If, on the other hand, Moses won, the rulers would lose their country, and their ideal way of life, which reflected their culture, their arts, their civilization, their recreations, etc. would automatically come to an end. Therefore they should do all they could to defeat Moses.

38They also urged them to present a united front and not to show their differences on the very occasion of the encounter. For, they argued, any hesitation and secret consultation before the very eyes of the public would show that they did not consider themselves to be in the right.

39That confidence was subsequently restored among Pharaoh's party by the speech of the head-strong people, and the magicians were asked to come iota the field for the encounter, has been omitted.

40In V11: 116, it was stated: "When they threw down their devices they bewitched the eyes of the people and filled their hearts with terror." Here it is stated that it was not the common people alone who were terrified by their magic but Prophet Moses too suffered from its effect. He not only seemed to see that the staffs and cords were running about like serpents but he also felt a dread of them.

41It appears that no sooner did Prophet Moses say, "Cast down", than the magicians immediately cast their staffs and cords and it seemed as if hundreds of serpents were running towards him, and he instinctively felt a dread of them. And there is nothing strange in this because a Prophet is after all a human being. Besides this, it is also possible that Prophet Moses apprehended that the demonstration of the magic might create a misunderstanding among the people about his miracle.

This is also a proof that a Prophet too can be influenced by magic to a certain extent like the common people, though magicians have no power to produce any effect on his Prophethood or interfere with Revelation, or misguide hint. Therefore there is no reason why one should consider as false those traditions in which it has been stated that the Holy Prophet suffered temporarily from the effect of magic.

42This is capable of two interpretations:

(1) the staff, which was turned into a dragon by a miracle, actually swallowed up all the staffs and cords which had been trade to appear as serpents.

(2) The dragon of the staff did not actually swallow up the serpents of the magicians but wiped out the effect of their magic from these things and they again became ordinary cords and staffs.

We prefer the second interpretation because the wording of VII: 117 and XXVI: 45 is this: "It swallowed up their false magic", and here the wording is: "It will swallow up all their sham creation". Obviously, the staffs and cords were not their creation but the tragic which had made them appear like serpents.

43When they saw the power of the staff of Moses, they involuntarily fell prostrate as if some one had trade them do so, because they were convinced that it was a miracle and not a feat of tragic.

44This profession of faith by the magicians shows that every one was aware of the basic object of the encounter. It was not an encounter between the feats of the magicians and those of Prophet Moses, but it was to decide whether the claim of Prophet Moses that he was a Messenger of Allah was true or not. If this staff was actually turned into a dragon, it was by means of a miracle. On the other hand, Pharaoh intended to prove by the feats of his magicians that it was not a miracle but a feat of magic. Incidentally, this also shows that Pharaoh and his magicians and the common people fully understood the distinction between a miracle and a feat of magic. ,That is why when the magicians saw that it was a miracle shown by the power of Allah which had exposed their magic, they did not say that Moses was a more skillful magician, but straightway fell prostrate, saying, "We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses."

It is obvious that the defeat turned the tables on Pharaoh who had himself arranged the encounter "to expose" Prophet Moses. He had mustered all his magicians with a view to demonstrating before the public that there was nothing extraordinary in turning a staff into a serpent for this could be done by every magician. But the defeat of the magicians and their acknowledgment testified that Moses was really a Messenger of Allah and the transformation of the staff was not a feat of magic but a miracle.

45In VII : 123, it has been stated : "Indeed it was a plot you conspired in the city to deprive the rightful owners of their power." Here the same thing has been further explained, as if to say, "It is not merely a

plot between you and him but it appears that Moses is your master and leader. You conspired beforehand that you would be defeated by your master in the encounter to prove that he was a Messenger who had shown the miracle of the staff to frustrate your magic and bring about a political revolution in the country."

46That is, "Right hand and left foot or via versa."

47This was a very cruel way of punishment in ancient times. They fixed a long pole in the ground or used the trunk of a tree for this purpose. Then a piece of wood was tied across it at the top. Then the hands of the criminal were nailed on to it and he was left hanging there for hours to die a slow, painful death.

48This was the last trick played by Pharaoh to win the losing game. He held out the threat of a cruel punishment in order to coerce them to admit that there really was a conspiracy between Prophet Moses and them against the kingdom. But the fortitude and determination of the magicians turned the tables on him. The very fact that, they were ready to endure the terrible punishment proved to the world that they had sincerely believed in the Prophethood of Moses and that the charge of conspiracy was an impudent trick that had been invented as a device.

49It may also be interpreted like this: "It cannot be that we should prefer you to these plain Signs which have come before us and to that Being Who has created us."

50This is a saying of Allah, which has been added to the foregoing words of the magicians.

51This is the most terrible of all the punishments that have been mentioned in the Qur'an. The criminal will prefer death to the horrible life in Hell, but death will not come to him. He will remain in that state of agony without any hope of relief from it.

52Here the details of the events which happened during the long period of Prophet Moses' stay in Egypt have been omitted. For these please see VII: 130-147, X: 83-92, XL: 23-50 and XLIII: 46-56.

53This happened when God at last appointed a night for the exodus of the Israelites and the other Muslims from Egypt. They were asked to gather at a fixed place and set forth as a caravan. Just at the time when they reached the coast of the Red Sea Prom where they had to cross to the Sinai Peninsula, Pharaoh arrived there with a large army in their pursuit. We learn from XXVI: 61 -63 that when they were literally between the devil and the deep sea, Allah commanded Moses to smite the sea with his staff and according to this verse the sea tore asunder and stood like two high walls on both sides, leaving a dry path between them for the caravan to pass. Thus, it is quite clear and plain that it was a miracle, and not the result of a wind storm or tide, for when the water rises in this way it does not remain standing like two high walls, leaving a dry path between them. (For details see E.N. 47 of Chapter XXVI).

54According to XXVI: 64-66, Pharaoh with his hosts. followed the caravan on the dry path and they were all drowned. In II :50, it has been stated that the Israelites had reached the other shore and saw them drowning in the sea. From X: 90-92, we learn that Pharaoh professed to believe in God while he was drowning but this was rejected by God and he was told that his dead body would he preserved for the coming generations to serve as a lesson for them.

55This was a subtle warning to the disbelievers of Makkah, as if to say, "Your chiefs and leaders are leading you on the same way on which Pharaoh led his people; now you may yourselves see that he did not guide them aright."

In conclusion, it will be worth while to consider the version as given in the Bible, for this will make it plain that it is absolutely false and ridiculous to say that the Qur'an has copied these stories from the Israelite traditions. We learn from Exodus the following:

(1) According to 4: 2-5, the miracle of the staff was given to Prophet Moses, and in 4:17 he was instructed: "And thou shalt take this rod in throe hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs", but according to 7: 9, the same rod was transferred to Prophet Aaron and then it remained with him to work miracles.

(2) The first dialogue between Prophet Moses and Pharaoh has been given in Chapter 5, but there is no mention in it whatever of the Doctrine of Tauhid presented by Moses. In answer to Pharaoh's question: "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord", Moses and Aaron merely said, "The God of the Hebrews hath met with us". (5: 2-3).

(3) The encounter with the magicians has been summed up in a few sentences thus: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." (7' 8-12)

When we compare this with the version of it in the Qur'an, it becomes obvious that the description in the Bible lacks the real essence of the whole encounter, for it does not mention that the encounter took place on the Day of the Feast in the open as a result of a regular challenge, and there is no mention at all that the magicians became believers in the Lord of Moses and Aaron and remained steadfast in their faith even in face of terrible threats.

(4) According to the Qur'an, Prophet Moses demanded full freedom and liberty for the Israelites, but

according to the Bible his demand was only this: "Let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God. " (5:3)

(5) In Chapters 11 to 14, the details of the events concerning the exodus from Egypt to the drowning of Pharaoh have been given. Though these contain some useful information and details about the events which have been briefly described in the Qur'an, they contain some strange contradictions as well. For instance, in 14:15-16 the staff (rod) again comes into the hands of Prophet Moses, who is commanded: ".... lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out throe hand over the sea, and divide it; and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea." But in w. 21 -22, it is said: "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night, and made the sea dry /and, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground.' and the waters were a wall unto them, on their right hand, and on their left. " It is not clear whether the sea was divided by a miracle or by a strong "east wind" which incidentally has never been known to divide the sea into two parts leaving a dry path between them.

It will also be worth while to make a study of these events as given in the Talmud. The Talmudic account differs from the Biblical version but is nearer to the one given in the Qur'an. A comparative study of the two clearly shows that the one is based on direct Revelation from Allah and the other on centuries old oral traditions which have been handed down from one generation to the other and thus considerably tampered with. (See H. Polano: The Talmud Selections, pp. 150-154).

56The part of the story relating to their journey from the Red Sea to the toot of Mount Tur has been omitted. This has already been given in VII:138-147. It has also been stated there that the Israelites said to Moses, "O Moses, make a god also for us like the gods these people have". (See VII:138 and its E.N. 98).

57That is, on the eastern side of Tur

58According to II: 51 and VII: 142, Prophet Moses and the chiefs of the Israelites were summoned to Mount Tur for receiving the Divine Commandments on stone tablets for the guidance of the people. (See E.N. 71 of Chapter II).

59For details please see E.N. 73 of Chapter II and E.N. 119 of Chapter VII. According to the Bible, manna and salva started being provided to the Israelites when they were passing through the wilderness between Elim and Sinai. According to Exodus, manna and salva were sent down thus:

"And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel

saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat .....And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." (16: 13-15, 31).

In Numbers, the following details have been given:

"And the people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil. And when the dew fell upon the camp in the bight, the manna fell upon it." (11: 8-9).

60According to this verse (82), there are four conditions for forgiveness:

(1) Repentance: to refrain from rebellion, disobedience, shirk or disbelief.

(2) Faith: sincere belief in Allah and the Messenger and the Book and the' Hereafter.

(3) Righteous works : to do good deeds according to the instructions of Allah and His Messenger.

(4) Guidance: to follow the right way steadfastly and to refrain from straying into any wrong path.

61From here the same account is resumed that was interrupted by the parenthesis (vv. 81-82). The Israelites were told to stay on the right side of Mount Tur, and they would be given the Commandments after forty days.

62This shows that in his eagerness to see his Lord as soon as possible, Prophet Moses had left them in the way and reached the meeting place alone. For the details of that meeting the reader should see VII: 143-145. Here only that portion has been mentioned which is connected with the calf-worship by the Israelites. This has been stated here to bring home to the disbelievers of Makkah how idol-worship starts and how deeply a Prophet of Allah is concerned about this evil.

63It is obvious from the last letter `ya' that Samiri was not the proper name of the person, for this Arabic letter is always added to show a person's connection with his race or clan or place. Moreover, the prefix `al' (definite article 'the') in the original Arabic text clearly denotes that the Samiri was a particular man from among many other persons of the same race or clan or place, who had propagated (he worship of the golden calf. In fact, this does not require any further explanation than this, but this has been necessitated because many Christian missionaries and the Western Orientalists have tried to criticise the Holy Prophet and the Qur'an on this account. They say, (God forbid,) "This is a proof of the grievous ignorance of history on the part of Muhammad, the author of the Qur'an, and is one of the anachronisms

of the Qur'an." They base this absurd criticism on the assumption that this Samiri was the inhabitant of Samaria, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Israel, which was built in 925 B.C. long after this happening; then centuries after this, a generation of the Samaritans came into existence as a result of inter-marriage between the Israelites and the non-Israelites. As the Samaritans worshiped the golden calf, the critics accuse the Holy Prophet of inventing this story on the basis of mere hearsay. They say that the Holy Prophet might have heard something like this from the neighboring Jews and inserted it in the Qur'an. This is not all. They also criticize that Haman who was a courtier of Cyrus has been mentioned in the Qur'an as a minister of Pharaoh. It is a pity that these so-called scholars seem to think that in the ancient times there used to be only one person bearing one name in a clan or a place, and there was absolutely no possibility of another person or persons having the same name. They do not know, or pretend they do not know, that during the time of Prophet Abraham, a famous people known as the Sumerians inhabited 'Iraq and the neighbouring regions, and it is just possible that during the time of Prophet Moses there were some people known as the Samiris who might have migrated to Egypt from 'Iraq. Besides this, according to the Bible (1 Kings, 16: 24), Samaria itself was built on a hill which was bought from Shemer and named Samaria after him. This is a clear proof that there were people named Shemer (or Sumer) even before Samaria came into existence and it is also just possible that some clans might have been called "Samiri"

64That is, "Did not Allah fulfill the promises He made with you of showing His favors to you? For instance, He safely brought you out of Egypt and not only freed you from the slavery of your enemy but also destroyed him totally. He provided you with provisions in the desert and in the mountainous regions." It may also be translated like this: "Did not Allah make a good promise with you?" In that case, it will mean: "He made a promise that he will give you the Law and Guidance: was this not a good promise for your well being and betterment?"

65That is,"Had a long time passed since those great favors were done to you that you forgot them? Had long ages passed since you were afflicted with persecution by your enemy that you committed such a blasphemy?" It may also be translated like this : Had you to wait for a long time for the fulfillment of God's promise .that you became so impatient?" In that case, the meaning is obvious: "You had not to wait for a long time to see the fulfillment of the promise of Guidance. Therefore there was no excuse for what you did."

66This Covenant was the one which every community makes with its Prophet and promises that it will steadfastly follow the Guidance brought by him and will not worship anyone except Allah.

67This excuse was put forward by those people who were involved in the shirk fabricated by the Samiri. They meant to say, "We did not throw down the ornaments with the intention of setting up a calf nor did we know what was going to be made of these, but when the calf was brought before us, we involuntarily got involved in shirk. " The Arabic text which we have translated into: "We felt burdened with the ornaments of the people", simply means this: "The heavy ornaments which our men and women were

wearing like the Egyptians proved very burdensome to us in our wanderings in the desert and we did not know how to get rid of them for it appeared very difficult for us to travel in the desert with them." But according to the Bible these ornaments had been borrowed by every family of the Israelites from their Egyptian neighbors with this intention, "....and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters and ye shall spoil the Egyptians....and let every man borrow of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold....And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians....so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians." And that, too, on the advice of Prophet Moses, whom God Himself had instructed to do this "noble deed." (Exodus, 3: 1422, 11 : 2-3, and I 2 : 35-36).

It is a pity that some of our commentators have interpreted this verse in the light of the above traditions of the Bible. They say that the Israelites felt burdened with the weight of those ornaments which they had borrowed from their Egyptian neighbors, with the intention of carrying them away as a "spoil" bestowed by God.

We are of the opinion that the clause of the verse under discussion means this: "When the people were tired of carrying their ornaments on their bodies, they decided by mutual consultation that all the ornaments should be gathered at one place and it should be noted down how much gold and silver belonged to each of the owners. Then it should be melted into bars and rods and placed on the backs of the beasts of burden." Accordingly, they might have brought their ornaments and thrown them in the common heap.

68It is obvious from the context that the answer of the people ended with "threw them down", and Allah Himself has added the remaining story up to the end of the paragraph. It appears from this that the people including the Samiri went on bringing their ornaments and throwing them down into the heap while they were absolutely unaware of what was going to be done by the Samiri. After this the Samiri offered his services to melt it. Then he shaped it into a calf which lowed like a cow. Thus the Samiri deluded the people, saying, "This god of yours has come into being by itself for I had simply thrown the gold in the fire.

69Here the Qur'an exonerates Prophet Aaron from the sin of taking any pan in the calf-worship, but in contrast to this, the Bible makes him wholly responsible for making the golden calf and setting it up as a god. According to Exodus:

"And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at his hand, and fashioned it with a graying tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which

brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar. before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord." 1,32: 1-5).

It is just possible that the real name of the Samiri was also Aaron which later on might have misled the Israelites to attribute the making of the golden calf to Prophet Aaron. Thus it is obvious that the Qur'an has shown a favor to the Jews and Christians by exonerating Prophet Aaron from the sin, but it is an irony that the Christian missionaries and the Orientalists still insist that the Qur'an is guilty of anachronism and that the calf was made a deity of worship by a holy prophet of ,theirs. In their blind obduracy they forget that even according to the Bible this was a great sin. (Exodus, 32: 21). A little further on in the same chapter the Bible again contradicts itself. It says that Prophet Moses ordered the Levites to kill all their kinsfolk, their friends and their fellow country men who had been guilty of the sin of calf-worship. Accordingly, about three thousand men fell that day. (Exodus, 32: 27-29).

Now the question arises: Why was Prophet Aaron not killed, if he was the inventor of the calf-worship? Why didn't the Levites ask Prophet Moses to kill his brother, Prophet Aaron, who was the real sinner, just as they were asked to kill theirs. The Bible also says that after this Moses went back to the Eternal and prayed Him to forgive their sins or blot him out of His list of the living, and the Eternal answered: "Whosoever has sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" (Exodus, 32: 31-33). But we learn from the Bible that the name of Prophet Aaron was not blotted out, but, on the other hand, he and his sons and his family were given the charge of the sanctuary and the office of priesthood (Numbers, 18: 1-7). Thus it is quite evident from the internal testimony of the Bible itself, that it contradicts itself and supports the Qur'an in its exoneration of Prophet Aaron.

70The "command" refers to the instructions which Prophet Moses gave to his brother Aaron when he made him his deputy in his absence when he went up to Mount Tur: "After me take my place and do the right and follow not the way of the mischief-makers". (VII: 142).

71See VII: 150.

72It can also be interpreted like this: "You did not wait for orders from me" In order to understand fully the statement of Prophet Aaron, one should read this verse along with verse 150 of Chapter VII, where he says: "Son of my mother, these people overpowered me and were going to kill me: so, let not the enemies gloat over me: do not count the among the people who have done wrong." Now if both these verses are read together, one can easily see the true picture of the event: Prophet Aaron did his utmost to stop the people from committing the sin of calf-worship, but they revolted against him and might even have killed him. Fearing a clash between them, therefore, he held his peace lest Prophet Moses, on his return, might blame him for letting the situation worsen and failing to control it effectively in his absence. The last clause of VII: 150 also gives the hint that there existed among the people a good number of the enemies of the two brothers.

73Here has been a good deal of divergence of opinion in regard to the interpretation of this verse. According to the majority of the early commentators and their followers, it means: "The Samiri saw the Messenger (Angel Gabriel) when he was passing and took a handful of dust from his footprints. Then he sprinkled this upon the idol of the golden calf. This created life in it and it began to low like a living calf." The Qur'an, in fact, does not say that this actually happened but merely cites the reply given by the Samiri to Prophet Moses when the latter took him to, task for the great sin he had committed.

There are others who interpret the words of the Samiri; like this: "I saw a Weakness in the Messenger (Prophet Moses) or in his Creed, which others did not see. Therefore I followed in his footsteps to a certain limit but afterwards I left his way." This interpretation was moat probably put forward first of all by Abu Muslim Isfahani. Then Imam Razi not only cited it in his own Commentary but also approved of it. And now it is being followed by some modernistic commentators, who try to prove their own favorite theories by giving far-fetched interpretations to the obvious meaning of the words of the Qur'an. Such people forget that the Qur'an has not been sent down in the terminology of enigmas, riddles and puzzles but in clear, plain and intelligible Arabic. Therefore the Qur'an would have never employed the words it has used in the Text to convey the meaning given by them because their usage cannot support that far-fetched interpretation. What such interpreters really mean to imply is that Allah has failed to express Himself clearly and plainly; therefore, they wish to come to His rescue by their interpretations in order to save Him from the ridicule of the "learned" people.

If we study the verse in the context in which it occurs, we shall be able to understand easily that the Samiri was a mischief-monger who had contrived his deceitful scheme after a good deal of consideration. As he appears to have been a good craftsman, he caused the golden calf he had made to produce a lowing sound, and successfully deluded the ignorant and simple people. He did not rest content with this but impudently invented the story that he had seen what the common people could not see and that he had taken a handful of the dust from the footprints of the Messenger and sprinkled it on the calf which made it low like a living calf. It is possible that by the "Messenger", he meant Prophet Moses himself and might have cunningly tried to flatter him, saying, that the dust of his footprints was miraculous. By saying so, he was playing the most subtle trick. He wanted to offer an intellectual bait to Moses so that he might feel elated about the miraculous effect of the dust trodden by his feet and utilize his services for propagating his own miraculous acts. Anyhow, the fact is that the Qur'an has presented the whole thing as a trick of the Samiri and has not given the account as if it were a real event by itself. The subsequent reaction of Prophet Moses to the statement of the Samiri clearly shows that he considered it as a deceitful story, and so laid the curse on him.

74The words show that he was not only made an outcast for life but was made to inform the people himself that he was an outcast, as given in Leviticus:

"And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in

him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be ". (13: 45-46).

We conclude from this that either he was inflicted with leprosy as a scourge by . Allah or the punishment inflicted on him was that, being a moral "leper", he should be made an outcast and should himself proclaim to be an unclean and impure person, saying, "Touch me not".

75Now that the story of Prophet Moses comes to an end, the same theme, that was interrupted by this story, has been resumed.

76That is, the Qur'an about which it was said at the beginning of the Surah that it had not been sent down to put the Holy Prophet in distress, and that it was an Admonition for the God-fearing.

77Here the people have been warned that whoso will turn away front the Qur'an and will reject its guidance, he shall do harm to himself only and not to Allah and His Messenger, and that the one, who rejects His Message, shall inevitably be punished in the Hereafter. And this warning holds good for every people, every country and every age. This is because there are only two alternatives for an individual or a community, whom the Message of the Qur'an reaches. They can either accept it or reject it; there is no third way.

78As regards the nature of the blowing of the "Trumpet" on the Day of Resurrection, it may be likened to the blowing of the bugle in the army to muster or disperse the soldiers. It is obvious that these words and terms have been used because these are known to the people. Therefore it will be wrong to consider the "Trumpet" to be exactly like the bugles and trumpets of this world.

79According to some Commentators, it means this: "The bodies of the criminals will turn white as if no drop of blood had been left in them."

80The original text tray also be interpreted to mean: "After your death, you may have passed hardly ten days till now." As regards the interpretation adopted in the translation, it is supported by XXVI: 112-113: "When Allah will ask them, 'For how many years did you stay on the Earth?' They will say, 'We stayed there for a day - or a pan of a day: You may ask those who have kept the record!" The second interpretation is supported by XXX: 55-56: "And on the day when Resurrection will take place, the criminals will declare on oaths, 'We have not remained in the state of dealt for more than an hour.' And likewise they were deluded on the Earth. On the other hand, those who have been given Knowledge and Faith will say, 'According to the Book of Allah, you have remained in this state up to the Day of Resurrection, and this is the very Day of Resurrection, but you did not know of it'. " Both the interpretations are supported by other verses of the Qur'an. It is clear from these that they will consider both the life on the Earth and the life in the interval between death and Resurrection to be very short.

They will consider the earthly life to be very short because, against all their expectations, they will have to face the eternal life in the Hereafter which they denied in their earthly life. As they had made no preparation for this life, they will wring their hands with regret that they had ruined their eternal life for the sake of a few transitory pleasures of the short life they had been given on the Earth. As regards the duration of the interval between death and Resurrection, they will consider it to be very short, for they will imagine that they had been suddenly awakened by the "Trumpet" from their last sleep or unconsciousness in their earthly life. Thus, they will not at first realize that the "Trumpet" was the signal for the Day of Resurrection because they had no expectation whatever that the Day of Resurrection would ever come. As a matter of fact, they used to make fun of this Day as a nonsensical thing.

81This is a parenthesis that has been inserted to remove this doubt of the hearers: "How has it been known today what the people will be talking in whispers in the Plain of Resurrection?"

82This is another parenthesis which has been inserted in answer to another objection raised by some hearer. It appears that when this Surah was being recited, some one might have raised this question as a ridicule: 'Where will these high mountains go on the Day of Resurrection, for it appears from your description of Resurrection that all the people of the world will be running about in a level plain?' In order to understand the background of the question, it should be kept in mind that Makkah, where this Surah was first recited on the occasion of its revelation, is surrounded on all sides by high mountains. The answer to this question follows immediately: "Allah will reduce them to fine dust and scatter it away."

83According to the Qur'an, the earth will take a new shape in the Hereafter:

"The earth will be spread." (LXXXIV: 3).

"The bottoms of the oceans will be split (and the whole water will sink down in the earth.)" (LXXXII: 3).

"The oceans will be filled up". (LXXXI: 6).

"The mountains will be reduced to fine dust and scattered away and there will be left no curve or crease in the earth". (XX: 105-107).

"On that day the earth will be totally changed". (XIV: 48).

"And it will be turned into a garden and given to the pious people to dwell therein for ever." (XXXIX: 74).

This shows that ultimately this earth will be turned into Paradise which will be inherited by the pious and righteous servants of Allah. The whole earth will become one country, and there will be no mountains, oceans, rivers and deserts which today divide it into countless countries and homelands and divide

mankind as well into as many tribes, races and classes. Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas and Qatadah have held this same view that Paradise will be established on this very earth.

84The original Arabic word (hams) is used for the sound of footsteps, the sound of whispering and other low sounds. What it implies here is that the people will be so awe-stricken on that Day that there will be no sound other than that of footsteps and whispering.

85This has another interpretation also: "On that Day intercession will not be effective except in the case of the one for whom the Merciful may allow it and be pleased to hear it for him." Both these interpretations are supported by the following:

"Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His own permission?" (11: 255).

"On that Day when the spirit and the angels will stand with folded hands, they will not be able to say anything except what the Merciful will permit, and they will say the right thing." (LXXVIII: 38). "They do not intercede for anyone except for whom the Merciful may be pleased to listen to, and they are always fearful of Him." (XXI: 28).

"There are many angels in the heavens whose intercession avails nothing at all except when it is made after getting permission from Allah, and for the one for whom He wills to hear and approves of it." (LIII: 26).

86Here the reasons for the restrictions on intercession have been stated. On the one hand, no angel, no prophet, no saint, nor anyone else knows, nor can know, the full details about the records of others. On the other hand, Allah has full knowledge of all the deeds and misdeeds of everyone and He knows who deserves pardon or punishment, and how much. If, therefore, there had been full freedom for intercession the whole purpose of the creation of man would have become meaningless. According to this verse, the door against intercession has not been entirely closed. The righteous people will be allowed to show their sympathy for other human beings as they did in the world, but they will have to get permission for this beforehand and even then make only a right sort of recommendation.

87From this, it is clear that in the Hereafter the case of every individual will be decided on merits. If a man had been guilty of iniquity and injustice in regard to the rights of God or the rights of man or even his own rights, he shall be dealt with accordingly. On the other hand, those, who are both believers and workers of righteous deeds, shall have no fear that they would be deprived of their rights or punished even though they were innocent.

88".... thus .. Qur'an": This means that the Qur'an is full of such high themes, wise teachings and admonitions as are contained in the preceding portion of this Surah as well as in the other Surahs of the

Book.

89That is, "The Arabic Qur'an might awaken them from their heedlessness and they might recollect the forgotten lessons and feel that they are going astray and might realize the consequences thereof."

90Such sentences as this are usually found in the Qur'an at the end of a discourse so that it may end with the praise of Allah. It is plain from the context that the discourse ends with “the True King.”

91At the end of the discourse, the Angel cautions the Holy Prophet by Allah's Command to guard against a thing that had been noticed during the Revelation, for it was not considered appropriate to do so during its recital. It is obvious from the wording of the caution that the Holy Prophet was trying to learn the revealed discourse and was repeating it during its recital by the Angel. Naturally this might have diverted his attention over and over again from listening to and grasping the Revelation. Therefore it was felt necessary that he should be taught the right method of the receipt of the message of Revelation and be asked not to try to commit it to memory during the Revelation.

This sentence shows that this portion of Surah Ta Ha is one of the earliest Revelations, for we learn from the other early Surahs that the Holy Prophet tried to commit to memory the Qur'anic Revelation and Allah cautioned him against it. For instance in LXXV: 16-19, he was told: "Do not move your tongue over and over again in order to learn the Revelation, for it is Our responsibility to cause you to remember it by heart and recite it. Therefore when it is being recited to you, listen to it carefully. Then it is also Our responsibility to make its meanings clear to you.

Again in LXXXVII: 6, he was assured: "We will teach you how to recite it and you will not forget it." It appears that afterwards when the Holy Prophet had learnt how to receive the messages of Revelation, this did not occur. That is why there is no such caution in the Surahs of the later period.

92From here begins a new discourse, which probably was sent down some time after the preceding discourse (see E.N. 90), and it was incorporated in this Surah by the command of Allah because both deal with the same theme. The following are the similarities between the two:

(1) Both the discourses remind mankind of the "forgotten lesson", the Admonition, which Allah had taught man on the occasion of his creation.

(2) Both teach that it is Satan who seduces man to forget that lesson. He succeeded in this by causing his first parents to forget it; since then he has been forgetting it over and over again and, therefore, has been cautioned against this.

(3) Both warn man that his ultimate success or failure depends upon his attitude towards this

"Admonition."

(4) Both warn mankind to discriminate between an inadvertent error and an intentional rebellion and their consequences. If man (like Prophet Adam and his offspring and the magicians of Pharaoh) realizes that he has been seduced by Satan, his eternal enemy, and then repents of his error, he is forgiven. But there is no forgiveness for intentional rebellion as was the case with Satan, Pharaoh and the Samiri.

93The story of Prophet Adam has already been stated in 11: 30-39, VII: 11-27, 189, XV: 28-42, XVII: 61-65 and XVIII: 51-52. But at every place only that part of the story which was relevant to the context has been cited. Therefore, in order to understand the whole story well, one should read it in all the Surahs along with the relevant E.N's.

94This means that he disobeyed the Command because he lacked the firmness of purpose and not because of intentional rebellion. He did not say, "I don't care for Allah. If it is His Command, let it be. I will do whatever I like. Who is Allah to intervene in my private affairs?"

On the contrary, he disobeyed because he forgot Allah's Command, and did not show firmness of purpose and determination against the temptations presented by Satan. This is shown by his subsequent repentance.

95Here the Command, which was given to Prophet Adam, has not been mentioned, which was: "You must not eat the fruit of this tree." This has been mentioned at other places but has been omitted here because the emphasis here is on this weakness of man that he is easily seduced by Satan in spite of the forewarnings and admonitions to this effect.

96Both knew that Satan was their enemy, for Adam himself had witnessed the demonstration of his enmity, when he had refused to bow down before him and declared in plain words, "I am better than he; Thou didst create me of tire and him of clay". (VII: 12, XXXVIII: 76, see also XV: 33). "Should I bow before the one whom Thou hast created out of clay?" And then added, "Just consider was he worthy of this that Thou hast exalted him over me?" (XVII: 61-b2). Then Satan did not rest content with this bragging of superiority but evinced his jealousy by giving an open challenge that he would prove it by seducing Adam. (VII: 16, 17; XV: 36-42; XVII: 62-6b; XXXVIII: 82-83).

97This was to forewarn both of them of the consequences of disobedience of the Command.

98This is the explanation of the "distress" which they had to undergo immediately after their expulsion from the Garden. Here instead of mentioning the high and perfect blessings of the Garden, only four basic necessities of life have been stated, namely, food, drink, dress, and shelter, as if to say, "In the Garden you are being supplied with all these necessities without any labor from you. But if you succumb

to the temptations and seduction of Satan, you will be totally deprived not only of these facilities but also of the higher blessings of the Garden. In that case, you will have to work so hard for these necessities that very little energy and time and leisure will be left with you to strive for higher aims of life."

99According to this verse. it was Adam whom Satan primarily wanted to seduce and not Eve. Though according to VII: 20, he tempted both of them and both were seduced, but Satan's efforts were mainly directed to Adam. On the contrary, according to the Bible, the serpent first tempted the woman "to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree and then she seduced her husband". (Genesis, 3).

100According to this verse, Satan tempted Adam to eat the fruit of the tree so that he might get eternal life and everlasting kingdom, and according to V 11: 20, he put an additional temptation in their way, saying that they would become angels and immortal.

101No sooner did they disobey the "Command" than they were deprived of all the facilities, but naturally the immediate effect of this as felt by them was. that they were stripped of their garments. Then gradually, as they felt thirsty, hungry etc., they realized that they had been deprived of all the facilities that they enjoyed in the Garden.

102It is worth while to understand the nature of human weakness which helped Satan to seduce Adam and Eve. They succumbed to seduction because Satan tempted them in the garb of a true friend and well-wisher even though they knew full well that he was their enemy. For Adam had a direct knowledge of the envy and enmity of Satan, who had challenged to seduce and ruin him in his very presence. Allah had also warned them to guard against the envy of and the temptations by Satan and had informed them of the consequences of disobedience. Above all, Adam and Eve still believed in Allah and never thought of intentional disobedience. But in spite of this, when Satan tempted them in the garb of a friend, they disobeyed their Lord: they forgot the "Command" for the time being for lack of fineness of purpose. And since then this human weakness has persisted in their descendants during all ages.

103".....His Lord chose him" because he did not disobey Him intentionally and did not persist in sin arrogantly. As soon as he realized his error he felt ashamed of it and asked Allah's pardon: "O our Lord, we have wronged ourselves gravely; if Thou dost not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we shall be totally ruined".(VII: 23). In contrast to Adam and Eve, Satan was cursed because he not only disobeyed his Lord but also persisted in his sin, and boldly challenged Him that it was He Who was responsible for his disobedience, for He had preferred Adam whom He had created of clay over him whom He had made of fire.

104That is, "Allah not only pardoned him but also gave him Guidance and taught him the way to follow it."

105"Wretched life in this world" does not mean a life of poverty. It means that such a one shall be

deprived of the peace of mind, even though he may be a millionaire or the ruler of a vast empire, for the one, who will turn away from the "Admonition", will win all the worldly successes by unlawful means and, therefore, will always be suffering from pangs of a guilty conscience and deprived of the peace of mind and real happiness.

106Here the story of Prophet Adam ends. In the light of this part of the story which has been related here and at other places in the Qur'an, I have come to the conclusion (and correct knowledge is with Allah alone) that the "vicegerency of the Earth" was the same as was initially bestowed on Adam in the Garden, which might have been created in the heavens or on this Earth. Anyhow the vicegerent of Allah was supplied gratis with all the necessities of life and the angels were placed under his command for service. This was to enable him to discharge the high and noble obligations of vicegerency, without any worry about the procurement of the necessities of life. But in order to make hire permanent in this office, it was necessary to put him to a test so that all his capabilities, excellences and weaknesses might be known. Accordingly, he had to take his test in which some of his weaknesses came to the surface: he was prone to be seduced by greed and temptation: he did not remain firm in obedience: he was capable of forgetfulness. That is why he was given the "vicegerency" as a trial in the Earth for a fixed term up to the Day of Judgment. During this period of trial, he had himself to make arrangements for the necessities of life though he was allowed to exploit all the resources of the Earth and to rule over other creatures. The trial is this: does he or does he not obey his Lord in spite of having the power to obey or not to obey? And if he forgets or is seduced by greed, does he or does he not repent through warning and admonition, when he realizes his error? At the same time, his Lord has warned him that a full and perfect record of all his deeds and misdeeds is being kept, and that he shall be judged on the Day of Reckoning in accordance with it. Those who will come out successful will be given permanent vicegerency and that eternal life and everlasting kingdom by which Satan seduced . him. The righteous servants will become the heirs to the Garden, if they had obeyed their Lord or repented after "forgetfulness". It should also be noted well that life in the Garden will not merely be to "eat, drink and be merry", but there will be such higher things to achieve as no human being can conceive in this world. That is why only those blessings of the Garden have been mentioned in the Qur'an which can be comprehended by human beings in this world.

It will be worth while to make a comparative study of the account of Adam and Eve as given in the Qur'an with that given in the Bible. According to Genesis:

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree....the tree of life....and the tree of knowledge of good and evil....And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die .... And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.... And they were both

naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." (2:725). "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?.... And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil....she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And He said, who told thee that thou west naked? Hast thou eaten, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gayest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.....And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every blast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, 1 will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shah bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which 1 commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life:.... In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." (3 :1-23).

It is obvious that the Bible has not done justice to Adam and Eve, nay, even to God Himself. On the other hand, the account given in the Qur'an is itself a clear proof that the stories given in it have not been copied from the Bible; for the Qur'an not only corroborates those parts of the Bible which have remained untampered but also corrects its wrong statements.

107The Qur'an has described the different conditions and experiences through which the criminals will pass from the Day of Resurrection to the time of their entry into Hell: "You were neglectful of this; now We have removed the curtain from before you and your sight has become very sharp." (L: 22). "He is only deferring them to the Day when all eyes shall stare with consternation. They will be running in terror with heads uplifted and eyes fixed upwards and hearts void". (XIV: 42-43). "We have fastened the augury of every man to his own neck and on the Day of Resurrection We will bring forth a writing which he will find like an open book. (It will be said to him :) 'Here is your record: read it. Today you can yourself reckon your account'". (XVII : 13-14). In the light of the above and this verse (126), it appears that in the

Hereafter, the criminals shall be enabled to see the horrible sights and to realize the consequences of their evil deeds, but in other respects they will be like the blind man 'who cannot see his way and is deprived of even a staff to feel his way, nor is there anyone to guide him. So he stumbles and is knocked about and dces not know where to go and how to satisfy his needs. This very state has been expressed thus: "You forgot Our Revelations when they came to you, so you are being forgotten today", as if, "you were blind and had no one to look after you."

108This refers to the "wretched life" which will be the lot of those who turn away from the "Admonition" in this worldly life.

109"These people" of Makkah.

110That is, "In this lesson of History and in the observation of the archaeological remains and in this experience of mankind".

111This is to comfort and console the Holy Prophet, as if to say, "Allah does not intend to destroy them yet, for He has appointed for them a term of respite, so you should endure with patience whatever they do against you and hear their harsh talk and go on performing the obligations of your Mission. For this purpose you should offer Salat in accordance with the prescribed times because it will create in you necessary forbearance and fortitude".

"Glorify your Lord" means: "Offer your prescribed Prayers", as is clear from v. 132:

Incidentally in this verse (130) the times of Salat have been prescribed: (1) Fajr Prayer before sunrise, (2) `Asr Prayer before sunset, (3) `Isha and Tahajjud Prayers during the hours of night. Morning and Afternoon (Dhuhr) and Evening (Maghrib) Prayers "at the extremes of the day." (See also E.N.'s. 91 to 97 of Chapter XV11.)

112The original Arabic Text admits of two meanings:

(1) "Rest content with your present condition in which you have to hear many unpleasant things for the sake of your Mission, and submit to this decree that they are not being punished for the time being, for they will continue to persecute you and at the same time lead prosperous lives."

(2) "Go on performing your Mission, for as a result of this, you will be fully satisfied."

This second meaning is supported by (a) XVII: 79: "That time is not far, when your Lord may exalt you to a laudable position," which follows the commandment about Salat, (b) XCIII: 45: "Surely the later period of life will be better for you than the former, and in the near future your Lord will give you so much that

you will be fully satisfied."

113It means: "It does not behoove you and your companions to be envious of the riches of the wicked people who are amassing wealth by unlawful means. The best thing for you is the lawful provision which you earn by your hard labor, even though this may be meager in quantity. That is better for the pious and righteous and is of everlasting virtue."

114That is, "Teach your children also that lawful provision is much better than the unlawful riches of the wicked people. For this purpose, enjoin them to say their prescribed Prayers, for this will change their attitude, their standard of values, and make them contented with pure provisions and virtuous life in preference to the life of sin and luxury."

115It implies this: "We do not ask you to offer your Prayers for any benefit of Our own. We ask you to do that for your own good, because this will create piety in you which will bring about true success for you in this world and in the Hereafter."

116This means that the Qur'an itself is a great miracle, for though it is being presented by an unlettered person from among them, it contains the essence of the teachings and guidance of all tire previous Divine Books. Not only this: it makes those teachings and guidance so plain and clear that even a simple man of the desert can benefit from them.

117That is, "Ever since the Message of Islam is being presented in your city (Makkah), it is not only every person of this city who is waiting for its ultimate result but also every one outside it, who has heard of it."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

21. Surah Al Anbiyaa (The Prophets)

Name

The name of this Surah has not been taken from any verse but it has been called *Al-Anbiyaa* because it contains a continuous account of many *Anbiyaa* (Prophets). Nevertheless, it is a symbolic name and not a title.

Period of Revelation

Both the subject matter and the style of the Surah indicate that it was sent down in the third stage of the life of the Holy Prophet at Makkah.(Sea Introduction to Chapter VI).

Subject and Topics

This Surah discusses the conflict between the Holy Prophet and the chiefs of Makkah, which was rampant at the time of its Revelation and answers those objections and doubts which were being put forward concerning his Prophethood and the Doctrines of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter. The chiefs of Makkah have also been rebuked for their machinations against the Holy Prophet and warned of the evil consequences of their wicked activities. They have been admonished to give up their indifference and heedlessness that they were showing about the Message. At the end of the Surah, they have been told that the person whom they considered to be a "distress and affliction" had in reality come to them as a blessing.

Main Themes

In vv. 1-47, the following themes have been discussed in particular :

1. The objection of the disbelievers that a human being could not be a Messenger and therefore they could not accept Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a Prophet, has been refuted.

2. They have been taken to task for raising multifarious and contradictory objections against the Holy Prophet and the Qur'an.

3. Their wrong conception of life has been proved to be false because it was responsible for their indifferent and heedless attitude towards the Message of the Holy Prophet. They believed that life was merely a sport and pastime and had no purpose behind or before it and there was no accountability or reward or punishment.

4. The main cause of the conflict between the disbelievers and the Holy Prophet was their insistence on the doctrine of *shirk* and antagonism to the Doctrine of *Tauhid*. So the doctrine of *skirk* has been refuted and the Doctrine of *Tauhid* reinforced by weighty and impressive though brief arguments.

5. Arguments and admonitions have been used to remove another misunderstanding of theirs. They presumed that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a false prophet and his warnings of a scourge from God were empty threats, just because no scourge was visiting them in spite of their persistent rejection of the Prophet.

In vv. 48-91, instances have been cited from the important events of the life stories of the Prophets to show that all the Prophets, who were sent by God, were human beings and had all the characteristics of a man except those which were exclusive to Prophethood. They had no share in Godhead and they had to implore Allah to fulfill each and every necessity of theirs.

Along with these two other things have also been mentioned:

1. All the Prophets had to pass through distress and affliction; their opponents did their worst to thwart their mission, but in spite of it they came out successful by the extraordinary succor from Allah.

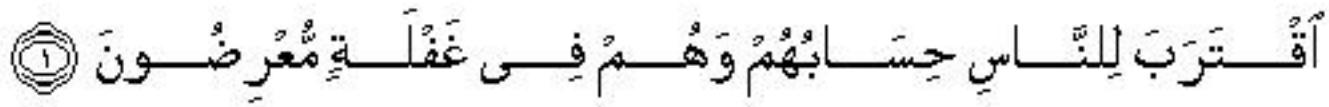
2. All the Prophets had one and the same "way of life', the same as was being presented by Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), and that was the only Right Way of Life and all other ways invented and introduced by mischievous people were utterly wrong.

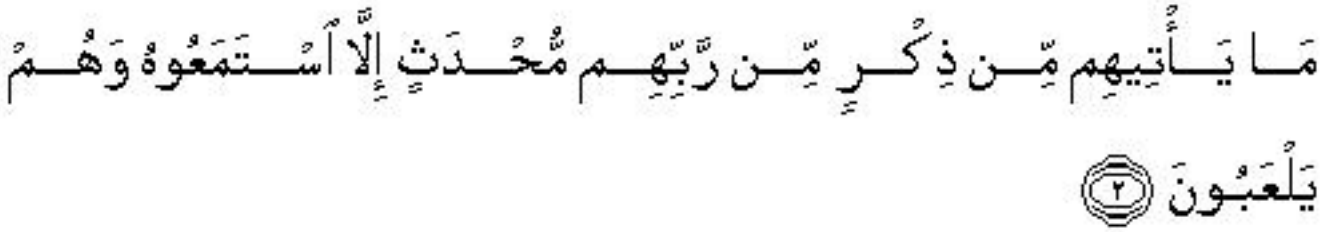
In vv. 92-106, it has been declared that only those who follow the Right Way, will come out successful in the final judgment of God and those who discard it shall meet with the worst consequences.

In vv. 107-112, the people have been told that it is a great favor of Allah that He has sent His Messenger to inform them beforehand of this Reality and that those, who consider his coming to be an affliction instead of a blessing, are foolish people.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

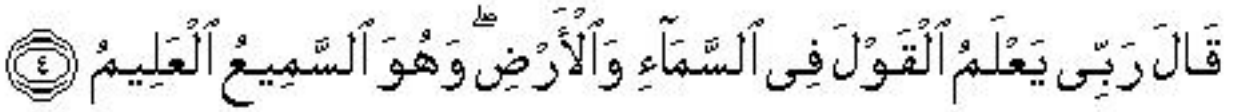






[1-3] The time of the reckoning of the people has drawn near,[1] and yet they are turning away (from the Admonition) in heedlessness.[2] They give a mere formal hearing to every new Revelation[3] that comes to them from their Lord and remain engaged in the game (of life) for their hearts are preoccupied (with other matters.)[4]

And the unjust people whisper to one another, saying, "This man is no more than a human being like yourselves. What! Will you, then, be enticed by his sorcery while you perceive it?"[5]



[4] To this the Prophet replied, "My Lord has the knowledge of everything that is said in the heavens and the earth for He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."[6]

بَلۡ قَالُوٓاْ أَضۡغَٰثُ أَحۡلَٰمِۭ بَلِ ٱفۡتَرَىٰهُ بَلۡ هُوَ شَاعِرٞ فَلۡيَأۡتِنَا بِـَٔايَةٖ كَمَآ أُرۡسِلَ
ٱلۡأَوَّلُونَ ٥

مَآ ءَامَنَتۡ قَبۡلَهُم مِّن قَرۡيَةٍ أَهۡلَكۡنَٰهَآۖ أَفَهُمۡ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٦

[5-6] Then, they say, "It is a bundle of incoherent dreams: nay, he himself has invented it: nay, he is a poet;[7] if not, let him bring a sign like the signs with which the former Prophets were sent." The fact, however, is that no habitation, which We destroyed before them, believed (in spite of signs); now, will they, then, believe?[8]

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا قَبۡلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالٗا نُّوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِمۡۖ فَسۡـَٔلُوٓاْ أَهۡلَ ٱلذِّكۡرِ
إِن كُنتُمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ٧

وَمَا جَعَلۡنَٰهُمۡ جَسَدٗا لَّا يَأۡكُلُونَ ٱلطَّعَامَ وَمَا كَانُواْ خَٰلِدِينَ ٨

ثُمَّ صَدَقۡنَٰهُمُ ٱلۡوَعۡدَ فَأَنجَيۡنَٰهُمۡ وَمَن نَّشَآءُ وَأَهۡلَكۡنَا ٱلۡمُسۡرِفِينَ ٩

[7-9] And, O Muhammad, We sent before you also human beings as Messengers, to whom We revealed (Our Message).[9] If you (O objectors,) have no knowledge of this, you may ask the people of the Book.[10] We did not give them such bodies as could survive without food nor were they immortal. Then We fulfilled Our promises with them and ultimately delivered them and whomsoever We willed, and destroyed the transgressors.[11]

لَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَٰبًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ ۖ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

[10] O people, We have sent down to you a Book, which deals with matters concerning yourselves. What, do you not understand this?[12]

وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَأَنشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿١١﴾

فَلَمَّآ أَحَسُّوا۟ بَأْسَنَآ إِذَا هُم مِّنْهَا يَرْكُضُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

لَا تَرْكُضُوا۟ وَٱرْجِعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ مَآ أُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيهِ وَمَسَٰكِنِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

فَمَا زَالَت تِّلْكَ دَعْوَىٰهُمْ حَتَّىٰ جَعَلْنَٰهُمْ حَصِيدًا خَٰمِدِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

[11-15] Many a habitation of wicked people is there, which We crushed to piece, and after them raised up another people. When they perceived Our Scourge[13] they began to flee the place. (Then it was said to them:) "Do not run away: go back to the same life of luxury and the houses where you were making merry: perhaps you may be asked about it."[14] They cried out, "Woe be to us: indeed we were wrong-doers." They went on crying out this very thing till We threshed them, leaving no spark of life in them.

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَٰعِبِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

لَوْ أَرَدْنَآ أَن نَّتَّخِذَ لَهْوًا لَّٱتَّخَذْنَٰهُ مِن لَّدُنَّآ إِن كُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِٱلْحَقِّ عَلَى ٱلْبَٰطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُۥ فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ ۚ وَلَكُمُ ٱلْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

[16-18] We have not created for a pastime the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them.[15] Had We meant to make it a plaything and nothing more than this, We would have done it by Ourself.[16] But We give falsehood a hard blow with the Truth, which breaks its head and falsehood vanishes away in no time; and there is woe for you because of the falsehoods you invent.[17]

وَلَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَنْ عِندَهُۥ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

يُسَبِّحُونَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[19-20] All that exists in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah:[18] and (the angels) who are near Him[19] disdain not to serve Him, nor do they feel wearied:[20] they glorify Him night and day without taking rest.

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ ءَالِهَةً مِّنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ هُمۡ يُنشِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

[21] Have the earthly deities they have set up the power to give life and raise the (inanimate) things?[21]

لَوۡ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَاۚ فَسُبۡحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَرۡشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

لَا يُسۡـَٔلُ عَمَّا يَفۡعَلُ وَهُمۡ يُسۡـَٔلُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

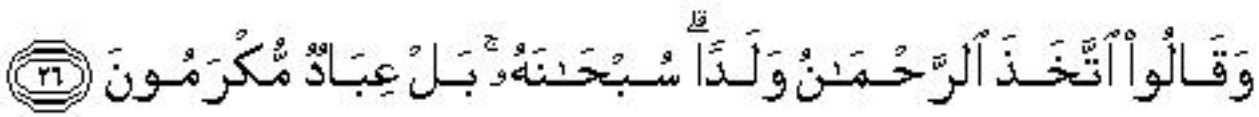
[22-23] Had there been other deities besides Allah in the heavens and the earth, both (the heavens and the earth) would have gone out of order.[22] So, absolutely free is Allah, Lord of the Throne,[23] from the false things they ascribe to Him. He is accountable to none for what He does, but all others are accountable (to Him).

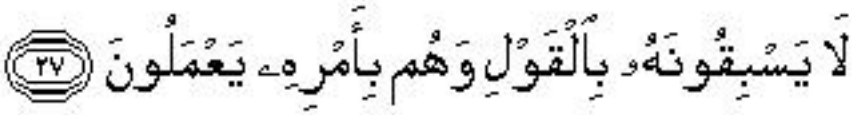
أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُواْ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةًۖ قُلۡ هَاتُواْ بُرۡهَٰنَكُمۡۖ هَٰذَا ذِكۡرُ مَن مَّعِيَ وَذِكۡرُ مَن قَبۡلِيۗ بَلۡ أَكۡثَرُهُمۡ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ٱلۡحَقَّ فَهُم مُّعۡرِضُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

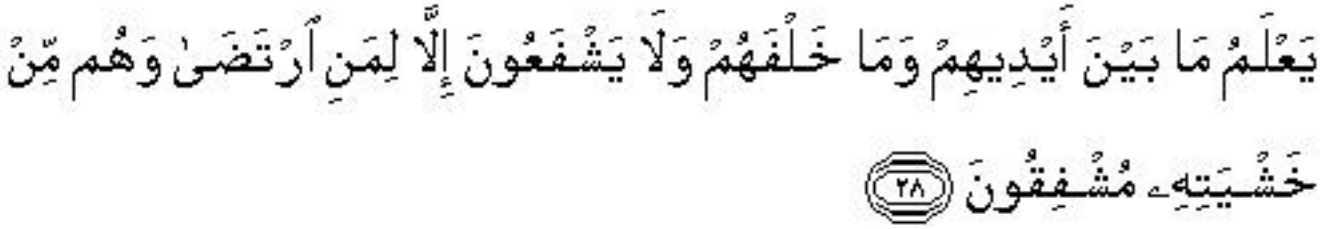
وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيٓ إِلَيۡهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعۡبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾

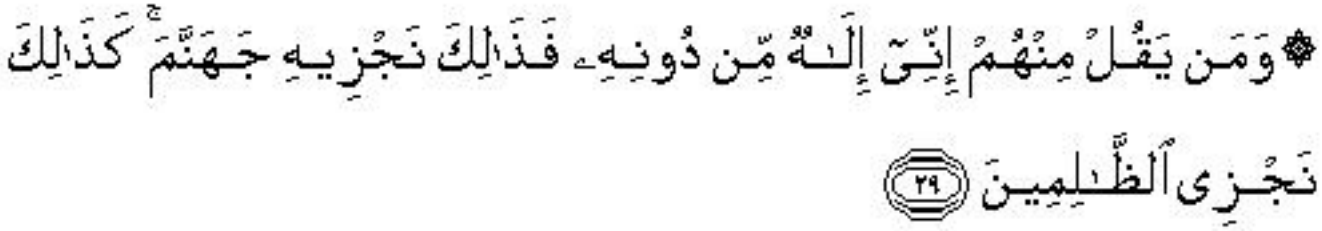
[24-25] Have they discarded Him and set up other deities? Say to them, O Muhammad, "Bring your authority; here

is this Book, which contains Admonition for the people of my time, and there are also those Books which contained Admonition for the former people."[24] But most of these people have no knowledge of the Reality; therefore they have turned away from it.[25] The fact is that to every Messenger whom We sent down before you, We revealed this same thing: "There is no other deity than Me: so worship Me alone."









[26-29] They say, "The Merciful has offspring."[26] Glory be to Allah!they are His mere servants who have been honored: they do not exceed the limits in their talk before Him and just do His bidding. He knows whatever is before them and also whatever is hidden from them; they "do not intercede for anyone except for the one for whom Allah pleases to hear a plea, and they live in awe of Him[27] And if anyone of them were to say, "I am also a deity besides Allah", We would send him to Hell, for this is the recompense from Us for such workers of iniquity.

أَوَلَمۡ يَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ كَانَتَا رَتۡقٗا فَفَتَقۡنَٰهُمَاۖ
وَجَعَلۡنَا مِنَ ٱلۡمَآءِ كُلَّ شَيۡءٍ حَيٍّۖ أَفَلَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٣٠

وَجَعَلۡنَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ رَوَٰسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِهِمۡ وَجَعَلۡنَا فِيهَا فِجَاجٗا
سُبُلٗا لَّعَلَّهُمۡ يَهۡتَدُونَ ٣١

وَجَعَلۡنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ سَقۡفٗا مَّحۡفُوظٗاۖ وَهُمۡ عَنۡ ءَايَٰتِهَا مُعۡرِضُونَ ٣٢

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلَّيۡلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ وَٱلشَّمۡسَ وَٱلۡقَمَرَۖ كُلّٞ فِي فَلَكٖ يَسۡبَحُونَ
٣٣

[30-33] Have not the people, who have disbelieved (the Message), ever considered this: the heavens and the earth were at first one mass; then We parted them,[28] and created every living thing from water?[29] Do they not acknowledge (that this is Our Creation)? And We set mountains firmly in the earth lest it should tilt to one side along with them,[30] and We left therein open paths[31] so that they may find their way.[32] And We made the sky a safe canopy,[33] but in spite of this they do not pay due heed to its signs.[34] And it is Allah, Who has made the night and the day and created the sun and the moon; all of them are floating, each in its own orbit.[35]

وَمَا جَعَلۡنَا لِبَشَرٖ مِّن قَبۡلِكَ ٱلۡخُلۡدَۖ أَفَإِيْن مِّتَّ فَهُمُ ٱلۡخَٰلِدُونَ ٣٤

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۗ وَنَبْلُوكُم بِٱلشَّرِّ وَٱلْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۖ وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

٣٥

[34-35] And,[36] O Muhammad, no man have We made immortal before you; then, if you die, will they live on for ever? Every living being has to taste death,[37] and We are putting all of you to trial by passing you through good and bad conditions,[38] and ultimately you shall return to Us.

وَإِذَا رَءَاكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِن يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوًا أَهَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى يَذْكُرُ ءَالِهَتَكُمْ وَهُم بِذِكْرِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ هُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ

٣٦

[36] When these disbelievers see you, they scoff at you: they say, "What! Is this the man who speaks slightingly of your deities?"[39] But as for them they discard with disdain the mention of the Merciful.[40]

خُلِقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ ۚ سَأُو۟رِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِى فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونِ

٣٧

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ

٣٨

لَوْ يَعْلَمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ حِينَ لَا يَكُفُّونَ عَن وُجُوهِهِمُ ٱلنَّارَ
وَلَا عَن ظُهُورِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

بَلْ تَأْتِيهِم بَغْتَةً فَتَبْهَتُهُمْ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ رَدَّهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

وَلَقَدِ ٱسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِٱلَّذِينَ سَخِرُواْ مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

[37-41] Man is a creature of haste (and impatience).[41] Well, you need not be impatient: I will show you My signs before long.[42] They ask, "Anyhow, when will this threat be made good, if you speak the truth?" Would that the disbelievers knew something about the time, when they shall neither be able to protect their faces from the Fire nor their backs, nor will they get any succor from anywhere! For that catastrophe will occur all of a sudden and will overpower them so abruptly that they shall neither be able to ward it off nor shall they get any respite. As for their scoff, the Messengers before you also have been scoffed at, but the scoffers were encircled by that very doom at which they used to scoff.

قُلْ مَن يَكْلَؤُكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ مِنَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ۗ بَلْ
هُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

أَمْ لَهُمْ ءَالِهَةٌ تَمْنَعُهُم مِّن دُونِنَا ۚ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَا هُم مِّنَّا
يُصْحَبُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

بَلْ مَتَّعْنَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَءَابَآءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ طَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْعُمُرُ ۗ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ
أَنَّا نَأْتِى ٱلْأَرْضَ نَنقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَآ ۚ أَفَهُمُ ٱلْغَٰلِبُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أُنذِرُكُم بِٱلْوَحْىِ ۚ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ ٱلصُّمُّ ٱلدُّعَآءَ إِذَا مَا يُنذَرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَلَئِن مَّسَّتْهُمْ نَفْحَةٌ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ يَٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا
ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[42-46] O Muhammad, ask them, "Who is there to protect you from the Merciful in the night or in the day?"[43] (None!) Yet they are paying no heed to the Admonition of their Lord. Do they have gods who can defend them against Us? (No) for they can neither help themselves nor are they helped by Us. The fact is that We provided them and their forefathers with provisions of life until the period grew too long for them.[44] But can they not see that We are coming in the land, shrinking its boundaries for them on all sides?[45] Do they, then, expect to come out victorious (over Us)?[46] Say to them, "I am warning you on the authority of . Revelation" But the deaf do not hear the call when they are warned. However, even if the slightest torment of your Lord touched them,[47] they would forthwith cry out, "Woe to us ! no doubt we were wrong-doers."

وَنَضَعُ ٱلْمَوَٰزِينَ ٱلْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ
شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا
حَٰسِبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

[47] On the Day of Resurrection, We will set up just and accurate balances so that no one will be wronged in the least in anyway; even if it be an act equal in weight to a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it forth (to be weighed) and We suffice for reckoning.[48]

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَآءً وَذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَهُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ
﴿٤٩﴾

وَهَٰذَا ذِكْرٌ مُّبَارَكٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ ۚ أَفَأَنتُمْ لَهُۥ مُنكِرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

[48-50] Before[49] this We bestowed on Moses and Aaron the Criterion and Light and "Admonition"[50] for the betterment of those righteous[51] people, who fear their Lord though they have not seen Him, and dread the Hours[52] (of Reckoning). And now We have sent down this blessed "Admonition" (for you). Do you, then, reject this?

۞ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ رُشْدَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِهِۦ عَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلتَّمَاثِيلُ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنتُمْ لَهَا عَٰكِفُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

قَالُوا۟ وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا لَهَا عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنتُمْ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُمْ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

[51-54] Even before that, We had blessed Abraham with the discretion he displayed, for We knew him well.[53] Recall to mind the occasion[54] when he said to his father and his people, "What are these images to which you are so devoted"? They replied, "We found our forefathers worshiping them". He said, "You have gone astray and so had your forefathers manifestly deviated from the Right Way."

قَالُوٓا۟ أَجِئْتَنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱللَّٰعِبِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

قَالَ بَل رَّبُّكُمْ رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَهُنَّ وَأَنَا۠ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُم مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

وَتَٱللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَٰمَكُم بَعْدَ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذَٰذًا إِلَّا كَبِيرًا لَّهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

قَالُوا۟ مَن فَعَلَ هَٰذَا بِـَٔالِهَتِنَآ إِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُۥٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾

قَالُوا۟ فَأْتُوا۟ بِهِۦ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْيُنِ ٱلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

قَالُوٓا۟ ءَأَنتَ فَعَلْتَ هَٰذَا بِـَٔالِهَتِنَا يَٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ ﴿٦٢﴾

قَالَ بَل فَعَلَهُۥ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَٰذَا فَسْـَٔلُوهُمْ إِن كَانُوا۟ يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

فَرَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّكُمْ أَنتُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

ثُمَّ نُكِسُوا۟ عَلَىٰ رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

قَالَ أَفَتَعۡبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُكُمۡ شَيۡـٔٗا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمۡ ٦٦

أُفّٖ لَّكُمۡ وَلِمَا تَعۡبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِۖ أَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُونَ ٦٧

قَالُواْ حَرِّقُوهُ وَٱنصُرُوٓاْ ءَالِهَتَكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ فَٰعِلِينَ ٦٨

قُلۡنَا يَٰنَارُ كُونِي بَرۡدٗا وَسَلَٰمًا عَلَىٰٓ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ ٦٩

وَأَرَادُواْ بِهِۦ كَيۡدٗا فَجَعَلۡنَٰهُمُ ٱلۡأَخۡسَرِينَ ٧٠

وَنَجَّيۡنَٰهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ ٱلَّتِي بَٰرَكۡنَا فِيهَا لِلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٧١

وَوَهَبۡنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ نَافِلَةٗۖ وَكُلّٗا جَعَلۡنَا صَٰلِحِينَ ٧٢

وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَإِقَامَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ لَنَا عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

[55-73] They said, "What! Are you presenting your real ideas before us, or are you jesting?"[55] He answered, "Nay, in fact your Lord is the same Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and their Creator! I hear witness to this, and, by God, I will out-wit your idols in your absence."[56] Accordingly, he broke them into pieces,[57] but he left the major one intact so that they might turn to it.[58] (On their return when they saw the plight of their idols,) they said, "Who has done this to our gods? Indeed he must be a spiteful person." Some replied, "We heard a young man called Abraham talking about them". At this, they said, "Then seize him, and bring him here before the people so that they may witness (how severely he is dealt with)".[59] (When Abraham came there,) they asked, "O Abraham, have you done this to our gods?" He answered, "Nay, all this has been done by their chief; you may ask them, if they can speak"[60] This turned them to (search) their own conscience, and they said (to themselves), "Surely you yourselves are in the wrong". But soon after this their minds became perverse,[61] and they said, "You know that they cannot speak". At this Abraham said, "Do you even then discard Allah and worship these things which are unable to do any good or harm to you? Fie upon you and the deities you worship instead of Allah! What! have you got no sense at all?" They said, "Burn him alive and avenge your gods, if you want to take any action". At this, We commanded, O fire! be cool and become safe for Abraham".[62]They intended to do some harm to Abraham, but We frustrated them in their evil design. Then We brought him and Lot[63] safely to the land, which We have made blessed for all the people of the world.[64] Then We bestowed on him Isaac and added Jacob to him,[65] and We made each of them righteous. We appointed them leaders who guided others by Our Command. We also enjoined them by Revelation to do righteous deeds and establish Salat and pay Zakat dues, and they all worshiped Us.[66]

وَلُوطًا ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلَّتِى كَانَت تَّعْمَلُ
ٱلْخَبَٰٓئِثَ ۗ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

وَأَدْخَلْنَٰهُ فِى رَحْمَتِنَآ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

[74-75] And We bestowed judgment and knowledge[67] on Lot, and delivered him from that habitation which committed indecent deeds. Indeed, they were a very wicked, perverse and disobedient people. And We admitted

Lot into Our Mercy: he was, indeed, of the righteous people.

وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ فَٱسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ فَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥ مِنَ
ٱلْكَرْبِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٦﴾

وَنَصَرْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟
قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنَٰهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

[76-77] And We blessed Noah with the same favor; remember that he had invoked Us[68] before those Prophets; We heard his prayer and delivered him and the people of his house from the great calamity[69] and helped him against those who had treated Our Revelations as false. They were indeed a very wicked people, so We drowned them all together.

وَدَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِى ٱلْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ
ٱلْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَٰهِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

فَفَهَّمْنَٰهَا سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُۥدَ
ٱلْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَٱلطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

[78-79] And We bestowed the same favor upon David and Solomon: Remember the occasion when the two were judging a case regarding a field into which the goats of other people had strayed at night, and We Ourself were watching their conduct of the case. At that time We guided Solomon to the right decision, though We had bestowed

wisdom and knowledge upon both of them.[70]

وَعَلَّمْنَٰهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَّكُمْ لِتُحْصِنَكُم مِّنۢ بَأْسِكُمْ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ شَٰكِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

وَلِسُلَيْمَٰنَ ٱلرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِى بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّتِى بَٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا ۚ وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ مَن يَغُوصُونَ لَهُۥ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[80-82] We had subdued to David the mountains and the birds which joined with him in Our praise:[71] It was We Who had done all this. And We taught him for your benefit the armorer's craft so that you might protect yourselves from each other's violence.[72] Are you, then, grateful?[73] And We had subdued to Solomon the strongly blowing wind which sped at his bidding to the land wherein We had placed Our blessings,[74] for We had the knowledge of everything. And We had subjected to him many of the satans who dived into the sea for him, and performed other works besides this: and We kept watch over all of them.[75]

۞ وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَسَّنِىَ ٱلضُّرُّ وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

فَٱسۡتَجَبۡنَا لَهُۥ فَكَشَفۡنَا مَا بِهِۦ مِن ضُرّٖۖ وَءَاتَيۡنَٰهُ أَهۡلَهُۥ وَمِثۡلَهُم مَّعَهُمۡ
رَحۡمَةٗ مِّنۡ عِندِنَا وَذِكۡرَىٰ لِلۡعَٰبِدِينَ ٨٤

[83-84] And We had given Job[76] the same (blessing of wisdom and knowledge). Remember when he invoked his Lord, saying, "I have been afflicted with the disease, and Thou art most Merciful."[77] We heard his prayer and relieved him of his affliction[78] and gave him back not only those of his family but also as many more with them as a favor from Us so that it may serve as a reminder to Our worshipers.[79]

وَإِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَإِدۡرِيسَ وَذَا ٱلۡكِفۡلِۖ كُلّٞ مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ٨٥

وَأَدۡخَلۡنَٰهُمۡ فِي رَحۡمَتِنَآۖ إِنَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ٨٦

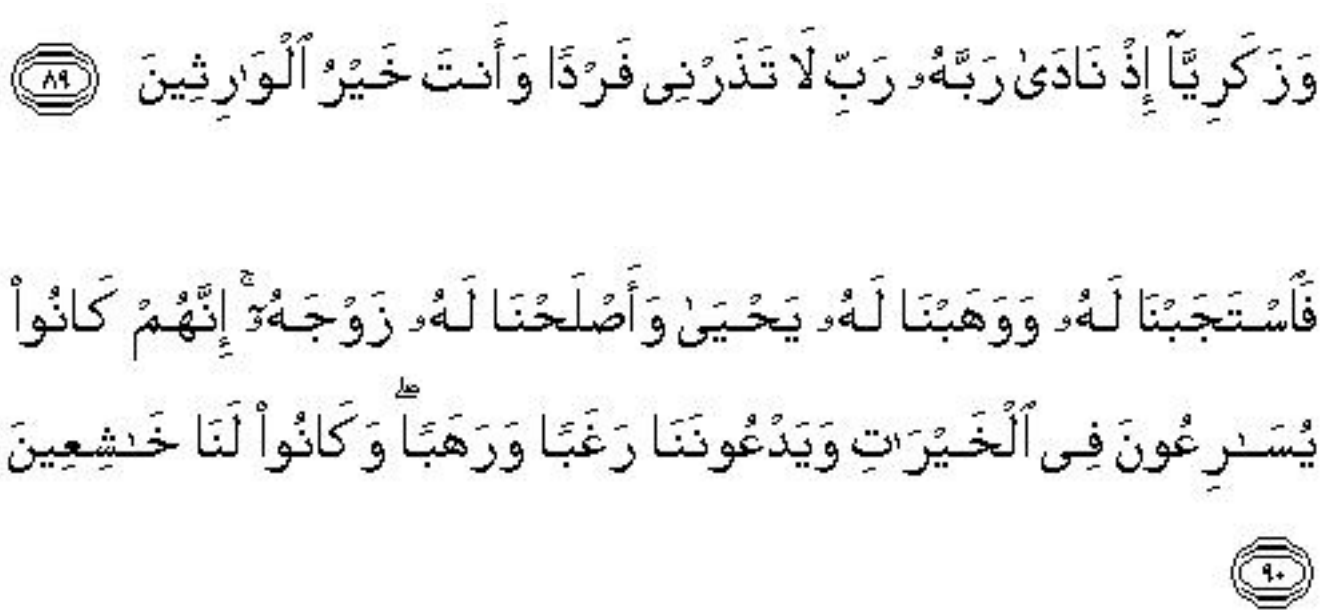
[85-86] And the same blessing was bestowed upon Ismael and Idris[80] and Zul-Kifl,[81] because they all practiced fortitude. We admitted them to Our mercy because they were of the righteous people.

وَذَا ٱلنُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَٰضِبٗا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن نَّقۡدِرَ عَلَيۡهِ فَنَادَىٰ فِي ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ
أَن لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنتَ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ إِنِّي كُنتُ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٨٧

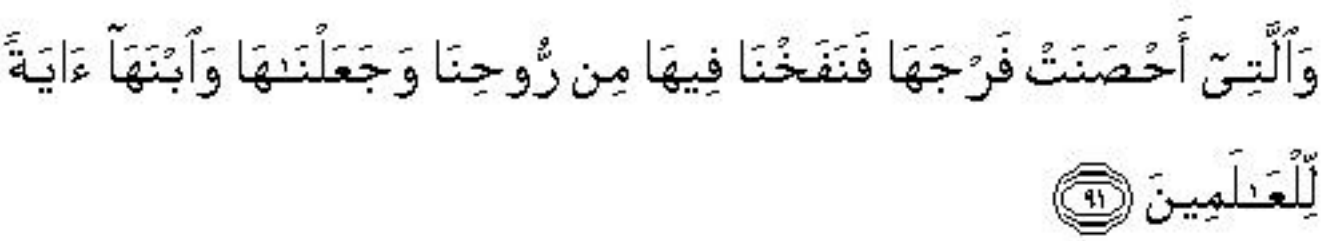
فَٱسۡتَجَبۡنَا لَهُۥ وَنَجَّيۡنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلۡغَمِّۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُنجِي ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٨٨

[87-88] And We showed a favor to Zun-nun (Jonah)[82] Remember when he went away in anger[83] for he thought that We would not take him to task for this.[84] But afterwards he invoked Us from the depths of darkness,[85] saying, "There

is no God but Thou: glory be to Thee: I had indeed committed a wrong". So We heard his prayer, and delivered him from the affliction: Thus do We deliver the believers.



[89-90] And (We showed a favor) to Zacharias, when he invoked his Lord, saying, "O Lord, do not leave me childless though Thou alone art the best Inheritor". So We heard his prayer, and bestowed on him Yahya (John) and made his wife fit. (to bear a child) for him.[86] These people exerted their utmost in righteous deeds and called upon Us with love and fear and they remained humble before Us.[87]



[91] And (We blessed) that woman who had kept her chastity.[88] We breathed into her of Our Spirit[89] and made her and her son a Sign to the whole world.[90]

إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿٩٢﴾

وَتَقَطَّعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُم بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ كُلٌّ إِلَيْنَا رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[92-93] Indeed this community of yours is one community, and I am your Lord: so worship Me alone. But the people (of their own accord) cut asunder their (one) Creed into many religions;[91] they have all to return to Us.

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا كُفْرَانَ لِسَعْيِهِۦ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ كَٰتِبُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

وَحَرَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَٰهَآ أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجُ وَهُم مِّن كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنسِلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

وَٱقْتَرَبَ ٱلْوَعْدُ ٱلْحَقُّ فَإِذَا هِىَ شَٰخِصَةٌ أَبْصَٰرُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَا قَدْ كُنَّا فِى غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَٰذَا بَلْ كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنتُمْ لَهَا وَٰرِدُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

لَوْ كَانَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ءَالِهَةً مَّا وَرَدُوهَا ۖ وَكُلٌّ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُم مِّنَّا ٱلْحُسْنَىٰٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا ۖ وَهُمْ فِى مَا ٱشْتَهَتْ أَنفُسُهُمْ خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

لَا يَحْزُنُهُمُ ٱلْفَزَعُ ٱلْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

[94-103] Then whosoever does good deeds, and he is a believer as well, his work will not be treated slightingly: We are recording it all. And it is not possible that the habitation We have once destroyed gets another lease of life[92] until Gog and Magog are let loose: they will swoop down from every height, and the time of the fulfillment of the True Promise will draw near,[93] whereupon the eyes of those who had disbelieved will be struck with amazement: they will say, "Woe to us: we were heedless of this: nay, we were wrong-doers."[94] As a matter of fact, you and your deities, whom you worship beside Allah, are fuel of Hell, wherein you have to enter;[95] had they really been God, they would not have gone there; now therein they will dwell for ever. There they will groan,[96] but they shall hear nothing (in

response due to the roaring noise). As for those for whom We will already have ordained good (rewards), they will be kept far away from it[97] they will not hear even its faintest sound and they shall dwell for ever in the midst of those things which they will desire and cherish most; the time of the great fright will not trouble them at all;[98] the angels will rush forth to receive them, saying: "This is the very Day which you were promised!"

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي ٱلسَّمَآءَ كَطَيِّ ٱلسِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ ۚ كَمَا بَدَأْنَآ أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُّعِيدُهُۥ ۚ
وَعْدًا عَلَيْنَآ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِى ٱلزَّبُورِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلذِّكْرِ أَنَّ ٱلْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِىَ
ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

إِنَّ فِى هَٰذَا لَبَلَٰغًا لِّقَوْمٍ عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[104-106] On that Day, We will roll up the sky as the leaves of paper are rolled up in a written scroll. We will bang forth the creation once again as We had originated it before. This is a promise We have made to Ourself, and We have to fulfill it. And We have written in the Psalms after the Admonition: "Our righteous servants shall inherit the land." Surely in this is a great news for those people who worship Us.[99]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

قُلْ إِنَّمَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُلْ ءَاذَنتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَآءٍ ۖ وَإِنْ أَدْرِىٓ أَقَرِيبٌ أَم بَعِيدٌ مَّا
تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

إِنَّهُۥ يَعْلَمُ ٱلْجَهْرَ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

وَإِنْ أَدْرِى لَعَلَّهُۥ فِتْنَةٌ لَّكُمْ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿١١١﴾

[107-111] O Muhammad! We have sent you to be a real blessing for the people of the world.[100] Say to them, "That which is revealed to me is this: Your Deity is One Deity only. Will you, then, surrender to Him?" If even then, they turn away from it, tell them plainly, "I have warned you openly; now I do not know whether that thing with which you are being threatened[101] is near at hand or far off. You should, however, note it well that) Allah has the knowledge of what is uttered aloud and also of what you talk about secretly.[102] I think that this (delay) may be a trial for you,[103] and you are being given respite to enjoy yourselves for an appointed term."

قَٰلَ رَبِّ ٱحْكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَرَبُّنَا ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

[112] (At long last) the Messenger said, "O my Lord, pass Thy Judgment with the truth. And, O people, we trust in our Lord, the Merciful, to help us against the things you say."

1"The time....near": the time of Resurrection. This is to warn the people that the time of Resurrection when they will have to appear before their Lord to render their accounts is not far. This was because the coming of the Holy Prophet was a sign and a clear evidence of the fact that mankind had entered the last stage of its history. The Holy Prophet himself explained it by holding out two of his adjoining fingers and said, "I have been sent at a time which joins to the time of Resurrection just as these two fingers adjoin" . By this he meant to say, "No other Prophet is coming between me and the Resurrection. Therefore mend your ways now, for after me no guide is coming with good news and warning."

2That is, "They do not pay heed to any warning nor reflect on their end nor listen to the admonition of the Messenger."

3"New Revelation": A new Surah of the Qur'an.

4The words of the original Text may also be interpreted as: "They do not take life seriously but treat it as a sport and a joke".

5This may also be translated as: "What, are you then being ensnared by his magic?"

The disbelievers, who were the chiefs of Makkah, whispered to one another to this effect: "Anyhow this man cannot be a Prophet because he is a human being like us and eats and drinks and has wife and children like us. We see nothing unusual about him that might distinguish him from us and make him worthy of the office of Prophethood. We, however, admit that there is some magic in his talk and personality. That is why any one who listens to him or goes near Him is charmed. Therefore, the best thing for you is not to listen to him at all, nor go near him, for listening to him or going near him will only be involving yourselves intentionally in his snare."

The reason why they accused the Holy Prophet of practicing magic was that even his antagonists were "charmed" by his personality. when they met him. Muhammad bin Ishaq (d. 152 A.H.) says, "Once `Utbah bin Rabi`ah, the father-in-law of Abu Sufyan, said to the chiefs that he wanted to see Muhammad and give him counsel. They said, `We have full confidence in you; you may go and have a talk with him.' Accordingly, he went to the Holy Prophet and said, `Dear nephew, you know that you were held in great honor here before this and you belong to a noble family. Why have you then brought this affliction to your people? You have caused discard among them: you consider your people to be fools: you speak ill of their religion and deities, and you declare their deceased forefathers to be disbelievers. My dear nephew, if your object is to become a rich man, we can give you so much wealth that you will become the richest man among us: if you are seeking a high rank, we will make you our chief, even our king, if you so like. But if you are suffering from a mental illness which makes you see illusions, we will have you treated by the best physicians.' He went on talking in this strain and the Holy Prophet remained silent. When he had a long talk, the Holy Prophet said, `Abul Walid, have you had your say or do you want to say anything more?' He replied that he had said what he had to say. Then the Holy Prophet said, `Now listen to me'. And he began to recite Surah Ha Mim Sajdah (Chapter XLI) after Bismillah and Utbah listened to him as if he had been charmed. When the Holy Prophet came to v. 38, he fell down in prostration. Then raising his head, he said, 'O Abul Walid, I have said whatever I had to say, and you have heard it. Now I have nothing more to say'. After this `Utbah walked back towards the chiefs who perceived him to be a changed man, and remarked, `By God ! his face shows that he is not the same man that he was when he went from here.' When he came to them, they asked, `What has been the result of your mission'? He answered, `By God, today I have heard a thing the like of which I had never heard before. By Allah! It is

not poetry nor sorcery nor divination. O people of Quraish, I advise you to leave him to himself. From what I have heard from him, I conclude that his Message is going to bring about a great revolution here. If the Arabs overcome him, you will stand absolved from the charge of murdering your own brother, and if he over-powers the Arabs, his sovereignty will be your own sovereignty and his honor your own honor.' The people answered, `By God! you, too, O Abul Walid, have been charmed by him'. To this he replied, `I have expressed my opinion. Now it is for you to accept or reject it'." (Ibn Hisham, Vol. I, pp. 313-314). Baihaqi, in his narration of the above event, makes this addition: "When the Holy Prophet recited v. 13: `If they turn away from your Message, say to them, I have warned you of the coming of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt that visited the `Ad and the Thamud', `Utbah placed his hand on the mouth of the Holy Prophet, saying, `For God's sake, have mercy on your own people'."

In this connection, ibn Ishaq has cited another event. Once a man from the clan of Arash came to Makkah with some camels and Abu Jahl bought them. When he demanded their price, he put him off by lame excuses. At last the man came to the Sanctuary of the Ka`bah and began to bewail publicly the dishonesty of Abu Jahl. The Holy Prophet was also sitting in a corner of the Sanctuary. The chiefs of the Quraish said to the man, "We cannot help you in any way in this matter; look, there is a man sitting: go to him and he will get you your money." Accordingly the Arashi went towards the Holy Prophet and the chiefs began to whisper jokingly, "Today there will be great fun!" When the man expressed his complaint before the Holy Prophet, he at once stood up and accompanied him to the house of Abu Jahl, followed by an informer of the chiefs. The Holy Prophet knocked at Abu Jahl's door, who asked from inside, "Who is there"? He answered, "Muhammad". Hearing this, he at once came out and the Holy Prophet said to him, "Pay this man his dues." Accordingly, Abu Jahl went in without uttering a word, brought the price of the camels and paid the man. At this the informer ran back to the Quraish and told them the whole story and said, "By God, today I have seen something which I had never seen before. When Abu Jahl came out, Muhammad asked him to pay the dues, and he obeyed him as if he were spell bound." (Ibn Hisham, Vol. II, pp. 29-30).

It was this "charm" of the personality, character and words of the Holy Prophet which these people considered to be the effects of "charm" and warned the people not to go near him for fear of his "magic."

6This was the answer of the Prophet to their false propaganda and whispering campaign. Instead of giving a `tit for tat' answer, he said, "My Lord will deal with you for He hears everything and knows everything."

7The background of this verse is this: "When the message of the Holy Prophet started gaining adherents, the chiefs of Makkah decided among themselves to start a propaganda campaign to counteract it. For this purpose they decided that every visitor to Makkah for pilgrimage should be approached and his mind so poisoned against the Holy Prophet that he dces not even go near and listen to him. Though this campaign continued throughout the year, in the pilgrimage season specially a large number of men were deputed to go to the tents of the pilgrims to warn them to beware of the Holy Prophet. Different sorts of

things were said against the Holy Prophet during these talks. Sometimes it was said that he was a sorcerer, or that he had fabricated the Qur'an himself but attributed it to Allah. Some would say that his `Revelations' were the words of an insane person and a bundle of incoherent ideas. Others would say that these were ordinary poetic ideas which were being dubbed as the words of Allah. All they wanted to do was to poison the minds of the visitors irrespective of the correctness of their own versions. They had no considered and definite opinion in the matter.

This false propaganda, however, had just the opposite effect. The name of the Holy Prophet became known throughout the length and breadth of the country through the nefarious activities of the chiefs of Makkah. A positive kind of approach from the Muslims would not have achieved the same publicity in years as was achieved so rapidly through this negative campaign of the Quraish. It set everybody thinking: "After all, who is this man against whom such a campaign of vilification has been started?" The serious type among them rather came to the conclusion that they must hear the Holy Prophet himself and said to themselves: "After all we are not children who can be easily enticed away".

For instance, Ibn Ishaq has related in detail the story of Tufail-bin-'Amr Dausi in his own words: "I was a poet of the clan of Daus. Once I went to Makkah and was, on my arrival there, surrounded by some people of the Quraish who told me all sorts of things against the Holy Prophet. So I grew suspicious and tried to avoid him as far as possible. The very next day, when I went to visit the Sanctuary, I saw him saying his prayer. By chance, I heard a few sentences and felt that what he was reciting were excellent words. I said to myself, `I am a poet and a sensible young man and no child who cannot discriminate between the right and the wrong. Why should I not therefore meet him and inquire what he is reciting?' Accordingly, 1 followed him to his house and said, `The people had so mch poisoned me against you that I had actually put cotton into my ears lest I should hear. your voice, but what I have heard today from you by chance was so appealing that I feel urged to inquire into your Message rather in detail. At this the Holy Prophet recited a passage of the Qur'an, as a result of which I embraced Islam there and then. On my return home I induced my father and wife to become Muslims, which they did, and then invited the people of my clan to embrace Islam with the result that till the Battle of the Trench as many as eighty families from my clan had entered the fold of Islam." (Ibn Hisham, Vol. II, pp. 22-24).

According to another tradition cited by Ibn Ishaq, the chiefs of the Quraish confessed in their private meetings that all their charges against the Holy Prophet were false. According to him, addressing a meeting, Nadr bin Harith once said, "You cannot overcome Muhammad by the methods you are adopting against him. When he was a young man you regarded him as your best-mannered person and looked upon him as your most truthful and honest man. Now that he has attained advanced age, you say, He is a sorcerer: he is a sooth-sayer: he is a poet: he is insane.' By God, he is not a sorcerer, for we very well know what kind of people the sorcerers are and what kind of tricks they resort to. By God, he is not a soothsayer, for we are fully aware of the guess-works of the sooth-sayers. By God, he is not a poet for we know what poetry is and can judge that his words cannot be classified under poetry in any sense. By God, he is not insane, for we all know what nonsensical things the insane people utter. Therefore, O

chiefs of the Quraish, let us think of some other plan to defeat him". After this, he himself proposed that stories from Persia like dose of Rustam and Asfandyar should be given publicity to divert the people's attention from the Qur'an. Accordingly, they put this scheme into practice and Nadr himself began to relate such stories before the people. (Ibn Hisham, Vol. l, pp. 320-321).

8This contains a concise answer to the demand for a sign to the effect

(1) You ask for Signs like the ones which were shown by the former Messengers but you forget that those obdurate people did not believe in spite of the Signs shown to them.

(2) While demanding a Sign, you fail to realize that the people, who disbelieved even after seeing a Sign, were inevitably destroyed.

(3) It is indeed a favor of Allah that He is not showing the Sign as demanded by you. Therefore, the best course for you would be to believe without seeing a Sign. Otherwise, you will meet the same doom that the former communities met, when they did not believe even after seeing the Signs.

9This is the answer to their objection: "This man is no more than a human being like yourselves", and therefore, cannot be a Messenger of God. They have been told that the former Prophets, too, whom you also recognize as Prophets, were human beings and were blessed with Revelations from Allah.

10That is, "You may have it testified by the Jews, who are the enemies of Islam like you, and are teaching you the ways to oppose it, that all the Messengers including Prophet Moses were human beings."

11History not only tells us that the former Messengers were human beings but it also contains a lesson that they all received Allah's succor as promised by Him and their enemies were completely destroyed. Therefore you should seriously consider the goal for which you are heading.

12This is a comprehensive answer to the various objections which were being raised in desperation by the disbelievers of Makkah against the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet, as if to say:"What is there in this Book that you cannot understand? Why don't you consider it in the right spirit? There is nothing contradictory in it: it discusses you and your own problems and affairs of life; it describes your own nature, origin and end; it discriminates between good and evil and presents high moral qualities which your own consciences endorse and confirm. Why don't you, then, use your minds to understand this simple and easy thing?"

13That is, “When they realized that Allah's scourge was actually coming”

14This is a very meaningful sentence. It may mean:

(1) "Examine this scourge minutely so that if someone asks you about it, you may be able to give an accurate account of it."

(2) "Hold your grand meetings as usual: perhaps your servants may come with folded hands before you to receive orders."

(3) "Hold your councils as before, perhaps people may still come to ask for your wise counsels."

15This was to refute their entire conception of life which was based on the assumption that man was free to do whatever he liked, and there was none to call him to account or take him to task: that there was no life in the Hereafter where one's good deeds would be rewarded and evil deeds punished. In other words, this meant that the whole universe had been created without any serious purpose and therefore there was no need to pay any heed to the Message of the Prophet.

16That is, "This world has been created with a definite purpose and not as a plaything; for, if he had wanted to enjoy a sport, We would have done so without creating a sentient, rational and responsible creature like you. Far be it from Us to put man to trial and conflict for the sake of mere fun."

17That is, "The object for which this world has been created is to stage a conflict between the Truth and falsehood. And you yourselves know that in this conflict falsehood has always been defeated and destroyed: You should, therefore, consider this reality seriously, for, if you build the system of your life on the false presumption that it is mere fun, you will meet with the same consequences as the former people did, who presumed that the world was a mere show and pastime. Therefore you should reconsider your whole attitude towards the Message which has come to you. Instead of making fun of it and scoffing at the Messenger, you should take a warning from the fate of the former peoples."

18From here begins the discourse on the confirmation of Tauhid and the refutation of shirk for these were the actual bases of the conflict between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers of Makkah. The line of argument is this: The whole system of the universe is a clear proof that there is One Allah Who is its Creator, Sovereign, Ruler, and Lord and it is a falsehood that there are many gods who are partners in His Kingdom and Sovereignty, or that there is a Supreme God Who has under Him some minor gods to conduct the affairs of His Kingdom. This proof is also based on the preceding verses in which it has been stated that the universe has not been created as a pastime or a plaything, but for a serious purpose and that there has always been a conflict between the Truth and falsehood, and falsehood has always been defeated and destroyed.

19That is, the angels whom the mushriks of Arabia believed to be the children of God and worshiped

them as partners in Godhead.

20That is, "They are engaged in His service day and night without grumbling or ever feeling wearied."

21This question has been posed to bring home to the disbelievers that when they themselves believed that there is no being other than Allah who can give life to inanimate matter, why do they then acknowledge other deities besides Allah?

22This concise sentence contains two arguments:

(1) The obviously simple argument is that no institution, no household, not to speak of the vast universe containing multitudes of countless distant stars, can function smoothly and properly, if it has two masters.

(2) The deeper argument is that the system of the whole universe, including that of the earth, is functioning according to a universal law. It could not work so even for a moment, if there had been no proper proportion, balance, harmony and coordination between the different powers and countless things. This is a clear proof that there is a universal and all-powerful law and system which binds and forces these powers and things to co-operate and coordinate between themselves with a perfect proportion and harmony and this could not have happened if there had been different independent rulers. The existence of such a system is itself a clear proof that there must be One All-Powerful Manager and Administrator governing and ruling the whole universe. For further details, please see E. N. 47 of Bani Isra'il (XVII).

23That is, "The Sovereign of the whole universe."

24The first two were rational arguments and this is a historical one. This means that the study of all the former Scriptures shows that the Creator of the universe is One Allah and He alone is worthy of service and worship, while "Your religion is neither supported by rational arguments nor by historical evidence."

25It is their lack of the knowledge of the Reality which has created this indifference towards the Message of the Prophet, and the same has made them heedless of the Message.

26"Offspring" here refers to the angels as is clear from v. 28. The disbelievers of Arabia believed that the angels were the daughters of God.

27These two verses refute the two reasons for which the mushriks had made the angels their deities:

(1) They took them for the offspring of Allah.

(2) They thought that if they worshiped the angels, they would be so pleased that they would intercede

with Allah on their behalf. (See X:18; XXXIX:3).

In this connection, it should also be noted that the Qur'an refutes the doctrine of intercession of the mushriks, saying, that their so-called intercessors are not qualified to intercede for anyone. This is so' because they have no knowledge of the hidden things, whereas Allah knows all that is hidden from or open to them. Therefore, the angels or Prophets or saints shall be allowed intercession only with the prior permission of Allah. As Allah alone has the power to hear or accept intercession, none else is entitled to divine worship or rights. For further details, please sec Ta Ha (XX): E. N.'s 85-86.

28From the wording of the Text, it appears that at first the whole universe was a single mass of matter; then it was split into different parts and the earth and the other heavenly bodies were formed. For fuller details, please see Ha Mim (XLI):E.N.'s 13-15

29From the wording of the Text, it appears that Allah made water the cause and origin of life. See also An-Nur (XXIV): 45.

30For explanation, see E. N. 12 of An-Nahl (XVI).

31"Open paths" are the passes between high mountains and the valleys and ravines made by the rivers in the mountainous regions and other natural ways that connect different regions on the earth.

32This is a very meaningful sentence. It may mean that the people may find paths for traveling on the earth, and it may also mean that the wisdom that underlies the skill and the system of their creation may guide them to the Reality.

33For explanation, see Al-Hijr (XV): E. N's 8 and 10-12.

34That is, "Those signs which are in the sky"

35The use of the words kullun (all) and yasbahun (float) in the plural (for more than two) indicates that not only the sun and the moon but all the heavenly bodies are floating in their own separate orbits and none of them is fixed or stationary. These verses (30-33) are capable of being interpreted in the modern scientific terms in accordance with the present day conceptions of Physics, Biology and Astronomy.

Here it should also be noted that vv. 19-23 refute shirk while vv. 30-33 present positive proofs of Tauhid. They imply that the creation and regular functioning of the universe clearly show that it is the work of One All-Powerful Creator, and no sensible person can say that it has been created as a there pastime for the sake of fun. When the fact is this and you see proofs of the Doctrine of Tauhid all around yourself, in the earth and heavens, why do you reject the Message of the Prophet and demand other Signs from him?"

36From here the same theme of the conflict between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers, that was interrupted by vv. 19-33, has been resumed.

37This is a brief answer to all those warnings and curses with which the Holy Prophet was being threatened and the conspiracies which the Quraish were hatching against him day and night. On the one hand, the women of the Quraish cursed him because according to them he had ruined their home life by enticing away their kith and kits; while on the other, the chiefs of the Quraish threatened hits with horrible consequences for the propagation of Islam. After the emigration to Habash especially, which almost affected every home of Makkah, these curses and threats increased all the more. This verse is meant to comfort and console the Holy Prophet as well so that he should continue his mission without any fear of their threats.

38That is, Allah is always putting human beings to test and trial both through adversity and affluence. This is to judge whether prosperity makes them proud, cruel and slaves of their lusts or they become grateful to Allah. On the other hand, He inflicts adversity upon them in order to see whether they remain within the prescribed and lawful limits or become low-spirited and down-hearted. A sensible person therefore should not be deluded by prosperity and adversity, but should keep their trial element in view and try to pass through it gracefully.

39It should be noted that this sentence contains only the reason why they scoffed at him, but does not refer to the expression of "scoff" itself. Obviously, the disbelievers must have been using some other words or expressions of derision to avenge themselves on the Holy Prophet for his rejecting their self-made deities.

40This is to rebuke the disbelieves, as if to say, "You cherish so much love of your self-made idols and false gods that you cannot tolerate anything against them; so much so that you scoff at the Messenger of Allah, but, as for you, you are not ashamed that you are stung to the quick when you hear the name of the Merciful and discard His mention with disdain."

41This is not the literal translation of the Text; its purport according to the Arabic usage is: "Man is a hasty and impatient creature by his very nature." The same thing has been stated in XVII:11: "Man is very hasty and impatient."

42From the succeeding sentences it is obvious that "Signs" here stands for the things that have been mentioned therein-the "threat" of the scourge of Allah, Resurrection and Hell. They made fun of these, as if to say: "This man threatens us with the scourge of Allah and the torment of the Day of Resurrection if we deny him and that we shall become fuel of Hell; but nothing of the sort has befallen us. We are as strong as ever and nothing seems to be happening".

43That is to say, "Who is there to protect and save you from the scourge of Allah if you are suddenly visited by it any time during the night or day?"

44In other words it means: "These people have been deluded by Our favor and Our provisions. They think they are enjoying prosperity and good life as their personal right and there is none to take it away from them. They have forgotten that there is God above them Who is able to make or mar their fortune".

45In this connection, see Ar-Ra`d (XIII): 41 and E. N. 60 thereof. Here it bears an additional meaning also: "Do they not see that an All-Powerful Being is showing His Signs every now and then everywhere on the earth in the form of famines, epidemics, floods, earthquakes and other calamities; millions of people are killed, habitations and harvests are destroyed and other damages are caused, which frustrate all human designs?"

46It means: "When they know that all the resources and provisions of life are in Our hands and that We can increase or decrease them as We will, have they the power and strength to defend themselves against Our punishment? Can they not see from these "Signs" that their power, prosperity and luxury are not everlasting and that there is an All-Powerful Allah to seize and punish them?"

47That is, "The same scourge which they are demanding to be hastened and of which they are making fun."

48See also vv. 8-9 and E.N.'s 8-9 of Al-A'araf (Vll). It is difficult for us to understand the exact nature of the "Balance". Anyhow it is clear that the "Balance" will weigh accurately all the human moral deeds instead of material things, and will help judge whether a man is virtuous or wicked and how much. The Qur'an has used this word to make mankind understand that every deed, good or bad, will be weighed and judged according to merit.

49From here begin the stories of the Prophets. If we consider these stories in the context in which they occur, it becomes plain that these have been related to impress the following themes:

(1) All the former Prophets were human beings: therefore there is nothing strange or unusual that a human being like Muhammad has been sent as a Messenger (Allah's peace be upon him).

(2) The Mission and teachings of this Prophet are the same as of those who were sent before him.

(3) All the Prophets had been granted a privileged position by Allah, Who blessed them with special favors. For instance, though they were made to suffer from hardships and persecutions for years, ultimately Allah heard their prayers and helped them in miraculous ways against their enemies and

persecutors.

(4) In spite of Allah's special favors on them they were no more than His humble servants and human beings and had no share whatever in Godhead; so much so that sometimes they committed errors of judgment, fell ill, were put to trials and even committed faults, for which they were called to account by Allah.

50All the three words have been used in praise of the Torah: (1) A Criterion which distinguished the Truth from falsehood. (2) A Light which showed the Right Way of life, and (3) An Admonition, which reminded the erring descendants of Adam to remember the lesson they had forgotten.

51Though it was sent for the good of all human beings, only the pious people, having these characteristics, could benefit from it.

52The Hour of "Resurrection".

53The Arabic word (rushd) is very comprehensive and means righteousness as well.

"We had blessed Abraham with discretion;" "The discretion he showed in discriminating between the right and the wrong etc. was not of his own acquirement but had been bestowed on him by Us." Al-Anbiyaa'

"We knew him well": "We knew that he was worthy of Prophethood; therefore We appointed him as such". According to VI:124: " .... Allah knows best whom to entrust with His Mission ...."It contains a subtle answer to the objection raised by the chiefs of the Quraish: "Why has Allah appointed this man (the Holy Prophet) to the office of Prophethood, when he is in no way superior to us?" This objection has been answered, as if to say, "The same objection might even have been raised against Prophet Abraham by his people, but We knew his capabilities. Therefore We selected him for Prophethood."

In this connection, please also see II: 124141, 258-260; VI: 74-84; IX: 114; XI: 69-76; XIV: 35-41; XV: 51-58 and XVI: 120-122 and the E.N's thereof.

54Before proceeding further it should be kept in mind that the incident from the history of Prophet Abraham has been cited here to refute the erroneous creeds of the Quraish. This was meant to hit them hard for they were the descendants of Prophet Abraham and were proud of their relationship with him. It was he who had built the Ka`abah which had become the center of the whole of Arabia and they, being its keepers, were its most important clan. Therefore, they could not remain indifferent to this answer.

55The literal translation will be: "Are you presenting the Truth before us, or just playing with us?" They were so sure of the truth of their creed that they could never imagine that anyone could be serious in

declaring it to be false.

56That is, "If you do not understand this by argument, I will present a practical proof that these idols are helpless and have no powers. Therefore, it is wrong to make them your deities."

57This was that practical proof. In the absence of the priests and attendants, Prophet Abraham entered their central Temple and broke all the idols to pieces.

58The pronoun in the original Text may be translated into "it" or "him". In the former case, it will refer to the chief idol and in the latter to Prophet Abraham. In the first case, it will imply a subtle sarcasm in order to make them realize that their creed of idol-worship was foolish, for obviously the chief idol could not break the minor idols. In the second case, it will refer to Prophet Abraham, who thought that they might turn to him about the "incident" and he might get an opportunity to have a frank talk with them about their absurd creed.

59This was exactly what Prophet Abraham expected to happen. He wished that the matter should not remain confined to the priests and the attendants but the common people also should be present there to witness that their deities were helpless and their priests were deluding them about their powers. The priests committed the same folly as was later committed by Pharaoh when he arranged an encounter between Prophet Moses and the magicians in the open in front of the multitudes of the common people, and the former got an opportunity to show publicly the miracle of the staff which shattered the illusory, magical tricks of the magicians.

60The very sentence, "You may ask them, if they can speak", is a clear proof that it was not a lie when Prophet Abraham said, "All this has been done by their chief." What he intended by this was to make them realize and confess that their idols were helpless because they could do nothing to protect themselves, and could not even speak. It is clear that when a person poses an unreal question for the sake of argument in order to bring home the fact that the position taken by the other party is untenable, it cannot be considered as a lie; firstly, because the speaker himself never intended it to be a lie, and secondly, because the addressees also knew that it was not a lie.

The foregoing remarks have been necessitated because of a "tradition" that Prophet Abraham told three "lies" in his life, of which one is the above mentioned event. The second "lie" is contained in XXXVII: 89: "I am indisposed", and the third "lie" is not contained in the Qur'an but in the Bible that he declared his wife to be his sister. (Gen. 12:12,13, 18;19). It is a pity that this "tradition" has given rise to two divergent opinions. The orthodox traditionalists actually believe that Prophet Abraham told these lies just because an "authentic tradition" says so. They do not consider that it is far better to discard the "tradition" according to which a Prophet is accused of being a "liar". On the other hand, those who are against the Traditions, discard all of them just because this solitary tradition, which has been reported as authentic by

Bukhari and Muslim, is unreliable on the very face of it. Obviously it needs no elaborate arguments to prove that all the traditions cannot be discarded just because one or a few of them are unreliable. As regards the upholders of the first opinion, they have gone to the other extreme and think that a tradition can be discarded in spite of the authenticity of its reporters for cogent reasons. They do this without reference to the contents of the tradition itself. But if the text of the tradition itself clearly shows that such a thing could not have been said by the Holy Prophet, there is no reason to insist that it should be accepted as authentic merely because its reporters are authentic.

This, tradition is unreliable for other reasons also. As has already been shown, the first "lie" is no lie at all. As regards the second "lie", ("I am indisposed"); it cannot be considered as a lie unless it is proved beyond doubt that Prophet Abraham was perfectly healthy at that time, and the text does not testify this. As regards the third "lie", the event stated in the Bible in chapter 12 of Genesis is absurd on the face of it. When Prophet Abraham went to Egypt with his wife Sarah, he was, according to the Bible itself, 75 years old and his wife was 65. Therefore the very age of Sarah is a clear proof that she could not be a "fair woman to look upon" to force Prophet Abraham to pose that she was his sister in order to save his life. The tradition under discussion, which accuses Prophet Abraham to be guilty of telling a lie, has accordingly no basis at all and cannot be taken as reliable in spite of its authentic reporters.

61Literally the original Text means: "They were turned down upon their heads." Some commentators have interpreted it to mean: "They hung down their heads with shame". But this does not fit in the context and the wording of the Text. The right interpretation would be: "When they considered the answer of Prophet Abraham, they realized that they themselves were in the wrong, because they had set up helpless idols as deities, which could not even speak a word as to who had broken them. But soon after this, they were overpowered by obduracy and ignorance which perverted their minds and they again relapsed into crookedness."

62Though this is one of those miracles which have been clearly stated in the Qur'an, there are people who try to "prove" that there was no such miracle at all. According to this passage (vv. 68-70), Prophet Abraham was actually threatened to be burnt alive and he was accordingly thrown into the burning fire; but Allah ordered the fire to become cool and harmless for him. In the face of the clear words of the Qur'an, these people deny this miracle because according to them it is impossible even for Allah to go beyond the routine of the physical laws. They say that miracles cannot appeal to the rationalists of the modern age, and therefore these should be interpreted in accordance with physical laws. They forget that according to the Qur'an, Allah is able to do everything, and He does extraordinary and unusual things which cannot be explained by "science". Therefore they should accept the Qur'an as it is or discard it, but they should not twist it to suit their so-called rationalism.

63According to the Bible, Prophet Abraham had two brothers, Nahor and Haran; Prophet Lot was the son of Haran (Gen. 11:26), and he was the only person to believe in Prophet Abraham. (XXIX: 26).

64The "blessed land" refers to Syria and Palestine, which contains both material and spiritual blessings. It is one of the most fertile regions in the world; moreover, it was blessed for two thousand years with more Prophets than any other region of the world.

65That is, "We made his son a Prophet and his grandson too".

66This important event of the life of Prophet Abraham has found no mention whatever in the Bible. In fact nothing about his life in `Iraq -his conflict with Nimrod, his father and the community at large, his efforts to eradicate idolatry, the incident of his being cast into the fire, which ultimately led to his forced exile from the country-is mentioned anywhere in the Bible. The Bible merely mentions his migration, and that too, in a manner as if a family was migrating from one country to another in search of livelihood. There is another interesting difference between the Qur'an and the Bible. According to the Qur'an, the father of Abraham, who was a mushrik, was foremost in tyrannizing over his son, but the Bible gives a different account, which is as follows:

"Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. But Sarai was barren; she had no child. And Terah took Abram 'his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and settled there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran." (Gen. 11:27-32).

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And 1 will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12: 1-3).

The Talmud, however, gives quite a few details about the life of Prophet Abraham about the period of his stay in `Iraq, which are generally the same as given in the Qur'an, but there is a glaring discrepancy in some of the important events. In fact, one can clearly feel that the account given in the Talmud is full of heterogeneous and hypothetical things while the one given in the Qur'an is most clear and contains nothing unworthy of Prophet Abraham. We reproduce below the account as given in the Talmud so that the reader may know the difference between the Quranic and Jewish versions. This will also remove the misunderstanding of those who think that the Qur'an has borrowed stories from the Bible or Jewish literature.

According to the Talmud, "The wise men saw a large star in the sky on the night Abram was born and they advised Nimrod to kill the child born in the house of Terah. The King decided to kill the child but

Terah hid his child and had a servant's son killed in exchange. Terah thereupon hid his wife and child in a cave where they lived for ten years. In the 11th year Abram was taken by Terah to Noah, where he lived under the guidance of Noah and his son Shem for 39 years. During the same period Abram married his niece Sarai, who was 42 years his junior. (The Bible does not mention that Sarai was the niece of Abram; moreover, the difference in their ages is mentioned as ten years). (Gen. 11: 29, 17: 17).

The Talmud then says, "Abram left Noah at the age of 50 and came back to his father. Here he found that his father was an idolatry and had twelve idols in the house according to the twelve months of the year. He tried to preach to his father against idolatry but when the latter did not listen to him, Abram one day broke all the idols in the house. Seeing this Terah went straight to Nimrod and complained that the son who was born in his house 50 years ago had misbehaved and broken the idols. He wanted the King's verdict on this. Nimrod sununoned Abram for interrogation, but the replies given by Abram were straight, terse and clear. Nimrod sent him to jail and then referred the matter to the Council for a decision. The Council decided that Abram should be burnt to death. A fire was accordingly prepared and Abram was cast into it. His brother and father-in-law Haran was also similarly cast into the fire. Haran was punished because Nimrod enquired of Terah as to why he had another child killed in place of Abram when he wanted to kill Abram on the day of his birth. Terah replied that this was done at the instigation of Haran. Nimrod accordingly let off Terah but threw Haran into the fire along with Abram. Haran was burnt to death instantly but people saw that Abram was walking unhurt through the flames. When Nimrod was informed of it, he witnessed it with his own eyes and cried out: `O man of the God of Heaven, come out of the fire and stand before me'. Thereupon, Abram came out and Nimrod became one of his .believers and gave him many costly presents. After this, according to the Talmud, Abram stayed in `Iraq for two more years when Nimrod saw a dreadful dream and the astrologers told him that the destruction of his empire .would come through Abram and that he should, therefore, put him to death. Nimrod sent people to kill Abram but Abram came to know of the plot before-hand through Eleazar, a slave presented to him by Nimrod himself. Abram accordingly fled and took refuge with Noah where Terah also met him off and on secretly. The father and the son at last decided to leave the country and Noah and his son Shem also approved of their plan. Accordingly, Terah along with his son Abram and his grandson Lot and his grand-daughter and son's wife Sarai, left U: and went to Haran." (H. Polano: The Talmud Selections, London, pp. 30-42).

Can a reasonable person after reading this account of the Talmud ever imagine that this could be a source book for the story as given in the Qur'an?

67The original Arabic word hukm is very comprehensive. It means judgment, wisdom and discretion, and authority from Allah. `Ilm stands for the revealed knowledge of the Truth. Thus, "We bestowed hukm and `ilm on Lot": "We appointed Lot as a Prophet". (For the story of Lot, see VII: 80-84; Xl: 7083; XV: 57-74 and the E.N.'s there of).

68This refers to Prophet Noah's prayer which he at last made after having tried his utmost to reform his people: "Lord, help me for I have been overpowered". (LIV: 10), and "Lord, do not leave even a single

disbeliever on the earth." (LXXIX 26).

69"Great calamity" may either refer to living a miserable life among the wicked people, or to the Flood. (For the story of Prophet Noah, see VII: 59-64; X: 72-74; X1: 25-48, and XVII: 3 and the E.N.'s thereof).

70There is no mention of this event in the Bible nor in the Jewish literature. According to the Muslim commentators, it happened like this: The goats of one person entered into the field of another person at night. The latter brought his complaint to Prophet David who decided that the strayed goats should be given to the owner of the field. Prophet Solomon, however, differed with this and opined that the goats should remain with the owner of the field up to the time that the former tilled and prepared the field as before. In regard to this Allah says, "We led Solomon to the right decision". As regards the legal aspect of the matter we cannot say with certainty what is the Islamic law in such a case nor is there any Tradition of the Holy Prophet to explain or support it. That is why the jurists have differed about it.

It should, however, be noted that in this context, the incident has been cited to show that the Prophets were after all human beings in spite of their God given powers and abilities. In this case, Prophet David committed an error of judgment because he was not guided by Allah as was Prophet Solomon, though both of them were Prophets. In the succeeding passage the wonderful powers of both have been mentioned to show that they were God-given and did not snake anyone a god.

Incidentally, we learn froth this verse that if two judges give different decisions about one and the same case, both of them will be regarded as righteous, though the decision of only one of them will be correct, provided that both are duly qualified for sitting in judgment on the case. The Holy Prophet has stated the same principle more elaborately. In a Tradition of Bukhari, he is reported by 'Amar bin 'As to have said, "If a judge does his very best to arrive at the right decision, he will get a double reward in case of a right judgment and a single reward if his judgment is wrong." According to another Tradition, cited by Abu Da'ud and Ibn Majah, on the authority of Buraidah, he is reported to have said, "Judges are of three kinds and only one of them will go to Paradise: the one who recognizes the Truth and decides according to it. On the other hand, the one who recognizes the Truth but gives his decision against it, will go to Hell, and he too, who sits in judgment on a case without the necessary knowledge (and competence). "

71From the wording of the Text, it is clear that "the mountains and the birds" were not subjected to Prophet David but were joined with him in glorifying Allah. This is also supported by XXXVIII:I9: "We had subdued the mountains by Our Command so that they praised Us with him (David) in the morning and evening, and the birds too, which gathered together and repeated Our praise with him". And, according to XXXIV: 10: "We commanded the mountains to repeat Our praise with him and also the birds to do the same. " We are of the opinion that it means this: "When Prophet David sang hymns of Allah's praise and glory, in his rich and sweet voice, the mountains echoed back his melodies and the birds gathered round him and the whole scene became charming." Our interpretation is supported by this Tradition:

"Once when Hadrat Abu Musa Ash`ari, who had an extremely sweet voice, was reciting the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet, who was passing by, stood and listened to him for a long time. When he finished the recital, the Holy Prophet remarked: 'This man has been granted a portion of the melody of David'."

72According to XXXIV: 10-11, it was like this: "....And We made the iron soft for him (and commanded him): `Make coats of mail complete in every way, and arrange the plates properly....'". This shows that Allah had made Prophet David an expert in the use of iron, and had especially taught him the art of an armorer for defense purposes. This fact is confirmed by archaeological and historical researches, for according to these the iron-age in the world started between 1200 and 1000 BC and this was precisely the period of Prophet David. At tirst the Hittites in Syria and Asia Minor, who flourished between 2000 and 1200 BC, discovered a method of melting and molding iron, but they guarded it as a close secret from the world, and it could not be put to common use. Later on, the Philistines came to know of it, but they too guarded it as a secret. The incessant defeats suffered by the Israelites at the hands of the Hittites and the Philistines before King Saul, were due mainly to the use of chariots of iron in their wars by the latter. (Joshua, 17:16; Judges, 1: 19, 4: 2-3). In 1020 BC when Saul became ruler over the Israelites by Allah's Command, he subdued the Canaanites and recaptured most of Palestine. After him Prophet David (1004-965 BC) not only annexed the whole of Palestine and Jordan to the Israeli kingdom but a major portion of Syria as well. This was the time when the secret of armor making closely guarded by the Hittites and the Philistines, became well known and cheaper articles of daily use began to be made. The recent archaeological excavations conducted in Edom, to the south of Palestine, which is rich in iron ore, have brought to light furnaces for melting and molding iron. The furnace excavated near Ezion-geber, a port on the Gulf of `Aqabah, in the time of Prophet Solomon, seems to have been built on the principles which are used in the modern blast furnaces. It is therefore natural that Prophet David must have first of all utilized this discovery for war purposes, because a little earlier the hostile Canaanites around his kingdom had made life really difficult for his people. The Bible also says that Prophet David was an expert in the art of melting and using iron for war purposes. (See Joshua, 17: 16; Judges, 1:19 and 4: 2-3).

73For further details about Prophet David, please see II:251 and XVII: 55 and the E.N.'s thereof.

74This is also explained in XXXIV: 12: "And for Solomon We had subjected the wind which covered a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening", and in XXXVIII: 36: "So We subjected the wind to him. It blew softly at his bidding whither-soever he wanted it to blow." Thus it is clear that the wind was so subjected to Prophet Solomon that the voyages to places at one month's sea journey could be performed conveniently, because a favorable wind was always blowing for his ships to and from those places.

It is confirmed by the Bible that Prophet Solomon had developed sea trade on a large scale. (I Kings, 10: 22). On the one side, his trade ships sailed from Ezion-geber, through the Red Sea, towards Yaman and other southern and eastern lands, and on the other, his naval fleet called Thar-shish, sailed on the Mediterranean to the western countries. The great furnace which he had built at Ezion-geber for melting

and molding ores extracted from the copper and iron mines in the `Arabah in Edom, has been confirmed by modem archaeological researches as well. This molten iron and copper was used in building ships besides being put to other uses. The Qur'an refers to this when it says: "....and We made a fountain of molten copper to flow for him (Solomon)...." (XXXIV:12).

As ,regards the subjection of the wind, it may mean that Allah, by His special favor, had so arranged that the wind-and sea voyages in those days depended entirely on wind-was always favorable for Prophet Solomon's fleet. But if we take the literal meaning of v. 81: "it sped at his bidding", there will be no harm, for Allah is able to give such powers to any of His servants He pleases.

75The subjection of "satans" has been explained in XXXIV:12-13. Incidentally, these verses of the Qur'an clearly show that the satans and jinns who worked for Prophet Solomon belonged to quite a different genus from human beings. Therefore, it is wrong to pervert the Qur'an to prove that "they were human beings" as some modernist commentators have tried to do. It is obvious from the wording of the Qur'an and the context in which the story of the jinns has been related, that they were not human beings. Had they been so this would have been no special favor to Solomon, because human beings had already built the gigantic monuments like the pyramids of Egypt.

76There is a wide divergence of opinion concerning the personality, period and nationality of Prophet Job. Some commentators opine that he was an Israelite, while others think that he was an Egyptian or an Arab who lived before Prophet Moses, or during the time of Prophets David and Solomon. As all these conjectures are based on the Book of Job, which is self-contradictory and against the Qur'an, nothing can be said about him with certainty, but in the light of the Book of Isaiah (8th century BC) and the Book of Ezekiel (6th century BC), which are more trustworthy works, he lived in the 9th century BC or even earlier. As regards his nationality, the context in which his name occurs in IV: 163 and VI: 84, it may be assumed that he was an Israelite. According to a saying of Hadrat Wahb bin Munabbih, he might have been from the offspring of Esau, a son of Prophet Isaac.

77The words of the prayer are note-worthy. Prophet Job mentions his distress but does not say anything more to his Lord except: "Thou art most Merciful" This is a great proof of his fortitude, noble and contented nature.

78How his disease was cured has been explained in XXXVIII: 42: "Stamp the ground with your foot: here is cool water for you to wash with and to drink." From this it appears that no sooner did he stamp the ground than a spring gushed forth. He took bath and drank the water and was cured of his disease. The nature of the treatment hints that he was suffering from a skin disease. This is confirmed by the Bible as well. "Satan smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. "- (Job, 2:7).

79It will be worth-while to compare the high character of Prophet Job as given in the Qur'an with that in

the Book of Job in the Bible. The Qur'an presents him as a veritable picture of patience and fortitude and an-excellent model for the worshippers of Allah, but his general picture presented in the Book of Job is that of a man who is full of grievance against God: "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived .... Let them curse (the night) that curse the day, ... Because it shut not the doors of my mother's womb, nor did sorrow from mine eyes. Why died I not from the womb?^ (Chapter 3)..... "Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balance together.....the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me." (Chapter 6).... "I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself? And why dost thou not pardon my transgressions, and take away my iniquity? (Chapter 7: 20-21).

His three friends try to console him and counsel patience, but in vain. He says, "My soul is weary of my life....I will speak in the bitterness of my soul" (10:1).... "I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all." (16: .... "So these three men ceased to answer Job ..... Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.... against Job.... because he justified himself rather than God." (32:1-3), but he also failed to console him....Then the Lord himself came down and condemned the three friends and Elihu and rebuked Job and then forgave him, accepted him and blessed him." (Chapters 41, 42). It should be noted that in the first two chapters of this Book, Prophet Job is presented as a perfect and upright man who feared God, but in the following chapters he becomes an embodiment of grievance against God, as though the estimate of Satan about him was correct and that of God incorrect. Thus this Book itself is a clear evidence that it is neither the Word of God nor of Prophet lob but had been written afterwards by some literary man and incorporated in the Bible as a scripture.

80For explanation, see Surah Maryam (XIX): E. N. 33.

81Zul-Kifl is not the name but the title of a righteous man, which literally means 'a man of luck'. Here it does not refer to worldly prosperity but to his high character and ranks in the Hereafter. He has also been mentioned by this title in XXXVIII: 48. There are different opinions about his identity and nationality: some have regarded him as Zacharias (but this is not correct because Zacharias has been mentioned separately in v. 89); others say he was Elias, or Joshua, son of Nun, or Elisha, but this again is incorrect, because in Surah Sad (XXXVIII: '49) Elisha and Zul-Kifl have been mentioned as separate personalities; some others say that he was Prophet Job's son, named Bishr, who succeeded him as Prophet.

Allamah Alusi says, "The Jews claim that he was Ezekiel who was appointed to Prophethood during the captivity (597 BC) of the Israelites and he performed his mission in a habitation by the side of the Chebar canal."

These conflicting opinions indeed confirm nothing. The modern commentators, however, are inclined to believe that he was Ezekiel, though there is no convincing argument about it. This opinion is sound

because his description in this verse "that he was a patient and righteous man and was blessed by God" is fully confirmed by the Book of Ezekiel. He was one of those people who had been taken prisoner by Nebuchadnezzer at the downfall of Jerusalem, who settled the Israeli exiles at Tel-abib by the river Chebar in Iraq. Here, in 594 BC, Ezekiel was raised to Prophethood when he was hardly 30, and he continued preaching the message of God to the exiled Israelites as well as to the iniquitous people and rulers of Jerusalem for full 22 years. In the 9th year of his mission, his wife whom he called "the desire of his eyes" died, but when the people came to mourn her death, he warned them of the wrath of God and the impending disaster. (Chapter 24: I5-21). The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel in the Bible is one of those scriptures which appear to be genuine and divinely' inspired.

82That is, Jonah. Literally Zun-Nun means “the man of the fish." He was called so because he was devoured by a fish by the Command of Allah. (Also See XXXV11:142 and X:98 and its E.N.'s 98-100).

83Prophet Jonah left his people before he received Allah's Command for migration.

84He presumed that he should leave, the place which was going to be visited by the scourge of Allah. This was not by itself an offence but it was an offence for a Prophet to leave the place of his Mission without the permission of Allah.

85"....darkness": the darkness in the belly of the fish and the darkness of the sea over and above it."

86"Made his wife fit": "We cured his wife of sterility." As "Thou alone art the best Inheritor", I shall have no grief even if Thou dost not give the any child. (For further details, please see III:37-41 and XIX: 2-14 and the E.N.'s thereof).

87It will be worth while to reiterate the reasons why the stories of the Prophets have been cited in this surah.

(1) The story of Prophet Zacharias has been cited to impress on the minds that all the Prophets were human beings and servants of Allah and had no tinge of Godhead in them. They had no power to bestow children upon others because they themselves had to pray to Allah for children for themselves.

(2) The story of Prophet Jonah has been cited to show that even a great Prophet like him did not go unnoticed when he committed an error in regard to Allah's Message. But when he repented, Allah, by His grace, delivered him alive from the belly of the fish.

(3) The mention of Prophet Job has been made to show that even Prophets were put to hard trials and afflictions and even they had to beg Allah to restore them to health, not to speak of curing others of diseases.

Along with these, the other important thing which is meant to be impressed is that all the Prophets believed in the doctrine of Tauhid. That is why they begged and prayed to One Allah alone to fulfill their needs and requirements. Though they met with trials, Allah helped them and granted their prayers in supernatural and miraculous ways.

88That is, "Mary (Allah's peace be upon her)".

89It should be noted that the incident of the birth of Prophet Jesus was not different from that of Prophet Adam, because the wording of the Arabic Text in the two cases is almost identical: (See XXXVIII: 71-72). Besides this in verse 91 , almost similar words have beets used in regard to the birth of Jesus Christ. (See also IV: l71 and LXVI:12). Allah Himself has stated that the birth of Prophet Jesus was just like the birth of Prophet Adam: "In the sight of Allah, the case of the birth of Jesus is like that of Adam, whom He created out of dust and said, 'Be', and he was." (III: 59).In the light of these verses, we may conclude that Allah uses words like: "We breathed into him or her of Our spirit" for miraculous births. (For fuller details please see IV: E.N's 212-213).

90That is, "The mother and the son were not partners of God nor had any share whatever in Godhead, but were a Sign from among the Signs of God." (See XIX: E.N. 21 also).

91In this verse, the addressees are the whole of mankind. It means: "O mankind, in reality all of you belonged to one community and had one and the same religion and all the Prophets brought one and the same Creed which was this: `Allah alone is the Lord of all mankind: therefore they should worship Him alone. '" But afterwards the people corrupted this Creed and invented and adopted the things they liked and mixed their own theories, whims and practices in it. This brought into being countless communities and religions. Thus it is absolutely wrong to say that a particular Prophet was the founder of a particular religion and another of another, and so on. The very fact that different religions came into being at different periods of tithe, does not prove that the Prophets created these differences. It is obvious that the Prophets of God could not found different religions nor could they teach their followers to worship any beings other than Allah.

92The Arabic Text of v. 95 may be interpreted in three ways:

(I) The community which is once destroyed by the scourge of Allah can never have a second or new life.

(2) After its destruction, its people are not given a second chance for their test: then they shall be presented in the Court of Allah for final judgment.

(3) When a community transgresses the last limits in its wickedness, injustices and disobedience, and Allah ordains to destroy it,no other chance of repentance is given to it because it becomes incapable of

turning back to right guidance.

93For the details about Gog and Magog, see E.N.'s 62 and 69 of Surah A1-Kahf (XVIII). They will be let loose in the sense that they will swoop down on the regions of the earth like a beast of prey which is set free from its cage suddenly. "The time of the fulfillment of the true promise" will come on the eve of Resurrection and the appearance of Gog and Magog will be a sign of it. In a Tradition related in Muslim, by Huzaifah bin Asid Ghifari, the Holy Prophet said, "Resurrection will not take place until ten signs appear:

(1) The smoke. (2) Dajjal. (3) Daabat-ul-Ard. (4) rising of the sun from the west. (5) coming down of Jesus, son of Mary. (6) sudden attack of Gog and Magog. (7-9) three land slides-one in the east, the second in the west and the third in Arabia. (10) the flare up of a great fire from Yaman which will drive the people to the Plain of Resurrection. In another Tradition the Holy Prophet stated that after the swoop of Gog and Magog, Resurrection will. be so near that it may take place at any moment just as a pregnant woman might deliver the child at any moment, in the day or night, after her term has expired. But the reference to the appearance of Gog and Magog in the Qur'an and Hadith does not indicate that they will swoop on mankind jointly; it may be that they will clash against each other near the time of Resurrection and their mutual conflict might result in a universal catastrophe and destruction.

94"We were heedless of this" contains a kind of excuse in it, as if to say, "The Prophets warned us of the Day of Resurrection but we were wrongdoers and paid no heed to their warning".

95We learn from traditions that `Abdullah bin Azza'ara raised an objection in this connection, saying, "According to this not only our deities but Prophets Jesus and `Uzair and the Angels also will become fuel for Hell because they are also worshiped." The Holy Prophet replied, "Yes, everyone who would approve of his own worship instead of Allah's will go to Hell along with those who worshiped him." He meant to say, "There is no reason why Prophets Jesus and `Uzair and the Angels should go to Hell because they never approved that they should be worshiped instead of Allah, and were not responsible for this, on the other hand, they taught people to worship Allah alone". Of course, those who tried to become deities and became partners in the shirk of others will certainly go to Hell along with their worshipers. Likewise those, who induced others to take deities other than Allah, will go to Hell. Satan comes under this category for he induces others to make deities. Thus it is Satan who is made the real deity whom they obey and commit shirk Besides this, idols of stone and wood and other accessories of shirk will also be thrown into Hell along with the mushriks so that the latter should see that their deities were becoming a cause of the intensity of their torture of fire instead of becoming their intercessors.

96The Arabic word (zafir) means `hard breathing' because of excessive heat, hard work and weariness.

97These will be the people who practiced virtue and righteousness in this world. Allah has already

promised that they will be kept safe from the torture and will be granted salvation.

98That is, "The time of mustering and going before Allah will be very dreadful for the common people but the righteous people will have full peace of mind because everything will be happening according to their expectations. Their faith and the righteous deeds they did in the world, will help console them by the grace of Allah and, instead of grief and sorrow, they will be filled with the hope that they are going to get their promised rewards."

99The interpretation of this verse has given rise to a great misunderstanding. Some people have tried to interpret it in a way, which is entirely opposed to the ideology of the Qur'an. They interpret it to mean: "The inheritance of the kingdom and the resources of the earth are given to the righteous people alone in this worldly life, and upon them alone Allah showers His favours and blessings." Then they apply this formula conversely and conclude that the gift of this inheritance of the earth is the sole criterion between the "righteous" and the "unrighteous" men. The righteous is the one who inherits the sovereignty of the earth and the unrighteous the one who is deprived of this inheritance. But when they apply their formula in the historical perspective, they find that most of those nations which have inherited the earth in the past and are inheriting it today, have been and are mostly disbelieving, mushriks, atheists and immoral, and that these are not the characteristics of the righteous people when judged by the criterion put forward by the Qur'an. From Nimrod and Pharaoh to the present day communist despots, who have been inheriting the earth, were and are unbelievers and the enemies of God and therefore could not be considered righteous, according to the Quranic formula. Faced with this situation, they start arguing that there must be some error in the conception of the "righteous" which should be such as would fit all the inheritors of the earth whether they were Caliphs like Abu Bakr Siddiq and `Umar Faruq or Chingez and Halaku. This research leads them to the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest and they assume fitness to be a synonym of "righteousness".

According to this new conception or definition of "righteousness", the proposition would plainly mean: "Any person, or a group of persons, who is capable of conquering and subduing countries by military force and has the ability to exploit the resources of the earth successfully is a `righteous servant of Allah' and his achievement is a criterion and message of righteousness and worship for other human beings to follow. Consequently, if they fail to achieve the inheritance of the earth, they will neither be regarded among the righteous nor among the servants of Allah". As a result of this interpretation of the verse, and this conception of "righteousness" and "service", they were confronted with the interpretation of some basic and fundamental articles of the Islamic Faith. For instance, according to the Qur'an, no deed, howsoever good, could be regarded as righteous without belief in Allah, the Hereafter, the Prophets and the Books. Moreover, the invitation of the Prophet to accept the moral and legal systems of Islam would become meaningless. Then these people could not reconcile their interpretation with the teachings of the Qur'an that obedience to the Holy Prophet and the Commandments of Allah was absolutely essential for a righteous tnan and that the lack of this would make a person a disbeliever and a transgressor who deserved the wrath of Allah. If they had faced this problem boldly and honestly, they would have realized

that their interpretation was wrong, but instead of this, they very impudently changed the universally accepted conception of Faith, Islam, Tauhid, Prophethood and the Hereafter in order to make these basic articles of the Faith fit in with their interpretation of this verse. Thus, they turned all the teachings of the Qur'an upside down and tampered with its meaning without the least hesitation. Now let us consider their interpretation and point out its errors:

(1) Their interpretation contradicts the teachings of the Qur'an as a whole, for according to these virtue, piety and goodness do not comprise material progress and ability to rule over the land. Moreover, if the Quranic word "Salih" (virtuous, good) is regarded as synonymous with "Sahib Salahiyyat" (i.e. possessor of fitness and competence), this one verse will clash with the whole of the Qur'an.

(2) They isolate this verse from its context and ascribe to it whatever meaning they like; otherwise, they would have seen that the "inheritance" referred to in the context is the promise to the Believers which is to be fulfilled in the Hereafter, and thus has nothing to do with inheritance in this world.

If this verse is interpreted in the context in which it occurs, it becomes very plain from the preceding verses that this promise to the righteous people holds good for the life in the Hereafter. This thing has been made more explicit in XXXIX: 73-74. According to this passage (which is definitely about life in the Hereafter), when the pious people will enter into Paradise, they will say: "God be praised, Who has fulfilled His promise and made us heirs to the land."

Now let us consider this matter in the light of the Psalms (whether the Book of Psalms in the Bible is genuine or tampered with, because the real Psalms of Prophet David are nowhere available) to which this verse refers. According to 37:9-29: "....evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the ' earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace....and their inheritance shall be for ever....The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." Thus the Psalms also confirm word for word verse 105. It is obvious that "(They shall) dwell therein for ever" refers to the life in the Hereafter.

As regards the inheritance of the earth in this worldly life, Allah gives it as a heritage to those of His servants whom He pleases (VII:128), irrespective of whether they are believers or disbelievers, righteous or wicked, not as a reward but for their trial. "....Your Lord will make you rulers on the earth, and then He will see how you conduct yourselves." (VII:129). The heritage of the earth in this worldly life is neither permanent nor everlasting. It is merely bestowed as a trial for different communities. On the other hand, the heritage of the "land" referred to in v. 105 is permanent and for ever and, according to the Qur'an, it will be bestowed on the basis of this formula: "The land belongs to Allah and He will make only His righteous servants heirs to it not for their test but as a permanent reward for the righteous attitude they adopted in this worldly life."

100This verse (107) can also be translated as: "We have sent you only as a blessing for the people of the world". In both cases it will mean that the appointment of the Holy Prophet is indeed a blessing and mercy of Allah to the whole world. This is because he aroused the neglectful world froth its heedlessness and gave it the knowledge of the criterion between truth and falsehood, and warned it very clearly of both the ways of salvation and. ruin. This fact has been stated here 'to tell the disbelievers of Makkah that they were quite wrong in their estimate of the Holy Prophet that he was an affliction and distress for them because they said, "This man has sown seeds of discard among our clans and separated near relatives from each other." They have been told here, "O foolish people, you are wrong to presume that he is an affliction for you; but he is in reality a blessing and mercy of Allah for you."

101That is, "I do not know the time and the form of the punishment of Allah for your rejection of the Message. It tray come at any time in any shape."

102This refers to their secret schemes, plots and their whispering campaign which have been mentioned in v. 3. There, too, the Prophet had said, "My Lord has the knowledge of everything that is said in the heavens or the earth for He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing". (v. 4). This was to warn them that they would be taken to task for these things, too.

103This was a "trial" because the delay in the "punishment" was deluding them into believing "All the things put forward by the Prophet are false: had he been a true Prophet of Allah we would have been punished long before this for our disbelief." They did not realize that the reason for the delay was that Allah willed to give them respite for mending their ways.

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22. Surah Al Hajj (The Hajj)

Name

This Surah takes its name from v. 27.

Period of Revelation

As this Surah contains the characteristics of both the Makki and the Madani Surahs, the commentators have differed as to its period of revelation, but in the light of its style and themes we are of the opinion that a part of it (vv. 1-24) was sent down in the last stage of the Makki life of the Holy Prophet a little before migration and the rest (vv. 25-78) during the first stage of his Madani life. That is why this Surah combines the characteristics of both the Makki and the Madani Surahs.

The sudden change of the style from v. 25 shows that probably vv. 25-78 were sent down in the month of Zul-Hijjah in the very first year after *Hijrah*. This is indicated by vv. 25-41 and confirmed by the occasion of the revelation of vv. 39-40. It appears that the month of Zul-Hijjah must have brought to the immigrants nostalgic memories of their homes in Makkah and naturally they must have thought of their Sacred City and of their Hajj congregation there, and grieved to think that the *mushrik* Quraish had debarred them from visiting the Sacred Mosque. Therefore, they might even have been praying for and expecting Divine permission to wage war against those tyrants who had expelled them from their homes and deprived them of visiting the House of Allah and made it difficult for them to follow the way of Islam. It was at this psychological occasion that these verses were sent down. That is why the purpose for which *Masjid-al- Haram* was built has been specifically mentioned. It has been made plain that Hajj (pilgrimage) had been enjoined for the worship of One Allah. But it is an irony that afterwards it had been dedicated to the rituals of *shirk* and the worshipers of One Allah had been debarred from visiting it. Therefore, permission for waging war against those tyrants has been given to oust them from there and to establish the righteous way of life for establishing virtue and eradicating evil. According to Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Urwah bin Zubair, Zaid bin Aslam, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Qatadah and other great commentators, v. 39 is the first verse that grants the Muslims permission to wage war. Collections of Hadith and books on the life of the Holy Prophet confirm that after this

permission actual preparations for war were started and the first expedition was sent to the coast of the Red Sea in Safar A.H. 2, which is known as the Expedition of Waddan or Al- Abwa.

Subject Matter and Theme

This Surah is addressed to: (1) The *mushriks* of Makkah, (2) the wavering Muslims, and (3) the True Believers. The *mushriks* have been warned in a forceful manner to this effect: "You have obdurately and impudently persisted in your ideas of ignorance and trusted in your deities instead of Allah, though they possess no power at all and you have repudiated the Divine Messenger. Now you will meet the same end as has been the doom of those like you before. You have only harmed yourselves by rejecting Our Prophet and by persecuting the best element of your own community; now your false deities shall not be able to save you from the wrath of God". At the same time, they have been admonished time and again for their creed of *shirk* and sound arguments have been given in favor of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter.

The wavering Muslims, who had embraced Islam but were not prepared to endure any hardship in its way, have been admonished to this effect: "What is this faith of yours? On the one hand, you are ready to believe in Allah and become His servants provided you are given peace and prosperity but, on the other, if you meet with afflictions and hardships in His Way, you discard your Allah and cease to remain His servant. You should bear in mind that this wavering attitude of yours cannot avert those misfortunes and losses which Allah has ordained for you."

As regards the true Believers, they have been addressed in two ways: (1) in a general way so as to include the common people of Arabia also, and (2) in an exclusive way:

1. The Believers have been told that the *mushriks* of Makkah had no right to debar them from visiting the Holy Mosque. They had no right to prevent anyone from performing Hajj because the Holy Mosque was not their private property. This objection was not only justified but it also acted as an effective political weapon against the Quraish. For it posed this question to the other clans of Arabia: Were the Quraish mere attendants of the Holy Mosque or its owners? It implied that if they succeeded in debarring the Muslims from Hajj without any protest from others, they would feel encouraged in future to debar from Hajj and Umrah the people of any other clan, who happened to have strained relations with the Quraish. In order to emphasize this point, the history of the construction of the Holy Mosque has been cited to show that it was built by Prophet Abraham by the Command of Allah and he had invited all the peoples to perform Hajj there. That is why those coming from outside had enjoyed equal rights by the local people from the very beginning. It has also been made clear that that House had not been built for the rituals of *shirk* but for the worship of One Allah. Thus it was sheer tyranny that the worship of Allah was being forbidden there while the worship of idols enjoyed full license.

2. In order to counteract the tyranny of the Quraish, the Muslims were allowed to fight with them. They were also given instructions to adopt the right and just attitude as and when they acquired power to rule in the land. Moreover, the Believers have been officially given the name of "Muslims", saying, "You are the real heirs to Abraham and you have been chosen to become witnesses of the Truth before mankind. Therefore you should establish salat and pay the zakat dues in order to become the best models of righteous life and

perform Jihad for propagating the Word of Allah." (vv. 41,77, 78.)

It will be worth while to keep in view the introductions to Chapters II (Al-Baqarah) and VIII (Al Anfal).

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ ٱلسَّاعَةِ شَىْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١﴾

يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّآ أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى ٱلنَّاسَ سُكَٰرَىٰ وَمَا هُم بِسُكَٰرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ ٱللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] O people, save yourselves from the wrath of your Lord: the fact is that the earthquake of the Resurrection is a terrible thing.[1] On the Day you behold it, you will see that every suckling woman will forsake her suckling,[2] and every pregnant female will cast her burden, and the people will appear to you to be intoxicated, though they will not be drunk, but the dreadful torment from Allah will be such (as to make them reel like drunkards).[3]

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُجَٰدِلُ فِى ٱللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّبِعُ كُلَّ شَيْطَٰنٍ مَّرِيدٍ ﴿٣﴾

كُتِبَ عَلَيۡهِ أَنَّهُۥ مَن تَوَلَّاهُ فَأَنَّهُۥ يُضِلُّهُۥ وَيَهۡدِيهِ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ٤

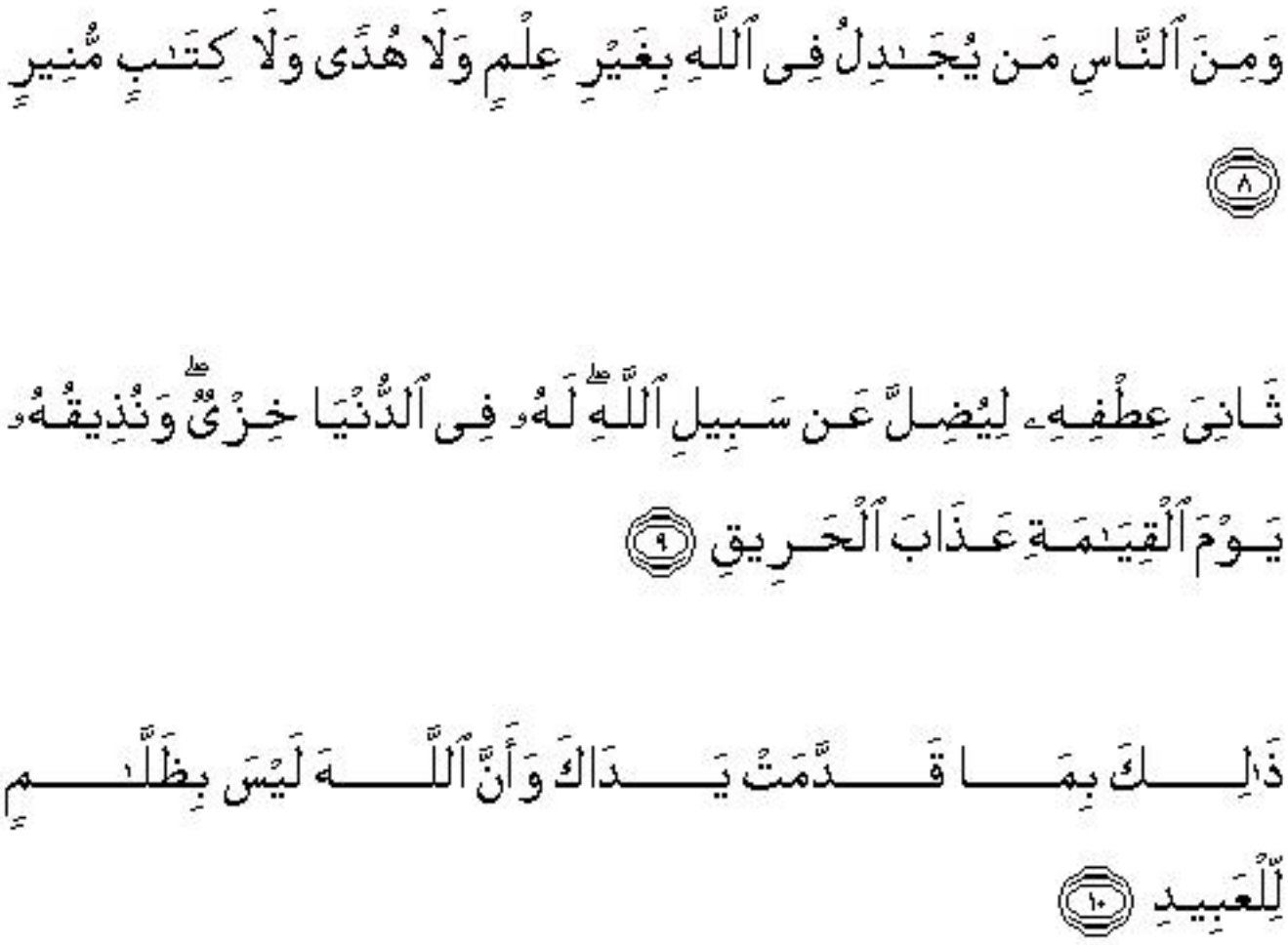
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمۡ فِي رَيۡبٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡبَعۡثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقۡنَٰكُم مِّن تُرَابٖ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطۡفَةٖ ثُمَّ مِنۡ عَلَقَةٖ ثُمَّ مِن مُّضۡغَةٖ مُّخَلَّقَةٖ وَغَيۡرِ مُخَلَّقَةٖ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمۡۚ وَنُقِرُّ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡحَامِ مَا نَشَآءُ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمّٗى ثُمَّ نُخۡرِجُكُمۡ طِفۡلٗا ثُمَّ لِتَبۡلُغُوٓاْ أَشُدَّكُمۡۖ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَرۡذَلِ ٱلۡعُمُرِ لِكَيۡلَا يَعۡلَمَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ عِلۡمٖ شَيۡـٔٗاۚ وَتَرَى ٱلۡأَرۡضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهَا ٱلۡمَآءَ ٱهۡتَزَّتۡ وَرَبَتۡ وَأَنۢبَتَتۡ مِن كُلِّ زَوۡجِۭ بَهِيجٖ ٥

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُۥ يُحۡيِ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ٦

وَأَنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٞ لَّا رَيۡبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبۡعَثُ مَن فِي ٱلۡقُبُورِ ٧

[3-7] There are some among the people, who indulge in discussions about Allah without any knowledge[4] and follow every rebellious Satan, concerning whom it has been decreed that he will mislead whoever takes him for a friend

and will show him the way to the torment of Hell. O people, if you have any doubt about Life after death, you should know that We first created you of clay, then of a sperm-drop[5] then of a clot of blood, then of a lump of flesh, shaped or shapeless.[6] (We are telling you this) so that We may make the reality plain to you. And We make those (sperm drops), which We will, remain in the wombs for a fixed period, then We bring you forth as a child; then (We nourish you) so that you may attain to your full youth. And there may be among you one who is recalled earlier and one who is returned to the most abject age so that he should know nothing even after knowing all he could.[7] And you see the land lying dry and barren, but as soon as We send down rain water upon it, it stirs (to life), and swells and brings forth every kind of luxuriant vegetation. This is so because Allah is the Truth.[8] He brings the dead to life and He has power over everything and (this is a proof that) the Hour of Resurrection is sure to come and there is absolutely no doubt about it, and most surely He will raise up those who are lying in the graves.[9]



[8-10] There are still others who arrogantly[10] dispute about Allah without any knowledge[11] and guidance[12] and illuminating Book,[13] so that they may lead people astray from Allah's Way.[14] Such a one shall incur disgrace in this world, and on the Day of Resurrection, We will make him taste the torment of the Fire, saying, "This is the future you have prepared for yourself with your own hands" . In fact, Allah is not unjust to His servants.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَعۡبُدُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ حَرۡفٖۖ فَإِنۡ أَصَابَهُۥ خَيۡرٌ ٱطۡمَأَنَّ بِهِۦۖ وَإِنۡ أَصَابَتۡهُ فِتۡنَةٌ ٱنقَلَبَ عَلَىٰ وَجۡهِهِۦ خَسِرَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةَۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡخُسۡرَانُ ٱلۡمُبِينُ ﴿١١﴾

يَدۡعُواْ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُۥ وَمَا لَا يَنفَعُهُۥۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلضَّلَٰلُ ٱلۡبَعِيدُ ﴿١٢﴾

يَدۡعُواْ لَمَن ضَرُّهُۥٓ أَقۡرَبُ مِن نَّفۡعِهِۦۚ لَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡمَوۡلَىٰ وَلَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡعَشِيرُ ﴿١٣﴾

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدۡخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفۡعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٤﴾

مَن كَانَ يَظُنُّ أَن لَّن يَنصُرَهُ ٱللَّهُ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ فَلۡيَمۡدُدۡ بِسَبَبٍ إِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ثُمَّ لۡيَقۡطَعۡ فَلۡيَنظُرۡ هَلۡ يُذۡهِبَنَّ كَيۡدُهُۥ مَا يَغِيظُ ﴿١٥﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَهْدِى مَن يُرِيدُ ﴿١٦﴾

[11-16] And there is a type of man who serves Allah standing on the borders (of the Faith[15]); is if some good comes to him, he is satisfied (with his Faith), but if he encounters a trial, he turns his back (upon it).[16] Thus he loses both this world and the Hereafter: this is the manifest loss.[17] Then, instead of Allah, he invokes those who can do him neither harm nor good: this is the last extremity of deviation. He invokes those who are more likely to do him harm than good.[18] What an evil guardian he chooses and what an evil companion![19] As for those who believed and did righteous deeds,[20] Allah will admit them to Gardens underneath which canals will be flowing. Allah does whatever He wills.[21] As for the one who presumes that Allah will neither help him in this world nor in the Hereafter, he should (if he can) ascend the sky by a rope and cut a hole into it and then peep through it and see for himself whether any device of his can avert his doom, which he abhors[22] And We have sent down this Qur'an with clear teachings such as these, but Allah alone guides whomsoever He wills.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ وَٱلصَّٰبِـُٔونَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ وَٱلْمَجُوسَ وَٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١٧﴾

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ وَٱلنُّجُومُ وَٱلْجِبَالُ وَٱلشَّجَرُ وَٱلدَّوَآبُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۗ وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿١٨﴾

[17-18] As regards those who believed[23] and those who became Jews[24] and the Sabaeans[25] and the Christians[26] and

the Magians[27] and those who committed shirk,[28] Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection,"[29] for everything is in the sight of Allah. Do you not see that everything in the heavens and the earth bows down before Allah?[30] [31] and so do the sun, and the moon and the stars, and the trees and the beasts and a large number of the people[32] and even a large number of those who have deserved the torment.[33] And the one whom Allah degrades and disgraces has none to make him worthy of honor;[34] Allah does whatever He wills.[35]

۞ هَٰذَانِ خَصۡمَانِ ٱخۡتَصَمُواْ فِي رَبِّهِمۡۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ قُطِّعَتۡ لَهُمۡ ثِيَابٞ
مِّن نَّارٖ يُصَبُّ مِن فَوۡقِ رُءُوسِهِمُ ٱلۡحَمِيمُ ١٩

يُصۡهَرُ بِهِۦ مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمۡ وَٱلۡجُلُودُ ٢٠

وَلَهُم مَّقَٰمِعُ مِنۡ حَدِيدٖ ٢١

كُلَّمَآ أَرَادُوٓاْ أَن يَخۡرُجُواْ مِنۡهَا مِنۡ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُواْ فِيهَا وَذُوقُواْ عَذَابَ
ٱلۡحَرِيقِ ٢٢

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدۡخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٖ
تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوۡنَ فِيهَا مِنۡ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٖ
وَلُؤۡلُؤٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمۡ فِيهَا حَرِيرٞ ٢٣

وَهُدُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱلطَّيِّبِ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ وَهُدُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلْحَمِيدِ ﴿٢٤﴾

[19-24] These are the two parties who have disputed about their Lord.[36] As regards those who have disbelieved, garments of fire have already been cut out for them;[37] over their heads shall be poured boiling water, which will melt not only their skins but also the inner parts of their bellies and there shall be maces of iron to lash them. Whenever in their anguish they will try to come out of Hell, they shall be driven back into it (with the rebuke): "Taste now the torment of burning." As regards those, who believed and did righteous works, Allah will admit them into Gardens underneath which canals will be flowing: there they will be decorated with golden bracelets and pearls,[38] and their garments will be of silk'. (This is because) they were guided to accept the pure Word,[39] and shown the Way of the All Praiseworthy.[40]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَسْجِدِ
ٱلْحَرَامِ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلْنَٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ سَوَآءً ٱلْعَٰكِفُ فِيهِ وَٱلْبَادِ ۚ وَمَن
يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِإِلْحَادٍۭ بِظُلْمٍ نُّذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

[25] Those who disbelieved,[41] and are (now) debarring others from the Way of Allah and from visiting that Sacred Mosque,[42] which We have assigned to all mankind with equal rights for its dwellers and the outsiders,[43] (surely deserve punishment); whosoever shall deviate from righteousness, and adopt in this (Sacred Mosque) the way of iniquity,[44] We will make him taste a painful chastisement.

وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَكَانَ ٱلْبَيْتِ أَن لَّا تُشْرِكْ بِى شَيْـًٔا وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِىَ
لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَٱلْقَآئِمِينَ وَٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَأَذِّن فِى ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ
مِن كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

لِّيَشْهَدُوا۟ مَنَٰفِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَٰتٍ
عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّنۢ بَهِيمَةِ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۖ فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا۟ ٱلْبَآئِسَ
ٱلْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾

ثُمَّ لْيَقْضُوا۟ تَفَثَهُمْ وَلْيُوفُوا۟ نُذُورَهُمْ وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا۟ بِٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

[26-29] Recall to mind the time when We assigned the site of this House (the Ka`bah) to Abraham, saying, "Do not associate anything as a partner with Me; keep My House clean and pure[45] for those who go round it and for those who stand and bow down and prostrate (in worship), and make a proclamation to the people to come to you for Hajj from far and near, on foot and on lean[46] camels[47] so that they may witness the benefits that have been made available here for them:[48] and during the known appointed days, they should mention the name of Allah over the cattle He has provided them:[49] then they may eat their flesh and also give of it to the indigent and needy.[50] Then they should clean off their "dirt[51] fulfill their vows[52] and go round the "Ancient House."[53]

ذَٰلِكَ وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ حُرُمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ ۗ وَأُحِلَّتْ لَكُمُ
ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلرِّجْسَ مِنَ ٱلْأَوْثَٰنِ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ قَوْلَ
ٱلزُّورِ ﴿٣٠﴾

[30] This was (the object for which the Ka`bah was built,) and whoso observes the sanctity of the things ordained by Allah, it will be best for him in the sight of his Lord.[54]

حُنَفَآءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِۦ ۚ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ
مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ ٱلطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِى بِهِ ٱلرِّيحُ فِى مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ
٣١

[31] And the cattle have been made lawful for you[55] except what has already been mentioned to you;[56] therefore guard yourselves against the filth of idols,[57] and refrain from all false things.[58] Become Allah's sincere servants, turning away from everything and without associating any partner with Him, for the one who associates a partner with Allah, becomes like him who has fallen from heaven. Then either the birds will snatch him away or the wind will blow him off to a place where he will be shattered into pieces.[59]

ذَٰلِكَ وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ شَعَٰٓئِرَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِن تَقْوَى ٱلْقُلُوبِ ٣٢

[32] This is the fact of the matter: (so understand it well.) And whoso observe the sanctity of what have been ordained as Symbols[60] of Allah, do so because of the piety of the hearts.[61]

لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَٰفِعُ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ مَحِلُّهَآ إِلَى ٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْعَتِيقِ ٣٣

[33] You are permitted to derive benefits from the cattle dedicated for sacrifice) up to an appointed time.[62] Thereafter the (lawful) place (of their sacrifice) is near the Ancient House.[63]

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّنۢ
بَهِيمَةِ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۗ فَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ فَلَهُۥٓ أَسْلِمُوا۟ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُخْبِتِينَ
٣٤

ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَهُمْ
وَٱلْمُقِيمِى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ٣٥

[34-35] For every community We have prescribed a way of sacrifice so that the people (of that community) should pronounce the name of Allah over the cattle which He has provided for them,[64] (but one and the same object underlies all the different ways). So your Deity is One Deity: surrender to Him alone. And, O Prophet, give good news to those who adopt a humble way,[65] whose hearts are filled with awe when Allah is mentioned before them: who endure with fortitude any affliction that befalls them: and who establish Salat and expend of what We have given them.[66]

وَٱلْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَٰهَا لَكُم مِّن شَعَٰٓئِرِ ٱللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ ۖ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا صَوَآفَّ ۖ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا۟ ٱلْقَانِعَ
وَٱلْمُعْتَرَّ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ سَخَّرْنَٰهَا لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ٣٦

[36] And We have included the camels[67] (dedicated for sacrifice) among the Symbols of Allah, for there is much good for you in them.[68] Therefore make them stand[69] and mention the name of Allah over them,[70] and when (after the sacrifice,) their backs lie still on the ground,[71] you may eat of their flesh and give of it to the contented ones and to those who ask for it. Thus have We subjected these animals to you so that you may be grateful.[72]

لَن يَنَالَ ٱللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَٰكِن يَنَالُهُ ٱلتَّقۡوَىٰ مِنكُمۡۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمۡ لِتُكَبِّرُواْ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمۡۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلۡمُحۡسِنِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[37] (Note it well that) neither their flesh reaches Allah nor their blood, but it is your piety that reaches Him.[73] Thus has Allah subjected these animals to you so that you should glorify Him for the guidance He has given you.[74] And, O Prophet, give good news to those who do righteous works.

۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدَٰفِعُ عَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٖ
كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ ظُلِمُواْۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصۡرِهِمۡ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ أُخۡرِجُواْ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بِغَيۡرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُواْ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُۗ وَلَوۡلَا
دَفۡعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعۡضَهُم بِبَعۡضٖ لَّهُدِّمَتۡ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٞ وَصَلَوَٰتٞ
وَمَسَٰجِدُ يُذۡكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسۡمُ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرٗاۗ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَمَرُوا۟
بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا۟ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

[38-41] Assuredly[75] Allah defends those who have believed[76] for He does not like any treacherous, ungrateful wretch[77] at all. Permission (to fight) has been granted to those against whom war has been waged because they have been treated unjustly,[78] and Allah is certainly able to help them.[79] These are the people who have been expelled unjustly from their homes[80] only for the reason that they said, "Our Lord is Allah."[81] Had Allah not repelled one people by means of another people, monasteries, churches, synagogues[82] and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is often mentioned, would have been demolished.[83] Allah will surely help those people who help Him:[84] Allah is indeed All-Powerful, All-Mighty. These are the people who, if We give them power in the land, will establish Salat, pay the Zakat dues, enjoin what is right and forbid what is evil,[85] and the final decision of all affairs is in the hand of Allah.[86]

وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ
وَثَمُودُ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَقَوْمُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَأَصْحَٰبُ مَدْيَنَ ۖ وَكُذِّبَ مُوسَىٰ فَأَمْلَيْتُ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ ۖ فَكَيْفَ
كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٤٤﴾

فَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَٰهَا وَهِىَ ظَالِمَةٌ فَهِىَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا وَبِئْرٍ
مُّعَطَّلَةٍ وَقَصْرٍ مَّشِيدٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ
بِهَآ أَوْ ءَاذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۖ فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ
وَلَٰكِن تَعْمَى ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلَّتِى فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٦﴾

[42-46] O Prophet, if they[87] treat you as false, (you should remember that) before them the people of Noah, and the tribes of Ad and Thamud, and the peoples of Abraham and Lot and the dwellers of Midian had treated their Prophets as false and likewise Moses was also rejected. At first I gave respite to all these disbelievers and then seized them.[88] Now you can see for yourselves how terrible was My chastisement![89] There are (the ruins of) many a wicked habitation which We destroyed: today they are lying upside down upon their roofs. How many a well has been rendered useless,[90] and how many a lofty castle is lying in ruins! Have they not gone about in the land so as to make their hearts think and ears hear? The fact, however, is that it is the hearts in the breasts and not the eyes that become blind.[91]

وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلْعَذَابِ وَلَن يُخْلِفَ ٱللَّهُ وَعْدَهُۥ ۚ وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِندَ رَبِّكَ
كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَمْلَيْتُ لَهَا وَهِىَ ظَالِمَةٌ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهَا وَإِلَىَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٨﴾

[47-48] These people are demanding of you to hasten the chastisement.[92] Allah will never fail to fulfill His threat, but

a day with your Lord is equal to a thousand years as you reckon.[93] There has been many a wicked habitation, whom at first I gave respite and then seized it, and all shall have to return to Me.

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ سَعَوْا۟ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مُعَٰجِزِينَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥١﴾

[49-51] O, Muhammad, say to them: "O people, I am merely a warner[94] who informs you plainly (of the coming evil time)." So those who believe and do righteous deeds shall have forgiveness and honorable provision,[95] and those, who will strive to discredit Our Revelations, shall become the dwellers of Hell.

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِىٍّ إِلَّآ إِذَا تَمَنَّىٰٓ أَلْقَى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فِىٓ أُمْنِيَّتِهِۦ فَيَنسَخُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ ٱللَّهُ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

لِّيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم
مَّرَضٌ وَالْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٣﴾

وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ
فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

[52-54] And, O Muhammad, (it has always been so with) every Messenger and Prophet[96] We sent before you that whenever he had a desire,[97] Satan tried to interfere with his desire.[98] But Allah eradicates the mischiefs worked by Satan and confirms His Revelations,[99] for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise,[100] (He allows this) so that He may make Satan's obstacles a trial for those, whose hearts suffer from the disease (of hypocrisy) and whose hearts are false--the fact is that these unjust people have gone far away in their enmity-and so that those who have knowledge may realize that this (Message) is the Truth from Allah and may believe in it, and their hearts may submit humbly to it. Most surely Allah always guides the Believers to the Straight Way.[101]

وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْهُ حَتَّىٰ تَأْتِيَهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً
أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ عَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

ٱلْمُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلَّهِ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فِى
جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ قُتِلُوٓا۟ أَوْ مَاتُوا۟ لَيَرْزُقَنَّهُمُ ٱللَّهُ رِزْقًا
حَسَنًا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

لَيُدْخِلَنَّهُم مُّدْخَلًا يَرْضَوْنَهُۥ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٩﴾

۞ ذَٰلِكَ وَمَنْ عَاقَبَ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبَ بِهِۦ ثُمَّ بُغِىَ عَلَيْهِ لَيَنصُرَنَّهُ ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُورٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

[55-60] Yet the disbelievers will always remain in doubt about it until the Hour of Resurrection overtakes them suddenly or the scourge of a "barren" day[102] descends upon them. On that Day Allah will reign supreme, and He will judge between them; then those who will have believed and done righteous works, will go to the Gardens of Bliss, but those who will have disbelieved and treated Our Revelations as false, shall receive an ignominious punishment. As for those, who left their homes for the sake of Allah and then were killed or died, Allah will make for them a generous provision) and Allah is the best of Providers. He will admit them to a place with which they will be well pleased; indeed Allah is All-Knowing and Clement.[103] This is about them. As regards the one, who takes vengeance

equal to the wrong that had been done to him, and has again been oppressed, Allah will surely help him.[104] Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.[105]

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٦١﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ هُوَ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
هُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٦٢﴾

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَتُصْبِحُ ٱلْأَرْضُ مُخْضَرَّةً ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

لَّهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦٤﴾

[61-64] So it is[106] because it is Allah Who brings forth the day from the night and the night from the day[107] and He hears everything and sees everything.[108] This is so because it is Allah alone Who is the Truth and all others, whom they invoke besides Him, are falsehood,[109] and Allah is the Supreme and the Exalted One. Do you not see that Allah sends down rain water from the sky and the land becomes green because of it?[110] The fact is that Allah works in imperceptible ways and is fully aware of everything.[111] To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth and undoubtedly Allah is All-Sufficient and All-Praiseworthy.[112]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلْفُلْكَ تَجْرِى
فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِۦ وَيُمْسِكُ ٱلسَّمَآءَ أَن تَقَعَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِۦٓ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِٱلنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٦٥﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ
لَكَفُورٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

[65-66] Do you not see that He has subdued to you all that is in the earth and that He has subjected the boat to the law that she floats over the sea at His bidding, and He is supporting the sky in a way that it cannot fall down without His permission?[113] The fact of the matter is that Allah is very Kind and Merciful to the people. He it is Who has given you life and causes your death, and He will again bring you to life; yet Man denies the Truth.[114]

لِّكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ فَلَا يُنَٰزِعُنَّكَ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ
رَبِّكَ إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾

وَإِن جَٰدَلُوكَ فَقُلِ ٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

ٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ فِى كِتَٰبٍ ۚ
إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

[67-70] For every community[115] We have prescribed a way of worship,[116] which it follows; therefore, O Muhammad, let them not dispute with you concerning this matter.[117] And invite the people to the Way of your Lord, for you are on the Straight Way.[118] And if they dispute with you, say to them, "Allah knows full well what you are doing: on, the Day of Resurrection, Allah will judge between you concerning that about which you differ". Do you not know that Allah has full knowledge of everything in the heavens and the earth ? Every thing has been recorded in a Book; this is an easy thing for Allah.[119]

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا وَمَا لَيْسَ لَهُم بِهِۦ
عِلْمٌ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ ﴿٧١﴾

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ تَعْرِفُ فِى وُجُوهِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلْمُنكَرَ ۖ
يَكَادُونَ يَسْطُونَ بِٱلَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا ۗ قُلْ أَفَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِشَرٍّ مِّن
ذَٰلِكُمُ ۗ ٱلنَّارُ وَعَدَهَا ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧٢﴾

[71-72] They worship, besides Allah, those for whom He has sent down no authority nor they themselves have any knowledge about them.[120] Such transgressors have no helper.[121] And when Our clear Revelations are recited to them, you perceive signs of disdain in the faces of the disbelievers as though they were going to assault those who recite Our Revelations to them. Say to them, "May I inform you of a thing worse than this?[122] It is the Fire which Allah has promised for those who reject the Truth; and what an evil abode it is!"

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَن يَخْلُقُوا۟ ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ ٱجْتَمَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ ۖ وَإِن
يَسْلُبْهُمُ ٱلذُّبَابُ شَيْـًٔا لَّا يَسْتَنقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۚ ضَعُفَ ٱلطَّالِبُ وَٱلْمَطْلُوبُ
٧٣

مَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ٧٤

[73-74] O mankind! A parable is related to you: so listen to it. The deities, whom you invoke instead of Allah, cannot create a fly even though they may all combine together for this purpose. Nay! if a fly snatches away something from them, they cannot get it back from it. How weak are the suppliants and how weak those whom they supplicate.[123] They do not recognize the true worth of Allah' as they should: the fact is that Allah alone is All-Mighty, All-Powerful.

ٱللَّهُ يَصْطَفِى مِنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ
٧٥

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۗ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ ٧٦

[75-76] Allah chooses His Messengers from among the angels and also from among the human beings (to convey His decrees).[124] He hears everything and knows everything. He knows whatever is open before them as well as that which is hidden from them,[125] and all matters are resented before Him.[126]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱرۡكَعُواْ وَٱسۡجُدُواْ وَٱعۡبُدُواْ رَبَّكُمۡ وَٱفۡعَلُواْ ٱلۡخَيۡرَ
لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ٧٧

وَجَٰهِدُواْ فِي ٱللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِۦۚ هُوَ ٱجۡتَبَىٰكُمۡ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ فِي ٱلدِّينِ
مِنۡ حَرَجٖۚ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمۡ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَۚ هُوَ سَمَّىٰكُمُ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ مِن قَبۡلُ وَفِي هَٰذَا
لِيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَتَكُونُواْ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِۚ فَأَقِيمُواْ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُواْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱعۡتَصِمُواْ بِٱللَّهِ هُوَ مَوۡلَىٰكُمۡۖ فَنِعۡمَ ٱلۡمَوۡلَىٰ وَنِعۡمَ
ٱلنَّصِيرُ ٧٨

[77-78] O people, who have believed, bow down and prostrate yourselves before Allah, worship your Lord and do righteous deeds: it may be that you attain true success.[127] Exert your utmost for the cause of Allah as one should.[128] He has chosen you for His service[129] and has not laid on you any hardship in your religion.[130] Therefore, be steadfast in the religion of your father Abraham.[131] Allah had called you "Muslims" before this and has called you[132] (by the same name) in this (Qur'an) also so that the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you and you may be witnesses in regard to the rest of mankind.[133] Therefore, establish Salat and pay the Zakat dues, and hold fast to Allah,[134] for He is your Guardian: What an excellent Guardian and what an excellent Helper!

1According to the early commentators, this earthquake will be a prelude to Resurrection. This will probably take place when the earth will begin to rotate in the reverse order, and the sun will rise in the west. In a lengthy Tradition reported by Ibn Jarir, 'Tabarani and Ibn Abi Hatim from Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet has stated that when the first Trumpet will be blown, there will be a general confusion; at the second all people will die and at the third they will be brought back to life and presented before Allah. At the first blowing of the Trumpet, the earth will begin to rock like a boat which is beaten about by huge waves, or like a hanging lamp which is moved from side to side by a strong wind.

This condition has been depicted in the Qur'an at several other places. For instance LVI: 6; LXIX: 13-14;

LXXIII: 14, 17-18; LXXIX : 6-9 and XCIX: 1-3.

According to other commentators, this earthquake will occur when the dead will be brought back to life and presented before their Lord. Though this is supported by some Traditions, we prefer the first interpretation (in spite of the fact that the Tradition reported by Abu Hurairah is "weak") because that is supported by clear verses of the Qur'an.

2This is to show the intensity and honor of the earthquake. At that time there will be so much confusion acid terror that mothers will forsake their dear children at the very time they will be suckling them.

3It should be noted that it is not meant to depict here the condition of the Resurrection but to impress upon the people the dreadful torment of the Hour in order to admonish them to mend their ways. This is supported by the subsequent passage.

4They do not indulge in discussions or disputes about the Being or existence of Allah but about His rights and powers and His Revelations, as is evident from the succeeding passage. When the Holy Prophet tried to convince them of Tauhid and Resurrection, inevitably the dispute arose whether there is One Allah, the sole Sovereign or there were other partners as well in His Godhead and whether He has the power to bring about Resurrection, etc.

5"created you... sperm-drop": The first man Adam was created directly from clay and after him the process of procreation started by means of sperm-drop. This has been stated in XXXII: 7-8 as well. It may also mean that man is created from sperm-drop but his body is made of those elements which are all available in the earth.

6This refers to the different stages of development of the child in the womb of its mother. This description is based on observation and not on scientific research, and there was no need for it for the purpose for which reference to this has been made here.

7That is, "In old age man is again reverted to the same condition in which he was in childhood. He loses his senses and knows little or nothing like a child".

8The Arabic Text may mean three things:

(1) Allah is telling the Truth and you are wrong in presuming that there is no possibility of life-after-death.

(2) Allah's existence is not merely a supposition but it is a Reality. He is not only the First Cause but has supreme authority, and is conducting every affair in the universe according to His Will, Knowledge and Wisdom.

(3) All His designs and works are based on Truth and are, therefore, serious, meaningful and full of wisdom.

9In this passage, different stages of the life of man, the effects of rain on the earth and the growth of vegetation have been cited as pointers to five realities:

(1) "Allah alone is the Truth".

(2) "He brings the dead to life".

(3) "He has power over everything".

(4) "The Day of Resurrection and the end of the world is inevitable".

(5) Most surely Allah will bring back to life all the people who have died", Let us now consider how these signs point to the above five realities:

(1) "Allah is the Truth": In order to prove this, let us first take the case of man. All the stages of his development are a clear proof that Allah has designed them with wisdom. He takes his birth from a sperm-drop which itself is produced in a wonderful manner. The food, which a man takes, turns into hair, flesh, bones and a part of it is turned into semen, which is potentially capable of producing millions of human beings. It is the Wise and True God Who decides which of these millions of seeds from the semen should be utilized to make a woman pregnant by mixing the seed with the egg-cell. This insignificant thing turns into a living child in nine months in the womb of the mother. If we consider the different stages of the child's birth we come to the inevitable conclusion that all these have been designed by the True, Ever Living Designer. For it is He Who decides whether it should be a male or a female, seeing or blind, etc. Then it is He Who decides how long a child is destined to live. All these things are a clear proof that Allah alone is the Truth.

(2) "He brings the dead to life": Even a little thinking on the right lines will convince every sensible and honest man that this process of bringing the dead to life is continuously going on before our eyes. Every human being has been created from a "dead" sperm-drop. Then he gets life from "dead things" like food containing dead matter like coal, iron, lime, salts, gases, which help make him a living human being. Then let us consider our surroundings. Seeds of different things which had been scattered here and there by the wind and birds, and the roots of different kinds of vegetation which lay rotten and dead in the soil, spring up to life as soon as there occurs a sprinkling of rain water. This process of the dead coming to life is observed during every rainy season year after year.

(3) "Allah has power over everything": There are people who believe that no doubt Allah created

everything and is governing the universe, but He cannot do anything in the future in addition to or apart from this. This is because they do not observe the phenomena of His powers which have been and are appearing every moment. They do not realize that if man-His creation ran perform wonderful feats of science which could not even be dreamed of in the former ages, why should Allah alone be held as having only limited powers?

(4) "The Day of Resurrection is inevitable" and "Most surely Allah will bring back to life all the people who have died": These two are the rational corollaries of the preceding three premises. Allah is All-Powerful and therefore can bring about Resurrection at any moment He wills. He can also bring back to life all the dead people just as He brought to life human beings out of nothing in the first instance. As He is All-Wise, He has not created human beings without any object and purpose. He will judge their worldly lives in accordance with the object and purpose for which He created them. He will call them to account for everything He entrusted to them. This is very simple: even human beings ask one another to render an account of the property etc. they entrust to others. Likewise, Allah's wisdom requires to call every human being to account for the things entrusted to him. Then human nature also demands that there should be a differentiation between good and bad, and it expects the reward of good works and dreads the punishment of bad deeds. That is why the people have set up judicial courts. Thus man cannot imagine that the Creator will not call him to account for the things, powers and faculties, etc. which He has entrusted to him. Therefore common sense confirms that Allah will hold the Last Judgment so that every one should get his due reward and his due punishment.

10That is, they are so stiff-necked, proud, arrogant, obdurate and obstinate that they do not pay any heed to "Admonition".

11"Knowledge": that personal information which is gained directly through observation and experience.

12"Guidance": that information which is gained .by reasoning or through another person who has knowledge.

13“Illuminating Book:” Source of information gained from Divine Revelation.

14v. 3 mentioned those people who have themselves gone astray, but v. 9 mentions those who have not only deviated from the Right Way themselves but are also bent upon misleading others from it.

15This type of man is a time server, who stands on the boundary line between Islam and kufr so that he may join the winning side whether it be Islam or kufr.

16As this type of man has a weak character and wavers between kufr and Islam he becomes the slave of his "self". He accepts Islam for the sake of self interest: he is faithful to it if all his wishes are fulfilled and

he has a life of ease and comfort; he is well-pleased with his Allah and is "firm" in his faith. On the contrary, if his "faith" demands some sacrifice from him, or he is visited by some affliction, or encounters some hardship and loss in the way of Allah, or he does not have his way, he begins to waver about the Godhead of Allah and the Prophethood of the Messenger and becomes skeptical about everything of the "Faith". Then he is ready to bow down before any power from which he expects some benefit and security from loss.

17This is a great moral proposition that has been stated concisely. The fact is that the wavering man remains a loser in this world as well as in the Next World, and fares worse even than an unbeliever. The unbeliever applies himself exclusively to the benefits of this world and becomes more or less successful in his object because he is not handicapped by the fear of Allah, accountability of the Hereafter and restrictions of Divine Law. Likewise a true believer follows the way of Allah with fortitude and perseverance and may as well become successful in this world, but even if he loses it altogether, he is assured of success in the Next Y World. But the "wavering Muslim" becomes a loser both in this world and in the Next World because he is handicapped by doubt and indecision and cannot make his choice between the two worlds. As he cannot decide whether there is Allah and the Hereafter, he cannot apply himself exclusively to the worldly affairs with that single-mindedness which the unbeliever enjoys. And when he thinks of Allah and the Hereafter, the allurements of this world and the fear of the disadvantages here and the abhorrence of observing the Divine restrictions do not let him apply himself exclusively to the demands of the Hereafter. This conflict between "God worship" and "World worship" makes him a loser in this world as well as in the next.

18Vv. 12-13 clarify two things about the deities whom the mushriks invoke. Firstly, they can do a person neither any good nor any harm; nay, it is more probable that they do harm rather than good. For when the mushrik invokes other deities than Allah, he loses his faith forthwith. Secondly, the mushrik himself knows that there is no guarantee or probability of any good from his `god' who is utterly helpless and powerless. As regards the occasional grant of his request through his god, this is done by Allah merely to test his faith.

19That is, the one, who leads a person to the way of shirk is the worst guardian and the worst comrade, whether he be a human being or a satan.

20"Those who believed and did righteous deeds" are quite different from the wavering Muslims, for they have a firm belief in Allah, His Prophet and the Hereafter. Therefore they follow the way of Truth both in prosperity and in adversity.

21That is, "Allah's powers are unlimited: He may bestow anything on anyone He wills in this world or in the Hereafter or in both, and bar anything from anyone. None has the power to interfere with what He wills and does."

22There is a great divergence of opinion about the exact meaning of this verse. Some of the interpretations are:

(1) One who presumes that Allah will not help him (Muhammad: Allah's peace be upon him), he should hang himself by a rope from the ceiling.

(2) One who presumes that Allah will not help him (Muhammad: Allah's peace be upon him), he should ascend the sky by a rope and try to stop Allah's help.

(3) One who presumes that Allah will not help him (Muhammad: Allah's peace be upon him), he should ascend the sky and stop the process of Revelations.

(4) One who presumes that Allah will not help him (Muhammad: Allah's peace be upon him), he should ascend the sky and stop his provisions.

(5) The one who presumes that Allah will not help him (the presumer himself), he should hang himself by a rope from the ceiling of his house.

(6) The one who presumes that Allah will not help him (the presumer himself), he should try to ascend the sky to seek help.

The first four interpretations are obviously irrelevant to the context, and the last two, though they might fit in with the context, do not explain the real meaning of the verse. If we consider this in the context, it becomes obvious that the one who presumes is "the one who serves Allah standing on the border" . This is to rebuke him, as if to say, "You may do whatever you can to change the decrees of Allah, but you will see that no device of yours can succeed, whether these decrees are favorable to your designs or unfavorable to them. " Obviously, "he should ascend the sky ..... cut a hole into it" has not been used in the literal but in the figurative sense.

23This means the "Muslims" of every age who believed in the Prophets of Allah and His Books up to the time of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him): they included both the sincere Muslims and the wavering Muslims.

24See E.N. 72 of Chapter IV (An-Nisa).

25"Sabaeans": In ancient times two sects were known by this title:

(1) The followers of Prophet John, who were found in upper Iraq in large numbers and practiced baptism.

(2) The worshipers of stars, who ascribed their creed to Prophets Shith and Idris (peace be upon them) and believed that the elements were governed by the planets and the planets by the angels. Their center was at Harran with branches spread all over Iraq. These people have been well known for their knowledge of philosophy and science and their achievements in medicine.

Probably here the first sect is referred to, because the second sect was not known by this name at the time the Qur'an was revealed.

26See E. N. 36 of Chapter V (AI-Ma'idah).

27That is, the fire-worshipers of Iran, who believed in two gods -one of light and the other of darknesses- and regarded themselves as the followers of Zoroaster. Their creed and morals were so corrupted by Mazdak that a brother could easily enter into matrimony with his sister.

28That is, "The mushriks of Arabia and of other countries, who had no special name like those mentioned above."

29That is, "Allah will pass His judgment on the Day of Resurrection in regard to all the differences and disputes which take place between different people and different religions and will decide which of them was right and which was wrong. "

30See E.N. 25 Chapter XIII (Ar-Ra`d) and E.N. 41 of Chapter XVI (An-Nahl).

31That is, "Angels, stars, planets, etc. and all the creation that exists in other parts of the universe, whether it is rational and possesses freedom of will and choice like man, or irrational like animals, vegetation, solid matter, air and light.

32That is, "A large number of the people bow down before Allah not by compulsion but willingly. On the other hand, there are many other people who bow down before Him under compulsion along with everything else in the universe, but they deserve punishment because they refuse to obey Allah in those spheres of life in which they have the choice to obey or not to obey.

33That is, though the Final Judgment will be passed on the Day of Resurrection, a discerning eye can see even today those "who have already deserved the torment." For instance, the man who rejects the Message of the open book of Nature and the Message of the Prophets and adopts self-made false creeds and then disputes about them with the Believers, proves himself to be in manifest error in this world as well.

34In this verse "honor" and "disgrace" mean the acceptance of the Truth and its rejection. It is obvious

that the one who does not see manifest realities is doomed to disgrace: for Allah lets him attain what he desires and works for; and when Allah does not bestow on anyone the honor of following the Truth, there is none else who can bestow it on him.

35Here it is obligatory to perform a sajdah (prostration), which is agreed upon by all Jurists. For further details please See E.N. 157 of Chapter VII (Al-A'raf).

36Here all the disputants about Allah have been divided into two main categories in spite of their large numbers:

(1) Those who believe in the Message of the Prophets and adopt the righteous way of life.

(2) Those who reject their Message and follow different ways of disbelief, though they may have countless differences and disputes among themselves.

37See v. 50 and E.N. 58 of Chapter XIV (Ibrahim) for explanation.

38This is to show that they will be honored like the kings and chiefs who used to wear ornaments of gold and jewelry in the period the Qur'an was revealed.

39"Pure Word": though it may imply every pure thing, here it refers to the basic articles of the Faith.

40As already stated in the Introduction, the portion of the Surah, which was sent down at Makkah, comes to an end here. Though its style is clearly that of the Makki Surahs and there is nothing to indicate that any part (or the whole) of it was revealed at al-Madinah, yet the words, "these are the two parties", have given rise to the misunderstanding that this verse was revealed at al-Madinah. Some commentators are of the opinion that the two parties referred to were the parties who met in the Battle of Badr, but there is nothing in the context to support this opinion. On the other hand, from the context in which these words occur, it becomes obvious that the two parties referred to were the "Believers and the disbelievers." For the conflict between Belief and disbelief has always been going on ever since the creation of man and will go on upto the Day of Resurrection.

Incidentally, this latter view helps prove that the Qur'an is a continuous whole and every part of it is closely connected with the other: whereas the comments mentioned earlier would imply that there is no continuous theme in the Qur'an but different parts of it have been put together without rhyme or reason.

41"Those who disbelieved" were the people who rejected the Message of the Holy Prophet. The subsequent theme clearly shows that they were the disbelievers of Makkah.

42That is, "They debarred the Holy Prophet and his followers from performing Hajj and 'Umrah".

43That is, "This is not exclusively the property of any person or family or clan but is meant for all mankind alike. Therefore bone has any right to debar others from it."

In this connection, two questions have arisen among the Jurists of Islam:

(1) What is meant by the "Sacred Mosque" ? Does it mean the mosque itself or includes the whole "Inviolable Place" of Makkah?

(2) What is meant by "equal rights" of its dwellers and the outsiders ?

According to some jurists it means the "Sacred Mosque" itself and not the whole of Inviolable Makkah. They base this opinion on the apparent wording of the Qur'an, and say that by "equal rights" is meant equal rights only in regard to worship in it. They cite a Tradition of the Holy Prophet to support their opinion. He said: "O children of 'Abd Manaf, those of you who will have authority over the affairs of the people, should not stop anybody from moving round the Ka'bah or froth offering prayers in it at any time of the day or night."

Imam Shafi'i and others who support this view are of the opinion that it is wrong to conclude from this verse that the rights of the dwellers and the outsiders are equal in every respect, but they are equal only in regard to the right of worship and in nothing else, for the people of Makkah owned the lands and the houses of Makkah before Islam and also after it. So much so that during the time of Caliph Umar, the house of Safwan bin Umayyah was actually purchased from him for the purpose of making a prison in Makkah.

The others who hold that the "Sacred Mosque" refers to the whole of the "Inviolable Place" of Makkah derive their authority from verses 196 and 217 of Chapter II (Al-Baqarah). They argue that Hajj is not performed only in the Ka'bah (the Sacred Mosque), but the pilgrim has to visit Mina, Muzdalifah, `Arafat, etc. for the performance of Hajj rites. Thus, they hold that equality is not merely in regard to worship in the "Sacred Mosque", but in regard to all other rights in Makkah. As this place has been appointed for Hajj by Allah for all alike, none has any right of ownership in it. Anyone can stay anywhere he likes and node can prohibit him from doing so. They cite many Traditions in support of their opinion:

(1) Abdullah bin `Umar reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Makkah is the place where travelers have to stay: therefore its lands cannot be sold nor can anyone charge rent for its houses."

(2) According to Ibrahim Nakha`i, the Holy Prophet said: "Makkah has been made an "Inviolable Place" by Allah: therefore selling its land and charging of rent for its houses is unlawful". Mujahid has also reported a tradition almost in similar words.

(3) Alqamah says, "During the time of the Holy Prophet, and of the first three Caliphs, the lands of Makkah were regarded as common property and one could live there or allow others to live therein."

(4) `Abdullah bin `Umar says, "Caliph `Umar had ordered that no resident of Makkah should close the door of his house during the Hajj season." According to Mujahid; Caliph `Umar had ordered that the people of Makkah should not put doors to enclose their courtyards but keep them open so that anyone who liked might come in and stay there. The same has been related by `Ata' with the addition that Suhail bin `Amr was the only exception to this rule, who was allowed to put a door in his courtyard in order to safeguard his camels in connection with his trade.

(5) `Abdullah bin `Umar also says that the one who receives rent for his house in Makkah fills his belly with fire.

(6) `Abdullah bin `Abbas says that Allah has made the whole of Makkah the "Sacred Mosque" where all have equal rights, Therefore the people of Makkah have no right to charge rent.

(7) `Umar bin `Abdul `Aziz sent an order to the governor of Makkah to this effect: "No rent should be charged for the houses of Makkah because it is unlawful".

On the basis of the above traditions, quite a few of the followers of the Companions and also, Imams Malik, Abu Hanifah, Sufyan Thauri, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Ishaq bin Rahawayah from among the Jurists, are of the opinion that it is unlawful to sell a piece of land and to charge rent, at least during the Hajj season, in Makkah. However, the majority of the Jurists are of the opinion that people can own houses in Makkah and can sell them as buildings but not as land. In my opinion, this last view seems to be the right one because it conforms with the Qur'an and the Sunnah and the practice of the rightly-guided Caliphs. It is obvious that Allah has not made Hajj obligatory for the Muslims of the whole world in order to provide a means of income for the people of Makkah. As Allah Has set apart the "Inviolable Place" for the benefit of all the Believers,. that land is not the property of anyone and every pilgrim has the right to stay anywhere he can find room for himself.

44It does not imply any specific act, but means every act that deviates from righteousness and falls under the definition of iniquity. Though all such acts are sins at all times and places; their commission in the "Inviolable Place" makes them all the more heinous; so much so that the commentators are of the opinion that even taking of an unnecessary oath brings it under the same category.

Besides common sins, there are certain other things whose commission in the " Inviolable Place" brings them under the same category. For instance:

(l) It is prohibited to take legal action even against a murderer, etc. who takes shelter within the "Inviolable Place": so much so that he cannot be arrested as long as he retrains therein. This sanctity of the "Inviolable Place" is being observed since the time of Prophet Abraham. The Qur'an says, "Whoso even enters it, he becomes safe and secure . . ." (III: 97).

(2) The consensus of opinion is that there can be no retribution within the "Inviolable Place" for the crimes committed outside it. Hadrat `Umar, `Abdullah bin `Umar and `Abdullah bin `Abbas declared, "We will not take any action in it even against the murderer of our fathers."

(3) It is unlawful to wage war or shed blood within it. On the second day of the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet declared, "O people, Allah has trade Makkah a Sanctuary since the very creation of this world, and it will remain so by Allah's ordinance up to the Day of Resurrection; therefore, it is not lawful for any man, who believes in Allah and the Day of Resurrection, to shed blood here". Then he added, "Suppose a man legalizes bloodshed here on the basis of the precedent that I waged war here, tell him, 'Allah made it lawful for His Messenger and not for you'. It was made lawful for me for a short interval of the day. Then it was again made "Inviolable" as before".

(4) It is unlawful to cut naturally growing trees or uproot the grass which has grown there. It is also prohibited to hunt birds and animals within the boundary or to drive them out from the "Inviolable Place" for hunting. It is, however, lawful to kill a serpent, a scorpion and other harmful animals and to uproot dry grass and "Izkhir" which is a kind of grass.

(5) It is prohibited to pick up anything that has fallen to the ground. In a Tradition, reported by Abu Dawud, the Holy Prophet prohibited people to pick up, anything belonging to a pilgrim that had fallen to the ground.

(6) It is unlawful for a pilgrim who comes with the intention of performing Hajj or 'Umrah" to enter therein without Ihram. However, there is a divergence of opinion in regard to the entry of others than the pilgrims without Ihram. According to 'Abdullah bin `Abbas no one is allowed to enter therein without Ihram in any case, and this has been supported by a saying each of Imam Ahmad and Imam Shafi`i. According to other sayings of Imams Ahmad and Shafi`i, those people who have to visit the' "Inviolable Place" frequently in connection with trade and business, are excepted. Imam Abu Hanifah, however, holds the view that the person who lives within the limits of the appointed "Miqats" can visit Makkah without Ihram but the outsiders cannot enter it without Ihram.

45Some commentators opine that the address to Prophet Abraham ends with v. 26 and say that the Command contained in v. 27 was addressed to the Holy Prophet; but this opinion does not fit in with the context. For it is obvious that this Command also was addressed to Prophet Abraham when he had built the Ka`bah. Moreover, the command implies that the House of Allah had been built for the worship of One Allah and there was general permission from the very first day for all worshipers to visit it for

performing Hajj.

46The expression "lean camels" has been deliberately used to depict the picture of the camels of pilgrims coming from far-off places to perform Hajj.

47In my opinion the address to Prophet Abraham comes to an end with v. 27 and vv. 28-29 have been added to emphasize and give further instructions for the performance of Hajj. We have based this opinion on the use of the epithet "Ancient House of the Ka`bah". It could not have been used at the time when Prophet Abraham built it. (For further details about the construction of the Ka`bah see II: 125-129, III: 96, 97 and XIV: 35-41).

48"The benefits" include both religious and worldly benefits. It was due mainly to the Ka`bah that during the period of 2500 years between the times of Prophet Abraham and the Holy Prophet, the Arabs, in spite of their tribal life, remained attached to one central place and continued to visit it from all parts of Arabia for performing Hajj year after year. This in turn preserved their language, their culture and their Arab identity. Then during the course of the year they were afforded at least four months of perfect peace when anybody and everybody could safely travel alone or in trade caravans; thus the ritual of Hajj was directly beneficial to economic life of the country as well. For details see III: 97 and E.N's 80, 81 thereof, and V: 97 and E.N. 113 thereof.

49"The cattle" here imply the camel, cow, sheep and goat as has been clearly mentioned in VI:142-144.". . . they should mention the name of Allah over the cattle" implies that they should slaughter the cattle for Allah's. sake and in His name, as is clear from the subsequent sentences. Allah's name should be recited at the time the cattle are slaughtered to show that the Muslims are to slaughter and sacrifice animals in Allah's name alone so as to distinguish them from the disbelievers who slaughtered animals without mentioning Allah's name or by mentioning other names than that of Allah.

As regards "the known appointed days", there is a difference of opinion as to their exact identity. Some of the opinions as to what the "appointed days" mean are:

(1) The first ten days of Zil-Hajj. This view is supported by Ibn `Abbas, Hasan Basri, Ibrahim Nakha`i, Qatadah and several other Companions and their followers. Imams Abu Hanifah, Shafi`i and Ahmad bin Hanbal have also favored this view.

(2) The tenth of Zil-Hajj and the three days following it. This view is supported by Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn `Umar, Ibrahim Nakha`i, Hasan and `Ata'. Imams Shafi`i and Ahmad are also reported to have favored this in a saying each.

(3) The tenth day of Zil-Hajj and the two following days. This view has been supported by Hadrat `Umar,

`Ali, Ibn `Umar, Ibn `Abbas, Anas bin Malik, Abu Hurairah, Said bin Musayyab and Said bin Jubair. Sufyan Thauri, Imam Malik, Imam Abu Yusuf and Imam Muhammad from among the Jurists have also adopted it, and the Hanafites and the Malikites are also generally agreed on this.

50The imperative mood of the verb has given rise to the misunderstanding that it is obligatory to eat their flesh and also to give of it to the needy people, Imams Shafi`i and Malik opine that it is good to eat of it and it is obligatory to give of it to others. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, both these things are permitted but are not obligatory. It is good to eat of it, for the people in the days of ignorance considered it unlawful to eat sacrificial meat of their own animals, and it is good to give of it to the poor by way of help. Ibn Jarir has cited instances from Hasan Basri, `Ata', Mujahid and Ibrahim Nakha`i to prove that the imperative mood dces not always imply a command, as for example in V: 2 and LXII: 10. Thus, ".... give of it to the indigent" does not mean that the flesh cannot be given to a rich person for the Companions of the Holy Prophet used to give of it to their friends, neighbors, relatives whether they were rich or poor. According to Ibn `Umar, one-third of the flesh may be consumed at home, one-third may be given to the neighbors and the remaining one-third distributed among the needy.

51It means that after performing the essential Hajj rites, one should put off Ihram, have a shave, bath, etc. for one is free from the restrictions of Ihram after Hajj. However, one is not allowed to have sexual relations with his wife till one has performed the Tawaf of Ziyarah or Ifadah.

52That is, the vow one has made for that occasion.

53The Arabic word `Atiq, which has been used for the Ka`bah, is very meaningful for it implies:

(1) ancient,

(2) free from the sovereignty and ownership of anyone,

(3) honored and revered.

I am of the opinion that here the word Tawaf refers to the circumambulation performed on the tenth day of Zil-Hajj after setting aside Ihram, as the last ritual of Hajj, and is called Tawaf of Ifadah or Ziyarah (Visit).

54Though the "command" is of a general nature, here it refers particularly to the prohibitions which are connected with the "Sacred Mosque", Hajj, 'Umrah and Makkah. Incidentally, there is a subtle hint in it to the Quraish; who had driven out the Muslims from Makkah and debarred them from Hajj and violated the sanctity of the "Ancient House" by associating indecent, filthy, and ungodly rites with Hajj and the House in contradiction to the ways of Abraham.

55"And the cattle have been made lawful for you ...." has been cited here for two objects:

(1) It is to refute the custom of the Quraish under which certain cattle-bahirah. saibah, wasilah and ham- were considered unlawful. They are being told that these are also lawful like other cattle.

(2) It is not unlawful as was held by the Quraish to eat the flesh of the cattle even in the state of "Ihram".

56This refers to VI: 145 and XVI: 11S in which Allah has forbidden the Muslims to eat what dies of itself, blood, flesh of swine or what has been slaughtered in any name other than Allah's.

57That is, "Refrain from and guard against the worship of idols just as you avoid filthy and dirty things"

58Though the expression "false things" is general and implies lies, false evidence, calumny, etc., here it particularly refers to those false creeds, rites, and rituals and superstitious things on which kufr and shirk have been founded. It is obvious that there is no greater lie than associating others with Allah in His Being, Attributes, Powers and Rights. It was a falsehood to make bahirah, etc. unlawful. . See also XVI :116.

To take a false oath and give a false evidence also come under this Commandment. A Tradition from the Holy Prophet says:

"A false evidence is equal to shirk with Allah." That is why according to the Islamic Law, a false witness should be punished and disgraced. Imams Abu Yusuf and Muhammad have expressed the opinion that a person who brings a false witness in the court should be publicly exposed and sentenced to a long imprisonment. This was the actual practice in the time of Hadrat `Umar. According to Makhul, he said:

"Such a person should be whipped, his head shaved and face blackened and he should be sentenced to a long imprisonment."

'Abdullah bin `Amir has reported from his father that a person's false evidence was established in Hadrat `Umar's court, whereupon the Caliph kept him exposed to public for a day, saying that he was so and so and a false witness so that people might recognize him, and then he imprisoned him. These days this can be done by publishing the culprit's name in the newspapers, etc.

59In this parable "heaven" means the original human nature. Man by nature is the servant of none else but Allah and inherently accepts the Doctrine of Tauhid. That is why the one who follows the guidance of the Prophets becomes firm in these dictates of his nature and soars higher and higher. On the other hand, the one who rejects Allah or associates a partner with Him falls down from the "heaven"of his nature. Then he either becomes a victim of satans and evil leaders like the birds of the parable, which

snatch away the fallen man, or he becomes a slave of his lusts, passions, whims, etc., which have been likened to the wind in the parable. They lower him down from one wrong position to the other till he falls into the deepest abyss of degradation.

60"Symbols of God worship": the performance of Salat, Hajj, Fasting, etc., or things like a Mosque or sacrificial offerings, etc. (See V: 2 and E.N.'s 5-7 thereof).

61That is, the observance of the sanctity of the "Symbols" by a man is a proof that there is piety in his heart. On the other hand, the man who violates their sanctity proves himself to be void of piety and fear of God. It shows that he either does not believe at all in Allah or adopts a rebellious attitude against Him.

62This is to remove the misunderstanding about getting any benefit from the animals dedicated for sacrifice as they were also included in the "Symbols of Allah. This was necessitated because the Arabs believed that it was unlawful to get any benefit from them. One could neither ride on them nor carry any load on them nor consume their milk, after they had been dedicated for sacrifice during Hajj. In this verse that misunderstanding has been removed. Hadrat Abu Hurairah and Anas have reported that the Holy Prophet saw a man walking in a miserable condition on foot leading his camel by the nose-string. When the Holy Prophet asked him to ride on it, he replied that it was his sacrificial offering. The Holy Prophet again urged him to ride on his camel.

There is a divergence of opinion in regard to the interpretation of "an appointed time". Some commentators, particularly Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Mujahid, Dahhak and `Ata' are of the view that it refers to the time of the dedication of the animals for sacrifice. Obviously this is not the correct view, because in that case the permission to get benefit from them becomes meaningless. There are other commentators including `Urwah bin Zubair and `Ala' bin Abi Rabah, who are of the view that "appointed time" means the time of sacrifice and one can get benefit from them up till then. One may ride on them, drink their milk, take their young ones for use and shear their hair, wool, etc. Imam Shaf`i has adopted this view. The Hanafites are of the opinion that one can get benefit from them, if need be, though it is preferable not to do so.

63It does not mean that the sacrifice is to be made in the precincts of the "Ancient House" of the Ka`ah. The Qur'an uses the "House of Allah" or Masjid-i-Haram for the whole of the "Inviolable Place" of Makkah and not for that particular building. (V: 95)

64This verse implies two things:

(1) Sacrifice has been an essential part of the worship of One Allah in all the revealed religions. In order to inculcate Tauhid, Allah prohibited sacrifice for anyone other than Himself. This was in keeping with the other prohibitions which were made for others than Allah. For instance, "prostration" before anyone other

than Allah, making vows for others than Allah, visiting holy places others than those prescribed by Allah, fasting in the name of others than of Alla, etc., were all prohibited.

(2) The other thing which has been common in all the revealed religions was the object of the sacrifice in the name of Allah though its details have been different in different religions, times and countries.

65The Arabic word `mukhbitin' has no equivalent in English. It includes those who (1) give up pride, arrogance and adopt humility before Allah, (2) surrender themselves to His service and slavery, and (3) accept His decrees sincerely.

66It means that righteous people spend their lawful provisions in the Way of Allah to meet their own and their dependents' lawful needs, to help their relatives, neighbors and other needy people, on public works and propagation of the Word of Allah. It does not include expenditure in unlawful ways for unlawful purposes. The Qur'anic term Infaq implies neither over-spending nor being miserly and stingy, but spending one's wealth on oneself and others according to one's means and status in society.

67Seven persons can become partners in the sacrifice of one camel and likewise in the sacrifice of one cow and the like, as enjoined by the Holy Prophet in a Tradition reported by Jabir bin `Abdullah in the Collection of Hadith by Muslim.

68That is, "You should sacrifice animals because you get many benefits front them to show your gratitude to Allah, the Giver, and also to acknowledge His Supremacy and Sovereignty".

69It should be noted that a camel is sacrificed while it is standing. This was enjoined by the Holy Prophet and is supported by Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, I)ahhak, etc. Muslim and Bukhar have reported a Tradition from Hadrat Ibn Umar, who saw a man slaughtering his camel in the sitting position. He said to him, "Tie one foot of your camel and make it stand, because that is the way of Abu Qasim (peace be upon him)". According to a tradition reported by Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah, in Abu Dawud, the Holy Prophet and his Companions would tie a left foot of the camel and would make it stand on three feet; then they would slaughter it. The same is implied by the subsequent sentence: " ...and after their backs lie still on the ground .....", i.e. when they fall down to the ground after enough of their blood has run out.

70"Mention the name of Allah over them" implies that animals should be slaughtered by pronouncing the name of Allah over them, because without that their flesh would be unlawful to eat. This shows that in the Islamic Law there is no conception of slaughtering an animal without pronouncing the name of Allah over it. According to Traditions, there are different wordings for pronouncing the name of Allah over the animals at the time of their slaughter. Some of these are:

(I) Bismillahi Allahu Akbar; Allahumma minks wa laka: "In the name of Allah, Allah is most Great! O Allah,

this is Thine and is presented to Thee".

(2) Allahu Akbar- La ilaha ill-Allahu; Allahumma minks wa laka: "Allah is most Great: There is no god but Allah: O Allah, this is Thine and is presented to Thee" .

(3) Inni wajjahtu wajhiya lillazi fatar-as-sama wati wal-arda, hanif-an-wa ma ana min-al-mushrikin. Inns Salati wa nusuki wa mahyaya wa mamati lillahi Rabb-il- 'alamin. La sharika lahu wa bi-zalika umirtu wa ana min-al-Muslimin. A llahumma minks wa laka. "I have turned my face sincerely towards the Being Who created the heavens and the earth, and I am not from among the idolatrous people. My Salat and my rites of worship and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the universe, Who has no partner with Him. This is what I have been enjoined and I am the first to surrender to Him. O Allah! This is Thine, and is presented to Thee."

71".....lie still on the ground....." means till they die completely, for the Holy Prophet prohibited to cut off a piece of flesh, if there is still any sign of life in the slaughtered animal; if this is done, the piece of flesh would be unlawful.

72This is another reason why animals should be sacrificed: "They should be sacrificed as a mark of gratitude to Allah Who has subjected them to you".

73This prescribes a very important condition for the sacrifice made in the worship of Allah. A sacrifice is acceptable to Allah only if it is accompanied by piety and sincerity. Though sacrifice is a Symbol of Allah, yet it has been made plain that it is accepted only if it is accompanied by piety, saying, "Neither their flesh reaches Allah nor their blood, but it is your piety ...." This was also meant to condemn the ritual of the days of ignorance, when the Arabs took the flesh to the Ka'bah and smeared its walls with the blood of the sacrificed animal.

74".... you should glorify Allah" at the time of sacrifice verbally also in order to acknowledge that the animals really belong to Allah and to no one else. One of the sentences uttered at the time of sacrifice is Allahumma minka wa laka (O Allah, this animal is Thine and is presented to Thee).

It should be noted well that the command of sacrifice as contained in verses 36 and 37 is not for the pilgrims alone and that the performance of sacrifice is not confined to Makkah on the occasion of Hajj. It is a general command for all those Muslims who are well off. They have been enjoined to be grateful to Allah because He has subjected these animals for the good of all human beings. Therefore they are required to sacrifice the animals during these days so that they may spiritually join those who go to Makkah to perform Hajj.

There are many authentic Traditions to the effect that the Holy Prophet made sacrifice on this occasion,

while he was personally at al-Madinah:

(1) "The one who does not perform sacrifice even though he can should not join us in the `Id Prayer". (Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Majah).

(2) According to a Tradition reported by Ibn 'Umar, the Holy Prophet dwelt at al-Madinah for ten years and performed sacrifice every year. (Tirmizi).

(3) According to Hadrat Anas, the Holy Prophet said:

"The one who sacrificed an animal before the 'Id Prayer, should offer another sacrifice; but the one who sacrificed his animal after the 'Id Prayer, did the right thing and followed the way of the Muslims". (Bukhari)

It this connection, it is note-worthy that no `Id Prayer is held on the tenth of Zil-Hajj in Makkah: therefore the injunction was meant for all Muslims and not only for those performing Hajj at Makkah.

Thus, it is clear that the sacrifice on the occasion of 'Id which is observed in the whole Muslim world is a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet and has been enjoined by him. The only dispute is whether it is obligatory in nature or only a Sunnah. Ibrahim Nakha'i, Imams Abu Hanifah, Malik, Muhammad and, according to a Tradition, Imam Abu Yusuf too, are of the opinion that it is Obligatory in nature. On the other hand, Imams Shafi`i and Ahmad bin Hanbal regard it only as a Sunnah of the Muslims, and Sufyan Thauri has also agreed with them, saying that there will be no harm if a person does not offer a sacrifice. It is, however, an irony that some of the "learned" Muslims of our time, who follow neither the Qur'an nor the Sunnah, and are only guided by personal whims, have declared that if there is a consensus of opinion of the Muslims, they can give up the practice of sacrifice on the occasion of Eid.

75From here the address for the first time prepares the Muslims for Jihad. In order to understand this, we should keep in view the preceding portion (vv. 19-24) in which the ideological conflict between the two parties (Believers and disbelievers) and the result thereof have been described. This naturally serves as a prelude to the armed conflict between the two parties. That is why in vv. 26-37 the immediate causes which necessitated war have been stated to serve as an introduction and justification for war with the disbelievers of Makkah.

After the migration to al-Madinah, when the first Hajj season approached, it naturally brought along with it anguish and anger both for the Muhajirs and the Ansar, who had been debarred froth visiting Makkah and performing Hajj, That is why, in this passage (vv. ,26-37) the rituals and the objects of Hajj have been described to bring home to the disbelievers that they had no right to debar anyone from Hajj. On the other hand, the Muslims are being prepared to fight not with the intention of wreaking vengeance but for the sake of reform. At the same time sacrifice on the occasion of Hajj has been prescribed as a permanent

rite to enable them (and the Muslims of the whole world) to commemorate Hajj and the rites connected with it, so that they might refrain from wreaking vengeance on the people of Makkah for the persecution to which they had been subjected. They have, therefore, been enjoined to fight to bring about better conditions and not to take. revenge on their persecutors.

76The Arabic word mudafi at implies two things:

(1) to fight with the enemy to ward off his aggressive attack;

(2) to fight with the enemy not just once but whenever the need arises. Allah has assured the Believers that He will defend them against the enemy every tithe there is a conflict between Islam and kufr. This is to encourage the Believers that they will not be left alone in their defence, but Allah Himself will be a party with them and will help them to frustrate the cunning designs of the enemy and to ward off their attacks. Indeed this verse is a great encouragement for the Believers, for it imbues their hearts with spirit and strength which nothing else can.

77Allah becomes a party with the Believers because they are justified in waging war against the disbelievers who are treacherous and ungrateful to Allah in spite of His marry blessings and favors to them.

78This (v. 39) is the first verse of the Qur'an in which permission to tight was given in the month of Zil-Hajj in the first year after Hijrah according to our research. Then the command to fight was given in vv. 190, 191, 193, 216 and 244 of Chapter II (Al-Baqarah) in Rajab or Sha`ban of A.H. 2.

79".....and Allah is certainly able to help them": this assurance was urgently needed by the persecuted Muslims whose fighting strength at that time was very meager, not even a thousand including all the migrants and the Muslims of al-Madinah. On the other hand, the fighting strength of the Quraish by themselves was much greater. Besides, they had all the other mushrik clans of Arabia at their back and were joined later by the Jews as well. Therefore, this assurance was most opportune and the challenge to the disbelievers was very significant, for it meant to say that they were not fighting against a small number of the Muslims but against Allah. Therefore, "You are. welcome to fight if you dare".

80The mention of their expulsion from their homes in v. 40 is a clear proof that this portion of Surah al-Hajj was revealed at al-Madinah.

81In order to have an idea of the severe persecution of the Muslims, a few instances of this are cited.

(1) Hadrat Suhaib Rumi was deprived of everything, when he was about to migrate to al-Madinah. When he reached there, he had nothing with him except the clothes he was wearing. Though he had earned all

that through his own labors he was deprived of everything by the disbelievers of Makkah.

(2) When Hadrat Abu Salmah was about to leave Makkah with his wife and a suckling child, his in-laws forcibly separated his wife from him, and then the people of his own family tore away the child from them. Thus the poor woman had to pass one whole year in sorrow and grief. After a year, she secured the child somehow and journeyed from Makkah to al-Madinah with it all alone on a dangerous route.

(3) `Ayyash bin Rabi`ah was a half brother of Abu Jahl: When he migrated to al Madinah, he was followed by Abu Jahl and another brother of his, and they told him the lie: "Your mother has taken the oath that she will not move from the sun to the shade nor comb her hair until she should see you (`Ayyash) You should therefore go back with us to Makkah,' show her your face and then come back". He was taken in by this trick. When they were journeying back the two brothers made him a prisoner, took him to Makkah with his hands and feet tied, and proclaimed, "O people of Makkah, this is how these lads should be treated and set right". He remained in that state for a long time and was at last rescued by a brave Muslim.

82Saumah (pl. Swami), Biyah and Salawat in the original Text are the places of worship of the monks who have left the world, the Christians and the Jews respectively. Salawat was Salauta in Aramaic, which might be the origin of the English words salute and salutation.

83In this sentence, a Divine principle has been stated:

"Allah does not let a group of people or a community have authority for ever. Every now and then He repels one group by means of another".

If this had not been the case, the permanent dominator would have created chaos not only in the political and economic spheres, but would have encroached upon the places of worship as well. This "principle" has also been stated in v. 251 of Chapter II (Al-Baqarah).

84Those "who help Allah" are the people who invite mankind to Tauhid and exert their utmost to establish the "True Faith" and righteousness. For further explanation see E.N. 50 of Chapter III (Al-i-`Imran).

85".....if We give them power ..... evil": In this one sentence, the real aim of the Islamic State and the characteristics of those who conduct its affairs have been stated concisely but comprehensively. Those who help Allah and deserve His succor behave righteously, establish Salat, make arrangements for the collection of Zakat and use their power and authority to propagate good and eradicate evil.

86That is, "It is Allah Who decides whom to give power in the land and when" . This is meant to remove the misunderstanding of the proud and arrogant people who think that the destiny of the land and its

dwellers is in their hands, and there is none to depose them from power. But Allah dethrones the most haughty ruler in supernatural ways and gives power to the most humble in order to show that He is All-Powerful, All-Mighty. "

87"The disbelievers of Makkah."

88The instances of some peoples who rejected their Prophets have been cited to impress that they were given respite to reform themselves before they were punished. Therefore, "O people of Makkah, you should not be deluded by the delay in your punishment. When the term of respite comes to an end, you shall also be punished like the former people, if you do not mend your ways in the meantime".

89The Arabic word Nakir is very comprehensive and implies two meanings:

(1) Displeasure at the evil conduct of the other, and

(2) a terrible punishment which disfigures the culprit so badly that he cannot even be recognized. The sentence therefore will mean: "Just see when I seized them for this evil conduct, how terrible was My chastisement".

90In Arabic a "well" is synonymous with a "habitation". Thus "many a well .... useless" means "many a habitation has been destroyed".

91The words ".... the hearts .... blind" have been used in the metaphorical and not in the literal sense. Since the heart is regarded as the center of emotions, feelings and of mental and moral qualities, these words have been used to imply that their obduracy has inhibited them from feeling and acting rationally.

92This refers to the oft-repeated challenge by the disbelievers: "Well, if you are a true prophet, why does not that chastisement come with which you have been threatening us, for we have been rejecting your claim of being a true Prophet of Allah?"

93That is, "The decisions of Allah do not follow your time and calendar, nor do the consequences of your wrong attitudes appear immediately after the deeds". Therefore it will be very foolish for the part of a people to argue that the threat of punishment was empty just because a decade or a century had passed since they had adopted a wicked attitude and conduct with impurity.

94That is, "I am merely a warner and not the maker of your destinies. It is Allah Who passes judgment and decides about the punishment."

95"The Believers shall have forgiveness" means that Allah will overlook their faults, weaknesses, and

acts of omission and commission. They will have "honorable provisions" means that they will have excellent supplies which will be given to them in an honorable way.

96For the distinction between Nabi and Rasul, refer to E. N. 30 of Chapter XIX (Maryam).

97The Arabic word tamanna has two meanings: "desire" and "to recite" something.

98If the first meaning is taken, it will imply: "Satan tried to prevent the fulfillment of his desire." If the second meaning is taken, it will imply: "When the Prophet recited the Revelations, Satan created different sorts of doubts about its truth and meanings in the minds of the people."

99If the first meaning is adopted, it will imply: "Allah fulfills the Prophet's desire and makes his Mission successful in spite of the obstacles of Satan and confirms the truth of His Revelations by fulfilling His promises to the Prophet". In case of the second meaning, it will imply: "Allah eradicates all the doubts and objections inspired by Satan in the hearts of the people and clarifies the confusion created about any verse of the Qur'an in subsequent Revelations".

100"Allah is All-Knowing" and has full knowledge of the mischief worked by Satan and of its effects, and being ;'All-Wise", He counteracts every mischief of Satan.

101That is, "Allah lets Satan work such mischiefs to put to the test both the righteous and the wicked people". The people with a perverted mentality deduce wrong conclusions from these and deviate from the Right Way, while those, who think on the right lines, realize that all these things are the mischiefs of Satan and that the Message of the Prophet is based on the Truth. They conclude that the very fact that Satan has been so much agitated and become active against it is a clear proof of its being the Truth. It is very important to understand the real significance of this passage (vv. 52-54) for this has given rise to a grave misunderstanding .

If we consider it in the context in which it occurs, it becomes obvious that it was sent down to refute the wrong appraisal of the casual observers that the Holy Prophet had "failed" to achieve his desired object. This was because he had striven for thirteen long years to persuade his people to accept his Message but the apparent result was that he had not only failed in this, but he and the small band of his followers had been forced to leave their homes. As this "exile" contradicted his claim that he was a Prophet of Allah and had His approval and succor with him, some people became skeptical about it. Moreover, they became doubtful about the truth of the Qur'an, because they were not being visited by the scourge, which was inflicted on those who treated the Prophet as false. His antagonists scoffed at him, saying, "Where is that succor of Allah and the scourge with which we were threatened?" The answer to these doubts of the disbelievers was given in the preceding passage, and in this passage the addressees were those who were influenced by this propaganda. Briefly the whole answer was to this effect:

"It is not a new thing that the people of a Messenger have treated him as an impostor for it has always been happening like this: You can see from the remnants of those peoples who treated their Messengers as impostors how they were punished for their mischief. You can learn a lesson from them, if you will. As regards the delay in the coming of scourge, the Qur'an never threatened the disbelievers ò with immediate punishment, nor is it the job of the Messenger to inflict punishments. The scourge is sent by Allah, but He is not hasty in sending His torment. He gives respite to the people to mend their ways as He is giving you now. Therefore, you should not be under any delusion that the threats of scourge are empty threats.

"It is also not a new thing that the desires and wishes of a Prophet meet with obstacles or that false propaganda is made against his Message for the same has already happened with regard to the Messages of the former Prophets. But ultimately Allah eradicated the mischief worked by Satan and made the Message successful. Therefore you should take a warning from the past history of Satan's mischiefs and their ultimate failure. You should note it well that the obstacles and the mischiefs of Satan are a trial and means that help attract the righteous people towards Islam and winnow the dishonest people away from it" .

It is a pity that in spite of the above clear and simple meaning of the passage which fits in well with the context, a grave misunderstanding has arisen because of a tradition which has not only changed its meaning entirely and rendered it irrelevant in the context but has helped make doubtful the very basic Articles of the Faith. Therefore we are making a critical appraisal of the tradition in order to show how to make the right use of traditions for the correct interpretation of the Qur'an.

According to this tradition, the Holy Prophet had a strong longing and desire to this effect: "I wish some Revelations were sent down to tone down the abhorrence of the mushrik Quraish against Islam so as to bring them nearer to it, or at least the criticism against their creed may not be so severe as to arouse their enmity" .

While he was cherishing this desire, it so happened that one day when he was sitting in a big gathering of the Quraish, Surah An-Najm (LIII) was sent down and he began to recite it. When he came to vv. 19, 20: "Have you ever considered about this Lat and this `Uzza, and a third (goddess) Manat, "all of a sudden he recited, "These are exalted goddesses; indeed their intercession may be expected". After this he continued to recite Surah An-Najm up to the last verse and then fell down in prostration and all the Muslims and the mushriks of the Quraish also did the same, for the latter said, "Now we have no difference with Muhammad; we also profess that Allah is the Creator and the Provider and that these deities of ours are merely our intercessors with Him" . After this, when in the evening Angel Gabriel came, he said, "What have you done? I did not bring these two sentences". At this the Holy Prophet became very sad and Allah sent down vv. 73 75 of Surah Bani Isra`il (XVII): "O Muhammad! these people have left no stone unturned to tempt you away from that which We have revealed to you so that you might

fabricate something in Our name. Had you done that, they would have made you their friend. It was just possible that you might have inclined a little towards them, if We had not given you strength. But if you had done so, We would have made you taste double chastisement in this world as well as in the Hereafter: then you would have found no helper against Us".

But in spite of this, he continued to be grieved till Allah sent down v. 52 of this Surah (Al-Hajj) in which Allah consoled him, saying that the same had been happening to the former Prophets.

Another thing that happened in the meantime was that the story reached the migrants to Habash that there had been a reconciliation between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers of Makkah. Accordingly, many of them returned to Makkah only to learn that the news of reconciliation was wrong and the conflict between Islam and kufr was raging as furiously as before.

Now let us make a critical study of this story which has been cited by Ibn Jarir and many other commentators and is even contained in many collections of Traditions.

(1) None of its reporters, except Ibn `Abbas, is a Companion.

(2) There are many major discrepancies and variations in its details.

(3) The wording ascribed to the Holy Prophet in praise of the idols in each Tradition is different from that of others.

Moreover, these words have been attributed to different sources according to different Traditions: (a) These words were put in by Satan during the Revelation and the Holy Prophet imagined that they were revealed by Gabriel. (b) He himself uttered these words inadvertently, being urged by his own desire. (c) He was dozing when he uttered these words. (d) He intentionally uttered these words but in a manner as to question their veracity. (e) Satan interpolated these words into the Revelation, giving an impression that the Holy Prophet himself had recited them. (f) It was one of the mushriks who had recited these words.

Yet scholars of Tradition like Hafiz Ibn Hajar and jurists like Abu Bakr alJassas and rationalists like Zamakhshari and commentators like Ibn Jarir accept this story as true and consider it as a commentary on verse 52 of this Surah. Ibn Hajar argues like this:

"Even though the links by which this Tradition has been related are either weak or "broken", except in one case, the very fact that it has been related through so many "links" is a proof that there is some truth about it. The one which has strong links is by Said bin Jubair who has related it from Ibn `Abbas and the reporters of two more Traditions (which have been cited by Tabari) have been declared authentic by Bukhari and Muslim".

On the other side, there are other eminent scholars who declare this story to be utterly baseless. Ibn Kathir says, "All the links of this Tradition are unauthentic and I have found no correct version of this with continuous links". Baihaqi says, "This story has not been proved to be correct by the rules of reporting". When Ibn Khuzaimah was asked about it, he said, "This story has been invented by heret cs". Qazi `Ayad says, "The very fact that this Tradition is neither contained in any of the six authentic collections of Hadith nor has it been related in an authentic way by authentic reporters shows its weakness". Besides them, Imam Razi, Qazi Abu Bakr Ibn al-`Arabi, Alusi etc. have rejected it altogether.

It is a pity that even those who reject this story have not done full justice to their cases. There are some who reject it because its "links" are weak. In other words, they would have accepted it, if its links were strong. Then there are others who reject it because its acceptance makes the whole Faith doubtful. This kind of reasoning may satisfy the believers but it cannot satisfy those who are already sceptical or intend to make a research into it with a view to making a correct appraisal of Islam. They will rather say, "When a story is related by an eminent Companion and is contained in the collections of Traditions, there is no reason why we should reject it just because it makes your Faith doubtful".

Now let us consider the story critically and rationally to prove that it is unacceptable.

(1) Its internal evidence proves it to be wrong: (a) According to the story the incident happened after the first migration to Habash, for according to it some of the migrants returned to Makkah after hearing the story. Now the fact is that the migration took place in the month of Rajab of the fifth year of Prophethood and some of the migrants returned to Makkah three months later, i.e. in Shawwal of the same year. (b) Verses 73-75 of Chapter XVII in which the Holy Prophet was "reproved" for this incident were revealed in the eleventh or twelfth year of Prophethood. In other words, he was "reproved" by Allah five or six years after the incident. (c) This verse (52) in which the interpolation by Satan was abrogated was sent down in the first year of Hijrah, i.e. about two years after the reproof. Can a person in his senses believe' that the Holy Prophet 'was reproved for the interpolation after six years, and it was abrogated after nine years ?

(2) According to the story, this interpolation was made in Surah An-Najm. When the Holy Prophet was reciting the words, "And a third (goddess) Manat'; he also recited the interpolated sentence, and then continued the recital up to the end of the Surah. It is said that the disbelievers of Makkah were so pleased with the interpolation that they declared, "The differences between us and Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) have now come to an end".

Let us now read w. 19-23 of An-Najm along with the alleged interpolation (in italics): "Have you ever considered about the reality of this Lat and ` Uzza and a third (goddess) Manat? These are exalted goddesses; indeed their intercession may be expected. What, do you have sons for yourselves add daughters for Him (Allah) ? This is indeed an unfair division. They are nothing but mere names which you and your forefathers have invented. Allah has sent down no authority in regard to them. They follow only

conjectures and the whims of their own minds, although right guidance has come from their Lord".

Even a casual reader will detect an obvious contradiction in the passage. Immediately after "praising" the goddesses there is a hard hit on their worshipers, as if to say: "O foolish people! How is it that you have ascribed daughters to Allah and sons to yourselves? All this is your own invention which has no authority from Allah" . On the face of it, the interpolation makes the passage absurd which cannot be assigned even to a rational person not to speak of Allah. Then the story presumes that all the Quraish who were listening to it must have lost their senses; otherwise they could not have declared that their differences with Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) had been made up from thence.

From this internal evidence it has become clear that this story is absurd and meaningless.

(3) Now let us consider whether the occasions ascribed by the commentators to the revelation of the verses under discussion, fit in with the chronological order of the Qur'an. According to the story, the interpolation in Surah AnNajm (LIII) was made in the fifth year of Prophethood; the reproof was made in vv. 73-75 of Bani Isra'il (XV11) and then the interpolation was annulled and the incident explained in vv. 52-54 of Surah Al-Hajj (XXII). Now there could be only two possibilities about the time of their revelation: either the verses containing the reproof and the abrogation were sent down in the period in which the interpolation took place, or the verse containing the reproof was sent down along with Surah Al-Hajj (XXII). In the first case, the question arises: Why were these verses (XVII: 73-75) not inserted in An-Najm (LIII)? Why were they held in abeyance for six long years and then inserted in Surah Bani Isra'il (XVII), when it was revealed, and vv. 52-54 (containing the abrogation) inserted in Surah Al-Hajj (XXII) after a further delay of more than two years? Does it mean that the verses were sent down on one occasion and inserted years later haphazardly in one Surah or the other? In the second case, the question would arise: Does it stand to reason that the verses containing the reproof (XVII: 73-75) were sent down six years after the interpolation, and the verse of abrogation (XXII: 52) nine years after the incident? Still another question arises: What was the occasion of the revelation of the verses of reproof and abrogation in Chapters XVII and XXII in the context in which they occur?

(4) Now let us turn to the third principle of correct appraisal of the Qur'an.

For a correct appreciation of the Qur'an it is essential to consider whether a particular commentary fits in with the relevant context of the Qur'an or not. If we make even a cursory study of XVII: 71-73, (Bani Isra'il), it will become obvious that there was no occasion for the alleged reproof in v. 73 and that there is no tinge of reproof in it, for the words of the verse refute the allegation that the Prophet was taken in by the mischief of the disbelievers. Then in Surah Al-Hajj (XXII), if we make a critical study of the verses that precede vv. 52-54 and follow them, it will become obvious that there was no occasion to console the Prophet for the "interpolation" and to annul it after nine years.

(5) We reiterate that no Tradition, however strong links it might have, can be accepted when the Text

itself is a clear evidence against it, and when it does not fit in with the wording, the context, the order etc. of the Qur'an. When the incident is considered in this background, even a skeptical research scholar would be convinced that the Tradition is absolutely wrong. As regards a believer, he can never accept it, when he knows that it contradicts not only one verse but a large number of other verses of the Qur'an. He would rather believe, that the reporters of the Tradition might have been deluded by Satan and not the Holy Prophet. He would never believe that the Holy Prophet could interpolate even a single word in the Qur'an under the influence of a desire of his own: or that there could ever occur such a desire in his mind that he should make a compromise with the disbelievers by associating shirk with Tauhid: or that he could ever wish that Allah might not say anything to displease the disbelievers: or that the Revelation was made in such an unsafe and doubtful manner as to enable Satan to mix with it even a word in a manner as if it was also brought by Gabriel. Each of these things is contradictory to the clear Revelation of the Qur'an and the basic Articles of the Faith which we have learned from the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet. God forbid that we should accept any such Tradition that might lead to the above mentioned presumptions just because the Tradition seems to be "authentic" in every way.

It will be worth-while to consider the question: How is it that so many reporters of Traditions have related this story? Does it not show that there must have been some reality about it? Otherwise, so many reporters, who included many authentic and eminent scholars, could not have made such an heinous slander against the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet. Its answer is contained in the authentic collections of Traditions by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Nasa`i and Musnad Ahmad. The reality of the incident is this:

The Holy Prophet recited Surah An-Najm and performed prostration at the end of it. At this, all the hearers, both the Muslims and the mushriks, fell down in prostration. This was what really happened and there is nothing strange about-it. Let us depict the occasion: The Holy Prophet was reciting a forceful piece of the eloquent Qur'an in a very impressive manner. Naturally the occasion produced an emotional effect and all the listeners instinctively fell down in prostration along with him. It was because of such ecstasies produced by the Holy Prophet's recital of the Qur'an as this that the disbelievers dubbed him a "sorcerer". As regards the story that the Holy Prophet praised the deities of the disbelievers, it appears that the Quraish concocted the story to hide their "defeat". Probably someone or other of them explained away their defeat, saying, "We ourselves heard Muhammad praising our deities. Therefore we also fell down in prostration along with him". As regards the migrants to Habash, they returned to Makkah when they heard the concocted story that there had been a compromise between the Holy Prophet and the Quraish. It appears that some of those people who had seen the Muslims and the mushriks falling down together in prostration, presumed that peace had been made between them, so the story traveled to the migrants in Habash who had no means to verify it and thus thirty-three of them returned to Makkah.

Naturally these three things-prostration by the Quraish, their explanation of it, and the return of the migrants from Habash-combined to evolve that story. So much so that some authentic people were also deluded by it, for to err is human, and the pious and intelligent people are no exception to it. However, the error of the latter proves to be more harmful, because their credulous followers accept with closed eyes

their misconceptions along with their right conclusions. On the other hand, mischief mongers collect all such errors of the righteous people and exploit them to prove that all the collections of Traditions are false and should be rejected forthwith.

102The epithet "barren" has been applied to the "day" in its metaphorical and not literal sense. :A "day" is barren if all the plans, hopes and devices remain unproductive in it, or it does not bring forth its night. For instance, the days on which the people of Prophet Noah, the tribes of `Ad and Thamud, the people of Lot and of Midian met with their destruction by scourge from Allah, were barren days in this sense, because those days did not bring forth any "tomorrow" for them, and no device of theirs could avert their doom.

103As Allah is All-Knowing, He knows well those who left their homes for His sake and what reward they deserve. He is Clement, and forgives minor errors and weaknesses of the people; therefore these things will not hinder Him from rewarding the Believers for their services and sacrifices.

104The preceding verses referred to those persecuted people who could not retaliate and here 'the reference is to those victims of persecution who could fight back.

From this verse, Imam Shafi`i has concluded that "retaliation" will be effected in the way as life was taken in the original act. If a person is killed by immersion in water, the killer also should be put to death by immersion in water; or if a person is .burnt to death, the killer also will be burnt to death. The Hanafites dispute this. According to them, retaliation against a murderer will be incurred in one and the same established way no matter how life was taken by the culprit in the original act.

105This verse (60) may imply two things:

(1) Allah forgives that "killing" which is done in self-defense, though killing of people is not a good thing in itself. (2) As Allah, Whose slaves the Believers are, is Forgiving and Forbearing, they should also forgive and forbear as far as possible. Though they have the right of retaliation, they should not resort to carnage and massacre.

106"So it is" (as stated in the preceding paragraph) because Allah is the Ruler of the universe and has the power to give punishments and rewards to those who deserve them.

107The fact that "Allah brings forth .....day" is a proof that He is the Master, Sovereign and Ruler of the universe. But the deeper meaning of the verse is that Allah, Who is able to bring forth the light of the day out of the darkness of the night, has the power to bring out the light of the Truth out of the darkness of disbelief and ignorance, and the light of justice out of the darkness of tyranny.

108He hears everything and sees everything and is not unaware of anything.

109As Allah is in fact the Sovereign of the universe, His worshipers will surely attain true success and the worshipers of false gods will meet with utter failure.

110This verse has a deeper meaning also, though apparently it merely declares that Allah alone has the power to send down rain which makes the land green. The deeper meaning is that the rainfall of the blessed Revelation will, in the near future, turn the barren land of Arabia into a garden of knowledge, morality and bring forth a high and righteous civilization.

111The original word Latif in the Text has no equivalent in English. The word "subtle" has not been used because of its bad associations. Latif implies that Allah fulfills His designs in such fine ways that it is difficult to understand them till they become real and apparent.

As He is fully aware of everything, He knows how to conduct the affairs of His Kingdom.

112He alone is "All-Sufficient" and does not stand in need of anyone in any way. He is "All-praiseworthy" because all praise belongs to Him alone whether anyone praises Him or not.

113Here "the sky" implies the whole of the universe above and below the earth where everything is held in its own place and sphere.

114That is, "Though man sees every reality presented by the Prophets, yet he denies it".

115That is, "The Community of every Prophet".

116Here the Arabic word mansak has been used in its most comprehensive sense which also includes "sacrifice" (v. 34). It means service, worship, in short, "the whole way of life". The same theme has been expressed in V: 48: "We prescribed a law and a way of life for each of you".

117That is, "Now you have brought a way of life just as the former Prophets brought "ways of life" for their people. Therefore the people have no right to dispute with you concerning the "Law" you have brought".

118This confirms the explanation given in E.N. 117 above.

119In order to understand the significance of this paragraph, we should keep in view vv. 55- 57 with which this is connected.

120That is, "Neither there is any mention of their deities in any revealed Book nor have they any other source of knowledge about them nor any authority to worship them. Therefore, it is sheer ignorance that they have associated their self invented deities with Allah and worship them, make vows and offer sacrifices to them and supplicate them for their needs etc.

121This is to warn the foolish people that they are absolutely wrong in expecting that their deities would help them in this world and in the Hereafter? because they have no power to help them. Thus, they will find no helper, for Allah alone could help them and they have already displeased Him by their rebellious behavior.

122That is, "You will meet with a far worse state of anguish than that which you display against those who recite Divine Revelations to you.

123This parable has been cited to impress upon the idol-worshipers that their deities are absolutely powerless, for even if they all collaborated to create an insignificant thing like a fly, they could not; nay, even if a fly snatched away anything from them they could not prevent it. This shows how weak they themselves are and how powerless are the idols they supplicate.

124In continuation of the refutation of shirk, Allah has taken two kinds of the most revered of "deities" to show their real status, as if to say, "The angels and the Prophets whom you have set up as deities are mere Messengers of Allah. Allah has chosen them to convey His Messages to human beings and this does not make them God or partners in His Godhead.

125The Qur'an employs this sentence to refute the creed of the mushriks in regard to intercession, as if to say, "You imagine that angels, prophets, saints,and the like can intercede with Allah on your behalf and therefore you worship them. You are absolutely wrong, for none of your deities knows what is good for you and what is not: Allah alone hears everything, sees everything and knows everything. Therefore He has not given the right of intercession and recommendation to anyone except when He Himself is pleased to give such permission."

126This is to impress upon them that every affair and every matter, big or small, is presented before Allah for a decision. Therefore you should not invoke anyone else than Allah, for all others are utterly helpless and powerless and cannot even fulfill their own desires and needs.

127This is the right way of attaining we success, but even after adopting these ways of worship and performing good deeds one should not rest content or be proud that he would surely attain success because he is worshiping Allah and is doing good deeds. He should only expect that Allah will by His grace accept his services and bless him with we success.

Imam Shafi`i, Ahmad bin Hanbal, `Abdullah bin Mubarak and Ishaq bin Rahawayah hold the view that this verse of Surah Al-Hajj requires a `prostration'. But Imam 'Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Hasan Basri, Said bin al-Musayyab, Said bin Jubair, Ibrahim Nakha`i and Sufyan Thauri dispute this. The arguments of the two sides are briefly as follows:

The former group of commentators base their opinion on the following:

(1) The verb in the verse is in the imperative mood.

(2) The Tradition of `Uqbah bin `Amir, which has been reported by Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Tirmizi, Ibn Marduyah and Baihaqi, says, "I asked, `O Messenger of Allah ! Dces the merit of Surah Al-Hajj consist in the fact that it contains two verses requiring prostration?' He replied, `Yes, the one who does not prostrate on these two verses, should not recite them.' "

(3) The Tradition of Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah in which `Amr bin `As says that he was told by the Holy Prophet that there were two verses requiring prostration in Surah Al-Hajj.

(4) Sayings of Hadrat `Umar, `Ali, `Uthman, Ibn `Umar, Ibn `Abbas, Abul Darda, Abu MUsa Ash`ari and `Ammar bin Yasir to the effect that Surah AIHajj contains two prostrations.'

The latter group of commentators argue as follows;

The verse contains a command both for Sajdah (prostration) and for Ruku' (bowing in prayer), which implies the whole Islamic Prayer according to the Qur'anic usage, and not `prostration' alone.

(2) The tradition reported by 'Uqbah bin `Amir is unauthentic as it has weak links.

(3) The Tradition of 'Amr bin `As is also unreliable, because its reporters are not well known.

(4) As for the sayings of the Companions, Ibn 'Abbas has clearly explained that prostration in respect of the first verse (in Surah AI-Hajj) is obligatory, whereas in regard to the second, it is only suggestive.

128The Arabic word Jihad is very comprehensive. It includes every kind of effort, exertion, conflict and war. Jihad for the cause of Allah means that it should be performed for .His service and for His approval against those who prevent others from following His Way. The performance of Jihad also requires that one should first of all fight against one's own self in order to subdue it. For there can be no true Jihad unless one fights against one's evil self and subdues one's desires and lusts to the obedience of Allah. The Holy Prophet himself has emphasized the need for this Jihad. Once when the warriors for the cause of Allah returned from Jihad, he said: "You have returned from the lesser Jihad to the' greater Jihad." They asked, "What is that greater Jihad.'" The Holy Prophet replied, "It is the Jihad against one's own

desires and lusts."

Moreover, the battlefield for Jihad is, in fact, the whole world, and Islam demands that one should exert one's utmost against all the rebels of Allah and the wicked powers with all of one's heart and mind and body and wealth.

129The direct addressees of this were the Companions of the Holy Prophet, for they were the first who had the honor to be chosen for this service; others have been addressed only indirectly being their followers. This thing has been mentioned in the Qur'an in other ways as well. For reference, see II: 143 and III: 110.

130"(Allah) has not laid on you any hardship in your religion." That is, "The creed you have been given is very simple and straightforward and the laws and regulations you have to obey are practicable. You are free within its bounds to make as much progress as you cap." This was to impress that the lives of the Muslims were free from all those useless and unnatural restrictions which had been imposed upon the former communities by their priests and law-givers. The negative aspect of the same thing has been mentioned in V1I: 157: ". . . He enjoins them to follow virtue and forbids them from evil: He makes pure things lawful for them and impure things unlawful. He relieves them of their burdens and frees thetas from the shackles that bound them."

131Though Islam tray be called the religion of Prophets Noah, Moses, Jesus, etc., yet the Qur'an emphasizes over and over again that it is the religion of Prophet Abraham. Therefore, "You should follow it." This is for three reasons:

(1) The first addressees of the Qur'an were the Arabs who were more familiar with Prophet Abraham than with any other Prophet and acknowledged him to be a holy personage and their leader.

(2) Prophet Abraham alone was the person whom the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims and the mushriks of Arabia and of the adjoining countries unanimously acknowledged as a great Prophet.

(3) When the Qur'an invites all these communities to follow the way of Abraham, it in fact, admonishes them that all their religions had been invented long after Prophet Abraham and, therefore, were not trustworthy because they contradicted many things taught by him. As for the mushriks of Arabia, they also acknowledged that idol-worship among them had been started by 'Amr bin Luhayy, who was a leader of Bani Khuza`ah, and had brought an idol, called Hubal, from Moab in about 600 B.C. So the religion to which Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) invited them was the same pure, un-adulterated religion which was taught by Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him).

For further details, see E.N.'s 134, 135 of Chapter II (Al-Baqarah) and E.N.'s 58, 79 of Chapter III (Al-

`Imran) and E.N.'s 119, 120 of Chapter XVI (An-Nahl)

132Here the word "you" has not been addressed exclusively to those Believers who lived at the time of the revelation of this verse, or those who believed after its revelation. It includes all those human beings, who, from the beginning of human history, believed in Tauhid, the Hereafter, Prophethood and the Divine Books. They were not "Jews", "Christians", etc., but "Muslims" in the sense that they had surrendered themselves to Allah. Likewise the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) are not Muhammadans but "Muslims".

133For Explanation, see E. N. 144 of Chapter II (Al-Baqarah).

134".... hold fast to Allah": Follow exclusively the Guidance and the law of Allah: obey Him alone: fear Him and have all your hopes and expectations in Him: invoke Him alone for help: trust in Him and pray to Him for all your needs.

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23. Surah Al Muminoon (The Believers)

Name

The surah takes its name, Al-Mu'minun, from the first verse.

Period of Revelation.

Both its style and theme indicate that it was revealed during the middle stage of Prophethood at Makkah. Reading between the lines, one feels that a bitter conflict had begun between the, Holy Prophet and the disbelievers of Makkah, though the persecution by them had not yet become tyrannical. It appears that the surah was sent down during the climax of the "Famine" in Makkah (vv. 75-76), which according to authentic traditions occurred during the middle stage of Prophethood. Moreover, according to a tradition related by 'Urwah bin Zubair, Hadarat Umar who had embraced Islam by that time, said, "This Surah was revealed in my presence and I myself observed the state of the Holy Prophet during its revelation. When the revelation ended , the Holy Prophet remarked, 'On this occasion ten such verses have been sent down to me that the one who measures up to them, will most surely go to Paradise'. Then he recited the initial verses of the surah." (Ahmad, Tirmizi, Nasai, Hakim).

Theme Topics

The central theme of the surah is to invite the people to accept and follow the Message of the Holy Prophet and the whole Surah revolves round this theme.

Summary

The fact that the people who have accepted the Message of the Holy Prophet have started acquiring such and such noble qualities of character is a practical proof of the truth of the Message. 1 - 11

In this passage, attention has been drawn to the creation of man and the universe to impress that the whole

universe including man's own self, is a clear proof of the truth of the Holy Prophet's Message, which invites the people to accept *Tauhid* and life in the Hereafter. 12 - 22

Then the stories of the former Prophets and their communities have been cited as historical evidences of the truth of the Message. They prove the following things :

1. The objections and the doubts that the antagonists are raising against the Message of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) are not new. These were raised against the former Prophets also whom they themselves acknowledged as Messengers of Allah. Therefore they should learn a lesson from their history and judge for themselves whether the Prophets were in the right or their objectors.

2. The Message of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is conveying is the same as was brought by the former Prophets; therefore they should accept it.

3. They should take a warning from the consequences met by those communities who rejected the Message of their Prophets.

4. All the Prophets brought one and the same religion from Allah and they all belonged to one and the same community. All other religions were invented by the people themselves and none of them is from Allah. 23 - 54

After relating the stories of the Prophets, a fundamental principle has been enunciated: Success and prosperity in the worldly life is not a criterion of success in the sight of Allah. If some persons (or a person) are enjoying prosperity, wealth, power and the like in this world, it does not mean that they are favorites of Allah. Likewise, the poverty and adversity of other people is not a proof that Allah is displeased with them. The real criterion is Faith (or lack of it). This declaration was needed because the antagonists of the Holy Prophet were the great chiefs of Makkah, who (and their followers) were deluded by their own prosperity that God and their deities were well pleased with them. On the other hand, they argued, the fact that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and his followers were indigent and in a state of helplessness, was a clear proof that Allah was not pleased with them, and they were under the curse of their deities. 55 - 67

In this passage different arguments have been used to convince them that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was a true Prophet of Allah. Then they have been told that the Famine (vv. 75 - 76) was merely a warning and therefore "it is better for you to mend your ways; otherwise you will be visited by a terrible scourge." 68 - 77

Again they have been invited to observe the Signs in the universe and in their own selves because these are clear proofs of the truth of the Message of the Holy Prophet. 78 - 95

The Holy Prophet has been told not to adopt any wrong way in retaliation to counteract the evil ways of the enemies, and to guard against the incitement of Satan. 96 - 97

In this concluding passage, the enemies of the truth have been warned that they shall have to render an account in

the Hereafter and bear the consequences of their persecution of the Believers; therefore they should mend their ways. 98 - 118

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ فِى صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ ٱللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَوٰةِ فَٰعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٥﴾

إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزۡوَٰجِهِمۡ أَوۡ مَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُهُمۡ فَإِنَّهُمۡ
غَيۡرُ مَلُومِينَ ٦

فَمَنِ ٱبۡتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡعَادُونَ ٧

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ لِأَمَٰنَٰتِهِمۡ وَعَهۡدِهِمۡ رَٰعُونَ ٨

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَٰتِهِمۡ يُحَافِظُونَ ٩

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡوَٰرِثُونَ ١٠

ٱلَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ ٱلۡفِرۡدَوۡسَ هُمۡ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ١١

[1-11] Most certainly those Believers have attained true success[1] who[2] perform their Salat with humility:[3] who refrain from vain things:[4] who spend their Zakat dues in appropriate ways:[5] who guard their private parts scrupulously,[6] except with regard to their wives and those women who are legally in their possession, for in that case they shall not be blame-worthy, but those, who go beyond this (in lust for sexual desires), shall be transgressors:[7] who are true to their trusts and their promises,[8] and who strictly guard their Prayers.[9] These are the heirs who will inherit Paradise[10] and dwell therein for ever.[11]

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَٰهُ نُطْفَةً فِى قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾

ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا ٱلنُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا ٱلْمُضْغَةَ عِظَٰمًا فَكَسَوْنَا ٱلْعِظَٰمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَٰهُ خَلْقًا ءَاخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ ٱلْخَٰلِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُم بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

[12-16] We created man from an essence of clay: then turned him into a sperm-drop in a safe place: then changed the sperm drop into a clot of blood and the clot into a piece of flesh: then turned the piece of flesh into bones: then clothed the bones with flesh,[12] and then brought him forth as quite a different creation (from the embryo).[13] So blessed is Allah, the best of all creators.[14] Then after this you shall all die: then most surely you shall' be raised up on the Day of Resurrection.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَآئِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ ٱلْخَلْقِ غَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءًۢ بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّٰهُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِنَّا
عَلَىٰ ذَهَابٍۭ بِهِۦ لَقَٰدِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَأَنشَأْنَا لَكُم بِهِۦ جَنَّٰتٍ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَٰبٍ لَّكُمْ فِيهَا فَوَٰكِهُ كَثِيرَةٌ
وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِن طُورِ سَيْنَآءَ تَنۢبُتُ بِٱلدُّهْنِ وَصِبْغٍ لِّلْءَاكِلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[17-20] And We have made seven paths above you[15] We were not novice in the art of creation.[16] And We sent down rain from the sky in due measure and lodged it in the earth[17] and We are able to take it away as We will.[18] Then with that rain We caused vineyards and palm groves to spring up. In those gardens there are delicious fruits[19] from which you obtain sustenance.[20] And We created the tree which grows on Mount Sinai,[21] it gives oil and is used as food also by those who like to eat it.

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ لَعِبْرَةً ۖ نُّسْقِيكُم مِّمَّا فِى بُطُونِهَا وَلَكُمْ
فِيهَا مَنَٰفِعُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى ٱلْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[21-22] In fact, there is a lesson for you in the cattle: We give you as a drink of that which is in their bellies,[22] and

besides this you get other benefits from them: you eat their flesh and are carried from place to place on them and on ships.[23]

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦ فَقَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم
مِّنۡ إِلَٰهٍ غَيۡرُهُۥٓۚ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ٢٣

فَقَالَ ٱلۡمَلَؤُاْ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِن قَوۡمِهِۦ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّا بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُكُمۡ
يُرِيدُ أَن يَتَفَضَّلَ عَلَيۡكُمۡۚ وَلَوۡ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَأَنزَلَ مَلَٰٓئِكَةٗ مَّا سَمِعۡنَا
بِهَٰذَا فِيٓ ءَابَآئِنَا ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ٢٤

إِنۡ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلُۢ بِهِۦ جِنَّةٞ فَتَرَبَّصُواْ بِهِۦ حَتَّىٰ حِينٖ ٢٥

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱنصُرۡنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ ٢٦

فَأَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَيۡهِ أَنِ ٱصۡنَعِ ٱلۡفُلۡكَ بِأَعۡيُنِنَا وَوَحۡيِنَا فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَمۡرُنَا وَفَارَ
ٱلتَّنُّورُ فَٱسۡلُكۡ فِيهَا مِن كُلّٖ زَوۡجَيۡنِ ٱثۡنَيۡنِ وَأَهۡلَكَ إِلَّا مَن سَبَقَ عَلَيۡهِ
ٱلۡقَوۡلُ مِنۡهُمۡۖ وَلَا تُخَٰطِبۡنِي فِي ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓاْۖ إِنَّهُم مُّغۡرَقُونَ ٢٧

فَإِذَا ٱسْتَوَيْتَ أَنتَ وَمَن مَّعَكَ عَلَى ٱلْفُلْكِ فَقُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

ٱلَّذِى نَجَّىٰنَا مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَنزِلْنِى مُنزَلًا مُّبَارَكًا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلْمُنزِلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

[23-29] We sent Noah to his people:[24] he said, "O my people, worship Allah alone; you have no other deity than Him. Are you not afraid (of shirk)?"[25] Those of the chiefs of his people, who had rejected his Message, said, "This person is no more than a human being like yourselves.[26] By this, he merely intends to obtain superiority over you.[27] Had Allah willed, He would have sent down angels.[27a] Since the time of our forefathers we have never heard (that a human being came as a Messenger). Obviously this man is possessed: wait a little more: (may be he is cured)" . Noah prayed, "Lord, help me against these people for they have treated me as an impostor".[28] At this, We revealed to him: Build an ark under Our supervision, according to Our instructions. Then, when Our Command comes and "at-Tannur"[29] begins to boil up, take aboard a pair of every species of animals, and also the members of your own family except those against whom the judgment has already been passed; and do not plead with Me for the workers of iniquity, for they are doomed to be drowned. Then, when you have boarded the ark along with your companions, say, "Praise be to Allah Who has delivered us from the wicked people",[30] and pray, "Lord, let my landing from this ark be at a blessed place, for Thou art the best of harborers".[31]

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ وَإِن كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[30] There are many Signs in this story,[32] and We always put people to the test.[33]

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

فَأَرۡسَلۡنَا فِيهِمۡ رَسُولًا مِّنۡهُمۡ أَنِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنۡ إِلَٰهٍ غَيۡرُهُۥٓۚ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلۡمَلَأُ مِن قَوۡمِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَكَذَّبُواْ بِلِقَآءِ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ وَأَتۡرَفۡنَٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّا بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُكُمۡ يَأۡكُلُ مِمَّا تَأۡكُلُونَ مِنۡهُ وَيَشۡرَبُ مِمَّا تَشۡرَبُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلَئِنۡ أَطَعۡتُم بَشَرٗا مِّثۡلَكُمۡ إِنَّكُمۡ إِذٗا لَّخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

أَيَعِدُكُمۡ أَنَّكُمۡ إِذَا مِتُّمۡ وَكُنتُمۡ تُرَابٗا وَعِظَٰمًا أَنَّكُم مُّخۡرَجُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

۞ هَيۡهَاتَ هَيۡهَاتَ لِمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

إِنۡ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا ٱلدُّنۡيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحۡيَا وَمَا نَحۡنُ بِمَبۡعُوثِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا وَمَا نَحْنُ لَهُۥ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

[31-38] After them We raised a people of another generation.[34] Then We sent to them a Messenger from among themselves, (who said,) "Worship Allah alone: you have no other deity than Him. Are you not afraid (of disbelief)?" Those of the chiefs of his people, who had rejected the Message and denied the life in the Hereafter and whom We had given prosperity in this worldly life,[35] said, "This person is no more than a human being like yourselves, for he eats of what you eat and drinks of what you drink. Now if you submit to a human being like yourselves, you shall indeed be losers.[36] What! does he tell you that after you are dead and turned into dust and become mere bones, you shall be brought out alive (from graves)? Impossible! Just impossible is that which you are being threatened with. There is no other life than this worldly life. We will live here and die here and will not be raised up again. This man is merely an impostor, who is inventing lies in the name of Allah,[36a] and we are not going to believe in what he says".

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱنصُرْنِى بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ ﴿٣٩﴾

قَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَّيُصْبِحُنَّ نَـٰدِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ بِٱلْحَقِّ فَجَعَلْنَـٰهُمْ غُثَآءً ۚ فَبُعْدًا لِّلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

[39-41] At this the Messenger prayed, "Lord, help me against these people, who have treated me as an impostor". In answer, it was said ,"The time is nearing when they shall be remorseful". In due course a great scourge overwhelmed them in all justice and We cast them away like scum.[37] So away with the wicked people!

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُونًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

مَا تَسۡبِقُ مِنۡ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسۡتَـٔۡخِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

ثُمَّ أَرۡسَلۡنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتۡرَاۖ كُلَّ مَا جَآءَ أُمَّةً رَّسُولُهَا كَذَّبُوهُۚ فَأَتۡبَعۡنَا
بَعۡضَهُم بَعۡضًا وَجَعَلۡنَٰهُمۡ أَحَادِيثَۚ فَبُعۡدٗا لِّقَوۡمٖ لَّا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[42-44] After them We raised other peoples. No people ceased to exist before its appointed term nor could any people outlive it. Then We sent Our Messengers in succession. Whenever a Messenger came to his people, they treated him as an impostor: so We went on destroying one people after the other till We made them mere legends.- Accursed be those who do not believe.[38]

ثُمَّ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مُوسَىٰ وَأَخَاهُ هَٰرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَسُلۡطَٰنٖ مُّبِينٍ
﴿٤٥﴾

إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ فَٱسۡتَكۡبَرُواْ وَكَانُواْ قَوۡمًا عَالِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

فَقَالُوٓاْ أَنُؤۡمِنُ لِبَشَرَيۡنِ مِثۡلِنَا وَقَوۡمُهُمَا لَنَا عَٰبِدُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَكَانُواْ مِنَ ٱلۡمُهۡلَكِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

[45-49] Then We sent Moses and his brother Aaron with Our Signs and a clear Authority[39] to Pharaoh and his nobles. But they received them with arrogance, for they were very haughty people.[40] They said, "What! should we believe in these two men who are human beings like ourselves[40a] and whose people are our bondsmen?"[41] So they treated them as impostors and incurred destruction.[42] As regards Moses, We gave him the Book so that the people might be guided by it.

وَجَعَلْنَا ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُۥٓ ءَايَةً وَءَاوَيْنَٰهُمَآ إِلَىٰ رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ

﴿٥٠﴾

[50] And We made the son of Mary and his mother a Sign[43] to mankind and We gave them shelter on a plateau where they could have peace, and which was watered by running springs.[44]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرُّسُلُ كُلُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَٱعْمَلُوا۟ صَٰلِحًا ۖ إِنِّى بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ

﴿٥١﴾

وَإِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱتَّقُونِ ﴿٥٢﴾

[51-52] O Messengers,[45] eat of pure things and do righteous deeds,[46] for I am fully aware of what you do. And you all belong to one and the same community, and I am your Lord: so fear Me.[47]

فَتَقَطَّعُوٓاْ أَمۡرَهُم بَيۡنَهُمۡ زُبُرٗاۖ كُلُّ حِزۡبِۭ بِمَا لَدَيۡهِمۡ فَرِحُونَ ٥٣

فَذَرۡهُمۡ فِي غَمۡرَتِهِمۡ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ٥٤

[53-54] Yet afterwards people divided themselves into different sects, and each sect rejoices in what it has[48] Well, leave them deeply involved in their heedlessness up to an appointed term.[49]

أَيَحۡسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُم بِهِۦ مِن مَّالٖ وَبَنِينَ ٥٥

نُسَارِعُ لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡخَيۡرَٰتِۚ بَل لَّا يَشۡعُرُونَ ٥٦

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ هُم مِّنۡ خَشۡيَةِ رَبِّهِم مُّشۡفِقُونَ ٥٧

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمۡ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٥٨

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِرَبِّهِمۡ لَا يُشۡرِكُونَ ٥٩

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَآ ءَاتَواْ وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَٰبِقُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۖ وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَٰبٌ يَنطِقُ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِى غَمْرَةٍ مِّنْ هَٰذَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَالٌ مِّن دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عَٰمِلُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

[55-63] Do they think that, by continuing to provide them with wealth and children, We are solicitous for their welfare? Nay, they do not understand the reality of the matter.[50] Those who feel the fear of their Lord;[51] who believe in the Signs of their Lord;[52] who do not associate anyone with their Lord;[53] who give whatever they give, and whose hearts are filled with awe by the very idea that they shall have to return to their Lords;[54] they indeed are the people who work for their true welfare and try to be the first to attain it, We do not burden anyone with more than he can bear.[55] And We have a book which tells accurately (about everyone),[56] and the people will in no case be treated unjustly.[57] But these people are heedless of this,[58] and their deeds are also of a different nature (from those mentioned above).

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَخَذۡنَا مُتۡرَفِيهِم بِٱلۡعَذَابِ إِذَا هُمۡ يَجۡـَٔرُونَ ٦٤

لَا تَجۡـَٔرُواْ ٱلۡيَوۡمَۖ إِنَّكُم مِّنَّا لَا تُنصَرُونَ ٦٥

قَدۡ كَانَتۡ ءَايَـٰتِي تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡكُمۡ فَكُنتُمۡ عَلَىٰٓ أَعۡقَـٰبِكُمۡ تَنكِصُونَ ٦٦

مُسۡتَكۡبِرِينَ بِهِۦ سَـٰمِرٗا تَهۡجُرُونَ ٦٧

[64-67] They will continue their misdeeds till We bring punishment on the epicureans among them,[59] then they will begin to bellow.[60] Now[61] stop your groaning. You will get no help from Us this Day; for when My Revelations were recited to you, you turned on your heels (hearing the voice of the Messenger).[62] In your arrogance you paid no heed to him, ridiculed him in your meeting places[63] and talked nonsense about him.

أَفَلَمۡ يَدَّبَّرُواْ ٱلۡقَوۡلَ أَمۡ جَآءَهُم مَّا لَمۡ يَأۡتِ ءَابَآءَهُمُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ٦٨

أَمۡ لَمۡ يَعۡرِفُواْ رَسُولَهُمۡ فَهُمۡ لَهُۥ مُنكِرُونَ ٦٩

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ بِهِۦ جِنَّةٌۢ ۚ بَلْ جَآءَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ
لِلْحَقِّ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

وَلَوِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلْحَقُّ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ وَمَن
فِيهِنَّ ۚ بَلْ أَتَيْنَٰهُم بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَن ذِكْرِهِم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

[68-71] Have the disbelievers never considered the Word?[64] Or, has he brought something the like of which had not come to their forefathers?[65] Or, did they not know their Messenger well that they fight shy of him (as if he were a stranger)?[66] Or, are they really convinced that he is possessed (by a jinn)?[67] Nay! the real thing is that he has brought the Truth and most of them have aversion to the Truth.-And had the Truth followed their lusts, the whole system of the heavens and the earth, and of all who dwell in them, would have been disrupted.[68] Nay, We have brought them admonition for their own good, but they are turning away from it.[69]

أَمْ تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ خَرْجًا فَخَرَاجُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٧٣﴾

وَإِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ عَنِ ٱلصِّرَٰطِ لَنَٰكِبُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

[72-74] Are you demanding some recompense from them? Allah's recompense is best for you, for He is the best Providence.[70] As a matter of fact, you are inviting them to the Straight Path, but it suits those, who do not believe, in the Hereafter, to deviate from the Straight Path.[71]

۞ وَلَوْ رَحِمْنَٰهُمْ وَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِم مِّن ضُرٍّ لَّلَجُّوا۟ فِى طُغْيَٰنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَٰهُم بِٱلْعَذَابِ فَمَا ٱسْتَكَانُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمْ وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَابًا ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ إِذَا هُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

[75-77] If We take compassion on them and relieve them of their affliction, they will persist blindly in their rebellion:[72] for even now, when they are suffering from a torment, they have not bowed before their Lord nor humbled themselves. However, when We will smite them with a dreadful scourge, you will see that they will despair of all good and become desperate.[73]

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى ذَرَأَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ وَلَهُ ٱخْتِلَٰفُ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

بَلۡ قَالُواْ مِثۡلَ مَا قَالَ ٱلۡأَوَّلُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

قَالُوٓاْ أَءِذَا مِتۡنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابٗا وَعِظَٰمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبۡعُوثُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

لَقَدۡ وُعِدۡنَا نَحۡنُ وَءَابَآؤُنَا هَٰذَا مِن قَبۡلُ إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[78-83] It is Allah Who has endowed you with the faculties of hearing and seeing and given you hearts to think, but you do not show any gratitude.[74] It is He Who has scattered you in the earth, and before Him you shall all be mustered. It is He Who gives life and ordains death, and controls the alternation of the night and the day.[75] Can you not understand this?[76] Nay! these people say what their forefathers said before them. They say, "Shall we be raised up again, when we have turned into dust after death and become mere bones? We have heard many such threats and so did our forefathers before us. These are nothing but ancient tales".[77]

قُل لِّمَنِ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمَن فِيهَآ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِۚ قُلۡ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[84-85] Say to them, "Tell me, if you know, whose is the earth and all who dwell in it?" They will say, "Allah's". Ask them, "Then why do you not understand this"?[78]

قُلۡ مَن رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ٱلسَّبۡعِ وَرَبُّ ٱلۡعَرۡشِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِۚ قُلۡ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

قُلۡ مَنۢ بِيَدِهِۦ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيۡهِ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِۚ قُلۡ فَأَنَّىٰ تُسۡحَرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

بَلۡ أَتَيۡنَٰهُم بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَإِنَّهُمۡ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

مَا ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِن وَلَدٖ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُۥ مِنۡ إِلَٰهٍۚ إِذٗا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَٰهِۭ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَا بَعۡضُهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖۚ سُبۡحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

[86-92] Say to them, "To whom do the seven heavens and the Glorious Throne belong?" They will say, "To Allah"[79] Say, "Then why do you not fear Him".[80] Say to them, "Tell me, if you know, whose is the Sovereignty[81] over everything? And who is that Being who gives protection while none can give protection against Him?" They will surely reply, "This power belongs to Allah." Say, "How then are you so bewitched?"[82] The fact is that We have brought the Truth before them and undoubtedly these people are liars.[83] Allah has no offspring,[84] and there is no other deity as a partner with Him. Had it been so, every deity would have become an independent ruler over its creation; moreover, in that case, they would have tried to override one another.[85] Exalted is Allah and free from the sort of things they attribute to Him. He has full knowledge of all that is open and hidden,[86] and He is far above the shirk these people invent.

قُل رَّبِّ إِمَّا تُرِيَنِّى مَا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

رَبِّ فَلَا تَجْعَلْنِى فِى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّرِيَكَ مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَٰدِرُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

[93-95] O Muhammad, pray, "Lord, if You inflict, during my presence among them, that punishment with which they are being threatened, then, O my Lord, do not include me among these unjust people."[87] And the fact is that We have the power to make you a witness of what they are being threatened with.

ٱدْفَعْ بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ ۚ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَٰتِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ﴿٩٧﴾

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَن يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿٩٨﴾

[96-98] O Muhammad, repel evil with that which is best: We are fully aware of what they utter against you. And pray, "Lord, I seek refuge in You from the promptings of the satans; more than that: I seek refuge in You, my Lord, even from their coming near me"[88]

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱرْجِعُونِ ﴿٩٩﴾

لَعَلِّيٓ أَعْمَلُ صَٰلِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ ۚ كَلَّآ ۚ إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَآئِلُهَا ۖ وَمِن وَرَآئِهِم
بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَلَآ أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ فِى جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَٰلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

أَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءَايَٰتِى تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَآلِّينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

قَالَ ٱخْسَـُٔوا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِى يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَٱرْحَمْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

فَٱتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا حَتَّىٰٓ أَنسَوْكُمْ ذِكْرِى وَكُنتُم مِّنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ

١١٠

[99-110] (Those people will not desist from their doing) till when death comes to any one of them, he will say, "Lord, send me back to the world[89] which I have left: I hope I will now do righteous deeds."[90] By no means![91] it is a mere saying that he is uttering:[92] for now there is a barrier between the dead (and the world which they have left) up to the Day[93] when they shall be raised up again. Then, when the Trumpet will be blown, all (worldly) relations between them shall cease to function and they will not inquire about one another.[94] Then only those whose Scales will be heavy,[95] will attain success; and those, whose scales will be light, will be the people who made themselves liable to loss[96] they shall abide in Hell for ever. The "Fire" will scorch their faces so as to expose their jaws[97] (It will be said to them,) "Are you not the same people, who treated as lies My Revelations, when they were recited to you?" They will say, "Our Lord, our bad luck prevailed over us, and we were, indeed, erring people. Our Lord, now take us out of this place: after this, if we be guilty of such a thing, we shall indeed be wrong-doers." In answer to this, Allah will say, "Get away from here, remain herein and do not speak to Me.[98] For, you are the very same people, who made fun of some of Our servants when they prayed to Us, `Our Lord, we have believed: so forgive us and have mercy, on us, for You are the Most Merciful of all who show mercy? So much so that in your obduracy, you even forgot My very existence, and went on scoffing at them.

إِنِّى جَزَيْتُهُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ

١١١

قَـٰلَ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ

١١٢

قَالُوا۟ لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَسْـَٔلِ ٱلْعَآدِّينَ

١١٣

قَٰلَ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا لَّوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾

[111-115] Today I have recompensed them for their fortitude, and they have triumphed over you.[99] Then Allah will inquire from them, "For how many years did you live on the Earth?" They will say, "We stayed there for a day or for part of a day.[100] You may inquire from those who kept account." It will be said, "Well, you know now that you stayed there for a little while only. What a pity! you did not realize it then.[101] Did you think that We had created you without any purpose,[102] and that you would never be brought back to Us?"

فَتَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْحَقُّ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْكَرِيمِ ﴿١١٦﴾

وَمَن يَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ لَا بُرْهَٰنَ لَهُۥ بِهِۦ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

[116-117] So Exalted is Allah,[103] the and real Sovereign. There is no god other than He: He is the Lord of the Glorious Throne. Therefore, if some one invokes any other deity along with Allah, whereof he has no proof,[104] he shall have to give an account to his Lord.[105] Such disbelievers can never attain "success."[106]

وَقُل رَّبِّ ٱغْفِرْ وَٱرْحَمْ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

[118] O Muhammad, say, "Lord, forgive and have mercy! You are the most Merciful of all, who show mercy".[107]

1"Believers", who have attained true success, are those who have accepted the Message of Muhammad

(Allah's peace be upon him), and have acknowledged him as their guide and followed the way of life taught by him.

This assertion cannot be fully appreciated unless one keeps in view the background in which it was made. On the one hand, there were the well-to-do and prosperous chiefs of Makkah, the opponents of Islam, whose business was thriving and who were enjoying every good thing of life, and on the other hand, there were the followers of Islam majority of whom were either poor from the beginning, or had been reduced to poverty by ruthless antagonism to Islam. Therefore, the assertion, "Most certainly the Believers have attained true success", with which the discourse begins, was meant to tell the disbelievers that the criterion of success and failure that they had in mind was not correct. It was based on misconceptions besides being transitory and limited in nature: it led to failure and not true success. On the contrary, the followers of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), whom they regarded as failures, were truly successful, because by accepting the invitation to the Right Guidance given by the Messenger of Allah, they had struck a bargain which would lead them to true success and everlasting bliss in this world as well as in the Hereafter, whereas by rejecting the Message the opponents had incurred loss and would meet with the evil consequences both in this world and in the next.

This is the main theme of the Surah and the whole discourse, from the beginning to the end, is meant to impress the same.

2The noble characteristics of the Believers pointed out in vv. 2-9 are the arguments to prove the above assertion. In other words, it has been stated that people with such and such traits and qualities only can attain true success in this world and in the Hereafter.

3Khashi`un in the Text is from khushu (to bow down, to express humility) which is a condition of the heart as well as of the body. Khushu' of the heart is to fear and stand in awe of a powerful person, and khushu ` of the body is to bow one's head and lower one's gaze and voice in his presence. In Salat one is required to show khushu ` both of the heart and of the body, and this is the essence of the Prayer. It has been reported that when the Holy Prophet once saw a person offering his Prayer as well as playing with his beard, he remarked: "Had he khushu ` in his heart, his body would have manifested it. "

Though khushu ` is actually a condition of the heart, as stated by the above tradition, it is manifested by the body as a matter of course. The Shari `ah has enjoined certain etiquette which, on the one hand, helps produce khushu ` in the heart, and on the other, helps sustain the physical act of the Prayer in spite of the fluctuating condition of the heart. According to this etiquette, one should neither turn to the right or left, nor raise one's head to look up: one may, however, look around from the corner of the eye, but as far as possible, one must fix the gaze on the place where the forehead would rest in prostration; one is also forbidden to shift about, incline side ways, fold the garments or shake off dust from them. It is also forbidden that while going down for prostration, one should clean the place where one would sit or perform prostration. Similarly it is disrespectful that one should stand stuffy erect, recite the verses of the

Qur'an in a loud resounding voice, or sing them, or belch or yawn repeatedly and noisily. It has also not been approved that one should offer the Prayer in a hurry. The injunction is that each article of the Prayer should be performed in perfect peace and tranquility, and unless one article has been completely performed, the next should not be begun. If one feels hurt by something during the Prayer, one may cast it aside by one hand, but moving the hand repeatedly or using both the hands for the purpose is prohibited. with this etiquette of the body, it is also important that one should irrelevant things during the Prayer. If thoughts come to the mind intention, it is a natural human weakness, but one should try one's

Along avoid thinking without one's utmost that the mind and heart are wholly turned towards Allah, and the mind is in full harmony and tune with the tongue, and as soon as one becomes conscious of irrelevant thoughts one should immediately turn the attention to the Prayer.

4Literally, laghv is anything nonsensical, meaningless and vain, which is in no way conducive to achieving one's goal and purpose in life. The Believers pay no heed to such useless things and they show no inclination or interest for them. If by chance they see such things being indulged in, they keep away and avoid them scrupulously, or treat them with utmost indifference. This attitude has been described in Al-Furqan (XXV): 72, thus: " ... if they have to pass by what is vain, they pass by like dignified people."

This is indeed one of the outstanding characteristics of the Believer. He is a person who feels the burden of responsibility at all times; he regards the world as a place of test, and the life as the limited time allowed for the test. This feeling makes him behave seriously and responsibly throughout life just like the student who is taking an examination paper with his whole mind and body and soul absorbed in it. Just as the student knows and feels that each moment of the limited time at his disposal is important and decisive for his future life, and is not inclined to waste it, so the Believer also spends each moment of his life on works which are useful and productive in their ultimate results. So much so that even in matters of recreation and sport, he makes a choice of only those things which prepare him for higher ends in life and do not result in mere wastage of time. For him time is not something to be killed but used profitably and productively.

Besides this, the Believer is a person who possesses a right thinking mind, pure nature and fine taste: he has no inclination to indecent things: he can talk useful and healthy things but cannot indulge in idle talk: he has a fine taste of humor, but is not given to jesting, joking, ridicule, etc. nor can he endure dirty jokes and fun. For him a society in which the ears are never immune from abusive language, back-biting, slander; lying, dirty songs and indecent talk is a source of torture and agony. A characteristic of the promised Paradise is: "therein you will not hear anything vain or useless."

5The word Zakat literally means purification and development-to help something grow tip smoothly and develop without obstruction. As an Islamic term, it implies both the portion of wealth taken out for the purpose of purifying the rest of wealth and the act of purification itself. The words of the original Text

mean that the Believer constantly practices purification. Thus the meaning is not confined to the paying off of Zakat dues only but it is extended to self-purification which includes purification of morals as well as wealth, property and life in general. Then it does not mean purification of one's own self, but includes the purification of the lives of other people as well. So the verse means: "The Believers are the people who purify themselves as well as others." This thing has been stated at other places in the Qur'an -also, for instance: "Successful is he who practiced -purification and remembered his Lord and prayed." (LXXXVII: 1415), and: "Successful is he who purified himself and failure is he who corrupted it." (XCI: 9-10). But this verse is more comprehensive in meaning because it stresses the purification of both society and one's own person.

6They are modest in every sense of the word. They are free from sex abuse and sex perversion. They are so modest that they even conceal those parts of their bodies which the Law forbids to expose before others. For explanation, see E.N.'s 30 and 32 of An-Nur (XXIV).

7This is a parenthesis which is meant to remove the common misunderstanding that sex desire is an evil thing in itself and satisfying it even in lawful ways is not desirable, particularly for the righteous and godly people. This misunderstanding would have been strengthened had it been only said that the Believers guard their private parts scrupulously, because it would have implied that they live unmarried lives, away from the world, like monks and hermits. Therefore a parenthesis has been added to say that there is nothing wrong in satisfying the sex desire in lawful ways. What is evil is that one should transgress the prescribed limits for satisfying the sex desire.

Here are briefly a few injunctions which are based on this parenthetical clause:

(1) Two categories of women have been excluded from the general command of guarding the private parts: (a) wives, (b) women who are legally in ode's possession, i.e. slave-girls. Thus the verse clearly lays down the law that one is allowed to have sexual relations with one's slave-girl as with one's wife. the basis being possession and not marriage. If marriage had been the condition, the slave-girl also would have been included among the wives, and there was no need to mention them separately. Some modern commentators, who dispute the permissibility of having sexual relations with the slave-girl, argue from An-Nisa' (IV) : 25 to prove that one can have sexual relations with a slave-girl only after entering wedlock with her, because that verse enjoins that if a person cannot afford to marry a free Muslim woman, he may marry a Muslim slave-girl. But these commentators have a strange characteristic: they accept a part of a verse if it suits them, but conveniently ignore another part of the same verse if it goes against their wish and whim. The law about marrying the slave-girls as enunciated in IV :25 reads: "....you may marry them with the permission of their guardians and give them their fair dowries." Obviously the person under reference here is not the master of the slave girl himself but the person who cannot afford to marry a free Muslim woman, and therefore , wants to marry a slave-girl, who is in the possession of another person. For if the question had been of marrying one's own slave-girl, who would then be the "guardian" whose permission would have to be sought? Then, the interpretation they give of this verse contradicts other

verses dealing with the same subject in the Qur'an. A sincere person who wants to understand the Qur'anic law in this regard should study An-Nisa' (IV); 3, 25; AI-Ahzab (XXXIII): S0, 52, and Al-Ma`arij (LXX): 30 together with this verse of Al-Mu'minun. (For further explanation, see E.N. 44 of An-Nisa).

(2) The law prescribed in the parenthesis is only applicable to men as is clear from the Text. A woman in the time of Hadrat `Umar did not understand this fine point of the language and indulged in sexual gratification with her slave. When her case was brought before the consultative body of the Companions, they gave the unanimous decision: "She misinterpreted the Book of Allah" Nobody should entertain the doubt that if this exception is meant for the men only, how could then the husbands become lawful for the wives? This doubt is unjustified because when the husbands are exempted from the command of guarding their private parts in regard to their wives, the wives automatically stand exempted from the command with regard to their husbands, and there is no nerd to grant them exemption separately. Thus the command of exemption remains applicable and effective only in respect of the man and the woman legally in his possession, and the slave becomes unlawful for the woman possessing him. The wisdom of why the slave has been forbidden to the woman is that he can only satisfy her sexual desire but cannot become guardian and governor of herself and her household, which leaves a serious flaw in the family life.

(3) The sentence ".... but those who go beyond this (in lust for sexual desire), shall be transgressors" has made satisfaction of sex desire in other ways unlawful, whether it be through fornication, homosexuality, sex gratification with animals, or some other means. The jurists differ only with regard to masturbation. Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal regards it as lawful, but Imams Malik and Shafi`i regard it as absolutely unlawful: and though the Hanafites also regard it as unlawful, they give the opinion that if a person indulges sometimes in masturbation under the fit of passion, it is expected that he will be forgiven the error.

(4) Some commentators have proved the prohibition of Mut ah (temporary marriage) from this verse. They argue that the "woman with whom one has entered into wedlock temporarily, can neither be regarded as a Wife nor a slave-girl. A slave-girl obviously she is not, and she is also not a wife, because the legal injunctions normally applicable to the wife are not applicable to her. She neither inherits the man nor the man her; she is neither governed by the law pertaining to `Iddah (waiting period after divorce or death of husband), divorce, subsistence, nor by that pertaining to the vow by man that he will not have conjugal relations with her, false accusation, etc. She is also excluded from the prescribed limit of four wives. Thus, when she is neither a "wife" nor a "slave-girl" in any sense, she will naturally be included among those "beyond this", whose seeker has been declared a "transgressor" by the Qur'an.

This is a strong argument but due to a weakness in it,-it is difficult to say that this verse is decisive with regard to the prohibition of Mut`ah. The fact is that the Holy Prophet enjoined the final and absolute prohibition of Mut ah in the year of the conquest of Makkah, but before it Mut ah was allowed according to several authentic traditions. If Mut 'ah had been prohibited in this verse, which was admittedly revealed at

Makkah, several years before the migration, how can it be imagined that the Holy Prophet kept the prohibition in abeyance till the conquest of Makkah? The correct position therefore is that prohibition of Mut ah is not based on any express law of the Qur'an but is based on the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. Had it not beep prohibited by the Sunnah, it would have been difficult to declare it as prohibited only on the authority of this verse.

It would be worth-while to clarify two other points in connection with Mut'ah: (a) lts prohibition is based on the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet and therefore it is wrong to say that it was prohibited by Hadrat 'Umar. As a matter of fact, Hadrat `Umar only enforced it as a law of Islam and publicised it among the people. This had not been done earlier because the Holy Prophet had forbidden Mut 'ah only during the latter part of his worldly life.

(b) The Shiite view that Mut ah is absolutely lawful and permissible has no sanction and support in the Qur'an or Sunnah. The fact is that a few of the Companions, their followers and jurists who regarded it permissible in the early days of Islam, did so only in case of extreme necessity and need. None of them held the view that it was absolutely lawful like marriage and could be practised in normal circumstances. Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas, who is generally cited as a prominent supporter of the view of permissibility, has himself explained his position thus: "It is just like carrion which is lawful for a person only in extreme necessity." Even Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas had to revise his opinion when he saw that people were abusing permissibility and had started practising Mut ah freely regardless of genuine need and necessity. Again, even if the question, whether Hadrat Ibn '.Abbas and the few likeminded jurists had revised their opinion or not, is ignored, the fact is that the supporters of Mut'ah allow it only in case of extreme necessity. Holding Mut ah as absolutely permissible, practising it without any real necessity, or resorting to it even when one has a legally wedded wife or wives is a kind of licence which is abhorred by good taste, much less it be attributed to the Shari ah of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and imputed to the learned jurists of his family. I think that among the Shiite Muslims themselves no respectable person would like that somebody should ask for the hand of his daughter or sister not in marriage but for the purpose of Mutah. For if Mutah is held as absolutely permissible, it would imply that there should exist in society a low class of women, like the prostitutes, who should be available for the purpose as and when required, or if not that, Mutah be restricted to the daughters and sisters of the poor stratum of society and the well-to-do be given the freedom and right to exploit them as and when they like. Can such an injustice and discrimination be expected of the Divine Law? And will Allah and His Messenger permit an act which every respectable woman would regard not only disgraceful for herself but shameful, too?

8The Believers fulfill the terms of the trusts which are placed in their charge. In this connection it should be noted that the Arabic word amanat is very comprehensive and includes all those trusts which are placed in their charge by Allah or society or individuals. Likewise `ahd includes all those compacts, pledges, and promises which are made between Allah and man, and man and man. The Holy Prophet himself used to impress the importance of the fulfillment of pledges in his addresses: "The one, who does not fulfil the terms of his trust, has no Faith, and the one, who does not keep promises and pledges has

no Islam. " (Baihaqi) According to a Tradition reported both by Bukhari and Muslim, he said: Four characteristics are such that if a person has all the four in him, he is beyond any doubt a hypocrite, and the one who has one of these, is a hypocrite to that extent till he gives it up:

(a) When something is placed in his trust, he commits breach of the trust,

(b) when he speaks, he tells a lie,

(c) when he makes a promise, he breaks it, and

(d) when he has a quarrel with somebody, he exceeds all limits (of decency and morality)"

9Salawat is plural of Salat. In verse 2 the act of Salat itself was implied, but here the plural number implies the individual Prayers offered in their own times. "They strictly guard their Prayers": they strictly adhere to the prescribed times of the Prayers: they perform them with due regard for their pre-requisites, conditions and articles with clean body and dress and necessary ablutions: they do not regard their Prayers as an unnecessary burden, which has to be cast off somehow: they do not recite mechanically but understand what they recite and are conscious that they are supplicating their Lord like humble servants.

10Firdaus (Paradise) is a common word found in almost all human languages in very nearly similar forms. It means a vast garden adjoining the dwelling of a person and enclosed by defence walls and containing all kinds of fruit trees, especially vines: In some languages, the word has the sense of containing pet birds and animals, too. Firdaus was in common use in pre-Islamic Arabic literature. The Qur'an, however, has used it for a plurality of gardens as in Al-Kahf (XVIII) :107. This gives the idea that Firdaus is a vast place containing a great number of gardens, vineyards, etc.

The inheritance of Paradise by Believers has been explained in detail in E.N. 83 of Surah Ta Ha (XX) and E.N. 99 of Surah Al-Anbiya' (XXI).

11The substance of this passage may be summed up in four parts for the further understanding of the Surah:

(1) The above-mentioned excellent qualities of the Believers are not confined to any race, nation or country.

(2) These excellences can be attained only by sincere Faith and excellent moral qualities, and by the observance of prescribed laws in all the aspects of life.

(3) True success is not confined to transitory worldly and material prosperity but it comprises both success in this life and in the life after death in the Hereafter, and is attained by sincere Faith and righteous deeds. This is a fundamental principle which cannot be falsified either by the worldly "success" of the evil-doers or by the temporary "failure" of the righteous people.

(4) Let us reiterate that these excellent characteristics of the Believers have been presented as a practical proof of the truth of the Message of the Holy Prophet, for these were the result of its acceptance. This should be kept in mind in the study of the succeeding passages, wherein the same subject has been pursued from different angles. This will also help to show the connection between this and the succeeding passages.

12For explanation see E.N.'s 5, 6 and 9 of Surah Hajj (XXII).

13Now let the disbelievers consider the Message of the Holy Prophet by observing their own creation, for this will convince them of its truth by proving its doctrine of Tauhid. The origin of man is from a mere inanimate sperm-drop, which undergoes several changes in the womb of the mother. But after this, when it sees the light of the day, it is quite a different creation from the embryo in the womb. Now it can hear, it can see, and in due course of time it can talk and think. Then, when he reaches adulthood and maturity, he is capable of performing wonderful deeds. It is obvious that Allah alone could create all these characteristics in an inanimate sperm-drop.

14The various stages of the creation of man have been cited to prove that Allah is All-Blessed and there is no human language which can describe the praise of which He is worthy, as if to say, "That Allah Who is able to develop an essence of clay into a perfect man, does not have any partner in His Godhead. Moreover, He has the power to raise him up again after his death, and is capable of working even greater wonders.

15The original Arabic word taraiq has more than one meaning. It may refer to the paths of the seven planets, with which the man of the time of the revelation of the Qur'an was familiar, or to the seven heavens. it should be noted that this word has not been used as a modern scientific term, but as a common word according to the Arabic usage of the period in order to invite the people's attention to the wonders of the heavens, whose creation is certainly a greater thing than the creation of men. (XL: 57).

16This may also be translated as: "We were not nor are heedless of Our creation." According to the first translation, it will mean that the whole of the creation has been brought about in a perfect manner with a definite design and purpose, for Allah-their Creator-is perfect in every respect. The creation itself a proof that it is not the work of a novice or an inexpert. All the physical laws of the entire system of the universe are so closely interconnected as to prove that it is the creation of the All-Wise Allah. If we take the second translation, it will mean that Allah has not been heedless in making provisions for every thing according to

its nature from the most insignificant to the greatest of all.

17The "rain" may refer to the rainfall, which comes down every now and then. It may also refer to the great store of water which Allah sent down at the time of the creation of the earth to fulfill its various needs till the Last Day, and which still exists in the shape of seas, lakes, sub-soil water, etc. It is the same water which evaporates in summer and freezes in winter and is carried by winds from place to place and spread over the earth by rivers, springs and wells to cause the growth of multitudes of things, and then is again restored to the seas, lakes, etc. Neither has this store of water been decreased by a drop nor was there any need to increase it by a drop since its creation. Today it is too well known how water comes about by the combination of oxygen and hydrogen in a certain ratio. The question is why can't more water be produced when oxygen and hydrogen still exist in abundance in the world? Who caused them to combine in the proper ratio in the beginning to produce oceans of water and who now stops them from coming together to produce an extra drop? Then when water evaporates, who causes oxygen and hydrogen to remain combined in water vapors even in the gaseous state. Have the atheists and polytheists, who believe in independent deities for water, air, summer and winter, any answer to this question?

18This is to warn that Allah is able to take away the water if He so wills, and deprive the world of its most important means of life. Thus, this verse is more comprehensive in meaning than verse 30 of Surah Al-hulk (LXVII):

"Ask them: Have you ever considered that if the water of your wells should sink down into the earth, who would then restore to you running springs of water?"

19That is, other kinds of fruits than dates and grapes.

20That is, you sustain yourselves by the produce that you get from these gardens in the shape of fruit, corn, wood, etc.

21That is, the olive-tree, which is the most important product of the lands around the Mediterranean Sea. The olive-tree can last for 2,000 years or so, so much so that some trees in Palestine are said to be existing since the time of Prophet Jesus. It has been attributed to Mount Sinai probably for the reason that the area whose well known and prominent place is Mount Sinai is its original habitat.

22That is, milk. Refer to An-Nahl (XVI): 66 and E.N. 54 thereof.

23The benefits of cattle as means of conveyance have been mentioned here along with the ships, because in Arabia, camel was used mainly for this purpose, and has been called "the ship of the desert" for the same reason.

24See also Al-A`araf (VII): 59-64, Yunus (X): 71-73, Hud (X1): 25-48, Bani Isra'il (XVII): 3 and Al-Anbiya' (XXI): 76-77.

25That is, "Are you not afraid that if you set up partners and associates with Allah, Who is the real Sovereign, and worship and submit to them, you shall incur His wrath and punishment?"

26There has been a common deviation that "a human being cannot be a Prophet, and a Prophet cannot be a human being." That is why the Qur`an has refuted this wrong conception over and over again, and has stated forcefully that all the Prophets were human beings and that a human being only could be sent as a Prophet to human beings. For details, see Al-A`araf (VII,): 63, 69, Yunus (X): 2, Hud (XI): 27-31, Yusuf (XII): 109, Ar-Ra`d (XIII): 38, Ibrahim (XIV): 10-11, An-Nahl (XVI): 43, Bani Isra'il (XVII): 94-95, Al-Kahf (XVIII): 110, Al-Anbiya' (XXI): 3, 34, Al-Mu'minun (XXIII): 33-34, 47, Al-Furqan (XXV): 7, 20, AshShu'ara` (XXVI): 154, 186, Ya Sin (XXXVI): 15, Ha Mim Sajdah (XLl): 6 along with the relevant E.N.'s.

27This accusation is another old objection, which has always been raised against those who tried to reform their people. Their opponents always accused them of exploiting "religion" to gain domination in the land. Prophets Moses, Aaron and Jesus were accused of the same and so was Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). So much so that the disbelievers of Makkah offered to make the Holy Prophet their king, if he gave up his Message.

As a matter of fact, the people who exhaust themselves in pursuit of worldly benefits and gains, cannot believe that somebody in this world could also exert himself sincerely and selflessly for the sake of human welfare. They regard deceptive slogans, which they raise to capture power, and false promises, which they make day and night to bring about reforms as natural. They think that sincerity and selflessness can be employed only to deceive people and these cannot be put to any better use. That is why the epithet of "power hungry" for the reformers in all ages has been used by those already in power as if their own power and domination in the land was their birth-right, and they were in no way blame-worthy for struggling for it and achieving it. (For further explanation, see E.N. 36 below)

In this connection, it should also be noted that all those, who try to reform the prevalent corrupt system of life, have inevitably to fight against those in, power in order to establish the righteous system. That is why the powers that be, have always been against the Prophets and their followers, who had to dislodge the corrupt rulers. It is, however, obvious that here is a vast difference between those who want power to gain their own selfish ends and those who want it to reform their people.

27aThis is a clear proof of the fact that Noah's people were not disbelievers in the existence of God nor did they reject Him as Lord of the universe and the angels as His obedient servants. They were only guilty of shirk: they had set up other deities as partners in God's attributes and powers and rights.

28"Help me against these people": `Take Thy vengeance on these people for they have denied me." Verse 10 of Al-Qamar (LIV) says: "Then cried Noah to his Lord, `I am overcome, so take Thy vengeance on these people" and verses 26-27 of Noah (LXXv say: "And Noah said, `O my Lord, do not leave of these disbelievers any dweller upon the earth, 'for if Thou sparest them, they will mislead Thy servants and will beget none but sinners and disbelievers'."

29Some commentators think that tanner means the earth; others take it for the highest part of the earth; and still others think that the words far-at-tannur in the Text have been used for the break of Dawn. There are some who express the opinion that the words have been used metaphorically for the creation of turmoil. But in view of the context, we see no reason why one should take a far fetched figurative meaning of a clear word of the Qur'an. It appears that a particular oven (tannur) had been ear-marked for the deluge to start from, which was to all appearances an unexpected origin of the doom of the wretched people.

30The fact that Allah should be praised and thanked for the annihilation of those people, is a clear proof that they were the most wicked and villainous people in the world.

31"Landing" here does not simply mean touching and resting on the land, but it also implies the sense of "hospitality", as if to say: "O God, now we are Thy guests and Thou alone art our Host.

32At the conclusion of the story of Prophet Noah, particular attention has been drawn to the many Signs in the story from which one can learn many lessons. For instance, the Prophet who invited the people to Tauhid was in the right and those who practiced and insisted on shirk and disbelief were in the wrong and were destroyed: that the same kind of conflict, which took place between Prophet Noah and his people, was going on in Makkah. Therefore, ultimately the Holy Prophet will come out victorious over his antagonists just like Prophet Noah.

33This can also be translated as: "We had to or have to put people to the test. " In each case the purpose is to warn the people that they will not be left alone after they have been granted power in the land and over good things of life, but Allah will put them to the test to see how they used their power. Whatever happened with the people of Noah was in accordance with this law, and the same will happen in future with any community which is raised to power.

34The people of `Ad, who were raised to power after the people of Noah. (Refer to AI-A`araf: 69).

35It should be noted that all those people who opposed the Messengers had three common characteristics: (1) They were the chiefs of their people. (2) They denied life in the "Hereafter". (3) They were prosperous in the worldly life. Obviously, they loved the life of this world and could never conceive that their way of life, which had made them chiefs and brought prosperity, could ever be wrong. Therefore

they opposed their Messengers, who took away their peace of mind, by preaching that there was a life-after-death and they shall have to render an account to Allah of what they did in this world. And this was exactly what was happening at Makkah.

36Some commentators have wrongly opined that the chiefs exchanged these remarks against the Messenger between themselves. These remarks in fact were addressed to the common people. When the chiefs felt that the Message was spreading among the common people and there was a real danger that they would be influenced by the pure character of the Messenger and that their superiority then would automatically come to an end, they began to delude them by raising such objections against him. It is worth while to note that both the chiefs of the people of Noah and the chiefs of the people of `Ad accused their Messengers of the "lust for power" but as regards themselves, they thought that power and prosperity were their inherent rights and they were in every respect entitled to be the chiefs of their people.

36aThese words show that the people of Ad too, were not disbelievers in the existence of God. They too were involved in the sin of shirk. Refer to Al Aaraf (VII): 70, Hud (Xl): 53-54, Ha Mim Sajdah (XLI): 14, and Al-Ahqaf (XLVI): 21-22.

37Lexically, the word ghutha' means the rubbish which is brought by Hood waters and is deposited on the banks to rot there.

38That is, "Those who do not believe in the Messengers.

39The use of "a clear Authority" along with "Our Signs" may either mean that the "Signs" were a clear proof that they were Messengers of Allah, or the "Signs" may refer to all other miracles of Prophet Moses than the "staff', which may stand here for a clear Authority, because the miracles shown by means of it were a clear proof that the two brothers had been sent by Allah.

40The words in the Text may either mean: (1) They were highly arrogant and tyrannous people, or (2) They showed haughtiness and self conceit.

40aFor explanation, see E.N. 26.

41Abid is worshiper. According to the Arabic usage, to be a "worshiper" and a "bondsman" are almost synonymous. Therefore when the Prophets invited their people to worship Allah alone, they wanted them to worship and serve and obey none but Allah, and that is the real significance of the word " `ibadat". For further explanation, see E.N. 50 of Al-Kahf (XVIII).

42For fuller details of the story of Prophet Moses and Pharaoh, see Al-Baqarah (II): 49-50, Al-A`araf (VII):

103-136, Yunus (X): 75-92, Hud (Xl): 9699, Bani Isra'il (XVII): 101-104, Ta Ha (XX): 9-80 along with the relevant E. N.'s.

43The wording "We made the son of Mary and his mother a Sign" is very significant, because it means that neither the son of Mary nor his mother was each a separate Sign, but both of them together were a Sign. This verse is a clear proof that a son was born to Mary without cohabitation with a man and that Jesus had no father. For fuller details see Al-`Imran (III): 45-49, An-Nisa' (IV): 156, 171, Maryam (XIX): 16-35 and Al-Anbiya' (XXI): 91 and the relevant E.N.'s.

In this connection, it should also be noted that the case of the error in regard to Prophet Jesus and his mother was different from the error in regard to other Prophets, who were rejected because ,they were human beings. But the deviation in regard to Prophet Jesus and his mother was that the credulous people raised them from the low position of human beings to the high rank of Godhead. On the other hand, those, who went to the other extreme accused Mary of unchastity, although they were witnesses of the miraculous birth of Jesus and had heard him speak in the cradle.

44Different people have mentioned different places, like Damascus, Ar-Ramlah, Jerusalem and Egypt, in regard to the plateau where Allah gave them shelter. From the Christian traditions it appears that Mary had to leave her home twice after the birth of Prophet Jesus, first in the time of Herod when she took him to Egypt and stayed there till Herod's death, and then in the time of Arichelaus when she took him to Nazareth in Galilee. (Matthew, 2: 13-23). Therefore it cannot be said with certainty to which of these two emigrations the Qur'an refers here. It is, however, obvious that the place of shelter was a plateau which provided them with all the necessities of life.

45In the preceding passage (vv. 23-50), the stories of some Prophets have been related as individuals, but in this verse all of them have been addressed together. However, it does not mean that they were present at one and the same place at the time of address. As a matter of fact, this way of address has been adopted to show that the Message of all the Messengers, who came to different countries in different ages, was the same and they all belonged to one and the same community. (v. 52). Therefore the Message to one Messenger was meant to be the Message for each one of them. In this verse, they have been addressed together as if they were present at one and the same place in order to emphasize this same aspect of the matter. But it is an irony that some stupid people of this age have concluded that this verse has been addressed to those messengers who were to come after Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). It is obvious that this interpretation cannot fit in the context in which the verse occurs.

46"Pure things" implies that they should be wholesome and must have been earned in lawful ways. Here the instruction, "eat of pure things", is meant to refute the theory and practice of asceticism. The Qur'an teaches the middle way between the life of asceticism and that of licence. The fact that the instruction, "eat of pure things", precedes "do righteous deeds", is meant to impress that righteous deeds are

meaningless without eating lawful provisions. The Holy Prophet impressed this very thing, saying, "O people, Allah is pure and loves pure things." Then he recited this verse (51) and said, "A person makes a long pilgrimage in a disheveled condition and prays with raised hands, `O my Lord, O my Lord', whereas he eats unlawful food, wears unlawful clothes and has been brought up on unlawful provisions. How can such a one expect that Allah will grant his prayer?" (Related by Abu Hurairah).

47The original Arabic word ummat (community) comprises those individuals who have something basic common among them. All the Messengers of Allah belonged to one and the same community because . they had the same creed and the same religion and the same Message. See also Al-Baqarah (II): 130-133 and 213, Al-`Imran (III): 19-20, 33-34, 64, 79-85, An-Nisa'(IV): 150-152, Al- A'araf (VII): 59, 65, 73, 85, Yusuf (XII): 37-40, Maryam (XIX) :49-59, and AlAnbiya' (XXII): 71-93 along with the relevant E.N.'s.

48This is not a mere statement of a fact, but it is a link of the same argument which is being put forward from the very beginning of the Surah. The argument is this: Islam has been the real and original religion of all the Prophets from Noah to Jesus (Allah's peace be upon them all), because all of them brought and taught the same doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter. On the contrary, all the other religions are the perversions of "the real and original religion", which has been tampered with in many ways. Therefore, those who are following the perverted religions are in the wrong and not the Holy Prophet who is inviting them to "the real and original religion".

49There is a gap between v. 53 and v. 54, which has been left to the listener to fill, because the background of the whole discourse itself helps to fill it. Five years had passed since the Holy Prophet had been inviting his people to the original religion. He had left no stone unturned to convince them by reasoning and by historical evidence that his Message was based on the truth. His people had seen the practical results of the acceptance of his Message and had witnessed his own high character which was by itself a guarantee that he was a trustworthy man. But in spite of all this, his people were rejoicing in their erroneous beliefs which they had inherited from their forefathers. This was not all. They had become his bitter enemies and were trying to defeat him and his Message by every wicked machination.

After filling the gap, the meaning of verse 51 becomes quite clear. It does not mean that the Holy Prophet should give up his preaching and leave the disbelievers to themselves. This way of address has been employed to shake and rouse the disbelievers. This verse warns them to realize that the time was coming near when they would see for themselves that the Messenger was in the right and they were in the wrong.

50This question has been posed as a proof of the main theme of the Surah. It is meant to remove their misconception of "success", "welfare" and "prosperity", which the disbelievers had formed to delude themselves. According to them, the one, who enjoyed the good things of life and wielded power and influence in the society, had attained "success". On the other hand, the one who was deprived of these

things was a "failure" . This misconception had involved " them in another serious misunderstanding. They thought that the one who had attained "success" was in the right, and the beloved of Allah. Otherwise, how could he have attained all the "successes"? On the contrary, the one who was apparently deprived of these things was surely wrong in his creed and erroneous in his deeds, and was under the wrath of God (or gods). As this misconception is one of the greatest deviations of the materialists, the Qur'an has stated it and refuted it in different ways at different places and made the reality plain. For instance, see A1-Baqarah (II): 126, 212, Al-A'araf (VII): 32, At-Taubah (IX): 55, 69, 85, Yunus (X):17, Hud (XI) :3, 27-31, 38-39, Ar-Ra`d (XIII): 26, Al-Kahf (XVIII): 28, 32-43, 103-105, Maryam (XIX):77-80, Ta Ha (XX): 131-132, Al-Anbiya` (XXI) :44 along with the relevant E.N.'s. In order to remove the above-mentioned misconceptions one should keep in view the following:

(1) "Success" is a far higher thing than the material prosperity and the transitory success of an individual, community or nation

(2) It is absolutely wrong to consider "prosperity" and "success" as a criterion of truth and falsehood.

(3) It should be noted well that this world is a place of test and trial and not a place of reward and retribution. It is true that even in this world, sometimes there is some punishment or reward, but it is on a very limited scale, and even in this, there is an aspect of the test. Therefore it is an utter folly to consider material "success" and "prosperity" to be a proof that the recipient is in the right and so the beloved of the Lord, and vice versa. Moreover, the tests and trials of individuals and communities are of many varieties and a seeker after truth must understand at the outset that the worldly "success" or "failure" of the people is not the result of ultimate reward or punishment and cannot be regarded as the criterion for the right or wrong creed, morals and actions and a sign of being the beloved of God or otherwise.'

(4) One must have a firm belief that truth and righteousness will ultimately gain victory over falsehood and wickedness. As regards the criterion of truth and falsehood and right and wrong, one must judge this in the light of Revelations and teachings of the Messengers, because common sense confirms the same, and it is also supported by the general conception which mankind has always had of good and evil.

(5) As a corollary of the above, it would have become clear that according to the Qur'an (and this is confirmed by common sense), the conception of "reward" and "punishment" should also be different from the common one. For instance, if a wicked person or community is enjoying "prosperity", it is not a reward of its evil deeds but a harder test for it, and it is not a blessing but the wrath of Allah. It means that Allah has decided to punish the "prosperous people" with a severe scourge. On the other hand, if the righteous people are suffering from hardships and afflictions, it is not a punishment from Allah but a blessing in disguise to pass them through the "fire" to remove impurity, if any, from the pure gold. If this hard trial is a blessing for the righteous people, it is a test for the wicked people to give them a severe punishment for the persecution of the former.

51That is, they do not live a carefree life devoid of the fear of God. They live in awe of Him and are fully conscious that He oversees and watches them in all their motives and actions and they are thus deterred from thinking and doing evil.

52"Signs" here means both Divine Revelations to the Prophets and the signs found in man's own self and in the universe around him. To believe in the verses of the Book is to affirm them, and to believe in the signs of human self and the universe is to affirm the realities which they point to.

53Though belief in the Revelations itself ingrains the doctrine of Tauhid in the hearts, yet the believers have been warned to guard against shirk. This is because, in spite of believing in the Revelations, man is inclined to commit shirk in one form or the other, for instance, in exaggerating the teachings of the Prophets and righteous people, supplicating and serving others than Allah, etc.

54This verse (60) may be elaborated like this: "They serve their Lord and try their best to obey Him and do righteous deeds, but all along they remain humble in their hearts and are not puffed up with the pride of their piety: nay, in spite of all their good deeds, their hearts are always filled with awe that they shall have to render an account to their Lord, and they are not sure whether they will come out successful in the judgment of their Lord or not."

A concrete interpretation of this verse is afforded by Caliph 'Umar. Although he served his Allah in a way that was exemplary, yet he was so afraid of accountability to Him that he is reported to have said before death: "f shall consider it a favor, if I am neither rewarded nor punished in the Hereafter." Hadrat Hasan Basri has expressed the same thing in a beautiful manner: "A believer obeys Allah and is yet fearful of Him, and a hypocrite disobeys Allah and is yet fearless of Him."

55The enunciation of this fundamental proposition, in the context in which it occurs, is very meaningful. In the preceding passage (vv. 57-b1), the characteristics of those people, who deserve true success, have been stated, and in this verse (62), it has been made clear that those excellent qualities can be attained by anyone who tries to achieve true success, as if to say, "The conditions We have laid down for true success are within the reach of those who strive for it, for 'We do not burden ... Therefore if you, O disbelievers, desire to achieve true success, you should follow the example of the Believers from among yourselves, who have really attained it"

56According to the Qur'an, an elaborate "conduct book" of every individual is being maintained accurately. This records every word he utters, every deed or act he performs, even every hidden thought and intention that he cherishes in his heart and mind. See also Al-Kahf (XVIII) :49 and E.N. 46 thereof.

57That is, neither a person will be accused of and punished for something he had not done, nor will he be deprived of the full reward of a good act that he had done.

58They are heedless that everything they are saying and doing, is being recorded in some "book" and that they shall have to render an account of everything.

59The epicureans will probably be punished in this worldly life because in the enjoyment of luxury and pleasure they forgot the rights of the other people and transgressed the prescribed limits.

60ju'ar is bellowing by a bull painfully. Here the word has been used tauntingly for a groaning person who does not deserve any mercy, as if to say, "Now that you are going to be punished for your misdeeds, you have started bellowing.

61That is, they will be told this at that time.

62That is to say, "In the worldly life you did not pay any heed to what the Messenger said; nay, you did not even like to hear his voice."

63The meeting places where the people of Makkah gathered together at night to hold consultations, to gossip and tell tales, etc.

64That is, "Do they mean to imply that they reject the Message because they do not understand it? whereas the Qur'an is not an enigma, nor is it being presented-in an incomprehensible language, nor does it deal with themes and subjects which are beyond human understanding. The fact is that they understand everything it presents, but they oppose and reject it, because they have no intention to follow and believe what it presents."

65That is, "Is the Qur'an presenting something which they had never heard before? No, that is not so. Allah had been sending His Messages through His Prophets, who came to Arabia and in the adjoining lands and they are well acquainted with them, especially with Prophets Abraham and Ismael, and Hud, Saleh and Shoaib, who are acknowledged by them as Prophets of God, and who were not idol-worshipers but enjoined the worship of One God. " For further explanation, see E.N. 84 of Al-Furqan (XXV), E.N. 5 of As-Sajdah (XXXII) and E.N. 35 of Saba (XXXIV).

66That is, "Do they reject the Message because Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) who is inviting them to it, is a stranger among them? No, this is not so, for he was born and bred among them in a noble family: he bears a pure and high character: he has been truthful, upright, trustworthy, honest and morally chaste throughout his life: he is a noble and gentle person, peace-loving and just by nature, honest in word and deed, sympathetic and helpful to the weak and poor. And they themselves testified to all this before he claimed to be a Messenger of Allah. Then he has been consistently preaching the same Message from the first day of his Mission. Then whatever he has preached he has first practiced it

himself and demonstrated its truth: there has been no contradiction between his word and deed: he and his followers have faithfully and honestly put into practice the Message of the Qur'an and shown excellent results." For further details, see E.N. 21 of AI-An'am (Vl), E.N. 21 of Yunus (X) and E.N. 105 of Bani Isra'il (XVII).

67That is, "Do they reject his Message because they regard Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) to be possessed by a jinn? No, this is also not correct, because in their heart of hearts, they themselves regard him as a wise and sagacious person. It is therefore ridiculous to regard a man like him to be possessed by a jinn, for such a person cannot say wise things and do noble deeds like him. How strange that a person possessed by a jinn (or having epileptic fits according to the western orientalists) should utter and recite sublime discourses of the Qur'an and start and guide a successful Movement which should revolutionize the way of life not only of his own people but of the whole world."

68This brief sentence expresses a great reality which should be understood well. The foolish people in the world generally feel offended by a person who points out the Truth to them. They do not like to hear and consider the Truth because it goes against their desires and interests but the Truth remains the Truth and cannot be changed after one's personal whims and wishes. Man is subject to the eternal and unalterable laws operating in the universe and has therefore to adjust his thinking, desires and conduct accordingly and should try to discover the Truth and Reality through experience, reasoning and observation. Only a foolish person can stick to and regard his personal whims, wishes and prejudices to be the reality and refuse to hear and consider any argument, however rational and scientific, simply because it goes against them.

69Here the word zikr means:

(1) Mention of human nature and its demands, (2) admonition, (3) esteem, honor and fame.

In the light of these, the full meaning of the verse will be: "Your rejection of the Qur'an is irrational, for it contains the mention of those things which develop the best in human nature: it is an admonition that will result in your own good and well-being, and it will bring esteem and honour for you in this world as well as in the Hereafter."

70This was yet another proof of the Holy Prophet's Prophethood: he was conveying the Message without demanding any recompense for it, and he had no self-interest in it. Nay, he had staked his business, reputation, peaceful home life, relationships with the unbelieving kindred for the success of his Mission and was being ruthlessly persecuted for its sake. A selfish person could not have risked his all for the sake of only worldly motives. He would rather have exploited the racial and tribal prejudices of his people to become their ruler and leader. On the contrary, his Message not only cut at the root of those prejudices but tended to destroy the very bases which helped his tribe to wield influence and authority over the

polytheists of Arabia. This is an argument which the Qur'an has advanced again and again as a proof of the truth of the Mission of the other Prophets as well. See Al-An'am (VI): 90, Yunus (X): 72, Hud (XI): 29, 51, Yusuf (XII): 104, Ya Sin (XXXVI): 21 along with the relevant E.N.'s.

71This was the real reason why they were deviating from the Right Path. As they did not believe in the Hereafter, they thought that no account would be taken from them of what they did in this world. Therefore it did not matter whether they followed the 'Truth or falsehood. Their only aim in life was to gratify the lusts of the flesh and gratify them in the best way possible.

72The affliction alluded to in this verse was the famine which occurred in Makkah some time after the advent of Prophethood. According to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, when the Quraish persistently refused to accept the invitation of the Holy Prophet and started putting up stiff resistance, he prayed, "O Allah, help me against them with a seven-year famine like the seven-year famine of the time of Prophet Joseph." So a severe famine started in Makkah with the result that people were obliged to eat carrion. This famine has been alluded to in a number of Makki Surahs. For instance see Al-An'am (VI): 42-44, Al-A'araf (VII): 94-99, Yunus (X): 11, 12, 21, An-Nahl (XVI): 112-113 and Ad-Dukhan (XLIV): 10-16 along with the relevant E.N.'s.

73The Arabic word mublis is used for one whom frustration makes so desperate and obdurate that he does not hesitate to resort to any crime. The Devil has been called Iblis for the same reason.

74The disbelievers have been told to consider the great blessings of eyes, ears, mind and heart and use them as human beings should, and show gratitude to the Creator by accepting His Message.

75If one makes the right use of one's faculties and observes these things properly, one can find the Truth, for it is obvious that the great mechanism of the universe could not have come into existence by a mere accident. There must be its Creator who need not have any associates or partners and that the universe could not have been created without a purpose as a mere sport. The very existence of a wonderful, rational thinking and feeling creature-Man-who has been delegated with powers, is a clear proof that his life will not come to an end at death.

76Here attention is being drawn to the proof of both Tauhid and Life after-death, and in the other phenomena cited to the refutation of both shirk and rejection of the Hereafter.

77Their denial of the Life-after-death implied the denial of the powers and wisdom of Allah as well.

78That is, "If you acknowledge this, why do you not then understand chat none but Allah deserves to be worshiped and that when He has once created the earth and all the things in it, it is not difficult for Him to re-create them once again?"

79That is, "If you acknowledge this, why do you not then understand chat none but Allah deserves to be worshiped and that when He has once created the earth and all the things in it, it is not difficult for Him to re-create them once again?"

80That is, "Why are you not afraid of rebelling against Him and worshiping others besides Him? Why do you not dread that one day you shall have to give an account of all your deeds to the All-Powerful Sovereign of the universe?"

81The word malakut in the Text is a strong word which combines both sovereignty and ownership. The verse therefore means: "Whose is the Sovereignty and Who possesses the real ownership rights over everything?"

82In order to understand the significance of this question, we should know that the art of magic makes a thing appear different from what it really is. Thus the question will mean: "Who has bewitched you that, in spite of knowing and acknowledging all these things, you do not understand the Reality ? Who has bewitched you that even after acknowledging Allah to be the Owner and the All Powerful Sovereign, you set up other owners and sovereigns along with Him or make them partners with Him and worship them ? Who has deluded you that you should dare to be treacherous and unfaithful to Allah knowing that none can protect you against Him, and forget that you will be called to account for these things?"

In this connection, it should also be noted that this question has a subtle meaning also. The Quraish accused the Holy Prophet of practicing magic and sorcery. This question turns the tables on them, as if to say, "O foolish people, the man who presents the Reality appears to you to be a sorcerer, while those leaders who say things against Reality, against common sense and against your own convictions and beliefs, do not appear to you to be sorcerers at all."

83They are liars because they say that others besides Allah have a share in His Godhead and that there is no Life-after-death, because their first saying contradicts their own admission that Allah is the Owner and the Sovereign of the universe. Then their second assertion is based on the presumption that the All-Powerful Allah cannot recreate what He has created once. This is clearly a contradiction in terms.

84It should be, noted that this is a general refutation of the belief that Allah has a child or children, and incidentally refutes the Christian belief that Christ is the son of God. Yet even some eminent commentators confine this to the refutation of the Christian belief. Obviously, there is no reason why it was necessary to refute the Christian belief specifically in this context, when the whole discourse has been directed towards the disbelievers of Makkah alone, who were, like the Christians, guilty of this sort of shirk.

85Here the argument of Tauhid is based on this principle : Had there been more than one God or partners in Godhead, there would have been serious differences, conflicts and wars among the different sovereigns and rulers. See Bani Isra'il (XVII): 42 and E.N. 47 thereof, and Al-Anbiya' (XXI): 22 and E. N. 22 thereof.

86This contains a subtle allusion to the refutation of the doctrine of "intercession". See E.N.'s 85, 86 of Ta Ha (XX) and E.N. 27 of AI-Anbiya' (XXI).

87This prayer does not mean that, God forbid, there was any real danger of the Holy Prophet's also being involved in the punishment, or that if he had not invoked this prayer, he might have been invoked in it. This way of address has been adopted to warn that all people should fear Allah's punishment. They should not demand it nor persist in their wickedness, if Allah gives them respite. As a matter of fact, Allah's punishment is a thing which should be dreaded not only by the sinful people but also by the righteous people, and they should all seek His refuge from it, for when the scourge of God comes, it does not destroy only the wicked people but may also involve the righteous people in it. Therefore the right course for those, who have to live in a wicked society, is that they should always pray to Allah for His refuge, for one does not know when that scourge might come down.

88For explanation, see E.N.'s 71, 72 of A1-An'am (Vl), E.N.'s 138, 150 to 153 of Al-A'araf (VII), E.N. 39 of Yunus (X), E.N. 48 of Al-Hijr (XV), E.N.'s 122 to 124 of An-Nahl (XVI), E.N.'s 58 to 63 of Bani Isra'il (XVII), and E.N.'s 35 to 41 of Ha Mim Sajdah (XLI).

89In the original Text plural number has been used for Allah, which may be for reverence, or may include the angels as well, who will be seizing the criminal soul. The entreaty would be: "O my Lord! send me back!"

90It occurs at several places in the Qur'an that each of the criminals, after his death till his entry into Hell, and even after that, will plead again and again: "Lord, send me back to the world: I will no more disobey Thee: I will now do righteous deeds." See Al-An`am (VI):27, 28, Al-A`araf (VII): 53, Ibrahim (X 1 V): 44, 45, Ash-Shu`ara' (XXVI):102, AI-Fatir (XXXV): 37, Az-Zumar (XXXIX): 58, 59, AI-Mu'min (XL): 10-12, and Ash-Shura (XLII): 44 along with the relevant E.N.'s.

91That is, "He will never be sent back nor given another opportunity, for in that case the test and vial for which man is sent m this world becomes meaningless." For further explanation, see Al-Baqarah (II): 210 and E. N. 228 thereof, and,E.N.'s 6, 139, 140 of AI-An`am (VI) and E.N. 26 of Yunus (X).

92That is, "Now, when he has met his doom, he has nothing more to say than that he should be sent back to the world; so let him say what he likes; he will never be allowed to go back."

93"That is, "Now there is a `barrier' between them and the world, which will not allow them to go back to it. Therefore they shall remain in that state up to the Day of Resurrection."

94It does not mean that the father will not remain "father" and the son will not remain "son", etc.. It only means that they will not be able to help each other, nor shall they be able to inquire about each other as father and son, for each one will be worried and anxious about his own plight. See also Al-Ma'arij (LXX): 10-14, and `Abasa (LXXXI 34-37).

95That is, those whose good deeds will be heavy and will out-weigh their evil deeds.

96For the criterion of "success" and "failure" in the Hereafter, please refer to E.N.'s 1 and 50 above.

97The word kalih means a face whose skin has been removed so as to expose the jaws. When somebody asked Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud the meaning of kalih, he said, "Haven't you seen the scorched head of a slaughtered animal?"

98"....do not speak to Me" "...do not plead your case with Me." According to some traditions, these will be their last words and they shall never be allowed to speak again, but this is contradicted by the Qur'an itself in the succeeding verses. Therefore, it only means this that they will not be able to plead their case again.

99This is again a reference to those who will deserve success or be doomed to failure in the Hereafter.

100For explanation, see Ta Ha (XX): 103 and E.N. 80 thereof.

101That is, "Our Messengers warned you that the life in this world is transitory and is for test and trial, but you did not realize it then and denied that there was any life in the Hereafter and behaved in accordance with that belief."

102The Arabic word abathan in the Text also means "for the sake of sport". Then the verse will mean: "Did you think that We had created you merely for the sake of sport and there was no purpose behind your creation ? Therefore you may eat, drink, be merry and enjoy yourself as you please."

103Allah is above this that He should create you without any purpose and that you may associate partners with Him with impunity.

104It may also be translated as: "The one who invokes any other deity along with Allah, has nothing to support him in this act."

105That is, he cannot escape accountability.

106Again, the reference is to those who will attain we success and to those who will be deprived of it.

107Compare and contrast this "prayer" with verse 109. Here the Holy Prophet has been told to make the same prayer as contained in verse 109, as if to say, "You (and your followers) should supplicate Allah with the same prayer so that, if the people scoff at you, they themselves might provide a proof of a strong case against themselves."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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24. Surah An Noor (The Light)

Name

This Surah takes its name, An Nur, from verse 35.

Period of Revelation

The consensus of opinion is that it was sent down after the Campaign against Bani al-Mustaliq and this is confirmed by vv. 11-20 that deal with the incident of the "Slander", which occurred during that Campaign. But there is a difference of opinion as to whether this Campaign took place in 5 A. H. before the Battle of the Trench or in 6 A. H. after it. It is important to decide this issue in order to determine whether this Surah was sent down earlier or Surah Al- Ahzab(XXXIII), which is the only other Surah containing the Commandments about the observance of purdah by women. Surah Al-Ahzab was admittedly sent down on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench. Now if this Battle occurred earlier, it would mean that the initial instructions in connection with the Commandments of purdah were sent down in Surah Al-Ahzab and they were complemented later by the Commandments revealed in this Surah. On the other hand, if the Campaign against Bani al-Mustaliq occurred earlier, the chronological order of the Commandments would be reversed, and it would become difficult to understand the legal wisdom and implications of the Commandments of purdah.

According to Ibn Sa'd, the Campaign against Bani al Mustaliq took place in Shaban 5 A. H. and the Battle of the Trench in Zil- Qa'dah the same year. This opinion is based on some traditions from Hadarat Ayesha about the events connected with the "Slander" in which she refers to a dispute between Hadrat Sa'd bin 'Ubadah and Sa'd bin Mu'az. Hadrat Sa'd bin Mu'az, according to authentic traditions, died during the Campaign against Bani Quraizah, which took place immediately after the Battle of the Trench. It is, therefore, evident that he could not be present in 6 A. H. to take part in a dispute about the "Slander".

On the other hand, Muhammad bin Ishaq says that the Battle of the Trench took place in Shawwal 5 A. H. and the Campaign against Bani al-Mustaliq in Sha'ban 6 A. H. This opinion is supported by many authentic traditions from

Hadrat Ayesha and others. According to these traditions, (1) the Commandments about purdah had been sent down in Surah Al-Ahzab before the incident of the "Slander", (2) the Holy Prophet had married Hadrat Zainab in Zil-Qa'dah 5 A. H. after the Battle of the Trench, (3) Hamnah, sister of Hadrat Zainab, had taken a leading part in spreading the "Slander", just because Hadrat Ayesha was a rival of her sister. All this evidence supports the view of Muhammad bin Ishaq.

Now let us consider the two opinions a little more closely. The only argument in favor of the first opinion is the mention of the presence of Hadrat Sa'd bin Mu'az in a dispute connected with the incident of the "Slander". But this argument is weakened by some other traditions from Hadrat Ayesha, in which she mentions Hadrat Usaid bin Hudair instead of Hadrat Sa'd bin Mu'az in this dispute. It may, therefore, be assumed that there has been some confusion regarding the two names in reporting the traditions. Moreover, if we accept the first opinion, just because of the mention of the name of Hadrat Sa'd bin Mu'az in some traditions, we encounter other difficulties that cannot be resolved in any way. For, in that case, we shall have to admit that the revelation of the Commandments of purdah and the Holy Prophet's marriage with Hadrat Zainab had taken place even earlier than the Battle of the Trench. But we learn from the Qur'an and many authentic traditions that both these events happened after that Battle and the Campaign against Bani Quraizah. That is why Ibn Hazm, Ibn Qayyim and some other eminent scholars have held the opinion of Muhammad bin Ishaq as correct, and we also hold it to be so. Thus, we conclude that Surah Al Ahzab was sent down earlier than Surah An-Nur, which was revealed in the latter half of 6 A. H. several months after Surah Al Ahzab.

Historical Background

Now let us review the circumstances existing at the time of the revelation of this surah. It should be kept in mind that the incident of the "Slander", which was the occasion of its revelation, was closely connected with the conflict between Islam and the disbelievers.

After the victory at Badr, the Islamic movement began to gain strength day by day; so much so that by the time of the Battle of the Trench, it had become so strong that the united forces of the enemy numbering about ten thousand failed to crush it and had to raise the siege of Al Madinah after one month. It meant this, and both the parties understood it well, that the war of aggression which the Disbelievers had been waging for several years, had come to an end. The Holy Prophet himself declared: "After this year, the Quraish will not be able to attack you; now you will take the offensive."

When the disbelievers realized that they could not defeat Islam on the battlefield, they chose the moral front to carry on the conflict. It cannot be said with certainty whether this Change of tactics was the outcome of deliberate consultations, or it was the inevitable result of the humiliating retreat in the Battle of the Trench, for which all the available forces of the enemy had been concentrated:They knew it well that the rise of Islam was nor due to the numerical strength of the Muslims nor to their superior arms and ammunition nor to their greater material resources; nay, the Muslims were fighting against fearful odds on all these fronts. They owed their success to their moral superiority. Their enemies realized that the pure and noble qualities of the Holy Prophet and his followers were capturing the hearts of the people, and were also binding them together into a highly disciplined community. As a result of this, they were defeating the *mushriks* and the Jews both on the peace and on the war front, because the

latter lacked discipline and character.

Under the above mentioned circumstances, the wicked designs of the disbelievers led them to start a campaign of vilification against the Holy Prophet and the Muslims in order to destroy the bulwark of morale that was helping them to defeat their enemies. Therefore the strategy was to attain the assistance of the hypocrites to spread slanders against the Holy Prophet and his followers so that the *mushriks* and the Jews could exploit these to sow the seeds of discord among the Muslims and undermine their discipline.

The first opportunity for the use of the new strategy was afforded in Zil-Qa'dah 5 A. H. when the Holy Prophet married Hadrat Zainab (daughter of Jahsh), who was the divorced wife of his adopted son, Zaid bin Harithah. The Holy Prophet had arranged this marriage in order to put an end to the custom of ignorance, which gave the same status to the adopted son that was the right only of the son from one's own loins. The hypocrites, however, considered it a golden opportunity to vilify the Holy Prophet from inside the community, and the Jews and the *mushriks* exploited it from outside to ruin his high reputation by this malicious slander. For this purpose fantastic stories were concocted and spread to this effect: "One day Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) happened to see the wife of his adopted son and fell in love with her; he maneuvered her divorce and married her." Though this was an absurd fiction it was spread with such skill, cunning and artfulness that it succeeded in its purpose; so much so that some Muslim traditionalists and commentators also have cited some parts of it in their writings, and the orientalists have exploited these fully to vilify the Holy Prophet. As a matter of fact, Hadrat Zainab was never a stranger to the Holy Prophet that he should see her by chance and fall in love with her at first sight. For she was his first cousin, being the daughter of his real paternal aunt, Umaimah, daughter of Abdul Muttalib. He had known her from her childhood to her youth. A year before this incident, he himself had persuaded her to marry Hadarat Zaid in order to demonstrate practically that the Quraish and the liberated slaves were equal as human being. As she never reconciled herself to her marriage with a liberated slave, they could not pull on together for long, which inevitably led to her divorce. The above mentioned facts were well known to all, yet the slanderers succeeded in their false propaganda with the result that even today there are people who exploit these things to defame Islam.

The second slander was made on the honor of Hadrat Ayesha, a wife of the Holy Prophet, in connection with an incident which occurred while he was returning from the Campaign against Bani al-Mustaliq. As this attack was even severer than the first one and was the main background of this Surah, we shall deal with it in greater detail.

Let us say a few words about Abdullah bin Ubayy, who played the part of a villain in this attack. He belonged to the clan of Khazraj and was one of the most important chiefs of Al-Madinah. The people had even intended to make him their king a little before the Holy Prophet's migration there, but the scheme had to be dropped because of the changed circumstances. Though he had embraced Islam, he remained at heart a hypocrite and his hypocrisy was so manifest that he was called the "Chief of the Hypocrites". He never lost any opportunity to slander Islam in order to take his revenge.

Now the main theme. When in Sha'ban 6 A. H. the Holy Prophet learned that the people of Bani al-Mustaliq were making preparations for a war against the Muslims and were trying to muster other clans also for this purpose, he fore- stalled and took the enemy by surprise. After capturing the people of the clan and their belongings, the Holy Prophet made a halt near Muraisi, a spring in their territory. One day a dispute concerning taking water from the

spring started between a servant of Hadrat Umar and an ally of the clan of Khazraj, and developed into a quarrel between the Muhajirs(immigrants) and the Ansar(Muslims of Madinah), but was soon settled. This, however, did not suit the strategy of Abdullah bin Ubayy, who also had joined the expedition with a large number of hypocrites. So he began to incite the Ansar, saying, "You yourselves brought these people of the quraish from Makkah and made them partners in your wealth and property. And now they have become your rivals and want domination over you. If even now you withdraw your support from them, they shall be forced to leave your city." Then he swore and declared, "As soon as we reach back Al-Madinah, the respectable people will turn out the degraded people from the city."

When the Holy Prophet came to know of this, he ordered the people to set off immediately and march back to Al-Madinah. The forced march continued up to noon the next day without a halt on the way so that the people became exhausted and had no time for idle talk.

Though this wise judgment and quick action by the Holy Prophet averted the undesirable consequences of the mischief, Abdullah bin Ubayy got another opportunity for doing a far more serious and greater mischief, i. e. by engineering a "Slander" against Hadrat Ayesha, for that was a mischief which might well have involved the young Muslim Community in a civil war, if the Holy Prophet and his sincere and devoted followers had not shown wisdom, forbearance and marvelous discipline in dealing with it. In order to understand the events that led to the incident of the "Slander", we cite the story in Hadrat 'Ayesha's own words. She says :

"Whenever the Holy Prophet went out on a journey, he decided by lots as to which of his wives should accompany him. Accordingly, it was decided that I should accompany him during the expedition to Bani al Mustaliq. On the return journey, the Holy Prophet halted for the night at a place which was the last stage on the way back to Al-Madinah. It was still night, when they began to make preparations for the march. So I went outside the camp to ease myself. When I returned and came near my halting place, I noticed that my necklace had fallen down somewhere. I went back in search for it but in the meantime the caravan moved off and I was left behind all alone. The four carriers of the litter had placed it on my camel without noticing that it was empty. This happened because of my light weight due to lack of food in those days. I wrapped myself in my sheet and lay down in the hope that when it would be found that I had been left behind, a search party would come back to pick me up. In the meantime I fell asleep. In the morning, when Safwan bin Mu'attal Sulami passed that way, he saw me and recognized me for he had seen me several times before the Commandment about purdah had been sent down. No sooner did he see me than he stopped his camel and cried out spontaneously : "How sad! The wife of the Holy Prophet has been left here!" At this I woke up all of a sudden and covered my face with my sheet. Without uttering another word, he made his camel kneel by me and stood aside, while I climbed on to the camel back. He led the camel by the nose-string and we overtook the caravan at about noon, when it had just halted and nobody had yet noticed that I had been left behind. I learnt afterwards that this incident had been used to slander me and Abdullah bin Ubayy was foremost among the slanderers.(According to other traditions, when Hadrat Ayesha reached the camp on the camel, led by Safwan, and it was known that she had been left behind, Abdullah bin Ubayy cried out, 'By God, she could not have remained chaste. Look, there comes the wife of your Prophet openly on the camel led by the person with whom she passed the night.')

"When I reached Al-Madinah, I fell ill and stayed in bed for more than a month. Though I was quite unaware of it, the news of the "Slander" was spreading like a scandal in the city, and had also reached the Holy Prophet. Anyhow,

I noticed that he did not seem as concerned about my illness he used to be. He would come but without addressing me directly, would inquire from others how I was and leave the house. Therefore it troubled my mind that something had gone wrong somewhere. So I took leave of him and went to my mother's house for better nursing.

"While I was there, one night I went out of the city to ease myself in the company of Mistah's mother, who was a first cousin of my mother. As she was walking along she stumbled over something and cried out spontaneously, 'May Mistah perish!' To this I retorted, 'What a good mother you are that you curse your own son -- the son who took part in the Battle of Badr.' She replied, 'My dear daughter, are you not aware of his scandal mongering?' Then she told me everything about the campaign of the "Slander".(Besides the hypocrites, some true Muslims also had been involved in this campaign, and among them who took leading part in it, were Mistah, Hassan bin Thabit, the famous poet of Islam, and Hamnah, daughter of Jahsh and sister of Hadrat Zainab). Hearing this horrible story, my blood curdled, and I immediately returned home, and passed the rest of the night in crying over it.

"During my absence the Holy Prophet took counsel with Ali and Usamah bin Zaid about this matter. Usamah said good words about me to this effect:'O Messenger of Allah, we have found nothing but good in your wife. All that is being spread about her is a lie and calumny.' As regards Ali, he said, 'O Messenger of Allah, there is no dearth of women; you may, if you like, marry an other wife. If, how- ever, you would like to investigate into the matter, you may send for her maid servant and inquire into it through her.' Accordingly, the maid servant was sent for and questioned. She replied, 'I declare on an oath by Allah, Who has sent you with the Truth, that I have never seen any evil thing in her, except that she falls asleep when I tell her to look after the kneaded dough in my absence and a goat comes and eats it.'

"On that same day the Holy Prophet addressed the people from the pulpit, saying:'O Muslims, who from among you will defend my honor against the attacker of the person who has transgressed all bounds in doing harm to me by slandering my wife. By God, I have made a thorough inquiry and found nothing wrong with her nor with the man, whose name has been linked with the "Slander". At this Usaid bin Hudair (or Sa'd bin Mauz) according to other traditions) stood up and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, if that person belongs to our clan, we will kill him by ourselves, but if he belongs to the Khazraj clan, we will kill him if you order us to do so.' Hearing this Sa'd bin 'Ubadah, chief of the Khazraj clan, stood up and said, 'You lie you can never kill him. You are saying this just because the person belongs to our clan of Khazraj. Had he belonged to your clan, you would never have said so.' Hadrat Usaid retorted, 'You are a hypocrite: that is why you are defending a hypocrite.' At this, there was a general turmoil in the mosque, which would have developed into a riot, even though the Holy Prophet was present there the whole time. But he cooled down their anger and came down from the pulpit."

The remaining details of the incident will be cited along with our commentary on the Text, which honorably absolved Hadrat Aishah from the blame. But here we would only want to point out the enormity of the mischief that was engineered by Abdullah bin Ubayy: (1) It implied an attack on the honor of the Holy Prophet and Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq.(2) He meant to undermine the high moral superiority which was the greatest asset of the Islamic Movement (3) He intended to ignite civil war between the Muhajirs and the Ansar, and between Aus and Khazraj, the two clans of the Ansar.

Theme and Topics

This Surah and vv. 28-73 of Surah Al-Ahzab(of which this is the sequel) were sent down to strengthen the moral front, which at that time was the main target of the attack, vv. 28-73 of Al-Ahzab were sent down concerning the Holy Prophet's marriage with Hadrat Zainab, and on the occasion of the second attack (the "Slander" about Hadrat Aishah), Surah An-Nur was sent down to repair the cracks that had appeared in the unity of the Muslim Community. If we keep this in view during the study of the two Surahs, we shall understand the wisdom that underlies the Commandments about purdah. Allah sent the following instructions to strengthen and safeguard the moral front, and to counteract the storm of propaganda that was raised on the occasion of the marriage of Hazrat Zainab:

1. The wives of the Holy Prophet were enjoined to remain within their private quarters, to avoid display of adornments and to be cautious in their talk with other persons (vv. 32, 33).

2. The other Muslims were forbidden to enter the private rooms of the Holy Prophet and instructed to ask whatever they wanted from behind the curtain.(v. 53).

3. A line of demarcation was drawn between the *mahram* and the non-*mahram* relatives. Only the former were allowed to enter the private rooms of those wives of the Holy Prophet with whom they were so closely related as to prohibit marriage with them.(v. 55).

4. The Muslims were told that the wives of the Prophet were prohibited for them just like their own real mothers; therefore every Muslim should regard them with the purest of intentions.(vv. 53, 54).

5. The Muslims were warned that they would invite the curse and scourge of Allah if they offended the Holy Prophet. Likewise it was a heinous sin to attack the honor of or slander any Muslim man or woman.(vv. 57, 58).

6. All the Muslim women were enjoined to cover their faces with their sheets if and when they had to go out of their houses.(v. 59).

On the occasion of the second attack, this Surah was sent down to keep pure and strengthen the moral fiber of the Muslim society, which had been shaken by the enormity of the slander. We give below a summary of the Commandments and instructions in their chronological order so that one may understand how the Qur'an makes use of the psychological occasion to reform the Community by the adoption of legal, moral and social measures.

1. Fornication which had already been declared to be a social crime (IV: 15,16) was now made a criminal offense and was to be punished with a hundred lashes.

2. It was enjoined to boycott the adulterous men and women and the Muslims were forbidden to have any marriage relations with them.

3. The one, who accused the other of adultery but failed to produce four witnesses, was to be punished with eighty lashes.

4. The Law of *Li'an* was prescribed to decide the charge of adultery against his own fife by a husband.

5. The Muslims were enjoined to learn a lesson from the incident of the "Slander" about Hadrat Aishah, as if to say, "You should be very cautious in regard to charges of adultery against the people of good reputation, and should not spread these; nay, you should refute and suppress them immediately." In this connection, a general principle was enunciated that the proper spouse for a pure man is a pure woman, for he cannot pull on with a wicked woman for long, and the same is the case with a pure woman, as if to say, "When you knew that the Holy Prophet was a pure man, nay, the purest of all human beings, how could you believe that he had experienced happiness with a wicked woman and exalted her as the most beloved of his wives? For it was obvious that an adulterous woman could not have been able to deceive, with her affected behavior, a pure man like the Holy Prophet. You ought also to have considered the fact that the accuser was a mean person while the accused was a pure woman. This should have been enough to convince you that the accusation was not worth your consideration; nay, it was not even conceivable.

6. Those who spread news and evil rumors and propagate wickedness in the Muslim Community, deserve punishment and not encouragement.

7. A general principle was laid down that relations in the Muslim Community should be based on good faith and not on suspicion: everyone should be treated as innocent unless he is proved to be guilty and *vice versa*.

8. The people were forbidden to enter the houses of others unceremoniously and were instructed to take permission for this.

9. Both men and women were instructed to lower their gaze and forbidden to cast glances or make eyes at each other.

10. Women were enjoined to cover their heads and breasts even inside their houses.

11. Women were forbidden to appear with make-up before other men except their servants or such relatives with whom their marriage is prohibited.

12. They were enjoined to hide their make-ups when they went out of their houses, and even forbidden to put on jingling ornaments, while they moved out of their houses.

13. Marriage was encouraged and enjoined even for slaves and slave girls, for unmarried people help spread indecency.

14. The institution of slavery was discouraged and the owners and other people were enjoined to give financial help to the slaves to earn their freedom under the law of *Mukatabat*.

15. Prostitution by slave girls was forbidden in the first instance, for prostitution in Arabia was confined to this class alone. This in fact implied the legal prohibition of prostitution.

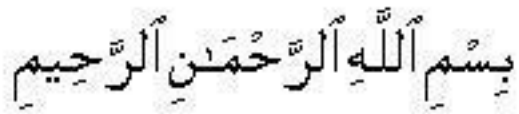
16. Sanctity of privacy in home life was enjoined even for servants and under age children including one's own. They were enjoined not to enter the private rooms of any man or woman without permission; especially in the morning, at noon and at night.

17. Old women were given the concession that they could set aside their head covers within their houses but should refrain from display of adornments. Even they were told that it was better for them to keep themselves covered with head wrappers.

18. The blind, lame, crippled and sick persons were allowed to take any article of food from the houses of other people without permission, for it was not to be treated like theft and cheating, which are cognizable offenses.

19. On the other hand, the Muslims were encouraged to develop mutual relationships by taking their meals together, and the nearest relatives and intimate friends were allowed to take their meals in each other's house without any formal invitation. This was to produce mutual affection and sincere relationships between them to counteract any future mischief. Side by side with these instructions, clear signs of the Believers and the hypocrites were stated to enable every Muslim to discriminate between the two. At the same time the Community was bound together by adopting disciplinary measures in order to make it stronger and firmer than it was at the time so as to discourage the enemies from creating mischief in it.

Above all, the most conspicuous thing about this discourse is that it is free from the bitterness which inevitably follows such shameful and absurd attacks. Instead of showing any wrath at this provocation, the discourse prescribes some laws and regulations and enjoins reformative commandments and issues wise instructions that were required at the time for the education and training of the Community. Incidentally, this teaches us how to deal with such provocative mischiefs coolly, wisely and generously. At the same time, it is a clear proof that this is not the word of Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) but of a Being Who is observing all human conditions and affairs from the highest level, and guiding mankind without any personal prejudices, feelings and leanings. Had this been the word of the Holy Prophet; there would have been at least some tinge of natural bitterness in spite of his great generosity and forbearance, for it is but human that a noble man naturally become enraged when his own honor is attacked in this mean manner.



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

سُورَةٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهَا وَفَرَضْنَٰهَا وَأَنزَلْنَا فِيهَآ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١﴾

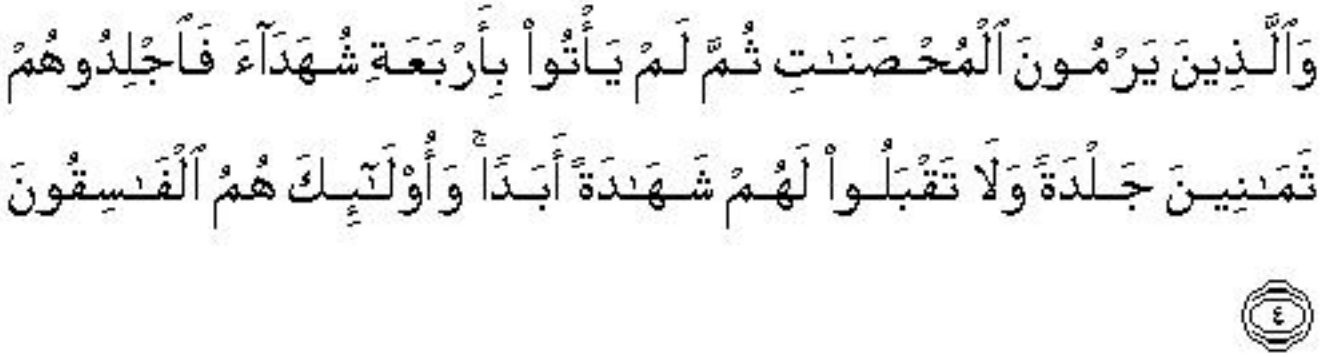
[1] This is a Surah which We have sent down and We have made it mandatory, and We have sent down clear Commandments in it[1] so that you may learn lessons.

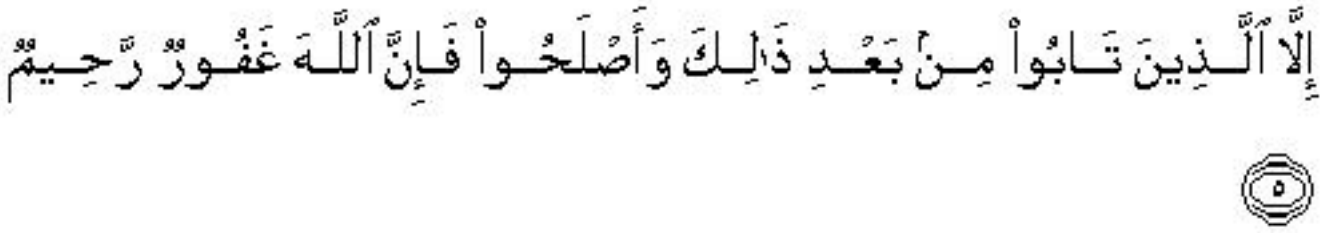
ٱلزَّانِيَةُ وَٱلزَّانِى فَٱجْلِدُوا۟ كُلَّ وَٰحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِاْئَةَ جَلْدَةٍ ۖ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُم بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِى دِينِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۖ وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾

[2] The woman and the man guilty of fornication, flog each one of them with a hundred stripes[2] and let not any pity for them restrain you in regard to a matter prescribed by Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day,[3] and let, some of the believers witness the punishment inflicted on them.[4]

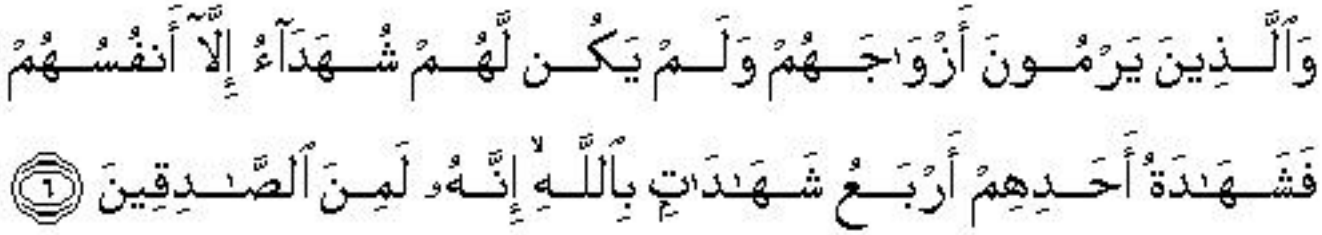
ٱلزَّانِى لَا يَنكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَٱلزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنكِحُهَآ إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ ۚ وَحُرِّمَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾

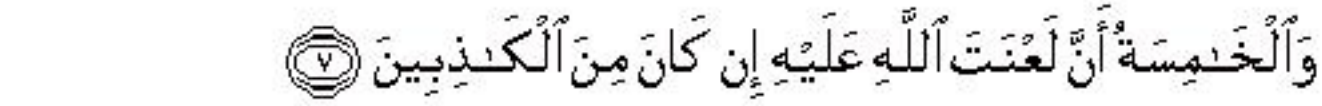
[3] A man guilty of adultery (or fornication) shall not marry any but the woman guilty of the same or a mushrik woman, and none shall marry a woman guilty of adultery (or fornication) but the man guilty of the same or a mushrik man: such marriages are forbidden to true believers.[5]





[4-5] As for those persons who charge chaste women with false accusations but do not produce four witnesses, flog them with eighty stripes and never accept their evidence afterwards, for they themselves are transgressors, except those who repent and reform themselves; Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[6]





[6-7] As for those who accuse their own wives but have no witness except themselves, the evidence of one of them is that he shall swear four times by Allah and declare that he is true (in his charge). Then the fifth time he shall declare that Allah's curse be upon him if he be false (in his charge).

وَيَدْرَؤُا۟ عَنْهَا ٱلْعَذَابَ أَن تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهَٰدَٰتٍۭ بِٱللَّهِ
إِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٨﴾

وَٱلْخَٰمِسَةَ أَنَّ غَضَبَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهَآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩﴾

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

[8-10] (As for the woman), it shall avert the punishment from her if she swears four times by Allah that the man is false (in his charge) and the fifth time she invokes Allah's wrath upon herself, if he be true (in his charge).[7] If Allah had not shown you His grace and mercy and if Allah had not been most Forgiving and All-Wise, (you would have been in a great fix because of accusing your wives).

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ جَآءُو بِٱلْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنكُمْ ۚ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُم ۖ بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ ۚ لِكُلِّ ٱمْرِئٍ مِّنْهُم مَّا ٱكْتَسَبَ مِنَ ٱلْإِثْمِ ۚ وَٱلَّذِى تَوَلَّىٰ كِبْرَهُۥ مِنْهُمْ
لَهُۥ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

لَّوْلَآ إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا۟
هَٰذَآ إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٢﴾

لَّوْلَا جَآءُو عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَآءَ ۚ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا۟ بِٱلشُّهَدَآءِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
هُمُ ٱلْكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِى مَآ
أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُۥ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَٰهِكُم مَّا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ
وَتَحْسَبُونَهُۥ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

[11-15] Those who have invented the slander,[8] are some of your own people.[9] You should not, however, regard this matter as evil for it has good in it for you.[10] Whoso took any part in this, he earned his share of the sin accordingly, and the one, who had the greatest share of responsibility in it,[11] shall have a terrible punishment. When you heard of it, why didn't the Believing men and the Believing women have a good opinion of themselves,[12] and why did they not say, "This is a manifest slander?"[13] Why did the slanderers not bring four witnesses (to prove their charge)? Now that they have not brought witnesses, they themselves are liars in the sight of Allah.[14] Were it not for Allah's grace and mercy towards you in this world and in the Hereafter, a painful scourge would have visited you because of the things in which you were involved. (Just think how erroneous you were,) when you passed this lie on from one tongue to the other and uttered with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge. You took it as a trifling matter whereas it was a grave offense in the sight of Allah.

وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُم مَّا يَكُونُ لَنَآ أَن نَّتَكَلَّمَ بِهَٰذَا سُبْحَٰنَكَ
هَٰذَا بُهْتَٰنٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٦﴾

يَعِظُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَن تَعُودُوا۟ لِمِثْلِهِۦٓ أَبَدًا إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

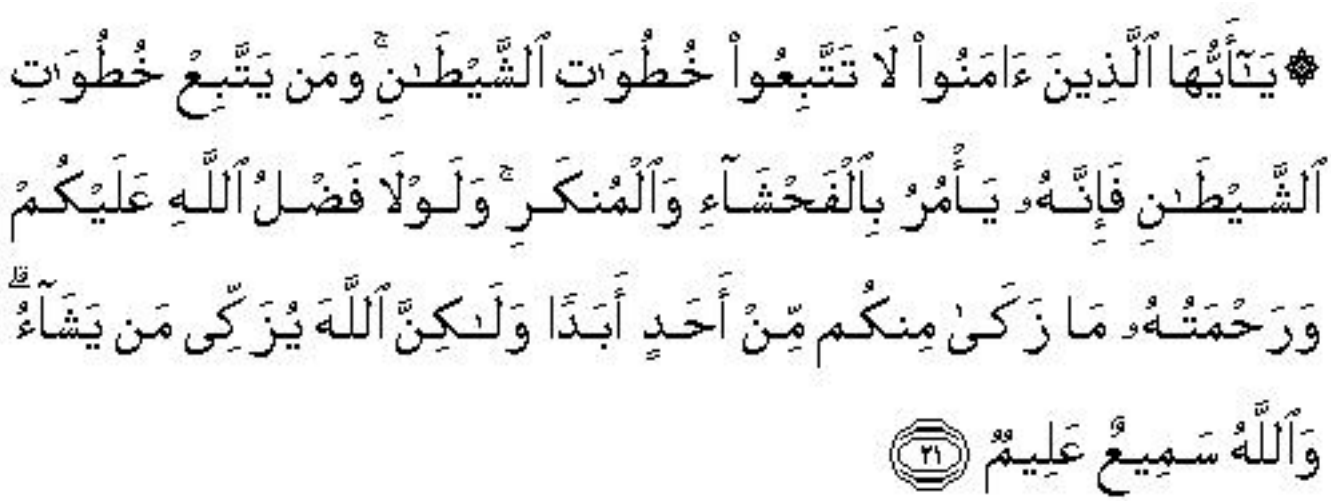
وَيُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

[16-18] Why did you not, as soon as you heard of it, say, "It is not proper for us to utter such a thing ? Glory be to Allah! This is a great slander." Allah admonishes you that in future you should never repeat a thing like this, if you are true Believers. Allah makes His Revelations clear to you, and He is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[15]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَن تَشِيعَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةُ فِى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

[19-20] As for those, who like that indecency should spread among the Believers, they deserve a painful punishment in this world and in the Hereafter,[16] for Allah knows and you do not know (its consequences).[17] If Allah had not shown His grace and mercy to you, (this scandal would have produced very evil results): Allah is indeed very Kind and Merciful.



[21] O Believers, do not follow in Satan's footsteps, for he will incite to indecency and wickedness any who will follow him. If Allah had not shown His Brace and mercy to you, none of you would have been able to cleanse yourself,[18] for it is Allah alone Who cleanses whom He wills, and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.[19]



[22] Those among you, who are bountiful and persons of means, should not swear on oath that they would withhold their help from their relatives, the indigent and those who have left their homes for the cause of Allah: they should forgive and forbear. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? and Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[20]



يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

يَوْمَئِذٍ يُوَفِّيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ دِينَهُمُ ٱلْحَقَّ وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٢٥﴾

[23-25] Those who charge with slander those Believing women, who are chaste but simple souls,[21] are accursed in this world and in the Hereafter: there is a great punishment for them. They should not forget the Day when their own tongues and their own hands and test will bear testimony in regard to their misdeeds.[21a] On that Day Allah will give them the full recompense they deserve, and they will realize that Allah is the very Truth, Who makes the Truth manifest.

ٱلْخَبِيثَٰتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ وَٱلْخَبِيثُونَ لِلْخَبِيثَٰتِ ۖ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ
وَٱلطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَٰتِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ ۖ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ
كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

[26] Impure women are for impure men and impure men for impure women, and pure women are for pure men and pure men for pure women. They are free from those scandals which the slanderers utter.[22] There is forgiveness for them and honorable provision.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَدْخُلُوا۟ بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ
حَتَّىٰ تَسْتَأْنِسُوا۟ وَتُسَلِّمُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

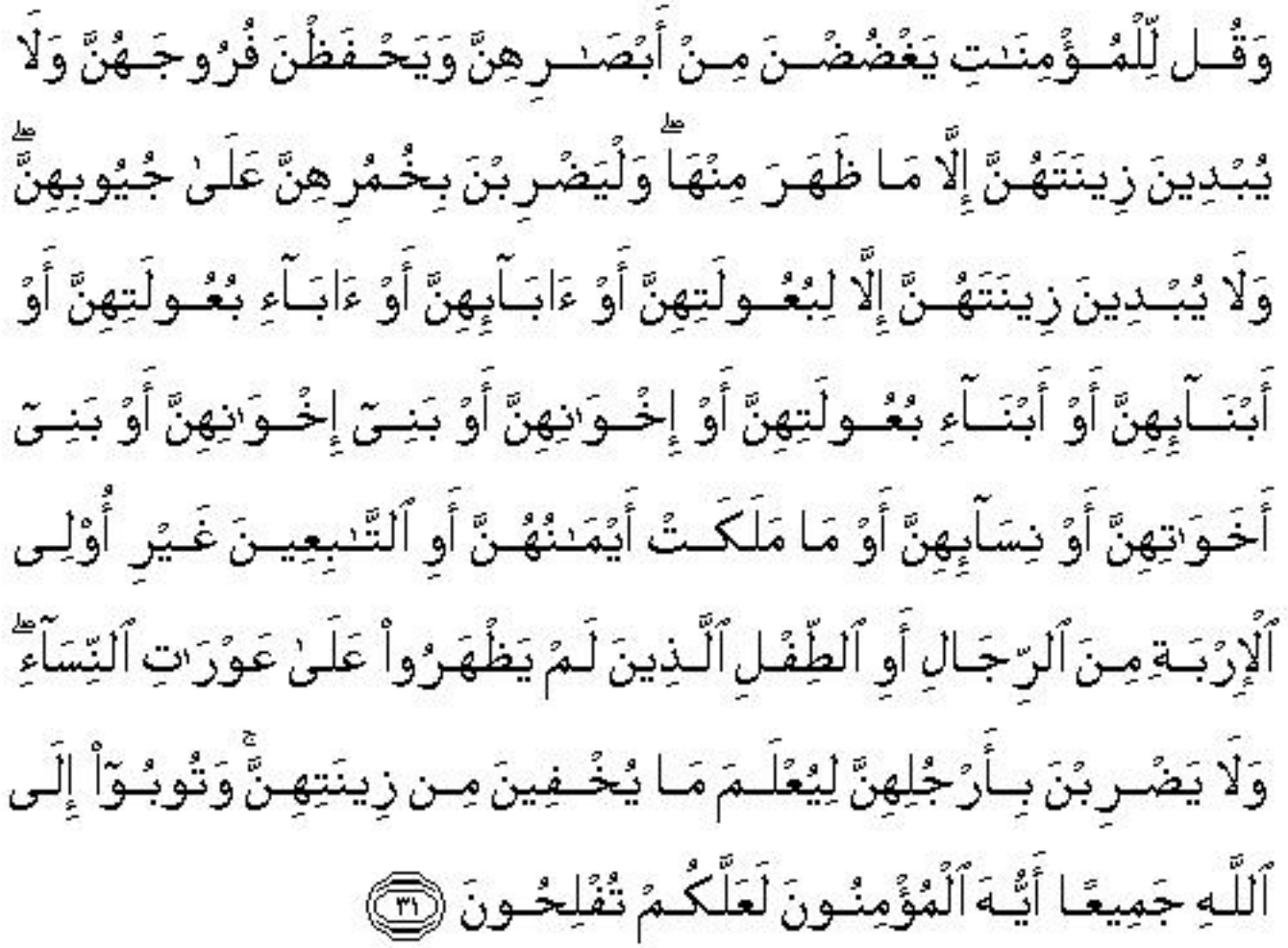
فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا۟ فِيهَآ أَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا حَتَّىٰ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِن قِيلَ لَكُمُ
ٱرْجِعُوا۟ فَٱرْجِعُوا۟ ۖ هُوَ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَدْخُلُوا۟ بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ مَسْكُونَةٍ فِيهَا
مَتَٰعٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

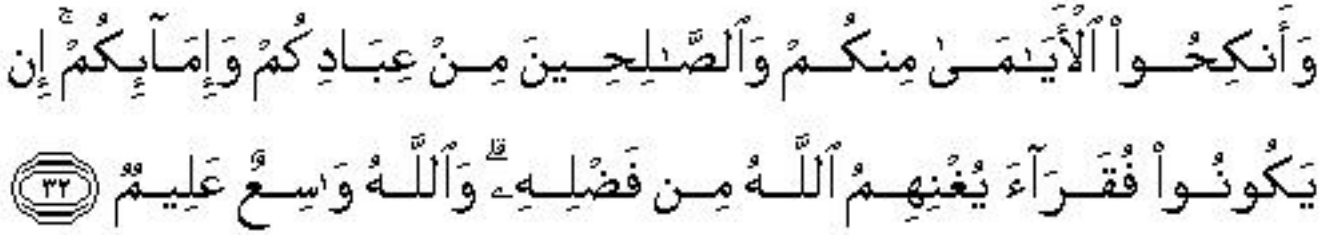
[27-29] O Believers,[23] do not enter other houses than your own until you have the approval of the inmates[24] and have wished them peace; this is the best way for you: it is expected that you will observe it.[25] Then, if you do not find anyone therein, do not enter until you have been given permission,[26] and if you are told to go back, you should go back. This is a purer way for you;[27] and Allah has full knowledge of what you do. There is, however, no harm if you enter houses which are not dwelling places, but contain something useful for you;[28] Allah knows what you disclose and what you conceal.

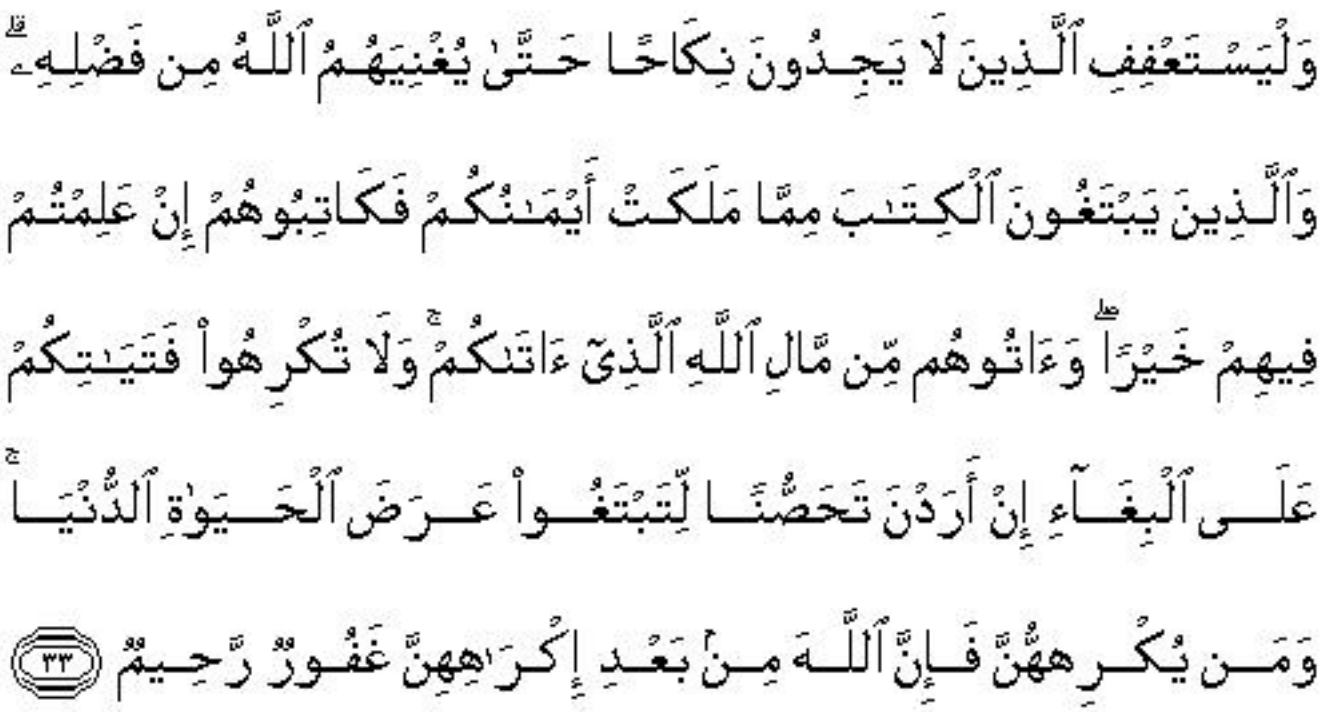
قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا۟ مِنْ أَبْصَٰرِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا۟ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[30] And O Prophet, enjoin the Believing men to restrain their gaze[29] and guard their private parts.[30] This is a more righteous way for them: Allah has knowledge of what they do.

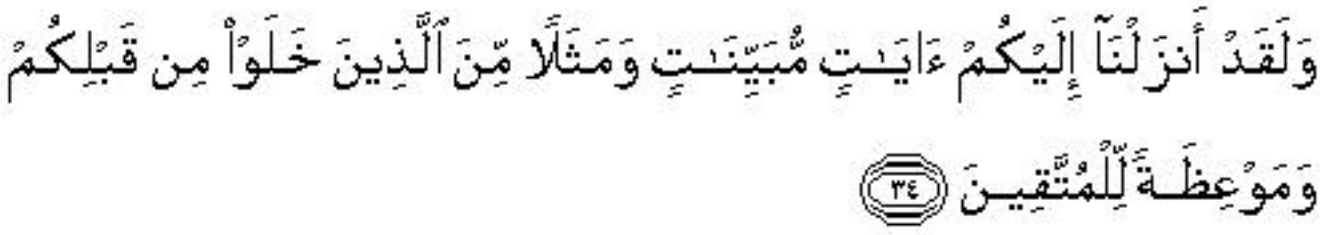


[31] O Prophet, enjoin the Believing men to restrain their gaze[31] and guard their private[32] parts.[33] and not to display their adornment[34] except that which is displayed of itself,[35] and to draw their veils over their bosoms[36] and not to display their adornment except before their husbands,[37] their fathers, the fathers of their husbands,[38] their sons and the sons of their husbands[39] (from other wives), their brothers,[40] their brothers' sons,[41] their sisters' sons,[42] their female associates[43] and those in their possession[44] and male attendants incapable of sex desire[45] and those boys who have not yet attained knowledge of sex matters concerning women;[46] also forbid them to stamp their feet on the ground lest their hidden ornaments should be displayed.[47] O Believers, turn all together towards Allah:[48] it is expected that you will attain true success.[49]





[32-33] Arrange marriages between the single men and women among you[50] and between your slave men and slave women, who are righteous,[51] [52] if they be indigent, Allah will provide means for them out of His bounty:[53] Allah has boundless resources and He is All Knowing. And those, who cannot find a match, should observe continence till Allah provides them with means out of His bounty[54] And if those who are in your possession, ask for a deed of emancipation, execute the deed of emancipation[55] with them,[56] provided that you find some good in them;[57] and give them something out of the means Allah has given you.[58] And do not force your slave-girls into prostitution for your own worldly gains when they themselves want to keep chaste;[59] and if anyone forces them into it, after such a compulsion Allah will be forgiving and merciful for them.



[34] We have sent down to you Revelations giving clear guidance and cited examples of the peoples who went before you to serve as warning and We have imparted admonitions for the God-fearing.[60]

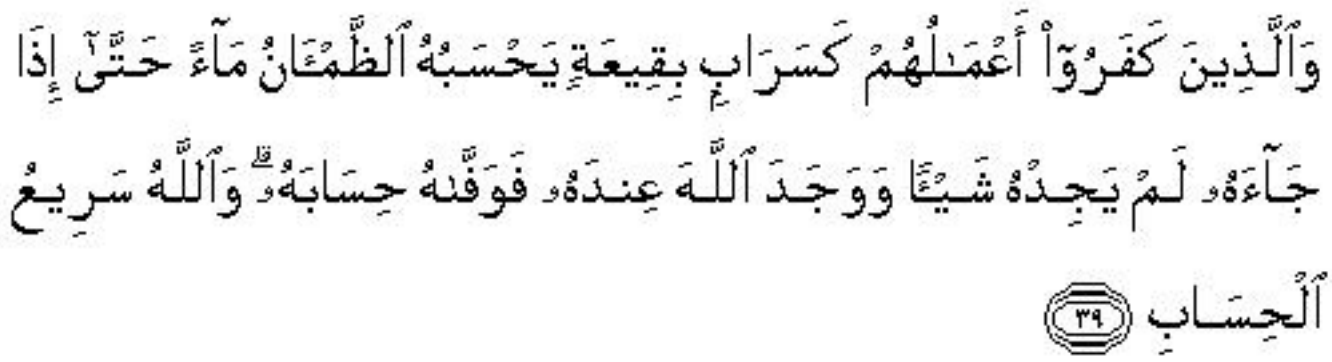
۞ ٱللَّهُ نُورُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ كَمِشۡكَوٰةٖ فِيهَا مِصۡبَاحٌۖ
ٱلۡمِصۡبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٖۖ ٱلزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوۡكَبٞ دُرِّيّٞ يُوقَدُ مِن شَجَرَةٖ
مُّبَٰرَكَةٖ زَيۡتُونَةٖ لَّا شَرۡقِيَّةٖ وَلَا غَرۡبِيَّةٖ يَكَادُ زَيۡتُهَا يُضِيٓءُ وَلَوۡ
لَمۡ تَمۡسَسۡهُ نَارٞۚ نُّورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٖۗ يَهۡدِي ٱللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَيَضۡرِبُ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡأَمۡثَٰلَ لِلنَّاسِۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ ﴿٣٥﴾

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرۡفَعَ وَيُذۡكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسۡمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلۡغُدُوِّ
وَٱلۡأٓصَالِ ﴿٣٦﴾

رِجَالٞ لَّا تُلۡهِيهِمۡ تِجَٰرَةٞ وَلَا بَيۡعٌ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءِ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوۡمٗا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ ٱلۡقُلُوبُ وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرُ
﴿٣٧﴾

لِيَجۡزِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَحۡسَنَ مَا عَمِلُواْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضۡلِهِۦۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَرۡزُقُ
مَن يَشَآءُ بِغَيۡرِ حِسَابٖ ﴿٣٨﴾

[35-38] Allah[61] is the light of the heavens and the earth:[62] His light (in the universe) may be likened (to the light of) a lamp in a niche: the lamp is in a glass shade: the glass shade is like a glittering star and lamp is lit with the olive oil of a blessed tree[63] which is neither eastern nor western:[64] its oil is (so fine) as if it were going to shine forth by itself though no fire touched it (as though all the means of increasing) light upon light (were provided[65]); Allah guides to His light whomever He wills.[66] He cites parables to make the Message clear to the people; He has perfect knowledge of everything.[67] (Those who obtain guidance to His light are found) in the houses which He has enjoined to raise up and to mention His name therein.[68] In them such people glorify Him morning and evening as are not diverted by trade and merchandise from remembering Him and from establishing Salat and paying Zakat, for they fear the Day when the hearts will be overturned and the eyes will become petrified. (And they behave like this) so that Allah may reward them for their excellent deeds and, in addition to it, show His favor to them out of His bounty: Allah provides without stint[69] for anyone He pleases.



[39-40] (On the other hand,) the deeds of those who disbelieved,[70] maybe likened to a mirage in a waterless desert, which the thirsty one took for water; but when he reached there he found nothing to drink; nay, he found there Allah Who settled his full account, and Allah is very swift at reckoning.[71] Or (their efforts may be likened to those of a man trying to swim in) a deep dark ocean, covered with billows, one over the other, and above it a cloud: darkness upon darkness: so much so that if he stretches out his hand, he cannot see[72] it. There is no light for the one whom Allah does not give light.[73]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلطَّيْرُ صَٰٓفَّٰتٍ ۖ
كُلٌّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُۥ وَتَسْبِيحَهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٢﴾

[41-42] Do[74] you not observe that all those who are in the heavens and the earth, and the birds with outspread wings, glorify Allah ? Each one knows the mode of its prayer and glorification, and Allah has full knowledge of all they do. The kingdom of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah alone, and all shall have to return to Him.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُزْجِى سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُۥ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُۥ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى
ٱلْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَٰلِهِۦ وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مِن جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنۢ بَرَدٍ
فَيُصِيبُ بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُۥ عَن مَّن يَشَآءُ ۖ يَكَادُ سَنَا بَرْقِهِۦ يَذْهَبُ
بِٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿٤٣﴾

يُقَلِّبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَبْصَٰرِ ﴿٤٤﴾

[43-44] Do you not observe that Allah makes the cloud move gently then joins its pieces together: then gathers it into a mass of thick cloud: then you see that rain-drops fall down from its midst: and He sends down hail out of the high up mountains in the heaven:[75] then He smites with it whom He wills and turns it away from whom He pleases: then a flash of lightning from it dazzles the eyes. He alternates the day and the night: there is indeed a lesson in it for those who have observing eyes.

وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَآبَّةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِى عَلَىٰ بَطْنِهِۦ وَمِنْهُم مَّن
يَمْشِى عَلَىٰ رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِى عَلَىٰٓ أَرْبَعٍۚ يَخْلُقُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٥﴾

[45] And Allah created every creature from a sort of water: of them some one crawls upon its belly: another walks on two legs and still another on four; Allah creates whatever He wills for He has power over everything.

لَّقَدْ أَنزَلْنَآ ءَايَـٰتٍ مُّبَيِّنَـٰتٍۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ
﴿٤٦﴾

[46] We have sent down Revelations that make the reality quite plain; however, Allah guides to the straight path whomsoever He pleases.

وَيَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَبِٱلرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ
ذَٰلِكَۚ وَمَآ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَإِذَا دُعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ
﴿٤٨﴾

وَإِن يَكُن لَّهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ يَأْتُوٓاْ إِلَيْهِ مُذْعِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

أَفِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَمِ ٱرْتَابُوٓاْ أَمْ يَخَافُونَ أَن يَحِيفَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَرَسُولُهُۥ ۚ
بَلْ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

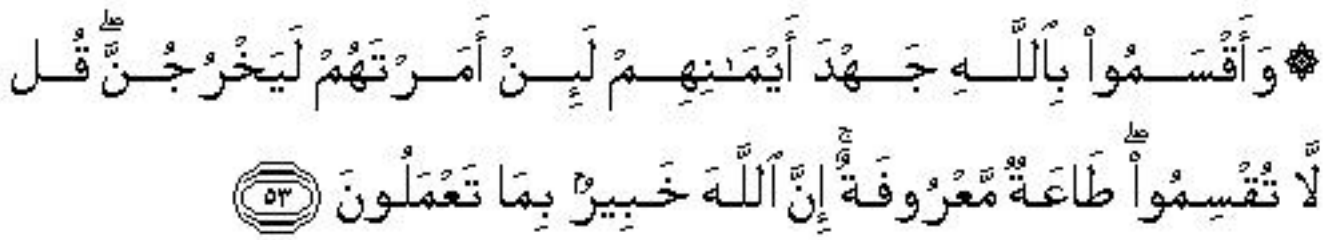
[47-50] These people say "We have believed in Allah and the Messenger and we have submitted"; but soon after this, some of them turn away (from obedience): such people are not true Believers.[76] When they are called to Allah and His Messenger so that the Messenger may judge between them,[77] a party of them turns away.[78] However, if the truth be on their side, they come towards the Messenger in all obedience.[79] Are their hearts afflicted with the disease (of hypocrisy)? Or, are they in doubt? Or, do they fear that Allah and His Messenger will be unjust to them? In fact, they themselves are unjust.[80]

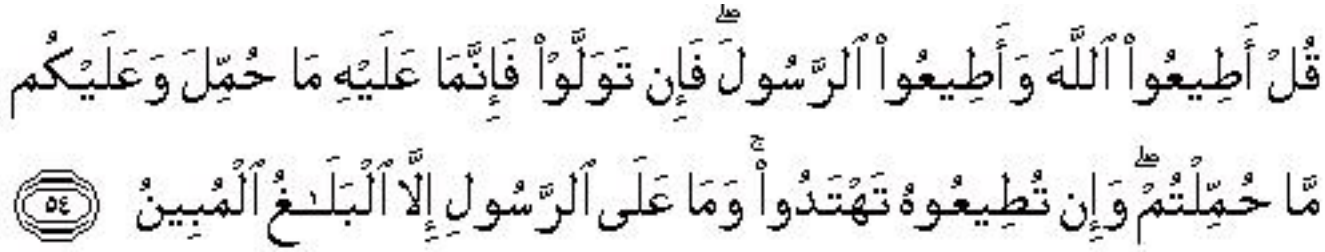
إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَن
يَقُولُواْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۚ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَخْشَ ٱللَّهَ وَيَتَّقْهِ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ

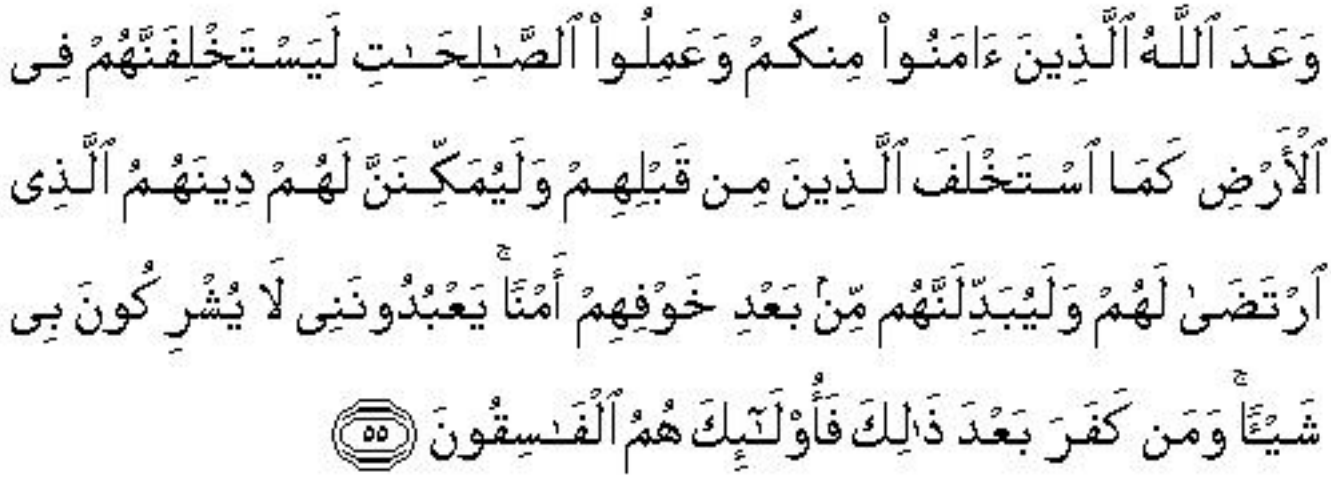
﴿٥٢﴾

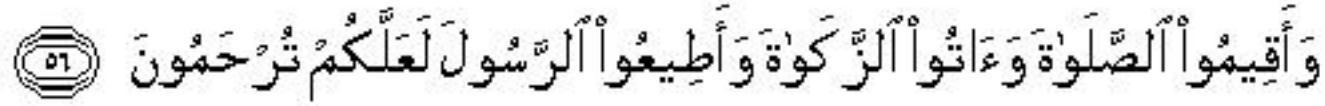
[51-52] As regards the Believers, when they are called towards Allah and His Messenger so that the Messenger may judge between them, they say, "We have heard and obeyed"; such are the people who attain true success, and only those attain true success who obey Allah and His Messenger and fear Allah and refrain from His disobedience.





[53-54] They (the hypocrites) solemnly swear by Allah and say, "If you order us, we will leave our homes." Say to them, "Do not swear oaths for your “obedience” is well known;[81] Allah is fully aware of what you are doing."[82] Say, "Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away, you should note it well that the Messenger is responsible for the duty entrusted to him and you are responsible for the duty entrusted to you. If you obey him, you will be rightly guided, for the responsibility of the Messenger is only to convey the Message clearly to you.





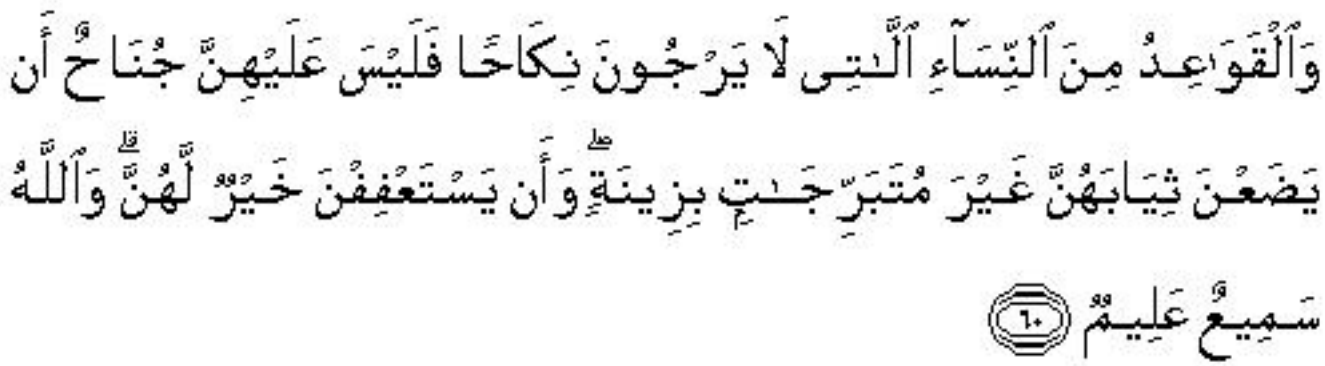
لَا تَحۡسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مُعۡجِزِينَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ وَمَأۡوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُۖ وَلَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ٥٧

[55-57] Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do righteous deeds, that He will make them successors in the land just as He made those who passed away before them, and that He will establish their religion, which He has approved for them, on strong foundations and will change their (present) state of fear into peace and security. Let them worship Me and associate none with Me;[83] and the one who disbelieves after this,"[84] shall be of those who are perverse transgressors. Therefore, establish Salat, pay the Zakat dues and obey the Messenger; it is expected that you will be shown mercy. Do not think about those who have disbelieved that they will be able to frustrate Allah in the land; their abode is Hell and it is a very evil abode.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لِيَسۡتَـٔۡذِنكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُكُمۡ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَمۡ يَبۡلُغُواْ ٱلۡحُلُمَ مِنكُمۡ ثَلَٰثَ مَرَّٰتٖۚ مِّن قَبۡلِ صَلَوٰةِ ٱلۡفَجۡرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظَّهِيرَةِ وَمِنۢ بَعۡدِ صَلَوٰةِ ٱلۡعِشَآءِۚ ثَلَٰثُ عَوۡرَٰتٖ لَّكُمۡۚ لَيۡسَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَلَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ جُنَاحُۢ بَعۡدَهُنَّۚ طَوَّٰفُونَ عَلَيۡكُم بَعۡضُكُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ ٥٨

وَإِذَا بَلَغَ ٱلۡأَطۡفَٰلُ مِنكُمُ ٱلۡحُلُمَ فَلۡيَسۡتَـٔۡذِنُواْ كَمَا ٱسۡتَـٔۡذَنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ ٥٩

[58-59] O Believers,[85] your slaves[86] and those of your children, who have not yet become sex conscious,[87] must ask your permission before coming in to see you on three occasions: before the Fajr Prayer and at noon when you put off your clothes and after the `Isha' Prayer. These are your three times of privacy.[88] There is no sin for you or for them[89] if they come without permission at other times than these, for you have to visit one another over and over again.[90] In this way Allah makes His Commandments clear to you for He is All-Knowing, All-Wise. And when your children have grown sex conscious,[91] they should receive your permission for this just as their elders get permission. In this way Allah makes His Revelations plain to you for He is All-Knowing, All Wise.



[60] There is no sin for such elderly women as are past the age of marriage,[92] if they lay aside their outer garments[93] provided that they do not mean to display their adornment.[94] Nevertheless, if they behave modestly, it would be better for them: for Allah hears everything and knows everything.

لَّيْسَ عَلَى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ
وَلَا عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَن تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِنۢ بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ ءَابَآئِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ إِخْوَٰنِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخَوَٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَعْمَٰمِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ عَمَّٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخْوَٰلِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ خَٰلَٰتِكُمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكْتُم
مَّفَاتِحَهُۥٓ أَوْ صَدِيقِكُمْ ۚ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَأْكُلُوا۟ جَمِيعًا أَوْ أَشْتَاتًا ۚ
فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُم بُيُوتًا فَسَلِّمُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً مِّنْ عِندِ
ٱللَّهِ مُبَٰرَكَةً طَيِّبَةً ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

[61] There is no harm if a blind or a lame or a sick person (takes a meal at another's house): nor is there any harm for yourselves if you take meals at your own houses or at the houses of your fathers and grandfathers or at the houses of your mothers and grandmothers or at your brothers' houses or at your sisters' houses or at the houses of your paternal uncles or at the houses of your paternal aunts or at the houses of your maternal uncles or at the houses of your maternal aunts or from the houses whose keys are in your possession or at the houses of your friends.[95] There is no harm if you take your meals together or separately;[96] however, when you enter the houses, you should send greetings of peace on your people, for the prayer of greetings prescribed by Allah is blessed and pure. Thus Allah makes His Revelation's clear to you. It is expected that you will use your common sense to grasp these.

إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَإِذَا كَانُوا۟
مَعَهُۥ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرٍ جَامِعٍ لَّمْ يَذْهَبُوا۟ حَتَّىٰ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُوهُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَسْتَـْٔذِنُونَكَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۚ فَإِذَا ٱسْتَـْٔذَنُوكَ
لِبَعْضِ شَأْنِهِمْ فَأْذَن لِّمَن شِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمُ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

[62] True Believers[97] are those who sincerely believe in Allah and His Messenger and who do not leave him without permission when they are with the Messenger for some common good;[98] only those who ask your permission sincerely believe in Allah and His Messenger. Therefore, when they ask your permission for a private business,[99] you may give permission to whomever you like,[100] and ask Allah's forgiveness for such people.[101] Allah is indeed Forgiving and Merciful.

لَّا تَجْعَلُوا۟ دُعَآءَ ٱلرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَآءِ بَعْضِكُم بَعْضًا ۚ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ
ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ مِنكُمْ لِوَاذًا ۚ فَلْيَحْذَرِ ٱلَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِۦٓ أَن
تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

أَلَآ إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ مَآ أَنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَيَوْمَ
يُرْجَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٤﴾

[63-64] O Believers, do not consider the summoning by the Messenger like the summoning among you by one

another.[102] Allah knows well those of you who steal away, concealing themselves behind others.[103] Let those who disobey the order of the Messenger beware lest they should be involved in some affliction,[104] or are visited by a woeful scourge. Beware! whatever is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah. He knows whatever you are doing. On the Day you shall return to Him, He will let you know what you have . done: He has full knowledge of everything.

1In all these sentences the emphasis is on "We", which implies that it is Allah Who has revealed this and none else; therefore, "You should not treat these instructions lightly like the word of an ordinary preacher. You should note it well that these have been sent down by One Who controls your lives and destinies and from Whom you can never escape even after your death.

The second sentence emphasizes that the instructions sent down in this Surah are not of the nature of advice which you may accept or reject at will. These are mandatory Commandments which must be obeyed. If you are a believer and a true Muslim you are obliged to act upon them.

The third sentence states that the instructions given in this Surah are free front any ambiguity and are couched in clear and plain words. Therefore, you cannot put up the excuse that you could not act upon them as you did not understand them.

This is the 'Preamble' of this blessed Message after which the specific Commandments follow. The cone of the preamble itself indicates the great importance which Allah has attached to the Commandments contained in Surah An-Nur. The preamble of no other Surah containing Commandments is so forceful as this.

2There are various legal, moral and historical aspects of this problem which need explanation, for if these are not clarified in detail, the modern man will find it difficult to understand the Divine Law concerning it. Accordingly, we shall discuss the various aspects of the problem below:

(1) The common meaning of zinc which everyone knows is: "Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman without the legal relationship of husband and wife existing between them." There has been complete unanimity of view among all the social systems from the earliest times to this day that this act is morally wicked, religiously sinful and socially evil and objectionable, and there has been no dissenting voice except from those stray individuals who have subordinated their moral sense to their lust, or who in their misguided notions try to be "original" and "philosophical" in their approach. The universal unanimity of view in this respect is due to the fact that man by nature abhors zinc. In fact, the future of human race and civilization depends on this that the relationship between the husband and wife should be built upon the basis of an enduring and everlasting bond of fidelity, which should not only be fully recognized in the social life but should also be guaranteed by the existing social structure. Without this the human race cannot survive. This is because the human child requires years of tender care and training for as survival and development and a woman alone cannot bear the burden without the cooperation of the man who became the cause of the birth of the child. Similarly

human civilization itself is the product of the corporate life of a man and a woman, their setting up a home, bringing up a family, and establishing mutual relationships and inter-connections between families. If men and women were to lose sight of this essential fact, that is, the establishment of a home and raising a family, and were to meet freely just for pleasure and lust, the entire structure of human society would crumble. In fact, the very foundations on which the structure of human civilization and culture has been built will topple down and the whole basis of the concept of a social life will disappear. It is for these reasons that free mixing of men and women, without any recognized and stable bonds of fidelity, is abhorrent to human nature, and it is for this reason that in every age zina has been considered as a moral evil and, in religious terminology, a grave sin. Accordingly, the social systems in every age recognized and adopted the institution of marriage and also adopted preventive measures against adultery or fornication. The forms of the measures adopted in this direction have, however, differed under different social, cultural and religious systems. This difference has been the result of the realization of the disastrous effects of adultery (or fornication) in varying degrees: some societies have considered it to be more heinous than others, and some have conceived it clearly and some others not so clearly and confused it with other problems.

(2) Though adultery (or fornication) has always been accepted as an evil, opinion has differed as to whether it is legally a punishable offense or not, and this is where Islam differs from other religions and systems of law. Social systems which have been akin to human nature have always considered illicit intercourse between man and woman a serious crime and prescribed severe punishments for it. But with the deterioration in moral standards, this morality grew weaker and weaker and the attitude towards this crime became more and more tolerant.

The first common lapse in this connection was caused by the invidious distinction between fornication and adultery. The former as such was taken as an ordinary offense while the latter only was held as a punishable crime.

Zina, as defined under various laws, means "sexual intercourse between a man (whether married or bachelor) and a woman, who is not the wife of anybody." This definition takes into account the position of the woman rather than of the man. If a woman is without a husband, the illicit intercourse with her amounts to fornication irrespective of the fact whether the man is married or not. The ancient laws of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria and India provided very light punishments for it, and the same were adopted by the Greeks and the Romans,which finally influenced the Jewish attitude. According to the Bible, only monetary compensation is payable for such an offense. The Commandment on the subject is as follows:

"And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins." (Exod. 22: 16,17)

The same Commandment is repeated in different words in Deuteronorny, which is as below:

"If a man finds a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with, and they be found; Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver (about fifty-five rupees), and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her." (Deut. 22: 28, 29).

Under the Jewish law, if a priest's daughter acts immorally, she is to be sentenced to burning and the man with whom she was alleged to have acted immorally was to suffer strangulation. (Everyman's Talmud, pp. 319, 320).

To judge the extent to which this conception resembles that of the Hindus, it will be worthwhile to compare it with the laws of Manu. According to him, "Anybody who commits illicit intercourse with an unmarried girl. of his own caste with her consent does not deserve any punishment. If the father of the girl is willing, the man should compensate him and marry the girl. But if the girl happens to belong to a higher caste and the man belongs to a lower caste, the girl should be turned out from her parents' house and the limbs of the man should be cut off." (Adhiai 8. Ashlok 365, 366). This punishment may be changed into burning him alive, if the girl happens to be a Brahman. (Ashlok 377).

Under all these laws, illicit intercourse with a married woman only was the real and major crime. The deciding factor for treating it as a crime was not the illicit relationship between the man and the woman but the likelihood of an awkward situation under which a child might have to be reared up by a man (the real husband of the woman), who was not its father. It was therefore not the act of zinc itself but the danger of the mixing up of progenies and the problem of rearing up somebody else's child at the expense of another and a possibility of its inheriting his property, that was the :eat basis of treating it as a crime and holding both the man and the woman as criminals. Under the Egyptian law, the man was to receive a severe beating with sticks and the nose of the woman was to be cut off. Similar punishments existed in Babylon, Assyria and Iran. According to the Hindus, the woman was to be thrown to the dogs to be torn apart and the man was to be put on a hot iron bed with fire all around him to burn him alive. At first the Greek and the Roman laws gave a man the right to kill his wife if he found her involved in adultery. He had also the option to demand monetary compensation. In the first century B.C. Augustus Caesar enacted that half the property of the man should be confiscated and he should be exiled. In case of the woman, half her dowry should be written off and one-third of her assets confiscated, and she should also be sent out to a distant part of the country. Constantine changed this law and imposed death penalty both for the tnan and for the woman. In the times of Leo and Marcian, this punishment was changed to imprisonment for life. Justinian further reduced the punishment and ordered that the woman should be flogged with stripes and sent to a monastery and the husband should be given the right to take her out within two years if he liked, otherwise she was to remain there for ever. Under the Jewish law, the orders for illicit intercourse with a married woman are as under:

"And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bond maid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her, she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free." (Leviticus 19: 20).

"And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death." (Leviticus 20: 10).

"lf a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel." (Deuteronorny 22: 22).

"If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city, and the man, because he had humbled his neighbor's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you. But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the Held, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the matt only that lay with her shall die: But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbor, and slayeth him, even so is this matter." (Deuteronorny 22: 23-26).

However, long before the advent of Christ, the Jewish jurists and scholars, the rich and the poor, had practically ceased to observe these laws. Though it was written in the Old Testament, and it was considered as a Divine Commandment, nobody was inclined to apply it practically; in the entire Jewish history, there is not a single instance where this commandment was ever enforced. When Jesus Christ embarked upon his prophetic mission, and invited the people to the eternal truth, the learned Jews, seeing that there was no way to stop the tide, brought a woman guilty of adultery before him and asked him to decide her case. (John 8: 111). Their object was to create a dilemma for Christ and to tempt and embarrass him. If he decided in favour of any punishment other than stoning, they would vilify him saying, "Here comes a strange Prophet who has changed the Divine Law for the sake of worldly considerations." And if he were to give the verdict of stoning, this would, on the one hand, bring him in direct clash with the Ron Ziad law, and on the other, give them the opportunity to tell the people, "Look! What you believe in a Prophet who will expose you to all the severities of the Torah? But Jesus turned the tables on them with one sentence, saying: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. " This put the jurists to shame and they departed one by one in humiliation, and the moral degeneration of the learned in law was totally exposed. When the woman was left alone, Jesus admonished her and after her repentance let her go. Jesus did this because he was neither a judge of any court competent to decide the case, nor any evidence had been produced against her, nor was there any government to enforce the Divine Law.

On the basis of this incident and some miscellaneous sayings of Jesus on different occasions, the Christians formed an utterly erroneous conception about the crime of zina. According to them, illicit intercourse between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman is a sin but not a punishable offence. But if either of them (or both) is married, adultery is treated as a crime. It is so not because of the illicit intercourse as such but because of the vow of fidelity taken by each of them before the priest at the altar. Nevertheless, there is no punishment even for this, except that the wife has the right to sue

her adulterous husband and claim separation for having violated the vow of fidelity. On the other side, the husband of the adulterous woman can also sue his wife for separation and can also claim compensation from the man who had illicit intercourse with his wife. This is the punishment in the Christian law for adultery. The irony is that even this punishment is a double-edged sword, because a woman, though entitled to separation from her husband by proving his infidelity and getting rid of him cannot remarry under the Christian law. Similarly the husband who sues his wife for infidelity can obtain judicial separation, but cannot remarry. Both the man and the woman who accuse each other of infidelity in a Christian court, will be deprived of the right of remarriage for the rest of their lives.

The Western laws of the modem times, which have also been adopted by the Muslims in various countries, are based on such conceptions. According to them, zina may be an evil, and an immoral and sinful thing, but it is not a crime. It becomes a crime only when illicit intercourse is committed without the consent of the other party. As for adultery by a married man, this only provides a cause for complaint to his wife who may, if she likes, prove it and get a divorce. Similarly in the case of an adulteress, her husband can lodge a complaint against her and also against the man with whom adultery was committed and can sue both of them to claim divorce from the woman and monetary compensation from the man.

(3) The Islamic Law, in contrast to all these conceptions, holds zina as a punishable crime and its committal by the married person enhances the guilt all the more. This is not so because of the violation of the oath of fidelity taken by the man or the woman nor because of the encroachment on the conjugal rights of the other, but because the criminal resorted to an unlawful method when there existed a lawful method for satisfying his sex desires. The Islamic Law views zina as an act which, if allowed to be indulged in freely, will strike at the very roots of both human race and human civilization. In the interest of the preservation of the human race and the stability of human civilization, it is imperative that relationship between man and woman should be regulated only through lawful and reliable means. And it is not possible to restrain this relationship if opportunities for free mixing of the sexes are allowed to exist, for it cannot be expected from a man or a woman to be prepared to bear the onerous responsibilities of the family life if he or she has the opportunities for the gratification of the sex desires without this. For in that case it will be as meaningless as buying a ticket for a railway journey when people can travel without a ticket as well. A ticket is essential only when travelling without a ticket is declared to be an offense. If somebody is found traveling without a ticket because he cannot afford to buy it, he is a criminal though in a lesser degree. But if a rich man resorts to this, his guilt becomes all the more serious.

(4) Islam dces not rely on punitive law alone for saving humanity from the menace of zina. It employs both reformatory and prohibitory measures on a large scale. It has provided legal punishment only as a last resort. Islam does not want that the people should go on committing this crime and getting flogged with stripes day and night. Its real aim is that the people should not commit this crime at all and there should be no occasion to resort to the extreme punishment. For this purpose Islam first of all purifies man: it imbues him with the fear of All-Powerful and All-Knowing Allah: it inculcates in him the sense of accountability for his actions in the Hereafter from which even death cannot release him.

It fills him with obligation of obedience to Divine Law which is sure to follow true Faith. Then, it repeatedly warns him that zina and unchastity are heinous crimes, which Allah will call to account with a severe reckoning. This theme occurs again and again in the Qur'an. Moreover, Islam provides all possible facilities for a man to marry. if he is not satisfied with one wife, he is allowed to take up to four. If the husband and the wife cannot pull on amicably, there are provisions for separation. In case of a dispute between the two, provision exists for reconciliation through the intervention of the members of the family and failing that through the judicial courts so that they should either reconcile or separate and then remarry wherever they like. All this has been explained in Surahs AIBaqarah, An-Nisa and At-Talaq. In this Surah too, it is not considered good and right to remain unmarried and a clear Commandment has been given that marriages should be arranged between unmarried persons and even slaves (men and women) should not be allowed to remain unmarried. Then Islam puts an end to all those factors which allure a man to zina or provide occasions for it. A year before the punishment for zina was prescribed, women were commanded (in Surah Al-Ahzab) to cover themselves with sheets and lower their head-covers over their faces when going out of their houses. The wives of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him), who were a model for every Muslim family, were ordered to restrict themselves to their houses with decorum and dignity and not to display their charms and adornments. Moreover, they were required to communicate with men from behind the curtain if there be any need for that. This was a model which was followed by all the believing women who considered the Prophet's wives and daughters patterns of virtue and not the immodest women of the age of 'ignorance'. Similarly, the free mixing of the men and women was discouraged before it was declared as a criminal offense and women were prohibited from going out openly in make-up.

After adopting such measures zina was declared to be a punishable offense and spreading of indecency in any way was also prohibited. Prostitution was legally banned and severe punishment was prescribed for charging men and women with adultery and propagating it without proof. Men were enjoined to restrain their gaze so that unrestricted feasting of eyes should not lead to lust for beauty and further on to illicit love. At the same time women were also enjoined to differentiate between mahram and non-mahram relatives.' This enables one to understand the entire scheme of reform, a constituent part of which is the prescribed punishment for zina. This extreme punishment is for those incorrigible persons who persist in resorting to the illegal course for the gratification of their sex desires in spite of all the treasures adopted to reform the individual and society. They certainly deserve to be flogged. Punishment of a wicked person serves as a, psychological deterrent for those who have similar tendencies.

Mahram relatives are those between whom marriage is not permissible under the Islamic Law, e.g. father and daughter, uncle and niece, nephew and aunt, and so on. Non-mahram are those between whom marriage is permissible e.g. cousins, etc. punishment is not merely a punishment for the criminal but is a declaration of the policy that the Islamic society has no room for debauchery and people cannot be allowed to live lives of indulgence and pleasures without restraint. If one tries to understand the Islamic scheme of reform from this point bf view, one will realize that not a single part of the law can either be dispensed with or amended. Only a tool who assumes the role of a self-styled reformer, without understanding this Divine Law, will ever think of changing it, or a mischievous

person, who deliberately wants to alter the very object of the social order designed by Allah, will try to tamper with it.

(5) Zina was declared a culpable act in the third year of Hijrah, but, it was not a "legal" crime at that time; as such the police and the courts were not competent to initiate legal proceedings. It was considered as a social crime against the institution of family. Accordingly the members of the family themselves were competent to punish the accused. The Commandment at that time was that if four men should bear witness to having seen a man and a woman committing zina, both the culprits should get a beating and the woman should be imprisoned in the house. But at the same time there was a suggestion that this Commandment would apply till further orders and that the real law was yet to follow. (See 1V: 15). After about two to three years the present Commandment was revealed which canceled the previous Commandment and declared zina to be a cognizable offense.

(6) The punishment prescribed in this verse (2) is for sexual intercourse between unmarried persons; it does not apply to illicit intercourse after marriage, which is a much graver offense under the Islamic Law. This thing is implied in verses 15 and 25 of An-Nisa (IV}that the punishment being prescribed is for the unmarried offenders:

"If any of your women are guilty of indecency, call four witnesses from among yourselves to testify this. If they give evidence and prove the guilt, then confine them to their houses until death comes to them, or Allah opens some other way out for them." (IV: 15). "Whoso cannot afford to marry free Muslim women, he should marry one of the Muslim slave-girls in your possession; Allah has full knowledge of your Faith. You all belong to one and the same Community; therefore you may marry them with the permission of their guardians and give them their dowries so that they may live a decent life in wedlock and not in licentiousness nor may have secret illicit relations. Then if they are guilty of indecency, after they have been fortified by wedlock, they shall be given half the punishment prescribed for free women." (IV: 25).

Verse 15 held out a hope that Allah would open some other way out for those adulterous women who were to be imprisoned according to the Commandment contained in it. Thus, the Commandment in verse 2 of this Surah is the same which was promised in IV: 15. Then in IV: 25 the punishment for a married slave-girl guilty of adultery has been prescribed. The word muhsanat has been used twice in the same verse in the same context and one will have to concede that it has been used in the same sense at both the places. Now let us consider the sentence: "Whoso cannot afford to marry free Muslim women (muhsanat).... " Obviously a muhsanah cannot mean a married woman; it can only mean an unmarried woman of a free family. Then at the end of the verse it has been enjoined that if a slave woman commits adultery after her marriage, she should be given half the punishment prescribed for a free unmarried woman. The context clearly indicates that in this sentence the word muhsanat has the same meaning as in the first sentence, i.e. an unmarried woman, who enjoys the protection of a free family. Thus it is concluded from these two verses of An-Nisa that the Commandment contained in this verse of An-Nur is the same that was promised in v. 15 of An-Nisa and it prescribes punishment for sexual intercourse between unmarried persons. (Also see E. N. 46 of An-Nisa).

(7) As regards the punishment for adultery after marriage, the Qur'an does not mention it, but it has been prescribed in the Traditions. We learn from many authentic Traditions that not only did the Holy Prophet prescribe the punishment of stoning to death for it verbally but also enforced it practically in several cases. Then after him his successors not only enforced this punishment during their caliphates but also declared repeatedly that this was the legal punishment. The Companions and their followers were unanimous on this point and there is not a single saying of anyone to suggest that anybody doubted the authenticity of this law during that period. After them the jurists of all ages and countries have been unanimous that this is the legal punishment prescribed by the Sunnah, for there have been so many strong and continuous proofs of its authenticity that no scholar can refute them. In the entire history of the Muslims nobody ever denied this except the Kharijites and some Mu'tazilites and even they did not deny it on the ground that there was some weakness in the proof of its having been enjoined by the Holy Prophet, but because they considered it to be "against the Qur'an". This was, however, due to their lack of understanding the Qur'an. They argued that by using the words AZ zani waz-zaniyatu in their general sense the Qur'an has prescribed a punishment of one hundred stripes for this crime. Therefore, according to them, the only punishment for adultery (or fornication) prescribed in the Qur'an was this, and to prescribe a different punishment for the married persons who committed adultery would be against the Divine Law. But they forgot that the explanation of the Qur'anic verses by the Holy Prophet carries the same weight and authority in law as the words of the Qur'an itself, provided that the explanation is proved to be from the Holy Prophet. The Qur'an has used As-sariqu was-sariqatu in similar general terms and prescribed the punishment of amputation of hands for the thief, both male and female. Now if this Commandment were to be interpreted literally without the limitations authentically emanating from the Holy Prophet, the generality of the words used would demand that every man or woman, who steals a needle or a plum, should be declared to be a thief and his or her hand cut off from the shoulder. On the other hand, if a thief, who has stolen a million rupees, declares on his arrest that he has reformed himself and has repented of theft, he should be let off in accordance with: "But whoso repents after his iniquity and reforms himself, Allah will surely turn towards him with His favour." (IV: 39).

Likewise the Qur'an forbids marriage only with a foster mother and a foster sister. According to their argument, such a ban should not apply to a foster daughter. The Qur'an forbids a person to keep two sisters as wives at one and the same time; therefore if a person keeps the aunt (paternal or maternal) and her niece together as wives, he should not be charged with violating the Qur'anic injunction. Again, the Qur'an forbids marriage with a step-daughter only when she has been brought up ' in the house of her step-father; therefore, according to their way of reasoning, the absolute prohibition of marriage with a step-daughter should be regarded as against the Qur'an. Similarly the Qur'an allows mortgage only when a man is on a journey and nobody is available to prepare the loan documents; therefore if a person is at home and a scribe is also available, mortgage should be regarded as un-Qur'anic. Then, the Qur'an enjoins in general terms: "You should have witnesses whenever you buy or sell goods." Therefore, according to them, all sales and purchases taking place in the markets without witnesses should be unlawful.

These few instances should suffice to prove the error in the reasoning of those who hold the Commandment of stoning to death as against the Qur'an. Nobody can deny the position and authority

of the Prophet in the legal system of Islam. It is he alone who can explain the underlying intention of a Divine Command, its procedures and in what cases it will be applicable and in what there is another injunction. To deny this position and authority of the Prophet is not only against the principles of Islam but it also entails innumerable complications in practice.

(8) There is a difference of opinion among the jurists about the legal definition of .zina. According to the Hanafis, it means frontal sexual intercourse of a man with a woman who is neither his wife nor his bondwoman, nor is there any valid reason to believe that the sexual act was committed under the misapprehension that the woman was his own wife or his own Bondwoman According to this definition, sexual act with a woman in the rectum, or sodomy, or sex gratification with animals, does not constitute zina. It is confined only to the frontal sexual intercourse with a woman without any legal right or any doubt thereof. According to the Shafi`is, zina means insertion of the male sexual organ into the female sexual part, which though forbidden by law may be quite natural: According to the Malikis, zina means the entry of the male sexual organ into the frontal sexual part, or in the rectum of a woman or man, without legal right or any doubt about its being legal. According to these two definitions, sodomy also will be included in zina. The correct position, however, is that these definitions are removed from the common meaning of zina. The Qur'an always employs words in their ordinary meaning and according to their common usage, unless it uses a certain word as a term. In such a case the Qur'an itself makes plain the particular sense of the term. In the context in which the word zina occurs, there is no indication that it has been used in any particular sense. Accordingly the word will have to be taken in the sense in which it is commonly understood. It is, therefore, confined to an illicit intercourse with a woman in the natural way and does not extend to other forms of sexual gratification. Besides, it is well known that there was a difference of opinion about the punishment for sodomy among the Companions of the Holy Prophet. Had sodomy been included in zina according to the Islamic terminology, there would have been no occasion for such a difference of opinion.

(9) Penetration of the glans of the penis is a sufficient legal ground for punishing the act of Zina. It is not essential that the penetration should be full or the sexual intercourse should be complete. On the other hand, if there is no penetration of the glans of the penis, mere lying of the couple in the same bed or their caressing each other or their being found naked, is not a sufficient ground for declaring them to be guilty of Zina; so much so that the Islamic Law does not bother to get the couple medically examined to establish their guilt of illicit sexual intercourse and then to get them punished according to the law. Those who are found in such an indecent condition are offenders and punishable according to the circumstances. The competent authority to determine the nature of the punishment is either a court or the legislature of the Islamic State. If the punishment is to be given in the form of flogging with stripes, it should not exceed ten stripes as specified in a Tradition: "Except in cases where a specific punishment has been prescribed by Allah, none should be flogged with more than ten stripes for any offense." (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud). However, if a person is not caught red-handed but confesses his guilt himself, he should only be admonished to repent. According to a Tradition reported by `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, a man came to the Holy Prophet and said, "I did everything with a woman except the sexual intercourse, outside the city. Now you may give me any punishment you may deem fit." Hadrat `Umar said, "When Allah had concealed it, you also should have kept it

concealed." The Holy Prophet, however, remained silent and the man went away. Then the Holy Prophet called him back and recited 'the following verse to him:

"Establish salat the two ends of the day and in early part of the night; indeed virtues remove evils." (XI: 114) At this a man asked, "Does the Commandment apply to him alone?" The Holy Prophet replied: " No, it is for all." (Muslim, Tirmizi, Abu Da'ud, Nasa`i).

Not only this: The Islamic Law does not permit that in cases where a man confesses his guilt without specifying his offense, any investigation be made to find out what the actual offense was. A man came to the Holy Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I deserve the prescribed punishment, so enforce the punishment on me." The Holy Prophet did not ask him what punishment he deserved. After the man had offered his prayers, he again came and said, "I am guilty: please punish me." The Holy Prophet asked: "Have you not offered your prayer with us?" When he replied in the affirmative, the Holy Prophet said: "Well Allah has pardoned your sin." (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad).

(10) The mere fact that a person (man or woman) has committed zina, is not enough to declare him guilty of it. For this there are certain conditions which must be satisfied. These conditions are different for fornication and for adultery. In the case of fornication, the offender should be of age and possessing normal common sense. If a child or a lunatic is guilty of it he does not incur the punishment prescribed for zina. In the case of adultery, there are some additional conditions which are as under:

(a) There is unanimity of opinion that the offender must be a free person and not a slave. The Qur'an itself has indicated that a slave shall not be stoned to death on the charge of zina. As has already been stated, a slave-girl, if found guilty of adultery after marriage, shall get half the punishment prescribed for -a free unmarried woman. The jurists are agreed that the same Qur'anic Law will apply to a slave.

(b) The criminal must be a legally married person. This condition has also the unanimous support of all the jurists. According to this condition, a man who has had sexual intercourse with a stave-girl, or whose marriage was performed in an illegal manner, will not be treated as married and shall not be stoned to death but will be flogged with stripes if he commits zina.

(c) Such a person should not only have been legally married but must have had.sexual intercourse with his wife after marriage. The mere ceremony of marriage does not entitle a man or a woman to be regarded as a muhsin or a muhsanah and be stoned to death in case of zina. Most of the jurists are agreed on this condition. However, Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Muhammad have added a supplementary condition to the effect that a man or a woman will be treated as married only when he or she is a free person and is of age and possesses normal common sense at the time of marriage and sexual intercourse. According to this supplementary condition, if a man is married to a slave-girl, or to a minor or mad girl, and even has had sexual intercourse with her, he will not be punishable by stoning to death if found guilty of zina. The same applies to the case of a woman who may have had intercourse with a slave or a mad or immature husband. She will not be stoned to death if found guilty

of zina. This is a very reasonable addition by these two far-sighted scholars.

(d) The criminal should be a Muslim. But Imam Shafi`i, Imam Abu Yusuf and Imam Ahmad have disputed this. According to them, even if a non-Muslim married person, who is a protege of the Islamic State, is found guilty of zina, he will be stoned to death. But Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Malik have concurred that the punishment of stoning to death for adultery after marriage, applies only to the Muslims. The most weighty argument advanced in this connection is that a man, who is to be given the extreme punishment of stoning to death, should be the one who, in spite of enjoying the complete state of ihsan dces not refrain from committing adultery. The Arabic word ihsan means "moral fortification," which has three essential components. First, the man should be a believer in Allah and in the accountability after death and should owe allegiance to Divine Law. Second, he should be a free member of society and not a slave of somebody, which might hinder him from satisfying his desires in a lawful manner, and his helplessness and indigence should make him commit a sin when there is no family to help him in protecting his morality and honour. Third, he should be married and should have the means of statisfying his sex desires lawfully. Where these three components exist, the moral fortification would be complete and anybody who breaks through these three fortifications for the sake of illicit sex gratification, would really deserve the extreme penalty of being stoned to death. But in a case where the very first and foremost component of belief in Allah, in the Hereafter and in Divine Law, dces not exist, the fortification is not complete, and accordingly, the gravity of the guilt is not such as to entail the extreme punishment. This is supported by a Tradition related by Ibn `Umar and cited by Ishaq bin Rahaviah in his Musnad and Daraqutni in his Sunan: "Whoever is guilty of shirk, he is not muhsan (morally fortified)". There is, however, a difference of opinion whether Ibn `Umar has quoted this as a saying of the Holy Prophet or as his own verdict. In spite of this lacuna, the principle is very strong and sound in its theme.

It will not be correct to counteract the above argument by a deduction from the case brought by the Jews to the Holy Prophet in which he ordered the stoning of a person guilty of zina. This is because all the authentic reports about the case show that it was not the Islamic Law of the land which was applied, but the punishment was awarded on the basis of the Jewish personal law itself. According to a Tradition cited by both Bukhari and Muslim, when this case was brought before the Holy Prophet, he asked: "What is the punishment for this offence in your Torah?" When it was confirmed that the Torah prescribed stoning, the Holy Prophet said: "I pass the same judgment as has been prescribed in the Torah." According to another Tradition, at the time of the judgment the Holy Prophet remarked: "O Allah, I am the first man to revive Thy Commandment which they (the Jews) had rendered null and void." (Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Ahmad).

(11) In order to hold a person guilty of Zina as punishable, it is necessary to prove that he committed the act of his own free will . If a person is forced to commit the act under compulsion or pressure, he or she is neither an offender nor liable to any punishment. This is not only based on the general principle of the Shari`ah that a person cannot be held responsible for acts done under compulsion, but this is also in accordance with the Qur'anic Law. In the subsequent verses of this Surah the Qur'an proclaims pardon for those women who are forced into prostitution. It has also been made clear in the various Traditions that in a case of rape only the man was punished and the woman, who had been

violated, was let off. According to a Tradition cited by Tirmizi and Abu Da'ud, a woman went out in darkness for prayers when on the way she was overpowered by a man and raped. She raised a hue and cry and the adulterer was caught red-handed and stoned to death by the order of the Holy Prophet, but the woman was let off.According to a Tradition in Bukhari, a man raped a girl, during the Caliphate of Hadrat 'Umar, who had the man flogged with stripes and let the girl off. It is clear from these instances that there is unanimity of opinion about the law in regard to the case of a woman raped or forced into prostitution. However, there is a difference of opinion in respect of the man who commits the act under compulsion and coercion. Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad, Imam Shafi`i and Imam Hasan bin Salih express the opinion that the man too, who is forced to commit zina under pressure, will be pardoned. Imam Zufar is of the opinion that he will not be let off because the act of zina could not have been performed unless the male organ was fully excited, which means that his own lust and sex desire had urged him to commit the act. Imam Abu Hanifah says that if the act is done under coercion, of the government or any of its officials, the man will not be punished because when the government itself compels a man to commit it, it has no right to punish him. But if somebody else compels him to it, the adulterer will be punished because he could not have committed this without his own desire for it, as sexual lust cannot be aroused by coercion. Of the three opinions, the first one is convincing. This is because even if erection of the male organ is a proof of the sexual urge of the man, it is not necessarily a proof of his willing participation- in the act. Suppose, for example, that a tyrant imprisons a simple God-fearing man and puts a beautiful young woman stripped naked in the same cell and does not want to release him until he commits zina and the tyrant brings four witnesses to prove it in the court, it will not be justice to stone them to death or flog them with stripes in utter disregard of the circumstances. This is because there is a probability that circumstances may be created whereby sexual desire tray overpower a man even though he may not be a willing partner. Supposing a man were imprisoned and not given anything to drink except wine; then if he drinks it, will he be punished simply because not a single drop of wine could have gone down his throat if he did not intend it, even though he was forced by the circumstances to drink it? For in order to establish a guilt, mere existence of intention is not enough, but it is also necessary to see that the person was in a position to exercise his free will. Therefore, if a person is placed in such circumstances that he is compelled to commit a crime, he will not be a real culprit in some cases, and in some his offence will be very light.

(12) The Islamic Law does not confer on anybody the authority except the government to sit in judgment against the man or the woman accused of 'zina and none except an Islamic court has the authority to punish them. There is a complete consensus of all the jurists that in verse 2 the Commandment, "flog them with stripes", is not addressed to the common people but to the officials and judges of an Islamic government. There is, however, a difference of opinion whether the owner of a slave is competent to punish him or not. According to the Hanafi scholars, he is not, but according to the Shafi is he is. The Malikis hold that the owner has no right to cut the hand in case of theft, but in case of zina, calumny and drinking of wine, he can enforce the prescribed punishments.

(13) Under the Islamic Law the punishment for Zina is a part of the law of the land. Accordingly it will apply to all people in the Islamic State whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. Probably none of the jurists except Imam Malik has differed with this opinion. As regards the opinion of Imam Abu

Hanifah that a non-Muslim guilty of zina should not be stoned to death, it is not based on the reason that a non-Muslim is not a complete muhsin, which is one of the conditions of stoning for Zina, for this condition is not satisfied unless one is a Muslim. On the other hand, Imam Malik says that a non-Muslim should not be stoned to death because the Commandment is a part of the Muslim personal law and the addressees are the Muslims and not the non-Muslims. As for the foreigner who has entered an Islamic State with due permission and is found guilty of Zina, he should also be stoned according to Imam Shafi`i and Imam Abu Yusuf, but according to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Muhammad he cannot be given the prescribed punishment.

(14) The Islamic Law does not make it obligatory that a person must confess his guilt of zina, or those who have knowledge of it must inform the authorities about it. But in case his guilt comes to the notice of the authorities, there is then no room for pardoning the guilt. This is based on a Tradition of the Holy Prophet: "If any of you is guilty of any immorality, he should better remain hidden under the curtain of Allah, but if he discloses it to us, we shall certainly enforce the Law of Allah on him." According to a Tradition of Abu Da'ud, when Ma'iz bin Malik Aslami; committed the crime of zina, he, on the advice of Hazzal bin Nu`aim, went before the Holy Prophet and confessed his guilt. The Holy Prophet ordered that he should be stoned to death, but at the same time he said to Hazzal: "Would that you had kept the matter hidden: this would have been better for you." In another Tradition cited in Abu Da'ud and ' Nasa'i, the Holy Prophet said: "Yeti should yourselves pardon the crimes which merit prescribed punishments because when a crime which calls for such a punishment comes to my notice, it will become obligatory on me to award the punishment."

(15) Under the Islamic Law Zina is not a compoundable crime. This is based on a Tradition which has been cited in almost all the collection of Hadith. A boy who was working as a labourer in a certain house committed Zina with the wife of his employer. The father of the boy gave 100 goats and one slave-girl to the tnan and made a compromise with him. But when the case came before the Holy Prophet, he said: "The goats and the slave-girl are yours and they are returned to you." Then he awarded the prescribed punishment to both the guilty ones. This shows that the crime of zina is not compoundable and that under the Islamic Law, an outraged chastity cannot be compensated in terms of money. This shameless conception of monetary compensation for outraged modesty is a part of Western laws only.

(16) The Islamic government shall not take action against anybody for zina unless it is fully proved. If the guilt is not proved, the authorities cannot pass orders for punishment even if they have the knowledge of the crime through many other sources. There was a woman in AI-Madinah who openly practised prostitution according to Traditions cited in Bukhari and Ibn Majah, but in spite of this no punishment was given to her as there was no proof of zina against her; so much so that the Holy Prophet once uttered the following words about her:

"lf I were to stone anybody to death without a proof, I would have certainly got this woman stoned. "

(17) The first possible proof of Zina is that proper evidence should be established against the criminal.

The important components of the law are:

(a) The Qur'an explicitly ordains that there should at least be four eyewitnesses to prove the guilt. This has been stated in An-Nisa (IV): 15, and in this Surah An-Nur too, it has been reiterated twice (vv. 4, 13). A judge is not authorized to decide the case on the basis of his own knowledge even if he has seen with his own eyes the couple committing the crime.

(b) The witnesses should be reliable according to the Islamic Law of Evidence, which requires that they should not have been proved to be false witnesses on any previous occasion: they should not be dishonest, they should not be previous convicts, and there should be no proof of their having any personal grudge against the accused, etc. In short, no one can be stoned nor flogged with stripes on the basis of unreliable evidence.

(c) The witnesses should give evidence to the effect that they saw the man and the woman in the actual state of intercourse, i.e. the union was complete such as a piston in a cylinder, and a rope in a well.

(d) The witnesses should be unanimous in regard to the time, the place and the persons committing the crime. Any difference in these basic things will nullify their testimony.

These conditions amply indicate that the Islamic Law does not intend to punish people as a matter of course. It inflicts severe punishment only when, in spite of all the measures to reform and eradicate the evil, there still exists a shameless couple in the Islamic society who commits the crime in a way as to be witnessed by as many as four men.

(18) There is a difference of opinion as to whether pregnancy by itself in a free woman, when she has no known husband, or in a slave-girl, when she has no known master, is a sufficient circumstantial evidence for the establishment of the crime of Zina. According to Hadrat 'Umar; this is a sufficient evidence, and the Malikis have adopted it. But the majority of the jurists are of the opinion that mere pregnancy is not a sufficient ground for stoning or flogging anybody with a hundred stripes. It is imperative that such a serious punishment should be based either on the evidence or on the confession of guilt. One of the basic principles of the Islamic Law is that the benefit of doubt should go to the accused. This is supported by a Tradition of the Holy Prophet: "Avoid punishments wherever you find scope for it. " (Ibn Majah). In another Tradition, he said: "Try to avoid punishing the Muslims wherever possible and if there is a way for an accused to escape punishment, let him off. An error of judgment in letting off an accused is better than in punishing him." (Tirmizi) According to this principle, the existence of pregnancy is not a definite proof of zina, however strong it may be for doubt. For there is a possibility that in one out of a million cases the semen of a man may enter the womb of a woman somehow or other without any sexual intercourse and make her pregnant. Even such a slight possibility of doubt should be enough to spare the accused of the horrible punishment for zina.

(19) There is also a difference of opinion as to whether the witnesses will be punished for falsely accusing a person in,case their evidence differs from one another, or if they are not able to prove the guilt. According to a section of the jurists they will be regarded as gazif (one who makes a false accusation as a slanderer), and will be punished with 80 stripes each. Others say that they should not be punished because they came as witnesses and not as plaintiffs, Moreover, if the witnesses are to be punished like this, nobody will, come forward as a witness in cases involving zina. This is because in that case no one will volunteer to appear as a witness at the risk of punishment, for nobody can be certain that all the four witnesses will be unanimous in their evidence We consider this second opinion as more rational, for the benefit of doubt should also accrue to the witnesses as it does to the accused. Therefore, if lapse in their testimony cannot result in the extreme punishment to the accused, it should also not result in any punishment to the witnesses branding them as false witnesses, unless of course, their falsehood is clearly proved. In support of the first opinion, two strong arguments are offered:

First, the Qur'an holds false accusation about zina as a punishable offense. But this argument is incorrect because the Qur`an makes a distinction between the qazif (the slanderer) and the shahid (one who appears in a court as an eye-witness). An eye-witness cannot be branded as a slanderer merely because the court did not hold his evidence as a sufficient proof of the crime.

The second argument is based on the case of Mughirah bin Shu`bah, in which Hadrat `Umar punished Abu Bakrah and the other two eye-witnesses on the charge of false accusation. A critical study of the entire case shows that this precedent is not applicable to every case where the crime is not proved by proper evidence

The facts of the case are that Mughirah bin Sh u`bah, the Governor of Basrah, did not have good relations with Abu Bakrah, whose house was opposite to his house across the same street. One day the windows of the two houses were opened by a strong current of wind. When 'Abu Bakrah got up to close his window, he saw through the opposite window across the street Mughirah in a state of actual sexual intercourse. He asked three of his friends (Naf`i bin Kaladah, and Shibl bin Ma`bad) who were also sitting with him to stand up and witness w Mughirah was doing. The friends asked him who was the woman. Abu Bakrah. said that she was Umm Jamil. The next day a complaint to this effect was sent to Hadrat `Umar, who immediately suspended Mughirah and appointed Abu Musa Ash`ari as Governor of Basrah. Mughirah along with the witnesses was called to AI-Madinah. When they were asked about the case, Abu Bakrah said that they had seen Mughirah actually committing sexual intercourse with umm Jamil, but Ziad said that the woman was not clearly visible and that he could not say definitely whether it was Umm Jamil or not. During the cross examination, Mughirah proved that they could not have seen the woman distinctly from the place where they were standing. He also proved that there was a close resemblance between his wife and Umm Jamil. Besides this, circumstantial evidence also showed that during the Caliphate of Hadrat `Umar, the governor of a province could not have committed this crime in his official residence, especially when his wife was also living with him. Thus the supposition of Abu Bakrah and his companions that Mughirah was having sexual intercourse with Umm Jamil, instead of his own wife, was nothing but a misplaced suspicion. It was for this reason that Hadrat `Umar not only acquitted the accused but also punished

Abu Bakrah, Naf`i and Shibl as slanderers. It is obvious that this isolated decision was based on the specific circumstances of the case and not on the principle that the witnesses must be' punished when they are not able to prove the charge by their evidence. (For details of this case, see Ahkam al-Qur'an, Ibn al-`Arabi, Vol. II, pp. 88, 89).

(20) Besides the evidence, the other thing by which the offense of zina can be established, is the confession of the accused himself. This confession must be in clear and plain words and the guilty one must confess that he committed zina with a woman who was unlawful for him, He should also admit that the act of zina was complete in every respect, 'The court must satisfy itself that the guilty person is confessing his guilt voluntarily without any external pressure and that, at the time of confession, he is in his right senses. Some jurists hold that one confession is not enough and that the guilty one must make four separate confessions. This is the view of Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Ahmad, Ibn Abi Laila, Ishaq bin Rahaviah and Hasan bin Salih. But according to Imam Malik, Imam Shafi`i, `Uthman al-Batti, only one confession is enough. In cases where the conviction is based on the confession of the guilty person himself without the support of any other proof, the infliction of punishment should be suspended if during the course of punishment the guilty one retracts his confession. It does not matter even if it is quite evident that he is retracting his confession in order to escape the torture of punishment. This entire law is based on the precedents which have been cited in the Traditions in the various cases of Zina.

The most important case is that of Ma`iz bin Malik Aslami, which has been related by a large number of reporters on the authority of many Companions of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him) and almost all books of Traditions contain details with regard to it. Ma`iz was an orphan boy from the clan of Aslam who had been brought up by Hazzal bin Nu'aim. He committed zina with a freed slave-girl. Hazzal said to him, "Go to the Holy Prophet and inform him of your sin; may be he prays for your forgiveness." Ma`iz went before the Holy Prophet in ,the Mosque and said, "I have committed zina; please purify me " The Holy Prophet turned his face away from him and said, "Woe be to you, go back and pray to Allah for forgiveness." But the boy again appeared before the Holy Prophet and said the same thing and the Holy Prophet again turned his face away. The boy then repeated his offense for the third time and the Holy Prophet again turned his face away. Hadrat Abu Bakr warned the boy that if he confessed the crime for the fourth time, the Holy Prophet would get him stoned. But the boy persisted and repeated the same thing again. At this the Holy Prophet turned to him and said: "You might have only kissed or embraced or caressed her, or you might have looked at her with lust (and you thought it was an act of Zina." The boy said, "No." The Holy Prophet asked, "Did you lie with her in the same bed?" The boy replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet again asked: "Did you have sexual intercourse with her? The boy again replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet then inquired in the most explicit Arabic expression specifically used for this act. Such a naked expression had never before been heard nor was ever heard afterwards from him. Had it not been the question of the life of an individual, the Holy Prophet would never have uttered such words. But the boy again replied in the affirmative to this explicit question. The Holy Prophet then asked: "Did you commit the act in such a manner that your male organ disappeared in her female part'?" The boy answered, "Yes." Again he was asked whether the act was as Complete as is a piston in a cylinder and a rope in a well. The boy again answered in the affirmative. Again he was asked whether he really understood what

zina meant, and the boy said, "Yes, I have committed the same act with her illegitimately which a husband commits legitimately with his wife." The Holy Prophet asked: "Are 'you married?" He said, "Yes". Again the Holy Prophet asked whether he had taken any wine. He said, "No", and one of the Companions smelt his mouth and continued that he had not. After this the Holy Prophet inquired of his neighbors whether he was suffering from insanity. They replied that he had not exhibited any sign of insanity. Then the Holy Prophet said to Hazzal: "Had you kept it secret, it would have been better for you." Then he ordered Ma`iz to be stoned to death and he was stoned to death outside the city. When they began to throw stones at him, Ma`iz tried to escape, and said, "O people, take me back to the Holy Prophet. The people of my clan deluded me, assuring that the Holy Prophet would not condemn me to death. " But they did not let him escape. Afterwards when this incident was reported to the Holy Prophet, he said: "Why didn't you let him go? Had you brought him to me, he might have repented. and Allah might have accepted his repentance."

The second incident is of Ghamidiyyah,who was a woman from the clan of Ghamid, a branch of Juhainah tribe. She also confessed four times that she had committed zina and had become pregnant as a result thereof. At her first confession, the Holy Prophet said: "Woe be to you, go back and ask forgiveness of Allah and repent." But she said, "O Messenger of Allah, do you want to put me off like Ma'iz? I am pregnant as a result of zina. "As there existed pregnancy along with the confession, the Holy Prophet did not cross examine her in detail as he did in the case of Ma`iz. He said to her, "Well, if you do not accept my counsel, go back and come to me after the birth of the child." After delivery had taken place, she came along with the child and said, "Please purify me now." The Holy Prophet said: "Go and suckle your child, and come to me after the suckling is over. " She again came after the weaning of the child and brought a piece of bread with her. She fed the child with the piece of bread before the Holy Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah, now the child has been weaned and has started taking bread." At this the Holy Prophet entrusted the child to a person to bring it up and ordered the stoning of the woman.

In both these cases, four confessions have clearly been mentioned. According to a Tradition, cited by Buraidah in Abu Da'ud, the Companions of the Holy Prophet, in general, held the opinion that if Ma`iz and Ghamidiyyah had not confessed their guilt four times, they would not have been stoned to death. In the third incident of this nature (which has been mentioned in para 15 above), the only words used therein, as contained in other Traditions, were: "Go and inquire from his wife about this. If she confesses her guilt, stone her to death . There is no mention of four confessions here and it is on the basis of this that some jurists have argued that only one confession is enough.

(21) The three cases mentioned above clearly show that a guilty person, who confesses his sin, will not be questioned about the other person with whom he or she committed zina. This is because in that case two persons shall have to be punished instead of one. The Islamic Law is not anxious to punish people. But if the guilty person names the other party to the crime, then that party will be interrogated and also punished in case of confession. But if the other party denies it, only the person confessing the guilt, will be punished. However, there is a difference of opinion among the jurists as to whether such a person will be punished for zina or for false accusation. According to Imam Malik and Imam Shafi`i, he will be awarded the prescribed punishment for zina , because he has confessed that crime

alone. According to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Auza'i, he shall be convicted as a false accuser, because the denial of the other party has made his crime of zina doubtful but his guilt of false accusation stands proved anyhow. According to Imam Muhammad and it is supported by a saying of Imam Shafi'i also, he will be punished for zina as well as for slander. This is because he has confessed the guilt of zina himself and has not been able to prove his accusation against the other party. A similar case was brought before the Holy Prophet. A Tradition to this effect cited in Musnad Ahmad and in Abu Da'ud by Sahl bin Sa`d contains these words: "A person confessed before the Holy Prophet that he had committed zina with such and such a woman." The Holy Prophet inquired of the woman but she denied it. Then he gave him the prescribed punishment but forgave the woman. This Tradition, however, does not specify the punishment that was awarded. In another Tradition cited in Abu Da'ud and Nasa`i from Ibn `Abbas, it has been stated that on the man`s confession the Holy Prophet gave him the prescribed punishment for zina. But when the woman denied it, the man was flogged with stripes for making a false accusation. But this Tradition is weak as regards its links, because one of its reporters, Qasim bin Fayyaz, is not considered as reliable by many scholars of Traditions. Moreover, this Tradition appears to be opposed to reason because it cannot be expected of the Holy Prophet that he would first punish the man for zina and then make an inquiry from the woman. Common sense and justice, which the Holy Prophet could not have overlooked, demanded that his case should not have been decided before making an inquiry from the woman. This is supported by a Tradition cited by Sahl bin Sa'd. Therefore, the second Tradition cannot be considered as reliable.

(22) There is a difference of opinion among the jurists as to what punishment should be given to the person who has been proved guilty of zina. The various opinions in this regard are as under:
Punishment for married persons guilty of Zina:

(a) According to Imam Ahmad, Da'ud Zahiris and Ishaq bin Rahaviah they shall be flogged with 100 stripes and then stoned to death.

(b) All other jurists are unanimous that they shall be stoned to death; stoning to death and flogging will not be combined together.

Punishment for unmarried persons:

(a) According to Imam Ahmad, Imam Shafi`i, Da'ud Zahiri, Sufyan Thauri, Ibn Abi Laila and Hasan bin Salih; the punishment is flogging with 100 stripes and exile for one year both for the man and. the woman.

(b) According to Imam Malik and Imam Auza`i, the man should be flogged with 100 stripes and exiled for one year, while the woman should only be flogged with 100 stripes. (According to these jurists, "exile" means that the guilty one should be banished from his own habitation and sent to such a distant place where one has to shorten one's prayer. But according to Zaid bin `Ali and Imam Ja`far Sadiq, imprisonment also serves the purpose of exile.)

(c) Imam Abu Hanifah and his disciples-Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Zufar and Imam Muhammad-are of the opinion that the "hadd" (prescribed punishment) for zina in such cases is only 100 stripes both for the man and for the woman. Any additional punishment, such as exile or imprisonment, is not "hadd" but ta `zir (discretionary punishment). If the judge feels that the guilty man is of immoral character, or that the illicit relations of the guilty ones are too intimate, he may exile or imprsion them as the occasion may demand. The difference between hadd and to `zir is that hadd is a specific punishment which must be inflicted provided that the guilt has been proved according to the conditions laid down in the Shari `ah, whereas to `zir is a punishment which has not been specified by the Shari `ah with regard to its nature and gravity, but is determined by the court in accordance with the circumstances of the case.

All the above different opinions have been based on various Traditions of the Holy Prophet, which are given below:

According to a Tradition related by `Ubadah bin Samit and cited by Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, Tirmizi and Imam Ahmad, the Holy Prophet said: ; Take it from me. Take it from me. Allah has prescribed the method for dealing with women guilty of zina. An unmarried man committing zina with an unmarried woman should get 100 stripes and one year's exile. The married man committing zina with a married woman, should get 100 stripes and stoning to death." Though this Tradition is technically correct according to its authentic links, we learn from a large number of correct Traditions that it was neither acted upon during the time of the Holy Prophet nor during the rightly-guided Caliphate nor 'any jurist ever gave any verdict strictly in accordance with it. According to a Tradition from Abu Hurairah and Zaid bin Khalid Juhani, which has been cited by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da`ud, Tirmizi Nasa`i, Ibn Majah and Ahmad, a case was brought by two Beduins before the Holy Prophet. One of them said, "My son, who worked as a labourer in the house of this man, got involved with his wife. I compromised with him by giving him 100 goats and one slave-girl, but I have been told by the scholars that this is against the Book of Allah. Please decide the case between us according to the Book of Allah." The second man also said the same thing and asked for the decision according to the Divine Book. The Holy Prophet said: "I will decide according to the Divine Book. You should take back your goats and the slave-girl. Your son shall get 100 stripes and a year's exile." Then the Holy Prophet said to a man from the clan of Aslam: "O Unais, go to this man's wife and inquire from her about this. If she confesses her guilt, stone her to death." The woman confessed the guilt and was stoned to death. It should be noted that in this Tradition there is no mention of flogging the married woman before stoning her to death, whereas the unmarried man, guilty of zina with a married woman, was punished with flogging and exile.

Besides this, the accounts of the cases of Ma`iz and Ghamidiyyah, which have been cited in the various books of Traditions, do not mention anywhere that the Holy Prophet ordered flogging of the guilty person before stoning him or her to death.

There is no Tradition in any book of Traditions to the effect that the Holy Prophet, in any case, combined flogging with stoning to death. In all the cases of zina by married persons, he awarded the punishment of stoning to death only.

In his well-known address, cited by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizi, and Nasa`i on the authority of various

reporters, Hadrat `Umar declared most emphatically that the punishment for zina after marriage is stoning to death. Imam Ahmad also has cited various Traditions regarding this but in none of these there is any mention of flogging before stoning to death.
From among the rightly-guided Caliphs Hadrat `Ali alone combined flogging with stoning to death in one case. Imam Ahmad and Bukhari have cited this case on the authority of `Amir Sha`bi that a woman named Shuaha confessed being pregnant as a result of illicit intercourse. Hadrat `Ali got her flogged on Thursday and stoned to death on Friday, saying, "We flogged her according to the Book of Allah and stoned her to death in accordance with the Sunnah of the Prophet. ". There is no other case than this in which both the punishments were combined during the rightly-guided Caliphate.

According to a Tradition cited in Abu Da'ud and Nasa`i on the authority of Jabir bin `Abdullah, a man committed zina and the Holy Prophet awarded him the punishment of flogging. Afterwards when it came to be known that he was a married man, he ordered that he should be stoned to death. Besides this, we have already cited several other Traditions showing that the Holy Prophet awarded the punishment of flogging only to the unmarried persons guilty of zina. For instance, the man who raped a woman while she was going out for prayers, and the man who confessed his crime of zina but the woman did not, were given the punishment of flogging.

As regards "exile", the authority may use its own discretion. Hadrat `Umar exiled Rabi`ah bin Umayyah bin Khalf on a charge of drinking and he fled and joined the Romans. At this Hadrat 'Umar said that in future he would not exile a man and a woman guilty of zina, because he feared that there was a risk of mischief in it. (Ahkam al-Qur 'an, AI-Jassas, Vol. III, p. 315).

In the light of these traditions and cases as a whole, it becomes quite plain that the view of Imam Abu Hanifah and his disciples is correct: the punishment for a married man or woman for zina is stoning to death alone while the punishment for unmarried persons is 100 stripes only. Flogging and stoning to death were never combined from the time of the Holy Prophet up to the Caliphate of Hadrat `Uthman. As for combining flogging and exile, it was practised on some occasions while on others it was not. This clearly establishes the correctness of the way of Imam Abu Hanifah.

(23) The first reference to the nature of flogging with stripes is implied in the word fajlidu of the Qur'an itself. The word jald is derived from jild, which means "skin". Accordingly all lexicographers and commentators have taken it to mean that flogging should be carried out in such a way that its effect should be confined to the skin only and should not reach the flesh under it. The flogging that causes deep wounds into the flesh or tears it up into pieces is against the Qur'an.

The whip or the cane used for the purpose of flogging should be medium in all respects: it should neither be thick and hard nor thin and soft. According to a Tradition cited by Imam Malik in Mu'atta, the Holy Prophet asked for a whip for flogging but as it had worn out owing to long use, he said: "Bring a harder one." Then a new whip was brought which was very hard because of lack of use. The Holy Prophet said: "Get me one between these two." Accordingly a whip was brought which had been used in riding and with it he gave the flogging. A similar tradition has also been cited by Abu

`Uthman an-Nahdi about Hadrat `Umar that he always used a medium whip. (Ahkam al-Qur'an, AI-Jassas,Vol. III, p. 322). A whip with knots or one having two or three prongs is also prohibited.

Flogging should also be of average intensity. Hadrat `Umar used to instruct the flogger, "Strike in such a way that your armpit should not become visible during flogging," i.e., Do not stretch your arm fully to strike with full force. (Ahkam aI-Qur'an, Ibn al-`Arabi, Vol. II, p. 84, and Ahkam al-Qur'an, AIJassas, Vol. III, p. 322). All the jurists are agreed that:

(a) the stripe should not be such as may cause a wound;

(b) the flogging should not be confined to one and the same place but should be spread over the whole body;

(c) the face and the private parts, and, according to the Hanafis, the head also should be spared but all other parts should get some flogging. Hadrat `Ali once said to the flogger, "Let every part of the body get its due share except the face and the private parts." According to another tradition, he said, "Save the head and the private parts only." (Ahkam al-Qur'an, Al Jassas Vol. III, p. 321). The Holy Prophet has said: "When anyone of you is flogging, he should not strike on the face." (Abu Da'ud).

While flogging, a man should be made to stand and a woman to sit. In the time of Imam Abu Hanifah, Qazi Ibn Abi Laila of Kufah got a woman flogged while she was standing. The Imam took a strong objection to it and openly declared it to be a wrong thing. Incidentally, this also throws light on Imam Abu Hanifah's stand with regard to the law of the contempt of court. At the time of flogging, the woman should be in her full dress: her clothes should rather be tied down on her so that no part of her body might be exposed; her thick clothes only will be taken off; but in regard to a man, there is some difference of opinion. According to some jurists, he will be allowed to remain in his pyjamas only, and according to some others, the shirt will not be taken off. Hadrat Abu `Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah sentenced a person guilty of zina to be flogged. The man said, "This sinful body should get a severe flogging." Then he started taking off his shirt, but Abu `Ubaidah said, "Do not let him take off his shirt." (Ahkam al-Qur`an, AlJassas, Vol. III, p. 322). During the time of Hadrat `Ali, a man was flogged while he was wrapped in a sheet of cloth.

Flogging is prohibited in severe cold and in severe heat. In winter it should be done when it is hot and in summer when it is cool.

It is also not permissible to tie down a person at the time of flogging unless he tries to run away. According to `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, 'it is not permissible in the Islamic Community to flog anybody after stripping him naked or after tying him on a tripod.

Jurists have permitted that at least twenty stripes may be given daily but it is better to inflict full punishment at one and the same time.

Flogging should not be entrusted to uncouth, uncultured executioners, but it should be done by men of deep insight who understand how the flogging should be carried out in order to meet the requirements of the Shari `ah. Ibn Qayyim has cited in zad al-Ma ad that the Holy Prophet employed the services of such pious and respectable people as `Ali, Zubair, Miqdad bin `Amr, Muhammad bin Maslamah, `Asim bin Thabit and Dahak bin Sufyan for this purpose. (Vol. I, pp. 44, 45)

If the guilty person is suffering from some disease and there is no hope of his recovery or is too old, it is enough to strike him once with a branch of 100 twigs, or with a broom of 100 twigs in order to meet the requirements of the law. During the time of the Holy Prophet, an old man, who was suffering from some disease, was found guilty of zina and the Holy Prophet awarded him the same kind of punishment. (Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Nasa`i Ibn Majah). In the case of a pregnant woman, the flogging will be postponed till the delivery and the complete discharge of blood after childbirth. But if she is to be stoned to death, the punishment will not be given till the child has been weaned.

If zina is proved by evidence, the flogging will be initiated by the witnesses themselves. If the punishment is based on confession, the judge himself will initiate the punishment. This is to make the witnesses and the judge realize the seriousness of the matter. In the case of Shuraha, when Hadrat `Ali decided to stone her to death, he said, "Had there been any witness to this crime, he should have initiated the stoning, but as she is being punished on the basis of confession, I will initiate it myself. " According to the Hanafis, this procedure is essential but according to the Shafi`is, it is not essential; it is, however, preferable according to all jurists.

After examining the above details of the law of flogging, just consider the audacity of those who hold this punishment as barbarous. This accusation becomes all the more ridiculous when the same people allow a harsher punishment in their jails. According to the existing law, not only the court but an ordinary superintendent of the jail also is authorized to award a punishment of 30 stripes to a prisoner for disobedience or insolence, and this flogging is carried out by a specialist who keeps himself ready and fit by regular practice and the canes are wetted beforehand so that they may cut through the body like a knife. The convict is stripped off his clothes and nothing but a thin cloth wetted with tincture of iodine is left to cover his private parts. Then he is tied down to a tripod to prevent him from making any movement at the flogging and the flogger comes running from a distance and strikes him with full force. Every time the same part (buttocks) is struck so hard that the flesh flies out like minced meat and often the bones become bare. Often it so happens that even the strongest man does not stand 30 canes and becomes unconscious and it takes a long time before his wounds are healed. It is an irony that those people, who are themselves enforcing this `civilized' Punishment in jails today, have the cheek to call the punishment enjoined by Islam as "barbarous". Then the horrible tortures which are inflicted by their police not only on proved criminals but on suspects, especially those suspected of criminal crimes, are well known to every one.

(24) After a convict has been stoned to death, he (or she) will be treated like any other Muslim: his (or her) body will be washed and shrouded: funeral prayer will be said in the Islamic way, and he (or she) will be buried with due respect in a Muslim graveyard. Prayers for his forgiveness will be offered and it will be improper for anyone to talk ill of him. According to Jabir bin 'Abdullah Ansari, as cited in

Bukhari, when Ma'iz bin Malik was stoned to death, the Holy Prophet said good words about him and himself led his funeral prayer. A Tradition from Buraidah, as cited in Muslim, states that the Holy Prophet said: °Pray for the forgiveness of Ma'iz bin Malik: he has offered such a repentance that if it were to be distributed over a whole community, it would suffice for the forgiveness of all its people." In the same Tradition it has been mentioned that when Ghaimidiyyah died due to stoning, her funeral prayer was led by the Holy Prophet. When Khaid bin Walid talked ill of her, the Holy Prophet said: "Khalid, hold your tongue! I swear by Him Who controls my life that her repentance was such that even if a cruel tax-collector had offered such a repentance, he would have been forgiven." According to Abu Hurairah, as cited in Abu Da'ud, after the stoning of Ma`iz one day when the Holy Prophet was walking along, he heard two men talking ill of Ma`iz. When he had gone a few paces further, he saw the dead body of a donkey. He stopped there and asked the two men: "Come on and eat something out of it." They said, "O Prophet of Allah, who can eat a dead donkey?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Talking ill of your own brother was much worse than eating a dead donkey. "

According to a Tradition from `Imran bin Hunain cited in Muslim, when the funeral prayer of Ghamidiyyah was about to be offered, Hadrat `Umar said to the Holy Prophet, "Are we going to offer funeral prayer for this adulteress?" The Holy Prophet said: "She has offered such a repentance that if it were to be distributed .ever the whole of the population of Al-Madinah, it would suffice for their forgiveness." According to another Tradition from Abu Hurairah, cited in Bukhari; when a man was being punished for drinking, somebody said, "May God defame him!" The Holy Prophet said: "Do not utter such words and thus help Satan against him." In Abu Da'ud there is an addition to this, according to which the Holy Prophet said: "Pray like this: 'O Allah, pardon him and show mercy to him'." This is the true spirit of punishment in Islam. Islam dces not punish even the biggest criminal with vindictiveness but with the intention to reform him. That is why after the punishment, mercy and compassion are shown towards him. In contrast to this, the modern civilization adopts a very mean attitude towards those who are killed by the state military or police and whose death is upheld by a judicial inquiry. It is not tolerated that even somebody may carry his dead body to the graveyard or utter a good word about him. In the face of this behaviour, they have the "moral courage" (a euphemism for impudence) to preach tolerance to the world.

(25) As regards the law of punishment concerning zina with prohibited relations, see E.N. 33 of An-Visa (IV), and for the punishment of sodomy see E.N.'s 64-68 of A`araf (Vll). As regards the committal of this heinous act with animals, some jurists treat it as zina and hold that the guilty person deserves the prescribed punishment of this crime. But Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Yusuf, Imam Muhammad, Imam Zufar, Imam Malik and Imam Shafi`i hold that it is not zina, and therefore, the offender should he given the discretionary punishment and not the prescribed punishment. We have already stated that the discretionary punishment has been left to the judge, or if necessary the state legislature can devise some appropriate form of punishment for it.

3The first thing that deserves attention in this verse is that the criminal law is being termed as the "Way of Allah". This shows that the "Way of Allah" does not merely consist in Salat, Fasting, Hajj and payment of Zakat dues, but the law of the land is also a part of the "Way of Allah". The establishment of the "Way" does not mean the establishment of Salat alone but it also includes the

establishment of the Divine Law and the system of law based on it. If these things are not established, the mere establishment of the system of Salat will be regarded as partial implementation of the "Way". But when instead of this an un-Islamic system of law is adopted, it amounts to the total rejection of the Divine Way itself.

The second thing which deserves attention is the warning from Allah that no feeling of compassion or pity should restrain you from inflicting the prescribed punishment on the guilty person. The same thing has been further elaborated by the Holy Prophet in the following Tradition:

"On the Day of Judgment, a judge who had reduced the punishment by one stripe in a certain case, will be called to account. He will be asked: ' Why did you do so?' He will say, 'It was out of pity for your people.' Allah will say: 'Well, it means you were more compassionate towards those people than Myself.' Then it will be ordered: `Take him to Hell.' Another judge, who had enhanced the punishment by one stripe will be brought forth. He will be asked: 'Why did you do so?' He will say, `It was done to serve as a deterrent for others.' Allah will say: `Well, it means you were wiser than I with regard to them.' It will be ordered: `Take him to Hell.' (Tafsir Kabir, Vol. Vl, p. 225).

The above applies to the case when reduction or enhancement in the punishment was the result of compassion or some other factor. But if the quantum of punishments were to be changed according to the status of the culprit, it would constitute the worst type of crime. According to a Tradition related by Hadrat `A'ishah, the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him) said in an address: "The communities before you perished because whenever anyone from among their aristocrats committed a theft, he was forgiven but whenever an ordinary man committed the same offense, he was awarded the prescribed punishment. " According to another Tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "The enforcement of one prescribed punishment is more beneficial to the people than 40 days of rainfall." (Nasa`i, Ibn Majah)

Some commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that the culprit should neither be forgiven after his guilt has been proved nor his punishment reduced. He must be flogged with 100 stripes. Some others have taken it to mean that the flogging should not be so light that the culprit may not feel its effect at all. The verse covers both the above interpretations and, in fact, both are plausible. It also means that the one guilty of fornication should get the same punishment which has been prescribed by Allah and no other type of punishment. It is a sin to inflict any other type of punishment instead of flogging even for the sake of compassion or pity. But` if any other type of punishment is inflicted on the ground that flogging with stripes is a barbarous type of punishment, it amounts to kufr ; which should never be tolerated even for a moment by a true Believer. To believe in the Divinity of Allah and then to call Him a barbarian, suits only those who are the meanest of hypocrites.

4The punishment should be awarded publicly so that, on the one hand, the guilty one may feel disgraced and, on the other, it may serve as a deterrent for the other people. This throws light on the concept of punishment in Islam. In verse 38 of AI-Ma`idah (V), in connection with the punishment of theft, it was said:

".... it is the recompense for what they have earned, and an exemplary punishment from Allah."

And now here it is being enjoined that the adulterer should be given the punishment publicly. This shows that in Islamic Law punishment is awarded to meet three purposes:

(a) To inflict pain on the criminal for the excesses he committed against the other person or society,

(b) To stop him from repeating the crime,

(c) To serve as a deterrent for others, so that the people having evil inclinations in society may be deterred and dare not commit such crimes again.

Another advantage of awarding the punishment publicly is that the officials concerned should not be able to reduce or enhance the punishment at will while executing it.

5That is, only an adulterous woman is a fit match for an adulterous man who has not repented, or an idolatrous woman. No believing, virtuous woman can be a match for hull. It is forbidden for the Believers that they should give their daughters in marriage to such wicked people knowing them to be so. Similarly the tit match for adulterous women (who have not repented) can only be adulterous or idolatrous men; they are not fit for any righteous Believer. It is forbidden for the Believers that they should marry women who are known to possess immoral character. This thing applies to those men and women who persist in their evil ways, and not to those who repent and reform themselves, for after repentance and reformation they will no longer be regarded as "adulterous."

According to Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, the prohibition of marriage with an adulterous man implies that such a marriage, if contracted, will have no legal effect. But this view is not correct. Prohibition does not have any legal implications. It cannot mean that if a person violates this prohibition, the marriage will be void, and the parties concerned will be involved in zina in spite of marriage. For the Holy Prophet has stated: "The unlawful does not make the lawful unlawful." (Tabarani, Daraqutni). In other words, an illegal act does not make a legal act also illegal. Therefore, if a person commits zina and then marries, his conjugal relations with his spouse cannot be considered as zina, because in that case the other party of the marriage contract who is not immoral, will also have to be considered as involved in zina. As a rule, no illegal act except open rebellion can cause the one guilty of it to be declared an outlaw, so that no act of his can be regarded legal after that. If the verse is considered in this light the plain meaning would be this: It is a sin to select such persons for marriage as are known to be unmoral. The Believers should shun them, otherwise they will feel encouraged, whereas the Shari ah intends to segregate them as the undesirable and contemptible element of society.

Similarly this verse does not validate the marriage of an adulterous Muslim with an idolatrous woman and of an adulterous Muslim woman with an idolatrous man. The verse simply means to emphasize the act of

zina, and declares that the person who commits it being a Muslim, makes himself unfit for contracting a marriage in the pure and pious Muslim society. He should either stripes so that he does not utter such a slander in future. Even if the accuser is an eye-witness of an immoral act, he should keep the secret and let the filth remain where it is instead of causing it to spread. However, if he has witnesses, he should abstain from publicizing the matter in society but should bring the case to the notice of the authorities and get the criminals duly punished by the court of law. Below we give the details of the law in serial order:

(1) The context in which the words wallazina yarmun-al-muhsanat (those who charge chaste women with false accusation) occur clearly shows that it does not imply any common sort of accusation but specifically the accusation of zina against the chastity of pure women. Then the demand from the accusers to produce four witnesses in support of their accusation also shows that it relates to zina, for in the entire Islamic Law producing four witnesses is the legal requirement only in a case zina and in no other matter. The scholars are, therefore, agreed that this verse describes the law relating to the accusation of zina, which has been termed qazf for convenience so that this law is not extended to cover cases of other accusations like that of theft, drinking, taking of interest, etc. Apart from qazf, the question of determining punishments for other allegations can be left to the discretion of the judge, or to the consultative council of the Islamic state, who can make general laws to cover cases of contempt and defamation as and when required

(2) Though the verse only mentions al-muhsanat (pure and chaste women), the jurists are agreed that the law is not confined to the accusation in respect of women, but it extends to the accusation in respect of chaste men also. Likewise, though the masculine gender has been used for the accusers, the law is not confined to male accusers only but extends to female accusers as well. For as regards the gravity and wickedness of the crime, it does not make any difference whether the accuser or the accused is a man or a woman. Therefore in either case, the man or accuser or the woman accusing a virtuous and chaste man or woman of zina, will be dealt with under this law.

(3) This law can be applied only in a case where the accuser has accused a muhsan or muhsanah, i.e., "a morally fortified" man or woman. In case the accused is not "morally fortified", the law cannot be applied. if a person who is not "morally fortified" is known for his immorality, there will be no question of the "accusation", but if he is not, the judge can use his discretion to award a punishment to the accuser, or the consultative council can make necessary laws to deal with such cases.

(4) For an act of qazi to be considered as punishable, it is not enough that somebody has accused somebody else of immorality without a proof, but there are certain conditions which have to be fulfilled in respect of the qazif(accuser), maqzuf(the accused) and the act of qazf itself.

As for the qazif, he should satisfy the following conditions:

(a) He should be an adult: if a minor commits the crime of qazf he can be given a discretionary

punishment but not the prescribed punishment.

(b) He should possess normal common sense: an insane and mentally abnormal person cannot be given the prescribed punishment; similarly, a person under the influence of an intoxicant, other than a forbidden intoxicant, e.g., chloroform, cannot be considered as guilty of qazi.

(c) He should have committed qazf out of his own free will or choice, and not under duress,

(d) He should not be the father or grandfather of maqzuf(the accused), for they cannot be given the prescribed punishment.

According to the Hanafis, the fifth condition is that the accuser should not be drunk, because the person who only gesticulates cannot be held guilty of qazi. But Imam Shafi`i disputes this. He says that if the gesticulation of the drunk person is clear and unambiguous by which everybody can understand what he wants to say, he will be considered as a qazif, because his gesticulation is no less harmful to defame a person than the word of mouth. On the contrary, the Hanafis do not hold mere gesticulation as a strong enough ground for awarding the prescribed punishment of 80 stripes; they, therefore, recommend a discretionary punishment for it.

The conditions to be satisfied by maqzuf(the accused) are as follows:

(a) He should be possessing normal common sense, i.e., he should be accused of having committed zina while in the normal state of mind; the accuser of an insane person (who might or might not have become sane later) cannot be held guilty of qazf, for the insane person cannot possibly safeguard his chastity fully; and even if the evidence of zina is established against him, he will neither become deserving of the prescribed punishment nor incur personal defamation; therefore, the one accusing him also should not be held as deserving of the prescribed punishment of qazf. However, Imam Malik and Imam Laith bin Sa`d hold that the qazif of an insane person deserves to be awarded the prescribed punishment of qazf, because he is accusing another person of zina without a proof thereof.

(b) He should be an adult, i.e., he should be accused of having committed zina while being of full age legally; accusing a minor, or a grown up person that he committed zina when a minor, dces not deserve the " prescribed punishment, for, like an insane person, a child also cannot fully safeguard his honour and chastity. However, according to Imam Malik, if a boy approaching the age of majority is accused of zina, the accuser will not deserve the prescribed punishment, but if a girl of that age is accused of having submitted herself for zina, when sexual intercourse with her is possible, her qazif will deserve the prescribed punishment, for the accusation defames not only the girl's family but ruins the girl's future as well.

(c) He should be a Muslim, i.e., he should be accused of having committed zina while in Islam. Accusing

a non-Muslim, or a Muslim that he committed zina when a non-Muslim, does not entail the prescribed punishment.

(d) He should be free; accusing a slave or a slave-girl, or a free person that he committed zina when a slave, does not call for the prescribed punishment, for the helplessness and weakness of the slave can hinder him from safeguarding his honour and chastity. The Qur'an itself has considered the state of slavery as excluded from the state of ihsan (moral fortification). (IV: 25). But Da'ud Dhahiri does not concede this argument; he holds that the qazif of the slave or slave-girl also deserves the prescribed punishment of qazf.

(e) He should possess a pure and blameless character, i.e., he himself should be free from zina proper and everything resembling therewith, This means that he should neither have been held guilty of zina in the past, nor should have had sexual intercourse in an illegal marriage, nor with a slave girl who was not clearly in his possession legally, nor with a woman whom he mistook for his wife. His day to day life should be such that nobody could accuse him of immorality, nor he should have been held guilty of lesser crimes than zina before. In all such cases the moral purity of the person falls into disrepute, and the accuser of such a person cannot deserve the prescribed punishment of 80 stripes. So much so that if the guilt of zina against an accused person is proved on the basis of evidence just before the enforcement of the prescribed punishment on an accuser, the latter will be forgiven; because the former is no longer chaste and morally pure.

Though the prescribed punishment cannot be enforced in any of these five cases it does not, however, mean that a person who accuses an insane person or a minor or a non-Muslim, or a slave, or an unchaste person of zina without proof, does not even deserve a discretionary punishment.

Now let us consider the conditions which must be found in the act of qazf itself An accusation will be considered as qazf, if either an accuser accuses a person of such a sexual act which, if proved to be correct by necessary evidence, would make the accused liable to the prescribed punishment, or the accuser holds the accused as of illegitimate birth. But in either case the accusation must be unambiguous and in clear terms; vague references in which the accusation of zina or illegitimacy depends upon the accuser's intention, are not reliable. For instance, using words like adulterer, sinner, wicked, immoral, etc. for a man, and prostitute, harlot, whore, etc. for a woman is only a reference and not qazf. Similarly, words which are used as an abuse like bastard, etc. cannot be regarded as qazf. There is, however, a difference of opinion among the jurists whether an allusion is also gazf or not. According to Imam Malik, if the allusion is clear and is meant to charge the addressee of zina or hold him as of illegitimate birth, it will be qazf, and the qazif will be liable to the prescribed punishment. But Imam Abu Hanifah and his companions and Imam Shafi`i, Sufyan Thauri, Ibn Shubrumah, and Hasan bin Saleh hold the view that an allusion is in any way ambiguous and doubtful, and wherever there is doubt, prescribed punishment cannot be awarded. Imam Ahmad and Ishaq bin Rahaviyah maintain that if an allusion is made in the heat of a quarrel or fight, it is qazf, but if in sport and fun, it is not. Hadrat `Umar and Hadrat `Ali, from

among the Caliphs, awarded the prescribed punishment in cases of allusion. In the time of Hadrat `Umar, one of the two men, who were involved in a brawl, said to the other, "Neither was my father an adulterer nor was my mother an adulteress." The case was brought before Hadrat `Umar. He asked those present there what they understood by the remark. Some said that the man had only praised his parents and had notb imputed anything to the other man's parents. Others objected to the use of the words and said that by these he had clearly alluded that the other man's parents were adulterous. Hadrat `Umar concurred with the latter and awarded the prescribed punishment. (Al-Jassas, vol. III, p. 330). There is also a difference of opinion as to whether accusing somebody of sodomy is qazf or not. Imam Abu Hanifah does not regard it qazf but Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad; Imam Malik and Imam Shafi`i hold it as qazf and recommend the prescribed punishment for it.

(5) There is a difference of opinion among the jurists as to whether qazf is a cognizable offence or not. Ibn Abi Laila says that this is the right of Allah; therefore, the qazif will be awarded the prescribed punishment whether maqzuf (the accused) demands it or not. Imam Abu Hanifah and his companions hold that it is certainly a right of Allah in so far as the enforcement of the prescribed punishment on the establishment of the offence is concerned, but in so far as the trial of the accuser under the law is concerned, it depends on the demand of the accused, and in this respect it is the right of man. The same is the opinion of Imam Shafi`i, and Imam Auza'i. According to Imam Malik, if the offense of gazf is committed in the presence of the ruler, it is a cognizable offense, otherwise legal action against the accuser will depend on the demand of the accused

(6) Qazf is not a compoundable offense. If the accused does not bring the case to the court, it will be a different thing; but when the case is brought to the court, the accuser will be pressed to prove his accusation, and if he fails to prove it, he will be awarded the prescribed punishment. The court then cannot pardon him nor the accused himself, nor the matter can be settled by making monetary compensation, nor the accuser can escape punishment by offering repentance or apology. The Holy Prophet has instructed: "Forgive among yourselves offenses that deserve the prescribed punishment, but when a case is brought before me, the punishment will become obligatory."

(7) According to the Hanafis, the demand for the prescribed punishment of qazf call either be made by the accused, or, if the accused is not there, by the one whose lineage suffers the stigma, e.g., the father, mother, children. and the children's children. But according to Imam Malik and Imam Shafi`i, this right is inherited. If the accused dies, each one of his legal heirs can make the demand for the prescribed punishment. It is, however, strange that Imam Shafi'i excludes the husband and the wife from this right on the ground that their marriage bond breaks with death, and the accusation against one spouse does not affect the lineage of the other. The fact is that both these arguments are weak. When it is conceded that the right to demand the prescribed punishment for qazf is inheritable, it will be against the Qur'an to exclude the husband and the wife from the exercise of this right on the ground that their marriage bond breaks with death, because the Qur'an itself has declared each of them as an heir on the death of the other. As for the argument that the accusation against one does not affect the lineage of the other, it may

be correct in the case of the husband but it is absolutely wrong in the case of the wife; the man whose wife is accused of zina has the lineage of his children automatically rendered doubtful. Moreover, it is not correct to think that the punishment for qazf has been prescribed only to protect the lineage of the people; honour along with lineage is equally important. Thus, it is no less damaging for a gentleman or a lady that his wife or her husband is accused of zina. Therefore, if the right to demand the prescribed punishment for qazf be inheritable there is no reason why the husband and the wife should be debarred from exercising that right.

(8) After it has been established that a person has committed qazf, the only thing that can save him from the prescribed punishment is that he should produce four witnesses who should give evidence in the court that they have seen the accused committing zina practically with such and such a man or woman. According to the Hanafis, all the four witnesses should appear at one and the same time in the court and they should give evidence all together. For if they appear one after the other, each one of them will become a qazf, and will need four witnesses to support him. But this is a weak argument. The correct position is the one adopted by Imam Shafi`i and `Uthman al-Bani, that it is immaterial whether the witnesses appear all together or come one after the other; it is rather better that as in other cases the witnesses should come one after the other and give evidence. The Hanafis hold that it is not necessary that the witnesses should be righteous; even if the qazif produces four immoral persons as witnesses, he will escape the prescribed punishment of qazf, and the accused also the prescribed punishment of zina, because the witnesses are not righteous. However, if the qazif produces witnesses who are unbelieving, or blind, or slave, or those already convicted of qazf, he will not escape the punishment. Imam Shafi`i holds that if the qzif produces witnesses who are immoral, he and his witnesses, all will become liable to the prescribed punishment, and the same is the opinion of Imam Malik. But the view of the Hanafis in this matter appears to be nearer the truth. According to them, if the witnesses are righteous, the qazif will be acquitted of the charge of qazf, and the crime of zina will become established against the accused. But if the witnesses are not righteous, the qazif's crime of qazf, the maqzuf's crime of zina and the evidence of the witnesses will all stand doubtful, and none will be held liable to punishment on account of the element of doubt.

(9) The Qur'an has given three Commandments in respect of the person who fails to produce proper evidence which can cause his acquittal of the crime of qazf,

(a) He should be awarded 80 stripes,

(b) His evidence should not be accepted in future,

(c) He himself is a transgressor. After this the Qur'an says:

" .... except those who repent of it and mend their ways; Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."

The question arises: To which of these three Commands is the forgiveness due to repentance and reformation as mentioned in the verse related? The jurists are agreed that it is not related to the first Command. That is, repentance will not render the punishment null and void, and the criminal will be given flogging in any case. The jurists are also agreed that the forgiveness is related to the third Command, which means that after repentance and reformation the criminal will no longer be a sinner and Allah will forgive him. (Here the difference of opinion is Only in this matter whether the criminal becomes a sinner due to the crime of qazf itself, or after his conviction by the court. Imam Shafi`i and Laith bin Sa`d hold that he becomes a sinner due to the crime of qazf itself, and therefore, they reject his evidence thenceforth. On the contrary, lmam Abu Hanifah, his companions and lmam Malik maintain that he becomes a sinner after the enforcement of the sentence; therefore, till the enforcement of the sentence his evidence will be acceptable. But the truth is that in the sight of Allah the criminal becomes a sinner as a result of the crime of qazf itself, but for the people his being a sinner depends on his conviction by the court and the enforcement of the punishment on him). Now as far as the second Command, viz. "The evidence of qazif should not be accepted in future", is concerned, there has been a great difference of opinion among the jurists as to whether the sentence ". .. except those who repent. ." is related to this or not. One group says that this sentence is related only to the last Command. That is, a person who repents and mends his ways, will no longer be a sinner in the sight of Allah and the common Muslims, but the first two Commands will remain effective, i.e. the sentence will be enforced on him and his evidence will never be accepted in future. To this group belong eminent jurists like Qazi Shuraih, Said bin Musayyab, Said bin Jubair, Hasan Basri, Ibrahim Nakha`i Ibn Sirin, Makhul, `Abdur Rahman bin Zaid, Abu Hanifah, Abu Yusuf, Zufar, Muhammad, Sufyan _Thauri, and Hasan bin Saleh. The other group says that the clause... except those who repent . .." is not related to the first Command but is related to the other two. That is, after repentance, not only will the evidence of the offender who has been punished for qazf be acceptable, but he wilt also not be regarded as a sinner. This group comprises jurists of the status of `Ata', Ta'us, Mujahid, Sha`bi, Qasim bin Muhammad, Salim, Zuhri, `Ikrimah, `Umar bin `Abdul `Aziz, Ibn Abi Nujaih, Sideman bin Yasar, Masruq, Zahhak, Malik bin Anas, `Uthman al-Batti, Laith bin Sa`d, Shafi`i, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Ibn Jarir Tabari. Among other arguments, these scholars cite the verdict of Hadrat `Umar which he gave in the case of Mughirah bin Shu`bah. For, according to some traditions, after enforcing the punishment, Hadrat `Umar said to Abu Bakrah and his two companions: "If you repent (or confess your lie), I shall accept your evidence in future, otherwise not." His companions confessed but not Abu Bakrah. On the face of it, it appears to be a strong argument. But from the details given above of Mughirah bin Shu`bah's case, it would become obvious that it is not correct to cite this precedent in support of this view. For in that case, there was complete unanimity as far as the act (of sexual intercourse) was concerned and Mughirah bin Shu`bah himself did not deny it. The point of dispute was the identity of the woman. Mughirah said that she was his own wife, whom the accusers had mistaken for Umm Jamil. Then it had also been established that the wife of Hadrat Mughirah and Umm Jamil resembled with each other to a degree that from the distance and in the kind of light that they were seen, the former could Be mistaken for the latter. But the circumstantial evidence was wholly in favour of Mughirah bin Shu'bah, and a witness of the case also had admitted that the woman was not clearly visible. That is why Hadrat `Umar decided the case in favour of Mughirah bin Shu`bah, and after

punishing Abu Bakrah, said the words as mentioned in the above-quoted traditions. This clearly shows that the real intention of Hadrat 'Umar was to impress on the accusers that they should confess that they had given way to undue suspicion and that they should repent of accusing people on the basis of such suspicions in future, otherwise their evidence would never be accepted. From this it cannot be concluded that in the eyes of Hadrat 'Umar the evidence of a person whose falsehood had been established, could become acceptable just after he had repented. The truth is that in this matter the view of the former group is more sound. None except Allah can know whether a person has repented sincerely or not. If a person repents before us, we may not consider him as a transgressor afterwards, but once his falsehood has been established, we cannot afford to trust him in future simply because he has uttered repentance. Moreover, the words in the Text themselves indicate that except those who repent . .. " is related only to ". .. they themselves are transgressors" . The reason is that the first two things, in the sentence ---" flog them with eighty stripes, and never accept their evidence afterwards"--have been given in the imperative form, while the third thing-- "they themselves are transgressors"-is a predicate. Then the clause"... except those who repent ..." just after the predicate itself indicates that the exception relates to the predicate and not to the two imperative sentences. Nevertheless, if it is conceded that the exception is not confined to the last sentence, one does not understand why it should be made to apply to "never accept their evidence" only and not extended to "flog them with eighty stripes" also.

(10) A question may be asked: Why should not the exception in "... .except those who repent...." be made applicable to the first Command also? Qazf after all is a sort of defamation. Why should not a person who confesses his guilt, apologizes and repents, be let off, when Allah Himself says: "... except those who repent and trend their ways; Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. " It will be strange that Allah forgives while the people do not forgive. The answer is that the act of Taubah (repentance) is not merely uttering the word Taubah with the tongue; it lather implies having a feeling of regrets, a resolve to reform and an inclination to do right; and this can only be known to Allah whether a person has repented sincerely or not. That is why on repentance worldly punishments are not forgiven but only punishments of the Hereafter; and that is why, Allah dces not say that if the offenders repent, they they be forgiven, but says: "For those who repent, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." If the worldly punishments are also excused on repentance, there will be no offender who will not offer repentance in order to escape his sentence.

(11) Another side of the question is that if a person cannot produce witnesses in support of his accusation, it may not necessarily mean that he is a liar. Is it not possible that he be true in his accusation, yet he may fail to produce evidence? Then, how is it that he should be condemned as a sinner on account of his failure to produce witnesses not only by the people but also by Allah ? The answer is that even if a person is an eye-witness to the immorality committed by an other person, he will be considered as a sinner for publicizing the act and accusing the offender without necessary evidence. The Divine Law does not want that if a person gets polluted in filth in a private place, the other person should start spreading the filth in the .whole society. If he has any knowledge of the presence of the filth, there are two ways open for him: either he should let it remain where it is, or he should produce a proof of its existence, so that the officials of the Islamic State should cleanse it. There is no third way for him. If he

publicizes it, he will be committing the crime of spreading the filth everywhere; and if he brings the matter to the notice of the officials without satisfactory evidence, they will not be able to deal with it effectively. The result will be that the failure of the case will become a means of spreading the filth and encouraging the wicked element of society. Therefore, the one who commits qazf without necessary proof and evidence, will in any case be a sinner even if he be we in his accusation.

(12) The Hanafi jurists hold that the qazif should be given a lighter punishment than the one who is convicted of zina. That is, he. should be given eighty stripes but flogging should be less intense, the reason being that his being a liar is not certain in the offense for which he is being punished.

(13) Majority of the jurists including the Hanafis are of the view that only one punishment will be enforced on the qazif no matter how often he repeats the accusation before or during the enforcement of the punishment. If after the punishment the qazif goes on repeating the same accusation, the punishment which he has already been awarded, will suffice. however, if after the enforcement of the prescribed punishment, he brings another charge of zina against the accused, he will be tried again for the new charge of qazf. Abu Bakrah after getting the punishment in the case against Mughirah bin Shu`bah, went on repeating openly that he bore witness that Mughirah had committed zina. Hadrat `Umar wanted to try him again, but as he was repeating the same accusation, Hadrat `Ali expressed the opinion that he could not be tried again and Hadrat `Umar conceded it. After this the jurists became almost unanimous that a qazif who has received the prescribed punishment for a crime, cannot he tried again unless he commits a fresh crime of qazf.

(14) There is a difference among the jurists with regard to qazf against a group. According to the Hanafi s, if a person accuses a number of persons in one word or in more words separately, he will be awarded only one prescribed punishment unless, of course, lie commits a- fresh crime of qazf after the enforcement of the first punishment. The words of the verse "Those who accuse chaste woman... "- indicate that the accuser of one person or more persons deserves only one punishment. Moreover, there can be no zina for which at least two persons cannot be accused, but in spite of that the Law-giver has prescribed only one punishment and not two, one for accusing the woman and the other for accusing the man. Contrary to this, Imam Shafi`i holds that the person who accuses a group of persons, whether in one word or in more words separately, will be awarded as many punishments as the number of the persons accused, one for each. The same is the opinion of `Uthman al-Batti. However, the ruling of Ibn Abi Laila, to which Sha`bi and Auza`i also subscribe, is that the one who accuses a group of persons of zina in one word, deserves one punishment, and the one who accuses them separately in separate words, deserves separate punishments, one for each.

6Allah is the most merciful of all.

7These verses were sent down some time after the preceding verses. The Law of Qazf prescribed the punishment for the person who accused the other man or woman of zina, and did not produce witnesses

to prove his charge, but the question naturally arose, what should a man do if he finds his own wife involved in zina? If he kills her, he will be guilty of murder and punishable; if he goes to get witnesses, the offender might escape; if he tries to ignore the matter, he cannot do so for long. He can, of course, divorce the woman, but in this case there will be no moral or physical punishment either for the woman or her seducer; and if the illicit intercourse results in pregnancy, he will have to suffer the burden of bringing up another person's child. Initially this question was raised by Hadrat Sa`d bin `Ubadah as an hypothetical case, who said that if he happened to see such a thing in his own house, he would not go in search of witnesses, but would settle the matter there and then with the sword. (Bukhari, Muslim). But soon afterwards actual cases were brought before the Holy Prophet by the husbands who were eyewitnesses of this thing. According to traditions related by Abdullah bin Mas`ud and Ibn `Umar, an Ansar Muslim (probably `Uwaimir `Ajlani) came to the Holy Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah, if a person finds another man with his wife, and utters an accusation, you will enforce the prescribed punishment of qazf On him; if he commits murder, you will have him killed; if he keeps quiet, he will remain involved in anguish; then, what should he do?" At this the Holy Prophet prayed, "O Allah, give a solution of this problem." (Muslim, Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Ahmad, Nasa`i). Ibn 'Abbas has reported that Hilal bin Umayyah presented the case of his wife whom he had himself witnessed involved in the act of sin. The Holy Prophet said, "Bring your proof, otherwise you will have the prescribed punishment of qazf inflicted on you." At this a panic spread among the Companions, and Hilal said, "I swear by Allah Who has sent you as a Prophet that I am speaking the truth: I have seen it with my eyes and heard it with my ears: I am sure Allah will send down a Command, which will protect my back (from the punishment). So, this verse was revealed." (Bukhari, Ahmad, Abu Da'ud). The legal procedure which has been laid down in this verse, is termed as the Law of Li `an.

The details of the cases which the Holy Prophet judged in accordance with the Law of Li'an are found in the books of Hadith and these form the source and basis of this law.

According to the details of Hilai bin Umayyah's case as reported in sibah Sitta, Musnad Ahmad and Tafsir Ibn Jarir, on the authority of Ibn `Abbas and Anas bin Malik, both Hilai and his wife were presented before the Holy Prophet, who first of all apprised them of the Divine Law, and then said: "You should note it well that the punishment of the Hereafter is much severer than the punishment of this world." Hilai submitted that his charge was absolutely correct. The woman denied it. The Holy Prophet then said: "Let us proceed according to the Law of Li'an." So, Hilal stood up first and swore oaths according to the Qur'anic Command. The Holy Prophet went on reminding them again and again: "Allah knows that one of you is certainly a liar: then, will one of you repent?" Before Hilal swore for the fifth time, the people who were present there, said to him, "Fear God: the punishment of the world is lighter than of the Hereafter. The fifth oath will make the punishment obligatory on you. " But Hilal said that God Who had protected his back (from punishment) in this world, will also spare him in the Hereafter. After this he swore the fifth oath, too. Then the woman began to swear oaths. Before she swore the fifth oath, she was also stopped and counseled, "Fear God: the worldly punishment is easier to bear than the punishment of the Hereafter. This last oath will make the Divine punishment obligatory on you." Hearing this the woman hesitated a

little. The people thought that she was going to make the confession. But instead of that she said: "I do not want to put my clan to disgrace for ever," and swore for the fifth time, too. At this the Holy Prophet ordered separation between them and ruled that her child after birth would be attributed to her and not to the man; that nobody after that would blame her or her child; that anybody who accused either of them would incur the punishment of qazf and that she had no right left to claim maintenance, etc. from Hilal, during her Legal waiting period, because she was being separated neither on account of divorce nor due to the husband's death. Then the Holy Prophet asked the people to see whether the child on birth took after Hilai or the man who was being accused in connection with the woman. After delivery when it was seen that the child took . after the other man, the Holy Prophet said: `If there had been no swearing of the oaths (or if Allah's Book had not settled the matter before this), I would have dealt with this woman most severely."

The details of the case of `Uwaimir `Ajlani have been cited in Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and Musnad Ahmad, on the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd Sa'idi and Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both). According to these, 'Uwaimir and his wife were both summoned to the Prophet's Mosque. Before proceeding against them in accordance with the Law of Li an, the Holy Prophet warned them thrice, saying: "Allah knows full well that one of you is a liar: then, will one of you repent ?" When neither repented, they were told to exercise Li'an. After that `Uwaimir said, "O Messenger of Allah, now if I keep this woman, I would be a liar" and then he divorced her thrice there and then even without the Holy Prophet's permission to do so. According to Sahl bin Sa`d, the Holy Prophet enforced the divorce to separate them, and said, "There shall be separation between the husband and the wife if they exercise Li'an. 'This became established as a Sunnah that the couple who swore against each other would separate never to marry again. Ibn `Umar only says this that the Holy Prophet enforced separation between them. Sahl bin Sa`d, however, adds that the woman was pregnant and `Uwaimir said that it was not due to his seed; so the child was attributed to the mother. The practice that thus became established was that such a child would inherit the mother and the mother him.

Apart from these two cases, we find several other traditions also in the books of Hadith, which may or may not be related to these cases, but some of these traditions mention other cases as well, which provide important components of the Law of Li'an.

Ibn `Umar has reported traditions according to which the Holy Prophet ordered separation between the spouses after Li'an and ruled that in case of pregnancy the child would be attributed to the mother (sibah Sitta, Ahmad). According to another tradition of Ibn `Umar, the Holy Prophet said to a man and woman after Li'an: "Now your affair is with Allah: in any case one of you is a liar." Then he said to the man, "Now she is not yours: you have no right on her, nor can you treat her vindictively in any way." The man requested, "Sir, please have my dowry returned to me." The Holy Prophet said, "You have no right to have the dowry back. If you are true in your accusation, the dowry is the price of the pleasure you had from her when she was lawful to you; and if your accusation is false, the dowry has receded farther away from you than it is from her." (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud).

Daraqutni has quoted `Ali bin Abi Talib and Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with them both) as saying: "The Sunnah that has become established is that the spouses who have exercised Li'an against each other, can never re-unite in marriage." Again Daraqutni has quoted Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas as saying, "The Holy Prophet himself has ruled that the two can never re-unite in wedlock.'

Qabisah bin Zu'aib has reported that a man in the time of Hadrat `Umar alleged that his wife was pregnant by illicit intercourse, then admitted that it was by his own seed, but after delivery again denied that the child was his. The case was brought to the court of Hadrat `Umar, who enforced the prescribed punishment of qazf on the man and ruled that the child would be attributed to him. (Daraqutni, Baihaqi).

Ibn , `Abbas has reported that a man came to the Holy Prophet and said. "Sir, I have a wife for whom I have great love; but her weakness is that she does not mind if the other man touches her. (By this he might have meant zina or a lesser moral evil)." The Holy Prophet replied, "You may divorce her." The man said, "But I cannot live without her." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said, "Then you should pull on with her. " (The Holy Prophet did not ask the man for any explanation, nor took his complaint as an accusation of zina, nor applied the law of li`an). (Nasa'i)

Abu Hurairah has narrated the case of a beduin who came to the Holy Prophet and said that his wife had given birth to a dark-coloured son and he was doubtful that it was his. (That is, the child's color had caused him the suspicion, otherwise there was no ground with him to accuse her of zina). The Holy Prophet asked him, "Do you have any camels ?" The man replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet then asked, "What is their color?" He said they were red. The Holy Prophet said, "Is any of them grey also?" He said, "Yes, Sir, some are gray also." The Holy Prophet asked, "What caused that color?" He said, "Might be due to some ancestor of theirs." The Holy Prophet replied, "The same might be the cause for your child's color." And he did not allow him to doubt and deny the child's fatherhood. (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Abu Da'ud).

According to another tradition of Abu Hurairah, explaining the verse of !i `an the Holy Prophet said: "The woman who brings a child into a family which does not actually belong to it (i.e. marries a man of the family with illicit pregnancy), has no relation with Allah. Allah will never admit her into Paradise. Similarly, the man who denies the fatherhood of his child, whereas the child looks up towards him, will never see Allah on the Day of Judgment, and Allah will put him to disgrace in front of all mankind." (Abu Da`ud, Nasa'i, Darimi).

Thus, the verse of li `an, the traditions of the Holy Prophet, the precedents and the general principles of the Shari `ah together form the basis of the Law of Li'an, which the jurists have formulated a complete code with the following main clauses:

(1) There is a difference of opinion about the man who sees his wife involved in zina with another man

and kills him instead of having recourse to li`an. One group holds that he will be put to death because he had no right to take the law in his own hand and enforce the punishment. The other group says that he will not be put to death nor will he be held accountable for his act in any way provided that it is confirmed that he killed the man (adulterer) on account of zina and nothing else. Imam Ahmad and Ishaq bin Rahaviyah maintain that the man will have to produce two witnesses to confirm that he killed the adulterer only on account of zina. Ibn al-Qasim and Ibn Habib, from among the Malikis, attach an additional condition that the murdered person should be a married man; otherwise the murderer will be made subject to the law of retaliation for killing an unmarried adulterer. But the majority of jurists are of the opinion that the man will be exonerated from retaliation only when he produces four witnesses to establish zina, or if the murdered person himself confesses before death that he committed zina with the wife of the murderer, and if it is also confirmed that the murdered person was a married man. (Nail al-Autar, vol. IV, p. 228).

(2) The Law of Li `an cannot be applied mutually at home, but in a court of law in front of the Judge.

(3) Exercise of li`an is not the sole right of the man; the woman also has a right to demand it in a court of law if her husband accuses her of zina, or denies fatherhood of her child.

(4) There is a difference of opinion among the jurists as to whether li `an can be resorted to between any husband and his wife, or whether they have to satisfy certain conditions. Imam Shafi'i holds that only that husband whose oath is legally reliable and who can exercise the right of divorce, can swear the oaths of li `an. In other words, sanity and maturity according to him, are the sufficient conditions which entitle a husband to exercise li'an no matter whether the spouses are Muslim or non-Muslim, slave or free, and whether their evidence is acceptable or not, and whether the Muslim husband has a Muslim or a zimmi wife. Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad have also given almost the same opinion. But the Hanafis maintain that li'an can be exercised only by free Muslim spouses, who should not have been convicted of qazf previously. If both husband and wife are non Muslim, or slaves, or convicted of qazf previously, they cannot exercise li `an against each other. Furthermore, if the woman was ever found guilty of an illicit or doubtful relationship with another man, exercise of li `an will not be valid. The Hanafis have imposed these conditions, because according to them, there is no other difference between li `an and qazf than this: -the other man commits qazf, he is given the prescribed punishment, but if the husband himself commits it, he can escape the punishment by exercising li `an. In all other respects, li `an and qazf are identical. Moreover, since according to the Hanafis, the oaths of li an are in the nature of evidence, they do not concede this right to a person who is not legally fit to give evidence. But the truth is that in this matter the position of the Hanafis is weak, and the opinion of Imam Shafi`i is correct, because the Qur'an has not made the accusation of the wife a component part of the verse of qazf, but has prescribed a separate law for it. Therefore, it cannot be linked with the law of qazf and treated under the conditions prescribed for qazf. Then, the wording of the verse of li'an is different from the wording of the verse of qazf and the two lay down separate injunctions. Therefore, the law of li `an should be derived from the verse of li `an and not from the verse of qazf. For instance, according to the verse of qazf, the person

who accuses chaste women (muhsanat) of zina, deserves to be punished. But in the verse of li `an, there is no condition of the chastity of the wife. A woman might have committed sins in life, but if she repents later on and marries somebody, the husband is not authorised by the verse of li `an to accuse her unjustly whenever he likes, and to deny fatherhood of her children simply because she had once lived in sin. The other equally important reason is that there is a world of difference between accusing a wife and accusing the other woman. The law cannot treat the two alike. A man has nothing to do with the other woman. He is neither attached to her emotionally, nor his honour, his family relations and rights are at stake nor his lineage. The only meaningful interest he can have in the woman's character can be his desire to see a morally pure and clean society. Contrary to this, his relationship with his wife is deep and of varied nature. She is the custodian of the purity of his race, of his property and his house; she is his life partner, sharer of his secrets, and with her he is attached in most delicate and deep feelings. If she is morally corrupt, it will deal a serious blow to his honour, his interests and his progeny. These two things, therefore, cannot be considered alike, and the law cannot treat them as equal to each other. Is an evil affair of the wife of a zimmi, or a slave, or a convicted husband in any way different, or less serious, in consequences than that of the wife of a free, mature and sound Muslim? If the husband himself sees his wife involved in zina with another person, or has reasons to believe that his wife is pregnant by illicit intercourse, how can he be denied the right of li 'an? And if he is denied this right, what else is there in our law which can help him out of his awkward situation? The intention of the Qur'an seems to be to open a way out of a difficult situation for married couples in which a husband may find himself placed due to the wife's immorality or illicit pregnancy, or a wife due to the husband's false accusation or unjustified denial of the fatherhood of her child. This is not particularly the need of the free and sound Muslims alone; there is in fact nothing in the Qur'anic Text which may confine it to them only. As for the argument that the Qur'an has described the oaths of li `an as evidence (shahadat), and therefore the conditions of evidence will apply here, the logical implication would be that in case a righteous and just husband whose evidence is acceptable, takes the necessary oaths, and the wife declines to take the oaths, she would have to be stoned to death, because her immorality would thus become established. But it is strange that in this case the Hanafis do not recommend stoning. This is a clear proof of the fact that they too do not regard the oaths as exactly identical with evidence. The truth is that though the Qur'an describes the oaths of li `an as evidence, it does not regard them as evidence in the technical sense, otherwise it would have required the woman to swear eight oaths and not four.

(5) Li `an is not necessitated by an allusion or expression of doubt or suspicion, but only when the husband accuses his wife clearly of zina, or denies in plain words that the child is his. Imam Malik and Laith bin Sa`d impose an additional condition that the husband while exercising li `an must say that he has himself seen his wife involved in zina. But this is an unnecessary restriction which has no basis whatever in the Qur'an and Hadith.

(6) If after accusing his wife, the husband declines to swear the oaths, the verdict of Imam Abu Hanifah and his companions is that he will be imprisoned and shall not be released until he exercises li `an or confesses the falsehood of his accusation, in which case he will be awarded the prescribed punishment

of qazf On the contrary, Imam Malik, Shafi`i, Hasan bin Saleh and Laith bin Sa`d express the opinion that refusal to exercise li`an itself amounts to confessing one's being a liar, which makes the prescribed punishment of qazf obligatory.

(7) If after the swearing of oaths by the husband, the wife declines to lake the oaths, the Hanafis give the opinion that she should be imprisoned and should not be released until she exercises li `an, or else confesses her guilt of zina. On the contrary, the other Imams (as mentioned in clause 6 above) say that in this case she will be stoned to death. They base their argument on the Qur'anic injunction: "...it shall avert the punishment from her if she swears four times by Allah," Now that she declines to swear the oaths, she inevitably deserves the punishment. But the weakness in this argument is that the Qur'an does not specify here the nature of "punishment"; it simply mentions punishment. If it is argued that punishment here means the punishment of zina only, the answer is that for the punishment of zina the Qur'an has imposed the condition of four witnesses in clear words, and this condition cannot be fulfilled by four oaths sworn by one person. The husband's oaths can suffice for him to escape the punishment of qazf and for the wife to face the injunction of li `an, but they are not enough to prove the charge of zina against her. The woman's refusal to swear the oaths in self-defense certainly creates a suspicion, and a strong suspicion indeed, but a prescribed punishment cannot be enforced on the basis of suspicions. This thing cannot be considered as analogous with the prescribed punishment of qazf for the man, because his qazf is established, and that is why he is made to exercise li `an. But contrary to this, the woman's guilt of zina is not established unless she herself makes a confession of it or four eye-witnesses are produced to prove it.

(8) If the woman is pregnant at the time of li `an according to Imam Ahmad, li`an itself suffices to absolve the husband from the responsibility for pregnancy whether he has denied accepting it or not. Imam Shafi`i, however, says that accusation of zina by the husband and his refusal to accept responsibility for pregnancy are not one and the same thing. Therefore, unless the husband categorically refuses to accept the responsibility for pregnancy, he will be considered as responsible for it in spite of the accusation of zina by him, because the woman's being adulterous dces not necessarily mean that her pregnancy is also due to zina.

(9) Imam Malik, Imam Shafi`i and Imam Ahmad concede the husband's right to deny responsibility for pregnancy during pregnancy, and allow him the right of li`an on that basis. But Imam Abu Hanifah says that if the basis for the man's accusation is not Zina, but only this that he has found pregnancy in the woman when it could not possibly be due to him, exercise of li 'an should be deferred until after delivery because sometimes symptoms of pregnancy appear due to some disease and not actual pregnancy.

(10) If a husband denies fatherhood of a child, there is a consensus that li`an becomes necessary There is also a consensus that after he has accepted e child once (whether it is in clear words or by implication, e.g. by receiving congratulatory messages on its birth, or by treating it lovingly like. one's own child and taking due interest in its bringing up), he loses his right to deny him later, and if he does so, he makes

himself liable to the prescribed punishment of qazf. There is, however, a difference of opinion as to how long the father retains a right to deny fatherhood of the child. According to Imam Malik, if the husband was present at home while the wife was pregnant, he can deny the responsibility from the time of pregnancy till the time of delivery; after that he will have no right. However, if he was away from home and delivery took place in his absence, he can deny the child's fatherhood as soon as it comes to his knowledge. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, if he denies within a day or two of the child's birth, he will be absolved from the responsibility of the child after exercising li`an, but if he denies after a year or two, li`an will be valid, but he will not be absolved from the responsibility of the child. According to Imam Abu Yusuf, the father has the right to deny fatherhood within 40 days of the child's birth. or knowledge of its birth; after that he will have no right. But this restriction of 40 days is meaningless. The correct view is that of Imam Abu Hanifah that fatherhood can be denied within a day or two of the child's birth or knowledge of its birth, unless one is hindered from doing so due to a sound and genuine reason.

(11) If a husband accuses a divorced wife of zina, according to Imam Abu Hanifah, this will be a case of qazf and not of li `an. Li `an can be resorted to between the spouses and cannot be extended to a divorced woman unless it is a retractable divorce and the accusation is made within the period of retraction. But Imam Malik holds that this will be qazf only if it does not involve the question of accepting or denying the responsibility of pregnancy or fatherhood of the child. If it is not that, the man has the right to exercise li `an even after pronouncing the final divorce, because in that case he would not be having recourse to li `an for the purposes of bringing infamy on the woman but to absolve himself from the responsibility of the child who, he believes, is not his. The same almost is the opinion of Imam Shafi`i.

(12) There is a complete consensus of opinion in respect of certain legal implications of li `an, but certain others have been disputed by the jurists. The agreed ones are the following:

Neither the woman nor the man is liable to punishment. If the man denies fatherhood of the child, it will be attributed to the mother alone; it will neither be attributed to the father nor will inherit him; the child will inherit the mother and the mother him. Thereafter nobody will have the right to call the woman adulterous nor the child illegitimate, whether the people might be wholly sure of her being adulterous under the circumstances at the time of li `an. Any person who repeats the old charge against the woman or her child, will make himself liable to the punishment of qazf. The woman's dowry will remain intact, but she will not be entitled to claim maintenance, etc. from the man, and she will become forbidden to him for ever,

There is, however, a difference of opinion in respect of two things:

(a) After li `an how will separation be effected between the husband and the wife?

(b) Is it possible for them to re-unite in marriage after they have been separated on account of li'an?

As regards the first question, Imam Shafi'i holds the opinion that as soon as a man has exercised his li'an, the woman stands automatically separated whether she refutes the man's charge by her li `an or not. Imam Malik, Laith bin S`ad and Zufar maintain that separation is effected when both a man and a woman have exercised their li `an one after the other. Imam Abu Hanifah, Abu Yusuf and Muhammad hold that separation dces not take place automatically after li`an, but it is effected by the judge. If the husband pronounces divorce, it takes effect, otherwise the judge will announce their separation.

Regarding the second, question, the opinion of Imam Malik, Abu Yusuf, Zufar, Sufyan _Thauri, Ishaq bin Rahaviyah, Shafi`i, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Hasan bin Zaid is that the spouses who have been separated due to li'an, are forbidden to each other for ever. Even if they wish to remarry, they cannot do so in any case. The same is the opinion also of Hadrat `Umar, Hadrat `Ali and Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud. Contrary to this, Said bin Musayyab, Ibrahim Nakha`i, Sha`bi, Said bin Jubair, Abu Hanifah and Muhammad (may Allah be pleased with them all) opine that if the husband confesses his lie, and he is awarded the prescribed punishment for qazf, the two can re-unite in marriage. They argue that it is li `an which makes them unlawful for each other. As long as they stand by their li `an, they will remain forbidden for each other, but when the husband confesses his lie and receives the punishment, li `an will become null and void and so will their prohibition to marry each other again.

8This is an allusion to the slander against Hadrat `A'ishah. Allah has Himself described it as Ifk (false accusation, calumny) which implies its total refutation
From here begins the mention of the incident which provided the occasion of this Surah's revelation. We have reproduced the initial part of it in the Introduction as related by Hadrat `A' ishah herself; the rest of it is reproduced below. She savs:

"Rumours about this slander went on spreading in the city for about a month, which caused great distress and anguish to the Holy Prophet. I cried due to helplessness and my parents were sick with mental agony. At last one day the Holy Prophet visited us and he sat near me, which he had not done since the slander had staved. Feeling that something decisive was going to happen that day, Hadrat Abu Bakr and Umm Ruman (Hadrat `A'ishah's mother) also sat near us. The Holy Prophet started the conversation, saying: `A'ishah, I have heard this and this about you: if you are innocent, I expect that Allah will declare your innocence. But it u you have committed a sin, you should offer repentance and ask for Allah's forgiveness; when a servant (of Allah) confesses his guilt and repents, Allah forgives him.' Hearing these words, tears dried in my eyes. I looked up to my father expecting that he would reply to the Holy Prophet, but he said, `Daughter, I do not knave what I should say.' Then I turned to my mother, but she also did not know what to say. At last I said, `You have all heard something about me and believed it. Now if I say that I am innocent-and Allah is my witness that I am innocent-you will not believe me; and if I confess something which I never didand Allah knows that I never did it-you will believe me.' At that time I tried to call to memory the name of Prophet Jacob but could not recall it. Therefore in view of the predicament that I was placed in, I said, ' `I cannot but repeat the words which the father of Prophet Joseph had spoken: fa-sabrun jamil: I will bear this patiently with good grace.' (XII: 83). Saying this I lay down and

turned to the other side. I was thinking that Allah was aware of my innocence, and He would certainly reveal the truth, but I could never imagine that Divine Revelation would come down in my defense, which the people will read and recite till the Last Day. What I thought probable was that the Holy Prophet would see a dream in which Allah would indicate my innocence. But in the meantime suddenly, the state of receiving Revelation appeared on the Holy Prophet, when pearl-like drops of perspiration used to gather on his face even in severe winter. We all held our breath and sat silent. As for me I was fearless, but my parents seemed to be struck with fear; they did not know what the Divine Revelation would be. When the Revelation was over, the Holy Prophet seemed to be very pleased. Overjoyed with happiness the first words he spoke were: `Congratulations, `A'ishah, Allah has sent down proof of your innocence' and then he recited these ten verses (11-21). At this my mother said to me, `Get up and thank the Holy Prophet.' I said, 'I shall neither thank him nor you two, but thank Allah Who has sent down my absolution. You did not even so, much as contradict the charge against me.' (This is not the translation of any one tradition, but the substance of many traditions which are found in the books of Hadith in connection with the incident of the slander against Hadrat `A'ishah).

One subtle point to be understood here is that before mentioning the absolution of Hadrat 'A'ishah, a full section of verses has been devoted to the Commandments pertaining to zina, qazf and li'an by which Allah means to admonish that zina is not a slight matter which may be used as a means of entertaining the people in a gathering. It is very serious.'If the accuser is right in his accusation he should produce witnesses, and get a most horrible punishment inflicted upon the adulterer and the adulteress. If the accuser is false, he deserves to be given 80 stripes, so that nobody may dare to bring a false charge against the other person. And if the accuser is a husband, he will have to exercise /i an in a court of law to settle the matter. So, none who utters such an accusation will have peace. The Islamic society which has been brought about for the purpose of establishing goodness and piety in the world, can neither tolerate zina as a means of entertainment nor endure loose talk about it as a diversion and amusement.

9Only a few persons have been mentioned in traditions, who were spreading the rumours. They were: `Abdullah bin Ubayy, Zaid bin Rifa'ah (who was probably the son of Rifa'ah bin Zaid, the Jewish hypocrite), Mistah bin Uthathah, Hassan bin Thabit, and Hamnah bint Jahsh. The first two of these were hypocrites, and the other three Muslims, who had been involved in the mischief due to misunderstanding and weakness. Names of the other People who were more or less involved in the mischief have not been mentioned in the books of Hadith and life of the Holy Prophet.

10That is, "You should not lose heart. Though the hypocrites, according to their own presumptions, have made the worst attack on you, it will eventually bring misfortune on them, and will prove to be a blessing in disguise for you."

As mentioned in the Introduction above, the hypocrites had planned to inflict a defeat on the Muslims on the moral front, which was their real field of superiority and responsible for their victory on every other front against the opponents. But Allah turned this mischief into a means of strength for the Muslims. On

this occasion, the conduct and attitude adopted by the Holy Prophet, Hadrat Abu Bakr and his family, and the Muslims at large proved beyond any doubt that they were the purest people morally, tolerant and just in nature, noble and forbearing in character. If the Holy Prophet had wished he could have got the people responsible for the attack on his honor beheaded immediately. But he bore everything with patience for a whole month. And when Divine injunction came down from Allah, he enforced the punishment for qazf only on those three Muslims whose guilt was established, and even spared the hypocrites. Hadrat Abu Bakr's own relative, whose whole family he had been supporting all along, continued heaping disgrace on him publicly, but that noble man neither severed his family relations with him nor stopped monetary help to him and his family. None of the wives of the Holy Prophet took the least part in the slander nor even expressed the slightest approval of it. So much so that Hadrat Zainab (a wife of the Holy Prophet), for whose sake her real sister, Hamnah bint Jahsh, was taking part in the slander, did not utter anything about her rival (Hadrat `A'ishah) except good words. According to Hadrat `A'ishah, herself: "Zainab among the wives of the Holy Prophet was my strongest rival, but when in connection with the incident of the slander, the Holy Prophet asked her opinion of me, she said, `O Messenger of Allah, I swear by God that I have perceived nothing in her except piety'." Hadrat `A'ishah's own nobility of character can be judged by this that though Hassan bin Thabit had played a prominent role in the campaign of slander against her, she continued to treat him with due honour and esteem. When the people reminded her that he was the man who had slandered her, she retorted, `No, he it was who used to rebut the anti-Islamic poets on behalf of the Holy Prophet and Islam.' Such was the conduct and attitude of those people who were directly affected by the slander. As for the other Muslims, their attitude can be judged from one instance. When Hadrat Abu Ayyub Ansari's wife mentioned before him the rumours of the slander, he said, "Mother of Ayyub, if you had been there in place of `A'ishah, would you have done that?" She replied, "By God, I would never have done it." Hadrat Ayyub then said, "Well, `A'ishah is a much better woman than you. As for myself. if I had been in place of Safwan, I could never have entertained such an evil thought and Safwan is a better Muslim than I. ¦ Thus, the result of the mischief engineered by the hypocrites was contrary to what they had planned to achieve, and the Muslims emerged out of this test morally stronger than before.

Then there was more good to come from this. The incident became the cause of some very important additions to the social law and injunctions of Islam. Through these the Muslims received such Commandments from Allah by which the Muslim society can be kept clean and protected against the creation and propagation of moral evils, and if at all they arise, they can be corrected promptly.

Furthermore, there was another aspect of goodness in it also. The Muslims came to understand fully that the Holy Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) had no knowledge of the unseen. He knew only that which Allah taught him. Beside that his knowledge was the same as that of a common man. For one full month he remained in great anxiety with regard to Hadrat `A'ishah. He would sometimes make enquiries from the maid-servant, sometimes from his other wives, and sometimes from Hadrat `Ali and Hadrat Usamah. At last when he spoke to Hadrat `A'ishah, he spoke only this: "If you have committed the sin, you should offer repentance, and if you are innocent, I expect that Allah will

declare your innocence." Had' he possessed any knowledge of the unseen, he would not have felt so upset" nor would have made enquiries, nor counselled repentance. However, when Divine Message revealed the truth, he received that knowledge which he had not possessed for more than a month. Thus Allah arranged to safeguard the Muslims, through direct experience and observation, against exaggerated notions in which people generally get involved in regard to their religious leaders on account of excessive blind faith. Perhaps this was the reason why Allah withheld Revelation for a month, for if Revelation had been sent down on the very first day, it could not have had any beneficial effect.

11That is, `Abdullah bin Ubayy, who was the real author of the false accusation and mischief. In some traditions it has been wrongly claimed that this verse refers to Hadrat Hassan bin _Thabit; this is actually due to a misunderstanding of the narrators themselves. As a matter of fact, Hadrat Hassan bin Thabit's only weakness was that he became involved in the mischief engineered by the hypocrites. Hafiz Ibn Kathir has rightly observed that if this tradition had not been included in Bukhari, it would not have deserved any notice. The greatest falsehood, rather a calumny, in this connection is the assertion by the Umayyads that it was Hadrat `Ali who had been referred to in this verse. A saying of Hisham bin `Abdul Malik has been cited in Bukhari, Tabarani and Baihaqi to the effect: "The one who had the greatest share of responsibility in it" refers to `Ali bin Abi Talib. The fact, however, is that Hadrat `Ali had no hand whatever in this mischief. The truth is that when Hadrat `Ali saw the Holy Prophet in a perturbed state of mind and the Holy Prophet asked for his counsel, he said: "Allah in this matter has not laid any restriction on you: suitable women are plenty: you may if you like divorce `A'ishah and marry another woman." But this did not at all mean that Hadrat `Ali had supported the accusation against Hadrat `A'ishah. His object was only to allay the Holy Prophet's mental anguish.

12This may also be translated as: "Why did they not have a good opinion of the people of their own community and society?" The words in the Text are comprehensive and contain a subtle meaning which should be understood well. What happened concerning Hadrat `A'ishah and Safwan bin Mu`attal was only this: A woman belonging to the caravan (apart from the fact that she was the Holy Prophet's wife) was left behind, and a man belonging to the same caravan, who was also left behind, chanced to see her and brought her on his camel to the camp. Now if a person alleges that when the two found themselves alone, they became involved in sin, the accusation would imply two other hypotheses: First, if the accuser himself (whether man or woman) had been there, he would certainly have availed of the rare opportunity and committed the sinful act, for he had never before chanced upon a person of the opposite sex in a situation like this. Second, the accuser's assessment of the moral condition of the society he belongs to is that in that society there is no man or woman who could possibly have abstained from sin in similar circumstances. This will be the case when it involves any one man and any one woman. But supposing if the man and the woman happened to belong to the same place, and the woman who was left behind by chance was the wife, or sister, or daughter of a friend, or a relative, or a neighbor, or an acquaintance of the man, the matter would become much more serious and grave. Then it would mean that the one who utters such an accusation has a very poor and degraded opinion of himself as well as of his society, which has nothing to do with morality and good sense. No gentleman can imagine that if he finds a

woman belonging to the family of a friend, or a neighbor or an acquaintance, stranded on the way, the first thing he would do would be to molest and dishonor her, and then would think of escorting her home. But here the matter was a thousand times more serious. The lady was no other than the wife of the Holy Prophet of Allah, whom every Muslim esteemed higher than his own mother, and whom Allah Himself had forbidden for every Muslim just like his own mother. The man was not only a follower of the same caravan and a soldier of the same army, and an inhabitant of the same city, but also a Muslim, who believed in the lady's husband to be the Messenger of Allah and his religious leader and guide, and had even followed him and fought in the most dangerous battle at Badr. Viewed against this background, it would seem that the person who uttered such an accusation and those who considered the accusation as probable, formed a very poor opinion not only of their moral selves but also of the whole society.

13That is, `The accusation was not worth any consideration; the Muslims should have rejected it there and then as a lie and a falsehood." A question might be asked: Why did not the Holy Prophet and Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq reject it on the very first day, and why did they give it all that importance? The answer is that the position of the husband and the father is different from that of the common people. Though none else can know a woman better than her husband and a righteous husband cannot doubt the character of a virtuous and pious wife only on account of the people's accusations, but when the wife is accused, the husband is placed in a difficult situation. Even if he rejects it outright as a calumny, the accusers will not listen. They will rather say that the woman is clever and has beguiled the husband into believing that she is virtuous and pious whereas she is not. A similar situation is faced by the parents. They also cannot remove . the accusers' slander regarding their daughter's chastity even if they know that the accusation is manifestly false. The same thing had afflicted the Holy Prophet, Hadrat Abu Bakr and Umm Ruman, otherwise they did not entertain any doubt about Hadrat `A'ishah's character. That is why the Holy Prophet had declared in his sermon that he had neither seen any evil in his wife nor in the man who was being mentioned in the slander.

14` .... in the sight of Allah": in the Law of Allah, or according to the Law of Allah. Obviously, in Allah's knowledge, the accusation was by itself false and its falsehood was in no way dependent on the production of witnesses by the accusers.

Here nobody should have the misunderstanding that failure to bring witnesses is being regarded as the basis and argument to prove that the accusation was false, and that the Muslims are also being told to regard it as a manifest calumny only because the accusers did not bring four witnesses. This misunderstanding can arise if one does not keep in view the background of the actual incident. As a matter of fact, none of the accusers had actually witnessed the thing which they were uttering with their tongues. The only basis of their accusation was that Hadrat `A'ishah had been left behind from the caravan and afterwards Safwan had brought her to the camp on his camel. From this nobody with a little common sense could conclude that Hadrat `A'ishah's being left behind was intentional. These are not the ways of those who do these things. It cannot happen that the wife of the army commander quietly stays back with a man, and then the same man makes her ride on his camel and makes haste to catch up with

the army at the next halting place in the open daylight at noon. The situation itself warranted that they were innocent. There could, however, be some justification in the charge if the accusers had seen something with their own eyes, otherwise the circumstances on which the accusers had based their accusation did not contain any ground for doubt and suspicion. "

15These verses, especially verse 12, wherein Allah says: "Why did not the Believing men and the Believing women have a good opinion of themselves 'I" provide the general principle that all dealings in the Islamic society must be based on `good faith'. The question of a bad opinion should arise only when there is a definite and concrete basis for it. Every person should, as a matter of principle, be considered as innocent unless there are sound reasons to hold him guilty or suspect. Every person should be considered as truthful unless there are strong grounds for holding him as unreliable

16The direct interpretation of the verse, in the context in which it occurs, is this: "Those who cast aspersions, propagate evil, publicize it and bring Islamic morality into disrepute, deserve punishment." The words in the Text, however, comprehend all the various forms that can be employed for the propagation of evil. These include actual setting up of brothels, production of erotic stories, songs, paintings, plays and dramas as well as all kinds of mixed gatherings at clubs and hotels, which induce the people to immoralities. The Qur'an holds all those who resort to such things as criminals, who deserve punishment not only in the Hereafter but in this world as well. Accordingly it is the duty of an Islamic government to put an end to all such means of propagating immorality. Its penal law must hold all those acts as cognizable offenses which the Qur'an mentions as crimes against public morality and declares the offenders punishable.

17"You do not know...": "You do not visualize the full impact of individual acts on society as a whole: Allah knows best the number of people who are affected by these acts and their cumulative effect on the collective life of the community. You should accordingly trust in Him and do all you can to eradicate and suppress the evils pointed out by Him. These are not trivial matters to be treated lightly; these have very serious repercussions and the offenders must be dealt with severely."

18`Satan' is bent upon involving you in all kinds of pollutions and indecencies: had it not been for the mercy and kindness of Allah Who enables you to differentiate between good and evil and helps you to educate and reform yourselves, you would not have been able to lead a pure and virtuous life on the strength of your own faculties and initiative alone.

19It is Allah's Will alone which decides whom to make pious and virtuous. His decisions are not arbitrary but based on knowledge. He alone knows who is anxious to live a life of virtue and who is attracted towards a life of sin. Allah hears a person's most secret talk, and is aware of everything that passes in his mind. It is on the basis of this direct knowledge that Allah decides whom to bless with piety and virtue and whom to ignore.

20Hadrat `A'ishah has stated that after the revelation of verses 11-21 absolving her from the accusation, Hadrat Abu Bakr swore that he would no longer support Mistah bin Uthatha. This was because the man had shown absolutely no regard for the relationship nor for the favours that Abu Bakr had all along been showing him and his family. At this verse 22 was revealed and Hadrat Abu Bakr, on hearing it, immediately said: "By God! we do want that Allah should forgive us." Consequently he again started to help Mistah and in a more liberal manner than before. According to Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, some other Companions besides Hadrat Abu Bakr, also had sworn that they would discontinue helping those who had taken an active part in the slander. After the revelation of this verse, all of them revoked their oaths and the ill-will that had been created by the mischief was gone.

Here a question may arise as to whether a person, who swears for something and Later on revokes the oath on fording that there was no good in it and adopts a better and more virtuous course, should offer expiation for breaking the oath or not. One group of the jurists is of the opinion that adoption of the virtuous course itself is the expiation and nothing more needs to be done. They base their argument on this verse where Allah commanded Hadrat Abu Bakr to revoke his oath but did not require him to atone for it. They also cite a Tradition of the Holy Prophet in support of their argument, saying: "lf anybody takes an oath for something and later on fords that another course is better and adopts it, his adoption of a better course by itself is the atonement for breaking the oath."

The other group is of the view that there is a clear Commandment in the Qur'an concerning the breaking of oath (II: 225, V: 89), which has neither been abrogated by this verse nor clearly amended. Therefore the earlier Commandment stands. No doubt, Allah commanded Hadrat Abu Bakr to revoke his oath but He did not tell him that expiation was not necessary. As regards the Tradition of the Holy Prophet, it only means this that the sin of taking an oath for a wrong thing is wiped out when the right course is adopted; it does not absolve one from making expiation for the oath itself. Another Tradition of the Holy Prophet clarifies this view. He said: "Whoso swears for something and then finds that another course is better than the one he had sworn for, he should adopt the better course and atone for his oath. " This shows that expiation for breaking one's oath and expiation of the sin for not doing good are different things. The expiation for the first is to adopt the right course, and for the second the same as has been laid down in the Qur'an. For further explanation, see E.N. 46 of Surah Saad.

21The word ghafilat as used in the Text means the women who are simple, unpretentious souls, who do not know any artifice, who have pious hearts and have no idea of immorality. They cannot even imagine that their names could ever be associated with any slander. The Holy Prophet has said: "To slander chaste women is one of the seven 'deadly' sins." According to another Tradition cited by Tabarani from Hadrat Huzaifah, the Holy Prophet said: "To slander a pious woman suffices to ruin the good deeds of a hundred years. "

21aFor explanation, see E.N. 55 of Surah Ya Sin and E.N. 25 of Ha Mim Sajdah.

22This verse enunciates a fundamental principle: Impure men are a fit match for impure women and pious men are a fit match for pious women. It never happens that a man is good in all other aspects but is addicted to a solitary vice. As a matter of fact, his very habits, manners and demeanor, all contain a number of evil traits, which sustain and nourish that single vice. It is impossible that a man develops a vice all of a sudden without having any trace of its existence in his demeanor and way of life. This is a psychological truth which everybody experiences in the daily lives of the people. How is it then possible that a man who has all along lived a pure and morally clean life, will put up and continue to live for years in love with a wife who is adulterous? Can a woman be imagined who is an adulteress, but she does not manifest her evil character through her talk, gait, manners and deportment? Is it possible for a virtuous man of high character to live happily with a woman of this type? What is being suggested here is that people in future should not credulously put their belief in any rumor that reaches them. They should carefully see as to who is being accused and on what account and whether the accusation fairly sticks on the person or not. And when there exists no trace of evidence to support the accusation, people cannot believe it just because a foolish or wicked person has uttered it.

Some commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that evil things are for the evil people and good things for the good people: the good people are free from the evil things which the wicked people utter about them. Some others have interpreted it to mean that evil deeds only go with evil people and good deeds with good people: the pious people are free from the evil deeds which the wicked people ascribe to them. Still others interpret it to mean that evil and filthy talk is indulged in only by the evil and filthy people and good and pious talk only by the good and pious people: the pious people are free from the sort of talk that these mischievous' people are indulging in. The words of the verse are comprehensive and can be interpreted in any of the three ways, but the first meaning that strikes the reader is the one that we have adopted above, and the same fits in more meaningfully with the context than others.

23The Commandments given in the beginning of the Surah were meant to help eradicate evil when it had actually appeared in society. The Commandments being given now are meant to prevent the very birth of evil, to reform society and root out the causes responsible for the creation and spread of evil. Before we study these Commandments, it will be useful to understand two things clearly:

First, the revelation of these Commandments immediately after the Divine appraisal of the incident of the "slander" clearly indicates that permeation of a calumny against the noble person of a wife of the Holy Prophet in the society, was the direct result of the existence of a sexually charged atmosphere, and in the sight of Allah there was no other way of cleansing society of the evil than of prohibiting free entry into other people's houses, discouraging free mixing of the sexes together, forbidding women to appear in their make up before the other men, excepting a small circle of close relatives, banning prostitution, exhorting men and women not , to remain unmarried for long, and arranging marriages even of the slaves and slave-girls. In other words, the movement of the women without purdah and the presence of a large number of unmarried persons in society were, in the knowledge of Allah, the real causes that

imperceptibly give rise to sensuality in society. It was this sexually charged atmosphere which kept the ears, eyes, tongues and hearts of the people ever ready to get involved in any real or fictitious scandal. Allah in His wisdom did not regard any other measure more suitable and effective than these Commandments to eradicate this evil; otherwise He would have enjoined some other Commandments.

The. second important thing to remember is that Divine Law does not merely forbid an evil or only prescribe a punishment for the offender, but it also puts an end to all those factors which provide occasions for the evil, or incite or force a person to commit it. It also imposes curbs on the causes, incentives and means leading to the evil so as to check the wrongdoer much before he actually commits the crime. It does not like that people should freely approach and loiter about near the border lines of sin and get caught and punished all the time. It does not merely act as a prosecutor but as a guide, reformer and helper, too. So it uses all kinds of moral, social and educational devices to help the people to safeguard themselves against evil and vice.

24The Arabic word tasta `nisu in the Text has been generally interpreted to mean the same as tasta `zinu. There is, however, a fine difference between the two words which should not be lost sight of. Had the word in the Text been tasta `zinu, the verse would have meant: "Do not enter other people's houses until you have taken their permission". Allah has used tasta`nisu which is derived from the root uns, meaning fondness, affection, regard, etc. According to this, the verse would mean: "Do not enter other people's houses until you are sure of their affection and regard for yourself." In other words, you should make sure that your entry in the house is not disagreeable to the inmates and you are sure of a welcome. That is why we have translated the word into 'approval' of the inmates instead of `permission' of the inmates, because the word `approval' expresses the sense of the original more precisely.

25According to the Arab custom of the pre-Islamic days, people would enter each other's house freely without permission just by pronouncing `good morning' or `good evening'. This unannounced entry sometimes violated the privacy of the people and their women folk. Allah enjoined the principle that everybody has a right to privacy in his own house and no one is entitled to force his entry unannounced and without permission of the inmates. The rules and regulations enforced by the Holy Prophet in society on receipt of the above Commandment are given below serially:

(1) The 'right of privacy' was not merely confined to the question of entry in the houses, but it was declared as a common right according to which it is forbidden to peep into a house, glance from outside, or even read the other person's letter without his permission. According to Thauban, who was a freed slave of the Holy Prophet, the Holy Prophet said: "When you have already cast a look into a house, what is then the sense in seeking permission for entry?" (Abu Da`ud). Hadrat Huzail bin Shurahbil has reported that a man came to see the Holy Prophet and sought permission for entry while standing just in front of the door. The Holy Prophet said to him: "Stand aside: the object of the Commandment for seeking permission is to prevent casting of looks inside the house." (Abu Da'ud). The practice of the Holy Prophet was that whenever he went to see somebody, he would stand aside, to the right or the left of the door,

and seek permission as it was not then usual to hang curtains on the doors. (Abu Da'ud). Hadrat Anas, the attendant of the Holy Prophet, states that a man glanced into the room of the Holy Prophet from outside. The Holy Prophet at that time was holding an arrow in his hand. He advanced towards the man in a way as if he would thrust the arrow into his belly. (Abu Da'ud). According to Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, the Holy Prophet said: "Whoever glances through the letter of his brother without his permission, glances into fire." (Abu Da'ud). According to Muslim and Bukhari;, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "If someone peeps into your house, it will be no sin if you injure his eye with a piece of stone." In another Tradition, he has said: "The inmates of a house, who injure the eye of the man peeping into their house; are not liable to any punishment." Imam Shafi`I has taken this Commandment literally and permits smashing of the eye of the one who casts a glance like this. The Hanafis, however, do not take the Command in the literal sense. They express the opinion that it is applicable only in that case where an outsider forces his entry into a house in spite of the resistance from the inmates and has his eye or some other limb smashed in the scuffle. In such a case, no penalty will lie on the inmates. (Ahkam'al--Qur an, Al-Jassan, Vol. III, p. 385).

(2) The jurists have included `hearing' also under `glancing'. For instance, if a blind man enters a house without permission, he will not be able to see anybody, but he will certainly be able to hear whatever is going on in the house. This also amounts to violation of the other person's right of privacy.

(3) The Command to seek permission is not only applicable in cases where a person wants to enter the other people's houses, but it also applies to entry in the house of_ one's own mother or sister. A man asked the Holy Prophet: "Sir, should I seek permission to enter my mother's house also?" The Holy Prophet replied that he should. The man stated that there was nobody beside him to look after her, and asked whether it was necessary to get permission every time he wanted to go in. The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes; would you like that you should see your mother in a naked state" (Ibn Jarir quoting from `Ata bin Yasar). According to a saying of `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, one should seek permission even when going to see one's own mother or sister. (Ibn Kathir). He has suggested that even when a person goes to visit one's wife in one's own house, he should announce his arrival by coughing, etc. It is related by his wife Zainab that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud would always announce his arrival by coughing, etc. and never liked that he should enter the house unannounced all of a sudden. (Ibn Jarir).

(4) The only exception to the general rule is that no permission is needed in case of an emergency or a calamity like theft, fire, etc. One can go for help without permission in such cases.

(5) In the beginning when the system of seeking permission was introduced, people did not know the exact procedure to be followed. Once a man came to the Prophet's house and shouted at the door, "Should I be in?" The Holy Prophet said to his maid servant, Roudah, "Go and instruct him about the correct way. He should say: Assalam-o- `alaikum (peace be upon you): May I come in?" (Ibn Jarir, Abu Da'ud). Jabir bin `Abdullah says that once he went to the Holy Prophet's house in connection with certain liabilities of his father and knocked at the door. The Holy Prophet asked: "Who is it?" I replied, "It's me."

The Holy Prophet thereupon repeated twice or thrice: "It's me, it's me!" That is, how can one understand from this who you are? (Abu Da'ud).

A man named Kaladah bin Hanbal went to see the Holy Prophet and got seated without the customary salutation. The Holy Prophet told him to go out and come in again after calling: Assalam-o-`alaikum (peace be upon you). (Abu Da'ud). Thus, the correct method of seeking permission was to disclose one's identity first and then ask for permission. It is related that whenever Hadrat `Umar went to see the Holy Prophet, he would say: "Assalam-o- alaikum ya Rasul-Allah, I am `Umar: May I enter!" (Abu Da'ud). The Holy Prophet enjoined that permission should be asked thrice at the most. If there is no reply even at the third call, one should come back. (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu D'ud). The same was his own practice. Once he went to the house of Hadrat Sa'd bin `Ubadah and sought permission twice after greeting with: Assalam-o-`alaikum wa Rahmatullah (peace be upon you and mercy of Allah), but there was no response. After calling for the third time when he received no response, he turned back. Sa'd came out running from the house, and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I was hearing you all right, but I desired to have Allah's peace and mercy invoked upon me through your sacred tongue as often as possible; therefore, I was replying to you in a low voice. " (Abu D'ud, Ahmad). The three calls as enjoined above should not be made in quick succession, but at suitable intervals so as to allow sufficient time to the inmates to make the response in case they are not free to do so.

(6) The permission for entry should come from the master of the house himself or from some other reliable inmate like a servant or a responsible person, who gives permission on behalf of the master. One should not enter the house on the word of a mere child.

(7) Undue insistence for permission to enter or to keep standing at the door obstinately even after refusal, is not permissible. If no entry is permitted even after three calls, or the master refuses to see, one should go back.

26Entry into an empty house is not allowed unless permitted as such by the master of the house. One may, for instance, have told a visitor or sent him a message to wait in his room till his arrival. The mere fact that there is nobody in the house or the call is not answered does not entitle anybody to enter without permission.

27That is nobody should mind if entry is refused, for everybody has a right to refuse to meet another person, or offer a plea if otherwise busy. The Command "Go back", according to the jurists, means going back in the literal sense and moving away from the door. Nobody has any right to compel the other person for a meeting or to embarrass him by standing obstinately at his door.

28"Houses which are not dwelling place" are the hotels, inns, guest houses, shops, staging bungalows, etc. which are generally open to all people.

29The word ghedd means to reduce, shorten or lower down something. Accordingly, ghadd basar is generally translated as `lowering the gaze' or 'keeping it lowered'. But the Command of ghadd basar does not imply that the gaze should always be kept lowered. It only means to imply that one should restrain one's gaze and avoid casting of looks freely. That is, if it is not desirable to see a thing, one should turn the eyes away and avoid having a look at it. The restriction of a 'restrained gaz' is applicable only in a limited sphere. The context in which the words occur shows that this restriction applies to the men's gazing at women, or casting looks at the satar of the other persons, or fixing the eyes at indecent scenes.

The details of this Divine Commandment as explained in the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet are given below:

(1) It is not lawful for a tnan to cast a full gaze at the other women except at his own wife or the mahram women of his family. The chance look is pardonable but not the second look which one casts when one feels the lure of the object. The Holy Prophet has termed such gazing and glancing as wickedness of the eyes. He has said that man commits adultery with all his sensory organs. The evil look at the other woman is the adultery of the eyes; lustful talk is the adultery of the tongue; relishing the other woman's voice is adultery of the ears; and touching her body with the hand or walking for an unlawful purpose is adultery of the hands and feet. After these preliminaries the sexual organs either bring the act of adultery to completion or leave it incomplete. (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud).

According to a Tradition related by Hadrat Buraidah, the Holy Prophet instructed Hadrat 'Ali: "O 'Ali, do not cast a second look after the first look. The first look is pardonable but not the second one." (Tirmizi;, Ahmad, Abu Da'ud). Hadrat Jarir bin 'Abdullah Bajali says that he asked the Holy Prophet, "What should I do if I happen to cast a chance look?" The Holy Prophet replied, "Turn your eyes away or lower your gaze."(Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmizi, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i). Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud quotes the Holy Prophet as having said: "Allah says that the gaze is one of the poisonous arrows of Satan. Whoever forsakes it, out of His fear, he will be rewarded with a faith whose sweetness he will relish in his own heart." (Tabarani). According to a Tradition related by Abu Umamah, the Holy Prophet said: "If a Muslim happens to glance at the charms of a woman and then turns his eyes away, Allah will bless his worship and devotion and will make it all the more sweet. ". (Musnad Ahmad). Imam Ja'far Sadiq has quoted from his father, Imam Muhammad Baqir, who has quoted Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah Ansari as saying: "On the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, Fadal bin'Abbas, who was a young cousin of the Holy Prophet, was riding with him on the camelback during the return journey from Mash`ar al-Haram. When they came to a few women passing on the way, Fadal started looking at them. Thereupon the Holy Prophet put his hand on his face and turned it to the other side." (Abu Da'ud). On another occasion during the same Pilgrimage, a woman of the clan of Khath'am stopped the Holy Prophet on the way and sought clarification about a certain matter pertaining to Hajj. Fadal bin `Abbas fixed his gaze at her, but the Holy Prophet turned his face to the other side. (Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi).

(2) Nobody should have the misunderstanding that the Command to restrain the 'gaze was enjoined

because the women were allowed to move about freely with open faces, for if veiling of the face had already been enjoined, the question of restraining or not restraining the gaze would not have arisen. This argument is incorrect rationally as well as factually. It is incorrect rationally because even when veiling of the face is the usual custom, occasions can arise where a man and a woman come face to face with each other suddenly, or when a veiled woman has to uncover her face under necessity. Then even if the Muslim women observe purdah, there will be non-Muslim women who will continue to move about unveiled. Thus, the Commandment to lower the gaze or restrain the eyes, does not necessarily presume existence of a custom allowing the women to move about with unveiled faces. It is incorrect factually because the custom of purdah which was introduced after the revelation of the Commandments in Surah Al-Ahzab included veiling of the face, and this is supported by a number of Traditions relating to the time of the Holy Prophet himself. Hadrat `A'ishah in her statement relating to the incident of the "slander", which has been narrated on the authority of reliable reporters, has said: "When I came back to the camp, and found that the caravan had left, I lay down and was ' overpowered by sleep. In the morning when Safwan bin Mu`attal passed that way he recognised me because he had seen me before the Commandment of purdah had been sent down. On recognising me he exclaimed: Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji`un: `To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return'; and I awoke and covered my face with my sheet." (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Hisham). Abu Da'ud contains an incident that when the son of Umm Khallad was killed in a battle, she came to the Holy Prophet to enquire about him and was wearing the veil as usual. It was natural to presume that on such a sad occasion one is liable to lose one's balance and ignore the restrictions of purdah. But when questioned she said, "I have certainly lost my son but not my modesty." Another Tradition in Abu Da'ud quoted on the authority of Hadrat `A'ishah relates that a woman handed an application to the Holy Prophet from behind a curtain. The Holy Prophet enquired: "Is it a man's hand or a woman's?" She replied that it was a woman's. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "If it is a woman's hand, the nails at least should have been coloured with henna!" As regards the two incidents relating to the occasion of Hajj, which we have mentioned above, they cannot be used as an argument to prove that the veil was not in vogue in the time of the Holy Prophet. This is because wearing of the veil is prohibited in the state of ihram. However, even in that state pious women did not like to uncover their faces before the other men. Hadrat `A'ishah has stated that during the Farewell Pilgrimage when they were moving towards Makkah in the state of ihram, the women would lower down their head sheets over their faces whenever the travellers passed by them, and would uncover their faces as soon as they had passed by. (Abu Da'ud).

(3) There are certain exceptions to the Command of lowering the gaze or restraining the look. These exceptions relate to occasions when it is really necessary to see a woman, for instance, when a man intends to marry her. It is not only permissible to see the woman in such a case but even commendable. Mughirah bin Shu'bah has stated,. "I wanted to marry in a certain family. The Holy Prophet asked me whether I had seen the girl or not. When 1 replied in the negative, he said: `Have a look at her; this will enhance harmonious relationship between you two'." (Ahmad, Tirmizi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Darimi). According to a Tradition related by Abu Hurairah, a man wanted to marry in a family of the Ansar. The Holy Prophet asked him to have a look at the girl, for the Ansar usually had a defect in their eyes.

(Muslim, Nasa'i, Ahmad). According to Jabir bin 'Abdullah, the Holy Prophet said: "When a person from among you wants to marry a woman, he should have a look at her to satisfy himself that there is some quality in the woman which induces him to marry her. " (Ahmad, Abu Da'ud). According to another Tradition emanating from Abu Humaidah and quoted in Musnad Ahmad, the Holy Prophet said that there was no harm in such a procedure. He also permitted that the girl may be seen without her being aware of it. From this the jurists have concluded that there is no harm in looking at a woman when it is really necessary. For instance, there is no harm in looking at a suspect woman when investigating a crime, or in the judge's looking at a female witness, who appears in the court, or in the physician's looking at a female patient, etc.

(4) The intention of the Command to restrain the gaze also implies that no man or woman should look at the private parts of the other man or woman. The Holy Prophet has said: "No man should look at the satar of another man nor a woman at the sater of another woman." (Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi). Hadrat 'Ali has quoted the Holy Prophet as saying: "Do not look at the thigh of another person, living or dead". (Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah).

30"Guard their private parts": Abstain from illicit sexual gratification and from exposing their satar before others. For males, the satar is the part of the body from the navel to the knee, and it is not permissible to expose that pan of the body intentionally before anybody except one's own wife. (Daraqutni, Baihaqi). Hadrat Jarhad Aslami states that once he was sitting in the company of the Holy Prophet with his thigh exposed. The Holy Prophet said: "Do you not know that the thigh has to be kept concealed." (Tirmizi, Abu Da'ud, Mu'atta). Hadrat 'Ali reports that the Holy Prophet said: "Do not expose your thigh." (Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah). Not only is the satar to be kept concealed before others but even when alone. The Holy Prophet has warned: "Beware, never remain naked, for with you are those (that is, the angels of goodness and mercy), who never leave you alone except when you ease yourself or you go to your wives. So feel shy of them and give them due respect. " (Tirmizi). According to another Tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "Guard your satar from everybody except from your wife and your slave-girl." The questioner asked, "Even when we are alone?" The Holy Prophet replied, "Yes, even when alone, for Allah has a greater right that you should feel shy of Him." (Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi, Ibn Majah).

31The Commandments of restraining the gaze for women are the same as for men. They should not glance intentionally at the other men, and if they happen to cast a chance look, they should turn their eyes away; and they should abstain from looking at the satar of others. However, the Commandments relating to the men's looking at women are a little different from those relating to the women's looking at men. On the one hand, there is an incident related in a Tradition saying that Hadrat Umm Salamah and Hadrat Umm Maimunah, wives of the Holy Prophet, were sitting with him when Ibn Umm Maktum, a blind Companion, made his appearance. The Holy Prophet said to his wives: "Conceal your faces from him." The wives said, "O Messenger of Allah: Is he not a blind man '? Neither will he see us nor recognize us." Thereupon the Holy Prophet remarked: "Are you two also blind? Do you not see him?" Hadrat Umm Salamah has clarified that this incident occurred at a time when the Commandments about the

observance of purdah had already been sent down. (Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi. This is also supported by a Tradition in Mu'atta saying that a blind man came to see Hadrat 'A'ishah and she observed purdah from him. When asked as to why she observed purdah when the man could not see her, she replied: "But I do see him." On the other hand, there is a different Tradition from Hadrat `A'ishah. In 7 A.H. a deputation of the Africans came to Al-Madinah and they gave a performance of physical skill in the compound of the Prophet's Mosque. The Holy Prophet himself showed their performance to Hadrat 'A'ishah. (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad). In another case, we find that when Fatimah bint Qais was irrevocably divorced by her husband, the question arose as to where she should pass her 'Iddah (the prescribed waiting term after divorce or death of husband). The Holy Prophet first told her to stay with Umm Sharik Ansari, but then instructed her to stay in the house of Ibn Umm Maktum, where she could stay with greater freedom as he was a blind man. He did not approve of her staying in the house of Umm Shank because she was a rich lady and her house was frequented by the Companions whom she entertained generously. (Muslim, Abu Da'ud). Read together these Traditions show that the restrictions about the women's looking at melt are not so hard as about the men's looking at women. While it is forbidden for women to sit face to face with men, it is not unlawful if they cast a look at men while passing on the way or see a harmless performance by them from a distance. There is also no hams for women to see the other men in case of real need if they are living in the same house. Imam Ghazzali; and Ibn Hajar `Asqalani have also reached almost the same conclusion. Shaukani in his Nail al-Autar has quoted Ibn Hajar as saying: "Such a permission in respect of women is also supported by the fact that they have always enjoyed this type of freedom in outdoor duties While they came out veiled when visiting the mosques, or moving in the streets, or during the journey, so that men may not gaze at them, the men were never commanded to use the veil so that women may not gaze at them. This shows that the Commandments in respect of the two sexes are different." (Vol. Vl, p. 101). However, it is not at all permissible that women should gaze leisurely at men and draw pleasure of the eye in doing so.

32That is, they should abstain from illicit gratification of their sex desire as well as from exposing their satar before others. Though the commandments for men in this respect are the same as for women, the boundaries of satar for women are different from those prescribed for men. Moreover, the female satar with respect to men is different from that with respect to women

The female satar with respect to men is the entire body, excluding only the hand and the face, which should not be exposed before any other man, not even the brother and father, except the husband. The woman is not allowed to wear a thin or a tight fitting dress which might reveal the skin or the outlines of the body. According to a Tradition from Hadrat 'A'ishah, orate her sister Asma' came before the Holy Prophet in a thin dress. The Holy Prophet immediately turned his face away and said: "O Asma', when a woman has attained her maturity, it is not permissible that any part of her body should be exposed except the face and the hand." (Abu Da'ud). Ibn Jarir has related a similar incident from Hadrat 'A'ishah saying that once the daughter of `Abdullah bin Tufail, who was her mother's son from her former husband, came to her house on a visit. When the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him) entered the house, he saw her but turned his face to the other side. Hadrat `A'ishah said: "O Messenger of Allah, she is my niece."

Thereupon the Holy Prophet remarked: "When a woman reaches the age of puberty, it is not lawful for her to display her body except the hand and the face. (Then he indicated what he meant by the hand by gripping his own hand from the wrist so that there was hardly a breadth left between his grip and the palm of the hand)." The only relaxation permitted in this connection is that a woman can uncover only that much of her body before her close relatives (for example, her brother, father, etc.) as is absolutely necessary for attending to the household duties. For instance, she can roll up her sleeves while kneading the flour, or tuck up her trousers while washing the floor.

The boundaries of female satar with respect to women are the same as the boundaries of the male satar with respect to men, which is the part of the body from the navel to the knee. This does not, however, mean that a woman should appear half naked before other women. It only means that while it is obligatory to keep the part of body from the navel to the knee duly covered, it is not so in case of other parts.

33It should be carefully noted that the demands that Divine Law makes from women are not only those it has made from men, that is restraining of looks and guarding of the private parts, but it makes some other demands from them also, which it has not made from men. This shows that men and women are not identical in this respect.

34"Adornment" includes attractive clothes, ornaments and other decorations of the head, face, hand, feet, etc. which the women usually employ, and is expressed by the modern word 'make-up'. The injunction that this `makeup' should not be displayed before others is discussed in detail in the following Notes.

35Different interpretations given by different commentators of this verse have greatly confused its real meaning. All that is obviously meant is that "women should not display their make-up and adornment" except that "which is displayed of itself" and is beyond their control. This clearly means that women should not purposely and intentionally display their make-up, but there is no accountability if the make-up becomes displayed without any purpose or intention on their part; for instance, the head-wrapper's being blown aside by the wind thus exposing the adornment, ,or the outer-garment itself which cannot be concealed but which nevertheless has attraction being a part of the female dress. This very interpretation of this verse has been given by Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hasan Basri, Ibn Sirin and Ibrahim Nakha`i. On the contrary, some other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean "all those parts of the body which usually remain exposed or uncovered" and in this they include the hands and the face with all their adornments. This is the view of Hadrat Ibn `Abbas and his followers, and a large number of the Hanafi jurists have accepted it. (Ahkam-ul-Qur'an, AlJassas, Vol. III, pp. 388-389). Thus, according to them, it is permissible for a woman to move out freely with the uncovered face in full make-up and adornment of the hands

We are, however, unable to subscribe to this view. There is a world of difference between "displaying

something" and "its becoming displayed of itself." The first implies `intention' and the second 'compulsion' and a state of helplessness. Moreover, such an interpretation also goes against the traditions which state that the women never moved out with open and uncovered faces in the time of the Holy Prophet after the Commandments of purdah had been sent down. These Commandments implied veiling of the face as well, and the veil had become a part of the female dress except during Hajj when one has to be in the prescribed state of ihram and keep the face uncovered. Another argument that is advanced in support of this view is that the hands and the face are not included in the satar of the woman, whereas satar and purdah are two entirely different things. Sanctity of satar is such that it cannot be violated even before the mahram males like the father. brother, etc. As for purdah it is over and above satar which is meant to segregate women from non mahram males; the discussion here relates to the Commandments of purdah and not to satar.

36In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, women used to wear a sort of head-band, which was tied in a knot at the rear of the head. The slit of the shirt in the front partly remained open exposing the front of the neck and the upper part of the bosom. There was nothing except the shirt to cover the breasts, and the hair was worn in a couple or two of plaits hanging behind like tails. (AI-Kashshaf, Vol. II, p. 90, and Ibn Kathir, Vol. III, pp. 283-284). At the revelation of this verse, the head-wrapper (dopatta) was introduced among the Muslim women, which was meant to cover the head, the breasts, and the back, completely. The way the Muslim women responded to this Command has been described by Hadrat 'A'ishah in a vivid manner. She states that when Surah An-Nur was revealed and the people learned of its contents from the Holy Prophet, they immediately went back to their houses and recited the verses before their wives, daughters and sisters. There was an instantaneous response. The Ansar women, one and all, immediately got up and made wrappers from whatever piece of cloth that was handy. The next morning all the women who came to the Prophet's Mosque for prayers were dressed in wrappers. In another tradition Hadrat `A'ishah says that thin cloth was discarded and the women selected only coarse cloth for the purpose. (lbn Kathir, Vol.III, p. 284, Abu Da'ud).

The very nature and object of the Command demanded that the wrapper should not be made out of fine and thin cloth. The Ansar women immediately understood the real object and knew what type of cloth was intended to be used. The Law-Giver himself clarified this and did not leave it to be interpreted by the people. Dihya Kalbi states: "Once a length of fine Egyptian muslin was presented to the Holy Prophet. He gave a piece of it to me and said, `Use one part of it for your shirt, and give the rest of it to your wife for a wrapper, but tell her that she should stitch another piece of cloth on the inner side so that the body may not be displayed through it." (Abu Da'ud).

37This verse describes the circle in which a woman can move freely with all her make-up and adornment. Outside this circle she is not allowed to appear with make-up before the other people, whether they are relatives or strangers. The Commandment implies that she should not display her embellishments outside this limited circle, intentionally or through carelessness. However, what becomes displayed incidentally, in spite of care and concern, or what cannot be concealed, it is excused by Allah.

38`Fathers' include grandfathers and great grandfathers as well, both paternal and maternal. Accordingly a woman can appear before her own and her husband's grandfathers just as she can appear before her own father and father in law.

39`Sons' include grandsons and great grandsons from the male or female offspring. No distinction is to be made between the real sons and the step-sons.

40Brothers' include real and stepbrothers.

41'Sons of brothers and sisters' include sons, grandsons and great grandsons of all the three kinds of brothers and sisters.

42After the relatives the other people are now being mentioned. But before we proceed further, it would be useful to understand three things in order to avoid confusion.

First, some jurists hold that the freedom of movement and display of adornment by a woman is restricted to the circle of relatives mentioned in this verse. AII others, even the real paternal and maternal uncles, are excluded from this list and a woman should observe purdah from them because they have not been mentioned in the Qur'an. This is, however, not a correct view. Let alone the real uncles, the Holy Prophet disallowed Hadrat `A'ishah to observe purdah even from her foster uncles. A tradition quoted in Sihah Sitta' and Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat `A'ishah says that once Aflah, brother of Abul Qu'ais, came to see her and sought permission to enter the house. But since the Commandment of purdah had been received, Hadrat `A'ishah refused him permission. On this Aflah sent back the word saying, "You are my niece: you were suckled by my brother Abul Qu'ais's wife." But Hadrat `A'ishah still was hesitant whether it was permissible to appear unveiled before such a relative or not. In the meantime the Holy Prophet arrived and he ruled that he could see her. This shows that the Holy Prophet himself did not interpret the verse in the way these jurists do that it was lawful to appear unveiled only before those relatives who have been mentioned in the verse and not before others. He interpreted it to mean that purdah need not be observed from those relatives with whom marriage is prohibited, for instance, paternal and maternal uncles, son-in-law and foster relatives. Hadrat Hasan Basri from among the followers has expressed the same opinion and the same has been supported by `Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas in his Ahkam-ul-Qur an. (Vol. III, p. 390).

Secondly, there is the question of those relatives with whom marriage is not permanently prohibited; they neither fall in the category of mahram relatives (that women may freely appear before them with adornment) nor in the category of complete strangers that they should observe full purdah from them as from others. What should be the right course between the two extremes has not been determined by the Shari `ah for such a course cannot possibly be determined. The observance of purdah or otherwise in

such cases will inevitably depend on the mutual relationship, age of the woman and of men, family relations and contacts and other circumstances (e.g. residence in the same house or in different houses). The personal example of the Holy Prophet himself in this matter gives us the same guidance. A large number of traditions confirm that Hadrat Asma', daughter of Abu Bakr, who was a sister-in-law of the Holy Prophet, appeared unveiled before him and no purdah, at least of the face and hands, was observed by her. This same position continued till the Farewell Pilgrimage which took place just a few months before the death of the Holy Prophet. (Abu Da'ud). Similarly Hadrat Umm Hani, daughter of Abu Talib and a first cousin of the Holy Prophet, appeared before him till the end without ever observing purdah of the face and hands. She herself has narrated an incident pertaining to the conquesh of Makkah, which confirms the same. (Abu Da'ud).On the contrary, we see that Hadrat `Abbas sends his son Fadal, and Rabi'ah bin Harith bin `Abdul Muttalib (a first cousin of the Holy Prophet) his son 'Abdul Muttalib before the Holy Prophet with the request for a job, as they could not be married till they became earning members of the family. They both see the Holy Prophet in the house of his wife Zainab, who is a first cousin of Fadal and is similarly related to the father of 'Abdul Muttalib bin Rabi'ah. But she dces not appear before them and talks to them from behind a curtain in the presence of the Holy Prophet. (Abu Da'ud). Taking the two kinds of precedents together we come to the same conclusion as we have stated above.

Thirdly, in cases where the relationship itself becomes doubtful, purdah should be observed even from the mahram relatives. Bukhari, Muslim and Abu Da'ud have related a case where Saudah, a wife of the Holy Prophet, had a brother born of a slave woman. `Utbah, the father of Saudah and the boy, left a will enjoining his brother, Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas, to look after the boy as a nephew for he was from his own seed. When the case came before the Holy Prophet, he rejected the claim of Hadrat Sa 'd, saying: "The boy belongs to him on whose bed he was born; as for the adulterer, let stones and pebbles be his lot." But at the same time he told Hadrat Saudah to observe purdah from the boy because it was doubtful whether he was really her brother.

43The Arabic word nisa-i -hinna means "their female associates". Before we consider what women are exactly meant, it is worth noting that the word used here is not an-nisa, which merely means "women", but nisa i-hinna which means "their female associates". In the former case, it would be quite permissible for a Muslim woman to appear unveiled before all sorts of women and display her adornment. The use of nisa-i-hinna, however, has circumscribed her freedom within a specific circle. As to what specific circle of women is implied, the commentators and jurists have expressed different opinions.

According to one group, the "female associates" mean only the Muslim women; as for the non-Muslim women, whether zimmis or otherwise, they are excluded and purdah should be observed from them as from men. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and Ibn Juraij hold this opinion and cite the following incident in support thereof: Caliph `Umar wrote to Hadrat Abu `Ubaidah: "I hear that some Muslim women have started going to public baths along with the non-Muslim women. It is not permissible for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day that she should expose her body before the women other than of her own community." On receipt of this letter Hadrat Abu `Ubaidah was much upset, and he cried out: "May the face of the

woman who goes to the public baths to whiten her complexion be blackened on the Last Day!" (Ibn Jarir, Baihaqi, Ibn Kathir).

Another group, which includes Imam Razi, is of the view that "female associates" are all women without exception. But it is not possible to accept this view as in that case an-nisa should have sufficed and there was no need to use nisa-i-hinna.

The third opinion, and this appears to be reasonable and nearer the Qur'anic Text, is that "their female associates" mean those familiar and known women with whom a woman usually comes into contact in her daily life and who share in her household chores, etc. whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim. The object here is to exclude those women from the circle who are either strangers whose cultural and moral background is not known or whose antecedents are apparently doubtful, which make them unreliable. This view is also supported by the authentic Traditions which state that zimmi women used to visit the wives of the Holy Prophet. The real thing to be considered in this connection would be the moral character and not the religious belief. Muslim women can meet and have intimate social contacts with noble, modest and virtuous women, who come from well-known and reliable families even if they are non-Muslim. But they must observe purdah from immodest, immoral and vulgar women even if they happen to be "Muslims". Their company from the moral viewpoint is as dangerous as of other men. As for contacts with un-known, unfamiliar women, they may at the most be treated like non-mahram relatives. A woman may uncover her face and hands before them but she must keep the rest of her body and adornments concealed.

44There is a good deal of difference of opinion among the jurists about the correct meaning of this injunction. One group holds that this refers only to the slave girls owned by a lady. Accordingly they interpret the Divine Command to mean that the Muslim woman can display her adornment before a slave girl, whether she is an idolatress or a Jew or a Christian, but she cannot appear before a slave man even if he is legally owned by her; for purposes of purdah, he is to be treated just like a free male stranger. This is the view of `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, Mujahid, Hasan Basri, Ibn Sirin, Said bin Musayyab, Ta`us and Imam Abu Hanifah, and a saying of Imam Shafi`i also supports this. They argue that the slave is not a mahram to the lady; if he is freed, e can marry his former owner. Therefore the there fact of his being a slave cannot by itself entitle him to be treated like the male mahrams and allow the lady to appear freely before him. The question why should the words" those in their possession" which are general and applicable to both slaves and slave girls, be restricted to mean only slave girls, is answered by these jurists like this: Though the words are general, the context and background in which they occur snake them specifically applicable to slave girls only. The , words "those in their possession" occur just after "their female associates" in the verse; therefore one could understand that the reference was to a woman's relatives and other associates; this could lead to the misunderstanding that the slave girls perhaps were excluded; the words "those in their possession". therefore were used to clarify that a woman could display her adornments before the slave girls as before her free female associates.

The other group holds that the words "those in their possession" include both the slaves and the slave girls. This is the view of Hadrat `A'ishah, Umm Salamah and some learned scholars of the house of the Holy Prophet and also of Imam Shafi`i. They do not argue merely on the basis of the general meaning of the words, but they also cite precedents from the Sunnah in support of their view. For instance, the incident that the Holy Prophet went to the house of his daughter, Hadrat Fatimah, along with his slave 'Abdullah bin Musa'dah al-Fazari. She was at that time wearing a sheet which would leave the feet exposed if she tried to cover the head, and the head exposed if she tried to cover the feet. The Holy Prophet felt her embarrassment and said: "No harm: there are only your father and your slave!" (Abu Da'ud, Ahmad, Baihaqi on the authority of Anas bin Malik). Ibn 'Asakir has stated that the Holy Prophet had given that slave to Hadrat Fatimah, who brought him up and then freed him. (But the man turned out to be an ungrateful wretch; in the battle of Siffin, he was the bitterest opponent of Hadrat 'Ali and a zealous supporter of Amir Mu`awiyah). They also quote the following words of the Holy Prophet in support of their stand: "When any of you agrees to a deed of emancipation with her slave, and the slave has the necessary means to buy his freedom, she (the owner) should observe purdah from him." (Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi, Ibn Majah on the authority of Umm Salamah).

45The literal translation of the Text would be: "those from among the men who are your subordinates and have no desire." The obvious meaning is that apart from the mahram males, a Muslim woman can display her adornment only before the man who satisfies two conditions: firstly, he should be in a subordinate capacity, and secondly, he should be free from sexual urges either due to advanced age, impotence, mental weakness, poverty or low social position, so that he cannot cherish the desire or have the boldness to think evilly of his master's wife, daughter, sister or mother. Anybody who studies this injunction in the right spirit with a view to obeying it, and not for the sake of finding ways and means of escaping from or violating it, will readily appreciate that the bearers, cooks, chauffeurs and other grown up servants employed these days in the houses do not fall in this category. The following clarifications given by the commentators and the jurists of this point would show the type of men envisaged in the verse: Ibn 'Abbas: This implies a man who is a mere simpleton and has no interest in women. Qatadah: A poor man who is attached to you merely for his sustenance. Mujahid: A fool who only needs food and has no desire for women. Sha'bi: The one who is a subordinate; entirely dependent on his master, and cannot have the boldness to cast an evil look at the womenfolk of the house. Ibn Zaid: The one who remains attached to a family for such a long time that he is regarded as a member brought up in that house, and who has no desire for the women of the house. He is there merely because he gets his sustenance from the family. Ta'us & Zuhri: An idiot who dces not cherish the desire for the women nor has the courage to do so. (Ibn Jarir, Vol. XVIII, pp. 95-96, Ibn Kathir, Vol. III, p. 285).

The best explanation in this regard is the incident that happened in the time of the Holy Prophet, which has been quoted by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i and Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat `A'ishah and Umm Salamah. There was a certain eunuch in Madinah who was allowed free access to the wives of the Holy Prophet and the other women of the city, on the assumption that he being incapable of sex was free from the sexual urge. One day when the Holy Prophet went to the house of his wife, Umm Salamah,

he heard him talking to her brother, 'Abdullah bin Abi Umayyah. He was telling `Abdullah that if Taif was taken the following day, he should try to have Badia, daughter of Ghailan Thaqafi . And then he started praising Badia's beauty and her physical charms and even went to the extent of describing her private parts. On hearing this the Holy Prophet said: "O enemy of Allah! you seem to have seen her through." Then he ordered that the women should observe purdah from him and he should not be allowed to enter the houses in future. After this he turned him out of Madinah and forbade the other eunuchs also to enter the houses, because the women did not mind their presence, while they would describe the women of one house before the other men of other houses in the society. This shows that the word "incapable of sex desire" do not merely imply physical impotence. Anyone who is physically unfit but cherishes sex desire in the heart and takes interest in women, can become the cause of many mischiefs.

46That is, the children who do not yet have their sex feelings aroused. This may apply to boys of 11 to12 at the most. Older boys start having sex feelings though they may still be immature otherwise.

47The Holy Prophet did not restrict this injunction to the jingle of the ornaments, but has derived from it the principle that besides the look, anything which tends to excite any of the senses, is opposed to the objective for which Allah has forbidden the women to display their adornment. Therefore he ordered the women not to move out with perfumes. According to Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said: "Do not stop the bondmaids of Allah from coming to the mosques, but. they should not come with perfumes." (Abu Da'ud, Ahmad). According to another tradition, Hadrat Abu Hurairah passed by a woman who was coming out of the mosque and felt that she had perfumed herself. He stopped her and said: "O bondmaid of Allah, are you coming from the mosque?" When she replied in the affirmative, he said: "I have heard my beloved Abul Qasim (Allah's blessings and peace be upon him) say that the prayer of the woman who comes to the mosque with perfumes, is not accepted till she purifies herself with a complete bath as is done after a sexual intercourse." (Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, Ahmad, Nasa'i). Abu Musa Ash'ari has quoted the Holy Prophet as saying: "A woman who passes on the way with perfumes so that people may enjoy her perfumes, is such and such: he used very harsh words for her." (Tirmizi, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i). His instruction was that women should use scents with bright colors but light odors. (Abu Da`ud). Similarly the Holy Prophet disapproved that feminine voices should enter the ears of men unnecessarily. In case of genuine need the Qur'an itself has allowed women to speak to men, and the Holy Prophet's wives themselves used to instruct people in religious matters. But where there is no necessity, nor any moral or religious objective, the women have been discouraged to let their voices be heard by men. Thus if the imam happens to commit a mistake during a congregational prayer, and he is to be warned of the lapse, the men have been taught to say Subhan-Allah (Glory be to Allah), while the women have been instructed to tap their hands only. (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmizi, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah).

48"Turn towards Allah": Repent of the lapses and errors that you have been committing in this regard so far, and reform your conduct in accordance with the Commands given by Allah and His Prophet.

49It would be useful to give here a resume of the other reforms which the Holy Prophet introduced in

the Islamic society after the revelation of these Commandments.

(1) He prohibited the other men (even if they are relatives) to see a woman in privacy or sit with her in the absence of her mahram relatives. Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Do not visit the women whose husbands are away from home, because Satan circulates in one of you like blood." (Tirmizi). According to another Tradition from Hadrat Jabir, the Holy Prophet said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should never visit a woman when alone unless she has a mahram relative also present, because the third one would be Satan. " (Ahmad). Imam Ahmad has quoted another Tradition from `Amir bin Rabi'ah to the same effect. The Holy Prophet himself was extremely cautious in this regard Once when he was accompanying his wife Hadrat Safiyyah to her Douse at night, two men of Ansar passed by them on the way. The Holy Prophet stopped them and said: "The woman with me is my wife Safiyyah." They said: "Glory be to Allah! O Messenger of AIlah, could there be any suspicion about you?" The Holy Prophet said: "Satan circulates like blood in the human body; I was afraid lest he should put an evil thought in your minds." (Abu Da'ud).

(2) The Holy Prophet did not approve that a man's hand should even touch the body of a non-mahram woman. That is why while administering the oath of allegiance, he would take the hand of the men into his own hand, but he never adopted this procedure in the case of women. Hadrat 'A'ishah has stated that the Holy Prophet never touched the body of any other woman. He would administer the oath verbally to them; when this was done, he would say: "You may go, Your allegiance is complete." (Abu Da'ud).

(3) He strictly prohibited the woman from proceeding on a journey alone without a mahram or in company with a non-mahram. A Tradition from Ibn 'Abbas has been quoted in Bukhari and Muslim saying that the Holy Prophet gave a sermon and said: "No man should visit the other woman when she is alone unless she has a mahram also present, and no woman should travel alone unless accompanied by a mahram. " A man stood up and said:"My wife is going for Hajj, while I am under orders to join a certain expedition." The Holy Prophet said: "You may go for Hajj with your wife. " Several other Traditions on the subject, emanating from Ibn 'Umar, Abu Said Khudri and Abu Hurairah, are found in authentic books of Traditions, which concur that it is not permissible for a Muslim woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day that she should go on a journey without a mahram. There is, however, a variation with regard to the duration and the length of the journey. Some Traditions lay down the minimum limit as 12 miles and some lay down the duration as one day, a day and night, two days or even three days. This variation, however, neither renders the Traditions unauthentic nor makes it necessary that we should accept one version as legally binding in preference to others. For a plausible explanation for the different versions could be that the Holy Prophet gave different instructions at different occasions depending on the circumstances and merit of each case. For instance, a woman going on a three-day journey might have been prohibited from proceeding without a mahram, while another going on a day's journey might also have been similarly prohibited. Here the real thing is not the different instructions to the different people in different situations, but the principle that a woman should not go on a journey without a mahram as laid down in the Tradition quoted above from lbn 'Abbas.

(4) He .not only took practical measures to stop free mixing of the sexes together but prohibited it verbally as well. Everyone knows the great importance of the congregational and the Friday prayers in Islam. The Friday Prayer has been made obligatory by AIIah Himself; the importance of the congregational prayer can be judged from a Tradition of the Holy Prophet, which says: "If a person does not attend the mosque without a genuine reason and offers his prayer at home, it will not be acceptable to AIIah." (Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, Daraqutni, Hakim on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas).But in spite of this, the Holy Prophet exempted the women from compulsory attendance at the Friday Prayer. (Abu Da'ud, Daraqutni, Baihaqi). As for the other congregational prayers, he made the women's attendance optional, saying: "Do not stop them if they want to come to the mosque." Then at the same time, he made the clarification that it was better forthem to pray in their houses than in the mosques. According to Ibn 'Umar and Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said: "Do not prohibit the bondmaids of Allah from coming to the mosques of AIIah." (Abu Da'ud). Other Traditions from Ibn 'Umar are to the effect: "Permit the women to come to themosques at night." (Bukhari, Muslim, Trimizi, Nasa'i, Abu Da'ud). And: "Do not stop your women-folk from coming to the mosques though their houses are better for them than the mosques." (Ahmad, Abu Da'ud). Umm Humaid Sa'idiyyah states that once she said to the Holy Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, I have a great desire to offer my prayer under your leadership." He replied: "Your offering the prayer in your room is better than your offering it in the verandah, and your offering the prayer in your house is better Bran your offering it in the neighbouring mosque, and your offering the prayer in the neighbouring mosque is better than offering it in the principal mosque (of the town)." (Ahmad, Tabarani). A Tradition to the same effect has been reported from 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud in Abu Da'ud. According to Hadrat Umm Salamah, the Holy Prophet said: "The best mosques for women are the innermost portions of their houses." (Ahmad, Tabarani). But when Hadrat 'A'ishah saw the conditions that prevailed in the time of the Umayyads, she said: "If the Holy Prophet had witnessed such conduct of the women, he would certainly have stopped their entry into the mosques as was done in the case of the Israelite women," (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud). The Holy Prophet had appointed a separate door in his Mosque for the entry of women, and Hadrat 'Umar in his time had given strict orders prohibiting men to use that door. (Abu Da'ud). In the congregational prayers the women were instructed to stand separately behind the men; at the conclusion of the prayer, the Holy Prophet and his followers used to remain sitting for a while so that the women could leave the mosque before the men. (Ahmad, Bukhari). The Holy Prophet would say: "The best row for the men is the front row and the worst the last one (nearest to the women's row); and the best row for the women is the rearmost row And the worst the front one (just behind the men's). (Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi Nasa'i, Ahmad). The women joined the 'Id congregational prayers but they had a separate enclosure from men. After the sermon the Holy Prophet used to address them separately (Abu Da'ud, Bukhari, Muslim). Once outside the Mosque the Holy Prophet saw the men and women moving side by side in the crowd. He stopped the women and said: It is not proper for you to walk in the middle of the road; walk on the sides." On hearing this the women immediately started walking along the walls. (Abu Da'ud). All these Commandments clearly show that mixed gatherings of the men and women are wholly alien to the temper of Islam. It cannot therefore be imagined that Divine Law which disallows the men and women to stand side by side for prayers in the sacred houses of Allah, would allow them to mix together freely in colleges, offices, clubs and other gatherings.

(5) He permitted the women to make modest use of the make-ups, even instructed them to do so, but strictly forbade its overdoing. Of the various types of make-up and decoration that were prevalent among the Arab women in those days, he declared the following as accursed and destructive of communities:

(a) To add extra hair to one's own artificially with a view to make them appear longer and thicker.

(b) To tattoo various parts of the body and produce artificial moles.

(c) To pluck hair from the eyebrows to give them a special shape, or to pluck hair from the face to give it a cleaner look.

(d) To rub the teeth to make them sharp or to produce artificial holes in them.

(e) To rub the face with saffron or other cosmetic to produce an artificial complexion.

These instructions have been reported in Sihah Sitta and in Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat `A'ishah, Asma' bint Abu Bakr, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, 'Abdullah bin `Umar, 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas and Amir Mu'awiyah through reliable narrators.

After having the knowledge of these clear Commandments froth Allah and His Prophet, a Muslim has only two courses open before him. Either he should follow these Commandments practically and purify himself, his family life and the society at large of the moral evils for the eradication of which Allah and His Prophet have given such detailed Commandments, or if due to some weakness he violates one or more of these Commandments, he should at least realize that he is committing a sin, and regard it as such, and should abstain from labeling it as a virtue by misinterpretation. Apart from these alternatives, the people who adopt the Western, ways of life against the clear injunctions of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and then try their utmost to prove them Islam itself, and openly claim that there is no such thing as purdah in Islam, not only commit the sin of disobedience but also display ignorance and hypocritical obstinacy. Such an attitude can neither be commended by any right-thinking person in this world, nor can it merit favor with Allah in the Hereafter. But among the Muslims there exists a section of modern hypocrites who are so advanced in their hypocrisy that they repudiate the Divine injunctions as false and believe those ways of life to be right and based on truth, which they have borrowed from the non-Muslim communities. Such people are not Muslims at all, for if they still be Muslims, the words 'Islam' and 'unIslam' lose all their meaning and significance. Had they changed their Islamic names and publicly declared their desertion of Islam, we would at least have been convinced of their moral courage. But in spite of their wrong attitudes, these people continue to pose themselves as Muslim. There is perhaps no meaner class of people in the world. People with such character and morality cannot be unexpected to indulge in any forgery, fraud, deception or dishonesty.

50The word ayama is the plural of ayyim which means a single person, and is applicable to every man who is without a wife and to every woman who is without a husband.

51That is, those who show the right attitude in their dealings with you and in whom you find the capability of discharging the responsibilities of married life. The owner whose slave does not show the right attitude nor seems to possess the necessary capability and temper to lead a reasonably happy married life, has not been required to arrange his or her marriage. For in that case he would become the cause of ruining another person's life. This condition, however, has not been imposed on free persons because in their case the people who promote marriages are no more than mere advisers, associates and introducers. The actual marriage depends on the mutual willingness of the bride and the bridegroom. In the case of a slave, however, the entire responsibility lies on the owner, and if he makes the mistake of marrying a poor person with an ill-natured, ill-mannered spouse, the responsibility for the consequences will be entirely his.

52..The imperative mood of the verb in "Arrange marriages .... the right attitude", has led some scholars to assume that it is obligatory to arrange such marriages; whereas the nature of the problem indicates that it cannot be so. Obviously it cannot. be obligatory for somebody to arrange the marriage of the other person. Marriage is not a one-sided affair; it needs another party also. If it were obligatory, what would be the position of the person who is going to be married? Should he willingly accept to be married wherever others arrange it? If so, it would mean that he or she had absolutely no choice in the matter. And if the one has a right to refuse, how are the others going to discharge their responsibility? Taking all these aspects into account the majority of the jurists have held that the Commandment is not obligatory but recommendatory. The intention is that the Muslims should ensure that none in the society should retrain unmarried. The people of the house, friends and neighbors, all should take necessary interest in the matter, and where no such help is available, the state should make necessary arrangements.

53This does not mean that Allah will certainly bestow wealth on anybody who marries. The intention is to discourage a calculative approach. This instruction is both for the parents of the girl and of the boy. The former should not reject a pious and virtuous suitor merely because he happens to be poor. Similarly the boy's parents should not go on postponing his marriage because he is not yet a full earning member or is not yet earning sufficiently. Young men have been advised not to go on postponing their marriage unnecessarily waiting for better times Even if the income is not yet sufficient, one should marry with full faith in Allah. Very often the marriage itself becomes the cause of improving strained circumstances. The wife helps to control the family budget, or the husband starts to exert himself more to meet the new challenges and responsibilities. The wife cap: also earn to supplement the family budget. Then, who knows what the future holds in store for him. Good times can change into bad times and bad into good. One should therefore refrain from being too calculative in this regard.

54The best commentary on these verses are the Traditions which have been reported from the Holy Prophet in this connection. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud has related that the Holy Prophet once said: "O young men, whoso among you can afford to marry, he should marry, because this will be a means of restraining the eyes from casting the evil look and of keeping one pure and chaste, and the one who

cannot afford, should fast, because fasting helps cool down the passions." (Bukhari, Muslim). According to Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said: "Allah has taken upon Himself to succor three men: (a) the one who marries with a view to guarding his chastity, (b) the slave who works to earn his freedom, and (c) the one who goes out to fight in the way of Allah." (Tirmizi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ahmad) For further explanation, see Surah An-Nisa: 25.

55Mukatabat as a term means a deed of emancipation between the owner and the slave entitling the latter to earn his or her freedom after payment of an agreed sum of money in a certain period. This is one of the methods laid down in Islam for the slaves to attain their freedom. It is not essential that the slave must always pay in cash; he can also earn his freedom by rendering some special service to the owner, provided that both the parties agree. Once the agreement is signed, the owner is not entitled to put any obstacles in the way of the slave's freedom. He will have to provide opportunities to enable him to earn for his emancipation and shall have to free him when the agreed amount has been paid in time. In the time of Hadrat 'Umar, a slave entered into such an agreement with his lady owner, but managed to collect the amount in advance of the time limit. When the amount was offered to the lady, she refused to accept it on the ground that she would like to have it in monthly and yearly installments. The slave complained to Hadrat 'Umar who ordered that the amount be deposited in the state treasury and the slave be sec free. The lady was informed that her money lay in the treasury and she had the option to take it in a lump sum or in yearly or monthly installments. (Daraqutni).

56A group of jurists have interpreted the words "execute the deed of emancipation with them" to mean that it is obligatory for the owner to accept the offer of a slave to earn his emancipation This is the view of 'Ata', 'Amr bin Dinar Ibn Sirin, Masruq, Dahhak, `Ikrimah, the Zahiriyyah and Ibn Jarir Tabari, and Imam Shafi'i 'also favoured it in the beginning. The other group holds that it .is not obligatory but only recommendatory and commendable. This group includes jurists like Sha'bi, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Hasan Basri, 'Abdul Rahman bin Zaid, Sufyan Thauri, Abu Hanifah and Malik bin Anas and Imam Shafi`i later on also had adopted this view. The first view is supported by two things:

(a) The imperative mood of the verb in "execute the deed...,' suggests that it is a Command front Allah.

(b) Authentic Traditions contain the incident that when Sirin, father of Hadrat Muhammad bin Sirin, the great jurist and traditionalist, made a request to his master, Hadrat Anas, for a deed of emancipation, the latter refused to accept it. Sirin took he matter before Hadrat `Umar, who whip in hand turned on Anas, saying: "Allah's Command is that you execute the deed." (Bukhari). From this it has been argued that it was not a discretionary and personal decision of Hadrat 'Umar but it was taken in the presence of the Companions and none expressed any difference of opinion. This therefore should be taken as an authentic interpretation of the verse.

The other group argues that Allah does not merely say: "Execute the deed of emancipation with them", but adds: ". . . provided that you trod some good in them." This condition of finding some good in them"

lies entirely on the owner, and there is no fixed standard or means by which the question of "finding good in them" be got adjudicated through a court. Legal injunctions are never couched in such language. As such this injunction can only be regarded as recommendatory and not as legally mandatory. As regards the precedent of the case of Sirin, the jurists say that there was not one slave who asked for a deed of emancipation but thousands of them in the time of the Holy Prophet and the rightly-guided Caliphs, and a large number of them earned their freedom in that way. But apart from Sirin's there is no case where an owner was forced by a judicial verdict to execute a deed of emancipation. Accordingly this decision of Hadrat 'Umar cannot be taken as a judicial decision. All that can be said is that Hadrat `Umar, apart from his position of a judge, was like a father to the Muslims and might have used his paternal authority in a matter where he could not intervene as a judge.

57"Good" implies three things:

(a) The slave must be capable of earning his emancipation money through hard work and labor. The Holy Prophet has said: "Execute the deed when you are sure that the slave can earn the required amount of money; do not let him go about begging the people for it." (Ibn Kathir).

(b) He should be honest, truthful and reliable for the purposes of the agreement. He should nuke the best of the opportunities and should not waste his earnings.

(c) The owner should make sure that the slave has no immoral trends and does not harbor feelings of enmity against Islam or the Muslims, nor should there be any apprehension that his freedom might prove harmful to the interests of the Muslim society. In other words, he should prove to be a loyal and faithful member of the Muslim society and not a fifth columnist. It should be noted that such precautions were absolutely necessary in the case of the prisoners of war taken as slaves.

58This Command is general and is addressed to the owners, the common Muslims and the Islamic government.

(a) The owner is instructed that he should remit a part of the emancipation money. There are traditions to confirm that the Companions used to remit a sizable amount of the emancipation money to their slaves. Hadrat 'Ali used to remit a quarter of the amount and exhorted others also to do the same. (lbn Jarir).

(b) The common Muslim is instructed that he should extend liberal help to all such slaves who asked for help in this regard. One of the heads of Zakat expenditure as laid down in the Qur'an is "the ransoming of slaves". (IX:60) In the sight of Allah "freeing of slaves" is a great act of virtue. (XC :13). According to a Tradition, a Bedouin came to the Holy Prophet and requested him to instruct him what he should do to earn Paradise. The Holy Prophet replied "You have asked about the most important thing in a most concise way. You should free the slaves and help them to earn their freedom, If you present a head of cattle to somebody, present such a one as gives plenty of milk. Treat your relatives kindly even if they

treat you unjustly. If you cannot do all this, you should feed the poor, give water to the thirsty, exhort the people to do good and forbid them to do evil. If you cannot do even this, you should restrain your tongue: if you have to speak, speak something good, otherwise keep quiet'". (Baihaqi).

(c) The Islamic government is advised to spend a part of the Zakat collections on the emancipation of slaves.

Here it should be noted that slaves in the ancient tunes were of three kinds: (i) Prisoners of war, (ii) Free men who were captured and traded as slaves, (iii) Hereditary slaves who did not know when their ancestors became slaves and to which of the above categories they originally belonged. Before the advent of Islam, Arabia as well as the outside world abounded in all kinds of slaves. The entire social and economic structure of society depended more on slave labor than on servants and wage-earners. The first question before Islam was to tackle the problem of the hereditary slaves, and secondly, to find a solution to the entire problem of slavery for all times to come. In tackling the first problem, Islam did not abruptly abrogate the ownership rights in respect of the hereditary slaves as it would have completely paralyzed the entire social and economic system, and involved Arabia in a far more destructive civil war than the one fought in America, leaving the problem where it was as it is in America, where the Negroes are still facing humiliation and disgrace. Islam did not follow any such foolhardy policy of reform. Instead it generated a great moral movement for the emancipation of slaves and employed inducements, persuasions, religious injunctions and legal enactments to educate and motivate the people to free the slaves voluntarily for earning their salvation in the Hereafter, or as expiation of their sins as enjoined by Islam, or by accepting monetary compensation. To set the pace the Holy Prophet himself freed 63 slaves. One of his wives, Hadrat 'A'ishah, alone treed 67 slaves. The Holy Prophet's uncle, Hadrat `Abbas, freed 70 slaves. Among others, Hakim bin Hizam freed 100 slaves, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar 1,000, Zulkal'a Himyari 8,000, and 'Abdur Rehman bin 'Auf 30,000. The other Companions among whom Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Uthman were prominent also set a large number of slaves free. The people, in order to win Allah's favor, not only emancipated their own slaves, but also bought them from others and then set them free. The result was that in so far as hereditary slaves were concerned, almost all of them had been freed even before the righteous Caliphate came to an end.

As for the future, Islam completely prohibited free men from being kidnapped and traded as slaves. As for the prisoners of war, it was permitted (not commanded) that they might be kept as slaves so long as they were not exchanged for Muslim prisoners of war, or freed on payment of ransom. Then, on the one hand, the slaves were also allowed to earn their freedom through written agreements with their masters, and on the other, the masters were exhorted to set them free just like the hereditary slaves, as an act of virtue, to win Allah's approval, or as expiation of sins, or by willing that a slave would automatically gain his freedom on the master's death, or that a slave girl would be free on the master's death if she had borne him children, whether he had left a will or not. This is how Islam solved the problem of slavery. Ignorant people raise objections without trying to understand this solution, and the apologists offer all sorts of apologies and have even to deny the fact that Islam had prohibited slavery absolutely.

59This does not mean that if the slave girls do not want to lead a chaste and virtuous life they can be forced into prostitution. It only means this that if a slave girl commits an immoral act of her own free will, she herself is responsible for it and the law will be applied against her alone. But if the owner forces her into it, it will be entirely his responsibility, and the law will proceed against him. Obviously the question of force arises only when someone is compelled to act against his own will. As for the words "for your own worldly gains", these have not been used in a conditional or restrictive sense that if the owner is not sharing the immoral earnings of the slave girl, he is not an offender if he forces her into prostitution. The intention is to declare all such money unlawful as has been earned through illegal and immoral ways.

It is, however, not possible to comprehend the full import of this injunction merely from the words of the text. For this it is necessary to understand the entire background and circumstances prevalent at the time of its revelation. Prostitution in Arabia existed in two forms: Domestic prostitution and open prostitution in the brothel.

(a) 'Domestic' prostitution was carried out by freed slave girls who had no guardians, or by free women who had no family or tribal support. They would take residence in a house and enter into an agreement with a number of men simultaneously for financial help in return for sexual gratification. Whenever a child was born, the mother would name whomsoever she liked as its father and the man was accepted in society as the father of the child. This was an established custom in the pre-Islamic days, which was considered almost analogous to "marriage". When Islam came, it recognized only that contract as legal marriage where a woman had only one husband. Thus all other forms of sexual gratification came to be regarded as adultery and punishable offenses as such. (Abu Da'ud).

(b) Open prostitution which was carried out entirely through slave girls was of two kinds. First, the slave girls were obliged to pay a fixed heavy amount every month to the owner, which they could only earn through prostitution. The owner knew fully well how the money was earned, and in fact there was no other object of imposing a heavy demand on the poor slave girl, especially when it was much higher than the usual wages for work or labor. Secondly, beautiful and young slave girls were made to stay in the brothel and a flag was put at the door to indicate that a "needy person" could satisfy his lust there. Such women were called "qaliqiyat" and their houses were well known as, "mawakhir"'. All prominent men of the 'day owned and maintained such houses of prostitution. `Abdullah bin Ubayy (the chief of the hypocrites of Madinah, who had been nominated as king of Madinah before the Holy Prophet's arrival there and who was in the forefront of the campaign to slander Hadrat `A'ishah) himself owned a regular house of prostitution in Madinah, which had six beautiful slave girls. Not only did he earn money through them but also used them to entertain his respectable and important guests who came to see him from different parts of Arabia. He employed the illegitimate children thus born to enhance the splendor and strength of his army of slaves. When one of these prostitutes, named Mu'azah, accepted Islam and wanted to offer repentance for her past sins, Ibn Ubayy subjected her to torture. She complained of it to Hadrat Abu Bakr, who brought it to the notice of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet ordered that the

woman be taken away from the cruel man. (Ibn Jarir, Vol. XVIII, pp. 55 -58, and 103-104; Al Isti`ab Vol 11, p. 762; p. 762; Ibn Kathir, Vol. III, pp. 288-289). Such were the conditions when this verse was revealed. If these conditions are kept in view, it will become obvious that the real object was not merely to stop the slave girls from being forced into prostitution but to ban prostitution itself as illegal within the boundaries of the Islamic state. Simultaneously there was a declaration of general pardon for those who had been forced into this business in the past.

After the revelation of this Divine Command the Holy Prophet declared: "There is no place for prostitution in Islam." (Abu Da'ud). The second Command that he gave was that the earnings made through adultery were unlawful, impure and absolutely forbidden. According to a tradition reported by Rafi` bin Khadij, the Holy Prophet described such earnings as impure, product of the worst profession and most filthy income. (Abu Da'ud, Tirmizi, Nasa'i). According to Abu Huzaifah, he termed the money earned through prostitution as unlawful. (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad). Abu Mas`ud `Uqbah bin `Amr says that the Holy Prophet forbade the people to take prostitution earnings. (Sihah Sitta and Ahmad). The third Command was that the slave girl could be employed for lawful manual labor, but the owner had no right to impose or receive any money from her about which he was not sure how it had been earned. According to Rafi` bin Khadij, he prohibited accepting any earnings from the slave girl unless it was known how she had earned it. (Abu Da'ud). Rafi` bin Rifa`ah Ansari has reported the same Command in clearer words. He says: "The Prophet of Allah prohibited us from accepting anything from the earnings of a slave girl except that which she earned through manual labour, such as (and he indicated this with his hand) baking bread, spinning cotton or carding wool or cotton." (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud). Another tradition quoted from Hadrat Abu Hurairah in Abu Da'ud and Musnad Ahmad says that taking of money earned by a slave girl through unlawful means is prohibited. Thus the Holy Prophet in accordance with the intention of this verse, banned by religious injunction and law all kinds of prostitution prevalent in Arabia in those days. Over and above this, the decision he gave in the case of Mu'azah, the slave girl of `Abdullah bin Ubayy, shows that an owner who forces his slave girl into prostitution loses his rights of ownership over her. This is a tradition from Imam Zuhri, which Ibn Kathir has quoted on the authority of Musnad `Abdur Razzaq.

60This verse is not only connected with the verse immediately preceding it but with the entire discourse right from the beginning. "Revelations giving clear guidance" are those verses which: (1) state the law concerning Zina, Qazf and Li an. (2) forbid the believers to marry impure men or women, (3) prohibit the slandering of chaste people and propagating indecencies in society, (4) lay stress on men and women to restrain their gaze and guard their private parts, (5) prescribe the limits of purdah` for women, (6) disapprove of the marriageable people's remaining unmarried, (7) lay down the rule for slaves to earn their freedom through written agreements, and (8) ban prostitution to purify society. After all these commands and instructions, a warning is being given that now if the people violated these instructions it would only mean that they wanted to meet with the same doom as had been the lot of the wretched communities before them, whose stories have been related in the Qur'an itself. There could probably be no severer warning at the end of an edict. But it is a pity that a people who profess to he believers, and recite the holy edict and hold it sacred, yet continue to defy and violate its provisions in spite of the

severe warning

61From here the discourse is directed towards the hypocrites, who were bent upon starting mischief in the Islamic community, and were as active from within as the unbelievers were from without to harm the Islamic movement and the body politic of Islam. As these people professed belief, and apparently belonged to the Muslim community, and had blood relationships with the Muslims, especially with the Ansar, they were better placed to start and spread mischief. The result was that even some sincere Muslims, due to simplicity or weakness, became tools in their hands and even their supporters. But in spite of their profession of faith, the lure of worldly gains had utterly blinded them to the light that was spreading in the world through the teachings of the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). The indirect address to the hypocrites here has three things in view: Firstly, to admonish them, for the first and foremost demand of Allah's providence and His mercy is to go on admonishing the misguided and the erring one till the last in spite of his persistence in mischief and wickedness. Secondly, to differentiate clearly between belief and hypocrisy so that every right thinking person from the Muslim community should be able to distinguish between a true believer and a hypocrite. Then if anybody, in spite of this differentiation, falls a prey to the machinations of the hypocrites or supports them, he should himself be responsible for his conduct.

Thirdly, to warn the hypocrites clearly and plainly that Allah's promises for the believers are meant only for those who sincerely believe and then fulfill the demands and requirements of their Faith. These promises are not meant for anybody who poses himself as a Muslim. The hypocrites and the sinful people therefore should not cherish any hope that they will have any share in these.

62The phrase "heavens and the earth" in the Qur'an is generally used for the "universe". Thus the verse would also mean: "Allah is the light of the whole universe"

Light is something which makes things visible; which is itself manifest and helps make other things manifest. The human mind conceives light in this very sense. Absence of light is termed darkness, invisibility and obscurity. On the other hand, when there is visibility and things become exposed to view, man says there is light. Allah has been called `Light' in this basic sense, and not in the sense of a beam of light which travels at the speed of 186,000 miles per second and stimulates the optic nerve through the retina. This conception of light has nothing to do with the reality of the meaning for which human mind has coined this word; rather the word light is used for all those lights which we experience in this physical world All human words used for Allah are used in their basic sense and meaning, and not with reference to their physical connotation. For instance, when, the word "sight" is used with respect to Allah, it does not mean that Allah has an eye like men and animals with which He sees. Similarly when we say that Allah 'hears' or 'grips' or 'grasps', it does not mean that He hears through ears, or grips or grasps with the hand like us. These words are used in a metaphorical sense and only a man of very poor intelligence would have the misconception that hearing or seeing or grasping is not possible except in the limited and specific sense in which we experience it. Similarly it will be shortsightedness to interpret the word 'light' in

the sense of physical light rays emanating from a luminous body and affecting the retina. This word is not applicable to Allah in its limited sense, but in its absolute sense. That is, He alone in this universe is the real and prime "Cause of manifestation", otherwise there is nothing but darkness. here. Everything which gives light and illuminates other things has got its light from Him; it has no light of its own.

The word light is also used for knowledge, and ignorance is termed as darkness. Allah is the Light of the universe in this sense too, because the knowledge of Reality and of right Guidance can be obtained from Him alone; without having recourse to His `Light', there will be nothing but darkness of ignorance and the resultant vice and wickedness in the world.

63"Blessed": yielding multiple benefits

64which is neither eastern nor western": which grows in an open plane or on a hill, where it gets sunshine from morning till evening. Such an olive tree yields tine oil which gives a bright light. On the other hand, a tree which gets sunlight only from the east or only from the west, yields thick oil which gives weak light.

65In this parable, Allah has been likened to the Lamp and the universe to the Niche. The glass shade is the veil behind which Allah has concealed Himself from His creation. This veil is not a physical veil for concealment, but a veil caused by the intensity of Divine manifestation. The human eye is unable to see Him not because of the intervening darkness but because of the intensity of the all pervading, all-embracing Light radiating through the transparent veil. The human vision which is limited in nature cannot comprehend it. It can only comprehend and perceive limited physical lights which vary in brightness, which disappear and reappear, and Which can be perceived only by contrast to existing darkness. But the 'Absolute Light' has no confronting darkness: it does not vanish, it shines forth and pervades all around with ever-existing glory; it is beyond human perception and comprehension.

As for "the lamp which is lit with the oil of a blessed olive tree, which is neither eastern nor western"', this is a metaphor to give an idea of the perfect light of the lamp and its brilliance. In antiquity the source for brilliant light were the olive lamps, and the most superior oil for the purpose was that obtained from a tree standing in an open and elevated place. The epithet of Lamp for Allah in the parable does trot mean that Allah is deriving His energy from some external source. It only means that the Lamp of the parable is not an ordinary lamp but the most brilliant lamp that can be imagined. Just as a brilliant lamp illuminates the whale house, so has Allah illuminated the whole universe.

Again, the words " .... its oil is (so fine) as if it were going to shine forth by itself though no fire touched it", are also meant to emphasize the brilliance of :he light of the lamp, which is being fed by the finest and most readily combustible oil. The 'olive' and 'its being neither eastern nor western', and 'high combustibility of its oil by itself' (without fire), are not the essential elements of the parable, but attributes of the lamp, which is the primary element of the parable. The essential elements of the parable are only three: the Lamp, the Niche and the transparent Glass Shade.

The sentence, "His light may be likened.....", dispels the possible misunderstanding that one could have front the words: "'Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth." This shows that the use of the word "light" for Allah does not at all mean that the essence of His Being is nothing but 'light'. In essence, He is a Perfect Being, Who is All-Knowing, All-Powerful, All-Wise etc. and also possessing all 'Light' has been called 'Light' itself because of His Perfection as a Source of Light, just as somebody may be called `Grace' on account of his being highly gracious and beneficent and 'Beauty' because of his being highly beautiful and attractive.

66That is, although Allah's Light is illuminating the whole world, everybody does not and cannot perceive it. It is Allah alone Who blesses whomsoever He wills with the capacity for perceiving His Light and benefiting by it. Just as the day and night are alike to a blind man, so is the case of a man without the gift of inner perception: he may see the electric light, the sunlight, the moonlight and the light from stars, but he cannot perceive the Light of Allah. For him. there is nothing but darkness in the universe. Just as a blind man cannot see the stone in his way unless he stumbles over it, so is the man without the gift of inner perception, who cannot perceive even those realities around him which may he all brilliance and shining by Allah's Light. He will perceive them only when he is overtaken by the consequences of his own misdeeds.

67This means two things: First, He knows what parable can best explain a certain reality, and secondly, He knows who is entitled to receive this bounty and who is not. Allah has no need to show His Light to the one who has do desire or longing for it and who is utterly lost in worldly pursuits and in seeking material pleasures and gains. This bounty can be bestowed only on the one who in the knowledge of Allah has a sincere desire for it.

68Some commentators have interpreted these "houses" to mean the mosques, and 'raising them' to mean constructing and reverencing them. Some others, however, take them to mean the houses of the believers and 'raising them' to mean raising their moral status. The words "to mention His name therein" seem to refer to the mosques and support the first interpretation, but if we look deeper, we see that they support the second interpretation equally well. This is because Divine Law does not confine worship to mosques alone as is the case with the priest-ridden religions where the rituals can only be performed under the leadership of a clergy. ht Islam a house is also a place of worship like the mosque and every man is his own priest. As this Surah mostly contains instructions for ennobling domestic life, we feel that the second interpretation is more in keeping with the context though there is no reason for rejecting the first interpretation. There will be no harm if both the mosques and the houses of the believers are implied here.

69Here those characteristics have been described which are necessary for the true perception of Allah's Absolute Light and for benefiting from His bounties. Allah does not bestow His bounties without reason.

He bestows them on the deserving ones alone. He only sees this that the recipient has sincere love for Him, stands in awe of Him, seeks His favors and avoids His wrath; he is not lost in material pursuits but in spite of his worldly engagements keeps his heart warm with God's remembrance. Such a person does not rest content with low spiritual levels, but actively endeavors to attain the heights towards which his Master may guide him. He does not go for the paltry gains of this transitory world, but has his gaze constantly fixed on the everlasting life of the Hereafter. These are the things which determine whether or not a person should be granted the favor to benefit from Allah's Light. Then, when Allah is pleased to bestow His bounties, He bestows them without measure; and it will be man's own incapacity if he does not receive them in full.

70That is, they refused to accept sincerely the Divine Message which was brought by the Prophets, and which at that time was being given by the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). These verses clearly show that the truthful and righteous believers only can benefit from Allah's Light. In contrast to them, the state of those people is being described here, who refused to believe and obey the Holy Prophet, who was the real and sole means of attaining the Light of Allah.

71This parable describes the condition of those people who, in spite of disbelief and hypocrisy, practice some good deeds and also believe, among other things, in the life after death in the hope that their good deeds will be of some help to thetas in the Hereafter even if they did not believe and follow the Prophet and lacked the qualities of true believers. In this parable they are being told that their expectations of reaping benefits of their ostentatious deeds of virtue in the Hereafter are no more than a mirage. Just as a traveler in the desert takes the glittering sands for a surging pool of water and runs towards it for quenching his thirst, so are these people traveling on the road to death cherishing false hopes on account of their good deeds. But just as the one running towards a mirage does not find anything there to quench his thirst, so will these people find nothing to avail them when they enter the state of death. On the contrary, they will find Allah there, Who will require them to account for their disbelief, hypocrisy and misdeeds, which they committed along with their ostentatious deeds of virtue, and will deal with them in full justice.

72This parable describes the condition of all the disbelievers and the hypocrites including those who perform good deeds for ostentation. It is being stated that such people are passing their life in a state of absolute and complete ignorance, whether otherwise they are the most learned people in the world and leaders in their respective fields of learning. They are like the mart who is lost in complete darkness where no ray of light can reach him. They think that knowledge merely consists in producing atom bombs, hydrogen bombs, supersonic planes and moon rockets, or in attaining excellence in economics and finance and law and philosophy. But they little understand that real knowledge is something entirely different and they have no idea of it. Thus considered they are just ignorant, and an illiterate peasant who has gained some acquaintance of the Divine Truth is wiser than they.

73Here is stated the real object of the discourse which began with: "Allah is the Light of the heavens and

the earth." When in fact there is no light in the universe except the Light of Allah and all manifestation of reality is due to that Light, where from can the one whom Allah does not give light have light? There exists no other source of light from where he can receive a ray

74As has been explained above, Allah is the Light of the whole universe, but His Light can be perceived and comprehended by the righteous believers only. All other people grope about in the dark like the blind in spite of the all-pervading, all-embracing Light. Here a few of the countless signs which. guide to the Light are being mentioned by way of example. If a person whose eyes of the heart are open, sees them, he can perceive Allah working everywhere around him at all times. But those who are blind of the heart, and can only see with the head's eyes, can see Biology and Zoology and other sciences working in the world, but they fail to perceive and recognize Allah's signs anywhere working in the world.

75This may mean frozen clouds which have been called `mountains in the heavens' metaphorically. It may also mean the mountains of the earth which stand high in the heavens and whose snow-capped peaks cause condensation in the clouds which results in hailstorms.

76That is, their turning away from obedience itself belies their claim that they are believers and their conduct clearly shows that their profession of faith and submission was absolutely false.

77These words clearly state that the judgment of the Prophet is the judgment of Allah and the Command of the Prophet is the Command of Allah. Therefore, the invitation to obey the Prophet is an invitation to obey both Allah and His Prophet. (Also see An-Nisa: 59-61, and the E.N.'s thereof).

78This does not only apply to the cases which came up before the Holy Prophet for a decision in his lifetime, but this continues valid even today. Thus, a summon from the court of a judge in an Islamic government, who judges a case in accordance with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet, is actually a summon from the Court of Allah and His Prophet and the one who repudiates the judge indeed repudiates both Allah and His Prophet. This thing has been explained in a tradition related by Hasan Basri thus: "Whosoever is summoned to appear before a judge from among the judges of the Muslims but fails to appear before him, he is a transgressor and forfeits his rights." (Al-Jassas, Ahkam-ul-Qur'an, Vol. III, p. 405). In other words, such a person not only renders himself punishable but also guilty and liable to be proceeded against.

79This verse states that a person who willingly accepts only that part of the Divine Law which serves his advantage, but rejects that which goes against his interests and desires, and prefers the worldly laws instead, is not a believer but a hypocrite. His profession of Faith is false for he does not in fact believe in Allah and His Prophet but in his own interests and desires. With this attitude even if he believes in and follows a portion of the Divine Law, his belief has no value whatever in the sight of Allah

80That is, there can be only three reasons for such a conduct. First, a person may not have believed at all but may only be posing as a Muslim in order to enjoy the benefits of belonging to the Muslim community. Secondly, he might have believed but may still be having doubts about the reality of the Prophethood, Revelations, life-after-death, and even the existence of Allah Himself. Thirdly, he may be a believer but might at the same time be apprehending injustice from Allah and His Prophet and considering their Commands disadvantageous to him personally in one way or the other. There can be no doubt that the people belonging to any of these categories are themselves unjust. A person who, having such doubts and suspicions, enters the Muslim community and enjoys undeserved benefits posing himself as a member thereof, is indeed a deceiver, cheat and forger. He is not only doing injustice to himself, practicing constant falsehood and developing the meanest traits of character, but he is being unjust to the Muslim people as well, who look upon him as one of themselves merely on the basis of his verbal profession of the Faith and let him enjoy all sorts of social, cultural, political and moral relations with them as such.

81The verse may also mean that the obedience expected of the believers is of recognized and well known type, which is above every kind of suspicion, and not such as may need swearing of oaths to convince others of its sincerity. Their conduct is manifest and everybody who comes into contact with them feels that they are truly obedient to Allah and His Prophet.

82That is, "You might succeed in deceiving the people, but you cannot deceive Allah, Who is aware of everything, open or hidden, even of your innermost motives and intentions."

83As has been hinted in the beginning of this discourse, this means to warn the hypocrites that the promise of Allah to bestow successorship in the land is not meant for those people who are Muslims only in name, but for those who are true in faith, pious in character, sincere in devotion and who follow Allah's religion in letter and spirit eschewing every tinge of shirk. Those who lack these qualities and pay mere lip service to Islam are neither worthy of this promise nor its addressees. Therefore they should entertain no hope of having any share in it.

Some people interpret Khilafat (successorship in the land) to mean political power and authority, and conversely conclude that whosoever possesses power and authority in the land is necessarily a true believer and a follower of Allah's approved religion and His devotee, free from all traces of shirk. Then in order to get support for their wrong conclusion, they even change the very meanings of Faith, virtue, Divine Creed, Allah's worship, idolatry, etc. to suit their interpretation. This is the worst distortion of the meaning of the Qur'an, even worse than what the Jews and Christians did with their Scriptures. This interpretation of the verse tends to destroy the very message of the Qur'an. If `successorship in the land' were to mean mere power and authority in the land; then all those people who wielded power and authority in the world, or wield it today., would fit in with the description contained in the verse, even if they denied Allah, Revelations, Prophethood, life in the Hereafter, and were involved in all kinds of major sins like usury, adultery, drinking and gambling. Now if all such people are regarded as pious believers

and considered worthy of holding the high offices because of their qualities as such, then `Faith' would imply simple obedience to physical laws and `Virtue' would mean making use of those laws effectively and successfully. Allah's approved religion would mean making maximum progress -in the fields of industry and trade, commerce and politics by achieving excellence in the physical sciences; devotion to Allah would mean abiding by the rules and procedures which are naturally useful and essential for success in individual and collective enterprises; and shirk would mean adopting a few harmful methods also along with the useful procedures and rules. But the question is: Would a person who has studied the Qur'an with an open heart and mind ever believe that the terms `Faith', 'Righteous deeds', `True Religion', `Devotion to Allah', Tauhid and Shirk as used in the Qur'an really mean this ? As a matter of fact, such a meaning can be understood either by the one who has never made an intelligent study of the Qur'an as a whole, but has picked up verses from here and there and given them his own biased meaning according to preconceived notions and theories, or by the one who has read the Qur'an through but has all along been holding all those verses as wrong and absurd, which invite people to accept Allah as the One and only Lord, His Revelations as the only source of Guidance, His Messengers as the only true Guides worthy of absolute obedience, and which demand not only belief in the life-after-death, but also state that the people who would consider success in the worldly life as their sole and ultimate objective, without any idea of their accountability in the Hereafter, would be deprived of real success. The Qur'an has repeated these themes so frequently in diverse ways and in such clear and plain language that it is difficult to believe that anybody who studies it honestly can ever be involved in those misunderstandings in which the modern interpreters of this verse have been involved. The fact is that they have misconstrued Khilafat and Istikhlaf (successorship) after their own notions, which cannot be held as correct by anybody who has some knowledge of the Qur'an.

The Qur'an has used Khilafat and Istikhlaf in the following three meanings and the context determines in which particular meaning it has been used in a particular place:

(a) "To bear the authority delegated by Allah". The whole human race is Allah's Khalifah (successor) on the earth in this sense.

(b) "To acknowledge Allah as the Supreme Sovereign and to use His delegated powers and authority in accordance with His Law." In this sense only a pious and righteous believer can be a Khalifah, because he alone can discharge the responsibilities of Khilafat truly. On the other hand, a disbeliever and sinner cannot be Khalifah: he is rather a rebel against Allah, because he abuses the power and authority delegated by Allah in disobedience to Him in the land bestowed by Him.

(c) "The succession of one ruling nation in the land after the fall of another nation." The meanings (a) and (b) imply vicegerency while (c) implies successorship. Both these meanings of Khilafat are well known and recognized in the Arabic lexicon.

Now anybody who reads this verse in this context cannot have any doubt that the word Khilafat has been

used here for the government which discharges the responsibilities of Allah's Vicegerency strictly in accordance with Allah's Law, and not in accordance with mere physical laws of the world. That is why, not to speak of the disbelievers, even the hypocrites, who professed faith in Islam, are being excluded from the purview of Allah's promise. That is why it is being stated that true and righteous believers only are worthy of this promise. That is why it is being averred that the establishment of Khilafat will result in the establishment of Islam, Allah's approved religion, on strong foundations; and that is why the condition being put forward for earning this favor is that the believers should remain steadfast in their faith and devotion to Allah avoiding every tinge of shirk. To remove this promise from its right context and apply it on the international scene to the case of America and Russia, or any other power that be, is sheer absurdity and nonsense. (For further details, see E. N. 99 of Al-Anbiya' also).

Another thing that needs to be mentioned here is that the direct addressees of this promise were the Muslims living in the time of the Holy Prophet though indirectly it applies to the future generations of Muslims as well. When in the beginning this promise was held out by Allah, the Muslims were living in a state of fear and Islam had not yet taken firm roots even in Hejaz. A few years later this state of fear not only gave way to peace and equanimity but Islam also spread outside Arabia to large parts of Africa and Asia, and it became firmly established not only in its own land of birth but outside it as well. This is a historical proof of the fact that Allah fulfilled His promise in the times of Hadrat Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman (may Allah he pleased with them all). No right thinking person, therefore, can have any doubt that the Khilafat of the first three Caliphs has been authenticated by the Qur'an itself and Allah Himself has testified to their being pious Believers. If anybody still has a doubt, he should read the address of Hadrat 'Ali in Nahjal Balaghah, which was meant to dissuade Hadrat 'Umar from going personally to tight against the Iranians. He said:

"Our success in this work is not dependent on numerical strength; it is the religion of Allah for which He Himself has opened ways. We are grateful to Him for His help and succor which has enabled us to serve its cause till it has been raised to its present glory Allah Himself has said: `Allah has promised to those among you, who believe and do righteous deeds that He will make them successors in the land .... ' Allah will certainly fulfill this promise and will help the armies of Islam. The position of the Caliph in Islam is like that of the string in a necklace of pearls. If the string breaks, the pearls scatter away and the order is destroyed. Once scattered and dispersed, it becomes difficult to collect them again. No doubt the Arabs are small in number, but they have been increased by Islam and strengthened by unity. You should therefore stick to Madinah like the pivot and make the grindstone of Arabia rotate about you and guide the war-machine from here. Once you leave this place, your entire organization will begin to crumble, then you will start feeling more worried about the dangers behind than the enemies in front. Moreover, the Iranians will concentrate their whole attention on you, and will like to exterminate you, taking you as the main and only hurdle in their way to victory. As for your apprehension that they have come out in much greater strength, I would say that hitherto we have been fighting them not merely on the strength of numbers, but have been putting them to rout on the strength of Allah's help and succor." Any discerning reader can see for himself as to which side is being held by Hadrat `Ali as worthy of Allah's promise with

regard to successorship in the land.

84Kufr (disbelief) here may also mean ingratitude or denial of the truth. In the first case, the verse will refer to those people who deviate from the right path after Allah has favored them with successorship, and in the second, to the hypocrites, who do not give up their hypocritical attitude even after hearing this promise of Allah.

85From here again, the Commandments for social life are being resumed. It is just possible that this portion of Surah An-Nur was sent down at a later date.

86According to the majority of commentators and jurists, this refers to both male and female slaves. Ibn `Umar and Mujahid, however, have expressed the opinion that it refers to the male slaves only. But in view of the Commandment that follows there appears to be no reason for making this distinction. Violation of one's privacy by one's' children is as undesirable as by one's female slaves. All jurists are agreed that the Commandment given in this verse is applicable both to the minor and to the grown up slaves.

87Another translation can be: "who have not yet reached the age of seeing wet dreams." From this the jurists have deduced the principle that in case of boys puberty starts when they begin having nocturnal emissions. But the translation that we have adopted is preferable because the injunction is meant both for boys and for girls. If nocturnal emission is taken as the sign of attaining puberty, the injunction would be confined to boys only, because in the case of girls it is the menstrual discharge, and not nocturnal emission, which marks the beginning of puberty. In our opinion the intention is that the children of the house should follow this procedure till the time that they become sex conscious. After they have become sex conscious they have to follow the injunction that follows.

88Literally `aurat' is a place of danger and trouble; it also means a private part of the body which one would not like to expose before others, and something which is not fully secured. All these meanings are close to each other and all are implied in the meaning of this verse. The verse means to say that these are your times of privacy when you are either alone or with your wives in a state when it is not proper for your children and servants to come in to see you unannounced. Therefore, they should be instructed that they must take your permission before coming in to see you in your places of privacy at these three times.

89That is, at other times than these, there is no restriction on the entry of minor children and slaves in your private rooms without permission. If on such an occasion you are not properly dressed and they enter without permission, you will have no right to take them to task. For in that case, it will be your own folly to have kept yourself in an improper state at a time when you should have been properly dressed for the day's business. However, if they enter without permission during the times of privacy, the blame will lie with them provided they have been taught the necessary etiquette.

90This is the reason for the general permission for children and slaves to come without permission .at other times than those mentioned above. This throws light on a fundamental Fiqh principle that every religious injunction is based on some wisdom or good reason, whether it has been explained or not.

91That is, when they have reached the age of puberty. As has been explained in E.N. 87 above, the signs of puberty in the case of boys and girls are nocturnal emission and menstrual discharge respectively. There is, however, a difference of opinion among the jurists regarding the beginning of puberty in those boys and girls who for some reason do not show these physical signs for an unduly long time. According to Imam Shafi`i, Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad and Imam Ahmad, a boy or a girl of IS years will be considered to have attained puberty, and a saying of Imam Abu Hanifah also supports this view. But the wellknown view of Imam Abu Hanifah is that in such cases the age of puberty will be 17 years for girls and 18 years for boys. Both these opinions are the result of juristic reasoning and neither is based on any injunction of the Qur'an or Sunnah. It is therefore not necessary that the age limits of 15 or 18 years be accepted as marking the beginning of puberty everywhere in the world in abnormal cases. In different countries and ages there are different conditions of physical development and growth. The age of puberty in a certain country can be determined by means of the law of averages in normal cases. As for abnormal cases, the mean difference of ages may be added to the upper age limit to determine the age of puberty. For instance, if in a country, the minimum and maximum ages for noctural discharge are normally 12 and 15 years respectively, the mean difference of one and a half years may be added to the maximum limit of 15 years to determine the beginning of puberty for abnormal cases. The same principle can be used by the legal experts of various countries to fix the age of puberty keeping in view their peculiar local conditions.

There is a tradition quoted from Ibn `Umar in support of the age of 15 years for puberty. He says: "I was 14, when I presented myself before the Holy Prophet to ask his permission to join the Battle of Uhud, but he declined permission. Then on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench, when I was 15, I was again presented and he permitted me to join." (Sihah Sitta, Musnad Ahmad). This tradition, however, does not stand scrutiny for the following two reasons:

(a) The Battle of Uhud took place in Shawwal, 3 A.H., and the Battle of the Trench in Shawwal, 5 A.H. according to Ibn Ishaq, and in Zil-Qa`d, 5 A.H. according to Ibn Sa`d. There is an interval of two years or more between the two events. Now if Ibn `Umar was 14 at the time of the Battle of Uhud, he could not be 15 at the time of the Battle of the Trench. It may be that he mentioned 14 years for 13 years and 11 months and 15 years for 15 years and 11 months.

(b) It is a different thing to be regarded as an adult for the purposes of war and quite different to be legally adult for social affairs. They are not necessarily interconnected. Therefor the correct view is that the age of 15 for an abnormal boy has been fixed on the basis of analogous and juristic reasoning and not on the basis of anything in the Qur'an or Sunnah.

92Literally, "the seated women". This means those women who are no longer capable of bearing children, who no longer cherish sexual desires, and who cannot excite the passions of men.

93Literally, "if they lay aside their clothes". Obviously it cannot mean that they should strip themselves naked. That is why all the jurists and commentators . are agreed that it implies the outer garments which are used to hide the adornments as enjoined in Al-Ahzab: 59.

94"Tabarruj " is display and exhibitionism. When used with regard to a woman, it would imply the one who displays her charms and adornments before other men. The permission to lay aside the outer garments is being given to those old women who are no longer interested in personal embellishments and whose sex desires are gone. But if they still have a hidden desire smoldering in their hearts and an urge to display, they cannot avail of this permission.

95Three things are necessary to understand this verse:

(a) The verse consists of two parts: the first part relates to the sick, the lame, the blind and other handicapped people, and the second part to the other People.

(b) The moral teachings of the Qur'an had so thoroughly changed the Arab mind that they had become highly sensitive with regard to the distinction between the lawful and the unlawful. According to Ibn `Abbas, when Allah commanded them "not to devour one another's property by unlawful ways" (IV: 29), the people became unduly cautious and would not eat freely at each other's house; so much so that unless a formal invitation was extended, they considered it unlawful even to dine in the house of a relative or a friend

(c) The mention of "taking meals at your own houses" only means to .impress that taking meals at the house of a relative or a friend is just like taking meals at one's own house, where no permission is required.

With these three things in mind, one can easily understand the meaning of the verse. It says that the handicapped person can have his meal anywhere and at any house in order to satisfy his hunger, because the society as a whole owes to him this privilege on account of his handicap. As for the other people, for them their `own houses' and the houses of the relatives mentioned in the verse are equally good for the purpose. No formal invitation or permission is needed to have the meals of their houses. In the absence of the master, if his wife or children offer something, it can be taken without hesitation. In this connection, it should be noted that the houses of one's children are just like one's own house, and the friends imply close friends.

96In ancient Arabia, some tribes had the tradition that each member sat and ate separately. Eating

together in one place was considered bad as some Hindus do even today. On the contrary, some other tribes considered it bad to eat alone individually; so much so that they would even go without food if they did not have company at meals. This verse means to abolish such customs and restrictions.

97These are the final instructions being given to tighten the discipline of the Muslim Community and make it more organized than before.

98This Commandment is also applicable in respect of the successors of the Holy Prophet after him and other leaders of the Muslims. When the Muslims are called upon to get together for a common cause, whether relating to war or peace, it is not permissible for them to retreat or disperse without due permission of the leader.

99This contains a warning that it is absolutely unlawful to ask permission without any genuine need.

100That is, it depends upon the Prophet or his successor after him to grant or not to grant permission even in case of a genuine need. If he deems the collective cause to be more important than the individual need of the person, he may refuse permission, and a believer will not mind it.

101This again contains a warning: If in asking permission there is even a tinge of excuse making, or of placing individual interests above collective interests, it would be a sin. Therefore the Prophet or his successor should also pray for the forgiveness of the one whom he gives permission.

102Dua means `to summon', `to pray' and` to call`. Dua'-ar-Rasul, therefore, may mean `summoning or praying by the Messenger' or `calling the Messenger'. The verse can thus have three meanings which would all be equally correct;

(a) "The Prophet's summons should not be treated as a common man's summons", for the Prophet's summon is of extraordinary importance, which you cannot ignore, because if you fail to respond to it, or feel hesitant about it, you will be doing so at the very risk of your faith

(b) "Do not consider the Prophet's prayer as a common man's prayer". If he is pleased with you and prays for you, there can be no greater good fortune for you. But if he is displeased with you and curses you, there can be no greater misfortune for you.

(c) "Calling the Prophet should not be like calling among yourselves of each other. That is, you should not call or address the Prophet just as you call and address other people aloud by their names. You should have full respect for' him, because the slightest disrespect in this regard will call for Allah's reckoning in the Hereafter. Though all the three meanings quite fit in with the context, the first meaning is more in keeping with the theme which follows.

103This is yet another trait of the hypocrites. When they are summoned to gather together for a collective cause, they do respond to the call, because they want to be counted among the Muslims. But they grudge their presence, and steal away somehow as soon as they find an opportunity.

104According to Imam Ja'far Sadiq, "affliction" means "rule of the unjust". That is if the Muslims will disobey the Commands of the Prophet, they will be put under tyrants. Besides this, there can be many other forms of affliction also; for instance, sectarian differences, civil war, moral degradation, disruption of community life, internal chaos, disintegration of political and material power, subjugation by others, etc.

25. Surah Al Furqan (The Criterion)

Name

The Surah takes its name "Al-Furqan" from the first verse. Though it is symbolic like the names of many other Surahs, it has a close relation to its subject matter.

Period of Revelation

It appears from its style and subject matter that, like Surah Al- Mu'minun, it was also revealed during the third stage of Prophethood at Makkah. Ibn Jarir and Imam Razi have cited a tradition of Dahhak bin Muzahim that this Surah was revealed eight years before Surah An Nisa. This also confirms our opinion as to its period of revelation. (*Ibn Jarir*, Vol. XIX, pp. 28-30, and *Tafsir Kabir*, Vol. VI,p. 358).

Subject Matter and Topics

The Surah deals with the doubts and objections that were being raised against the Qur'an, the Prophethood of Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and his teachings by the disbelievers of Makkah. Appropriate answers to each and every objection have been given and the people have been warned of the consequences of rejecting the Truth. At the end of the Surah, a clear picture of the moral superiority of the Believers has been depicted as in the beginning of Surah Al-Mu'minun, as if to say, 'Here is the criterion for distinguishing the genuine from the counterfeit. This is the noble character of those people who have believed in and followed the teachings of the Holy Prophet and this is the kind of people that he is trying to train. You may yourselves compare and contrast this type of people with those Arabs, who have not as yet accepted the Message, and who are upholding "ignorance" and exerting their utmost to defeat the Truth. Now you may judge for yourselves as to which you would like to choose." Though this question was not posed in so many words, it was placed before every one in Arabia in a tangible shape. It may be noted that during the next few years, the practical answer given to this question by the whole nation, with the exception of a small minority, was that they chose Islam.

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

تَبَٰرَكَ ٱلَّذِي نَزَّلَ ٱلۡفُرۡقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِهِۦ لِيَكُونَ لِلۡعَٰلَمِينَ نَذِيرًا ١

[1] Highly blessed[1] is He, Who has sent down Al-Furqan[2] [3] to His servant so that it may be a warner to all mankind.[4]

ٱلَّذِي لَهُۥ مُلۡكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَمۡ يَتَّخِذۡ وَلَدٗا وَلَمۡ يَكُن لَّهُۥ شَرِيكٞ فِي ٱلۡمُلۡكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيۡءٖ فَقَدَّرَهُۥ تَقۡدِيرٗا ٢

وَٱتَّخَذُواْ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةٗ لَّا يَخۡلُقُونَ شَيۡـٔٗا وَهُمۡ يُخۡلَقُونَ وَلَا يَمۡلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمۡ ضَرّٗا وَلَا نَفۡعٗا وَلَا يَمۡلِكُونَ مَوۡتٗا وَلَا حَيَوٰةٗ وَلَا نُشُورٗا ٣

[2-3] He to Whom belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth:[5] Who has begotten no son.[6] Who has no partner in His Sovereignty.[7] Who created each and every thing and then ordained its destiny.[8] Yet the people have set up, besides Him, deities, who do not create anything but are themselves created,[9] who can neither harm nor help even themselves: who have no power over life or death, nor can they raise up the dead.[10]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ إِفۡكٌ ٱفۡتَرَىٰهُ وَأَعَانَهُۥ عَلَيۡهِ قَوۡمٌ ءَاخَرُونَۖ
فَقَدۡ جَآءُو ظُلۡمٗا وَزُورٗا ٤

وَقَالُوٓاْ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ٱكۡتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِ بُكۡرَةٗ وَأَصِيلٗا ٥

قُلۡ أَنزَلَهُ ٱلَّذِي يَعۡلَمُ ٱلسِّرَّ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ
إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ غَفُورٗا رَّحِيمٗا ٦

[4-6] Those who have rejected the Message of the Prophet, say, "This (Al-Furqan) is a forgery which this man himself has devised, and some others have helped him at it." What a cruel injustice[11] and an impudent lie! They say, "These things are the writings of the ancients which he has got copied down for himself, and then these are recited to him in the morning and evening." O Muhammad, say to them, "This has been sent down by Him, Who knows the secret of the heavens and the earth."[12] The fact is that He is very Forgiving and Merciful.[13]

وَقَالُواْ مَالِ هَٰذَا ٱلرَّسُولِ يَأۡكُلُ ٱلطَّعَامَ وَيَمۡشِي فِي ٱلۡأَسۡوَاقِۙ لَوۡلَآ أُنزِلَ
إِلَيۡهِ مَلَكٞ فَيَكُونَ مَعَهُۥ نَذِيرًا ٧

أَوۡ يُلۡقَىٰٓ إِلَيۡهِ كَنزٌ أَوۡ تَكُونُ لَهُۥ جَنَّةٞ يَأۡكُلُ مِنۡهَاۚ وَقَالَ
ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلٗا مَّسۡحُورًا ٨

ٱنظُرۡ كَيۡفَ ضَرَبُواْ لَكَ ٱلۡأَمۡثَالَ فَضَلُّواْ فَلَا يَسۡتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلٗا ٩

تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِيٓ إِن شَآءَ جَعَلَ لَكَ خَيۡرٗا مِّن ذَٰلِكَ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ وَيَجۡعَل لَّكَ قُصُورَۢا ١٠

[7-10] They say, "What sort of a Messenger is he that he eats food and moves about in the streets?[14] Why has not an angel been sent down to accompany him and threaten (the disbelievers)?[15] Or why has not at least a treasure been sent down for him or a garden given to him for (easy) sustenance?"[16] And the wicked people say, "You are following a man bewitched."[17] Just see what strange arguments they bring forward with regard to you! They have gone so far astray that they cannot charge any thing against you.[18] Highly blessed[19] is He, Who, if He wills, could give you much more and better things than what they propose for you: (Not one but) many gardens, beneath which rivers flow; and big castles.

بَلۡ كَذَّبُواْ بِٱلسَّاعَةِۖ وَأَعۡتَدۡنَا لِمَن كَذَّبَ بِٱلسَّاعَةِ سَعِيرًا ١١

إِذَا رَأَتۡهُم مِّن مَّكَانِۭ بَعِيدٖ سَمِعُواْ لَهَا تَغَيُّظٗا وَزَفِيرٗا ١٢

وَإِذَآ أُلۡقُواْ مِنۡهَا مَكَانٗا ضَيِّقٗا مُّقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوۡاْ هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورٗا ١٣

لَّا تَدْعُوا۟ ٱلْيَوْمَ ثُبُورًا وَٰحِدًا وَٱدْعُوا۟ ثُبُورًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾

[11-14] The fact of the matter is that these people have denied "the Hour"[20] [21] And for the one who denies the coming of the Hour, We have prepared a blazing Fire. When it will see[22] them from afar, they will hear the sounds of its raging and roaring. And when they are chained together and flung into a narrow space therein, they will begin to call for death. (Then it will be said to them:) "Do not call for one death today, but call for many deaths."

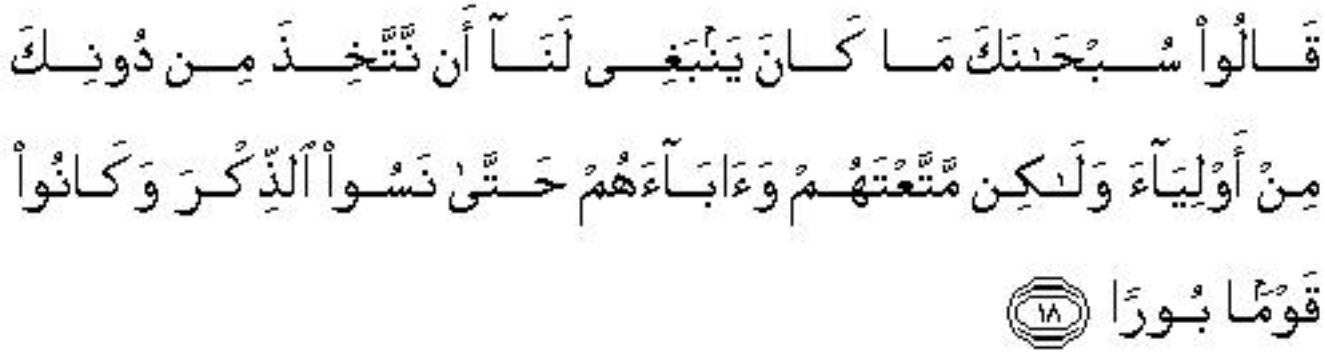
قُلْ أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ ٱلْخُلْدِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۚ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ
جَزَآءً وَمَصِيرًا ﴿١٥﴾

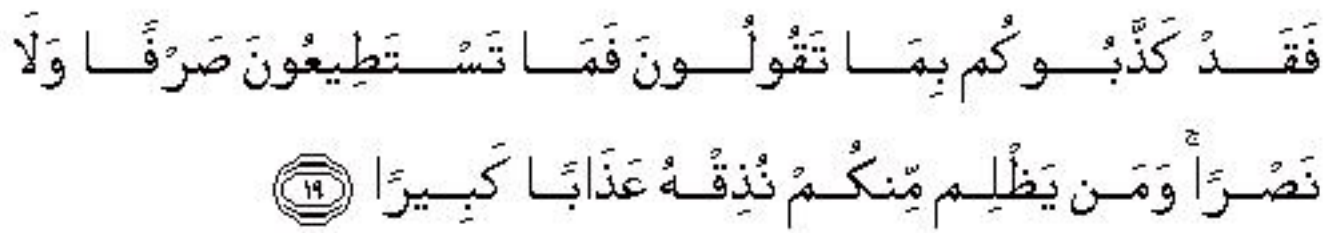
لَّهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَآءُونَ خَٰلِدِينَ ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ وَعْدًا مَّسْـُٔولًا ﴿١٦﴾

[15-16] Ask them "Is this (Fire) better or the everlasting Garden which has been promised to the God-fearing righteous people?" which will be the recompense of their good deeds and the final destination of their journey wherein they will get everything they desire and wherein they will dwell for ever. This is a promise which your Lord has taken upon Himself to fulfill.[23]

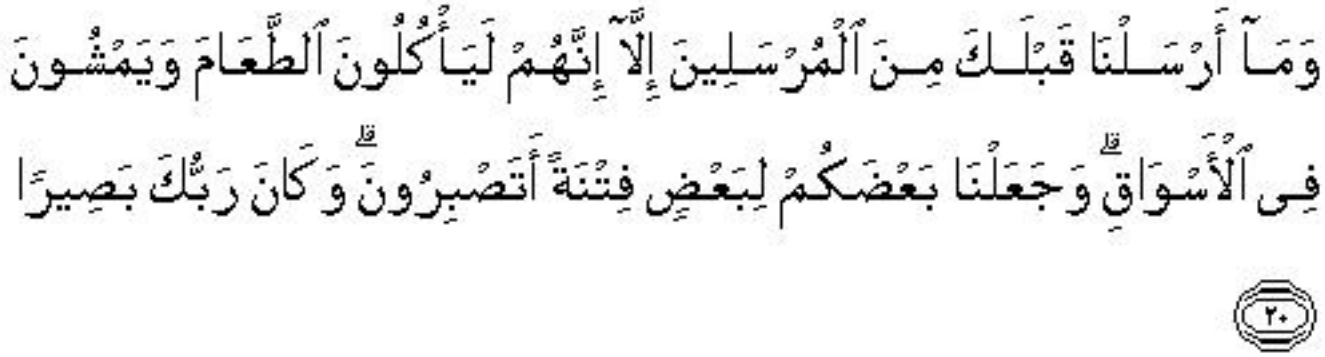
وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقُولُ ءَأَنتُمْ أَضْلَلْتُمْ عِبَادِى
هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ أَمْ هُمْ ضَلُّوا۟ ٱلسَّبِيلَ ﴿١٧﴾

[17] And on that Day (your Lord) will gather all these people together as well as their deities,[24] whom they worship besides Allah. Then He will ask them, "Did you mislead these servants of Mine, or did they themselves go astray?"[25]





[18-19] They will answer, "Glory be to Thee! We dared not take any guardian besides Thee: (they were misled because) Thou didst give them and their forefathers all the good things of life till they forgot the Admonition, and incurred the punishment."[26] Thus will your gods deny all that you are professing today.[27] Then you shall neither be able to repel your punishment nor shall get any help from anywhere; and whoso is guilty. of iniquity"[28] among you, We shall make him taste a severe torment.



[20] O Muhammad, all the Messengers whom We sent before you also ate food and moved about in the streets.[29] In fact, We have made you all a means of test for one another.[30] Will you show patience?[31] for your Lord sees everything.[32]

۞ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَرۡجُونَ لِقَآءَنَا لَوۡلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيۡنَا ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوۡ نَرَىٰ رَبَّنَا
لَقَدِ ٱسۡتَكۡبَرُواْ فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡ وَعَتَوۡ عُتُوّٗا كَبِيرٗا ﴿٢١﴾

يَوۡمَ يَرَوۡنَ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ لَا بُشۡرَىٰ يَوۡمَئِذٖ لِّلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حِجۡرٗا
مَّحۡجُورٗا ﴿٢٢﴾

وَقَدِمۡنَآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُواْ مِنۡ عَمَلٖ فَجَعَلۡنَٰهُ هَبَآءٗ مَّنثُورًا ﴿٢٣﴾

أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ يَوۡمَئِذٍ خَيۡرٞ مُّسۡتَقَرّٗا وَأَحۡسَنُ مَقِيلٗا ﴿٢٤﴾

وَيَوۡمَ تَشَقَّقُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِٱلۡغَمَٰمِ وَنُزِّلَ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ تَنزِيلًا ﴿٢٥﴾

ٱلۡمُلۡكُ يَوۡمَئِذٍ ٱلۡحَقُّ لِلرَّحۡمَٰنِۚ وَكَانَ يَوۡمًا عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ عَسِيرٗا ﴿٢٦﴾

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ ٱلظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى ٱتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ ٱلرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾

يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰ لَيْتَنِى لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾

لَّقَدْ أَضَلَّنِى عَنِ ٱلذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَآءَنِى ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ خَذُولًا ﴿٢٩﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلرَّسُولُ يَٰرَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِى ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ مَهْجُورًا ﴿٣٠﴾

[21-30] Those people, who have no fear of coming before Us, say,"Why should not the angels be sent down to us?[33] Or else we should see our Lord."[34] Great arrogance have they assumed in regard to themselves,[35] and have transgressed all limits in their rebellion. The Day, when they will see the angels, will not be a day of rejoicing for the criminals;[36] they will cry out, "May Allah save us!" Then We shall turn . to what they had done and render it vain like scattered dust.[37] (On the contrary) only those who have deserved the Garden, will have a good abode on that Day and a cool place for midday rest.[38] On that Day, a cloud will appear rending the sky and the angels will be sent down rank after rank. The real Kingdom on that Day will belong only to the Merciful,[39] and it will be a very hard Day for the disbelievers. The unjust man will bite at his hand and say, "Would that I had stood by the Messenger! O, woe to me! Would that I had not chosen so and so for a friend! For it was he, who had deluded me to reject the Admonition which had come to me. Satan has proved very treacherous to man."[40] And the Messenger will say, "O my Lord, my people had made this Qur'an the object of their ridicule."[41]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِّنَ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَنَصِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾

[31] O Muhammad, in this very way We have made the criminals the enemies of every Prophet,[42] but your Lord suffices for you as your Guide and Helper.[43]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ جُمْلَةً وَٰحِدَةً ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ ۖ وَرَتَّلْنَٰهُ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾

وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُحْشَرُونَ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٤﴾

[32-34] The disbelievers say, "Why has not the entire Qur'an been sent down to this man all at once?"[44] Well, this has been done to impress it deeply on your mind,[45] and (for the same object) We have sent it down piecemeal by degrees. And (there is another wisdom in this :) whenever they brought to you an odd thing (or a strange question), We sent its right answer to you in time and explained it all in the best manner,[46] those who are going to be driven to Hell upon their faces, have taken an utterly wrong stand and their way is most erroneous![47]

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَجَعَلْنَا مَعَهُۥٓ أَخَاهُ هَٰرُونَ وَزِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

فَقُلْنَا ٱذْهَبَآ إِلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَدَمَّرْنَٰهُمْ تَدْمِيرًا ﴿٣٦﴾

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ لَّمَّا كَذَّبُوا۟ ٱلرُّسُلَ أَغْرَقْنَٰهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ ءَايَةً ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٣٧﴾

وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا۟ وَأَصْحَٰبَ ٱلرَّسِّ وَقُرُونًۢا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٣٨﴾

وَكُلًّا ضَرَبْنَا لَهُ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلَ ۖ وَكُلًّا تَبَّرْنَا تَتْبِيرًا ﴿٣٩﴾

وَلَقَدْ أَتَوْا۟ عَلَى ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُمْطِرَتْ مَطَرَ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۚ أَفَلَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ يَرَوْنَهَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَرْجُونَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٠﴾

[35-40] We gave Moses the Book[48] and appointed his brother Aaron as his counselor: then We said to them, "Go to the people who have treated Our Revelations as false."[49] So We annihilated those people utterly. The same was the

case with the people of Noah when they charged the Messenger with imposture.[50] We drowned them and made them a sign of warning for entire mankind, and We have prepared a painful chastisement for the unjust.[51] Likewise were destroyed the `Ad and the Thamud and the people of the Rass,[52] and many a generation in between. We admonished each one of them by citing the examples (of those who were destroyed before them) and ultimately annihilated all of them. Surely, these people have passed by that habitation on which was rained an evil rain;[53] have they not seen its ruins ? But they do not expect another life in the Hereafter.[54]

وَإِذَا رَأَوْكَ إِن يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوًا أَهَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى بَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ رَسُولًا ﴿٤١﴾

إِن كَادَ لَيُضِلُّنَا عَنْ ءَالِهَتِنَا لَوْلَآ أَن صَبَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ
حِينَ يَرَوْنَ ٱلْعَذَابَ مَنْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾

[41-42] When these people see you, they scoff at you, (saying), "Is this the man whom Allah has sent as His Messenger? He had almost led us astray from our gods, had we not remained firm in our faith with regard to them."[55] The time is not far when they will see the torment and realize who had strayed far from the truth.

أَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ أَفَأَنتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ
إِلَّا كَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۖ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٤﴾

[43-44] Have you ever considered the case of the person who has made his lust his god?[56] Can you take the responsibility of guiding such a one aright? Do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like the cattle; nay, even worse than the cattle.[57]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ ٱلظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَآءَ لَجَعَلَهُۥ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا
ٱلشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا ﴿٤٥﴾

ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَٰهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا ﴿٤٦﴾

[45-46] Have you not seen how your Lord lengthens out the shadow? Had He willed, He would have made it constant, but We have made the sun its pilot;[58] then (as the sun climbs up), We roll it up little by little towards Ourselves.[59]

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَٱلنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٧﴾

[47] And it is Allah Who has ordained the night as a garment[60] for you, and the sleep as a repose of death, and the day as the time of return to life.[61]

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
مَآءً طَهُورًا ﴿٤٨﴾

لِّنُحْـِۧيَ بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا وَنُسْقِيَهُۥ مِمَّا خَلَقْنَآ أَنْعَٰمًا وَأَنَاسِىَّ كَثِيرًا ﴿٤٩﴾

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَٰهُ بَيْنَهُمْ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا۟ فَأَبَىٰٓ أَكْثَرُ ٱلنَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴿٥٠﴾

[48-50] And it is He, Who drives the winds to be the harbingers of His mercy: then He sends down pure water[62] from the sky so that He may revive the dead land, and quench the thirst of many of His creatures from among beasts and men.[63] We present the same phenomenon over and over again before them[64] so that they may learn a lesson from it; but most people decline to adopt any other attitude than of disbelief and ingratitude.[65]

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَبَعَثْنَا فِى كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ نَّذِيرًا ﴿٥١﴾

فَلَا تُطِعِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ وَجَٰهِدْهُم بِهِۦ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

۞ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى مَرَجَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا ﴿٥٣﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُۥ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا ﴿٥٤﴾

[51-54] Had We willed, We would have raised up a separate Warner in each habitation.[66] So, O Prophet, do not yield to the disbelievers, but wage a Jihad against them with this Qur'an.[67]

And it is He, Who has let loose the two seas, one palatable and sweet, the other bitter and salty, and there is a partition between them, which is an insurmountable barrier.[68]

And it is He, Who created man from water: then from him He caused two kinds of kindred, by blood and by marriage:[69] your Lord is All Powerful.

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّهُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱلْكَافِرُ
عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

[55] Yet they worship, instead of Allah, those who can neither benefit them nor harm them: more than this, the disbeliever has become a helper of every rebel against his Lord.[70]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٥٦﴾

قُلْ مَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ أَن يَتَّخِذَ
إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ سَبِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

[56-57] O Muhammad, We have sent you only to proclaim good tidings and to give warning.[71] Tell them, "I do not ask of you any recompense for this work: I only ask of the one, who will, to adopt the way of his Lord."[71a]

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱلْحَىِّ ٱلَّذِى لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِۦ ۚ
وَكَفَىٰ بِهِۦ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِى سِتَّةِ
أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ فَسْـَٔلْ بِهِۦ خَبِيرًا
٥٩

[58-59] O Muhammad trust in that Allah Who is Ever-Living and will never die' Glorify Him with His praise, for He alone is sufficient to be aware of the sins of His servants. In six days He created the earth and the heavens and all that is between them; then He established Himself on the "Throne" (of the Kingdom of the universe).[72] (He is) the Merciful: as to His Glory, ask the one who knows.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ قَالُوا۟ وَمَا ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ أَنَسْجُدُ
لِمَا تَأْمُرُنَا وَزَادَهُمْ نُفُورًا ۩ ٦٠

[60] When it is said to them. "Prostrate yourselves before the Merciful," they retort, "What is the Merciful? Would you have us prostrate ourselves before whomsoever you will?"[73] And this invitation only helps to increase their hatred all the more.[74]

تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَٰجًا وَقَمَرًا مُّنِيرًا
٦١

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِّمَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ
أَرَادَ شُكُورًا ﴿٦٢﴾

[61-62] Highly blessed is He, Who has made fortified spheres[75] in the heavens and has set in it a "lamp"[76] and a shining moon. He it is Who caused the night and the day to succeed each other so that everyone who desires may learn a lesson or become grateful.[77]

وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ
ٱلْجَٰهِلُونَ قَالُوا۟ سَلَٰمًا ﴿٦٣﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَٰمًا ﴿٦٤﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ إِنَّ
عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا ﴿٦٥﴾

إِنَّهَا سَآءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا ﴿٦٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَنفَقُواْ لَمۡ يُسۡرِفُواْ وَلَمۡ يَقۡتُرُواْ وَكَانَ بَيۡنَ ذَٰلِكَ قَوَامٗا ٦٧

وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدۡعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقۡتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفۡسَ ٱلَّتِي حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا يَزۡنُونَۚ وَمَن يَفۡعَلۡ ذَٰلِكَ يَلۡقَ أَثَامٗا ٦٨

يُضَٰعَفۡ لَهُ ٱلۡعَذَابُ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ وَيَخۡلُدۡ فِيهِۦ مُهَانًا ٦٩

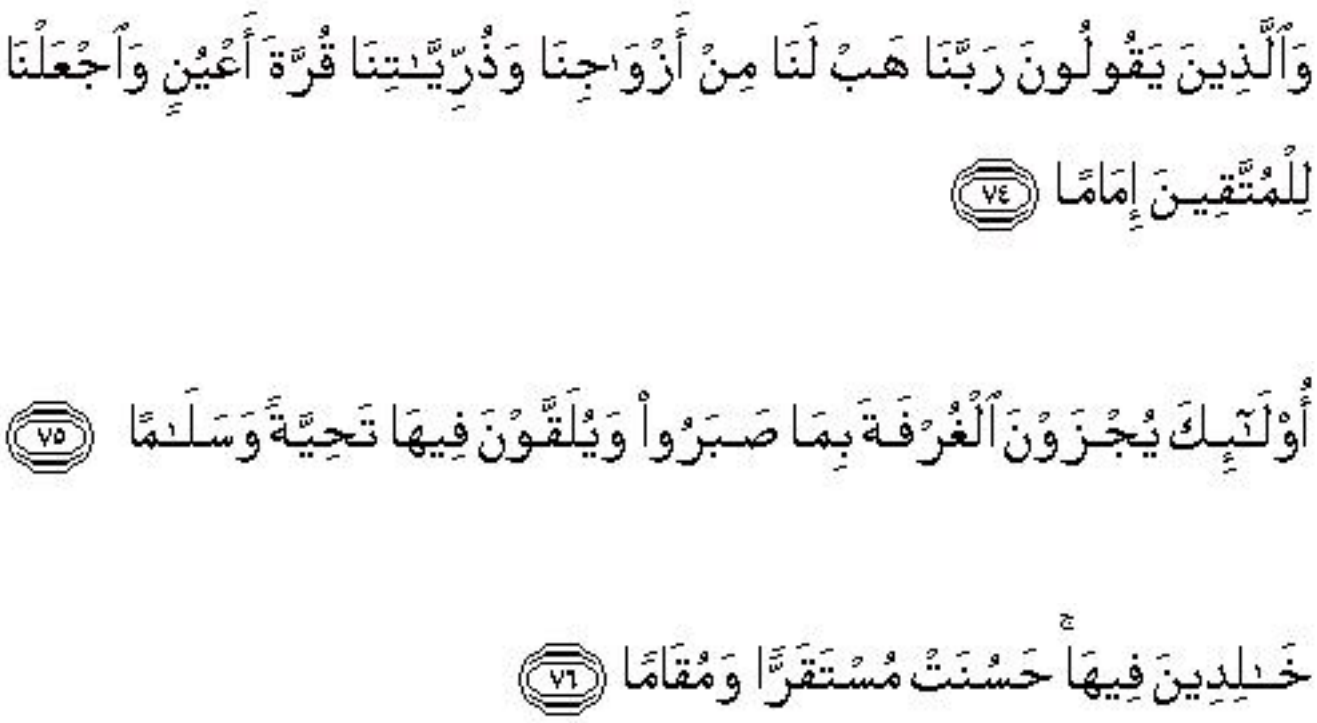
إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلٗا صَٰلِحٗا فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ ٱللَّهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمۡ حَسَنَٰتٖۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٗا رَّحِيمٗا ٧٠

وَمَن تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا فَإِنَّهُۥ يَتُوبُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ مَتَابٗا ٧١

وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَشۡهَدُونَ ٱلزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّواْ بِٱللَّغۡوِ مَرُّواْ كِرَامٗا ٧٢

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمۡ لَمۡ يَخِرُّواْ عَلَيۡهَا صُمّٗا وَعُمۡيَانٗا ٧٣

[63-73] The (true) servants of the Merciful are those[78] who walk humbly on the earth[79] who, when the ignorant people behave insolently towards them, say,"Peace to you"[80] who pass their nights in prostrating themselves and standing before their Lord[81] who pray, "Our Lord, save us from the torment of Hell, for its torment is killing: it is an evil abode and an evil resting place"[82] who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor miserly but keep the golden mean between the two (extremes):[83] who do not invoke any god but Allah nor kill a soul, which Allah has forbidden, unjustly, nor commit adultery.[84] He who does this shall be punished for his sin, and his torment shall be doubled on the Day of Resurrection,[85] and he shall abide in a state of ignominy, except the one who may have repented (after those sins) and have believed and done righteous works,[86] for then Allah will change his evil deeds into good deeds, and He is very Forgiving and Merciful. In fact, the one[87] who repents and does righteous deeds, returns to Allah as one rightly should.[88] (And the servants of the Merciful are those:) who do not bear witness to falsehood[89] and who; if they have ever to pass by what is vain, pass by like dignified people[90] who do not behave like the blind and the deaf, when the Revelations of their Lord are recited to them for admonition.[91]



[74-76] Those who pray, "Our Lord, bless us with wives and children, who may be the comfort of our eyes,[92] and make us leaders of the righteous."[93] Such are the people who will be rewarded with high palaces for their fortitude,[94] [95] wherein they will be welcomed with due respect, honor and salutations and wherein they will live for ever: what an excellent abode and what an excellent resting place!

قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا۟ بِكُمْ رَبِّى لَوْلَا دُعَآؤُكُمْ ۖ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا



[77] O, Muhammad, tell the people, "My Lord does not care at all if you do not invoke Him.[96] Now that you have denied (His Revelations), you will soon be awarded such a punishment which you will never be able to avoid."

1The Arabic word tabaraka is very comprehensive, and cannot be understood fully and completely by "highly blessed", not even by a sentence. However, its meanings may be grasped by keeping in view the remaining portion

of vv. 1-2. Here it has been used to convey the following meanings:

(1) He is the most Beneficent: that is why He has bestowed the great blessing of Al-Furqan by degrees on His servant so that he may admonish all mankind.

(2)He is the most Exalted and Great: for the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him.

(3) He is the most Holy, Pure and Perfect: He is free from every tinge of shirk and has neither a partner in His Godhead, nor needs a son to succeed Him; for He is Ever-Lasting.

(4) He is the Highest and the Most Supreme in rank: the Kingdom and the Dominion wholly and solely belong to Him, and there is none who has any share in His Authority and Powers.

(5) He is the sole Creator of the universe and has created each and everything in it and predetermined its destiny. For further details, see E.N. 14 of Al Mu'minun and E.N. 19 of Al-Furqan.

2Al-Furqan: The Criterion. The Qur'an has been called Al-Furqan because it is the Criterion for judging right and wrong virtue and vice, truth and falsehood.

3The word nazzala implies revelation of the Qur'an piecemeal by degrees. The wisdom of this introductory remark will be explained in the study of verse 32, where the objection of the disbelievers of Makkah -as to why the Qur'an has not been sent down all at once-has been dealt with

4“..... warner to all mankind": To warn all mankind of the evil consequences of their heedlessness and deviation. The warner may be Al-Furgan or the Holy Prophet to whom it was revealed. In fact, both were

the warners because they were both sent for one and the same purpose. The message of the Qur'an and Prophethood of Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) were not meant for any particular country but for the whole world; and not for their own time, but for all times to come. This has been stated at several places in the Qur'an; for instance: "O Muhammad, say, O mankind, I am a Messenger to all of you from Allah ....." (Al-A`raf: 158); "..... and this Qur'an has been revealed to me so that I should thereby warn you all and whom it may reach." (Al An'am: 19); "We have sent you only as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind." (Saba: 28); and "We have sent you as a mercy to all mankind." (Al Anbiya': 107) The Holy Prophet himself has stated this clearly in the Hadith; for instance, he said: "I have been sent to all men-the red and the black." "Before me a Prophet was sent only to his own people, but 1 have been sent to all mankind." (Bukhari, Muslim). "I have been sent to all mankind, and I am the Last of the Prophets." (Muslim).

5Another translation may be: "To Him belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth." That is, He alone has an exclusive right to it, and no one else has any right to it nor any share in it.

6That is, "He has neither any relation of direct parenthood to anyone, nor has He taken anyone as a son. Therefore, none else in the universe is entitled to worship. He is Unique and there can be no partner in His Godhead. Thus all those who associate with Him angels or jinns or saints as His offspring, are ignorant. Likewise, those who believe that some one, is His "son", are also ignorant. They have no true conception of the Greatness of Allah and consider Him to be weak and needy like human beings, who require some one to become their inheritor. It is sheer ignorance and folly." For further details, see E.N.'s 66 to G8 of Surah Yunus .

7The Arabic word mulk means Sovereignty, Supreme Authority, and Kingship. Thus the sentence will mean: "Allah is the Absolute Ruler of the whole universe and there is none other who may have any right to authority; therefore He alone is God." For whenever a man takes anything else as his lord, he does so under the presumption that his deity has the power to do good or bring harm and make or mar his fortune; nobody will like to worship a powerless deity. Now when it is recognized that none but Allah has the real power and authority in the universe, nobody will bow before anyone other than Him in worship, nor will sing anybody else's hymns, nor commit the folly of bowing in worship before any thing else except his real God, or recognize any other as his ruler, because "To Allah belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and to Him alone."

8There may be other translations of this also: "He has ordained it in due proportion"; or "He has appointed an exact measure for everything." But no translation can convey its real meaning, which is: "Allah has not only created everything in the universe but also determined its shape, size, potentialities, characteristics, term of existence, the limitations and extent of its development and all other things concerning it. Then, He has created the means and provisions to enable it to function properly in its own separate sphere."

This is one of the most comprehensive verses of the Qur'an with regard to the Doctrine of Tauhid. According to Traditions, the Holy Prophet himself taught this verse to every child of his family as soon as it was able to speak and utter a few words. Thus, this verse is the best means of impressing the Doctrine of Tauhid on our minds, and every Muslim should use it for educating his children as soon as they develop understanding.

9The words are comprehensive and cover all the false gods whom the mushriks worship whether they are angels, jinns, Prophets, saints, the sun, the moon, the stars, trees, rivers, animals etc., which have been created by Allah, or those which have been created by man, as the idols of stone, wood, etc.

10That is, "Allah has sent down Al-Furqan on His servant so that he may invite the people to the Truth, which they have forsaken due to heedlessness and waywardness, and warn them of the evil consequences of their folly. The Furqan is being revealed piecemeal so that he may distinguish right from wrong and the genuine from the counterfeit."

11Another translation may be: "a great injustice."

12This is the same objection which the modern orientalists have raised against the Qur'an, but strange as it may seem, no contemporary of the Holy Prophet ever raised such an objection against him. Nobody, for instance, ever said that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) as a boy had met Buhairah, the monk, and had attained religious knowledge from him, nor did anybody claim that he had obtained all that information from the Christian monks and Jewish rabbis during the trade journeys in his youth. In fact, they knew that he had never traveled alone but in the caravans and if they said such a thing, it would be refuted by hundreds of their own people from the city.

Then, one could ask, if he had gained all that knowledge from Buhairah when he was about 12, and during trade journeys when he was 25, why did he keep it secret from the people till he became 40? whereas he did not leave his country even for a single day, but lived for years among his own people in the same city. That is why the people of Makkah dared not bring such an impudent and baseless charge against him. Their objections related to the time when he claimed to be a Prophet of Allah and not to the time preceding that claim. Their argument was like this: "This man is illiterate and cannot obtain any knowledge through books. He has lived among us for forty years, but we have never heard from him anything that might have shown that he had any acquaintance with what he is preaching; therefore he must have had the help of other people who copied these things from the writings of the ancients for him: he learns these things from them and recites them as Divine Revelations: this is a fraud." So much so that according to some traditions, they named some of his "helpers", who were the people of the Book, were illiterate and lived in Makkah. They were: (1) Addas, a freed slave of Huvaitib bin `Abdul `Uzza(2) Yasar, a freed slave of 'Ala bin Al Hadrami, and (3) Jabr, a freed slave of `Amir bin Rabbi`ah .

Apparently this is a weighty argument. For there can be no greater proof of the "fraud" of Prophethood than to specify its source. But it looks strange that no argument has been put forward to refute this charge except a mere denial, as if to say, "Your charge is an impudent lie: you are cruel and unjust to bring such a false charge against Our Messenger; for the Qur'an is the Word of Allah Who knows all the secrets in the heavens and the earth. " Had their charge been based on facts, it would not have been rejected with contempt, for in that case the disbelievers would have demanded a detailed and clear answer. But they realized the strength of the arguments and did not make such a demand. Moreover, the fact that the "weighty" argument failed to produce any doubt in the minds of the new Muslims, was a clear proof that it was a lie.

The enigma is clearly explained if we keep in view the prevalent circumstances

(1) The disbelievers of Makkah did not take any decisive steps to prove their charge, although they could, had there been any truth in their charge. For instance, they could have made raids on the houses of the alleged helpers and on the house of the Holy Prophet himself and taken hold of the whole "material" which was being used in this "fraud", and made it public to expose his Prophethood. And this was not difficult for them because they never hesitated to resort to anything to defeat him, including persecution, as they were not bound by any moral code.

(2) The alleged helpers were not strangers. As they lived in Makkah, everyone knew it well how learned they were. The disbelievers themselves knew that they could never have helped to produce a unique and sublime Book like the Qur'an which had the highest literary excellence and merit. That is why none of them challenged the answer to the charge. That is why even those people, who did not know them, considered this frivolous. Then if the alleged helpers were such geniuses, why did they not claim to be prophets themselves?

(3) Then, all the alleged helpers were freed slaves who were attached"to their former masters even after their freedom according to the customs of Arabia; therefore they could not have become willing accomplices of the Holy Prophet in this "fraud" of false prophethood because their former masters could have coerced them to expose it. The only reason for them to help the Holy Prophet in his claim could have been some greed or interest which, under the circumstances, could not even be imagined. Thus, apparently there was no reason why they should have offended those whose protection and patronage they needed and enjoyed, and become accomplices in the "fraud".

(4) Above all, all these alleged helpers embraced Islam. Could it be possible that those very persons, who had helped the Holy Prophet to make his "fraud" successful, could have possibly become his devoted followers? Moreover, if, for the sake of argument, it be admitted that they helped him, why was not any of them raised to a prominent rank as a reward of his help? Why were not 'Addas and Yasar and Jabr exalted to the same status as were Abu Bakr and 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaidah? Another odd flung is that if the "fraud" of prophethood was being carried on with the help of the alleged helpers, how could it

remain hidden from Zaid bin Harithah, 'Ali bin Abi Talib, Abu Bakr and other people, who were the Holy Prophet's closest and most devoted Companions? Thus the charge was not only frivolous and false, but it was also below the dignity of the Qur'an to give any answer to it. The charge has been cited merely to prove that those people had been so blinded by their opposition to the Truth that they could say anything.

13"... He is very Forgiving and Merciful" is very meaningful here. It means that Allah is giving full respite to the enemies of the Truth, for He is "Forgiving and Merciful"; otherwise He would have sent down a scourge to annihilate them because of the false charges they were bringing against the Messenger. It also contains an admonition, as if to say, "O unjust people! if even now you give up your enmity and obduracy and accept the Truth, We shall forgive your previous misdeeds. "

14That is, "He cannot be a Messenger of Allah because he is a human being like us. Had Allah willed to send a Messenger, He would have sent an angel, and f at all a human being was to be sent, he should have been a king or a millionaire, who would have resided in a castle and been guarded by attendants. A Messenger could not be an ordinary person who has to move about in the market places like the common people, for it is obvious that such a human Messenger cannot attract the attention of the people. In other words, they thought that a Messenger was not meant to guide the people to the right path but to coerce them to obedience by show of worldly power and grandeur. For further details, see E.N. 26 of Al-Mu'minun.

15That is, "If a human being was to be sent as a Messenger, an angel should have been appointed to accompany him to proclaim: `If you do not believe in him, 1 will scourge you." But what son of a Messenger is he, who has to suffer from abuse and persecution?"

16That is, "If nothing else, Allah should at least have made extraordinary arrangements for his livelihood. But this man has no treasure and no gardens; yet he claims to be a Messenger of the Lord of the universe."

17The disbelievers of Makkah made the false propaganda against the Holy Prophet that he had been bewitched by some jinn or by the sorcery of an enemy or by the curse of some god or goddess for his insolence. But it is strange that they also admitted that he was a clever man who could make use of extracts from the ancient writings for the sake of his "prophethood", could practice sorcery and was also a poet.

18As these objections were frivolous and meaningless like others, the Qur'an has ignored them, saying, "Your objections are irrelevant, unreasonable and void of sense. You bring no sound argument to prove your doctrine of shirk, or to refute the Doctrine of Tauhid put forward by him, whereas the Messenger gives such proofs of the Doctrine of Tauhid that you cannot refute them except by saying, 'He is bewitched'. The same is true of the doctrine of the life-after-death and of the moral system of the Qur'an,

which has produced men of high character. You cannot deny these things; you reject them, saying, "He is a human being like us, etc."

19Here again the word tabaraka has been used and in the context it means: "Allah has full control over everything and has unlimited powers: if he wills to favor somebody, He can do so as and when He wills without let or hindrance. "

20The word As-Sa'at, meaning the Time or the Hour, has been used in the Qur'an as a term for the promised Hour of Resurrection, when all human beings of all ages will be raised from the dead and gathered together before Allah Almighty to account for their beliefs and deeds, right or wrong, and rewarded or punished accordingly.

21That is, "The objections they are raising are not due to the reason that they doubt the authenticity of the Qur'an on some rational ground, or that they do not believe in you for the reason that you eat food and walk about in the streets like the common people, or that they did not accept your Message of Truth only because you were not escorted by an angel, or were not given a treasure. But the real reason why they are putting forward all sorts of absurd arguments to reject your Message, is that they do not believe in the life-after-death, and this denial has made them free from all moral obligations. For when one denies the life-after death, there remains no need for him to consider and decide what is true or false, or what is right or wrong, etc. Their argument is like this: 'There is going to be no life after this one on the earth when we will be called to account for our deeds before God. Death will be the end of everything, and it will therefore make no difference whether one was a worshiper of God or a disbeliever or a mushrik or an atheist When the ultimate end is to become one with the dust, there is no need of judging what is right and what is wrong except by the criterion of "success" and "failure" in this life'. Those who deny the Hereafter also see that worldly success or failure does not entirely depend upon one's faith or conduct; nay, they very often see that the righteous and the wicked persons meet with the same end irrespective of their faith for which there is no ordained punishment or reward in this life; one righteous person may be living a life of hardship while another enjoying all the good things of life; one wicked person may be suffering for his misdeeds while the other enjoying a life of pleasure and plenty. As such, as far as the worldly consequences of adopting a particular moral attitude are concerned, the disbelievers in the Hereafter cannot be satisfied whether it is right or wrong. In view of this, those who deny the Hereafter, do not see any need to consider an invitation to faith and morality even if it is presented in a most forceful way."

22"The Fire will see them" The words used in the Text may be metaphorical, or they may mean that the Fire of Hell will be endowed with the faculties of seeing, thinking and judging.

23Literally: "It is a promise whose fulfillment can be demanded (from Allah)".

Here one ma ask the question: How can the promise of the Garden and the threat of the Fire produce any effect on the attitude of a parson who denies Resurrection and the existence of Paradise and Hell? In order to understand the wisdom of this method of admonition, one should keep in view that it is meant to appeal to the self-interest of an obdurate person, who does not otherwise listen to such arguments. This is, as if to say, "Even if, for the sake of argument, there is no proof of the reality of the life-after-death, there is also no proof that such an event will not occur at all, and there is a possibility for both. In the latter case, the Believer and the disbeliever both will be in one and the same position, but if there is life in the Hereafter, as the Prophet asserts, then the disbelievers will be doomed to utter ruin". Therefore, such an approach breaks the stubbornness of the disbelievers and proves to be highly effective when the entire scene of Resurrection gathering of the people, their accountability and of Hell and Heaven is presented in a vivid manner as if the Prophet had himself seen it with his own eyes. Fur further explanation, see Ha Mim Sajdah: 52 and E. N. 69 thereof, and A I-Ahqaf: 10.

24Here, deities do not mean idols but the angels, the prophets; the saints, the martyrs and the pious men, whom the mushriks of different communities have made their deities.

25Such dialogues between Allah and the gods of the disbelievers occur at several places in the Qur'an. For instance, in Surah Saba it has been stated: "On the day when He will gather them all together, He will ask the angels, 'Did these people worship you?' They will answer, `Glory be to Thee! Thou art our Patron and not they: they in fact worshiped the jinns (that is, satans); most of these believed in them." (vv. 40-41). Similarly in Surah Al-Ma'idah, it is said:" And when Allah will say "O Jesus, son of Mary, did you ever say to the people: `Make me and my mother gods instead of Allah?' He will answer, `Glory be to Thee ! It did not behoove me to say that which I had no right to say...I told them only that which Thou didst bid me: 'Worship Allah, Who is my Lord as well as your Lord'." (vv. 116, 117).

26That is, "They were mean people: You gave them all the provisions of life so that they may show gratitude to You, but they became ungrateful and ignored all the admonitions given by the Prophets. "

27That is, "On that Day your religion, which you now believe, to be true. will prove to be false and even your gods, whom you yourselves have set up,' will declare it to be a lie; for none of them ever asked you to make them your deities and worship them as such. Consequently, instead of interceding on your behalf; they will bear witness against you."

28"... who will be guilty of iniquity ...": " .... who will be unjust to the Reality and the Truth and guilty of disbelief and shirk "The context shows that those who reject the Prophet and set up other deities instead of Allah and deny life in the Hereafter, are guilty of zulm (iniquity).

29This is an answer to the objection of the disbelievers of Makkah that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) could not be a Messenger of Allah because he ate food and moved about in the streets. They

have been told that all the Messengers of Allah who came before Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) like Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Moses and many others whom they knew and acknowledged as Prophets and Messengers of Allah also ate food and walked about in the streets. Nay, even Prophet Jesus, son of Mary, himself, whom the Christians had made the son of God (and whose image had also been placed in the Ka`bah by the disbelievers of Makkah) ate food and walked about in the streets like a common man even according to the Gospels themselves.

30It is obvious that the Messenger and the Believers were a test for the disbelievers as to whether they would believe even after hearing the Divine Message and seeing their pure character. On the other hand, the disbelievers were a test for the Messenger and his followers in the sense that they were a means of proving and trying their true Faith by their persecution. For it is this test alone which helps to discriminate the true Believers from the hypocrites. That is why, at first, only the poor arid the helpless but sincere people embraced Islam. Had there been no persecution and hardships but prosperity, wealth and grandeur, the worshipers of the world and the selfish people would have been the first to embrace Islam.

31That is, "Now when you have understood the wisdom of the test by persecution, it is hoped that you will endure all kinds of hardships without complaint, and willingly undergo the persecutions that are inevitable."

32It probably means two things: First, the way your Lord is conducting your affairs, is according to His will and nothing that happens is without His knowledge. Second, He is fully aware of your sincerity and righteousness in serving His cause under all kinds of hardships. You should therefore rest assured that you will have your full reward. He also sees the persecution and iniquity of the disbelievers; therefore they will not escape the consequences of their wickedness.

33That is, "If Allah had really intended to convey His Message to us, He would not have chosen a prophet and sent an angel only to him, but to each one of us individually with the guidance, or He should have sent a deputation of angels to appear before the people with the Message". The same objection has been stated in Surah Al-An`am thus: "When a Revelation comes before them, they say, `We will not believe in it unless we are given the like of what has been given to the Messengers of Allah.' Allah knows best whom to entrust with His Mission and how it should be enforced." (v. 124) appeal .

34That is, Allah Himself should appear before us and make the appeal.

35Another translation could be: "They have formed a very high opinion of their own selves."

36This very theme has been expressed in much greater detail in Al An'am: 8, Al-Hijr: 7-8 and 51-64, and also in Bani Isra`il: 90-95.

37For explanation, see Ibrahim: 18 and E. N.'s 25, 26 thereof.

38In contrast to the miserable plight of the disbelievers on the Day of Resurrection, the Believers will be protected from the hardships of that Day; they will be treated with honor and will have a blissful place for midday rest. According to a Tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "I declare on oath by Allah, in Whose hand is my life, that the long, horrible Day of Resurrection will be made very short and light for a Believer, as short and light as the time taken in offering an obligatory Prayer." (Musnad Ahmad).

39That is, "On that Day all other kingdoms, which deluded man in the world, will come to an end, and there will be only the Kingdom of Allah, Who is the real Sovereign of the universe. In Surah Mu'min: 16, the same thing has been stated thus: "On that Day when all the people will stand exposed, and nothing of them will be hidden from Allah, it will be asked, `Whose is the Sovereignty today?' The response from every side will he: `Of Allah, the Almighty'." According to a Tradition, the Holy Prophet said, "Allah will take the heavens in one hand and the earth in the other, and will declare: `I am the Sovereign: I am the Ruler. Where are the other rulers of the earth? Where are those tyrants`? Where are the arrogant people?" (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, and Abu Da'ud, with slight variations).

40"Satan has proved very treacherous to man" may also be a part of the disbelievers' lament, or it may be a remark by Allah, in which case the meaning will be: "And Satan is indeed the one who always deceives man."

41The Arabic word mahjur is capable of several meanings. As such, the sentence may mean:" "these people did not regard the Qur'an as worthy of their consideration: they neither accepted it nor followed it"; or "They considered it to be a nonsense or the delirium of insanity: or "They made it the target of their ridicule and mockery."

42That is, "It is not a new thing that the disbelievers have become your enemies, for it has always been so with all the former Prophets and Messengers. (See also Al-An'am: 112-113). This is inevitable because it is Our Law that the criminals will always oppose the Truth. You should, therefore, pursue your mission with full confidence and determination without expecting any immediate results.

43"Guidance" does not only imply bestowing of the knowledge of the Truth, but it also means giving the right guidance at the right time to guide the Islamic Movement on the right lines and to defeat the strategy and scheme of the enemies of Islam "Help" means all kinds of moral, spiritual and material help to the followers of the Truth in their conflict against falsehood. Thus, Allah is All Sufficient for the righteous people and they need no other support provided they have full faith in Allah and fight falsehood with all their energies and strength.

This meant to encourage the Holy Prophet, otherwise the previous assertion would have been very

discouraging without this. It meant to say, "Even :f the unbelievers have become your enemies, you should continue your mission, for We shall guide you in every stage and situation and help you against them. We shall defeat all the schemes of your enemies and help you in every way in your conflict with falsehood. We shall provide you with material means also, but you should trust in Us and exert your utmost against falsehood."

44As the disbelievers of Makkah considered this objection to be very strong, they repeated it over and over again. The Qur'an also has cited it with its answer at several places; for instance, see E.N.'s 101-106 of Surah An-Naml and E.N. 119 of Bani Isra'il. Their question implied: "Had the Qur'an been really the Word of Allah, it would have been sent as a complete book all at once; for Allah has the knowledge of everything and every human affair. Thus it is obvious that nothing is being sent down from above; but this man himself fabricates all its themes or gets these from other people or other books.

45Another translation can be: "So that by it We may strengthen your heart and imbue it with courage." The words are comprehensive and imply both the meanings. This concise sentence contains the following explanation why the Qur'an was revealed piecemeal by degrees:

(1) So that the Holy Prophet may commit it to memory perfectly and recite it to his people, who are illiterate, rather than present it in a written form.

(2) So that its teachings and messages may be impressed deeply on the minds.

(3) So that the way of life it teaches, may be followed with complete conviction, which would not be possible if all the Commandments and the whole system of life had been sent down all at once.

(4) So that the hearts of the Prophet and his followers may be imbued with courage during the conflict between the Truth and falsehood. This required that the Divine Guidance and messages of encouragement should be revealed as and when needed according to the practical situation. Obviously, this could not have been possible if these had been sent down all at once. This also showed that Allah had not left His Messenger alone amidst persecution to counter all sorts of resistance and opposition after appointing him to the mission, but He Himself was watching the struggle with concern and guiding His Prophet through every difficulty by direct communion in every critical situation.

46This is yet another point of wisdom of sending down the Qur'an by degrees. Allah did not intend to produce a book on "Guidance" and spread its teachings through the agency of His Prophet. Had it been so the disbelievers would have been justified in their objection as to why the Qur'an had not been sent down as a complete book all at once. The real object of the revelation of the Qur'an was that Allah intended to start a Movement of faith, piety and righteousness to combat disbelief, ignorance and sin, and He had raised a Prophet to lead and guide the Movement. Then, on the one hand, Allah had taken it upon Himself to send necessary instructions and guidance to the leader and his followers as and when

needed, and on the other, He had also taken the responsibility to answer the objections and remove the doubts of opponents and give the right interpretation of things which they misunderstood. Thus the Qur'an was the collection of the different discourses that were being revealed by Allah; it was not merely meant to be a code of laws or of moral principles, but a Book, which was being sent down piecemeal to guide the Movement in all its stages to suit its requirements on different occasions. (See also Introduction: The Meaning of the Qur'an, Vol. I, pp. 9- 18).

47That is, "They will be driven towards Hell upon their faces because of their perversion and their perverted thinking."

48Here by "the Book" is not meant the Torah, which was given to Prophet Moses after the exodus from Egypt, but it implies that Divine Guidance which was given to him after his appointment as a Prophet up to the Exodus. It included the orations delivered by him in the court of Pharaoh and also the instructions given to him during his conflict with Pharaoh as mentioned in the Qur'an here and there. Most probably, these things were not included in the Torah; the Torah began with the Ten Commandments which were given to Moses engraved on stone tablets on Mount Sinai after the Exodus.

49"Revelations": The Divine teachings which had reached them through Prophets Jacob and Joseph, and which had been preached to them by the righteous people of Israel for centuries

50They did not charge only Prophet Noah with imposture because he was a man, but, in fact, charged all the Prophets with imposture because they were all human beings.

51That is, a painful chastisement in the Hereafter.

52There is no definite knowledge about "the people of the Raas" . Different commentators have said different things about them, but nothing is convincing. The only thing that may be said about them is that they were a people who had killed their Prophet by throwing him into or hanging him down a "Rass " (an old or dry well).

53The habitation referred to was that of the people of Prophet Lot, which was destroyed by a rain of stones. The people of Hijaz while traveling to Palestine and Syria, passed by its ruins and heard the horrible tales of its destruction.

54As the disbelievers did not believe in the Hereafter, they looked at these ancient ruins as mere spectators and did not take any warning from them. Incidentally, this is the difference between the observation of a disbeliever and of a Believer in the Hereafter: the former looks at such things as a mere spectator or at the most as an archaeologist whereas the latter learns moral lessons from the same and obtains an insight into the realities beyond this worldly life.

55Obviously there is a contradiction between the question posed by the disbelievers and the assertion made by them about their deities. The question was meant to bring the Holy Prophet into contempt, as if to say, "You are making a claim that is far above your low position." On the other hand, their assertion shows that ,they indirectly admitted the force of the arguments and the high character of the Holy Prophet and were even afraid of the effectiveness and success of his Message, because, according to them, it was going to turn them away from their false gods.

56"...the person who makes his lust his god" is the one who becomes the slave of his lusts and desires. As he serves his lust like the one who warships ' his deity, he becomes as much guilty of .shirk as the one who worships an idol. According to a Tradition, related by Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said, "Of all the false gods being worshipped and served, instead of Allah, the worst in the sight of Allah is one's own lust." (Tabarani). For further explanation, see E.N. 50 of Al-Kahf,

The man who keeps his desires under control, and uses his common sense to make decisions, can be expected to come to the right path by making an appeal to his reason even though he might have been involved in shirk or disbelief; for if. he decides to follow the right way he will remain firm and steadfast on it. On the other hand, the man who is the slave of his own lust, is like a ship without an anchor, who wanders about on any path where his lust leads him. He is least bothered about the distinction between the right and the wrong, the true and the false, and has no desire to choose one against the other. And, if ar all, such a person is persuaded to accept the message of Guidance, no one can take the responsibility that he will observe any moral laws.

57"They are only like the cattle" because they follow their lusts blindly. Just as the sheep and cattle do not know where their driver is taking them, to the meadow or to the slaughter house, so are these people also following their leaders blindly without knowing or judging where they are being led-to success or to destruction.. The only difference between the two is that the cattle have no intelligence and will not be accountable as to the place where they are being taken by the driver. But it is a pity that human beings who are endowed with reason, should behave like cattle; therefore their condition is worse than that of cattle.

Incidentally it should be noted that this passage (w . 43, 44) is not meant to dissuade the Holy Prophet from conveying the Message to such people, but it is an indirect warning to the disbelievers of the consequences if they continued to behave like cattle .

58The word dalil has been used in the sense of the "pilot", who is a person trained to take ships safely in or out of a harbor, or along a waterway. The sun has been trade the pilot of the shadow because the lengthening out of the shadow and its being rolled up depends on the rising, declining and setting of the sun.

59"We roll it up.....Curselves": "We annihilate it or cause it to disappear", for everything which is annihilated returns to Allah, because everything comes from Elim and returns to Him.

The Qur'an has used the phenomenon of the shadow caused by the sun for two purposes. (fit is taken literally, it is meant to warn the disbelievers that they should learn a lesson from this and should not behave like cattle, as if to say, "If you had considered the benefits of the shadow in regard to your everyday experience, you would have accepted without any hesitation the Doctrine of Tauhid. Had the shadow been constant, there would have been no life en earth, for life depends on the light and heat of the sun. On the other hand, if there had been no shadow at all, the constant heat and light of the sun would have made life impossible. Besides this, if there had been sudden changes in the sun and the shadow, they would not have been able to endure it for long; therefore you should reflect on this phenomenon and understand it well that it has been so ordained by the All-Wise and the All-Powerful Creator so that it always increases or decreases gradually in accordance with fixed natural laws. Thus it is obvious that it could not have come into existence by itself nor produced by blind mechanisms nor functioned so regularly and continuously under many independent gods."

But if it is taken in the metaphorical sense, there is between the lines a subtle suggestion, and it is this: Just as the shadow does not remain in one and the same state, likewise the shadow of disbelief and shirk, which appears to have spread far and wide, will begin to shorten as the "Sun" of Guidance gradually rises; but it requires patience, for Allah never brings about sudden changes.

60The night is a "garment" in the sense that it covers and hides things.

61This verse has three objects:

(1) It provides a proof of Tauhid,

(2) It furnishes a proof of the possibility of life-after-death from everyday human experience, and

(3) It bears the good news that the night of ignorance has come to an end and now the bright day of Knowledge and Guidance has dawned. It is therefore inevitable that those who were sleeping the sleep of ignorance, will sooner or later wake up, but those who have slept the sleep of death, will not wake up and will themselves be deprived of life, while the business of the day will go on thriving even without them.

62That is, such water as is pure and free from all sorts of impurities, germs and poison, which cleanses and washes away filth and becomes a source of life for men, beasts as well as all kinds of plant life.

63This verse also gives proofs of the Doctrine of Tauhid and the Hereafter. Besides, it contains a subtle

suggestion that the period of the "drought" of ignorance has been replaced through Allah's mercy by the "blessed rain" of Prophethood, which is showering the life-giving knowledge of Revelation from which many servants of Allah will certainly benefit, if not all .

64"We present...before them" may have three meanings:

(1)"We have cited the phenomenon of rainfall over and over again in the Qur'an in order to make plain to them the Reality."

(2) "We are time and again showing them the wonderful phenomenon of the heat and drought, seasonal winds and clouds, rainfall and its life producing effects."

(3) "We go on changing the system of the distribution of rainfall throughout the , world year after year, so that the same place does not receive the same amount of rainfall every time: sometimes a place is left completely dry, another has more or less of rainfall than usual, while some other is flooded with rain water. They see all these different phenomena with their countless different results in their daily life."

65The verse means to impress that the wonderful system of rainfall is by itself a proof of the existence of Allah, of One Lord of the universe, and of His attributes. Its wonderful distribution during the year and over different parts of the earth is a clear proof that there is an All-Wise Designer. But the obdurate disbelievers do not learn any lesson from it, and persist in their ingratitude, though this has been cited in the Qur'an repeatedly for this purpose.

It is also a proof of the life-after-death, for the disbelievers themselves see and again that rainfall brings to life dead land year after year. This clearly that Allah has the power to bring the dead back to life, but the disbelievers it time proves do not learn any lesson from it and persist in their irresponsible ways.

If verse 48 is taken in the metaphorical sense, the "pure water" of rain will mean the blessings of Prophet hood. Human history shows that whenever this blessing as been sent down, ignorance has been replaced by knowledge, injustice by justice and wickedness by righteousness. The coming of Prophets has always proved to be the harbinger of a moral revolution. But only those who accepted their guidance benefited from it. This is the lesson of history, yet the disbelievers reject it because of their ingratitude.

66That is, "If We had willed, We could have sent a separate Prophet to every habitation but We did not do so, because like the sun, Our Last Prophet suffices to enlighten the whole world."

67The Arabic words Jihad-i-Kabir imply three meanings:

(1) To exert one's utmost for the cause of Islam,

(2) To dedicate all one's resources to this cause, and

(3) To tight against the enemies of Islam on all possible fronts with all one's resources in order to raise high the "Word of Allah". This will include jihad with one's tongue, pen, wealth, life and every other available weapon.

68This phenomenon has been perceived in many places in the sea and on the land that sweet water and bitter water has existed side by side. Turkish Admiral Syedi Ali Ra'is, in his book Mir 'at-al-Mamalik, written in the 16th century, has mentioned a place in the Persian Gulf, where springs of sweet waver exist under the bitter waters of the sea, where he could get drinking water for his fleet. The American Oil Company at first obtained water from the same springs in the Persian Gulf, before they dug up wells near Dhahran for supply of drinking water. Near Bahrain also there exist springs of sweet water at the sea bed from which people have been taking water until quite recently. Besides this apparent meaning which gives a rational proof of Allah's being the One and the only Lord of the universe, the verse contains a subtle suggestion as well: When Allah wills, He can raise up a righteous community from among a large wicked society just as He can cause springs of palatable and sweet water to gush out from under the salty waters of the sea.

69Here the miracle of the birth of man from a mere sperm drop and the procreation of his offspring from man and woman have been cited as a proof of Tauhid. Though both man and woman belong to the same genus, they are two species, having important common human characteristics but different physical structures and psychological traits. It is a proof of Tauhid that the All-Powerful Allah has used this "difference" for making the two as complements and not antagonists. ' It is also the design of the All-Powerful Creator that He is creating sons and daughters in the world in due proportion Then the sons marry and create blood relationships, and the daughters are married and become means of forming new relationships. This process goes on widening to produce families, tribes and nations belonging to the same race and bound by the same civilization.

The verse has also a subtle suggestion: The whole of life is being run on the principle of "difference", for example, the difference between the night and the day, the summer and the winter, etc. Therefore, " O Muslims, you should patiently endure the differences you are having with your opponents for these are certain to produce good results."

70This is a characteristic of the typical disbeliever: he is a helper and defender of all those who are rebels against Allah and an enemy of all those who may he striving to raise Allah's Word and enforce His Law in the world; he is associated directly or indirectly with all the works of Allah's disobedience and opposes and resists in one way or the other every effort that is made to bring people to the path of Allah's obedience and service.

71This verse (56) was meant to comfort the Holy Prophet and to warn the disbelievers who opposed him and obstructed his work, as if to say, "Your duty is only to convey the Message of good news to the people and to warn them of the consequences of disbelief: you are not responsible as to whether they accept .your Message or reject it, or to reward the Believers and punish the disbelievers."

Such words occur in the Qur'an at other places also and are obviously directed to the disbelievers, as if to say, "The Message of the Prophet is meant to reform the people without any tinge of selfishness. As he does not force the people to accept his Message, there is no reason why you should feel offended. If you accept the Message, it will be for your own good, and if you reject it, you will be harming yourselves alone. For after conveying the Message, he is relieved of his duty and responsibility; then the matter will be between you and Us."

Although this is a very simple and clear interpretation of verse 56 (and of similar other verses), yet some people erroneously conclude from it that the only duty and responsibility of the Prophet is to convey the Message and nothing else. They forget that the Qur'an has stressed over and over again that the Prophet is not only a giver of good news to the Believers but he is also their teacher, their lawgiver, judge and guide, a purifier of their morals and a model of life for them, and that every word which he utters is law which they have to obey and follow willingly in all walks of life and for all times to come.

71aFor explanation, see E.N. 70 of Al-Mu'minun.

72For explanation of "Throne", see E.N.'s 41, 42 of Al-A'raf, E.N. 4 of Yunus, and E.N. 7 of Hud.

It is difficult to say what exactly is mean by "six days" Here a "day" thay mean a period of time or an ordinary day of this world. For explanation of the "day", see E.N.'s 11 to 15 of Surah Ha Mim Sajdah.

73This they said due to their arrogance and stubbornness just as Pharaoh had said to Prophet Moses: "What is the Lord of the universe?" For the disbelievers of Makkah were not unaware of the Merciful (Rahman), nor was Pharaoh unaware of the "Lord of the universe". The wording of the verse itself chows that their question about the "Merciful" was not the result of their ignorance of Him but was due to their rebelliousness; otherwise Allah would not have punished them for this but would have informed them politely that He Himself is "Merciful". Besides this, it is well known historically that the word Rahman (Merciful) for Allah had been in common usage in Arabia since the ancient times. Please see also E.N. 5 of As-Sajdah and E.N. 35 of Saba.

74All scholars are agreed that here a `Prostration of Recital' (Sajdah Talawat) has been enjoined, which means that every reader and every hearer must prostrate himself on reciting or hearing the recital of this verse. According to traditions, the one who hears this verse being recited should say: Zadan Allahu, khudu an-anima zada, lil-a`daa-i nufura: "May Allah increase us in humility even as the enemies are

increased in their hatred."

75See E.N.'s 8 to 12 of Al Hijr.

76That is, the sun, as mentioned clearly in Surah Nuh: 16: "... and made the sun a lamp."

77The observation and deep consideration of the wonderful phenomenon of the alternation of the day and night is a proof of Tauhid and His Providence so that man may feel grateful to Him and prostrate himself before Him in all humility.

78That is, "Though all human beings are by birth the servants of the Merciful before Whom you have been invited to prostrate yourselves, and which you disdain, his true servants are those who adopt the way of His obedience consciously and develop such desirable characteristics. Then the natural consequences of the prostration are those found in the lives of the Believers and the evil results of rejecting the invitation, those found in your lives." Here attention is being drawn to the two patterns of character and life: first of those who had accepted the Message of the Holy Prophet and were following it, and the second of those who persisted in the ways of ignorance. Here only the prominent characteristics of the true Believers have been cited, and for contrast, the characteristics of the disbelievers have been left to every discerning eye and mind which could see them all around in society and make its own decision.

79That is; "They do not walk haughtily and arrogantly like the tyrants and mischief-makers, but their "gait" is of a gentle, right-thinking and good natured person." "Walking humbly" does not mean walking like a weak or sick person, nor does it imply the gait of a hypocrite who walks ostentatiously to show humility or fear of God. According to Traditions, the Holy Prophet himself used to walk with firm, quick steps. One day Caliph `Umar saw a young man walking slowly like a weak, sick person, and asked him, "Are you ill?" When the man replied in the negative, the Caliph raised his whip, rebuked him and told him to walk like a healthy man. This shows that the "humble gait" is the natural gait of a noble and gentle person and not a gait which shows weakness and undue humility.

In this connection, the first characteristic of the true servants of Allah to which attention has been drawn, is their "gait" This is because the gait indicates the character of an individual. If a man walks in a humble and dignified way, as opposed to a haughty, vain and proud manner, it shows that he is a noble and gentle person. Thus the different "gaits" of the different types of people show what sort of characters they possess. The verse means to imply that the true servants of the Merciful can be easily recognized by their "gait" among the people. Their attitude of Allah's worship and obedience has changed them so thoroughly that it can "be seen at first sight from their "gate that they are noble, humble and good natured people, who cannot be expected to indulge in any mischief. For further explanation, see E.N.43 of Bani Isra'il and E.N 33 of Luqman

80"Ignorant people": Rude and insolent people and not uneducated and illiterate ones. The true servants of the "Merciful" do not believe in "vengeance", even though they may have to deal with the ignorant people who behave rudely and insolently towards them. If they happen to come across such people, they wish them peace and turn away. The same thing has been expressed in Al-Qasas: 55, thus: "And when they hear something vain and absurd they turn away from it, saying, `Our deeds are for us and your deeds are for you: peace be to you: we have nothing to do with the ignorant'." For details see E.N.'s 72 to 78 of Al-Qasas.

81That is, they neither spend their nights in fun and merry-making nor in gossips and telling tales, nor in doing wicked deeds, for these are the ways of the ignorant people. The true servants of Allah pass their nights in worshipping and remembering Him as much as they can. This characteristic of theirs has been brought out clearly at several places in the Qur'an, thus: "their backs forsake their beds and they invoke their Lord in fear and in hope." (As-Sajdah: 16). "These people (of Paradise) slept but little at night, and prayed for their forgiveness in the hours of the morning." (Az-Zariyat: 17, 18). And: "Can the end of the one, who is obedient to Allah, prostrates himself and stands before Him during the hours of the night, fears the Hereafter and places his hope in the mercy of his Lord, be like that of a mushrik;'" (Az-Zumar: 9).

82That is, their worship has not made them vain and proud to presume that they are the beloved ones of Allah and that the Fire of Hell will not touch them. On the other hand, in spite of all their worship and good deeds, they are so tilled with the fear of the torment of Hell that they pray to their Lord to save them from it, for they do not depend upon their own work for success in the Hereafter but upon the mercy of Allah.

83The true servants of Allah adopt "the golden mean" between the two extremes in spending their money. They neither go beyond prudence and necessity in expenditure nor live in wretched 'circumstances in order to save and hoard money but are frugal. This was the characteristic of the followers of the Holy Prophet, which distinguished them from the well-to-do people of Arabia, who were either spend-thrifts in regard to the gratification of their own lusts or niggardly in spending their money on good works.

According to Islam extravagance is: (1) To spend even the smallest amount of money in unlawful ways, (2) to go beyond one's own resources in expenditure even in lawful ways, or to spend money for one's own pleasure, and (3) to spend money in righteous ways not for the sake of Allah but for mere show. On the other hand, one is miserly if one does not spend money for one's own needs and requirements and those of one's family in accordance with one's resources and position, or if one does not spend money for good works. The way taught by Islam is the golden mean between the two extremes. The Holy Prophet has said, "It is a sign of wisdom to adopt the "golden mean" in one's living." (Ahmad, Tabarani).

84The true servants refrain from three great sins: Shirk, murder and adultery. The Holy Prophet himself

warned of their gravity. According to 'Abdullah bin Mas`ud, when some one asked him about the worst sins, he replied, (1) "It is to set up someone as equal in rank with Allah, Who has created you, (2) to kill your own child for fear of its sustenance, and (3) to commit adultery with the wife of your neighbour." (Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizi, Nasa`i, Ahmad). Obviously this is not a complete list of the "heinous sins". But these three instances have been cited because they were most prevalent in the Arab society of those days .

As regards the inclusion of refraining from shirk among the excellences of the true servants, one may ask why it should be presented as virtue before the disbelievers who did not regard shirk as a vice. It is because the Arabs had doubts about the doctrine of shirk even though they appeared to be deeply involved in it. This is amply supported by their history. For instance, when Abraha invaded Makkah, the Quraish did not invoke their idols to save the Ka`bah from him, but they begged Allah to save it. Their contemporary poetry bears sufficient evidence that they regarded the destruction of the "people of the elephant" due to Allah's power and supernatural interference and not due to any help of their idols. The Quraish and the polytheists of Arabia had also come to know that when Abraha reached Ta`if on his way to Makkah, the people of Ta`if had offered him their services to destroy the Ka`bah and had even provided him guides to take him safely to Makkah through the hills, for fear that he might also destroy the temple of "Lat", their chief deity. This event so much offended the Arabs that for years after this they continued , pelting the grave of the chief guide with stones for retaliation. Moreover, the Quraish and the other Arabs attributed their creed to Prophet Abraham and looked upon their religious and social customs and their Hajj rites as part of Abraham's religion. They knew that Prophet Abraham was a worshiper 'of Allah and not of idols. They also had traditions to show as to when they had started idol-worship, and which idol had been brought from where, when and by whom. The fact is that the common Arab did not have much of reverence for his idols. He would even speak insultingly of it and withheld his offerings when it failed to fulfil his wishes and prayers. For instance, there is the story of an Arab who wanted to avenge the murder of his father. He went to the temple of his idol, Zul-Khalasah, and wanted to take an omen. The response came that he should abandon his intention. At this the Arab became furious and cried out: 'O Zul-Khalasah! Had you been in my place, and your father was murdered, you would not have said that the murderers should not be punished." Another Arab took his herd of camels to the shrine of his god, named Sa'd, for seeking its blessings. It was a tall idol which had been smeared with sacrificial blood. On seeing it, the camels became terrified and started running in all directions. The Arab was so filled with rage that he started pelting the idol with stones, shouting, "May God destroy you! I had come to you to seek blessings for my camels, but you have deprived me of all of them." There were certain idols about whose origin filthy stories were current. For instance, the story about Asaf and Na'ilah whose images had been placed at Safa and Marwa, was that they were actually a man and a woman, who had committed adultery inside the Holy Ka`bah and had been turned into stone by God as a punishment. When the deities had such reputation, no worshiper could cherish any reverence for them in his heart. From this one can easily understand that the Arabs did recognize the value of true God-worship deep in their hearts, but, on the one hand, it had been suppressed by ancient customs and ways of ignorance, and on the other, the priestly class among the Quraish had vested interests, who were busy creating

prejudices against it among the people. They could not give up idol-worship because such a step would have brought to an end their supremacy in Arabia. That is why, refraining from shirk and worship of One Allah has been mentioned as a mark of superiority of the followers of the Holy Prophet without any fear of contradiction by the disbelievers, for even they in their heart of hearts knew that it was a weighty argument against them.

85This can have two meanings: (1) His punishment will never come to an end, but it will continue being inflicted relentlessly over and over again; and (2) the person who in addition to the sins of disbelief, shirk and atheism, would have committed murders, adultery and other sins, will get separate punishment for rebellion and for each other sin. He will be accountable for each of his major and minor sins none of which will be pardoned. For instance, for each murder and for each act of adultery he will be given a separate punishment, and likewise, there will be a separate punishment for every sin committed by him.

86This is a good news for those people who repented and reformed themselves, for they will have the benefit of the "general amnesty" contained in verse 70. This was regarded as a great blessing by the true servants because very few of those who embraced Islam had been free from those vices during their 'ignorance', and were terrified by the threat contained in vv. 63-69, but this amnesty not only redeemed them but filled them with hope.

Many instances of such people, who sincerely repented and reformed their lives, have been related in the traditions. For instance, Ibn Jarir and Tabarani have related an incident from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, who savs, "One day when 1 returned home after offering the 'lsha prayer in the Prophet's Mosque, I saw a woman standing at my door. I saluted her and walked into my room, closed the door and busied myself in voluntary worship. After a while she knocked at the door. I opened the door and asked what she wanted. She said that she had come with a problem: She had committed zina, had become pregnant, given birth to a child and then killed it. She wanted to know if there was any chance of her sin being forgiven. I replied in the negative. She went back grief-stricken, exclaiming, "Ah! this beautiful body was created for the fire!" The next morning, after the prayer, when I related the night's incident before the Holy Prophet, he said, "You gave a very wrong answer, Abu Hurairah: Haven't you read the Qur'anic verse which says: '(Those) who do not invoke any other deity than Allah...except the one who may have repented (after those sins) and have believed and done righteous deeds' `?" Hearing this from the Holy Prophet, I went out in search of the woman, and had her traced again at the `Isha time. I gave her the good news and told her what the Holy Prophet had said in reply to her question. She immediately tell prostrate on the ground and thanked Allah, Who had opened a way for her forgiveness. Then she offered repentance and set a slave-girl, along with her son, tree." A similar incident about an old man has been related in the traditions. He came before the Holy Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah, all my life has passed in sin: there is no sin which I have not committed; so much so that if my sins were to be distributed over the people of the whole world, they would all be doomed. Is there any way out for my forgiveness?" The Holy Prophet asked him, "Have you embraced Islam?" He said, "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." The Holy Prophet said, "Go back, Allah is All-Forgiving

and has the power to change your evil deeds into good deeds." He asked,"Is it about all my crimes and errors?" The Holy Prophet replied, "Yes, it is about all your crimes and errors." (Ibn Kathir) .

87It has two meanings: (1) When he has repented sincerely, he will start a new life of belief and obedience to Allah and by His grace and help will start doing good deeds instead of evil deeds that he used to do in his life of unbelief, and his evil deeds will be replaced by good deeds; and (2) Not only will his evil deeds done in the past be written off, but it will also be recorded in his conduct register that he was the servant who gave up rebellion against his Lord and adopted the way of His obedience. Then, as he will feel more and more sorry for his past sins and offer repentance, more and more good deeds will be credited to him; for repenting of one's wrong doing and seeking forgiveness is in itself a good deed. Thus, good deeds will supersede all his evil deeds in his conduct register, and he will not only escape punishment in the Hereafter but, in addition, he will also be blessed with high favors by Allah.

88That is. ultimately everyone has to return to Allah for Allah alone is man's last and real refuge: He alone can reward one for his good deeds or punish one for his evil deeds: He alone is All-Merciful and All Compassionate, Who receives the penitent with forgiveness and Who does not rebuke him for his past errors provided that he has repented sincerely, and adopted the right attitude and reformed himself.

89This also has two meanings: (1) They do not give evidence (in a law court etc.) in regard to a false thing in order to prove it right, when in tact it is a falsehood, or at best a doubtful thing; and (2) they have no intention to witness any thing which is false, evil or wicked as spectators. In this sense, every sin and every indecency, every sham and counterfeit act is a falsehood. A true servant of Allah recognizes it as false and shuns it even if it is presented in the seemingly beautiful forms of "art" .

90The Arabic word laghv implies all that is vain, useless and meaningless and it also covers "falsehood". The true servants pass by in a dignified manner if ever they come across "what is vain", as if it were a heap of tilth. They do not tarry there to enjoy the "filth" of moral impurity, obscenity or foul language, nor do they intentionally go anywhere to hear or see or take part in any sort of "filth". For further details, see E.N. 4of Al-Muminun.

91The true servants of Allah do not behave like the blind and the deaf towards the Revelations of Allah, when they are recited to them for their admonition. They do not turn a deaf ear to their teachings and Message and do not deliberately close their eyes to the Signs that they are asked to observe, but are deeply moved by them. They follow and practice what they are enjoined and retrain from what is forbidden.

92The most distinctive characteristic of the true servants is their eagerness for prayer to Allah. In verse 65 their "prayer" for their own salvation and in verse 74 their prayer for their wives and children have been cited: "Our Lord, make our wives and children true believers so that they should practice

righteousness and become a source of comfort for us." Their prayer shows that the true servants of Allah are more concerned about the salvation of their beloved ones in the Hereafter than the enjoyment of the world.

It should be noted that this characteristic has been cited here to show that the true servants had sincerely believed in the Message. That is why they were so concerned about the "Faith" of their beloved ones. It should also be kept in mind that many of the near and dear ones of the Believers had not as yet embraced Islam. If a husband had embraced Islam, the wife was still an unbeliever, and if a youth had accepted Islam, his parents and brothers and sisters were still involved in disbelief, and vice versa. Therefore, the true servants wept and prayed for them, whenever the picture of their horrible state in Hell came before their mind's eyes.

93That is,"We should excel in piety, righteousness and good works; nay, we should become the leaders of the pious people so that we may lead them in the propagation of virtue and piety in the world. " Incidentally, this characteristic of the true servants was in great contrast to that of the disbelievers, who strove in competition and rivalry with one another for superiority in worldly power and wealth. But it is a pity that some people in our time have misinterpreted this verse as containing sanction for seeking candidature for political leadership. According to them, the verse means: "Our Lord, make us rulers over the pious people."

94The word sabr (fortitude) has been used here in its most comprehensive sense. The true servants courageously endured their persecution by the enemies of the Truth; they remained firm and steadfast in their struggle to establish Allah's way in the land; they carried out their duties enjoined by Allah sincerely and tearlessly without any concern for the worldly losses and deprivation; and they withstood all temptations held out by Satan and all the lusts of the flesh.

95"Ghurfah " is a high mansion and the word is generally used for the "upper chamber" of a double-storeyed house. But the reality is that the highest buildings made by man in this world, even the Taj Mahal of India and the skyscrapers of New York, are an ugly imitation of the "excellent abodes" in Paradise. They are so magnificent, grand and beautiful that human imagination cannot form any picture of their grandeur.

96This warning to the disbelievers has been given in order to contrast it with the great rewards that have been promised to the true servants of Allah, as if to say, "If you do not invoke Allah for help and protection, and do not worship Him, you will have no value and importance in His sight, and He will not care at all for you because He does not stand in need of any help from you. It is indeed for your own sake that He has given you the opportunity to invoke Him so that He they turn in mercy towards you; otherwise there is no difference between you and the rest of creation."

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26. Surah Ash Shuaraa (The Poets)

Name

The Surah takes its name from verse 224 in which the word *Ash-Shu`araa'* occurs.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter and the style show, and the traditions confirm, that it was revealed during the middle Makkan period. According to Ibn Abbas, Surah Ta Ha was revealed first, then Surah Al Waqiah, and then Surah Ash-Shu'araa.(*Ruh-ul-Ma'ani*, Vol. xx, p. 64). About Surah Ta Ha it is well known that it had been revealed before Hadrat Umar embraced Islam.

Subject Matter and Topics

The background of the Surah is that the disbelievers of Makkah were persistently refusing, on one pretext or the other, to accept the message of Islam given by the Holy Prophet. Sometimes they would say that he did not show them any sign to convince them of his Prophethood; sometimes they would brand him as a poet or a sorcerer and mock his message; and sometimes they would ridicule his Mission, saying that his followers were either a few foolish youth, or the poor people and slaves - whereas, they argued, if his Mission had really some value for the people, the nobles and the elders would have accepted it first. Thus, while on the one hand, the Holy Prophet was becoming wearied by his efforts to show them rationally the errors of their creeds and prove the truth of the Doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter, the disbelievers, on the other, were never tired of adopting one kind of obduracy after the other. This state of affairs was causing great anguish and grief to the Holy Prophet.

Such were the conditions when this Surah was revealed. It begins with words of consolation to the Holy Prophet, implying, "Why do you fret for their sake?If these people have not believed in you, it is not because they have not seen any Sign, but because they are obdurate. They will not listen to reason they want to see a Sign which makes them bow their heads in humility. When this Sign is shown in due course of time, they will themselves realize that

what was being presented to them was the Truth."

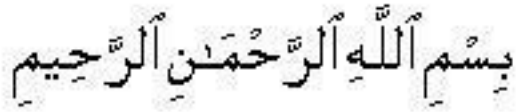
After this introduction, till verse 191, one and the same theme has been presented continuously, and it is said: "The whole earth abounds in such Signs as can guide a seeker after truth to Reality, but the stubborn and misguided people have never believed even after seeing the Signs, whether these were the Signs of the natural phenomena or the miracles of the Prophets. These wretched people have stubbornly adhered to their erroneous creeds till the Divine scourge actually overtook them." It is to illustrate this that the history of seven of the ancient tribes has been told, who persisted in disbelief just like the disbelievers of Makkah. In this connection, the following points have been stressed:

1. The Signs are of two kinds:(a) Those which are scattered all over the earth, and by seeing which an intelligent person can judge for himself whether what the Prophet is presenting is the Truth or not and (b) those which were seen by Pharaoh and his people, Noah's people, the Ad and the Thamud, Lot's people and the people of Aiykah. Now it is for the disbelievers to decide which kind of the Signs they are eager to see.

2. The mentality of the disbeliever has been the same throughout the ages; their arguments and their objections, and their excuses and subterfuges for not believing have been similar and ultimately the fates that they met have also been the same. Likewise, the Prophets in every age presented the same teachings, their personal character and their reasoning and arguments against their opponents were the same, and they were all similarly blessed with mercy by Allah Almighty. Both these patterns of behavior and conduct are found in history, and the disbelievers could themselves see as to which respective patterns they and the Holy Prophet belonged.

3. Allah is All Mighty, All Powerful and All Merciful at the same time. History contains instances of His Wrath as well as of His Mercy. Now, therefore, it is for the people to decide whether they would like to deserve Allah's Mercy or His Wrath.

4. Lastly, the discussion has been summed up, saying "O disbelievers, if at all you want to see the Signs, why should you insist on seeing those horrible Signs that visited the doomed communities of the past? Why don't you see the Qur'an which is being presented in your own language? Why don't you see Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and mercy) and his Companions? Can the revelations of the Qur'an be the work of a satan or a jinn? Does the recipient of the Qur'an appear to be a sorcerer? Are Muhammad and his Companions no different from a poet and his admirers? Why don't you give up disbelief and search your hearts for their judgment? When in the heart of your hearts you yourselves believe that the Revelations of the Qur'an have nothing in common with sorcery and poetry, then you should know that you are being cruel and unjust, and will certainly meet the doom meant for the cruel and unjust."



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

طسٓمٓ ﴿١﴾

تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلۡمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] Ta Sin Mim. These are the verses of the lucid Book.[1]

لَعَلَّكَ بَٰخِعٞ نَّفۡسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُواْ مُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾

إِن نَّشَأۡ نُنَزِّلۡ عَلَيۡهِم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ ءَايَةٗ فَظَلَّتۡ أَعۡنَٰقُهُمۡ لَهَا خَٰضِعِينَ ﴿٤﴾

وَمَا يَأۡتِيهِم مِّن ذِكۡرٖ مِّنَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ مُحۡدَثٍ إِلَّا كَانُواْ عَنۡهُ مُعۡرِضِينَ ﴿٥﴾

فَقَدۡ كَذَّبُواْ فَسَيَأۡتِيهِمۡ أَنۢبَٰٓؤُاْ مَا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ يَسۡتَهۡزِءُونَ ﴿٦﴾

[3-6] O Muhammad, you will perhaps consume yourself with grief because these people do not believe.[2] If We will, We can send down from the sky a Sign before which they will bend down their necks in submission.[3] Whatever new admonition comes to them from the Merciful, .they turn away from it. Now that they have rejected it, they will soon

come to know (in various forms) the reality of what they have been mocking.[4]

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَمْ أَنۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٧﴾

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

[7-9] And have they never looked at the earth (and seen) how We have created in it a variety of fine vegetation in abundance? This surely has a Signs[5] but most of them would not believe. The fact is that your Lord is Mighty as well as Merciful.[6]

وَإِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنِ ٱئْتِ ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ أَلَا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١١﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿١٢﴾

وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِى وَلَا يَنطَلِقُ لِسَانِى فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَٰرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَلَهُمْ عَلَىَّ ذَنۢبٌ فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿١٤﴾

قَالَ كَلَّا ۖ فَٱذْهَبَا بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ ۖ إِنَّا مَعَكُم مُّسْتَمِعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَآ إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

أَنْ أَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٧﴾

[10-17] Relate to them the story of the time when your Lord called Moses,[7] saying: "Go forth to the wicked people- the people of Pharaoh.[8] Do they not fear?"[9] Moses answered, "My Lord, I am afraid that they will treat me as a liar. My breast straitens and I am not eloquent of tongue: so appoint Aaron to Prophethood.[10] And they have the charge of a crime against me, too; therefore, I fear that they will put me to death."[11] Allah said: "No, never! Go, both of you, with Our Signs:[12] We shall be with you, hearing everything. Go to Pharaoh and tell him, `We have been sent by the Lord of all Creation (with the message) that you should let the Israelites go with us."[13]

قَالَ أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا وَلَبِثْتَ فِينَا مِنْ عُمُرِكَ سِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَفَعَلْتَ فَعْلَتَكَ ٱلَّتِى فَعَلْتَ وَأَنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

[18-19] Pharaoh said."Did we not bring you up as a child in our house?[14] You lived quite a few years of your life among us, and then you did what you did,[15] you are indeed an ungrateful man."

قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَآ إِذًا وَأَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَفَرَرْتُ مِنكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِى رَبِّى حُكْمًا وَجَعَلَنِى
مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

[20-21] Moses answered, "I did it inadvertently;[16] then I fled from you out of fear; then my Lord bestowed wisdom and knowledge upon me,"[17] and included me among the Messengers.

وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَىَّ أَنْ عَبَّدتَّ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[22] As for the favor of which you have reminded me, the fact is that you had reduced the Israelites to bondsmen.[18]

قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[23] Pharaoh said,[19] "And what is this Lord of all Creation?"[20]

قَالَ رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُم مُّوقِنِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[24] Moses answered, "The Lord of the heavens and the earth and of all that is between them, if only you care to believe!"[21]

قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥٓ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

[25] Pharaoh said to those around him, "Do you hear?"

قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[26] Moses said, "Your Lord as well as Lord of your forefathers who have gone before."[22]

قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمُ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

[27] Pharaoh said (to all those present), "This messenger of yours, who has been sent to you, seems to be utterly mad."

قَالَ رَبُّ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[28] Moses said, "(He is) Lord of the east and the west and of all that is between them, if only you people have any common-sense" [23]

قَالَ لَئِنِ ٱتَّخَذْتَ إِلَٰهًا غَيْرِى لَأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْمَسْجُونِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

[29] Pharaoh said, "If you take any one other than me as a deity, will cast you among those who are rotting in the prisons."[24]

قَالَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَيْءٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

[30] Moses said, "Even if I bring forth a convincing thing?"[25]

قَالَ فَأْتِ بِهِۦٓ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

[31] Pharaoh replied, "Well, bring it if you are truthful."[26]

فَأَلْقَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُۥ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَآءُ لِلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[32-33] (No sooner had he uttered these words than) Moses cast down his staff, and suddenly it became a serpent.[27] Then he drew out his hand (from the armpit) and it was shining bright for all the spectators.[28]

قَالَ لِلْمَلَإِ حَوْلَهُۥٓ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسَٰحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

يُرِيدُ أَن يُخْرِجَكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُم بِسِحْرِهِۦ فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[34-35] Pharaoh said to the chiefs around him, "This fellow is certainly a skilled magician: he wants to drive you out of your land by means of his magic.[29] Now, what is your command?"[30]

قَالُوٓاْ أَرۡجِهۡ وَأَخَاهُ وَٱبۡعَثۡ فِي ٱلۡمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ٣٦

يَأۡتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِيمٖ ٣٧

[36-37] They said, “Detain him and his brother for a while, and send forth heralds to the cities to summon every skilled magician into your presence.”

فَجُمِعَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ لِمِيقَٰتِ يَوۡمٖ مَّعۡلُومٖ ٣٨

وَقِيلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلۡ أَنتُم مُّجۡتَمِعُونَ ٣٩

لَعَلَّنَا نَتَّبِعُ ٱلسَّحَرَةَ إِن كَانُواْ هُمُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبِينَ ٤٠

[38-40] So, the magicians were gathered together on an appointed day and time,[31] and the people were asked, "Would you come to the gathering?[32] We may perhaps still follow the magicians way if they are dominant."[33]

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ قَالُواْ لِفِرۡعَوۡنَ أَئِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجۡرًا إِن كُنَّا نَحۡنُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

[41] When the magicians arrived for the contest, they said to Pharaoh, "Shall we have rewards if we win?"[34]

قَالَ نَعَمۡ وَإِنَّكُمۡ إِذٗا لَّمِنَ ٱلۡمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[42] He replied, "Of course,and then you will be included among those nearest to me."[35]

قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰٓ أَلۡقُواْ مَآ أَنتُم مُّلۡقُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[43] Moses said, “Cast down what you have to cast down.”

فَأَلۡقَوۡاْ حِبَالَهُمۡ وَعِصِيَّهُمۡ وَقَالُواْ بِعِزَّةِ فِرۡعَوۡنَ إِنَّا لَنَحۡنُ ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

فَأَلۡقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلۡقَفُ مَا يَأۡفِكُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

فَأُلۡقِيَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

قَالُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[44-48] They forthwith cast down their cords and staffs and said. "By Pharaoh's honor, we shall surely win"[36] Then Moses cast down his staff, and lo! It started devouring up their false devices. At this, all the magicians fell down in prostration, and cried out, "We have believed in the Lord of all creation the Lord of Moses and Aaron!"[37]

قَالَ ءَامَنتُمۡ لَهُۥ قَبۡلَ أَنۡ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمۡۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ ٱلَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحۡرَ
فَلَسَوۡفَ تَعۡلَمُونَۚ لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيۡدِيَكُمۡ وَأَرۡجُلَكُم مِّنۡ خِلَٰفٖ وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمۡ
أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

[49] Pharaoh said, "You have believed in Moses even before I should have permitted you! He must be your chief who has taught you magic[38] Well, you shall soon come to know: I shall have your hands and feet cut off on opposite sides and shall crucify you all"[39]

قَالُواْ لَا ضَيۡرَۖ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

إِنَّا نَطۡمَعُ أَن يَغۡفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطَٰيَٰنَآ أَن كُنَّآ أَوَّلَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

[50-51] They replied, "We care not: we shall pass into our Lord's presence and we expect that our Lord will forgive us our sins because we are the first to believe."[40]

۞ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِىٓ إِنَّكُم مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِى ٱلْمَدَآئِنِ حَٰشِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَآئِظُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حَٰذِرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

فَأَخْرَجْنَٰهُم مِّن جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَكُنُوزٍ وَمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنَٰهَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾

[52-59] We inspired Moses with this:[41] "Set off with My servants by night, for you will be pursued."[42] At this, Pharaoh sent out heralds to the cities (for mobilization, saying): "These are but a handful of people, who have provoked us much; and we are a host who are always on our guard."[43] Thus did We draw them out from their gardens and their water-springs and their treasure-houses and fine dwellings.[44] This is how they were dealt with, while (on the other hand) We made the Children of Israel inherit all these things.[45]

فَأَتۡبَعُوهُم مُّشۡرِقِينَ ٦٠

فَلَمَّا تَرَٰٓءَا ٱلۡجَمۡعَانِ قَالَ أَصۡحَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّا لَمُدۡرَكُونَ ٦١

قَالَ كَلَّآۖ إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهۡدِينِ ٦٢

فَأَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنِ ٱضۡرِب بِّعَصَاكَ ٱلۡبَحۡرَۖ فَٱنفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرۡقٖ كَٱلطَّوۡدِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٦٣

وَأَزۡلَفۡنَا ثَمَّ ٱلۡأٓخَرِينَ ٦٤

وَأَنجَيۡنَا مُوسَىٰ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥٓ أَجۡمَعِينَ ٦٥

ثُمَّ أَغۡرَقۡنَا ٱلۡأٓخَرِينَ ٦٦

[60-66] In the morning these people set out in pursuit of them. When the two hosts came face to face with each other, the companions of Moses cried out: "We are overtaken!" Moses said, "No, never! With me indeed is my Lord: He will surely guide me."[46] We inspired Moses with the Command: "Smite the sea with your staff." The sea parted forthwith and its each part stood like a mighty mountain.[47] And We led to the same place the other host, too. We saved Moses and all his companions, and drowned the others.[48]

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكۡثَرُهُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ٦٧

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ٦٨

[67-68] There is indeed a Sign in this,[49] but most of these people would not believe. The fact is that your Lord is Mighty as well as Merciful.

وَٱتۡلُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ نَبَأَ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ ٦٩

إِذۡ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوۡمِهِۦ مَا تَعۡبُدُونَ ٧٠

قَالُواْ نَعۡبُدُ أَصۡنَامٗا فَنَظَلُّ لَهَا عَٰكِفِينَ ٧١

قَالَ هَلۡ يَسۡمَعُونَكُمۡ إِذۡ تَدۡعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

أَوۡ يَنفَعُونَكُمۡ أَوۡ يَضُرُّونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

قَالُواْ بَلۡ وَجَدۡنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا كَذَٰلِكَ يَفۡعَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

قَالَ أَفَرَءَيۡتُم مَّا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡبُدُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

أَنتُمۡ وَءَابَآؤُكُمُ ٱلۡأَقۡدَمُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

فَإِنَّهُمۡ عَدُوٌّ لِّيٓ إِلَّا رَبَّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهۡدِينِ ﴿٧٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِي هُوَ يُطۡعِمُنِي وَيَسۡقِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾

وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ﴿٨٠﴾

وَٱلَّذِى يُمِيتُنِى ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ ﴿٨١﴾

وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لِى خَطِيٓـَٔتِى يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٨٢﴾

رَبِّ هَبْ لِى حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَٱجْعَل لِّى لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَٱجْعَلْنِى مِن وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٨٥﴾

وَٱغْفِرْ لِأَبِىٓ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

وَلَا تُخْزِنِى يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى ٱللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

[69-89] And tell them the story of Abraham[50] when he asked his father and his people: "What are these things that you worship?"[51] They answered, "These are idols which we worship and we serve them devotedly."[52] Abraham asked, "Do they hear you when you call on them? Or ' do they bring any good or harm to you?" They replied, "No, but we have found our elders doing the same."[53] At this, Abraham said, "Have you ever seen (with open eyes) the things which you and your elders have been worshiping?[54] They are all enemies to me,[55] except One Lord of the worlds,[56] Who created me,[57] then He it is Who guides me, Who gives me food and drink, and Who gives me health when 1 am ill,[58] Who will cause me to die and then will give me life again, and of Whom I expect that He will forgive me my errors on the Day of Judgment."[59] (After. this Abraham prayed:) "My Lord, bestow upon me knowledge and wisdom[60] and join me with the righteous,[61] and grant me true renown among posterity,[62] and include me among the inheritors of the blissful Garden, and forgive my father, for indeed he is from among those who have strayed,[63] and do not disgrace me on the Day when everybody will be raised back to life,[64] when neither wealth will avail anybody, nor children, except that one should appear before Allah with a sound heart."[65]

وَأُزْلِفَتِ ٱلْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

وَبُرِّزَتِ ٱلْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ هَلۡ يَنصُرُونَكُمۡ أَوۡ يَنتَصِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

فَكُبۡكِبُواْ فِيهَا هُمۡ وَٱلۡغَاوُۥنَ ﴿٩٤﴾

وَجُنُودُ إِبۡلِيسَ أَجۡمَعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

قَالُواْ وَهُمۡ فِيهَا يَخۡتَصِمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

تَٱللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٧﴾

إِذۡ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

وَمَآ أَضَلَّنَآ إِلَّا ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

فَمَا لَنَا مِن شَٰفِعِينَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

[90-102] (On that Day)[66] Paradise will be brought close to the righteous, and Hell will be set open before the straying ones,[67] and they will be asked: "Where are those whom you worshiped instead of Allah? Are they of any help to you, or even to themselves ?" Then these deities and those erring people, and the hosts of Satan, all will be hurled into it, one upon the other.[68] Therein they will dispute with one another, and these erring people will say (to their deities): "By God! We had certainly strayed when we held you equal in rank with the Lord of the worlds, and they were criminals indeed who led us astray.[69] Now we have neither any intercessor[70] nor any true friend.[71] Would that we were given a chance to return (to the world) so that we became believers.[72]

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

[103-104] Indeed there is a great Sign in this,[73] but most of these people would not believe. The fact is that your Lord is Mighty as well as Merciful.

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٠٧﴾

فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١١٠﴾

۞ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنُؤْمِنُ لَكَ وَٱتَّبَعَكَ ٱلْأَرْذَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

قَالَ وَمَا عِلْمِى بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

إِنْ حِسَابُهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّى ۖ لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

وَمَآ أَنَا۠ بِطَارِدِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

إِنْ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

قَالُوا۟ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهِ يَٰنُوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمَرْجُومِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِى كَذَّبُونِ ﴿١١٧﴾

فَٱفْتَحْ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتْحًا وَنَجِّنِى وَمَن مَّعِىَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلْمَشْحُونِ ﴿١١٩﴾

ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدُ ٱلْبَاقِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

[105-120] Noah's people[74] rejected the Messengers.[75] Remember the time when their brother Noah said to them: "Do you not fear?[76] I am a Messenger to you worthy of full trust:[77] so fear Allah and obey me:[78] I do not ask of you any reward for this duty, for my reward is with the Lord of the worlds;[79] therefore, you should fear Allah and obey me (without hesitation)."[80] They replied, "Should we believe in you, whereas the meanest of the people have become your followers?"[81] Noah said, "I have no knowledge of what they do: their account is the concern of my Lord : would that you had used some common-sense![82] I am not here to drive away those who believe; I am only a plain Warner."[83] They said, "O Noah, if you do not desist from this, you will surely become one of the accursed."[84] Noah prayed: "My Lord, my people have treated me as a liar:[85] now settle the accounts between us, and deliver me and the believers with me to safety."[86] At last, We rescued him and his companions in a laden Ark,[87] and then drowned all the others.

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[121-122] Indeed there is a Sign in this, but most of these people would not believe. The fact is that your Lord is Mighty as well as Merciful.

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٢٥﴾

فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٢٦﴾

وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

[123-127] `Ad rejected the Messengers.[88] Remember the time when their brother Hud said to them,[89] "Do you not fear? I am a Messenger to you worthy of full trust: so fear Allah and obey me. I do not ask of you any reward for this

duty, for my reward is with the Lord of the worlds.

أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ ءَايَةً تَعْبَثُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُم بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

فَاتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٣١﴾

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَمَدَّكُم بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

أَمَدَّكُم بِأَنْعَٰمٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

وَجَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٣٤﴾

إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ عَذَابَ يَوۡمٍ عَظِيمٖ ١٣٥

قَالُواْ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيۡنَآ أَوَعَظۡتَ أَمۡ لَمۡ تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلۡوَٰعِظِينَ ١٣٦

إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا خُلُقُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ١٣٧

وَمَا نَحۡنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ١٣٨

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهۡلَكۡنَٰهُمۡۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكۡثَرُهُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ١٣٩

[128-139] What! You erect for mere pleasure, a monument on every high spot,[90] and build huge castles as if you were immortal;[91] and when you seize somebody, you seize him like a tyrant.[92] So fear Allah and obey me. Fear .Him Who has bestowed on you all that you know: He gave you cattle and children and gardens and water-springs. I fear the torment of a dreadful Day for you." They replied, "Whether you admonish us or not, it is the same for us: such things have been said in the past as well,[93] and we are certainly not going to be chastised." At last, they rejected him, and We destroyed them.[94]

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ١٤٠

[140] Indeed there is a Sign in this, but most of these people would not believe. The fact is that your Lord is Mighty

as well as Merciful.

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ صَٰلِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾

فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٤٤﴾

وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

أَتُتْرَكُونَ فِى مَا هَٰهُنَآ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٤٧﴾

وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخۡلٍ طَلۡعُهَا هَضِيمٞ ﴿١٤٨﴾

وَتَنۡحِتُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡجِبَالِ بُيُوتٗا فَٰرِهِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٥٠﴾

وَلَا تُطِيعُوٓاْ أَمۡرَ ٱلۡمُسۡرِفِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُفۡسِدُونَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَا يُصۡلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

مَآ أَنتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُنَا فَأۡتِ بِـَٔايَةٍ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

قَالَ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةٞ لَّهَا شِرۡبٞ وَلَكُمۡ شِرۡبُ يَوۡمٖ مَّعۡلُومٖ ﴿١٥٥﴾

وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأۡخُذَكُمۡ عَذَابُ يَوۡمٍ عَظِيمٖ ١٥٦

فَعَقَرُوهَا فَأَصۡبَحُواْ نَٰدِمِينَ ١٥٧

فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلۡعَذَابُۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكۡثَرُهُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ١٥٨

[141-158] Thamud rejected the Messengers.[95] Remember the time when their brother Salih said to them, "Do you not fear? I am a Messenger to you worthy of full trust,[96] so fear Allah and obey me. I do not ask of you any reward for this duty, for my reward is with the Lord of the worlds. Will you be left in security amidst all that is around you here?[97] In the gardens and the water-springs? In the corn-fields and the date-groves laden with juicy fruit?[98] You proudly carve out dwellings in the hills.[99] Fear Allah and obey me, and do not follow the transgressors who spread mischief in the land and reform nothing."[100] They replied, "You are only an enchanted person.[101] You are no more than a man like us: bring forth a sign if you are truthful."[102] Salih. said, "Here is a she-camel.[103] One day will be for her to drink, and one day for you all to take water.[104] Do not at all molest her; otherwise you will be overtaken by the torment of a dreadful day." Yet they hamstrung her,[105] and then became regretful, for the torment overtook them.[106] Indeed there is a Sign in this, but most of these people would not believe.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ١٥٩

[159]The fact is that your Lord is Mighty as well as Merciful.

كَذَّبَتۡ قَوۡمُ لُوطٍ ٱلۡمُرۡسَلِينَ ١٦٠

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ لُوطٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾

إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٦٢﴾

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٦٣﴾

وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

[160-164] The people of Lot rejected the Messengers.[107] Remember the time when their brother Lot said to them, "Do you not fear? I am a Messenger to you worthy of full trust: so fear Allah and obey me. I do not ask of you any reward for this duty, for my reward is with the Lord of the worlds."

أَتَأْتُونَ الذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

وَتَذَرُونَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عَادُونَ ﴿١٦٦﴾

قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهِ يَا لُوطُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿١٦٧﴾

قَالَ إِنِّى لِعَمَلِكُم مِّنَ ٱلْقَالِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

رَبِّ نَجِّنِى وَأَهْلِى مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

فَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِى ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَرًا ۖ فَسَآءَ مَطَرُ ٱلْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿١٧٣﴾

[165-173] “Do you go to the males from the creatures of the world,[108] and leave that which your Lord has created for you in your wives?[109] You have indeed transgressed all limits.”[110] They said, “O Lot, if you do not desist from this, you will surely be included among those who have been expelled from our towns.”[111] He said, “I am certainly one of those who abhor your wickedness. My Lord, deliver me and my people from their wicked deeds.”[112] At last, We delivered him and all his people except an old woman who was of those who were left behind.[113] Then We destroyed all the rest of them, and rained on them a horrible rain, which fell on those who had been warned.[114]

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٤﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧٥﴾

[174-175] Indeed there is a Sign in this, but most of these people would not believe. The fact is that your Lord is Mighty as well as Merciful.

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَٰبُ لْـَٔيْكَةِ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

إِنِّى لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾

فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٧٩﴾

وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

۞ أَوۡفُواْ ٱلۡكَيۡلَ وَلَا تَكُونُواْ مِنَ ٱلۡمُخۡسِرِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾

وَزِنُواْ بِٱلۡقِسۡطَاسِ ٱلۡمُسۡتَقِيمِ ﴿١٨٢﴾

وَلَا تَبۡخَسُواْ ٱلنَّاسَ أَشۡيَآءَهُمۡ وَلَا تَعۡثَوۡاْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مُفۡسِدِينَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكُمۡ وَٱلۡجِبِلَّةَ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

وَمَآ أَنتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٞ مِّثۡلُنَا وَإِن نَّظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلۡكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

فَأَسۡقِطۡ عَلَيۡنَا كِسَفٗا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

قَالَ رَبِّيٓ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمِ ٱلظُّلَّةِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٨٩﴾

[176-189] The people of Aiykah rejected the Messengers.[115] Remember the time when Shu`aib said to them, "Do you not fear? I am a Messenger to you worthy of full trust: so fear Allah and obey me. I do not ask of you any reward for this duty, for my reward is with the Lord of the worlds. Give full measure and do not give people less than what is due to them; weigh with even balance and do not cheat people of their goods; and do not spread evil in the land, and fear Him Who has created you and those who have gone before you." They said, "You are only an enchanted person and are no more than a man like us: we consider you to be an utter liar. However, if you are truthful, cause a fragment of the sky to fall down upon us." Shu'aib said, "My Lord knows whatever you are doing."[116] They treated him as a liar. At last, the torment of the Day of Canopy overtook them,[117] and it was the torment of an extremely dreadful day.

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٩١﴾

[190-191] Indeed there is a Sign in this, but most of these people would not believe. The fact is that your Lord is Mighty as well as Merciful.

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٩٢﴾

نَزَلَ بِهِ ٱلرُّوحُ ٱلْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾

عَلَىٰ قَلۡبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُنذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيّٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿١٩٥﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَفِي زُبُرِ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٩٦﴾

أَوَلَمۡ يَكُن لَّهُمۡ ءَايَةً أَن يَعۡلَمَهُۥ عُلَمَٰٓؤُاْ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿١٩٧﴾

وَلَوۡ نَزَّلۡنَٰهُ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضِ ٱلۡأَعۡجَمِينَ ﴿١٩٨﴾

فَقَرَأَهُۥ عَلَيۡهِم مَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ مُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿١٩٩﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ سَلَكۡنَٰهُ فِي قُلُوبِ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

[192-200] This[118] (Book) has been revealed by the Lord of the worlds.[119] The trustworthy Spirit[120] has come down with it upon your heart so that you may become one of those who are (appointed by God) to warn (the people) in plain Arabic language;[121] and this is also contained in the Scriptures of the former people.[122] Is it not a Sign for the people (of Makkah) that the learned men of the Children of Israel know it?[123] (But they are obdurate to the extent) that even if We had sent it down to some non Arab, and he had recited this (discourse in lucid Arabic) before them, they

would still not have believed in it.[124] Likewise, We have caused this (Qur'an) to pass through the hearts of the criminals.[125]

لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلْأَلِيمَ ﴿٢٠١﴾

فَيَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

فَيَقُولُوا۟ هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنظَرُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

[201-203] They do not believe in it until they see the painful torment.[126] Then, when it overtakes them unawares, they say, "May we be given some respite ?"[127]

أَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

أَفَرَءَيْتَ إِن مَّتَّعْنَٰهُمْ سِنِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

ثُمَّ جَآءَهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يُمَتَّعُونَ ﴿٢٠٧﴾

[204-207] Are these people clamoring for Our torment to be hastened? Have you considered that even if We grant them the respite to enjoy life for years, and then there comes down on them that with which they are being threatened, the provisions of life that they have got, will not avail them anything?[128]

وَمَآ أَهۡلَكۡنَا مِن قَرۡيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا مُنذِرُونَ ٢٠٨

ذِكۡرَىٰ وَمَا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ٢٠٩

[208-209] (Note it that) We have never destroyed a habitation unless it had its warners to administer admonition; and We have never been unjust.[129]

وَمَا تَنَزَّلَتۡ بِهِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ ٢١٠

وَمَا يَنۢبَغِي لَهُمۡ وَمَا يَسۡتَطِيعُونَ ٢١١

إِنَّهُمۡ عَنِ ٱلسَّمۡعِ لَمَعۡزُولُونَ ٢١٢

[210-212] This (lucid Book) has not been brought down by satans,[130] nor does this work behoove them,[131] nor are they able to do it.[132] They have indeed been kept out of its hearing.[133]

فَلَا تَدۡعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُعَذَّبِينَ ٢١٣

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾

وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾

فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢١٧﴾

ٱلَّذِى يَرَىٰكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٢١٨﴾

وَتَقَلُّبَكَ فِى ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿٢١٩﴾

إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

[213-220] So, O Muhammad, do not invoke any other deity besides Allah lest you should also be included among those who will be chastised.[134] Warn your nearest kinsfolk[135] and treat with kindness those of the believers who follow you, but if they disobey, tell them: "I am not responsible for what you do."[136] And put your trust in the Mighty and Merciful One,[137] Who watches you when you get up,[138] and when you move about among those who prostrate themselves in worship.[139] He is indeed All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

هَلۡ أُنَبِّئُكُمۡ عَلَىٰ مَن تَنَزَّلُ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ ﴿٢٢١﴾

تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

يُلۡقُونَ ٱلسَّمۡعَ وَأَكۡثَرُهُمۡ كَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾

[221-223] O people, shall I tell you upon whom the satans come down? They come down upon every sinning forgerer.[140] They whisper hearsay into ears, and most of them are liars.[141]

وَٱلشُّعَرَآءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ ٱلۡغَاوُۥنَ ﴿٢٢٤﴾

أَلَمۡ تَرَ أَنَّهُمۡ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ﴿٢٢٥﴾

وَأَنَّهُمۡ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفۡعَلُونَ ﴿٢٢٦﴾

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَذَكَرُواْ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَٱنتَصَرُواْ مِنۢ
بَعۡدِ مَا ظُلِمُواْۗ وَسَيَعۡلَمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓاْ أَيَّ مُنقَلَبٖ يَنقَلِبُونَ ٢٢٧

[224-227] As for the poets, they have the erring people to follow them.[142] Do you not see that they stray aimlessly in every valley?[143] and say that which they do not practice themselves.[144] save those who believed and did good works and remembered Allah much, and when they were treated unjustly, they only defended themselves (and did not show vindictiveness).[145] And the iniquitous people will soon come to know what punishment awaits them.[146]

1That is, the verses being presented in this Surah are of that Book, which presents and explains its subject-matter clearly and plainly so that every reader and listener may easily understand what it invites to, what it enjoins and what it forbids, and what it regards as true and what as false. To believe or not to believe is a different matter; but no one can have the excuse that he could not understand the teachings of the Book and its injunctions and prohibitions.

"Al-Kitab-ul-Mubin" also has the meaning that the Qur'an is, beyond any doubt, a Divine Book. Its language, its diction and themes, the facts presented by it and the background of its revelations, all testify to the fact that this is indeed the Book of the Master of all Creation. In this sense, its every sentence is a Sign and a miracle. As such, any person who has common sense has no need of any other Sign than the verses of this Book for believing in the Prophethood of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

Thisbrief introductory sentence, which covers both these meanings, has a close connection with the subject-matter of this Surah. The disbelievers of Makkah demanded a miracle from the Holy Prophet so as to be convinced that the message he gave was really from Allah. In answer to that, it has been said that if some one really wanted a Sign for believing in the Prophet, he should study the verses of this Book. Then, the disbelievers accused the Holy Prophet of being a sorcerer. This charge has been refuted by saying that the Qur'an has nothing ambiguous or mysterious in it; but it plainly puts forward all its teachings which cannot be the creation of a poet or a sorcerer's imagination.

2The words bakhi'un-nafsaka literally mean: "You would kill yourself." The verse in fact describes the extreme anguish, anxiety and grief of the Holy Prophet over the Makkan disbelievers' ways of deviation, moral degradation, and obduracy and opposition to his message of reform. Sometimes it seemed as if his grief and mental suffering for their sake would cause his death. This state of the Holy Prophet has been referred to at other places in the Qur'an as well, for instance in Al-Kahf: 6, thus: "Well, O Muhammad, it may be that you will consume your life for their sake out of sorrow if they do not believe in this message.

And in Al-Fatir: 8, thus:" ....let not your life be consumed in grief for their sake."

3That is, "It is not at all difficult for Allah to send down a Sign which would make all the disbelievers yield and submit. If, however, He does not send one, it does not mean that such a thing is beyond His powers, but the reason is that . belief under compulsion is not acceptable to Him. Allah wants that people should use their common-sense and recognize the Truth through the verses of the Divine Book and the Signs which are scattered all over the universe and are found even in their own selves. Then, when their hearts are satisfied that the message of the Prophets contains the Truth, and the beliefs and the creeds which are opposed to it, are false, they should willingly give up falsehood and adopt the Truth. This voluntary belief, acceptance of the Truth and rejection of falsehood, is what Allah demands from man. It is for this reason that Allah has bestowed upon man choice and free will, and freedom to follow any way, right or wrong, that he pleases. For the same reason He has placed in his nature both the tendencies, towards good and towards evil, and opened up before him both the ways, to piety and to sin. For the same purpose He has given Satan the freedom and respite to mislead him and has made arrangements of Prophethood, Revelation and invitation to goodness to guide him to the right way, and has placed man on trial to see whether he adopts the way of belief and obedience or of disbelief and sin. On the other hand, if Allah had adopted a method of coercing people to believe and obey, it would have defeated the very purpose of the trial and test. Then there was no need to send down the Signs for the purpose, but He would have created man with a pure nature, without any inclination for evil, disbelief and sin, and made him obedient by birth like the angels. This has been referred at several places in the Qur'an, for instance in Yunus: 99: ` Had your Lord willed all the dwellers of the earth would have believed in Him;" and in Hud: 118: "'Your Lord could have made mankind one community had He so willed, but now they will continue to follow different ways, but only those on whom Allah has His mercy (escape wrong ways). It will be so because He has created them for this (very freedom of choice and action)." For further explanation, see E. N.'s 101,102 of Yunus and E.N. 116 of Hud.

4That is, the people who show lack of feeling and interest for every rational attempt made to bring them to the right way, cannot be made to believe forcibly by sending down Signs from heaven. They only deserve to be shown their evil end after they have been duly warned and shown guidance, which they not Only treated with indifference but rejected scornfully. This evil end can be shown to them in several ways:

(1) The Truth which they have bitterly opposed and scoffed at should prevail in the world in front of their very eyes in spite of their antagonism. (2) They should be visited by a painful torment and eliminated from the world. (3) Alter a few years of misguided life they should meet death and see for themselves that what they had been following wholeheartedly throughout their lives was nothing but falsehood and what the Prophets had been presenting was the very Truth, which they had been scoffing at. Thus the evil end can take place differently for different people as it happened in the past.

5That is, the seeker after truth does not have to look far for a Sign. If only he sees with open eyes the phenomena of vegetation around him, he will be able to judge for himself whether the reality about the

system of the world (i.e., Tauhid) which was being presented by the Prophets is true, or the speculations of the polytheists and atheists. From the variety and abundance of creation found on the earth, the various elements and factors supporting it, the laws of nature causing it to grow and flourish, and the accord and harmony existing between its characteristics and the countless needs and demands of innumerable creatures, only a fool will conclude that all this is happening automatically without the wisdom, knowledge, power and design of an All-Mighty, All-Powerful Creator. Obviously, many masters and gods could not have by any device arranged and produced the perfect harmony and accord between the soil, the sun and the moon, and the animal and plant life produced with their help and the needs of a great variety of creatures living on the earth. A sensible person, unless he is prejudiced and biased, cannot help feeling convinced that these are the clear signs and proofs of the existence of One God, and there is no further need of a miracle to convince him of the reality of Tauhid.

6That is, "He has the power and ability to annihilate completely anyone whom He wills to punish, but it is His mercy that He dces not hasten to punish the wrung-doer, but gives him respite for years and centuries to allow him time to think, understand and mend his ways, and is ever ready to forgive the sins of a lifetime if the sinner offers repentance but once.

7After a brief introduction, historical events have been presented beginning with the story of Prophet Moses and Pharaoh, and attention has been drawn specifically to the following points:

(1) The conditions under which Prophet Moses had to work were much harsher and more severe than those faced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). Prophet Moses belonged to a slave community very much suppressed by Pharaoh and his people. In contrast to them, the Holy Prophet was a member of the clan of Quraish and his family enjoyed an equal status with the other clans. Then Prophet Muses had been bred and brought up in the house of Pharaoh and after remaining a fugitive for ten years due to a charge of murder, he was commanded to go before the same king from whom he had fled for life. The Holy Prophet did not have to face any such situation. Then the empire of Pharaoh was the most extensive and powerful empire of the time and the meagre power of the Quraish had no comparison with it. In spite of that Pharaoh could not do any harm to Prophet Moses and ultimately perished in the conflict. From this Allaln wanted the Quraish to learn this lesson: "None can defeat the one who has Allah to help him? When Pharaoh with all his might became helpless against Moses, how can you, O poor Quraish, succeed against Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings)'?

(2) There could not be clearer and more manifest Signs (miracles) than those which were shown to Pharaoh through Moses. Then in an open contest with the magicians before a gathering of hundreds of thousands of people to meet the challenge of Pharaoh himself, it had been conclusively demonstrated that what was presented by Moses, was not magic. The skillful magicians who were themselves Egyptians and had been summoned by Pharaoh himself bore witness to the fact that turning of Moses' staff into a serpent was a real change of nature, which could only happen through a Divine miracle, and

not by any trick of magic. Then the magicians' believing in Moses immediately, even at the risk of life, proved beyond any doubt that the Sign presented by Moses was a miracle and not magic. Yet the disbelievers were not inclined to believe in the Prophet. Now how can you, O Quraish, say that you will believe only when you are shown a perceptible miracle and a physical Sign '? As a matter of fact, if a person is free from prejudice, false sense of prestige and vested interest, and has an open mind to appreciate the distinction between truth and falsehood, and is prepared to give up falsehood for the truth, he does not stand in need of any other signs than those found in this Book, in the life of the one presenting it and in the vast universe around him. On the contrary, an obstinate person, who is not interested in the truth, and who because of selfish motives is determined not to recognize and accept any such truth as may clash with his interests, will not be prepared to believe after seeing any sign whatever, even if the earth and the heaven are turned upside down in front of his eyes .

(3) 'the tragic end of such obstinacy as met by Pharaoh is not something for which other people should become so impatient. Those who do not believe even after seeing with their own eyes the Signs of Divine power have inevitably to meet a similar fate. Therefore, instead of learning a lesson why do you insist on seeing such a dreadful sign? For comparison, see AIA'raf: 103-137, Y'unus: 75-92, Bani Isra'il: 101-104, and Ta Ha: 9-79.

8The epithet of "the wicked people" describes the extremely wicked character of the people of Pharaoh.

9That is, "O Moses! Just see how these people are perpetrating crime and injustice presuming that they are all-powerful in the land having no fear of God, Who will call them to account in the Hereafter".

10The sentence, "My breast straitens", shows that Prophet Moses was somewhat hesitant of going alone on such a difficult mission, and also had the feeling that he was not eloquent in speech. That is why he begged Allah to appoint Aaron too, as messenger to assist him who, being more vigorous in speech, could support and strengthen him as and when the need arose. It is just possible :hat in the beginning, the Prophet Moses might have begged that Aaron be appointed to Prophet hood instead of him, but later when he felt that Allah willed him to be appointed to that position, he might have appealed that Aaron should at least be made his counselor and assistant. We say this because here Prophet Moses is not praying for Aaron to be made his counselor, but says, "Appoint Aaron to Prophet hood." On the other hand, in Surah Ta Ha, he says, "Appoint for me a counselor from my family-(let it be) my brother Aaron." Then in Surah Al Qasas, he says, "My brother Aaron is more vigorous in speech than myself, so send him as an assistant with me to confirm (and support) me." From this it appears that these two requests were made later, but originally Prophet Moses had begged Allah to appoint Aaron to Prophet hood instead of himself.

The Bible has a different story to tell. According to it, Prophet Moses, fearing that he would be rejected by the people of Pharaoh, and putting forward the excuse of his faltering speech, had declined to accept his appointment to prophet hood on the pretext that he lacked vigor and eloquence in speech : "O my, Lord,

send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." (Exodus, 4: 13), Then Allah, of His own will, appointed Aaron to be his assistant and persuaded them: to go together before Pharaoh. (Exodus, 4: 1-13). For further details, see E.N. 19 of Ta Ha.

11The allusion is to the incident of Prophet Moses giving a blow to an Egyptian, who was fighting with an Israelite, and thus causing his death. Then as soon as Moses came to know that the report had reached Pharaoh and his people and they were planning to take revenge, he fled the country and took refuge in Midian. (See Al-Qasas: 15-21) Now when after a period of almost ten years of hiding he was suddenly called upon and commanded to go before Pharaoh, who had already a charge of murder against him, with the message, Prophet Moses rightly felt apprehensive that he would immediately be involved in the murder case even before he was able to convey the message as commanded by Allah.

12Here by "Signs" are meant the miracles of the staff and the shining hand, which were liven to Moses. For details see Al-A`raf: 106-117, Ta Ha: .1723, An-Naml: 7-14, and Al-Qasas: 31-32).

13The Mission of the Prophets Moses and Aaron was twofold: First, to invite Pharaoh to the worship and obedience of Allah which has been the foremost aim of the Mission of every Prophet, and secondly, to liberate the Israelites from the bondage of Pharaoh, which was specifically assigned to them. The Qur`an has mentioned sometimes only the first part of their Mission (as in Surah An-Nazi`at) and sometimes only the second.

14This remark of Pharaoh shows that he was not the same Pharaoh who had brought up Moses in his house, but his son. Had he been the same Pharaoh, he would have said, "I brought you up." But, on the contrary. he says, "You were brought up among ourselves." For a detailed discussion, see E.N.'s 85-93 of Al A'raf.

15The allusion is to the incident of murder committed by Moses accidentally.

16The word dalalat does not always mean "straying away", but it is also used in the sense of ignorance, folly, error, forgetfulness, inadvertence, etc. As mentioned in Surah Al-Qasas, Prophet Moses had only given a blow to the Egyptian (Copt) when he saw him treating an Israelite cruelly. A blow does not cause death, nor is it given with the intention of causing death. It was only an accident that the Egyptian died. As such, it was not a case of deliberate murder but of accidental murder. A murder was committed but not intentionally, nor was any weapon used, which is usually employed for murder, or which can cause murder.

17The word hukm means wisdom, knowledge or authority, which is granted by Allah to a Prophet so that he may speak with confidence and power.

18That is, "If you had not been unjust and cruel to the Israelites. I should not have been brought to your house for upbringing. It was only on account of your barbarism that my mother put me in a basket and cast it into the river. Had it not been so, I should have been happily brought up in my own house. Therefore, it does not behoove you to remind me of your favor of bringing me up in your house."

19Here the details that Prophet Moses went before Pharaoh as the Messenger of the Lord of the universe and conveyed to him His message, have been omitted, and only the conversation that took place between them has been related.

20This question of Pharaoh concerned the assertion of Moses that he had been sent by the Lord, Master and Ruler of all Creation with the message that he should let the Israelites go with him. This was a political message. It implied that the One, Whom Moses claimed to represent, possessed authority and sovereign rights over all the people of the world including Pharaoh and that he was not only encroaching upon his sphere of sovereignty as Supreme Ruler, but was also sending him the Command that he should hand over a section of his subjects to the representative appointed by Him, so that he should take them out of his kingdom. That is why Pharaoh asked, "Who is this Master and Ruler of all Creation who is sending such a command to the king of Egypt through an ordinary subject of his kingdom?"

21That is, "I have not been sent by any mortal king ruling in the world, but I come from Him Who is the Owner of the heavens and the earth. If you believe that, there is a Creator and Master and Ruler of this universe, it should not he difficult for you to understand who is the Lord of all Creation."

22These words were addressed to the chiefs of Pharaoh, whom he had asked, "Do you hear?" Prophet Moses said: "I do not believe in the false gods who exist today, but did not exist yesterday, or who existed yesterday but do not exist today. This Pharaoh, whom you worship as your lord today, did not exist yesterday, and the Pharaohs whom your elders worshiped yesterday, do not exist today; whereas I believe in the sovereignty and authority of that Lord Who is both your Lord and Pharaoh's Lord as much today as He was your elders' Lord before this."

23That is, "You regard me as a mad person, but if you think you are wise people, you should yourself decide as to who is the real lord: this wretched Pharaoh who is ruling over a small piece of earth, or He Who is the Owner of the east and the west and of everything bounded by the east and the west including the land of Egypt. I believe in His sovereignty alone and have been sent to convey His message to a creature of His."

24To understated and appreciate this conversation fully, one should bear in mind the fact that as it is today, in the ancient times too, the concept of "deity" was confined to its religious sense only. The deity was meant to be worshiped and presented offerings and gifts, and because of its "supernatural powers" and authority the people were to pray to it for help and fulfillment of their desires. But a deity's being

supreme legally and politically also and his right to enjoin anything he pleased in the mundane affairs and man's duty to submit to his commands as to superior law, has never been recognized by the so-called worldly rulers. They have always claimed that in the mundane affairs, they alone possess absolute authority and no deity has any right to interfere in the polity and law prescribed by them. This very thing has been the real cause of the conflict between the Prophets and their righteous followers, on the one hand, and the worldly kingdoms and governments on the other. The Prophets have been trying their utmost to make the worldly rulers acknowledge the sovereign and absolute rights of the Lord of the Worlds, but they in return have not only been claiming sovereign powers and rights for themselves, but have been considering every such person as a criminal and rebel, who has held someone else as a deity in the political and legal sphere. With this background one can easily understand the real significance of Pharaoh's words. Had it been a question of mere worship and offerings, he would have least bothered that Moses, forsaking all gods, regarded only Allah, the Lord of all Creation, as worthy of those rights. if Moses had invited him to serve Allah alone, he would not have felt provoked and offended. At the most he would have refused to give up the creed of his forefathers, or would have challenged Moses to have a debate with his own religious scholars. But what caused him provocation was that Prophet Moses was presenting himself as the representative of the Lord of all Creation and was conveying to him a political command as if he was a subordinate ruler and the representative of the superior authority was demanding obedience from him to the command. In this sense, he was not prepared to acknowledge any other political or legal authority, nor allow any of his subjects to acknowledge anybody instead of himself as the supreme ruler. That is why he challenged the teen "Lord, of all Creation", for the message sent by Him clearly reflected sovereignty in the political and trot in the mere religious sense. Then, when Prophet Moses explained over and over again what he meant by the "Lord of all Creation", Pharaoh threatened that if he held any one other than him as sovereign in the land of Egypt, he would be cast into prison.

25That is, "Will you still deny me and send me to prison, even if I present a convincing Sign to prove that I am really the Messenger of God, Who is Lord of all Creation , Lord of the heavens and the earth and Lord of the east and the west?

26This reply of Pharaoh shows that he was not in any way different from the common polytheists of the ancient and modern times. Like all other polytheists he believed in Allah's being the highest Deity in the supernatural sense. Who wielded greater power and authority than all other gods and goddesses. That is why Prophet Moses said to him, "If you do not believe that I have been appointed by Allah, I can present such clear Signs as will prove that I have really been sent by Him", and that is why Pharaoh said, " I f you are true in your claim, come out with your Sign", otherwise if he had any doubt about the existence of Allah or His being Master of the universe, he would not have asked for the Sign.

27Thub an means a serpent. At other places, the Qur'an has used hayyatun (snake) and jaann (a small snake) to describe the snake of the staff. The interpretation given by Imam Razi is that the snake of the staff looked like a serpent from its big size and has been called jaann on account of its swift movement which is characteristic of small snakes.

28Some commentators under the influence of the Israelite traditions have translated baida' as white and have taken it to mean that the healthy hand when drawn out of the armpit became white as if struck by leprosy. But commentators like Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Zamakhshari, Razi, Abul Sa'ud `Imadi, Alusi and others are agreed that baida' here means shining and bright. As soon as Prophet Moses took out his hand from the armpit, it made the whole place bright as if by the sun. For further explanation, see E.N. 13 of Ta Ha.

29The impact of the two miracles can be judged from the fact that a moment before this Pharaoh was calling Moses a mad man, because he had claimed to be a Prophet and had had the boldness to openly demand release of the Israelites. He was also threatening Moses that if he took somebody else as Lord instead of him, he would cast him into the prison for life. But, after he had seen the Signs, he became so terror-stricken that he felt his kingdom to be at stake, and in his contusion he did not realize that he was talking meaninglessly to his servants in the court. Two men from the oppressed community of the Israelites were standing before the most powerful ruler of the time: they had no military force with them, they belonged to a weak and lifeless community, and there was no sign of any rebellion in any corner of the country, nor did they have the support of any foreign power, yet as soon as the miracles of the snake of the staff and the shining hand were shown, the tyrant desperately cried out: "These two men want to seize power and deprive the ruling class of their sovereign rights!" His apprehension that Moses would do so by force of his magic again reflected a confused state of mind, for nowhere in the world has a political revolution been ever brought about, nor a country taken, nor a war won merely by force of tragic. There were many magicians in Egypt, who could perform masterly tricks of tragic, but Pharaoh knew it well that they were nonentities because they performed magic only for the sake of rewards.

30This sentence further shows Pharaoh's perplexed state of mind. A moment before he was the deity of his courtiers and, now, struck by awe, the deity is asking his servants as to what he should do to meet the dangerous situation.

31As already mentioned in Surah Ta Ha (v. 59), the day fixed for the purpose was the day of the national festivities of the Egyptians so that large crowds of people coming to the festivals from every part of the country should also witness the grand "contest which was to be held in the broad daylight so that the spectators could see the performances clearly.

32That is, besides proclamation heralds were sent to urge the people to come and see the contest. It appears that the news of the miracle shown by Prophet Moses before the packed court had reached the common people also, and Pharaoh fearing that the people at large might be influenced, wanted that they should come together in large numbers so that they could see for themselves that turning a staff into a snake had nothing extraordinary in it because such a trick could be performed by every common magician of their own country as well.

33This sentence confirms the idea that those who had witnessed the miracle of Moses in the royal court and those who had heard of it reliably outside were losing faith in their ancestral religion, and now the strength of their faith depended on this that their own magicians also should give a performance similar to that of Moses. That is why Pharaoh and his chiefs themselves regarded this contest as a decisive one, and their heralds were busy moving about in the land, impressing on the people that if the magicians won the day, they would yet be secured against the risk of being won over to Moses' religion, otherwise there was every possibility of their creed's being exposed and abandoned for ever.

34Such was the mentality of the supporters of the polytheistic creed of the land, whose only ambition was to win rewards from the king if they won the day.

35This was then the highest honor that the king could confer on those who served the creed best Thus, at the very outset, Pharaoh and his magicians manifested by their conduct the great moral distinction that exists between a Prophet and a magician. On the one side, there stood that embodiment of courage and confidence, who in spite of belonging to the suppressed community of the Israelites and having remained to hiding for ten long years on account of a charge of murder, had suddenly appeared in Pharaoh's court to proclaim fearlessly that he had been sent by the Lord of all Creation and demanded release of the Israelites.

He did not even feel the least hesitation in starting a discussion face to face with Pharaoh not caring in' the least for his threats. On the other side, there were the wretched magicians wholly lacking in moral fiber, who had been summoned by Pharaoh himself to help secure the ancestral religion, and yet they were begging for rewards in return for the services. And when they are told that they will not only be given rewards but will also be included among the royal courtiers, they feel greatly overjoyed. These two types of characters clearly bring out the difference between the grand personality of a Prophet and that of a mere magician. Unless a man loses all sense of modesty and decency, he cannot have the audacity to call a Prophet a magician.

36As soon as they cast down their cords and staffs, these started moving like so many snakes- towards Moses. This has been described in greater detail at other places in the Qur'an. According to Al-A`raf: 116: "When they threw down their devices, they bewitched the eyes of the people and terrified their hearts: for they had indeed produced a great magic." And according to Ta Ha: 66, 67: "Suddenly it so appeared to Moses that their cords and staffs were running about by the power of their magic, and Moses' heart was filled with fear."

37This was not merely an acknowledgment of their defeat at the hands of Moses as though he was a greater magician, but their falling prostrate in submission to Allah, Lord of the universe, was an open declaration before thousands of Egyptians that what Moses had brought about was no magic at all, but a manifestation of the powers of Allah, Almighty.

38This only shows the extreme obstinacy and obduracy of Pharaoh, who even after witnessing a clear miracle and the testimony of the magicians on it, was still insisting that it was magic. But according to Al-A`raf: 123, Pharaoh said, "Indeed it was a plot you conspired in the capital to deprive the rightful owners of their power." Thus he tried to make the people believe that the magicians had yielded to Moses not because of the miracle but due to a conspiracy with Moses before they entered the contest, so that they might seize political power and enjoy its fruits together.

39This horrible threat was held out by Pharaoh to justify his thinking that the magicians had entered a conspiracy with Moses. He thought that the magicians, in order to save their lives, would confess the plot and thus the effect produced by their falling prostrate and believing in Moses in front of thousands of spectators would be gone.

40That is, "We have to return to our Lord in any case. If you kill us now, we shall present ourselves before Him just today, and we have nothing to worry in this. We rather expect that we shall be forgiven our sins and errors because out of this entire gathering we were the first to believe as soon as reality became known to us."

This reply of the magicians made two things absolutely clear to the people who had been gathered together by Pharaoh heralds

First, that Pharaoh was a dishonest obdurate and deceitful person. When he saw that Moses had come out successful in the contest which he himself had arranged to be decisive, he concocted a plot and forced the magicians to confess it by coercion and threats. Had there been any truth in it, the magicians would not have readily offered to have their hands and feet cut off on opposite sides and get crucified. The fact that the magicians remained steadfast and firm in their belief even in the face of such a horrible threat, proves that the accusation of plotting a conspiracy against Pharaoh was baseless. The fact was that the magicians being experts in their art had realized that what Moses had displayed was no magic, but surely a manifestation of the powers of Allah, Lord of the universe.

Secondly, thousands of the people who had gathered together from all corners of the land had themselves witnessed the great moral change that had occurred in the magicians as soon as they professed belief in the Lord of the universe. The same magicians who had been summoned to strengthen and secure the ancestral creed by means of their magic and who, a minute before, were humbly begging Pharaoh for rewards had now become so bold and ennobled spiritually that they would not take any notice of Pharaoh's powers and his threats and were even prepared to face death and extreme physical torture for the sake of their Faith. Thus psychologically there could not be a better occasion to expose the polytheistic creed of the Egyptians in their own eyes and help impress the truth of Moses' religion in the minds of the people.

41The mention of migration here does not mean that Prophet Moses and the Israelites were immediately ordered to leave Egypt. The history of the intervening period has been related in Al-A`raf: 127-135 and Yunus: 83-89, and a part of it has been mentioned in Al-Mu`min: 23-46 and Az-Zukhruf: 46-56. Here the story is being cut short and only the final phase of the conflict between Pharaoh and Prophet Moses is given to show the tragic end of Pharaoh who had remained obdurate even after witnessing clear Signs and the ultimate success of Moses who had Divine support behind his message.

42The warning that "you will be pursued" shows the wisdom of the instruction to set off during the night. The idea was that before Pharaoh came out with his hosts to pursue them, they should have gone far enough so as to be out of reach of him. It should be borne in mind that the Israelites were not settled in one place in Egypt but were scattered in cities and habitations all over the country and lived in large numbers especially in the land between Memphis and Rameses called Goshen. (See map in Vol . III, p. 31, on the Exodus of the Israelites). It appears that when Prophet Moses was commanded to leave Egypt, he must have sent instructions to the Israelite habitations telling the people to make necessary preparations' for migration and he must have also fixed a night for them to leave their homes for the exodus.

43All this shows that Pharaoh in fact was terror-stricken, but was trying to hide his fear under cover of fearlessness. On the one hand, he was mobilizing forces to face the situation; on the other, he wanted to show that he was undaunted and undeterred, for a despotic ruler like Pharaoh could have no danger from a suppressed and slave community which had been living in disgrace for centuries. That is why his heralds made the people believe that the Israelites were just a handful of people, who could do them no harm, but had to be punished for the provocation they had caused. As for mobilization it was only a precautionary measure which had been taken to meet any eventuality in time.

44The genera'. mobilization ordered by Pharaoh was aimed to crush the Israelites completely, but God's device turned the tables on him and drew out all his chiefs and courtiers from their dwelling places and drove them to the place where they and their hosts were to be drowned all together. Had they not pursued the Israelites, nothing would have happened save that a community would have left the country quietly and they would have continued to enjoy life in their fine dwellings as before. But they in fact had cleverly planned not to allow the Israelites go away peacefully, but to attack the migrating caravans suddenly to finish them completely. For this very purpose the princes and the high chiefs and the nobles came out of their palaces and joined Pharaoh in the campaign, but their cleverness did not avail them anything. Not only did the Israelites succeed in escaping from Egypt, but also at the same time the elite of Pharaoh's tyrannical kingdom perished in the sea.

45Some commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that Allah made the Children of Israel to inherit the gardens, water-springs, treasure-houses and fine dwellings vacated and left behind by Pharaoh and his people. This would inevitably mean that after the drowning of Pharaoh, the Israelites

returned to Egypt and took possession of the wealth and properties of Pharaoh's people. This interpretation, however, is neither supported by history nor by other verses of the Qur'an. The relevant verses of Surahs AI-Baqarah, AI-Ma'idah, AI-A`raf and Ta Ha confirm that after the destruction of Pharaoh in the sea, the Israelites did not return to Egypt but proceeded towards their destination (Palestine) and then, till the time of Prophet David (973-1013 B.C.) all the major events of their history took place in the lands which are now known as the Sinai Peninsula, northern Arabia, Transjordan and Palestine. As such, in our opinion the verses mean this: On the one hand, Allah deprived the people of Pharaoh of their wealth, possessions and grandeur, and on the other, He bestowed the same on the Children of Israel in Palestine, and not in Egypt. This same meaning is borne out by vv. 136-137 of A1-A'raf: "Then We took Our vengeance on them and drowned them in the sea because they had treated Our Signs as false and grown heedless of them. And after them We gave as heritage to those who had been abased and kept low, the eastern and the western parts of that land, which had been blessed bountifully by Us." The epithet of "the blessed land" has generally been used for Palestine in the Qur'an as in Surah Bani Isra'il: l, Al-Anbiya': 71-81, and Saba': 18.

46That is, "He will show me the way out of this calamity"

47Literally, tawd is a high mountain. It appears that as soon as Prophet Moses struck the sea with his staff, it tore the sea asunder and the waters stood like two mighty mountains on the sides and remained in that condition for so long that, on the one hand, the Israelite caravans consisting of hundreds of thousands of the migrants were able to pass through safely, and on the other, Pharaoh and his hosts stepped in and reached the middle of the sea. In the natural course, a phenomenon like this has never occurred that due to a windstorm, however strong, the sea should have parted and stood like mighty mountains on either side for such a long time. According to verse 77 of Ta Ha, Prophet Moses was commanded by Allah "to make for them (the Israelites) a dry path across the sea. " This shows that the smiting of the sea did not only result in dividing the waters into two parts, which stood like mighty mountains on either side, but it also created a dry path in between without any mud or slush. In this connection, one should also consider verse 24 of Surah Dukhan, which says that after Moses had crossed the sea along with his people, he was commanded by Allah "to let the sea remain as it is because Pharaoh is to be drowned in it." This implies that if after crossing the sea, Moses had again struck it with his staff, the two sides would have rejoined, but he was forbidden to do so. Obviously, this was a miracle, and the view of those who try to interpret it as a natural phenomenon, is belied. For explanation, see E.N. 53 of Ta Ha.

48That is, Pharaoh and his army.

49That is, the Quraish have this lesson to learn from this: "The obdurate people like Pharaoh, his chiefs and followers had not believed even though they had been shown clear miracles for years. They had been so blinded by obduracy that even on the occasion of their drowning in the sea although they had seen the sea parting asunder in front of their very eyes, the waters standing like high mountains on either

side, and the dry path in between for the Israelite caravans to pass, yet they failed to understand that Moses had Divine succor and support with him which they had come out to fight. At last when they came to their senses, it was too late, because they had been overtaken by the wrath of Allah and the sea waters had covered them completely. It was on this occasion that Pharaoh had cried out "I have believed that there is no god but the real God in Whom the Children of Israel have believed and I am of those who surrender." (Yunus: 90).

On the other hand, there is a Sign in this for the believers, too. They should understand how Allah by His grace causes the Truth to prevail in the long run and the falsehood to vanish even though the forces to evil may appear to be dominant for the time being .

50This part of the life-history of Prophet Abraham relates to the time when after his appointment to Prophethood, a conflict had started between him and his people on the questions of shirk and Tauhid. In this connection, the reader should also see Al-Baqarah: 258-260, Al-An`am: 75-83, Maryam: 41-50, Al-Anbiya': 51-70, As- Saffat: 83-113, and Al-Mumtahanah: 4-5.

The Qur'an has specially repeated this part of Prophet Abraham's life story over and over again because the Arabs in general and the Quraish in particular regarded themselves as his followers and professed his way and creed. Besides them, the Christians and the Jews also claimed that Abraham was their religious leader and guide. That is why the Qur'an admonishes them over and over again that the creed brought by Abraham was Islam itself, which is now being presented by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), and which they are opposing tooth and nail. Prophet Abraham was not a mushrik, but an antagonist against shirk, and for the same reason he had to leave his home and country and live as a migrant in Syria, Palestine and Hejaz. Thus he was neither a Jew nor a Christian, because Judaism and Christianity appeared centuries after him. This historical argument could neither be refuted by the mushriks, nor by the Jews or the Christians, because the mushriks themselves admitted that idol-worship in Arabia had started several centuries after Prophet Abraham, and the Jews and the Christians also could not deny that Prophet Abraham had lived long before the beginning of Judaism and Christianity. This obviously meant that the special beliefs and customs which those people thought formed the basis of their religion, were not part of the original religion taught by Prophet Abraham. True religion was the one which had no tinge of those impurities, but was based on those worship and obedience of One Allah alone. That is why the Qur`an says:

"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Muslim, sound in the Faith, and he was not of those who set up partners with Allah. Surely only those people who follow Abraham are entitled to claim a relationship with him. Now this Prophet and the believers are better entitled to this relationship." (Al An'am: 67, 68).

51Obviously the object of this question was to remind the people that the deities which they worshiped were false and absolutely powerless. In Surah Al Anbiya' the same question has been posed thus: "What

are these images to which you are so devoted '?" (V. 52).

52Though everybody knew that they worshiped idols, their answer implied that they were firm in faith and their hearts were satisfied with it, as if to say, "We also know that these are idols of stone and wood, which we worship, but our faith demands that we should serve and worship them devotedly."

53That is, "We do not worship and serve them because they hear our prayers and supplications, or that they can harm and benefit us, but because we have seen our elders worshiping and serving them." Thus, they themselves admitted that the only reason of their worshiping the idols was the blind imitation of their forefathers. In other words, they meant this: "There is nothing new in what you are telling us, We know that these are idols of stone and wood, which do not hear anything, nor can harm or do good; but we cannot believe that our elders who have been worshiping them since centuries, generation after generation, were foolish people. They must have had some good reason for worshiping these lifeless images, so we are doing the same as we have full faith in them."

54That is, "Is it enough to say that a religion is true only because it has been held as such by their ancestors ? Should people, generation after generation, go on following their ancestors in their footsteps blindly without ever caring to see whether the deities they worship possess any divine attribute or not, and whether they have any power to influence their destinies?

55That is "When I consider them, I see that if I worship them, I shall ruin myself both in this world and in the Hereafter. As their worship is clearly harmful, worshiping them is worshiping one's enemy." These words of Prophet Abraham bear a close connection with verses 81, 82 of Surah Maryam, which say: "These people have set up other gods than Allah so that they may become their supporters. But they will have no supporter; all of them will not only disown their worship but also become their opponents (on the Day of Judgment)."

It should be noted that Prophet Abraham did not say, "They are enemies to you", but said, "They are enemies to me." In the first case, there was every chance that the people would have felt offended and provoked, because it would have been difficult for them to understand how their own gods could be their enemies. As a matter of fact, Prophet Abraham appealed to the natural feeling of man that he is his own well-wisher and cannot wish ill of himself deliberately. This would inevitably have led the addressees to think whether what they were doing was really for their good and was in no way harmful."

56That is, "Of all the deities who are being worshiped in the world, there is only One Allah alone, Lord of the universe, in whose worship I find any good for myself, and Whose worship is the worship of one's own Cherisher and Supporter, and not of one's enemy." Then Prophet Abraham briefly gives the arguments, which nobody could refute, as to why Allah alone is worthy of man's worship and indirectly suggests that his addressees (the idol-worshipers) had no rational basis for worshiping deities other than

Allah except in blind imitation of their forefathers.

57This is the first reason for which Allah, and One Allah alone, is worthy of man's worship. The people also knew and believed that Allah alone was their Creator without any partner. Not only they but all the polytheists of the world also have always held the belief that even the deities they worshiped were the creation of Allah, and except for the atheists none have ever denied that Allah is the Creator of the whole universe. This argument of Prophet Abraham implied that being a creature, he could only worship his Creator, Who was alone worthy of his worship, and none else, because none besides Allah had any share in His creation.

58The second reason for worshiping Allah and Allah alone is that Allah had not become unconcerned with man after creating him and let him alone to see other supporters for help, but had also taken the responsibility of making arrangements for his guidance, protection and fulfillment of his needs. The moment a human child is born, milk is produced for it in the breasts of its mother, and some unseen power teaches it the way to suck it and take it down the throat. From the first day of his life till his death, the Creator has provided in the world around him all necessary means required for every stage of his life for his development and guidance, sustenance and survival. He has also endowed him with all those powers and abilities which are needed to use the means with advantage and given him all necessary guidance for every sphere of life. Then for the protection of human life against all sorts of disease, germs and poisons, He has created such effective antidotes that they have not yet been fully encompassed by human knowledge. If these natural arrangements had not been made, even a thorn-prick would have proved fatal. When this all-pervading mercy and providence of the Creator is supporting and sustaining man at all times in every way, there could be no greater folly and ingratitude on the part of man than this that he should bow down before others than Allah and seek their help in need and trouble.

59The third reason for worshiping none but Allah is that man's relation with his God is not merely confined to this worldly life, which will end at death, but extends to life-after-death also. The same God Who brought him into existence, recalls him and there is no power which can stop his return froth the world. No remedy, no physician no god or goddess has ever been able to catch the hand which takes man out of this world. Even all those men who were made deities and worshiped, could not ward off their own deaths. Only Allah judges and decides when a particular person is to be recalled from the world, and whenever somebody is recalled by Him, he has to leave this world in any case. Then it is Allah alone Who will decide as to when He should raise back to life all those people who were born in this world and died and buried here, and ask them to account for their worldly lives. Then also nobody will have the power to stop resurrection of himself or others. Every human being will have to rise on the Command of Allah and appear in His Court. Then Allah alone will be the Judge on that Day, and nobody else will be a partner in his judgment in any degree. To punish or to forgive will be entirely in Allah's hand. Nobody will have the power to get somebody forgiven if Allah would want to punish him, and punished if Allah would want to forgive him All those who are regarded as intercessors in the world, will themselves be hoping for Allah's mercy and grace for their forgiveness. In view of these facts anybody who worships others than

Allah, is in fact preparing for his own doom. There can be no greater misfortune than this that man should turn away from Allah Who controls his life here as well as in the Hereafter, and should turn for help and support to those who are utterly powerless in this regard.

60Hukm here does not mean "Prophethood", because at the time this prayer was made, Prophet Abraham had already been appointed a Prophet. Even if this prayer was made before that, Prophethood is not bestowed on request, but it is something which Allah Himself bestows on those He wills. That is why, hukm has been translated wisdom, knowledge, right understanding and power of judgment. The Holy Prophet is also reported to have made a similar prayer

Arinal-ashyaa' Kama hiya: "O Allah, give us the power to see and understand a thing as it really is and to form an opinion about it according to its reality."

61"Join me with the righteous": "Give me a righteous society to live in in this world and raise me along with the righteous in the Hereafter." To be raised back to life with the righteous and to attain one's salvation have one and the same meaning. Therefore, this should be the prayer of every person who believes in the life-after-death and in reward and punishment. Even in this world a pious man cherishes the desire that God should save him from living a life in an immoral and wicked society and should join him with the righteous people. A pious and righteous person will remain ill at ease and restless until either his own society should become clean and pure morally, or he leaves it to join another society which is practicing and following the principles of truth and honesty.

62"Grant me true renown among posterity": "Grant me the grace that posterity should remember me as a good and pious man after my death and not as one of the unjust people, who were not only wicked themselves, but who left nothing but wickedness behind them in the world. Enable me to perform such high deeds that my life should become a source of light for others for all times to come, and I should be counted among the benefactors of humanity." This is not a prayer for worldly greatness and renown, but for true greatness and renown, which can be achieved only as a result of solid and valuable services. A person's achieving such true renown and glory has two good aspects:

(1) The people of the world get a good example to follow, as against bad examples, which inspires them with piety and encourages them to follow the right way; and

(2) The righteous person will not only get the rewards of works done by posterity who were guided aright by the good example left and set by him, but in addition to his own good works, he will have the evidence of the millions of people in his favor that he had left behind him in the world fountains of guidance, which went on benefiting people, generation after generation, till the Day of Resurrection.

63Some commentators have interpreted this prayer of Prophet Abraham for his father's forgiveness to

imply that he had prayed to God to grant his father the favor to accept Islam because forgiveness in any case is inter-linked with and dependent upon Faith. But this interpretation is not borne out by the other verses of the Qur'an. The Qur'an says that when Prophet Abraham left his home at the tyrannical treatment of his father, he said, "I bid farewell to you; I shall pray to my Lord to forgive you for He is very kind to me." (Maryam: 47) To fulfill this promise, he not only prayed for the forgiveness of his father, but for both his parents: "Lord, forgive me and my parents..." (Ibrahim: 41). But afterwards he himself realized that an enemy of the Truth, even if he be the father of a believer, does not deserve a prayer of forgiveness. Thus according to verse 114 of At Taubah: "The prayer of Abraham for his father was only to fulfill a promise he had made to him, but when he realized that he was an enemy of Allah, he disowned him."

64That is, "Do not put me to disgrace on the Day of Judgment by inflicting punishment on my father in front of all mankind, when I myself shall be witnessing his punishment helplessly."

65It cannot be said with certainty whether vv. 88, 89 are a part of Prophet Abraham's prayer, or they are an addition by Allah. In the first case, they will mean that Prophet Abraham while praying for his father had a full realization of these facts. In the second case, they will be a comment by Allah on Abraham's prayer, as if to say, "On the Day of Judgment, only a sound heart, sound in faith and free from disobedience and sin, will be of any avail to man and not wealth and children, for wealth and children can be useful only if one possesses a sound heart. Wealth will be useful if one would have spent it sincerely and faithfully for the sake of Allah, otherwise even a millionaire will be a poor man there. Children also will he of help only to the extent that a person might have educated them in Faith and good conduct to the best of his ability; otherwise even if the son is a Prophet, his father will not escape punishment, if he died in the state of unbelief, because such a father will have no share in the goodness of his children. "

66Verses 90-102 do not seem to be a part of Prophet Abraham's speech, but they are Allah's words.

67That is, on the one hand, the righteous people will be shown the countless blessings which they will enjoy in Paradise by Allah's grace, and on the other, Hell will be set open with all its dreads and horrors before the straying people, when they will still be in the Plain of Resurrection.

68Kubkibu in the Text has two meanings: (1) They will be hurled into Hell one upon the other; and (2) they will go on rolling down into the depths of Hell.

69This is how the followers will treat their religious leaders and guides, whom they served and revered like deities in the world, whose words and patterns of behavior they took as authoritative and before whom they presented all sorts of offerings in the world. In the Hereafter when the people will find that their guides had misled them and caused their ruin as well as their own, they will hold them responsible for it and will curse them. The Qur'an has presented this horrible scene of the Hereafter at several places

so as to admonish the blind followers to see and judge carefully whether their guides in this world were leading them on the right path or not. For instance: "As each generation will be entering Hell, it will curse its preceding generation till all generations shall be gathered together there; then each succeeding generation will say regarding the preceding one, `O Lord, these were the people who led us astray; therefore give them a double chastisement of the Fire.' Allah will reply, `There is a double chastisement for every one but you know it not'." (Al-A`raf: 38). "And the disbelievers will say, `Our Lord, bring those jinns and men before us, who led us astray so that we may trample them under our feet and put them to extreme disgrace'." (Ha Mim Sajdah: 29). "And they will say, `Our Lord, we obeyed our chiefs and our great men and they misled us from the right path; our Lord, give them a double chastisement and curse them with a severe curse'." (Al-Ahzab: 67-68).

70That is, "Those whom we regarded as our intercessors in the world and who, we believed, would take us safely into Paradise, are utterly helpless today and of no avail to us."

71That is, "We have no sympathizer either who could feel for us and console us." The Qur'an says that in the Hereafter only the believers will continue to be friends; as for the disbelievers, they will turn enemies of one another even though they had been sworn friends in the world. Each will hold the other as responsible for the doom and try to get him maximum punishment. "Friends on that Day will become enemies of one another except the righteous (who will continue to be friends)." (Az-Zukhruf: 67).

72That Qur'an has given an answer to this kind of longing and desire as well:".. evenif they be sent back to the earthly life, they would do all that they had been forbidden to do." (Al-An`am: 28). As for the reasons why they will not be allowed to return to the world, please see E.N.'s 90-92 of Al-Mu'minun above.

73There are two aspects of the Sign in the story of Prophet Abraham: (I) On the one hand, the mushriks of Arabia, especially the Quraish, claimed that they were the followers of Prophet Abraham and were proud of being his descendants, but on the other, they were involved in shirk against which Prophet Abraham had been engaged in a relentless struggle throughout his life. Then these people were opposing and treating the Prophet who was inviting them towards the religion brought by Prophet Abraham in the like manner as Prophet Abraham himself had been opposed and treated by his people. They have been reminded that Abraham was an enemy of shirk and an upholder of Tauhid which they themselves admitted, and yet they persisted in their obduracy to follow the creed of shirk. (2) The people of Abraham were eliminated from the world: 'if any of them survived, it was the children of Prophet Abraham and his sons, Ishmael and Isaac (thay Allah's peace be upon them). Though the Qur'an does not mention the torment that descended on Abraham's people after he had left them, it has included them among the tormented tribes: "Has not the story reached them of those who had gone before them: the people of Noah, the tribes of `Ad and Thamud, the people of Abraham, and the inhabitants of Midian and of the overturned cities ?" (At Taubah: 70).

74For comparison, see Al-A`raf: 59-64, Yunus: 71-73, Hud: 25-48, Bani Isra'il: 3, Al-Anbiya' 76-77, Al-Mu'minun:: 23-30, and Al-Furqan: 37. For the details of the story of Prophet Noah, see Al-'Ankabut:15, As-Saffat: 75-82, AlQamar: 9-15 and Surah Nuh itself.

75Though they had rejected only one Messenger, it amounted to rejecting all the messengers because all of them had brought one and the same message from Allah. This is an important fact which the Qur'an has mentioned over and over again in different ways. Thus, even those people who rejected just one Prophet have been regarded as unbelievers though they believed in all other Prophets, for the simple reason that the believer in the truth of one Messenger cannot deny the same truth in other cases unless he does so on account of racial prejudice, imitation of elders, etc.

76The initial address of Prophet Noah to his people, as mentioned at other places in the Qur'an, was as follows: "O my people, worship Allah alone: you have no other deity than Him. Are you not afraid (of Him)?" (Al-Mu'minun: 23); and "Worship Allah and fear Him and obey me." (Nuh: 3). That is, "Are you not afraid of the consequences of adopting an attitude of rebellion against Allah and worshiping others than Him?

77It has two meanings: (1) "1 present before you nothing but what Allah reveals to me;" and (2) "I am a Messenger whom you have already known to be a trustworthy and honest and righteous man. When I have been honest and true in my dealings with you, how can 1 be dishonest and untrustworthy in conveying the Message of God'? Therefore, you should rest assured that whatever I am presenting is the Truth. "

78That is, "When I am a truthful and trustworthy Messenger, you are duty-bound to obey me alone as against all other patrons, and carry out my commands and instructions, because I represent the will of God: obedience to me is in fact obedience to God and disobedience to me is disobedience to Him." In other words, the people are not only required to accept a Messenger as a true Messenger sent by Allah, but it inevitably implies that they have to obey him and follow his Law against all other laws. To reject a Prophet, or to disobey him after accepting him as a Prophet, is tantamount to rebellion against God, which inevitably leads to His wrath. The words "fear Allah" are, therefore, a warning that every heater should clearly understand the consequences of rejecting the message of a Messenger or of disobeying his commands.

79This is the second of the two arguments of Prophet Noah about the truth of his message, the first being that they had known him as a trustworthy man during his earlier life, which he had lived among them. This second argument implies this: "I do not have any selfish motive or personal interest in conveying the message which I am propagating day and night in spite of all sorts of opposition and antagonism from you. At least you should understand this that 1 am sincere in my invitation, and am presenting honestly only that which I believe to be the truth and in following which I see the true success and well-being of

humanity at large. I have no personal motive in this that I should fabricate falsehood to fool the people."

These two arguments are among the most important arguments which the Qur'an has advanced repeatedly as proofs of the truthfulness of the Prophets, and which it presents as criterion for judging Prophethood. A man who before Prophethood has lived a life in a society and has always been found to be honest, truthful and righteous, cannot be doubted even by a prejudiced person that he would suddenly start fabricating falsehood in the name of Allah and making people believe that he has been appointed a Prophet by Him, whereas he has been not. More important than that: such a lie cannot be fabricated with a good intention unless somebody has a selfish motive attached to this kind of fraud. And even when a person indulges in this sort of fraud, he cannot hide it completely from the people. The foul means and devices adopted by him to promote his "business" become known and all the various selfish interests and gains become all too apparent. Contrary to this, the personal life of a Prophet is full of moral excellencies: it has no trace of the employment of foul means and devices. Not to speak of any personal interest, he expends whatever he has for the cause of a mission which to all appearances is fruitless. No person who possesses any common sense and also has a sense of justice, can ever imagine that a sensible man who was leading a perfectly peaceful life, would come out all of a sudden with a false claim, when such a false claim does not do him any good, but on the contrary, demands all his money, time and energy and earns him nothing in return but the antagonism and hostility of the whole world. Sacrifice of personal interests is the foremost proof of a man's sincerity; therefore, doubting the intentions and sincerity of a person who has been sacrificing his personal interests for years and years can only be the pastime of the one who himself is selfish and insincere. 'Please also see E.N. 70 of AI-Mu'minun above.

80Repetition of this sentence is not without reason. In the first case Iv. I U8), it implied this: "You should fear Allah if you treat as false a true and trustworthy Messenger from Him, whom you yourselves have been regarding as a true and trustworthy man in the past." Here it means: "You should fear Allah if you doubt the intention of a person who is working sincerely only for the reformation of the people without any personal interest." This thing has been stressed because the chiefs of Prophet Noah's people, in order to find fault with his message of Truth, accused him of struggling merely for his personal superiority: "He merely intends to obtain superiority over you." (Al-Mu'minun: 24)

81This answer to Prophet Noah's message of Truth was given by the chiefs, elders and nobles of his people as mentioned in Hud: 27: "In answer to this, those chiefs of his people, who had rejected his message, said, 'We see that you are no more than a mere man like ourselves, and we also see that only the meanest from among us have become your followers without due consideration, and we find nothing in you that might give you superiority over us'." This shows that those who believed in Prophet Noah were mostly the poor people, and ordinary workmen, or some youth who enjoyed no position in society. As for the influential and rich people, they had become his bitter opponents, and were trying by every trick and allurement to keep the common man behind them. One of the arguments they advanced against Prophet Noah was this: "Had there been some weight and substance in Noah's message, the rich people, scholars, religious divines, nobles and wise people of the community should have accepted it, but none of

them has believed in him; the only people to follow him are the foolish people belonging to the lowest stratum of society, who have no common-sense. Now how can the noble and high ranking people like us join the company of the common people?"

Precisely the same thing was being said by the unbelieving Quraish about the Holy Prophet and his followers. Abu Sufyan in reply to the questions asked by Heraclius had said: "Muhammad (Allah"s peace be upon him) has been followed by the poor and weak of our people." What they seemed to be thinking was that Truth was that which was considered as Truth by the chiefs and elders of the community, for only they had the necessary common-sense and power of judgment. As for the common people, their being common was a proof that they lacked sense and judgment. As such, if a thing was accepted by them but rejected by the chiefs, it meant that the thing itself was without worth and value. The disbelievers of Makkah even went further. They argued that a Prophet could not be a common man: if God had to appoint a Prophet, He would have appointed a great chief to be a Prophet: "They say: why has not the Qur'an been sent down to a prominent man of our two cities (Makkah and Ta'if)?" (Az-Zukhruf: 31).

82This is the first answer to their objection, which was based on the assumption that the poor people belonging to the working classes and lower social strata who performed humble duties, did not possess any mental maturity and were without intelligence and common sense. Therefore, their belief was without any rational basis, and so unreliable, and their deeds were of no value at all. To this Prophet Noah replies, "I have no means of judging the motives and assessing the worth of the deeds of the people who accept my message and act accordingly. This is not my concern but the responsibility of God".

83This is the second answer to their objection, which implied that since those who were gathering around Noah as believers, belonged to the lowest social strata, none of the nobles would like to join them, as if to say, "O Noah, should we believe in you in order to be counted among the low-ranking people like the slaves and servants and workmen?" To this Prophet Noah answers, "How can I adopt this irrational attitude that I should attend earnestly to those who do not like to listen to me, but drive away those who have believed and followed me? I am simply, a warner, who has declared openly that the way you are following is wrong and will lead you to ruin, and the way that I am inviting to is the way of salvation far all. Now it is up to you whether you heed my warning and adopt the right path, or go on following blindly the way to your ruin. It does not behoove me that I should start inquiring into the castes and ancestry and trades of the people who have heeded my warning and adopted the right path. They might be "mean" in your sight, but I cannot drive them away and wait to see when the "nobles" will' give up the path of destruction and adopt the way of salvation and success instead."

Precisely the same thing was going on between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers of Makkah when these verses were revealed, and one can fully understand why the dialogue between Prophet Noah and the chiefs of his people, has been related here. The chiefs of the disbelievers of Makkah thought exactly the same way. They said how they could sit side by side with the slaves like Bilal, 'Ammar and Suhaib

and other men of the working class, as if to say, "Unless these poor people are turned out, there can be no possibility that the nobles may consider to become believers; it is impossible that the master and the slave should stand shoulder to shoulder with each other." In answer to this the Holy Prophet was commanded by Allah to tell the vain and arrogant disbelievers plainly that the poor believers could not be driven out of Islam just for their sake: "O Muhammad, you attend earnestly to him who has shown indifference (to your message), whereas you have no responsibility if he does not reform himself; and the one who comes to you earnestly, fearing Allah, to him you pay no attention. Nay! this indeed is an Admonition, so let him who wills, accept it." (`Abasa :5-12).

"And do not drive away those who invoke their Lord morning and evening and are engaged in seeking His favor. You are not in any way accountable for them, nor are they in any way accountable for you: so, if you should drive them away, you shall be counted among the unjust. As a matter of fact, in this way We have made some of them a means of test for others, so that, seeing them, they should say, `Are these the people from among us upon whom Allah has showered His blessings?' Yes: does not Allah know His grateful servants better than they?" (AI-An'am: 52-53)

84The words in the Text may have two meanings: (1) "You will be stoned to death"; and (2) "You will be showered with abuses from all sides, and cursed and reviled wherever you go. "

85That is, "They have rejected me completely and absolutely and now there is no hope of their becoming believers." Here nobody should have the misunderstanding that just after this conversation between Prophet Noah and the chiefs of his people, and the rejection of his message by them, the Prophet submitted a report to Allah that his people had rejected him and now He should settle the accounts between them. The Qur'an has mentioned at different places the details of the long struggle that went on for centuries between Prophet Noah and his people, who persisted in unbelief. According to verse 14 of Surah Al Ankabut, the struggle continued for 950 years: "He (Noah) remained among them for a thousand years save fifty years." Prophet Noah during this long period studied their collective behavior, generation after generation, and came to the conclusion that they had no inclination to accept the Truth, and formed the opinion that in their future generations also there was no hope of anybody becoming a believer and adopting the righteous attitude: "My Lord, if You should leave them, they will lead Your servants astray, and they will bear as children none but sinners and disbelievers." (Nuh: 27). Allah Himself confirmed this opinion of Noah, saying, "No more of your people will believe in you now than those who have already believed. So do not grieve at their misdeeds." (Hud: 36)

86"Deliver me and the believers with me to safety": "You should not only give Your judgment as to who is in the right and who is in the wrong, but deliver Your Judgment in such a manner that the followers of the Truth are saved and the followers of falsehood are completely annihilated from the earth.

87"Laden Ark", because the Ark became full with the believers and the pairs of animals from every species. For further details, see Hud: 40.

88For comparison, see Al-A'raf: 65-72, Hud: 50-60; and for further details of this story, see Ha Mim Sajdah: 13-16, Al-Ahqaf: 21-26, Az-Zariyat: 4145, Al-Qamar :18-22, Al-Haqqah: 4-8, and Al-Fajr: 6-8.

89In order to understand this discourse of Prophet Hud fully, we should keep in mind the various details about the people of `Ad which the Qur'an has given at different places: For instance, it says:

(1) After the destruction of the people of Noah, the `Ad were given power and prominence in the world: "Do not forget that after Noah's people your Lord made you the successors." (Al-A`raf: 69).

(2) Physically they were very robust and powerful people: " .... and made you very robust." (Al-A`raf: 69).

(3)They had no parallel as a nation in the world: "The like of which was not created in the lands." (A1-Fajr: 8).

(4) They were civilized and were well-known in the world for their great skill and art in erecting lofty buildings with tall columns: "Have you not seen what your Lord did with `Ad Iram, of lofty columns?" (Al-Fajr: 6, 7).

(5) This material progress and physical power had made them arrogant and vain: "As for `Ad, they deviated from the right path and adopted an arrogant attitude in the land and said, `who is mightier than we in power'?" (Ha Mim Sajdah: 15) .

(6) Their political power was in the hands of a few tyrants before whom none could dare raise his voice: "....and they followed and obeyed every tyrannous enemy of the Truth." (Hud: 59) .

(7) They were not disbelievers in the existence of Allah, but were involved in shirk; they only denied that Allah alone should be worshiped and none else: "They said (to Hud), `Have you come to us (with the demand) that we should worship Allah alone and discard those whom our elders have been worshiping?" (Al-A`raf: 70).

90That is, "You build grand buildings merely to show off your wealth and power, whereas they have no use and purpose except that they stand as monuments to your grandeur and glory. "

91That is, ,"Though you have built other buildings also for dwelling purposes, in order to make them grand, beautiful and strong, you expend your wealth and mental and physical abilities in a manner as if you were going to live for ever, and there was no purpose of life except seeking of comfort and pleasure and nothing beyond this worldly life which might deserve your attention."

In this connection, one should bear in mind the fact that extravagance in architecture is not a solitary vice in a people. This happens as a result of a people's becoming affluent and then crazy for selfish gains and materialistic pursuits. When a people reach such a stage, their whole social system becomes corrupted and polluted. Prophet Hud's criticism of his people's extravagant and luxurious architecture was not simply aimed at the high castles and monuments, but he was actually criticizing their corrupt civilization and social system, whose glaring symptoms could be seen everywhere in the land in the shape of castles and monuments.

92That is,"In order to meet the demands of your ever rising standards of life, you do not rest content with small living quarters but you build castles and fortresses, and yet being unsatisfied you erect lofty edifices unnecessarily just for ostentation. But as human beings you have become so depraved that there is no mercy in your hearts for the weak, no justice for the poor, and all people of lower social strata, living inside or around your land, are being oppressed tyrannically and none is safe from your barbarities."

93This can have two meanings: (1) "Whatever we are doing is not new but has been happening from the tune of our elders since centuries: they had the same creed, the same way of life, the same morality and the same kind of dealings and yet they remained unharmed and safe from every calamity. If there was any evil in this way of life, we should have met the doom with which you are threatening us." (2) "The things you are preaching have been preached and said before also by religious maniacs and so-called moralists, but they could not change the ways of the world. It has never happened that the world suffered a disaster only because people refused to listen to preachers like you."

94According to the Qur'an, the people of 'Ad were destroyed by a violent windstorm. When they saw it advancing towards their valleys, they rejoiced with the hope that those were dense clouds which would bring much rain for them, but in reality it was Allah's scourge. The windstorm continued to rage for eight days and seven nights and destroyed everything. The people were swept away like straw and everything on which the hot, dry wind blew was left rotting. The storm did not abate until the last man of the wicked tribe had met his doom. Only ruins of their habitations remained to tell the tale of their terrible fate, and today even the ruins have become extinct. The whole territory of Ahqaf has turned into dreadful desert dunes. For details, see E.N. 25 of Al-Ahqaf.

95For comparison, see Al-A'raf: 73-79, Hud: 61-68, Al-Hijr: 80-84, Bani Isra'il 59; and for further details, see An-Naml . 45-53, Az-Zariyat: 43-45, Al-Qamar: 23-31, Al-Haqqah: 4-5, Al-Fajr: 9, and Ash-Shams: 11.

Thamud achieved power and glory after the destruction of 'Ad and as far as progress in civilization is concerned, they followed in the footsteps of their predecessors. In their case, too, the standards of living went on rising higher and higher and the standards of humanity continued to fall lower and lower, suffering one deterioration after the other. On the one hand, they erected large edifices on the plains and hewed beautiful houses out of the hills like those in the caves of Ellora and Ajanta in India, and on the

other, they became addicted to idol-worship and the land was filled with tyranny and oppression. The worst men became leaders and rulers in the land. As such, Prophet Salih's message of Truth only appealed to the weak people belonging to the lower social strata and the people of the upper classes refused to believe in him.

96According to the Qur'an, the people of Prophet Salih themselves admitted that he was a man of great integrity and extraordinary caliber: "They said, 'O Salih, till now you were such a person among us of whom we had great expectations." (Hud: 62)

97That is, "Do you consider that your life of indulgence and pleasure is everlasting, and you will never be asked to account for Allah's favors to you and for your own misdeeds?"

98Hadim. heavy bunches of ripe, juicy and soft date-palm fruit hanging from trees

99Just as the most prominent feature of the 'Ad civilization was that they built large edifices with high pillars, so the most prominent feature of the Thamud civilization for which they were known among the ancient peoples was that they carved out dwellings in the hills. That is why in Surah Fajr, the `Ad have been referred to as "(people) of the illars", and the Thamud as "those who hewed rocks in the valley". These people also built castles on the plains, the purpose and object of which was nothing but display of wealth and power and architectural skill as there was no real necessity for them. These are, in fact, the ways of the perverted people: the poor among them do not have proper shelters, and the wealthy members not only have sufficient fine dwellings but over and above those they raise monuments for ostentation and display.

Some of these Thamudic works exist even today, which I have seen in December, 1959. (See pictures. This place is situated between AI-Madinah and Tabuk, a few miles to the north of Al-'Ula (Wad-il-Qura of the Holy Prophet's time) in Hejaz. The local inhabitants call it AI-Hijr and Mada'in Salih even today. AI-'Ula is still a green and fertile valley abounding in water springs and gardens, but AI-Hijr appears to be an abandoned place. It has thin population, little greenery and a few wells one of which is said to be the one at which Prophet Salih's shecamel used to drink water. This well is now dry and located within a deserted military post of the time of the Turks. When we entered this territory and approached AI-'Ula, we found hills which seemed to have been shattered to pieces from top to bottom as if by a violent earthquake. (See pictures on the opposite pages). We saw the same kind of hills while travelling to the east, from AI-`Ula to Khaibar, for about 50 miles, and towards the north inside Jordan, for about 30 to 40 miles. This indicated that an area, stretching well over 300 to 400 miles in length and 100 miles in width, had been devastated by the terrible earthquake.

A few of the Thamudic type monuments that we saw at AI-Hijr were also found at Madyan along the Gulf of 'Aqabah and at Petra in Jordan. At Petra specially the Thamudic and Nabataean works stand side by

side, and their styles and architectural designs are so different that anyone who examines them will find that they were neither built in the same age nor by the same nation. (See pictures for contrast). Doughty, the British orientalist, in his attempt to prove the Qur'an as false, has claimed that the works found at Al-HIijr were not carved out by Thamud but by the Nabataeans. I am of the view that the art of carving houses out of the rocks started with the Thamud, and thousands of years later, in the second and first centuries B.C., it was considerably developed by the Nabataeans and it reached perfection in the works of the caves of Ellora, which were carved out about 700 years after Petra.

100That is, "You should give up obedience to your chiefs, guides and rulers under whose leadership you are following an evil way of life. These people have transgressed all bounds of morality: they cannot bring about any reforms and they will corrupt every system of life that they adopt: The only way for you towards success and well-being is that you should inculcate fear of God, give up obedience to the misguides and obey me, because I am God's Messenger: you are fully aware of my honesty and integrity: I have no personal interest and motive for undertaking the work of reform. " This was in short the manifesto which Prophet Salih presented before his people: it not only contained the religious message but invitation to cultural, moral and political revolution as well.

101"Enchanted person": Mad and insane person who has lost reasoning power. According to the ancient conceptions, madness was either due to the influence of a jinn or magic. That is why a mad person was either called majnun (one under the influence of a jinn) or one enchanted by magic.

102That is, "We cannot believe you to be a Messenger from God because you are just like us and we see no distinction in you. However, if you are true in your claim that God has appointed you as His Messenger, you should present such a clear miracle as should make us believe that you have really been sent by the Creator and Master of the universe.

103From the context it appears that it was not a common she-camel, but it was brought about in a supernatural manner because it was presented in response to the demand for a miracle. Prophet Salih. could not have produced before the people an ordinary she-camel as a proof of his Prophethood because that would not have satisfied them. All other places in the Qur'an it has been clearly referred to as a miracle. In Surah Al-A`raf and Hud it has been said: "....here is Allah's she camel, a Sign for you." (VII: 73) In Surah Bani Isra'il the same thing has been stated more emphatically: "And nothing has hindered Us from sending Signs except that the former people refused to acknowledge them as such. (For example) We sent the she-camel as an open Sign to Thamud but they treated her with cruelty; whereas We send Signs only by way of warning." (v. 59) Moreover, the challenge given to the wicked people of Thamud, after presenting the she-camel before them, was such that it could only be given after presenting a miracle.

104That is, "One day the she-camel will drink water all alone at your wells and springs, and one day you

and your animals will take water, and this arrangement will not be violated in any way." There could hardly be a greater challenge for the people of Arabia, for taking of water had been the foremost cause of feuds and fights among them, which mostly resulted in bloodshed, even loss of life. As such, the challenge given by Prophet Salih was indeed a challenge to the whole nation, which could not be acceptable unless the people were sure that the challenger had a great power at his back. But Prophet Salih threw this challenge all by himself without any worldly power behind him, and the whole nation not only received it quietly, but also abided by it submissively for quite some days.

In Surahs Al-A`raf and Hud there is an addition to this: "Here is Allah's she-camel, a Sign for you. So let her graze at will in Allah's land, and do not touch her with an evil intention." (XI: 64) That is, the challenge was not only this that the she-camel would drink water all alone every alternate day, but, in addition, she would freely move about and graze at will in their fields and gardens and palm groves and pastures and was not to be touched with an evil intention.

105This does not mean that as soon as they heard the challenge, they attacked the she-camel at once and hamstrung her. Actually, when the she-camel became a problem for the whole nation, the hearts of the people were filled with rage, and they began to hold lengthy consultations as to how to get rid of her. At last, a haughty chief undertook the task of putting an end to her, as mentioned in Surah Ash-Shams thus: "When arose the most villainous of the people.. ." (v. 12) and in Surah Al-Qamarthus: "They appealed to their companion; so he took up the responsibility and hamstrung (her)." (v. 29).

106As stated at other places in the Qur'an, when the she-camel was killed, Prophet Salih declared: "You have only three more days to enjoy yourselves in your houses." (Hud: 65) When this time limit came to an end, a shocking explosion took place in the night at about dawn, followed by a violent earthquake, which destroyed the whole nation completely. In the morning their dead bodies lay scattered here and there like dry pieces of bush trampled down by animals around an enclosure. Neither their stony castles nor their rock-hewn caves could protect them against the calamity. "We sent against them a single blast and they became as the trampled twigs of the fence of a fold-builder." (Al-Qamar: 31). "Consequently a shocking catastrophe overtook them and they lay lifeless in their dwellings" (Al-A'raf: 78). "At last a violent blast overtook them with the approach of the morning, and all that they had achieved proved of no avail to them." (Al Hijr: 83, 84).

107For comparison, see Al-A'raf: 80-84, Hud: 7483. AI-Hijr: 57-77, AI-Anbiya': 71-75, An-Naml; 54-58, Al-'Ankabut: 28-35, As-Saffat: 133-138 and A I-Qamar: 33-39.

108This can have two meanings: (1) Of all the creatures you have chosen males only for the purpose of gratifying your sex desires, whereas there are plenty of women in the world; and (2) You alone are the people in the whole world, who go to men to satisfy the sex desires; even the animals do not resort to this. This second meaning has been explained in Surahs Al-A'raf and Al- 'Ankabut thus: "Have you become so shameless that you commit such indecent acts as no one committed before you in the

world?" (Al-A'raf: 80).

109This can also have two meanings: (1) "You leave your wives whom God has created for you to satisfy your sex desire and adopt unnatural ways with the males for the purpose." (2) "Even with respect to your wives you do not follow the natural way but adopt unnatural ways for the gratification of your lust?" This they might have been doing with the intention of family planning.

110That is, "This is not the only vice in-you; your whole lives have become corrupted and perverted, as stated in An-Naml: 54 thus : "Do you commit indecent acts openly and publicly?" And 'in Al-'Ankabut: 29 thus: "Have you become so perverted that you gratify your lust with the males, you rob travelers, and you commit wicked deeds publicly in your assemblies?" For further details, see E.N. 39 of AI-Hijr.

111That is, "You know that whosoever has spoken against us, or protested against our doings, or opposed us in any way, he has been turned out of our habitations. If you also behave like that, you too will be treated likewise." It has been stated in Surahs AI-A`raf and An-Naml that before giving this warning to Prophet Lot, the wicked people had decided to "turn out these people of your habitations for they pose to be very pious." (VII: 82)

112This may also mean: "My Lord, deliver us from the evil consequences of their misdeeds," and also this: "Protect the children of the believers from the evil effects of the immoral acts of the wicked people."

113This refers to the Prophet Lot`s wife as stated in verse 10 of Surah Tahrim about the wives of Prophets Noah and Lot: "These two women were in the houses of Our two pious servants but they acted treacherously towards them." That is, they did not believe, and sided with the unbelievers instead of their righteous husbands. Therefore, when Allah decreed to send a torment on the people of Lot, He commanded Lot to leave the place along with his people but to leave his wife behind: "So depart from here with the people of your household in the last hours of the night. And look here: none of you should turn round to look behind; but your wife (who will not accompany you) shall meet the same doom as they." (Hud: 81).

114This was not a rain of water but a rain of stones. According to the details given at other places in the Qur'an, when Prophet Lot had left the place along with the people of his household in the last hours of the night, there occurred a terrible explosion at dawn and a violent earthquake, which turned all their habitations upside down and rained on them stones of baked clay as a result of a volcanic eruption and a strong blast of wind.

Below we give a resume of the Biblical account and of ancient Greek and Latin writings and modern geological researches and archaeological observations about the torment and the place where it occurred:

The, hundreds of ruins found in the waste and uninhabited land lying to the south and east of the Dead Sea indicate that this must have been a prosperous and thickly populated area in the past. The archaeologists have estimated that the age of prosperity of this land lasted between 2300 and 1900 B.C. According to historians, Prophet Abraham lived about 2000 B C. Thus the archaeological evidence confirms that this land was destroyed in the time of Prophet Abraham and his nephew Prophet Lot.

The most populous and fertile part .of the area was "the vale of Siddim" as mentioned in the Bible: "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt" (Gen. 13 :10) The present day scholars are of the opinion that that valley is now under the Dead Sea and this opinion is supported by firm archaeological evidence. In the ancient times, the Dead Sea did not so much extend to the south as it does today. Opposite and to the west of the present Jordanian city of AI-Karak, there is a small peninsula called AI-Lisan. This was the end of the sea in ancient days. The area to the south of it, which is now under sea water (the shaded portion in the map) was a fertile valley, "the vale of Siddim", in which were situated Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, Zoar, the famous cities of the people of Lot. In about 2000 B.C. this valley sank as a result of a violent earthquake and was submerged in sea water. Even today this is the most shallow part of the Sea. In the Roman period it was more so and was fordable from AI-Lisan to the western coast. One can still see submerged jungles along the southern coast and there might as well be submerged buildings.

According to the Bible and the ancient Greek and Latin writings, the region abounded in pits of petroleum and asphalt and at places inflammable gas also existed. It appears from the geological observations that with the violent earthquake shocks, petroleum, gases and asphalt were thrown up and ignited, and the whole region exploded like a bomb. The Bible says that when Prophet Abraham got the news and went from Hebron to see the affected valley, he saw that "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." (Gen. 19: 28).

115The people of Aiykah have been briefly mentioned in vv. 78-84 of Surah AI-Hijr. More about them here. There is a difference of opinion among the commentators as to whether the Midianites and the people of Aiykah were two different tribes or one and the same people. One group holds that they were different tribes and gives the argument that in Surah Al-A'raf Prophet Shu'aib has been "brother of the Midianites" (v. RS), whereas here, with regard to the people of. Aiykah, he has not been called so. The other group holds that they were one and the same people on the ground that the moral discases and characteristics mentioned of the Midianites in SurahS AI-A'raf-and Hud are the same as of the people of Aiykah mentioned here. Then the message and admonition of Prophet Shu'aib to both the tribes was the same, and the two tribes also met the same end.

Research in this regard has shown that both the views are correct. The Midianites and the people' of Aiykah were doubtless two different tribes but branches of the same stock. The progeny of Prophet

Abraham from his wife (or slave girl) Keturah, is well known in Arabia and in the history of the Israelites as the children of Keturah. Their most prominent branch was the one which became famous as the Midianites, after their ancestor, Midian, son of Abraham. They had settled in the territory between northern Arabia and southern Palestine, and along the coasts of the Red Sea and the Gulf of 'Aqabah. Their capital city was Madyan, which was situated, according to Abul Fida, on the western coast of the Gulf of 'Aqabah at five days' journey from Aiykah (present-day 'Aqabah). The rest of the children of Keturah, among whom the Dedanites are comparatively better known, settled in the territory between Taima and Tabuk and AI-'Ula in northern Arabia, their main city being Tabuk, the Aiykah of the ancient tithes. (Yaqut in his Mu'jam al-Buldan, under Aiykah, writes that this is the old name of Tabuk, and the natives of Tabuk confirm this).

The reason why one and the same Prophet was sent to the Midianites and the people of Aiykah was probably that both the tribes were descendants of the same ancestors, spoke the same language and had settled in the adjoining areas. It is just possible that they lived side by side in the same areas and had marriage and other social relations between them. Then, these two branches were traders by profession and had developed similar evil practices and social and moral weaknesses. According to the early books of the Bible, these people worshiped Baal-peor. When the Children of Israel came out of Egypt and entered their territory, they also became infected with the evils of idolatry and adultery. (Numbers, 25: 1-5, 31: 16-17). Then those people had settled on the two main international trade routes, the one joining Yaman with Syria and the other the Persian Gulf with Egypt. Due to their advantageous position they had started big scale highway robbery and would not let any caravan pass till it had paid heavy taxes. They had thus rendered these trade routes highly unsafe. Their characteristic of highway robbery has been mentioned in the Qur'an, for which they were admonished through Prophet Shu'aib, thus: "And do not lie in ambush by every path (of life) as robbers in order to frighten the people" (AI-A'raf: 86). These were the reasons why Allah sent to both the tribes the same Prophet, who conveyed to them the same teachings and message. For the details of the story of Prophet Shu'aib and the Midianites, see A1-A'raf: 85-93, Hud: 8495, Al'Ankabut 36-37.

116That is, "It is not in my power to bring down the torment; it is in Allah's power, and He is fully aware of your misdeeds. He will send down the torment as and when He wills." In this demand of the people of Aiykah and the answer of Prophet Shu'aib to them there was an admonition for the Quraish as well. They also demanded from the Holy Prophet to bring down the torment on them: "Or.... you cause the sky to fall down on us in fragments, as you threaten us." (Bani Isra'il: 92). As such the Quraish are being told that the people of Aiykah had also demanded a similar thing from their Prophet, and the answer that they got from their Prophet is the answer of Muhammad (Allah's peace be on him) to you.

117The details of this torment are neither found in the Qur'an nor in any authentic Tradition. What one can learn from the Text is this: As these people had demanded a torment from the sky. Allah sent upon them a cloud which hung over them like a canopy and kept hanging until they were completely destroyed by the torment of continuous rain. The Qur'an clearly points out that the nature of the torment sent upon

the Midianites was different from that sent upon the people of Aiykah The people of Aiykah, as mentioned here, were destroyed by the torment of the Canopy, while the torment visiting the Midianites was in the form of a terrible earthquake: "It so happened that a shocking catastrophe overtook them and they remained lying prostrate in their dwellings." (Al-A'raf: 91). And: "A dreadful shuck overtook them and they lay lifeless and prostrate in their homes." (Hud: 94). Therefore, it is wrong to regard the two torments as identical. Some commentators have given a few explanations of "the torment of the Day of Canopy", but we do not know the source of their information. Ibn Jarir has quoted Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas as saying: "If somebody from among the scholars gives you an explanation of the torment of the Day of Canopy, do not consider it as correct."

118At the end of the historical account, the same theme, with which the Surah began, is resumed. For reference, see vv. 1-9.

119That is, "This lucid Book whose verses are being recited to you, and this 'Admonition' from which the people are turning away, is not the product of the whims of a man; it has not been written and compiled by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself, but it consists of the Revelations of the Lord of this universe."

120That is, Angel Gabriel, as mentioned in Al-Baqarah: 97: "Say to them, `Whoever is the enemy to Gabriel, he should understand that he has, by Allah's Command, revealed to your heart the Qur'an'." Here the object of using the title of "the trustworthy Spirit" for Gabriel implies that the Qur`an is not being sent down by Allah through some material agency, which is subject to change and vacillation; but through a pure Spirit, having no tinge of materialism, and. who is perfectly trustworthy. This Spirit conveys the Messages of Allah precisely in the same form and with the same content as they are entrusted to him: it is not possible for him to tamper with the Messages, or to make his own additions to them in any way.

121This sentence may be related to: "... the trustworthy Spirit has come down" and also to: ".... who are (appointed by God) to warn. "In the first case, it will mean that the trustworthy Spirit has brought it down in plain Arabic language, and in the second case, it will mean that the Holy Prophet is included among those Prophets who were appointed to warn the people in the Arabic language, i.e., Hud, Salih, Ishmael and Shu'aib (Allah's peace be upon them). In both cases the object is the same: the Divine Message has not been sent down in a dead or mysterious language, or in a language of riddles and enigmas, but in such clear and lucid Arabic, which can be understood easily by every Arab and every nonArab who has learnt Arabic. As such, the people who are turning away from it, cannot have the excuse that they could not understand the message of the Qur'an. The only reason of their denial and aversion is that they are afflicted with the same disease with which Pharaoh, the people of Abraham the people of Noah, the people of Lot, the 'Ad and the Thamud, and the people of Aiykah were afflicted.

122That is, this very Admonition and Divine Message and teachings are contained in the former

Scriptures also. The same message of submission to One God, the same belief in the Hereafter and the same invitation to follow the Prophets has been given in all those Books. AII the Books sent down by God condemn shirk and the materialistic philosophy of life and invite people to accept the true and sound philosophy of life, which is based on the concept of man's accountability before God, and demands that man should give up his independence in deference to Divine Commands brought and preached by the Prophets. None of these things is new, which the Qur'an may be presenting for the first time, and none can blame the Holy Prophet of saying something which had never been said before by the former Prophets.

Among other arguments this verse also is quoted in support of Imam Abu Hanifah's early opinion that if a person recites the translation of the Qur'an in the prayer, his prayer will be in order and valid, whether he is able to recite the Qur'an in Arabic or not. According to `Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas, the basis of this argument is: "Allah says that the Qur'an was contained in the former Scriptures also; obviously this could not be in Arabic words, As such, if translated and presented in another language, it will still be the Qur'an." (Ahkam-ul-Qur'an, Vol. III, p. 429). But the weakness of this argument is obvious. The Qur'an, or any other Divine Book, was never revealed in a manner that Allah inspired the Prophet with its meaning and then he presented it before the people in his own words. The fact is that every Book, in whatever language it came, was revealed in Divine words and meanings together. As such, the teachings of the Qur'an were contained in the former Scriptures in Divine words and not in human, and none of their translations could be considered as the Divine Book or its representation. As regards the Qur'an, it has been stated over and over again that it was literally revealed in the Arabic language: "We have sent it down as Qur'an in Arabic". (Yusuf: 2). "We have sent this Command in Arabic to you." (Ar-Ra'd: 37). "An Arabic Qur'an without any crookedness." (Az-Zumar: 28). Then just before this verse, it has been said that the trustworthy Spirit has brought it down in Arabic. Now how can it be said that the translation of the Qur'an made into another language will also be the Qur'an and its words will represent the words of Allah? It appears that later the Imam himself felt this weakness in the argument and, according to authentic traditions, gave up his earlier opinion, and adopted the opinion of Imams Abu Yusuf and Muhammad, who held that a person who could not recite Arabic words, could recite the translation of the Qur'an in his prayer till he was able to pronounce Arabic words. However, the prayer of a person, who was able to recite the Qur'an in Arabic, would not be valid if he recited its translation. The fact is that the two Imams had proposed, this concession only for those non-Arab converts who were not able to offer their prayer in Arabic immediately after embracing Islam. In this the basis of their argument was not that the translation of the Qur'an was the Qur'an itself, but that just as a person unable to perform Ruku' and Sajdah was allowed to offer his prayer by making signs, so a person unable to pronounce Arabic words could recite the translation. Then just as the prayer of a person who offered it by making signs could not be valid as soon as the cause of inability was removed, so the prayer of a person who recited the translation would not be valid as soon as he became able to pronounce Arabic words. (For a detailed discussion, see Al-Mabsut by Sarkhasi,Vol. I, p. 37; Fath ul-Qadir and Sharh Inaya 'alal-Hedaya, Vol. I. pp. 190-201).

123That is, "The learned men of the Israelites know that the teachings of the Qur'an are the same as of the former Scriptures. Though the people of Makkah themselves are un-initiated in the knowledge of the Book, there are many scholars among the Israelites living in the surrounding areas, who fully understand that the Qur'an did not bring a novel "message", which was being presented by Muhammad bin `Abdullah for the first time, but it was the same message which had been brought and preached by Prophets of Allah one after the other since thousands of years. Is it not then a convincing proof of the fact that the Qur'an has been sent down by the same Lord of the universe, Who sent down the former Books ?" '

According to Ibn Hisham's Life of the Holy Prophet, a little before the revelation of these verses a deputation of 20 men, who had been influenced by the preaching of Hadrat Ja'far, came to Makkah from Habash. They met the Holy Prophet in Masjid al-Haram and asked him in the presence of the unbelieving Quraish what his teachings were. In response, the Holy Prophet recited a few verses of the Qur'an, whereupon tears came down from their eyes and they believed in him there and then to be a true Messenger of Allah. When they took leave of the Holy Prophet, Abu Jahl met them along with a few other men of the Quraish and rebuked them, saying, "Never has a more stupid company come here before: O foolish men, you were sent here by your people with a view to inquiring about this man, but no sooner did you meet him than you gave up your own faith!" "those gentle people did not like to have a dispute with Abu Jahl, so they left him, saying, "We have no wish to enter an argument with you: you are responsible for your faith and we are for ours: we adopted something in which we saw some good for ourselves." (Vol II, p. 32). This same incident has been mentioned in Surah Qasas, thus:"Those to whom We had given the Book before this, believe in the Qur'an and when it is recited to them, they say, 'We have believed in it: this is the very Truth from our Lord: we were even before this followers of Islam'. And when they heard vain and meaningless talk, they refrained from entering an argument, saying, `For us are our deeds and for you yours: peace be to you: we do not like the ways of the ignorant!'" (vv. 52-55).

124That is, "Now when a man from among themselves is reciting to them this Divine Revelation in lucid Arabic, they say that he himself has composed it, and therefore it cannot be from Allah. But if the same Revelation in eloquent Arabic had been sent down by Allah to a non-Arab as a miracle, and he had recited it before them in perfect Arabic accent, they would have invented some other excuse for not believing in him. They would have said that he is under the power and influence of a jinn, who speaks Arabic through a non-Arab." As a matter of fact, a lover of the truth considers the thing presented before him coolly and forms an opinion about it after due thought. But an obdurate person who is unwilling to believe, pays no attention to it at all, but instead seeks all sorts of excuses to reject it, and will, in any case, invent an excuse for his denial. This obduracy of the unbelieving Quraish has been exposed over and over again in the Qur'an, and they have been clearly told that even if a miracle were shown to them, they would certainly have found an excuse to deny it because they are not inclined to believe: "O Messenger, even if We had sent down to you a Book written on paper, and even if they had touched it with their own hands, the disbelievers would have said, `This is nothing but manifest sorcery'." (Al-An`am: 7). "Even if We had opened a gate for them in heaven, and they had begun to ascend through it, they would have said, `Our eyes have been dazzled; nay, we have been bewitched'" (Al-Hijr: 1415).

125That is, unlike the truth-loving people to whom the Qur'an brings peace of the mind and heart, it passes like a hot iron rod through the hearts of the disbelievers, which sets them ill at ease, and they, instead of pondering over its themes, start looking for subterfuges to deny it.

126The kind of torment with which the tribes and communities mentioned above were punished.

127That is, "Until the criminals are actually overtaken by the torment, they do not believe in the Prophet. Then they feel remorse and desire to be given some respite when it is too late.

128There is a subtle gap between this and the preceding sentence, which the reader himself can fill with a little thinking. They were asking for the torment to be hastened because they were not sure that it would ever come. They were confident that they would continue living a life of ease and indulgence as they had been living till then. On account of the same confidence they challenged the Holy Prophet, as if to say, "If you are a Messenger of Allah, and we deserve to be chastised by Allah because we have treated you as a liar, then you should hasten that torment on us, with which you threaten us." At this it is being said, "Well, even if they be right in their confidence, and the torment is not sent upon them immediately, and they are allowed a long respite to enjoy life as they expect, the question is: What will these few years of worldly pleasure and comfort avail them when the inevitable scourge from Allah overtakes them suddenly as it overtook the 'Ad and the Thamud, or the people of Lot and of Aiykah, or if they are visited by death which nobody can escape?

129That is, "We could not be blamed for any injustice when they did not heed the warning and admonition of the warners and were destroyed. It would have been injustice if no effort had been made to admonish them and guide them aright prior to their destruction."

130After the positive aspect as stated in vv. 192-193, the negative aspect is being stated that the Qur'an has not been brought down by satans as the enemies of the Truth allege. The unbelieving Quraish in their campaign to spread lies and slander against the Holy Prophet were facing a real difficulty. They did not know how to account for the wonderful discourses which were being presented before the people in the form of the Qur'an and which were moving their hearts deeply. They could not stop the Qur'an from reaching the people. The only thing they could do to counteract its effect and influence was to create doubts and suspicions about it in their minds and hearts. Therefore, in their desperation they charged that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was a sorcerer, who was being inspired by the satans, and they considered this charge of theirs to be the most effective because it could neither be easily verified nor refuted.

131That is, these revelations and themes do not at all suit the satans. Any person who has a little common sense can well understand that the sublime discourses being presented in the Qur'an cannot be

inspired by the satans. Never has it happened that the satans might have taught the people through the sorcerers to worship God and fear Him, or forbidden them from shirk and idol-worship, or warned them of the accountability of the Hereafter, or prohibited them from tyranny and sexual and moral evils, and exhorted them instead to act righteously and do good to others. Such works cannot behoove the satans. Their only pastime can be to sow the seeds of discord among the people and to arouse them to mischief and vice. The common observation is that people visit the sorcerers to find out whether they will succeed in their love affairs or not, what move would suit them in gambling, what trick and stratagem would be helpful against the enemy, or who had stolen the camel of so and so. Apart from such affairs and problems, the sorcerers and their patron-saints cannot be expected to worry themselves about matters like reforming the people, teaching them morals and cleansing their lives of vice and evil.

132That is, even if the satans wanted they could not impart Truth and Goodness to the people like a true teacher and reformer as the Qur'an does. Even if to deceive the people, they came out under the guise of a benefactor, their work would not be tree from blemishes, which would betray their ignorance and their hidden satanic nature. Similarly the life and the teachings of a person who poses to be a religious guide, under the influence and inspiration of satans, would inevitably reflect the wickedness of intention and design. Thus the satans can neither inspire others with piety and goodness, nor can those, who have any relation with the satans, become pious and righteous themselves. Then in addition to its high and noble teachings, the Qur'an is a lucid and eloquent Book, which contains the knowledge of Reality. That is why it has over and over again put forward the challenge that human beings and jinns would never be able to produce a book like the Qur'an even if they collaborated with all their energies and capacities. "Declare this: Even if human beings and jinns should cooperate with one another to bring forth a book like the Qur'an, they will never be able to bring anything like it, even though all of them help one another" (Bani Isra'il: 88).

"Tell them: if what you say be true, then produce one Surah like this, and you may call to your assistance anyone you can other than Allah." (Yunus: 38).

133That is, "Not to speak of interfering with the revelation of the Qur'an, the satans are not even given a chance to hear the Qur'an any moment from the time Angel Gabriel receives it from Allah till he reveals it to the heart of the Holy Prophet. They are so kept out of its hearing that they cannot get any hint as to its words and contents so as to tell their friends that the Holy Prophet was going to give such and such a message to his followers, or that his address would contain such and such a thing that day. For further details see E. N.'s 8 to 12 of Al-Hijr, E.N.'s 5 to 7 of As -Saffat and Surah Jinn: 8-9-27.

134This does not mean that the Holy Prophet was going to be involved in shirk from which he was to be admonished to desist. The object was to warn the disbelievers and polytheists to the effect: "As the message of the Qur'an is based on pure Truth revealed by the Almighty Ruler of the universe, and there is no tinge of any satanic impurity in it, there could be no question of showing a favor to somebody in regard to the Truth. Even if the Holy Messenger himself, who is nearest to Allah and His most beloved

servant, deviated a little from the path of His obedience and invoked any other deity than Allah, he could not escape the punishment." When it was so in the case of the Holy Prophet, who else could have the hope that after committing shirk with regard to Allah, he would be able to escape the punishment or help others to escape it.

135Just as there could be no concession or favor for the person of the Prophet in a matter concerning Allah's religion, so there could be no question of a favor being shown to the Prophet's family or his nearest kinsfolk. Here the case of everybody will be judged on merit, and nobody will be shown any favor on account of his ancestry or relation with somebody else. The accountability of the Hereafter and punishment for deviation and misdeeds are the same for everybody and even the Prophet's nearest kinsfolk are no exception. Therefore, the Holy Prophet was commanded to warn his relatives and kindred to attain the right belief and to act righteously because they would not escape punishment only by virtue of being his relations.

There are authentic Traditions to show that after the revelation of this verse, the Holy Prophet first of all addressed the sons and daughters of his grandfather. Calling each one of them by name, he said: "O children of 'Abdul Muttalib, O 'Abbas, O Safiah, paternal aunt of Allah's Messenger, O Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad! You are warned to beware and save yourselves from the torment of the Hell-Fire: I cannot protect you from Allah's punishment; you may, however, demand whatever you like from my worldly property." Then as was the custom in Arabia, to warn the people of an impending calamity, he stood on top of Mount Safa one morning and called out: "O people of Quraish, O children of Ka`b bin Luayy, O children of Murrah, O children of Qasayy, O children of 'Abd Manaf, O children of 'Abd Shams, O children of Hashim, O children of `Abdul Muttalib....", and in this way he called out each branch and clan of the Quraish by name. When all the people had got together, he said, "O People, if 1 tell you that on the other side of this hill, there is a huge army ready to attack you, will you believe my word?" With one voice they replied in the affirmative, saying that they had never heard a lie from him in the past. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said, "Well, I warn you of the impending scourge of Allah: save yourselves from His punishment: I cannot be of any help to you against Him. On the Day of Resurrection, the righteous only will be nearest to me. Let it not happen that others should corm forth with good deeds and you should appear with the burden of sins on your heads. Then you will call me for help, but I shall be constrained to turn my face away from you. Of course, here in this world, I am bound to you by blood relations, and I shall treat you with all possible politeness as a good relation should." (Several Traditions on this subject have been reported in Bukhari, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Tirmizi, Ibn Jarir on the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, Hadrat Zubair bin 'Amr and Hadrat Qabisah bin Makhariq).

The matter was not simply this that on receipt of the Command to "warn your nearest kinsfolk", the Holy Prophet called together all his relatives and complied with it. In fact, the principle it meant to stress was that in the matter of religion the Prophet and his relations enjoyed no special privilege of which the other people might be deprived. What was harmful for one man, was harmful for everybody. The Prophet was supposed to first protect himself from this and then warn his nearest kinsfolk and the common people of

its fatal consequences. On the other hand, what was good and beneficial for one man, 'was good and beneficial for all. As. such, the Prophet should first adopt it himself and then exhort his relatives also to adopt it, so that everybody may see that the Prophet dces not only preach his message to others but practices it himself also sincerely. The Holy Prophet followed this principle throughout his life. On the conquest of Makkah, when he entered the city, he declared: "Every kind of interest payable from the people during the age of ignorance, is trampled under my feet, and first of all, I remit the interest payable to my uncle `Abbas." (It should be noted that before the prohibition of interest, Hadrat 'Abbas traded money on interest, and a substantial amount of interest payable to him at that time was outstanding against the people). Once the Holy Prophet ordered cutting off of the hand of a Quraishite woman, named Fatimah, on the charge of theft. Hadrat Usamah bin Zaid came to intercede for her, whereupon the Holy Prophet said: "By God, even if Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad, had committed the theft, I would have ordered amputation of her hand, too."

136This can have two meanings:

(1) "Treat those of your relatives with kindness, who have believed in you and followed your teachings practically; as for those who have not accepted your message, you may declare that you are not responsible for what they do."

(2) "You should treat with kindness every such person, who believes in and obeys you, and you should warn every unbeliever that you take no responsibility for his actions."

This verse shows that at that tune there were some people among the Quraish and the neighboring Arabs, who had believed in the truth of the Holy Prophet's message; but they had not as yet started obeying his teachings practically. They were still, as usual, living the same life of unbelief among their people as were the other unbelievers. Allah set apart such believers from those true believers who after belief had adopted total obedience of the Holy Prophet. The Command "to treat with kindness" was meant only for the latter group. As for those who had turned away from his obedience, and who included both those who believed in the truth of his message and those who rejected it, the Holy Prophet was instructed to disown them, and tell them plainly that they themselves were responsible for their deeds, and that after giving them the warning he was not at all responsible for what they did.

137That is, "You should not care at all for any worldly power, howsoever big and strong, but should continue to perform your mission with complete trust in that Being Who is Mighty as well as Merciful. He is Mighty and, therefore, anybody enjoying His support, cannot be overcome by any other power; He is Merciful and, therefore, He will not let go waste the sacrifices and efforts of the one who struggles for the sake of raising His Word in the world.

138"Getting up" may mean getting up for the Prayers during the night, or coming out for the purpose of performing the Prophetic Mission.

139This can have several meanings:

(1) Allah watches you when in the congregational Prayers you stand and sit and perform Ruku' and Sajdah with your followers behind you.

(2) He watches you when you get up in the night to see what your Companions (whose mark of distinction is that "they prostrate themselves in worship") are doing for their own well-being in the Hereafter.

(3) He is fully aware of how you and your Companions are endeavoring to reform the people.

(4) He is fully aware of all your efforts to revolutionize the lives of the people who "prostrate themselves in worship"; He knows what sort of training you are giving them to reform them; how you have purified their lives and transformed them into the best people.

These characteristics of the Holy Prophet and his Companions have a special significance in the context here. In the first place, the Holy Prophet deserves Allah's Mercy and His Support for Allah, being All-Hearing and All-Knowing, is fully aware of the struggle he is waging for His cause and of the efforts he is making to reform his Companions. Secondly, when a person is living such a noble life as Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is actually living, and the characteristics of his followers are those which Muhammad's Companions have, only an idiot can have the boldness to say that he is inspired by the satans, or that he is a poet. People are fully aware of the lives of the sorcerers who are inspired by the satans and also of the poets and their admirers living among them. Can anybody honestly say that there is no difference whatever between the noble life being led by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his Companions and the sort of life being led by the poets and the sorcerers? Then, what is it if not sheer impudence that the former are openly being branded as poets and sorcerers without any shame?

140This implies the sorcerers, astrologers, fortune-tellers and conjurers who pose as knowers of the unseen and tell the people their future, or as wise men who have control over jinns and spirits and can make the destinies of the people through them.

141This may have two meanings: (1) The satans somehow get a little hint of the truth and inspire their agents with it, mixing it with all kinds of falsehood; and (2) the deceitful, unscrupulous sorcerers hear something from the satans and then mixing it with falsehood, whisper it into the people's ears. This has been explained in a Tradition which Bukhari has quoted on the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah. She says that when some people asked the Holy Prophet about sorcerers, he replied that they were nothing. They said, "O Messenger of Allah, they, sometimes, tell the right thing" The Holy Prophet answered, "That right thing

is overheard by the jinns who whisper it into their friend's ear, who concocts a story by mixing a lot of falsehood in it."

142That is, the people who follow and accompany the poets, are wholly different in, their characteristics, habits and temper from those who follow and accompany Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). The difference between the two groups is so obvious that one group can be easily distinguished from the other. On the one side, there are the people who are characterized by the high seriousness, civilized and gentle behavior, righteousness and fear of God, sense of responsibility and a high regard for the rights of others; people who are fair and just in their dealings, . who do not utter a word except in the cause of goodness, who have a high and pure ideal before them, which they pursue with single-minded devotion and for whose attainment they expend all their energies and capabilities. On other side, there are the people whose only pastime is to portray erotic scenes of love and wine-drinking, mocking and jesting, satirizing and eulogizing, or to arouse feelings of hatred and enmity and vengeance against others, or to describe charms of unchaste women to the brothel or of chaste ladies in the houses, only for the sake of pleasing the people and winning their applause. From the crowds who throng the poetic sessions and follow the "famous" poets, one cannot help forming the impression that those people are free from every moral restriction, who have no object in life except to gratify the lusts of the flesh like animals, and who have no idea whatever of the higher and nobler ideals and ends of life. The person who cannot see the obvious difference between the two types is indeed blind. But if in spite of seeing and knowing the difference, only for the purpose of suppressing the Truth, he says that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his Companions are no different from the poets and their followers, he is not only a liar but has also transgressed all bounds of modesty and decency.

143That is, they follow no fixed pattern for their thought and speech. but wander aimlessly in every valley. Every new impulse makes them take up a new theme regardless as to whether it has any truth in it or not. Under one momentary impulse they would start uttering wise things; under another they would give expression to filthy and base feelings. If they felt pleased with somebody, they would exaggerate his praises, and if they felt offended by him, they would condemn him and run him down to hell. If they had a selfish motive, attached with somebody, they would feel no hesitation in giving preference to a miserly person over a generous person and to a cowardly person over a gallant person. On the contrary, if they felt displeased with somebody, they would not feel any shame in blotting his character and ridiculing him and his ancestors. That is why, one can tied God-worship and atheism, materialism and spiritualism, morality and immorality, piety and filthiness, seriousness and jesting, eulogy and satire expressed side by side in the poetry of one and the same poet. A person who is aware of these well known characteristics of the poets cannot reconcile himself to charging the recipient of the Qur'an with poetry, whose every discourse and word is clear and precise, whose objective is clearly defined, and who has never in his life uttered a word deviating in any way from the path of truth, righteousness and virtue.

At another place in the Qur'an, it has been stated that poetry is not suited to the temperament of the Holy Prophet: "We have not taught him poetry, nor does it suit him." (Ya Sin: 69). And this fact was fully known

to the people who had any personal acquaintance with the Holy Prophet. Authentic Traditions show that he could not recite a complete verse from memory. If ever during conversation he remembered of a good verse of some poet, he would recite it without much care and regard for its meter and order of words.

Once Hadrat `A'ishah was asked whether the Holy Prophet ever made use of poetic verses in his discourses. She replied that he hated poetic verses the most, though sometimes he would recite a verse of a poet of Bani Quais, but in so doing he would unconsciously change the order of its words. When Hadrat Abu Bakr corrected him, he would say, "Brother, I am not a poet, nor composing poetry is my object. " Arabic poetry abounded in themes of sex and love romances, wine drinking, tribal hatreds and feuds, ancestry pride and vanity and made little or no mention of pure and noble themes. It was so saturated with falsehood, exaggeration, false accusations, undue praise , vanity, satiric invectives, jesting and polytheistic obscenities that the Holy Prophet once remarked: "It is better that the interior of one of you be filled with pus than with poetic verses" However, if there was something good in a verse, he would appreciate it, and say, "Some verses are based on wisdom." When he heard the verses of Umayyah bin Abi-Salt, he said, "His verse is a believer but his heart a disbeliever." Once a Companion recited a hundred or so good verses before him, and he went on urging him to recite more.

144This characteristic of the poets was just the antithesis of the Holy Prophet's conduct and practice. Everybody knew that the Holy Prophet said what he practiced and practiced what he said. The fact that there was complete conformity between his word and deed, could not be denied by anybody. On the contrary, everyone was well aware that the poets said one thing and practiced just the opposite of it. For instance, they would express noble themes of generosity, indifference to worldly wealth, contentment and self-respect in their poetry, but, in practical life, they would turn out to be extremely stingy and cowardly, avaricious and selfish. They would find fault with others on trifles, but would themselves be involved in grave moral weaknesses.

145Here those poets have made an exception from the general reproach, who possess the following four characteristics:

(1) They should be believers in Allah, His Prophets, His Books and the Hereafter.

(2) They should be pious in practical life and not sinners, nor free from moral restrictions to say whatever they like.

(3) They should be remembering Allah much in their day to day lives as well as in their literary work. It should not be so that their personal lives reflect God-consciousness and piety, but their poetry is replete with themes of debauchery and lusts of the flesh, or that their poetry is full of serious themes of wisdom and God-consciousness, but their personal lives are devoid of any trace of the remembrance of Allah. As a matter of fact, both these states are equally despicable. A good poet is he who is God conscious in his personal life and whose poetic talent and skills also are devoted to the advancement of the way of life

followed by the God-conscious, God-fearing and God-worshiping people.

(4) They should not satirize others for personal reasons, nor take vengeance on others on account of personal, racial and national prejudices, but when they are required to support the truth, they should use their literary powers like weapons of war against the unjust and treacherous people. It does not behoove the believers to adopt a humble, supplicating attitude against injustice and oppression. Traditions show that when the unbelieving and mushrik poets raised a storm of false accusations against Islam and the Holy Prophet and spread the poison of hatred against the Muslims, the Holy Prophet urged and encouraged the poets of Islam to counter attack them. Once he said to Ka`b bin Malik, "Satirize them, for, I swear by God in Whose hand is my soul, your verse will be more effective and damaging for them than the arrow. " Likewise he said to Hassan bin Thabit, "Deal with them and Gabriel is with you". And, "Say and the Holy Spirit is with you." Once he said, "The believer fights with the sword as well as with the tongue. "

146"The iniquitous people": The people who out of sheer obduracy calumniated the Holy Prophet of being a sorcerer, poet and a mad and enchanted man, in order to defeat Islam, and to confuse the other people and distract them from his message and invitation.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

27. Surah An Naml (The Ant)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the phrase *wad-in-naml* which occurs in verse 18, implying that it is a Surah in which the story of An-Naml (the Ant) has been related.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter and the style bear full resemblance with the Surahs of the middle Makkan period and this is supported by traditions as well. According to Ibn Abbas and Jabir bin Zaid, "First the Surah Ash-Shu`araa' was sent down, then the Surah An Naml and then Al-Qasas."

Theme and Topics

The Surah consists of two discourses, the first from the beginning of the Surah to the end of verse 58, and the second from verse 59 to the end of the Surah.

The theme of the first discourse is that only those people can benefit from the guidance of the Quran and become worthy of the good promises made in it, who accept the realities which this Book presents as the basic realities of the universe, and then follow up their belief with obedience and submission in their practical lives as well. But the greatest hindrance for man to follow this way is the denial of the Hereafter. For it makes him irresponsible, selfish and given to worldly life, which in turn makes it impossible for him to submit himself before God and to accept the moral restrictions on his lusts and desires. After this introduction three types of character have been presented.

The first type is characterized by Pharaoh and the chiefs of Thamud and the rebels of the people of Lot, who were all heedless of the accountability of the Hereafter and had consequently become the slaves of the world. These people did not believe even after seeing the miracles. Rather they turned against those who invited them to goodness and piety. They persisted in their evil ways which are held in abhorrence by every sensible person. They

did not heed the admonition even until a moment before they were overtaken by the scourge of Allah.

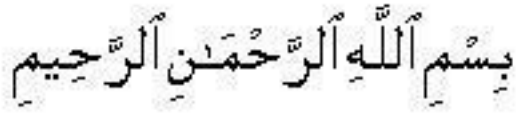
The second type of character is of the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him), who had been blessed by God with wealth and kingdom and grandeur to an extent undreamed of by the chiefs of the disbelievers of Makkah. But, since he regarded himself as answerable before God and had the feeling that whatever he had was only due to Allah's bounty, he had adopted the attitude of obedience before Him and there was no tinge of vanity in his character.

The third type is of the queen of Sheba, who ruled over a most wealthy and well known people in the history of Arabia. She possessed all those means of life, which could cause a person to become vain and conceited. Her wealth and possessions far exceeded the wealth and possessions of the Quraish. Then she professed *shirk*, which was not only an ancestral way of life with her, but she had to follow it in order to maintain her position as a ruler. Therefore, it was much more difficult for her to give up *shirk* and adopt the way of *Tauhid* than it could be for a common *mushrik*. But when the Truth became evident to her, nothing could stop her from accepting it. Her deviation was, in fact, due to her being born and brought up in a polytheistic environment and not because of her being a slave to her lusts and desires. Her conscience was not devoid of the sense of accountability before God.

In the second discourse, at the outset, attention has been drawn to some of the most glaring and visible realities of the universe, and the disbelievers of Makkah have been asked one question after the other to the effect : "Do these realities testify to the creed of *shirk* which you are following, or to the truth of *Tauhid* to which the Qur'an invites you?" After this the real malady of the disbelievers has been pointed out, saying, "The thing which has blinded them and made them insensitive to every glaring reality is their denial of the Hereafter. This same thing has rendered every matter and affair of life non-serious for them. For, when according to them, everything has to become dust ultimately, and the whole struggle of life is purposeless and without an object before it, the truth and falsehood are equal and alike. Therefore, the question whether one's system of life is based on the right or wrong foundations, becomes meaningless for him."

But the discourse, as outlined above, is not meant to dissuade the Prophet and the Muslims from calling the obdurate and heedless people to the way of *Tauhid*; it is, in fact, intended to arouse them from their slumber. That is why in vv. 67-93 certain things have been said repeatedly in order to produce in the people a sense of the Hereafter, to warn them of the consequences of being heedless of it, and to convince them of its coining, like an eye witness of something, who convinces the other person of it, who has not seen it.

In conclusion, the real invitation of the Quran that is, the invitation to serve One Allah alone, has been presented in a concise but forceful manner, and the people warned that accepting it would be to their own advantage and rejecting it to their own disadvantage. For if they deferred their faith until they saw those Signs of God after the appearance of which they would be left with no choice but to believe and submit, they should bear in mind the fact that that would be the time of judgment and believing then would be of no avail.



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

طسٓ تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانِ وَكِتَابٖ مُّبِينٖ ١

هُدٗى وَبُشۡرَىٰ لِلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٢

ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤۡتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ هُمۡ يُوقِنُونَ ٣

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمۡ أَعۡمَٰلَهُمۡ فَهُمۡ يَعۡمَهُونَ ٤

[1-4] Ta. Sin. These are the verses of the Qur'an and the lucid Book,[1] a guidance and good news[2] for those believers who establish the Salat and pay the Zakat,[3] and they are the ones who fully believe in the Hereafter.[4] The fact is that We have made the misdeeds of those who deny the Hereafter seem fair to them; therefore, they stray about blindly.[5]

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَهُمۡ سُوٓءُ ٱلۡعَذَابِ وَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ هُمُ ٱلۡأَخۡسَرُونَ ٥

وَإِنَّكَ لَتُلَقَّى ٱلْقُرْءَانَ مِن لَّدُنْ حَكِيمٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿٦﴾

[5-6] They are the ones for whom there is an evil chastisement,[6] and in the Hereafter they shall be the worst losers. And (O Muhammad), you are most surely receiving this Qur'an from the One, Who is All Wise, All-Knowing.[7]

إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِۦٓ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا سَـَٔاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ ءَاتِيكُم بِشِهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهَا نُودِىَ أَنۢ بُورِكَ مَن فِى ٱلنَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَسُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨﴾

يَـٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

وَأَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَآنٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَـٰمُوسَىٰ لَا تَخَفْ إِنِّى لَا يَخَافُ لَدَىَّ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

إِلَّا مَن ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًۢا بَعْدَ سُوٓءٍ فَإِنِّى
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِى جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٓءٍ ۖ فِى
تِسْعِ ءَايَٰتٍ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا فَٰسِقِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

[7-12] (Tell them the story of the time) when Moses said to the people of his house,[8] "I have seen a fire: I may either bring some information from there or a burning brand so that you may warm yourselves."[9] When he came to it, a voice called out,[10] "Blessed is He Who is in the fire and the one who is around it. Glorified is Allah, Lord of the worlds.[11] O Moses, this is I, Allah, the Almighty, the All-Wise: Just cast down your staff." No sooner did Moses see the staff writhing like a snake[12] than he turned about and fled, without even looking behind. "O Moses fear not: the Messengers never feel afraid in My Presence,[13] unless, of course, someone has committed an offense."[14] Then, if after the evil, he changed (his act) into a good one, I am indeed All Forgiving, All-Merciful.[15] And just put your hand into your bosom: it will come out shining, without any hurt. These (two Signs) are from among the nine Signs (you will take)[16] to Pharaoh and his people: they are indeed a very wicked people."

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ
﴿١٣﴾

وَجَحَدُوا۟ بِهَا وَٱسْتَيْقَنَتْهَآ أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا ۚ فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

[13-14] But when Our clear Signs came before those people, they said, "This is plain magic." They rejected those Signs out of sheer injustice and vanity, whereas in their heart of hearts they were convinced.[17] See, then, what fate those mischief-makers met.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ عِلْمًا ۖ وَقَالَا ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى فَضَّلَنَا عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَٰنُ دَاوُۥدَ ۖ وَقَالَ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنطِقَ ٱلطَّيْرِ وَأُوتِينَا مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ ۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ ٱلْفَضْلُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾

وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَٰنَ جُنُودُهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ وَٱلطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَتَوْا۟ عَلَىٰ وَادِ ٱلنَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّمْلُ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ مَسَٰكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَٰنُ وَجُنُودُهُۥ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَتَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِّن قَوْلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِيٓ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ
ٱلَّتِيٓ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَٰلِحًا تَرْضَىٰهُ وَأَدْخِلْنِى
بِرَحْمَتِكَ فِى عِبَادِكَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

[15-19] (On the other hand,) We gave knowledge to David and Solomon,[18] and they said, "Praise is for Allah Who exalted us above many of His believing servants."[19] And Solomon succeeded David,[20] and he said, "O people, we have been taught the speech of the birds,[21] and we have been granted all sorts of things.[22] This is indeed a great favor (of Allah)." For Solomon were gathered hosts of jinn and men and birds,[23] which were kept under strict discipline. (Once he was marching in an expedition with them) until when they came to the valley of the ants, an ant said, "O ants, get into your holes lest Solomon and his hosts should trample you down without even knowing it."[24] Hearing its words, Solomon laughed smilingly and said "O My Lord, restrain[25] me so that I may render thanks to Thee for Thy favors which Thou hast bestowed upon the and my parents, and (enable me) to do such good works as may please Thee; and admit me, by Thy mercy, among Thy righteous servants."[26]

وَتَفَقَّدَ ٱلطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِىَ لَآ أَرَى ٱلْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْغَآئِبِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُۥ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَا۟ذْبَحَنَّهُۥٓ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِّى بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ وَجِئْتُكَ مِن سَبَإٍۭ بِنَبَإٍ
يَقِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِنِّى وَجَدتُّ ٱمۡرَأَةً تَمۡلِكُهُمۡ وَأُوتِيَتۡ مِن كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ وَلَهَا عَرۡشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَجَدتُّهَا وَقَوۡمَهَا يَسۡجُدُونَ لِلشَّمۡسِ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيۡطَـٰنُ أَعۡمَـٰلَهُمۡ فَصَدَّهُمۡ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ فَهُمۡ لَا يَهۡتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

أَلَّا يَسۡجُدُواْ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى يُخۡرِجُ ٱلۡخَبۡءَ فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَيَعۡلَمُ مَا تُخۡفُونَ وَمَا تُعۡلِنُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلۡعَرۡشِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾

[20-26] (On another occasion) Solomon reviewed his birds[27] and said, "How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Has he disappeared somewhere? I will punish him severely, or even slaughter him, unless he presents before me a reasonable excuse"[28] The bird did not take long when it came and said, "I have obtained knowledge of things of which you have no knowledge. I have brought sure information about Saba.[29] There I have seen a woman ruling over her people: she has been given all sorts of provisions, and she has a splendid throne. I saw that she and her people prostrate themselves before the sun instead of Allah."[30] Satan[31] made their deeds seem fair to them,[32] and hindered them from the highway: therefore, they do not find the right path that they may prostrate themselves before that God Who brings to light the hidden things of the heavens and the earth[33] and knows all that you conceal and reveal.[34] Allah: none but He is worthy of worship. He is the Owner of the glorious Throne.[35]

۞ قَالَ سَنَنظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

ٱذْهَب بِّكِتَٰبِى هَٰذَا فَأَلْقِهْ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَٱنظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[27-28] Solomon said, "We shall just now see whether what you say is true, or that you are a liar. Take this letter of mine and cast it before them; then get aside and see what reaction they show."[36]

قَالَتْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ إِنِّىٓ أُلْقِىَ إِلَىَّ كِتَٰبٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِنَّهُۥ مِن سُلَيْمَٰنَ وَإِنَّهُۥ بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣٠﴾

أَلَّا تَعْلُوا۟ عَلَىَّ وَأْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

[29-31] The queen said, "O chiefs, a very important letter has been cast before me. It is from Solomon, and it begins with the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. It says, `Do not adopt a rebellious attitude against me and present yourselves as Muslims before me."[37]

قَالَتْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ أَفْتُونِى فِىٓ أَمْرِى مَا كُنتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّىٰ تَشْهَدُونِ ﴿٣٢﴾

قَالُوا۟ نَحْنُ أُو۟لُوا۟ قُوَّةٍ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَٱلْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَٱنظُرِى مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

قَالَتْ إِنَّ ٱلْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا۟ قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوٓا۟ أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَآ أَذِلَّةً ۖ وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَإِنِّى مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِم بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَاظِرَةٌۢ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[32-35] (Having read out the letter) the queen said, "O chiefs, counsel me in this matter; I do not take a decision in any matter without (consulting) you."[38] They replied, "We are a powerful people, and good fighters. The decision, however, rests with you. You may yourselves consider as to what command you should give." The queen said, "When the kings enter a land, they ruin it and debase its honorable people;[39] they do just the same.[40] I shall send to them a gift, and then wait to see with what reply my envoys return."

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ سُلَيۡمَٰنَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَنِ بِمَالٖ فَمَآ ءَاتَىٰنِۦَ
ٱللَّهُ خَيۡرٞ مِّمَّآ ءَاتَىٰكُم بَلۡ أَنتُم بِهَدِيَّتِكُمۡ تَفۡرَحُونَ
٣٦

ٱرۡجِعۡ إِلَيۡهِمۡ فَلَنَأۡتِيَنَّهُمۡ بِجُنُودٖ لَّا قِبَلَ لَهُم بِهَا وَلَنُخۡرِجَنَّهُم مِّنۡهَآ
أَذِلَّةٗ وَهُمۡ صَٰغِرُونَ ٣٧

[36-37] When (the envoy of the queen) came to Solomon, the king said "Do you want to help me with wealth? What God has given me is much more than what He has given you[41] May you yourselves rejoice in your gift! (O messengers,) go back to your people; we shall bring against them such forces[42] which they will not be able to withstand, and we shall drive them out (of their land) humbled and disgraced."

قَالَ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡمَلَؤُاْ أَيُّكُمۡ يَأۡتِينِي بِعَرۡشِهَا قَبۡلَ أَن
يَأۡتُونِي مُسۡلِمِينَ ٣٨

قَالَ عِفۡرِيتٞ مِّنَ ٱلۡجِنِّ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبۡلَ أَن تَقُومَ مِن مَّقَامِكَۖ وَإِنِّي عَلَيۡهِ
لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٞ ٣٩

قَالَ ٱلَّذِى عِندَهُۥ عِلۡمٌ مِّنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبۡلَ أَن يَرۡتَدَّ إِلَيۡكَ
طَرۡفُكَۚ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهُ مُسۡتَقِرًّا عِندَهُۥ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِن فَضۡلِ رَبِّى لِيَبۡلُوَنِىٓ
ءَأَشۡكُرُ أَمۡ أَكۡفُرُۖ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشۡكُرُ لِنَفۡسِهِۦۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ
فَإِنَّ رَبِّى غَنِىٌّ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

[38-40] To his courtiers Solomon[43] said, "Which of you can fetch me her throne before those people come to me in submission?"[44] A mighty one from among the jinns submitted, "I shall fetch it to you even before you rise from your place.[45] I possess the necessary power for it and am trustworthy."[46] He who possessed knowledge of the Book, spoke out, "I will fetch it to you in the twinkling of an eye."[47] As soon as Solomon saw the throne placed before him, he exclaimed: "This is by the Grace of my Lord so that He may test me (to see) whether I am grateful or ungrateful![48] And the one who is grateful is grateful only for the good of his own self; as for the one who is ungrateful, my Lord is All-Sufficient and Self-Exalted."[49]

قَالَ نَكِّرُواْ لَهَا عَرۡشَهَا نَنظُرۡ أَتَهۡتَدِىٓ أَمۡ تَكُونُ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَهۡتَدُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتۡ قِيلَ أَهَٰكَذَا عَرۡشُكِۖ قَالَتۡ كَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَۚ وَأُوتِينَا ٱلۡعِلۡمَ مِن قَبۡلِهَا
وَكُنَّا مُسۡلِمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَت تَّعۡبُدُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّهَا كَانَتۡ مِن قَوۡمٍ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[41-43] Solomon said,[50] "Se her throne before her casually; let us see whether she reaches the truth, or she is one of those who are not guided aright."[51] When the queen arrived, she was asked, "Is your throne like this?" She

replied, "It is just the same.[52] We had already known this and we had surrendered (or we had become Muslims)."[53] The worship of the deities whom she served instead of Allah had hindered her (from believing), for she came of an unbelieving people.[54]

قِيلَ لَهَا ٱدۡخُلِي ٱلصَّرۡحَۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَتۡهُ حَسِبَتۡهُ لُجَّةٗ وَكَشَفَتۡ عَن سَاقَيۡهَاۚ قَالَ
إِنَّهُۥ صَرۡحٞ مُّمَرَّدٞ مِّن قَوَارِيرَۗ قَالَتۡ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمۡتُ نَفۡسِي وَأَسۡلَمۡتُ مَعَ
سُلَيۡمَٰنَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٤٤

[44] She was asked to enter the palace. When she saw it, she thought it was a pool of water, so she tucked up her skirt to enter it. Solomon said, "It is the glossy floor of glass."[55] At this she exclaimed, "O my Lord! I have (hitherto) been unjust to myself; now I submit myself, with Solomon, to Allah, Lord of the worlds."[56]

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَآ إِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمۡ صَٰلِحًا أَنِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ فَإِذَا هُمۡ
فَرِيقَانِ يَخۡتَصِمُونَ ٤٥

قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ لِمَ تَسۡتَعۡجِلُونَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ قَبۡلَ ٱلۡحَسَنَةِۖ لَوۡلَا تَسۡتَغۡفِرُونَ
ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُرۡحَمُونَ ٤٦

قَالُواْ ٱطَّيَّرۡنَا بِكَ وَبِمَن مَّعَكَۚ قَالَ طَٰٓئِرُكُمۡ عِندَ ٱللَّهِۖ بَلۡ أَنتُمۡ قَوۡمٞ تُفۡتَنُونَ
٤٧

[45-47] And[57] to Thamud We sent their brother Salih (with the message) that they should worship Allah, but they divided themselves forthwith into two wrangling groups.[58] Salih said, "O my people, why do you hasten for the evil in preference to the good?[59] Why don't you ask forgiveness of Allah? Maybe that you are shown mercy." They said, "We regard you and your companions as a sign of bad omen."[60] Salih said, "Your good and bad omens issue forth from Allah. The fact is that you are a people on trial."[61]


وَكَانَ فِي ٱلْمَدِينَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾
قَالُوا۟ تَقَاسَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهُۥ وَأَهْلَهُۥ ثُمَّ لَنَقُولَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهِۦ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ
أَهْلِهِۦ وَإِنَّا لَصَٰدِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾
وَمَكَرُوا۟ مَكْرًا وَمَكَرْنَا مَكْرًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾
فَٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ أَنَّا دَمَّرْنَٰهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ
﴿٥١﴾
فَتِلْكَ بُيُوتُهُمْ خَاوِيَةًۢ بِمَا ظَلَمُوٓا۟ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَأَنجَيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

[48-53] There were in that city nine ring-leaders of the men,[62] who spread mischief in the land and reformed nothing. They said to one another, "Let us pledge on an oath by Allah that we shall attack Salih and his household by night, and then tell his guardian[63] that we were not even present at the time his family were killed: we are telling the truth."[64] They plotted thus, and We too devised a plot of which they were unaware.[65] Just see how their plot ended. We annihilated them and all their people together. There, their houses lie desolate in consequence of their wicked deeds. There is a lesson in this for those who have knowledge;[66] and We saved those who had believed and avoided disobedience.

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَتَأْتُونَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ وَأَنتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّن دُونِ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ بَلْ
أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

۞ فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓا۟ أَخْرِجُوٓا۟ ءَالَ لُوطٍ مِّن قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ
إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمْرَأَتَهُۥ قَدَّرْنَٰهَا مِنَ ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَأَمۡطَرۡنَا عَلَيۡهِم مَّطَرٗاۖ فَسَآءَ مَطَرُ ٱلۡمُنذَرِينَ ٥٨

[54-58] And We sent Lot.[67] Remember the time when he said to his people, "Do you commit indecency while you see it?[68] Do you leave women and seek men for the gratification of your sexual desire? The fact is that you are a people steeped in ignorance."[69] But the only reply his people gave was to say, "Expel the family of Lot from your habitation: they pose to be very pious." At last We saved him and his family except his wife about whom We had decreed that she would linger behind,[70] and rained on then a rain, an extremely evil rain for the people who had been warned.

قُلِ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱصۡطَفَىٰٓۗ ءَآللَّهُ خَيۡرٌ أَمَّا يُشۡرِكُونَ ٥٩

[59] (O Prophet)[71] say, "Praise is for Allah and peace upon those servants of His whom He has chosen."

(Ask them:) "Is Allah better or those deities whom they set up as His associates?"[72]

أَمَّنۡ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا بِهِۦ حَدَآئِقَ ذَاتَ بَهۡجَةٖ مَّا كَانَ لَكُمۡ أَن تُنۢبِتُواْ شَجَرَهَآۗ أَءِلَٰهٞ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِۚ بَلۡ هُمۡ قَوۡمٞ يَعۡدِلُونَ ٦٠

[60] Well, Who is He Who created the heavens and the earth and sent down rainwater for you from the sky, then caused to spring up by it beautiful gardens, whose trees you had no power to cause to grow? Is there besides Allah another god (who is His associate in these works)?[73] (Nay,) but these people themselves have strayed from the right path.

أَمَّن جَعَلَ ٱلْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلَٰلَهَآ أَنْهَٰرًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا
رَوَٰسِىَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

[61] And Who is it Who made the earth as a place of rest[74] and caused in it rivers to flow, and set in it firm mountains and placed barriers between the two bodies of water?[75] Is there besides Allah another god (who is His associate in these works)? Nay, but most of these people have no knowledge.

أَمَّن يُجِيبُ ٱلْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ
أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[62] Who is it Who listens to the oppressed one when he invokes Him, and Who relieves him of his affliction?[76] And (Who is it Who) makes you vicegerents in the earth?[77] Is there besides Allah another god (to do this)? How little you reflect!

أَمَّن يَهْدِيكُمْ فِى ظُلُمَٰتِ ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ وَمَن يُرْسِلُ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشْرًۢا بَيْنَ
يَدَىْ رَحْمَتِهِۦٓ ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ تَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

[63] And Who is it Who shows you the way in the darkness of the land and the sea,[78] and Who sends the winds as harbingers of His mercy?[79] Is there besides Allah another god (who does this)? Far exalted is Allah above what they associate with Him.

أَمَّن يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ وَمَن يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ
مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ هَاتُوا۟ بُرْهَٰنَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[64] And Who is it Who originates the creation and then reproduces it?[80] And Who provides you sustenance from the sky and the earth?[81] Is there besides Allah another god (who is a partner in these works) Say, "Bring your proof if you are truthful."[82]

قُل لَّا يَعْلَمُ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْغَيْبَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ
يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

[65] Tell them, "None but Allah has the knowledge of the unseen, in the heavens and the earth,[83] and they (your deities) do not even know when they will be raised back to life."[84]

بَلِ ٱدَّٰرَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ فِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهَا ۖ بَلْ هُم مِّنْهَا
عَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَءِذَا كُنَّا تُرَٰبًا وَءَابَآؤُنَآ أَئِنَّا
لَمُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا هَٰذَا نَحْنُ وَءَابَآؤُنَا مِن قَبْلُ إِنْ هَٰذَآ
إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

قُلْ سِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

[66-69] But (on the contrary,) these people have lost the knowledge of the Hereafter;" nay, they are in doubt about it; nay, they are blind to it.[85] The disbelievers say, "When we and our forefathers have become dust, shall we be really raised up from the graves? This news has been given to us as well as to our forefathers before us, but these are nothing but tales, which we have been hearing since the ancient times." Say to them, "Move about in the land and see what doom the criminals have met."[86]

وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُن فِى ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

قُلْ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ رَدِفَ لَكُم بَعْضُ ٱلَّذِى تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

وَمَا مِنْ غَآئِبَةٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٥﴾

[70-75] O Prophet, do not grieve for them nor feel distressed at their machinations.[87] They say, "When will this threat be carried out if you are truthful?"[88] Say, "No wonder that a part of the torment you wish to be hastened, may well have approached you."[89] The fact is that your Lord is highly Gracious to the people, but most of them are not grateful.[90] No doubt your Lord knows fully well what they keep hidden in their breasts and what they reveal.[91] There is no secret thing in the heavens and the earth, which is not recorded in a clear Book.[92]

إِنَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ يَقُصُّ عَلَىٰ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَكْثَرَ ٱلَّذِى هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِى بَيْنَهُم بِحُكْمِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٨﴾

فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَى ٱلْحَقِّ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾

إِنَّكَ لَا تُسۡمِعُ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰ وَلَا تُسۡمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ ٱلدُّعَآءَ إِذَا وَلَّوۡاْ مُدۡبِرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

وَمَآ أَنتَ بِهَٰدِ ٱلۡعُمۡيِ عَن ضَلَٰلَتِهِمۡۖ إِن تُسۡمِعُ إِلَّا مَن يُؤۡمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُم مُّسۡلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

[76-81] The fact is that this Qur'an tells the children of Israel the reality of most of those things in which they differ,[93] and this is a Guidance and a Mercy for the believers.[94] (Likewise) your Lord will surely judge between these people[95] as well by His Command, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.[96] Therefore, O Prophet, put your trust in Allah: you are certainly on the manifest Truth. You cannot make the dead to hear you,[97] nor can convey your call to the deaf, who have turned their backs and are running away from you,[98] nor can guide the blind against their errors.[99] You can only make those people to listen to you, who believe in Our Revelations and then submit (to Us) completely.

۞ وَإِذَا وَقَعَ ٱلۡقَوۡلُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ أَخۡرَجۡنَا لَهُمۡ دَآبَّةٗ مِّنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمۡ أَنَّ ٱلنَّاسَ كَانُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

وَيَوۡمَ نَحۡشُرُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٖ فَوۡجٗا مِّمَّن يُكَذِّبُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُمۡ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُو قَالَ أَكَذَّبۡتُم بِـَٔايَٰتِي وَلَمۡ تُحِيطُواْ بِهَا عِلۡمًا أَمَّاذَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَوَقَعَ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِم بِمَا ظَلَمُوا۟ فَهُمْ لَا يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا ٱلَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا۟ فِيهِ وَٱلنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[82-86] And when the time of the fulfillment of Our Decree approaches them,[100] We . shall bring forth a beast for them from the earth, which will speak to them (about this) that the people did not believe in Our Revelations.[101] And imagine the Day when We shall gather together from every community a host of those people who used to treat Our Revelations as false; then they will be arranged (according to their classification and merit) until when all of them will have arrived, (their Lord) will ask them, "Did you treat My Revelations as false whereas you did not comprehend them by knowledge?[102] If not this, what else were you doing?"[103] And the threat of the torment will be carried out on them in consequence of their wicked deeds; then they will not be able to utter a word. Did they not perceive that We had ordained the night for them to have rest in it, and made the day bright?[104] Surely in this there were many Signs for those who believed.[105]

وَيَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَكُلٌّ أَتَوْهُ دَٰخِرِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

وَتَرَى ٱلْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِىَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ ٱلسَّحَابِ ۚ صُنْعَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَتْقَنَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

مَن جَآءَ بِٱلۡحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ خَيۡرٞ مِّنۡهَا وَهُم مِّن فَزَعٖ يَوۡمَئِذٍ ءَامِنُونَ ٨٩

وَمَن جَآءَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتۡ وُجُوهُهُمۡ فِي ٱلنَّارِ هَلۡ تُجۡزَوۡنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ٩٠

[87-90] And on the Day when the Trumpet will be blown, all those who are in the heavens and the earth, shall be struck with terror[106] except those whom Allah shall be pleased to protect.-And all shall present themselves before Him in submission. Today, you see the mountains and think that they are firmly set, but on that Day they will be flying about like the clouds; this will be a manifestation of the powers of Allah, Who has ordered everything with wisdom. He is fully aware of what you do.[107] He who will bring good deeds, will have a reward better than that,[108] and such people shall be secure from the terror of that Day.[109] And the one who will come with evil deeds, all such people shall be flung upon their faces into the Fire. Can you be rewarded except in accordance with your deeds?[109a]

إِنَّمَآ أُمِرۡتُ أَنۡ أَعۡبُدَ رَبَّ هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡبَلۡدَةِ ٱلَّذِي حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهُۥ كُلُّ شَيۡءٖۖ وَأُمِرۡتُ أَنۡ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ ٩١

وَأَنۡ أَتۡلُوَاْ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَۖ فَمَنِ ٱهۡتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهۡتَدِي لِنَفۡسِهِۦۖ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَقُلۡ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلۡمُنذِرِينَ ٩٢

وَقُلِ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ سَيُرِيكُمۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ فَتَعۡرِفُونَهَاۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

[91-93] (O Muhammad, say to them:) "What I have been commanded is that I should worship the Lord of this City, Who has made it sacred, and Who is the Owner of every thing.[110] I have been commanded to live as a Muslim and to recite the Qur'an." Now whosoever follows the guidance, will follow it for his own good, and to him who goes astray, say, "I am only a warner." Say to them, "Praise is only for Allah; very soon He will show you His Signs, which you shall recognize; and your Lord is not unaware of what you do."

1Kitab-i-mubin has three meanings: (1) This book presents its teachings and instructions and injunctions plainly; (2) it distinguishes between the Truth and falsehood clearly; and (3) its being a Divine Book is obvious: whoever studies it with open eyes will realize that it has not been composed and forged by the Holy Prophet himself.

2That is, the verses themselves are a "guidance" and "good news", because they give guidance and convey good news in a most excellent manner.

3That is, "These verses of the Qur'an give guidance and convey the good news of a good end only to those people who possess these two qualities: (1) They should affirm faith, that is, accept the invitation of the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), believe In one God as their only Deity and Lord, accept the Qur'an' as the Book of Allah, acknowledge the Holy Prophet as a true Prophet and their Leader, and also adopt the belief that after this life there is another life, in which man has to render his full account of deeds and be rewarded or punished accordingly. (2) They should not only profess faith verbally, but should also be inclined to follow and obey the Divine Commands practically, and the first indication of this inclination is that they should establish the Salat and pay the Zakat. The verses of the Qur'an will show the right way of life only to those people who fulfill these two conditions; they will explain to them the difference between the right and the wrong at every stage on the way, protect them against the wrong ways at every turn of the way, and bless them with the satisfaction that whatever be the consequences of following the Right Way in the world, in the Hereafter they will certainly attain the eternal and everlasting success and the good will of Allah only through it. For in order to derive full benefit from the teaching of a teacher, one has first to have faith in him, then accept to be his student, and then work according to his instructions. Similarly, a patient who wants to be benefited by a doctor has first to accept him as a physician, and then follow his instructions with regard to medical dosage, prevention, etc. Then only he can assure the patient of the desired results.

Some people have interpreted the words yu'tun-az-zakat in this verse to mean that they should adopt moral purity. But, wherever in the Qur'an the word ita-i-zakat has occurred along with the word iqamat-i-salat, it means payment of the Zakat, which is the second pillar of Islam after the Salat. Moreover, the Qur'an has used the word tazakka for adopting piety and purity and not ita' which is specifically used for the payment of the Zakat. In fact, what is meant to be impressed here is this: In order to benefit fully by the guidance of the Qur'an, it is imperative that one should adopt the attitude of submission and obedience in practical life as well after the affirmation of the Faith, and the establishment of the Salat and the payment of the Zakat is the first indication that one has actually adopted such an attitude. If there is no such indication, it will become obvious that one is rebellious: he might have acknowledged a ruler as such, but he is not inclined to carry out his commands.

4Although belief in the Hereafter is an article of the Faith, and a believer will also believe in it along with believing in Tauhid and the Prophethood, here it has been specially mentioned separately in order to bring out its unique importance. The object is to impress that for those people who do not believe in the Hereafter, it is impossible to follow, even tread, the way taught by the Qur'an. For the people of this way of thinking naturally determine their criterion of good and evil by the results that appear, in this world. For them it is not possible to accept any admonition or guidance which seeks to determine the good and evil by the criterion of the gain and loss in the Hereafter. Such people in the first instance do not at all heed the teachings of the Prophets, but if for some reason, they also get included among the believers, they find it difficult to take even the initial steps on the way of the Faith and Islam because of the lack of faith in the Hereafter. For as soon as they will encounter the first situation where the demands of the worldly gains and the losses of the Hereafter will pull them in opposite directions, they will freely allow themselves to be pulled towards the worldly gains without caring in the least for the losses of the Hereafter, even though they may be making all sons of claims to be the believers.

5That is. "This is God's Law of Nature and the natural logic of human psychology that when man thinks that the results of his life's struggle are confined to this world only when he does not believe in the existence of any court where his life's work has to be scrutinized and judged finally for good and evil, and when he does not believe in any life hereafter when he will be requited strictly in accordance with the real worth of his life's deeds, he will inevitably develop in himself a material outlook on life, and every kind of conflict between the Truth and falsehood, good and evil, morality and immorality, will appear utterly meaningless to him. Then, whatever earns him pleasure and enjoyment, material progress and prosperity, power and authority, will be the good for him, no matter it be any philosophy of life, any way of life and any system of morality. He will have no concern for truth and reality. His real ambition will be to win successes and earn adornments only of this worldly life, and their pursuit will lead him astray into every valley. Then, whatever he does with this object in view. will be a thing of beauty for him, and he will regard all those others as foolish, who are not absorbed like him in seeking the world, and doing anything and everything without any moral qualm and inhibition.

6Nothing definite has been said about the form, time and place of this "evil chastisement." For it is

imposed in this world also on different persons and groups and' nations in countless different ways; a part of it is also experienced by the wicked when they are about to leave the world; man experiences it also in the intermediary state between death and Resurrection; and then after Resurrection it will become endless and everlasting.

7That is, the things being mentioned in the Qur'an are not imaginary nor are they based on the presumptions and opinions of a man, but they are being revealed by the One Who is All-Wise and All-Knowing, Who is perfect in Wisdom and Knowledge, Who has full knowledge of the affairs of His creation and of its past and present and future, and Whose Wisdom devises the best schemes for the reform and guidance of His servants.

8This happened at the foot of Mount Tur when the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) was traveling along with his family in search of a suitable place for settlement, after passing eight to ten years in Madyan (Midian). From Madyan, whose territory lay on both sides of the Gulf of `Aqabah, on the sea-shores of Arabia and the Sinai Peninsula, he reached the place called Mt. Sinai and Jabal Musa in the southern part of the Peninsula, which at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an was well known as Tur. (See also The Meaning of Qur'an, Vol. VIII Ash-Shu'araa', E.N. 115). The details of this story have already been given in Surah Ta Ha: 9-24 above and will, follow in Surah Al-Qasas: 29-36 below.

9The context shows that it was a cold wintry night and the Prophet Moses was passing through unfamiliar land. Therefore, he said to his family, "Let me go and find out what habitation it is where a fire is alight, and get some information about the traveling routes and the nearby habitations. I shall at least bring a few embers for you to light a fire and warm yourselves."

The place where the Prophet Moses had seen a burning bush is situated at about 5,000 ft. above sea level at the foot of Mt. Tur. Constantine, the first Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire, had a church built in about 365 A.D. right at the spot where this event had occurred. Two hundred years later Emperor Justinian had a monastery built which included the church built by Constantine as well. Both the monastery and the church stand even today and are under the control of the monks of the Greek Orthodox Church.

10According to AI-Qasas: 30, the voice was calling out from a tree. What one understands from this is this: A sort of a fire was alight on the ground on the edge of the valley, but neither was anything burning nor any smoke arising. In the midst of the fire there stood a lush green tree from which a voice started calling out this all of a sudden.

This is a strange thing which the Prophets of Allah have been experiencing. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him) was first blessed with Prophethood, an Angel appeared before him in the solitude of the Gave of Hira' and started delivering Allah's Message. A similar thing

happened with the Prophet Moses also. A journeying person has halted at a place, sees a fire at a distance, approaches it in order to get some information abort the route, or to pick a burning ember, and suddenly Allah, Lord of the Worlds, the Infinite, the Inconceivable Being, starts speaking to him. On such occasions, there exists externally as well as within the Prophets' own selves an extraordinary state which fills them with the assurance that it is not a jinn or a satan or an illusion of their own mind, nor are their senses being deceived, but it is the Lord of the universe, or His Angel, who is speaking to them. (For further explanation, see E.N. 10 of An-Najm).

11Here the use of the words Subhan Allah (glorified is Allah) is meant to warn the Prophet Moses to this effect: "You should never think that Allah, Lord of the universe, is sitting in the tree, or has entered into it, or that His absolute Light has concentrated itself into the limited sphere of your sight, or some tongue is functioning in some mouth to produce speech, but it is Allah, Who is Pure and Free from all such limitations, Who is Himself speaking to you."

12In Surahs Al-A`raf and Ash-Shu`araa', the snake has been called thu`ban (a large serpent) but here jaann, a small snake. The reason is that in physical size it was a serpent but in movement it was swift like a small snake. The same thing has been expressed by hayyatun tas `a (a running snake) in Ta Ha: 20.

13That is, "In My Presence there is no danger of any harm to the Messenger. When I call someone into My Presence to appoint him to the high office of Prophethood, I Myself become responsible for his safety. Therefore, the Messenger should remain fearless and confident in every kind of unusual situation: it will never harm or hurt him in any way. "

14This exception can be contiguous as well as remote. In the first case it will imply that there can be a genuine cause of fear if the Messenger has committed an offense; in the second case it will mean: "None should have any cause of fear in My Presence, unless, of course, someone has committed an offense."

15That is, "If even an offender repents and reforms himself and does good instead of evil, I will pardon him. ¦ This implied both a warning and a good news. The Prophet Moses had killed a Copt inadvertently and fled from Egypt. This was an offense to which a subtle reference was made. When this offense was committed un-intentionally by the Prophet Moses, he had immediately offered repentance to Allah, saying, "O my Lord! I have sinned against myself, so forgive me." So, "Allah forgave him" there and then. (Al-Qasas: 16). Here the good news of the same forgiveness has been given him, as if to say, "O Moses, there could be a genuine cause for you to feel afraid in My Presence, because you had committed an offense, but when you have changed the evil into good, I have nothing but forgiveness and mercy for you. I have not called you here at this time to punish you, but I am going to send you on a great mission with wonderful miracles."

16According to Surah Bani Isra'il:101, the Prophet Moses had been granted nine clearly visible Signs,

which according to the details given in AI-A`raf were the following: (1) The staff's turning into a serpent, (2) the shining hand when it was drawn out of the armpit, (3) public triumph over the magicians, (4) occurrence of a widespread famine in the land as foretold by the Prophet Moses, (5) the storm, (6) the locusts, (7) the incidence of weevils in the grain stores and of lice among human beings and animals, (8) the frogs, and (9) the rain of blood. (Far explanation, see E.N. 43 of Az Zukhruf).

17As mentioned at other places in the Qur'an, whenever a plague befell Egypt as foretold by the Prophet Moses, Pharaoh would say, "O Moses, pray to your Lord to remove this plague; then we shall submit to what you say." But as soon as the plague was removed, Pharaoh would break his promise. (Al-A'raf: 134, Az-Zukhruf: 49-50). The Bible also has mentioned it (Exodus. 8 to 10), and otherwise also it could not be imagined that the occurrence of a famine throughout the country and the coming of a violent storm and the incidence of the locusts and the frogs and the weevils in such abundance could be due to any trick of magic. The miracles were so manifest that even a stupid person could not help realizing that the occurrence of the plagues on such a large scale and their removal at the Prophet's prayer could be only due to Allah, Lord of all Creation's power and authority. That is why the Prophet Moses had told Pharaoh plainly: "You know it full well that none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth has sent down these Signs." (Bani lsra'il:102). But the reason why Pharaoh and his chiefs rejected Moses knowingly was: "What! should we believe in these two men who are human beings like ourselves and whose people are our bondsmen'?" (Al Mu'minun: 47)

18That is, the knowledge of the Reality, the knowledge that whatever they have is not theirs but the gift of Allah and whatever rights they have been granted over those things should be used strictly according to Allah's will, for they will be held answerable before Allah, the real Owner, for the right and wrong use of those rights. This knowledge is the opposite of the ignorance in which Pharaoh was involved. The type of character built on the ignorance has been presented in the preceding verses. Now, in the following verses, the model of the character built on the knowledge is being presented. The sort of kingdom, wealth, power and grandeur were common on both the sides. The Pharaoh had been given these as well as the Prophets David and Solomon. But the distinction of the ignorance and the knowledge built and molded them into entirely different personalities.

19That is, "There were other believing, servants as well, who could be blessed with vicegerency. But it is only Allah's favor, not due to any special quality in ourselves, that He has chosen us to be rulers over this kingdom."

20Succession here does not mean inheritance of wealth and properties, but the succession to the Prophet David in the Prophethood and vicegerency. For the wealth and possessions, if at all transferred, could not be transferred to the Prophet Solomon only, because Prophet David had other children also. Therefore, this verse cannot be cited to refute the Hadith reported from the Holy Prophet, saying, "The inheritance left by us, the Prophets, is not divided as such. whatever we leave behind is charity." (Bukhari) And: "There is no heir to a Prophet. Whatever he leaves behind, is divided among the

needy and the indigent of the Muslims." (Musnad Ahmad. Traditions from Abu Bakr, Ahadith No. 60 and 78).

The Prophet Solomon was the youngest son of the Prophet David. His Hebrew name Solomon is a synonym of Salim (right-minded, affable). He succeeded the Prophet David in 965 B.C. and ruled his kingdom for forty years, till 926B.C. For other details of his life and works, see E. N.'s 74-75 of Al Anbiyaa in The Meaning of the Qur'an, Vol. VII). Our commentators have greatly exaggerated' the vastness of his kingdom, and have held that he ruled over a large part of the world. The fact, however. is that his kingdom comprised only the present Palestine and Transjordan and a part of Syria. (See Map: Kingdom of the Prophets David and Solomon, The Meaning of the Qur'an, Vol. II, Bani Israel E. N. 7).

21There is no mention in the Bible that the Prophet Solomon had been taught speech of the birds and animals, though the Israelite traditions contain a reference to it. (Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. Xl.p. 598)

22That is, "Allah has bestowed on us all sorts of things." This, however, should not be understood literally; it only means the abundance of the wealth and the means of life granted by Allah. This was not said proudly by Prophet Solomon but only to express his gratitude to Allah for His grace and bounty and favors.

23The Bible does not either make any mention that there were jinns also in the Prophet Solomon's armies, and he took service from them; but the Talmud and the rabbinical traditions contain details of this. (Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XI, p. 440). Some of the present-day writers have strained every nerve to prove that the words jinn and fair do not refer to the jinns and birds but to men who performed different duties in the Prophet Solomon's army. They say that the Jinn haply the people of the mountain tribes whom Prophet Solomon had subdued and who performed teats of great strength and skill under him; and fair implies cavalry which could move much faster than the infantry. But these are indeed the worst examples of misinterpreting the Qur'an. The Qur'an here mentions three distinct kinds of the army consisting of the men, the jinns and the birds, and all the three gave been qualified by the prefix a1 (alif-lam) to denote a class. Therefore, al jinn and al-tair could not be included in al-ins (the men), but could be two separate and different classes from the men. Moreover, a person who has a little acquaintance with Arabic cannot imagine that in this language the mere word a/ Jinn could ever imply a group of the men, or al-tair troops mounted on horses, nor could any Arab understand these meanings from these words. Calling a man a jinn only figuratively because of some supernatural feat of his, or a woman a fairy because of her beauty, or a fast moving person a bird dces not mean that the words Jinn and fairy and bird will henceforth be taken to mean a powerful man and a beautiful woman and a fast moving person respectively. These are only the metaphoric and not the real meanings of these words. In a discourse, a word is used in its figurative instead of its real meaning, and the listeners also will take it in that meaning, only when there exists in the context a clear pointer to its being figurative. What, after all, is the pointer in the context here from which one may understand that the words jinn and tair have been used not in their real and lexical meaning but in their figurative meaning? Contrary to this, the work and the state of a

member each of the two groups that have been mentioned in the following verses, fall entirely against the purport of this interpretation. If a person does not want to believe in something stated in the Qur'an, he should frankly say that he does not believe in it. But it would be moral cowardice and intellectual dishonesty if one should force the clear words of the Qur'an to give the meaning that he wants them to give, and tell the world that he believes in what the Qur'an says, whereas he does not, in fact, believe in it but believes in his own distorted meaning.

24This verse also has been greatly misconstrued by some commentators of the present day. They say that wad-in naml does not mean "valley of the ants", but it is the name of a valley that was in Syria, and namlah does not mean an ant but it is the name of a tribe. Thus, according to them, the verse means this: "When the Prophet Solomon reached the valley of the ants, a Namilite said, 'O people of the Naml tribe ....." But this also is an interpretation which is not supported by the words of the Qur'an. Even if we took wad-in-naml to be the name of a valley and supposed that it was inhabited by the tribe of Bani an-Naml, it would be against the Arabic idiom and usage to speak of a member of the tribe as namlah. Although there are many Arab tribes which have been named after the animals, e.g. Kalb (dog), Asad (lion), etc"., yet no Arab would ever say in respect of a member of the Kalb or the Asad tribe: "A dog said, or a lion said, etc. Therefore, it would be against the Arabic idiom to say in respect of a member of the Naml tribe: "A namlah (ant) said this." Then a member of the Naml tribe's warning the people of his tribe, saying, "O Namilites, get into your houses lest Solomon's hosts should trample you down without even knowing it," becomes meaningless, It has never happened that an army of men should have trampled down a group of men without knowing it. If the army has come with the intention of an attack, it would be useless for the other side to get into their houses, for in that case the invaders would follow them into their houses, and trample them more ruthlessly. And if the army is only on the routine march, it is just enough to clear off the way for it. Human beings may be harmed by the marching columns, but it can never happen that the soldiers on the march would trample down other men without knowing it. Therefore, if Bani an-Naml were a tribe of human beings, and one of its members were to warn his people, then in case of an attack, he would have said, "O Namilites, flee your houses and take refuge in the mountains lest Solomon's armies should destroy you. " And in case there was no danger of an attack, he would have said, "O Namilites, clear off the way lest one of you should be harmed by the marching columns of Solomon's armies."

This error in the interpretation is on account of the Arabic idiom and the subject-matter. As for the name of the valley and the tribe of Bani an-Naml inhabiting it, it is a mere hypothesis for which there exists no scientific proof. Those who hold that wad-in -naml was the name of a valley have themselves pointed out that it had been so named because of the abundance of ants in it. Qatadah and Muqatil say, "It is a valley in the land of Syria where ants are found in abundance. But in no book of history and geography and in no archaeological research it is mentioned that it was inhabited by a tribe called Bani an-Naml. Thus, it is merely a concoction that has been invented to support one's own interpretation.

This story is also found in the Israelite traditions but its latter portion falls against the Qur'an as well as

against the regal dignity of the Prophet Solomon. According to it, when the Prophet Solomon was passing through a valley which abounded in ants, he heard an ant calling out to the other ants to say, "Get into your holes, otherwise you will be trampled down by Solomon's hosts." At this, Prophet Solomon displayed great vanity before the ant to which the ant rejoined, " What are you?-the product of a mere sperm-drop! " Hearing this the Prophet Solomon felt greatly ashamed. (Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. X1, p. 440). This shows how the Qur'an corrects the wrong traditions of the Israelites, and cleanses the filthy spots with which they had themselves branded the characters of their Prophets. It is these traditions about which the Western orientalists shamelessly claim that the Qur'an has plagiarized them for its narratives.

Rationally also it is not at all inconceivable that an ant should warn members of its' own species of an impending danger and tell them to get into their holes. As for the question as to how the Prophet Solomon heard it, the answer is: It is not all difficult to understand the crude speech of an ant for a person whose senses can comprehend and receive a subtle message like the Word of Revelation

25"Restrain me...thanks to Thee" means this: "O my Lord! the wonderful powers and abilities that You have given me are such that if I become even a little forgetful and heedless, I might transgress the bounds of service and be puffed up with pride and go astray. Therefore, O my Lord, restrain me so that I may remain grateful to You for all Your blessings instead of being ungrateful."

26"Admit me..righteous servants" probably implies this: "I should be included among the righteous in the Hereafter and should enter Paradise along with them." For a person who does righteous acts will automatically be righteous, but one's entry into Paradise in the Hereafter cannot come about merely on the strength of one's good works, but it will depend on Allah's mercy. According to a Hadith, the Holy Prophet once said, "Merely the deeds of any one of you will not enable him to enter Paradise." It was asked, "In your case too, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied, "Yes, I also shall not enter Paradise only on the strength of my deeds, unless Allah Almighty covers me with His mercy."

This prayer of the Prophet Solomon on this occasion becomes irrelevant if an Naml is taken to mean a vibe of human beings and namlah a member of that tribe. After all, there could be nothing extraordinary in the warning given by a member of a human tribe to the people of his vibe about the approaching troops of a powerful king that it should have induced the king to make such a prayer to Allah. However, a person's having such a wonderful power of comprehension that he may hear the speech of an ant from a distance and also understand it, is certainly something extraordinary, which can involve a person in self-conceit and vanity. In such a case only the prayer of the Prophet Solomon can be relevant."

27That is, the birds whose troops, as mentioned above, were included in the armies of Prophet Solomon like the troops of the men and jinns. It is just possible that the Prophet Solomon had employed them for communicating messages, hunting and performing other such services.

28Some people of the modern time say that the hud-hud (hoopoe) does not mean the bird commonly known by this name, but is the name of a man who was an officer in the army of Solomon. This claim is not based on any historical research in which they might have found a person named hud-hud included in the list of the officers of the government of the Prophet Solomon, but they base their claim on the argument that the custom of naming human beings after animals is prevalent in Arabic as in other languages and was also found in Hebrew. Moreover, the, work that has been ascribed to the hud-hud in the following verses and its conversation with the Prophet Solomon, can, according to them, be only performed by a human being. But if one keeps in view the context in which this thing occurs in the Qur'an, it becomes evident that this is no commentary of the Qur'an but its distortion. After all, why should the Qur'an put the intellect and intelligence of man to the test by using enigmatic language '? Why should it not clearly say that a soldier of the Prophet Solomon's cavalry, or platoon, or communication department, was missing, whom he ordered to be searched out, and who came and gave this news and whom he dispatched on such and such a mission? Instead, it uses such language that the reader, from the beginning to the end, is compelled to regard it as a bird. Let us, in this connection, consider the tarts in their sequence as presented in the Qur'an.

First of all, the Prophet Solomon expresses his gratitude to Allah for His this bounty: "We have been taught the speech of the birds." In this sentence, firstly, the word Lair has been used absolutely which every Arab and scholar of Arabic will take in the meaning of a bird, because there is nothing in the context that points to its being figurative; secondly, if tair implied a group of men and not a bird, the ward language or tongue would have been used concerning it and not speech. 'Then, a person's knowing the tongue of another people is not so extraordinary a thing that it should be specially mentioned. Today there are among us thousands of men and women, who can speak and understand many foreign languages. This is in no way an unusual achievement which may be mentioned as an extraordinary gift of God.

Then the Qur'an says, "For Solomon were gathered hosts of jinns and then and birds." In this sentence, firstly, the words Jinn and ins (men) and tair have been used as names for three well-known and distinct species denoted by these words in Arabic. Then they have been used absolutely and there is nothing in the context that may point to any of them being used metaphorically, or as a simile. hecause of which one may take them in another meaning than their well- known lexical meaning. Then the word ins has occurred between the words jinn and Lair which does not allow taking it in the meaning that the Jinn and the tair were, in tact, two groups included in the species of ins (men). Had this been meant the words would have been: ul jinn wat-tair min-al-ins and not min-al- Jinn wal-ins Wat-tair.

A little further un the e Qur'an says that the Prophet Solomon said this when-during his review of the birds hr found the hud-hud missing. If the fair were human beings and hud-hud also was the name of a man, a word or two should Dave been there to indicate this so that cite poor reader should not have taken the word for a bird. When the group being mentioned is clearly of the birds and a number of it is called hud-hud. how can it be expected that the reader will of his own accord understand them to be human beings'?

Then the Prophet Solomon says, "I will punish him severely, or even slaughter him, unless he presents before me a reasonable excuse." A man is killed, or hanged, or sentenced to death, but never slaughtered. Some hard-hearted person may even slaughter another person out of vengeance, but it cannot be expected of a Prophet that he would sentence a soldier of his army to be slaughtered only for the offense of desertion, and Allah would mention this heinous act of the Prophet without a word of disapproval.

A little further on we shall again see that the Prophet Solomon sends the same hud-hud with a letter to the queen of Sheba and tells him "to cast it before her". Obviously, such an instruction can be given to a bird but not at all to a man when he is sent as an envoy or messenger. Only a foolish person will believe that a king would send his envoy with a letter to the queen of another country and tell him to cast or throw it before her. Should we suppose that the Prophet Solomon was not aware of the preliminary social etiquette which even common people like us also observe when we send our servant to a neighbor? Will a gentleman tell his servant to carry his letter to the other gentleman and throw it before him?

All these things show that the word hud-hud here has been used in its lexical meaning, showing that he was not a man but a bird. Now, if a person is not prepared to believe that a hud-hud can speak those things that have been ascribed to it in the Qur'an, he should frankly say that he does not believe in this narrative: of the Qur'an. It is sheer hypocrisy to misconstrue plain and clear words of the Qur'an according to one's own whims only in order to cover up one's lack of faith in it.

29Saba' were a well-known commercial people of southern Arabia, whose capital city of Ma'rib lay about 55 miles to the north-east of San`a', the present capital of Yaman. They rose to power after the decline of the Minaean Kingdom in about 1100 B.C. and flourished for a thousand years in Arabia. Then in 115 B.C. they were replaced by the Himyarites, the other well-known people of southern Arabia, who ruled Yaman and Hadramaut in Arabia and Habash in Africa. The Sabaeans controlled the whole trade that passed between eastern Africa, India, the Far East and Arabia itself, on the one hand, and Egypt, Syria, Greece and Rome on the other. That is why they were famous for their wealth in the ancient times; so much so that according to the Greek historians they were the richest people of the world. Besides trade and commerce, another great reason for their prosperity was that they had built dams here and there in their country to store rainwater for irrigation purposes, which had turned their whole land into a veritable garden. The Greek; historians have made mention of the unusual greenery of their country; and the Qur'an also refers to it in Surah Saba': 15.The statement of the hud-hud, `I have obtained knowledge of things of which you have no knowledge", does not imply that the Prophet Solomon was wholly unaware of Saba'. Obviously, the ruler of Syria and Palestine whose kingdom extended to the northern shores of the Red Sea (Gulf of `Aqabah), could not be unaware of a people who ruled the southern shores (Yaman) of the same Red Sea, and who also controlled an important pan of the international trade. Moreover, according to Psalms, Solomon's father, Prophet David, knew Saba' We lied the following words of his prayer in Psalms

"Give the king thy judgment, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son (i.e. Solomon)... The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba (i.e. of Yaman's and Habash's branches) shall offer gifts." (72: 1-2, 10-11).

Therefore, what the hud-hud means to say is this: "The knowledge of the things 1 have seen with my eyes in the central city of the Sabaeans. has not yet reached you."

30This shows that the people of Saba' at that lime followed the religion of sun-worship, which is also supported by the ancient traditions of Arabia. Ibn ishaq has cited the genealogists' saying to the effect that Saba' have in fact descended from an ancestor whose name was `Abd Shams (slave of the sun, or sun-worshiper) and title Saba'. This is supported by the Israelite traditions as well. According to these when the hud-hud arrived with the Prophet Solomon's letter, the queen of Sheba was going for the worship of the sun-god, and it threw the letter on the way before the queen.

31The style shows that the sentences from here to the end of the paragraph are not a part of the hud-hud's speech but its speech ended with: "they prostrate themselves before the sun", and these words are an addition by Allah to its speech. His opinion is supported by the sentence: "He knows all that you conceal and reveal." These words give the impression that the speaker and the addressees here are not he hud-hud and the Prophet Solomon and his courtiers respectively, but the speaker is Allah and the addressees the mushriks of Makkah, for whose admonition this story has been related. From among the commentators, Allamah Alusi;, the author of Ruh-al-Ma ani, also has preferred the same opinion.

32That is, Satan has made them believe that earning the worldly wealth and making, their lives more and more grand and pompous is the only real and fit use of their mental and intellectual and physical powers. Apart from these, they need not think seriously on anything else: they need not bother themselves to see whether there was any factual reality behind the apparent life of the world or not, and whether the basis of their religion, morality, culture and system of life accorded with that Reality or went utterly against it. Satan satisfied them that when they were making adequate progress in respect of wealth and power and worldly grandeur, they had no need to see whether their beliefs and philosophies and theories were correct or not, for the only proof of their being correct was that they were earning wealth and enjoying life to their hearts content.

33That is, He is bringing continuously into existence those things which before their ' birth were hidden here and there: He is bringing out continuously countless kinds of vegetation and minerals from the bowels of the earth: He is manifesting from upper space such things as could not even be conceived by the human mind before their manifestation.

34That is, His knowledge embraces everything; the open and hidden are alike for Him; He is aware of everything. By citing these two attributes of Allah the object is to impress that if they had not been

deluded by Satan, they could have seen the right way clearly: they could have perceived that the hot burning sphere of the sun which has no sense of its own existence, did not deserve to be worshiped but worship was due to Him alone Who is the All-Knowing and the All-Wise Being, and Whose power is bringing into existence new and ever stew phenomena every moment.

35This is one of those verses of the Qur'an, whose recital makes it obligatory for one to perform a Sajdah (prostration), and there is a consensus on this of the Muslim jurists. The object of performing a Sajdah here is that a believer should set himself apart from the sun-worshipers and should declare by his action that he does not regard the sun but Allah Almighty alone as his Deity and Lord.

36Here ends the role of the hud-hud (hoopoe). The rationalists deny its being a bird for the reason that a bird could not possibly be endowed with such powers of observation, discrimination and expression that it should pass over a country and should come to know that it is the land of Saba`, it has such and such a system of government, it is ruled by a certain woman, its religion is sun worship, that it should have worshiped One God instead of having gone astray, and then on its return to the Prophet Solomon it should so clearly make a report of all its observations before him. Due to these very reasons the open atheists object that the Qur'an is a book of fables and legends; then those who try to interpret the Qur'an rationally misconstrue its clear words in order to prove that the hud-hud was not at all a bird but he was a man. But the question is: What scientific information have these gentlemen got by which they could tell with absolute certainty what powers and abilities the different species of animals and their different individuals have got? The information that they possess only consists of the results interred froth the grossly insufficient observation made cursorily by them of the life and behavior of the animals. In fact, man has not so far been able to know through any certain means what different animals know and what they see and hear. and what they feel and think and understand, and how the mind of each one of them works. Yet, whatever little observation has been made of the life of the different species of animals, it has revealed some of their wonderful abilities. Now, when Allah, Who is the Creator of these animals, tells us that He had taught the speech of the birds to one of His Prophets and blessed him with the ability to speak to them, and the Prophet's taming and training had so enabled a hud-hud that it could make certain observations in the foreign lands and could report theta to the Prophet, we should, in fact, be prepared to revise our little knowledge about the animals in the light of Allah's statement. But, instead, we commit the folly of taking our this insufficient knowledge as the criterion and belie this statement of Allah or distort it out of its true meaning.

37That is, "The letter is important for several reasons: (1) It has reached me in an unusual way. Instead of an envoy it has been brought and dropped at me by a bird. (2) It is from Solomon, the great ruler of Palestine and Syria. (3) It has been begun with the name of Allah, the Compassionate, and Merciful, which is an unusual way of correspondence and is not followed by any kingdom in the world. (4) Then, it is also unusual that a letter should be written only in the name of Allah, the Exalted, spare from all other gods and goddesses. (5) The most important thing in it is that it quite clearly and plainly invites us to give up rebellion and adopt obedience and present ourselves before Solomon in submission (or as Muslims)."

"Present yourselves as Muslim" can have two meanings: (I) "Present yourselves in submission"; and (2) "present yourselves as Muslims (after embracing Islam)." The first meaning is in accordance with the Prophet Solomon's position as a ruler, and the second with his position as a Prophet. Probably this comprehensive word was used in order to convey both the meanings through the letter. The same sort of invitation has always been extended by Islam to independent nations and governments that they should either accept Islam and become equal partners in the Islamic system of life, or surrender political independence and submit to the system of Islam and pay Jizyah"

38The words used in the Text are: hatta tash-hu-dun (unless you are present, or unless you bear witness). That is: "I regard your presence necessary when I take a decision in important matters, and also that whatever decision I take you should be there to testify that it is right and correct." This shows that though the system of government among Saba' was kingship, it was not tyrannical; but the ruler of the time decided matters in consultation with the important people in the government.

39In this one sentence a thorough criticism has been made of imperialism. The kings' invasion of the other countries and the victorious nations' violence against the oppressed nations has never been for the sake of reform and goodwill. 'fire object has been to control and exploit the means and resources of sustenance granted to the other nation by God, and make it so helpless that it should never be able to rise in resistance and demand its share. For this purpose they block up all it, means of prosperity, power and honor, crush down all self respecting elements, instill in its members attitudes of slavery, flattery, treachery and spying against one another, imitation of the conqueror and respect for his civilization, contempt of their own civilization and other such mean qualities of character. Thus, gradually they bring them down to such a low level of character where they may not hesitate even to sell off any of their most sacred objects of heritage and be ready to perform any wretched service on payment.

40This sentence has two meanings and both are equally probable: (1) It may be a part of the queen of Sheba's speech, which she might have added in order to emphasize her foregoing words; and (2) it may be Allah's words which have been added as a parenthesis in support of the queen's speech.

41This sentence is not meant to express pride and vanity. What it means to say is this: "I have no desire for your wealth; I only desire that you should believe, or at least submit to a righteous system. if you agree to neither of these alternatives, it is not possible for me to accept the bribes of wealth and leave you tree in the , matter of a polytheistic and wicked system of life. What my Lord has given me is enough for me to cherish any desire for your wealth.

42There is a subtle gap between this and the previous sentence, which one can easily till up by a careful study of the discourse. It means this: "O Messengers, take ties gift back to the people who nave sent you. They will either have to yield to our first proposal, i. e. they should come before us as Muslims, or we

shall bring forces against them."

43The details of the story that have been omitted are to the effect: The envoys returned to the queen with the gift and made a report of what they had seen and heard; the queen decided on the basis of what she heard about the Prophet Solomon to make a visit to Jerusalem to see him personally; she left Saba' for Palestine accompanied by her royal entourage and Sent a message to Solomon's court that she was herself coming to personally hear the invitation from the king himself and to have a direct talk with him. Here, the story is resumed from the time when the queen had reached near Jerusalem and was going to appear before Solomon in a day or two.

44That is, the same throne about which the hoopoe (hud- hud) had reported, "She has a splendid throne." Some commentators have given a strange interpretation here. They say that the Prophet Solomon wanted to have the throne before him before the queen's arrival because he wanted to take possession of it. For he feared that if the queen became a Muslim. it would be unlawful to take possession of her property without her approval: therefore, he made haste to have the queen's throne with him even before her arrival in Jerusalem because at chat time it was lawful to take it into his possession. May Allah pardon us! This is a strange concept about the intention of a Prophet. Why should one not understand the verse in the light that Prophet Solomon wanted to show a miracle also to the queen and her courtiers besides preaching his message so that she might know what extraordinary powers Allah, Lord of the worlds, had granted His Prophet so that she might be convinced that Solomon was surely a Prophet of Allah`? Some modern commentators have put an even more strange meaning on this verse. They translate the verse thus: "Which of you can bring me a throne for the queen:'" whereas the Qur'an has used the word bi- 'arshi-ha which means "her throne', and not bi-'arshil,-laha, "a throne for her". They mistranslate the verse in order to get rid of what the Qur'an has stated that the Prophet Solomon wanted the queen's own throne to be brought froth Yaman to Jerusalem and that too before the queen's arrival.

45From this it becomes obvious whether the jinns under the Prophet Solomon were, according to the interpretation of some rationalist commentators of the modern times, from among mankind or from among the hidden creation commonly known as jinns. Obviously, the sitting of the Prophet Solomon's court would at the most be of three to four hours, and the distance of Ma'rib, capital of Saba', from Jerusalem was even as the crow dies, not less than 1500 miles. To fetch a splendid throne of a queen from such a distant place in such a short time could not be possible for a man, even if he be a very strong and robust person. This task cannot be performed even by a jet plane of today. The throne was not lying in a jungle from where it had just to be fetched. It lay in a queen's palace, which must have been well-guarded, and in the absence of the queen it must have been kept in a secure place If a man had gone to fetch it, he should have been accompanied by a commando force so that he could overwhelm the guards and snatch away the throne. How could all this be accomplished before the rising of the court? This thing can be conceived only in connection with a real Jinn !

46That is, "You can trust me in that I will not carry it away, nor steal any valuable thing from it."

47Nothing is known with certainty as to who this person was, what special knowledge he had and what Book is referred to here, whose knowledge he had. No explanation of these things has been given either in the Qur'an or in any authentic Hadith. Some of the commentators say that it was an angel; others say that it was a man. Then they differ as to the identity of the man. Someone mentions the name of Asaf bin Barchiah, who, according to the rabbinical traditions, was the Prince of Men. Someone says that he was Khidr; someone mentions some other name; and Imam Razi insists that it was the Prophet Solomon himself. But none of these has any reliable source for his information, and Imam Razi's opinion does not even fit in with the Qur'anic context. Likewise, about the Book also the commentators differ. Someone says that it refers to Lauh-i-Mahfuz (the Preserved Tablet) and some other takes it for the Book of Law. But all this is mere guess-work. Similar guesses have been made about the knowledge the man had from the Book. We only know and believe what has been said in the Qur'an, or what becomes evident from its words In any case the person was not from among the jinns, and possibly he was a man. He possessed some extraordinary knowledge, which had been derived from some Divine Book (al-Kitab) . The jinn had claimed to fetch the throne within a few hours by means of his physical strength; this man fetched it in a moment by the power of his knowledge.

48The words of the Qur'an are very clear in this regard. This person's claim did not remain a claim like the jinn's, but, in tact, as soon as he made the claim the throne was seen placed before the Prophet Solomon the next moment. just consider these words:

"The person said, `I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye.' As soon as Solomon saw the throne placed before him...."

Anyone who reads these words, regardless of the extraordinary nature of the event, will surely understand that no sooner did the person utter these words than the event as claimed by him took place forthwith. There is, therefore, no need to make far-fetched interpretations of this plain matter. Then, on seeing the throne, the Prophet Solomon's exclaiming, "This is by the Grace of my Lord so that He may test me (to see) whether I am grateful or ungrateful!" can be relevant only if the event be extraordinary; otherwise if only a skillful craftsman of the king had hurriedly made or arranged a throne for the queen, it could not be so novel an event at which the Prophet Solomon should have spontaneously exclaimed: "This is by the Grace of my Lord!..." and feared that the prompt arrangement of a throne for the honorable guest might cause him to become ungrateful to Allah instead of being grateful. After all, there could be no question of a believing ruler's becoming involved in vanity and self-conceit on this small achievement, especially when he was not merely an ordinary believer but a Prophet of Allah

As for the question as to how a royal throne was fetched over a distance of 1,500 miles in the twinkling of an eye, it can be briefly answered thus: "The concepts of time and space, and matter and movement, that we have formed on the basis of our experiments and observations, are only applicable to us. These

concepts are not correct in respect to God, nor is He bound by these. Not to speak of an ordinary throne, His power can make the sun; and even much larger stars, travel millions of millions of miles in the matter of moments. The God Who by His one Command brought this huge universe into being, had the power to have moved the throne of the queen of Sheba at a speed greater than the speed of light. In this very Qur'an it has been stated that Allah, by His powers, took his servant Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him) from Makkah to Jerusalem and also brought him back in the same night.

49That is, He does not stand in need of somebody's gratefulness. His Godhead is neither enhanced by an iota by somebody's gratefulness nor diminished by that amount by somebody's ingratitude or thanklessness. He is a Sovereign in His own right. His Sovereignty is not dependent on His creation's acknowledgment or rejection. The same thing has been expressed in the Qur'an through the Prophet Moses: "If you prove thankless, you and all the dwellers of the earth, (you should know that) Allah is All-Sufficient and worthy of all praise by Himself." (Ibrahim: 8). The same theme is contained in a Hadith Qudsi related in Muslims saying:

"Allah says: O My servants, if you all men and jinns, from the beginning to the end, together become like the heart of the most righteous person among you, it will not cause any increase in My Kingdom; and O My servants, if you all men and jinns, from the beginning to the end, together become like the heart of the most sinful person among you, it will not cause any decrease in My Kingdom. O My servants, it is your own deeds which I credit to your account, and then fully recompense you for them. So, whoever receives something good, let him be grateful to Allah, and whoever receives something else, let him curse his own self only".

50As to how the queen reached Jerusalem and how she was received, has been omitted. The story is resumed from the time when she had arrived at the palace to see Prophet Solomon.

51This is a meaningful sentence, which means: (1) "Whether she understands or not that it is her own throne which has been fetched in no time from her capital to distant place like Jerusalem;" and also (2) "whether she is guided aright after seeing this wonderful miracle, or persists in her error." This refutes the wrong idea of the people who say that the Prophet Solomon intended to take possession of the throne. Here he himself clearly says that he had done this in order to help the queen see Guidance.

52This also refutes the speculations of those people who depict the event in :t manner as though the Prophet Solomon wanted to have u throne made for the queen and for this purpose he invited tenders and a strong, robust artisan offered to make hint a throne in the matter of a few hours, but ,n expert craftsman submitted that he could make and produce it in no time. This w hole guess-work is destroyed by the tact that Solomon himself ordered the throne to be fetched before him (v. 381), and when it had been fetched, ordered his servants to set it before the queen casually (v. 41), and then when she arrived, she was asked whether her throne was like that (v. 42), and she answered, "It is just the same."

Obviously, there could he no room for the absurd interpretations in the face of such a clear statement of facts. If there is still any doubt left, it can be satisfied by the next sentence.

53That is, "Even before we saw this miracle we had been convinced by what we had heard of Solomon (peace be upon him) that he was a Prophet of Allah, and not merely a ruler of a kingdom." After seeing the throne and saying, "It is just the same", what could be the relevance of adding this sentence if it is supposed that the Prophet Solomon had got a throne manufactured and set the same before her? Even if it is supposed that no effort was spared to have a throne manufactured closely resembling the queen's what special excellence it could have to make a sun- worshiping queen exclaim "We had already known this and we had become Muslims!"

54This sentence has been added by Allah to clarity the queen's position, saying that she was not obdurate and stubborn. She had been an unbeliever till then mainly because she canto of an unbelieving people. As she had become accustomed to bowing down before a false deity since her childhood, it had become a hindrance for her to the right way. As soon as she came in contact with the Prophet Solomon, she discerned the right way and the hindrance was removed Forthwith.

55This was the last thing that opened the queen's eyes. The first thing was Solomon's letter that had been begun with the name of the AII-Compassionate, the AII-Merciful Allah, a way different front the common custom prevalent among the kings. The second was his rejection of her gifts, which made the queen understand that he was a different kind of king. The third was the report made by the queen's envoys froth which she came to know about Solomon's pious life, his wisdom and his message of the Truth. This very dung had induced her to travel to Jerusalem herself to personally meet the Prophet Solomon, and to this she had referred when she said. "We had already known this and we had become Muslims." The fourth thing was the removal of her throne from Ma'rib to Jerusalem in no time, from which the queen realized that he had Allah's power at Itil hack. Now this was the last thing that removed every doubt front her mind regarding the unique and great personality of the Prophet Solomon. When she saw that in spite of possessing every means of comfort and ease and a grand palace for a dwelling, he was so free from every conceit, so God-fearing and righteous and so grateful to God that he bowed before Him far every small favor and his life so different from the life of those who were enamored of the world, she exclaimed the words that follow.

56This story of the Prophet Solomon and the queen of Sheba has been related in the Old and the New Testaments and the Israelite traditions in different ways, but the Qur'anic narration differs from all others. A resume of the story as given in the Old Testament is as follows:

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the tame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company . when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions ..... And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and

the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cup bearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thine wisdom: Howbeit I believed nut their words, until I carte, and thine eves had seen it: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of they wisdom Was not told rte: for thou exceedest the (ante that 1 heard. Happy are thy men. and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord they God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne ..... And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon ..... And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatever she asked ..... So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants." (2 Chronicles, 9: 1-12. A similar account is also found in I Kings, 10: 1-13).

In the New Testament. the following sentence only has been reported from a discourse of the Prophet Jesus about the queen of Sheba .

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here." (Matthew, 12: 42; Luke, 11: 31).

The story of the Prophet Solomon and the queen of Sheba as given in the rabbinical traditions resembles in most parts with the Qur'anic version. The hopoe's absence, then its .arrival and reporting about Sheba and its queen, the Prophet Solomon's sending her a letter through it, the hoopoe's dropping the letter in front of the queen right at the time when she was going for sun-worship, the queen's calling for her ministers' council, then her sending of valuable gifts to Solomon, her traveling to Jerusalem and meeting him personally, her arrival in the palace and thinking that Prophet Solomon was sitting in the midst of a pool of water, tucking up her skirt in order to enter it-all this has been mentioned in these traditions as in the Qur'an. But there is no mention whatsoever in these traditions of the Prophet Solomon's reply on receipt of the gift, having the queen's th rune fetched from Ma'rib, his bowing down before God in thankfulness for every favor of His, and the queen's embracing the Faith ultimately, at his hand, his belief in the oneness of God, etc. And worst of all, these wicked people have accused Prophet Solomon of having committed adultery, God forbid, with the queen of Sheba, giving rise to an illegitimate race, which gave birth to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, who destroyed Jerusalem. (Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XI, p. 443). The fact of the matter is that n section of the Jewish learned men have been highly critical of the Prophet Solomon. They have accused him of heinous crimes like violating the Commandments of the Torah, of pride of government, pride of wisdom, of being a hen-pecked husband, and of luxurious living, polytheism and idol-worship. (Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XI, pp. 439-441). It is due to this propaganda that the Bible presents him only as a king instead of a Prophet, a king who was lost in the love of polytheistic women against the Divine Commandments, whose heart was turned away from God, and was turned to other gods and goddesses. (I Kings, 11: 1-11). As against this it can be seen

what great favor has the Qur'an done to the Israelites by cleansing the personalities of their elders of the tilth thrown at them by themselves, and yet the Israelites, ungrateful as they are, look upon the Qur'an and him who brought it as their enemies.

57For comparison. see Al-A'raf: 73-79, Hud: 61-68, Ash-Shu'ara': 141159, Al-Qamar: 23-32, Ash-Shams: 11-15.

58That is, as soon as the Prophet Salih embarked on his mission, his people were divined into two groups, the believers and the disbelievers, and a conflict started between them as stated elsewhere in the Qur'an:

"The chiefs of his tribe, who .were full of pride, said to those who had believed from among the oppressed people, 'Do you know it for certain that Salih is a Messenger from his Lord?' They replied, `Indeed, we believe in the message with which he has been sent.' But those who had arrogant assumption of superiority, said, `We deny that which you believe'." (Al-A'raf: 75-76).

One should note that precisely the same situation arose in Makkah at the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him). The nation was divided into two factions and a conflict started between them. Therefore, this story fully applied to the conditions in which these verses were revealed.

59That is, "Why do you hasten in asking for a torment instead of some good from Allah`?" The following saying of the chiefs of the Prophet Salih's people has been related at another place: "O Salih, bring that scourge with which you threaten us, if you really are one of the Messengers." (Al-A`raf:77).

60One meaning of what they said is: "Your movement has proved to be an evil omen for us. Since you and your companions have revolted against the ancestral religion, one or the other calamity is befalling us almost daily, because our deities have become angry with us. In this sense, this saying is similar to the sayings of most of those polytheistic nations who regarded their Prophets as ominous. In Surah Ya Sin, for instance, a nation has been mentioned, which said to its Prophet "We regard you as an evil omen for ourselves." (v. 18) The same thing was said by the Pharaoh's people about the Prophet Moses: "Whenever a good time came, they would say, `This is but our due', and when there was a bad time, they would ascribe their calamities to Moses and his companions." (Al A`raf 130) Almost similar things were said in Makkah about the Holy Prophet also.

The other meaning of their saying is this: "Your advent has stirred up divisions in our nation. Before this we were a united people, who followed one religion. Your ominous coming has turned brother against brother, and separated son from father. " This very accusation was being brought against the Holy Prophet by his opponents over and over again. Soon after he started his mission of inviting the people to

the Faith, the delegation of the chiefs of the Quraish, who went to Abu Talib, had said, "Give up to us this nephew of yours: he has opposed your religion and your forefathers' religion and has sown discord among your people, and has held the whole nation as foolish." (Ibn Hisham, Vol. I. p. 285).

On the occasion of Hajj, when the disbelievers of Makkah feared that the visitors from outside might be influenced by the Holy Prophet, they held consultations and decided to approach the Arab tribes and tell them: "This man is a sorcerer, who by his sorcery separates son from his father, brother from his brother, wife from her husband, and man from his family." (Ibn Hisham, p. 289).

61That is, "The truth is not that which you understand it to be. The fact which you have not yet realized is that my advent has put you to the test. Until my arrival you were following a beaten track in your ignorance. You could not recognize the truth from the falsehood; you had no criterion for judging the genuine from the counterfeit; your worst people were lording over your best people, who were rolling in the dust. But now a criterion has come against which you will all be judged and assessed. Now a balance has been set up publicly, which will weigh everybody according to his true worth. Now both the truth and the falsehood have been made manifest. Whoever accepts the truth will weigh heavy whether he was not being held even worth a farthing so far; and whoever persists in falsehood will not weigh a gramme even though he was being esteemed as the chief of the chiefs before this. Now the judgment will not be based on the nobility or otherwise of the family one came of, or the abundance of the means and resources that one possessed, or one's physical strength but on this whether one accepted the truth gracefully or preferred to remain attached to falsehood."

62That is, nine chiefs of the tribes each of whom had a band of followers with him.

63"The guardian": the chief of the Prophet Salih's tribe, who, according to the ancient tribal tradition and custom, could make a claim to blood vengeance. The same was the position in Makkah of the Holy Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib. The Quraish were hesitant that if they attacked and killed the Holy Prophet, Abu Talib, the chief of Bani Hashim, would come out with a claim to blood vengeance on behalf of his clan.

64This precisely was the kind of plot which the Makkan chiefs of the clans were devising against the Holy Prophet, and they devised the same ultimately on the occasion of migration (Hijrah) to kill him. They decided that men from all the clans would attack him in a body so that the Bani Hashim could not hold any one of the clans as responsible for the murder, and, therefore, would find it impossible to fight all of them at one and the same time.

65That is, "Before they could make the night attack on the Prophet Salih at the appointed time Allah sent down His scourge which destroyed their whole nation completely. It appears that they made this plot after hamstringing the she-camel. According to Surah Hud: 65, when they had killed the she-camel, Prophet

Salih gave them a notice to enjoy life in their houses for three more days, for then they would be seized by the torment. At this they might have thought that the torment with which Salih threatened them might come or might not, but they must take We vengeance on Salih himself. Therefore, most probably they chose We same night for We attack which Allah had appointed for sending down We torment, and thus were struck down by Allah even before they could touch We Prophet Salih."

66That is, "The ignorant people will say, `There is no link between We Prophet Salih and his she-camel and We earthquake which struck We people of Thamud. These Wings have Weir natural causes. Their occurrence or otherwise has nothing to do with We piety and wickedness of the people of a place, with Weir high-handedness or Weir show of mercy. It is meaningless merely to say that such and such a city or land was filled with sin and wickedness, and therefore, it was overwhelmed by flood, or its habitation turned upside down by an earthquake, or it was ruined by a sudden disaster'." But We people who possess knowledge know that this universe is not being ruled by a deaf and blind God, but by an All-Wise, All-Knowing One Who is deciding We destinies. His decisions are not subject to physical causes, but We physical causes are subject to His will. His decisions to debase or exalt nations are not taken blindly but with wisdom and justice. In His Book of Law Were is also included We principle of retribution, according to which the wicked are made to suffer for Weir evil deeds even in this world, on moral grounds. The people who are aware of these realities, cannot explain away We occurrence of an earthquake by citing physical and natural causes; they will rather look upon them as the scourge of warning for themselves, and they will learn lessons from it. They will try to understand those moral causes because of which the Creator annihilated a flourishing nation, which He Himself had created. They will divert Weir conduct and attitude from We track that brings Allah's wrath to We way that joins them to His mercy.

67For comparison, See Al-A`raf: 80-84; Hud, 74-83, Al-Hijr: 57-77, Al-Anbiya': 71-75, Ash-Shu`ara': 160-174, Al-`Ankabut: 28-75, As-Saffat: 133138, Al-Qamar: 33-39.

68This can have several meanings and probably all are implied: (1) `That you are not unaware of this act's being wicked, but you commit it knowing it to be so"; (2) "You are also not unaware that the man has not been created for the man's sex satisfaction but the woman, and the distinction between them (man and woman) is not such as you cannot perceive, yet with open eyes you commit this abominable act." (3) "You indulge in this indecency publicly when there are people watching you", as stated in Surah `Ankbut: 29, thus: " ..... and you indulge in indecencies in your assemblies."

69The word jahalat here has been used in the sense of folly and stupidity. But even if it is taken in the sense of ignorance and lack of knowledge, it will mean: "You do not know the evil consequences of your acts. You only know that you are deriving sensual pleasure, but you do not know what severe punishment awaits you for this criminal and heinous pleasure-seeking. The scourge of Allah is ready to strike you but you are engaged in a senseless, filthy game with impunity.

70That is, "The Prophet Lot had already been instructed not to take the woman along because she had to be destroyed along with her people."

71From here starts the second discourse, and this is its introductory sentence. This introduction teaches how the Muslims should begin a speech. That is why the truly Islamic-minded people have always been starting their speeches and discourses with the praise of Allah and salutation on His righteous servants. But now this is looked upon as characteristic of bigotry, and the present-day Muslim speakers have no idea of starting their speech with these words, or feel shy of doing so.

72Superficially the question whether Allah is better or the false deities appears to be odd. As a matter of fact, there can be no question of goodness in the false gods and, therefore, they cannot be compared to Allah. As for the polytheists, even they had no misconception that Allah could be compared to their gods. But they were asked this question in order to be warned against their error. For obviously none in the world would do anything unless he saw some good in it. Now if the polytheists served their deities and implored them for their needs instead of Allah, and presented their offerings before them, this would be meaningless unless they perceived some good in them. That is why they have been explicitly asked to consider whether Allah is better or their deities, for they could not face and answer this forth-right question. Even the most hardened polytheist among them could not venture to say that their deities were better. But if they acknowledged that Allah is better it would demolish their whole creed, for then it would be unreasonable to adopt the inferior against the superior creed. The Meaning of the Qur'an Thus, the Qur'an at the very outset made the opponents helpless. After this, pointed questions have been asked, one after the other, about the manifestations of the power and creation of Allah to the effect: "Whose works are these? Is there besides Allah any other god also associated with these works'? If not, why have you then set up these others as your deities?"

According to traditions, whenever the Holy Prophet recited this verse, he would immediately respond to it, saying: "Nay, but Allah is better, and He alone is the Everlasting and Exalted and High."

73No one from among the mushriks could answer that someone other than Allah had done these works, or someone else was Allah's associate in doing these. The Qur'an at other places says with respect to the pagans of Makkah and the Arab mushrikin: "If you ask them, 'Who has created the heavens and the earth?' they will surely say: 'The All-Mighty, the All-Knowing One has created them'." (Az-Zukhruf: 9) "And if you ask them, Who has created them? they will surely say, 'Allah'." (Az-Zukhruf: 87), "If you ask them, 'Who sent down rain water from the sky and thereby raised the dead earth back to life ?' They will surely say, 'Allah'." (Al-`Ankabut: 63). "Ask them: Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth? Who has power over these faculties of hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? Who controls and directs the system of the universe?' They will surely say, 'Allah'." (Yunus: 31). Not only the polytheists of Arabia but of the whole world generally acknowledged, and acknowledge even today, that Allah is the Creator of the universe and He alone controls and directs

its system. Therefore, none of them could answer this question even obstinately for the sake of the argument that their deities were Allah's associates in those works, for if he had done so, thousands of his own people would have belied him saying that, that was not their belief.

This and the other questions that follow not only contain a refutation of the creed of shirk (polytheism) but of atheism as well. For example, in this first very question, it has been asked, "Who has sent down rainwater and caused to spring up by it beautiful gardens?" Just consider whether the presence of the substances essential for the growth of countless kinds of plant life, in the soil or near the soil, and the existence in water of those very qualities which are in accordance with the requirements of animal and vegetable life, and the evaporation of this water again and again from the seas, and its condensation and raining regularly in different parts of the earth from time to time, and the coordination between the soil and the air, the water, the temperature;.etc., conducive to proper growth of plant life and fulfillment of the countless requirements of every sort of animal life, could be just accidental, or the result of the wise scheming and planning the supreme power and will of an All-Wise Designer. And is it possible that this accident should continue to recur constantly for millions and millions of years on end? Only an obstinate person who has been blinded by prejudice will regard it as accidental, for no truth loving, sensible person can make such a senseless claim or accept it.

74It is not a simple thing for the earth to be a place of rest for the countless kinds of different creations living on it. If man looks into the wise harmony and coordination with which this sphere of the earth has been established, he is simply amazed and starts feeling that these harmonies and concordances and relations could not be brought about without the grand design of an All-Wise, All Knowing and All-Powerful God. This sphere of the earth is floating in space and is not resting on anything, yet there is no commotion and no vibration in its movement. Had there been any vibration in it, such as we experience during an earthquake, life could not exist here. This sphere comes before the sun and hides from it regularly, which causes the alternation of the day and night. Had it turned the same face perpetually towards the sun and kept the other side always hidden, no life could be possible here, for on the bright side all life would have been shriveled up, and on the dark side all life would have been frozen to death. The sphere is enveloped by a five hundred mile thick atmosphere, which protects it against the' continual bombardment of meteors, otherwise the twenty million meteors on the average, which dart towards the earth daily at 30 miles per second, would have caused such destruction as would not have allowed any man animal or tree to survive. The same atmosphere controls the temperature, raises clouds from the oceans, carries water to different parts of the earth and provides the required gases that sustain the human, animal and plant life. Without it the earth could not become a fit place of rest for any kind of animal life. Just under the earth's surface all those minerals and chemicals which are essential to the survival of vegetable and animal life have been provided in abundance. Wherever these natural resources do not exist, the land there cannot sustain any kind of life. A great store of water has been arranged on the earth in the form of oceans, rivers, lakes, springs and underground channels and snow on the mountains which melts and flows down in the form of rivers. Without such an arrangement there could be no life. Then the earth has been endowed with an appropriate gravitational pull by which it

keeps the water and the air and all other things found on it attracted to it. If this pull had been a little less strong, it could not have stopped the air and the water from escaping. It would also have so much increased the temperature that life here would have become difficult. On the other hand, if the gravitational pull had been a little stronger, the atmosphere would have been denser, its pressure would have increased, evaporation would have become difficult and rains impossible; the cold would have increased and less areas on earth would have been inhabitable; men and animals would have been shorter in size but heavier in weight, which would have made movement difficult. Besides, this sphere has been located at a suitable distance from the sun, which is most appropriate for the population here. If the distance had been longer, the earth would have received less of heat, the climate would have been much colder, the seasons much longer and the earth would be hardly inhabitable. On the other hand, if the distance had been shorter, the intensity of the heat along with other factors would have rendered it unfit for the kind of life man is living here.

These are a few of those harmonies and concordances due to which earth has become a place of rest for its population. A man with a little common sense who is aware of these facts cannot imagine for a moment that these concordances have come into existence without the design of an All-Wise Creator, as a mere accident, nor can he ever conceive that a god or goddess, jinn or prophet, saint or angel, could have had any hand in the creation and bringing into operation of this grand design.

75That is, the bodies of sweet and saline waters that exist on the earth but do not , intermingle. Underground water channels mostly flow separately with sweet water and saline water side by side. Even in the middle of the bitter seas there exist at some places springs of sweet water; their current remains separate from the sea water and the sea passengers obtain their drinking water from it. (For further explanation, see, E.N. 68 of Surah Al-Furqan) .

76The Arab polytheists themselves knew and acknowledged that Allah alone could avert a disaster. Therefore, the Qur'an reminds them again and again that they implore Allah alone for help when they are confronted by a calamity. But when the calamity is removed, they start invoking others besides Allah. (For details, see E.N.'s. 29 to 41 of Al-An`am, Yunus: 21-22, E.N. 46 of An-Nahl, and E.N. 84 of Bani Isra'il). And this is not only true of the Arab polytheists but of all polytheists; so much so that even the Russian atheists who are regularly campaigning against God-Worship, had to invoke God when in the Second World War they were tightly encircled by the German forces.

77This has two meanings: (1) "He raises one generation after the other and one nation after the other"; and (2) "He gives you power and authority to rule in the earth"

78That is, "He has made such arrangements by means of the stars that you can find your way even in the darkness of the night." This is also because of the wise planning of Allah that He has created such means by which man can determine his direction and the way to his destination in his journeys by sea and land. In the day time he is guided by different land-marks and the direction of sunrise and sun-set,

and in the dark nights by the stars. In Surah An-Nahl this has been counted among the bounties of Allah: "He has placed land-marks to direct people, and by the stars, too, they are guided aright." (v. 16)

79"Allah's mercy" the rain whose coming is promptly foretold by the winds.

80The simple fact hat has been expressed in this one sentence is so vast in meaning and detail that as one considers it more and more deeply one goes on getting new and ever new proofs of Allah's existence and His unity. to the first place, take the question of the creation itself. Man by his knowledge has not been able to discover what is life, how and where form it comes. So far the admitted scientific fact is that the mere arrangement of inanimate matter by itself cannot bring about life. Though the atheists assume, unscientifically, that life comes into existence automatically when all the elements essential for its creation combine together accidentally in the right proportion, yet if the mathematical law of chance is applied to it, the possibility of its occurrence comes to naught. All attempts made so far to produce animate matter out of inanimate matter experimentally in the laboratory have met with utter failure in spite of employing every possible care. At the most what has been created is DNA, which is the basic constituent of the living cell. This is the essence of life but not life itself. Life in itself even now is a miracle which cannot be explained scientifically except by saying that it is the result of a Creator's will and command and design.

Furthermore, life does not exist in a solitary form but in a limitless variety of forms. Man has so far discovered more or less a million species of animals and two hundred thousand species of plants on the earth, which in their constitution and special characteristics are so clearly and absolutely different from one another, and have been maintaining their distinctive features since the earliest known times so consistently that no Darwin could ever give any rational explanation of this great variety of life except the existence of the creative design of One God. Not a link has so far been discovered between any two species, which might have broken up the form of the characteristics and constitution of one species and might be struggling to attain the characteristics and constitution of another species. The whole record of the fossils is without such a precedent, and among the existing animals also there is no such "eunuch" in its physical form. Any member of any species that exists is found with the distinctive features of its own species, and every story that is invented and announced from time to tune about the discovery of some missing link is destroyed by the facts themselves. Therefore, the inevitable fact is that it is the All-Wise Designer, the Planner of creation, its Enforcer and its Fashioner, Who has endowed life with all its countless different forms.

This was about the beginning of the creation. Now let us consider its reproduction. The Creator has placed in the constitution and snake-up of every animal and vegetable species such a wonderful mechanism, which goes on producing through its countless members an endless race exactly with its own distinctive form and nature and characteristics, and it never has happened even by mistake that in these millions and millions of tiny sex workshops a certain workshop of a species may have turned out a specimen of a different species. The observations of modern Genetics in this connection present

wonderful facts. Every plant has been so endowed with the capability of procreating its species that the new generation should possess all the distinctive characteristics of its own species and its every member should be distinguished in its special features from the members of all other species. This element for the survival of the species and its procreation is contained in a part of a cell of every plant, which can be seen with effort only through a most powerful microscope. This tiny engineer directs the whole development the plant precisely and definitely on the way which is the way .of its own distinctive species. That is why all the plants that have emerged from a grain of wheat arty where in the world have in turn produced only wheat. In no climate and in no region has it ever happened that from the whole race of a grain of wheat even a single grain of barley might have emerged. The same is the case with animals and men. None of them has been created just for once, but on an inconceivably high scale a huge factory of reproduction is functioning every where, which is constantly bringing into existence, from the members of every species, countless other members of the same species. If one considers the microscopic germ of procreation which along with all the distinctive features and hereditary characteristics of its species is found in a small portion of its tiny self and thou looks at the extremely delicate and complex physiological system and the subtle, intricate processes by which the procreative seed of every member of every species produces a member of the same species, one cannot conceive for a moment that such a tine and subtle system could come into being by itself, and then keep on functioning by itself in millions and millions of the members of different species. This thing stands in need of an All-Wise Designer not only for its beginning but for its proper and perpetual functioning also it needs an Administrator Who is at once Wise and Ever-Living and Self-Subsistent, Who is ever watching and guiding the work of these workshops.

These facts destroy the very basis of an atheist's denial of God as also of a polytheist's creed of polytheism. A foolish person only can think that an angel or a jinn or a prophet or a saint has any hand in this work of God, but no unbiased person possessed of a little common sense can ever say that this huge workshop of production and reproduction with all its underlying wisdom and order started working just accidentally and has since been working so automatically.

81The question of the provision of sustenance also is not so simple as a person may feel it to be from a cursory study of this brief sentence. There exist on this earth millions of animal and vegetable species, each comprising billions of members having different food requirements. The Creator has arranged the means of sustenance for each species in such abundance and so within easy reach that members of no species ever go without food. Then the agencies of the earth and sky which combine and work together in this system are varied and countless. Unless there is the right kind of coordination and harmony between the heat, light, air, water and the diverse substances of the earth, not a single particle of food can be produced.'

Can anyone conceive that this wise system could come about just accidentally. without the intelligent planning and design of an All-Wise Creator? And can anybody in his senses imagine that in this system there could be any hand of a Jinn or an angel or the spirit of a pious man?

82That is, "You should either bring a proof to show that someone else is an associate of Allah in these works, or, if that is not possible, you should at least explain by an argument why you should worship and serve any other god beside Allah, when One Allah alone has done, and is doing, all these works."

83In the preceding verses, arguments have been given to prove that Allah is the One and only Deity when considered from the viewpoint of creation, design and provision of the means of sustenance. Now in this verse it is being told that from the viewpoint of knowledge too, which is an important attribute of Godhead, Allah is Unique and without associate. Whatever creations are therein the heavens and the earth, whether angels or jinns, prophets and saints, or other men and other creatures, they have only limited knowledge. Something is hidden from all of them. The All-Knowing One is only Allah, from Whom nothing whatever of this universe is hidden, and Who knows every thing of the past and the present and the future.

The word ghaib means something hidden and covered. As a term it implies everything which is unknown, and beyond one's sphere of knowledge and information. There are many things in the world which individually are known to some human beings and. unknown to others. And there are many others which taken as a whole have never been known to any of mankind, nor are known at present; nor will be known in the future: The same is the case with the jinns and the angels and other kinds of creation: certain things are known to some of them and hidden from others, and many things hidden from all of them and known to none. All kinds of hidden things are only known to One Being, the All-Knowing Allah. For Him nothing is unknown everything is known and evident.

In order to bring out this reality the method of the question as employed above with regard to creation, design and sustenance of the universe has not been adopted here. The reason is that the manifestations of those attributes are clear and evident which everyone sees, and which even the pagans and polytheists acknowledged, and do even today, that they are the works of Allah. So, the argument adopted above was: When all these works, as you admit, are being done by Allah, and no one else is His partner in these, why have you then made others His associates in Divinity, and in His worship? However, the attribute of knowledge . has no perceptible manifestation which may be referred to and pointed out. It can be comprehended only by thought and reflection. Therefore, it has been put forward as an assertion instead of a question. Now it is for every intelligent person to think and consider for himself whether it is reasonable to believe that there should be any other than Allah, who is all-knowing, i.e. who knows all those conditions and things and realities which existed in the universe in the past; or exist now; or will exist in the future. And if there is none other who is all knowing, and cannot be, then is it reasonable to believe that any of those who are not aware fully of the realities and conditions and circumstances can become the answerer of the people's prayers, fulfiller of their needs and remover of their hardships ?

There is a subtle relationship between Divinity and the knowledge of the unseen and hidden. Since the earliest times in whatever being has man imagined the presence of an attribute of Godhead, he has

taken it for granted that it knows everything and nothing is hidden from it. In other words, it is self-evident for man to believe that making or marring the destinies, answering the prayers, fulfilling the needs and helping everyone in need of help, can be the work of the being who knows everything and from whom nothing is hidden. That is why whomever man has regarded as possessor of the powers and authority of Godhead he has necessarily regarded him as the knower of all hidden things as well. For his intellect testifies rightly that knowledge and authority are inter-dependent. Now if it is a fact that none but God is the Creator and the Designer and the Answerer of the prayers and the Providence, as has been proved in the foregoing verses, then it is also a self-evident reality that none but God is the Knower of the hidden things. After all, who in his senses could imagine that an angel or a jinn or a prophet or a saint or any other creature would be knowing where and what kinds of animals existed in the oceans and in the atmosphere and under the layers of the earth and upon its surface? And what is the correct number of the planets in the heavens? And what kinds of creatures exist in each of them? And where is each one of these creatures living and what are its requirements? All this should necessarily be known to Allah, because He has created them and He alone has to watch over their conditions and control their affairs and arrange for their sustenance. But how can some one else with his limited self have this vast and all-embracing knowledge and what has he to do with the functions of creation and sustenance that he should know these things?

Then this quality is also not divisible in the sense that a person, for instance, may be the knower of everything on the earth, or the knower of everything concerning human beings only, on the earth. It is in the same way indivisible as are God's Creativity and His Providence and His Self-Subsistence indivisible. After all, how can it be possible for one to know all the affairs and all the conditions and states of all human beings who have been born in the world since the beginning of creation, and will be born till Resurrection, from the time their mothers conceived them till the time they will breath their last ? And how and why will he know all this ? Is he the creator of these countless multitudes ? Did he create their seed in their fathers' sperm-drop ? Did he mold and shape them in their mother's womb? Did he arrange for their normal birth'? Did he make the destiny of each one of them? Is he responsible for taking decisions with regard to their life and death, their health and ill-health, their prosperity and adversity, and their rise and fall in the world ? And since when did he become responsible for it? Since before his own birth or since after it ? And how can these responsibilities remain confined only to human beings? This is only a part of the universal administration of the heavens and the earth. The Being Who is controlling the whole universe is the Being Who alone can be responsible for the creation and death of men, for restricting and extending their provisions and for making and marring their destinies.

That is why it is a fundamental article of Islam that none other than Allah is the Knower of the hidden and unseen things. Allah may disclose whatever of His information He wills to whomsoever of His servants He pleases and bless him with the knowledge of one or more of the hidden things as a whole. Being the Knower of all hidden and unseen things is the attribute only of Allah, Who is the Lord of all creation "He alone has the keys of the `unseen' of which none has the knowledge but He." (Al-An`am: 59) "Allah alone has the knowledge of the Hour: He alone sends down the rain and He alone knows what is (taking

shape) in the wombs of the mothers. No living being knows what he will earn the next day, nor does anybody know in what land he will die." (Luqman 34) "He knows what is before the people and also what is hidden from them; and they cannot comprehend anything of His knowledge save whatever He Himself may please to reveal." (Al Baqarah: 255).

The Qur'an does not rest content with this general and absolute negation of the knowledge of the hidden and unseen for the different forms of creation, but about the Prophets in particular, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself it clearly says that they do not possess the knowledge of the hidden and unseen, and that they were given only that much knowledge of the hidden by Allah as was necessary to enable them to carry out the duties of Prophethood. Surah Al-An`am.: 50, Al-A'raf: 187, At-Taubah: 101, Hud: 31, AlAhzab: 63, Al-Ahqaf: 9, At-Tahrim: 3 and Al-Jinn: 26-28 do not leave any room for doubt in this regard.

All these elucidations of the Qur'an support and explain the verse under discussion after which there remains no doubt that looking upon another than Allah as the knower of the hidden and unseen and believing that someone else also possesses the knowledge of all the past and future events, is an absolutely un-Islamic belief. Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Imam Ahmad, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abu Hatim have cited this saying of Hadrat `A'ishah. through authentic reporters: "Whoever claimed that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) knew what was going to happen the next day, accused Allah of lying, for Allah says: O Prophet, say, `None in the heavens and the earth has the knowledge of the hidden and unseen but Allah'." Ibn al-Mundhir has reported this on the authority of 'Ikrimah, the well-known pupil of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas: "A person asked the Holy Prophet: O Muhammad, when will Resurrection be? And our territory is suffering from famine: when will it rain ? And my wife is pregnant: what will she deliver, a boy or a girl? And I know what I have earned today; but what shall I earn tomorrow? And I know where I was born, but where shall I die?" In reply, the Holy Prophet recited verse 34 of Surah Luqman as cited above. Then the well-known Tradition as reported in Bukhari; and Muslim and other works of Hadith also supports the same. According to it one of the questions asked by Angel Gabriel from the Holy Prophet when he sat among the Companions in human shape before him, was: "When will Resurrection be?" The Holy Prophet replied: "The one being questioned knows no better than the one questioning." Then added, "This is one of those five things whose knowledge is possessed by none but Allah," and then he recited the above-cited verse of Surah Luqman .

84That is "Those others about whom it is thought that they possess the knowledge of the hidden and, therefore, are regarded as partners in Divinity, are themselves unaware of their future. They do not know when will Resurrection be when Allah will raise them up again.

85After warning the people about their basic errors with regard to Divinity, it is being said that the reason why these people are involved in these errors is not that they have reached this conclusion after serious thought and deliberation that there exist other beings also who are Allah's associates in His Divinity, but the actual reason is that they have never considered this matter seriously. As they are unaware of the

Hereafter, or are in doubt about it, or are blind to it, their heedlessness of the Hereafter has developed in them an utterly irresponsible attitude. They are not at all serious about the universe and the real problems of their own lives. They do not bother to know what reality is and whether their philosophy of life accords with that reality or not. For, according to them, in the end the polytheist and the atheist, the monotheist and the agnostic, all will become one with the dust after death, and nothing will bear any fruit.

The theme of the Hereafter is contained in this sentence of the preceding verse: "They do not know when they will be raised back to life." In that sentence it was said that those who are made deities-the angels, jinns, prophets, saints, etc., do not themselves know when will Resurrection be. Here three things have been said about the common polytheists and the atheists: (1) They do not at all know whether there will be any Hereafter or not; (2) this lack of information on their part is not due to the reason that they were never informed of this, but because they did not believe in the information given to them and doubted its authenticity; and (3) they never bothered to consider with due thought and seriousness the arguments that were advanced about the coming of the Hereafter, but they preferred to remain blind to it.

86This brief sentence contains two strong arguments for the Hereafter as well as admonition:

Firstly, those communities who rejected the Hereafter could not help becoming criminals: they lived irresponsibly; they committed cruelties and all kinds of sin; and ultimately their moral depravity led them to utter ruin. This continuous experience of human history which is testified by the doomed communities all over the world, clearly shows that belief and unbelief in the Hereafter has a deep relationship with the soundness or the unsoundness of human behavior. Belief in it generates sound behavior and denial of it unsound behavior. This is a clear proof of the fact that belief in it is in accordance with the reality; that is why belief helps life to follow the right path. And rejection of it is against the reality; that is why rejection leads life into crooked alleys.

Secondly, the destruction of the communities, which became criminals, one after the other, in the long experience of history is a clear pointer to the fact that this universe is not being ruled by the deaf and blind and senseless forces, but this is a wise system which is functioning according to the unalterable law of retribution, which is dealing with the human communities only on moral grounds, in which no community is given long enough rope to commit whatever evil it likes and continue to enjoy life and commit injustices after it has once risen to power and prosperity. But when a wicked community happens to reach a certain stage, a mighty hand topples it from power and hurls it into the abyss of ignominy. Anyone who realizes this fact can have no doubt that the same law of retribution calls for the establishment of a new world after this world, where all individuals and nations and the whole mankind collectively should be rewarded and punished for their deeds. For the requirements of justice cannot be fulfilled only by the destruction of a wicked nation; this does not in any way redress the grievances of the oppressed people; this does not punish those who had enjoyed life and left the world before the coming down of the scourge; this does not also take to task those wicked people who went on leaving behind them legacies of immoralities and deviations for the coming generations. The torment that visited the

nation only put a stop to the further tyrannies of its last generation. The court has not yet started working, to punish every wicked person for the evil done, to compensate every oppressed person for the losses incurred, and to reward all those who stood by the right against the onslaught of evil, endeavored to reform things and faced persecutions in this way throughout their lives. All this should necessarily happen at some time. For the continuous operation in the world of the law of retribution clearly points to the temperament and technique of the ruling government of the universe that it judges human deeds by moral standards and punishes and rewards them accordingly.

Besides these two arguments, the aspect of admonition in this verse is: "Learn lessons from the fate of the guilty people of the past, and do not persist in the foolish belief of the denial of the Hereafter, which, in fact, was responsible for making them criminals. "

87That is, "You have done full justice to your mission of preaching. Now if they do not listen to you, and wish to persist in their folly and deserve the Divine torment, you should not consume yourself by being distressed and grieved at their condition. Then, why should you feel vexed at their mean machinations that they are devising in order to fight the truth and to frustrate your movement of return `? You have Allah's power at your back. If they do not listed to you, they will only be harming themselves, not you."

88The same threat which is implied in the preceding verse. What they meant was: "When will the scourge with which you threaten us overtake us? Why are we not being punished when we have not only rejected you but have also done whatever we could to frustrate your mission'?"

89This is a royal way of saying a thing. When words like "perhaps", "no wonder", etc. occur in the Divine discourse, they do not contain any sense of doubt, but express Allah's Independence and Self-Sufficiency. Allah's power is so great that His willing a thing and its happening is one and the same thing. It is inconceivable that He should will a thing and it should not happen. Therefore, when He says, "No wonder it may well be so", it means, "It will certainly be so if you do not mend your ways."

90That is, "It is Allah's mercy that He does not seize the culprit immediately after his commission of a crime but gives him respite to reform himself. But most people are not grateful for this, and do not utilize the period of respite for their reformation. On the contrary, when they see that they have not been taken to task immediately, they form the idea that there is none to call theta to account. Therefore, they are free to do whatever they like and they should not listen to any word of admonition".

91That is, "He is not only aware of their open misdeeds but is also fully aware of the malice and spite which they are concealing in their hearts and the evil plots which they are making secretly. Therefore, when the time comes to call them to account, they will be taken to task for everything done and thought."

92Here by "Book" is not meant the Qur'an, but the Divine Record in which everything has been registered.

93This sentence is connected with the foregoing theme as well as with what follows. In the first case, it means that it is a manifestation of the knowledge of the All-Knowing God that He is explaining through a gentile (non-Jew) in this Qur'an the reality of those events which are a part of the Israelite history, and which are being disputed by the learned men of the Israelites themselves. (The examples of this have been given in the early part of this Surah as explained in our Notes). In the second case, it means that just as Allah has decided those disputes, so He will decide this dispute also which is going on between the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him) and his opponents as to who is following the truth and who the falsehood. So, a few years after the revelation of these verses the Decision came before the whole world. In the same land of Arabia and in the same clan of the Quraish there was not left a single person who was not convinced that it was Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) who was following the Truth and not Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab. Even the children of these people admitted that their fathers were in the wrong.

94That is, "It is Mercy and Guidance for those who accept the message of the Qur'an and believe in what it presents. Such people will be saved from the errors in which their own people are involved. They will find the right way of life by means of the Qur'an and they will be blessed with such favors by Allah, which the disbelievers among the Quraish cannot even imagine today." This shower of Allah's mercy was also witnessed by the world after a few years. The same people who were living unknown lives in a corner of the Arabian desert and could at the most become successful raiders in the state of unbelief, suddenly emerged after their belief in the Qur'an as the guides of the world, leaders of the nations, makers of human civilization and rulers over a vast part of the world.

95"Between these people": Between the disbelievers of the Quraish and the believers.

96That is, "Neither can any power withhold His judgment from being enforced, nor is there any chance of an error in His judgment."

97"The dead" the ones whose consciences are dead and whose stubbornness, obstinacy and love of the usage and custom have deprived them of the sense of discrimination between the Truth and falsehood.

98That is, "Who not only close their ears against what you say, but slink away from the place where they fear they aught hear what you say.

99That is, "It is none of your job to pull them forcibly to the right way and drag them along with you. You can only tell them by the word of mouth and by your example that this is the right way and the way they are following is the wrong way But how can you guide the one who has closed his eyes and is not at all inclined to see anything?"

100That is, "...when Resurrection which they are being promised will approach."

101According to Ibn `Umar, this will happen when there remains no one in the world to command the people to do good and forbid them to do evil. Ibn Marduyah has reported a Hadith on the authority of Abu Said Khudri; according to which the latter heard the same thing from the Holy Prophet himself. This shows that when man gives up the duty of exhorting others to do good and forbidding them to do evil, Allah will bring forth a beast to serve as the final warning just before Resurrection. This, however, is not clear whether it will be just one beast, or a particular species of beasts, who will spread all over the earth. The words daabbat-an-min-al-ard might contain both the meanings. In any case, what it will say will be: "The people did not believe Allah's Revelations in which Resurrection was foretold. Now the same Resurrection is about to come; let everyone know that what Allah said was true". The sentence, "The people did not believe in Our Revelations", is either a part of the beast's own speech, or Allah's narration of its words. If these are its own words, the word "Our" will be understood in the style of an official who speaks on behalf of his government and not on his personal behalf. In the second case, since Allah is narrating the beast's words, He has used "Our Revelations" in the normal sense.

As to the time and occasion of the appearance of this beast, the Holy Prophet has said: "The sun will rise in the west and the beast will suddenly appear in the open daylight. Whichever of these signs appears first, it will be closely followed by the other." (Muslim) In the other traditions related in Muslim, Ibn Majah, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad, etc. the Holy Prophet foretold that the signs of Resurrection-emergence of the Anti-Christ (Dajjal), appearance of the beast, smoke and the rising of the sun in the west -will appear one after the other.

As for the nature, general appearance, place of appearance and other details about the beast, contradictory traditions have been reported, which only cause confusion and are not relevant to the object for which this thing has been mentioned in the Qur'an.

As regards the beast's speaking to human beings in a human language, this will be a manifestation of the power of Allah, Who can give the power of speech to anything He pleases. He will give this power only to a beast before the event of Resurrection, but when Resurrection will have taken place, each limb of man-his ears, his eyes, even his skin-will speak out and give evidence in the Court of Allah, as has been clearly stated in Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 20-21: "Then, when all will have reached there, their ears and their eyes and their very skins will bear witness against them concerning what they had been doing in the world. They will say to their skins, "Why have you borne witness against us?' They will reply, `The same God Who has given speech to everything has given us speech'."

102That is, "You did not deny My Revelations on the basis of some scientific investigation, which might have proved them to be false, but you denied them without any sound reason."

103That is, "If it is not so, can you then prove that you treated them as false only after a thorough scientific investigation through which you came to know that the reality was not that which was being presented in these verses?"

104That is, "Two out of the countless signs were such which they were observing at all times, whose benefits they were enjoying every moment, and which were not hidden even from a blind or deaf or dumb person. While they benefited by the rest at night and the opportunities afforded by the day, why did they not think that it is a system devised by an All-Wise Being, Who has established the relationship between the sun and the earth precisely to meet their requirements and needs ? This cannot be a mere accident, for it clearly manifests purposefulness, wisdom and planning, which cannot be the characteristic of the blind forces of nature, nor the work of many gods. It can only be a system established by the One Creator and Master and Disposer, Who is ruling over the earth, the moon, the sun and all other planets. From the observation of this single phenomenon they could judge that the alternation of the day and night testified to the truth that We have conveyed through Our Messenger and Our Book."

105That is, "It was not something incomprehensible either. There were among their own relatives, their own clan and their own brotherhood people like themselves, who had seen the same very Signs and believed that the creed of God worship and Tauhid towards which the Prophet was inviting them was precisely in accordance with the truth and reality."

106For a detailed discussion of the blowing of the Trumpet, see E.N. 47 of Al-An`am, E.N. 57 of Ibrahim, E.N. 78 of Ta Ha, E.N. 1 of Al-Hajj, E.N.'s. 46, 47 of Ya Sin and E.N. 79 of Az-Zumar.

107That is, "From such God you should not expect that after giving you the powers of intellect and discrimination and control over things, He will remain unaware of your deeds and actions and will not see how you have been using the delegated authority in the earth."

108The reward will be better in two ways: (1) It will be higher than what a person will actually deserve for his good deeds; and (2) it will be everlasting and for ever though the good act was temporary and its influence confined to a limited period only.

109That is, "Though the terrors of Resurrection will stun and confound the disbelievers, the believers will remain safe and secure from them, for everything in the Hereafter will be according to their expectations. They had already known from the messages brought by the Messengers of Allah that Resurrection will take place, and a new World will be established when everyone will be called to account for his deeds. Therefore, they will neither be bewildered nor alarmed, which will be the case with those who had denied this Day and retrained heedless of it, till their last breath in the world .They will also be satisfied because they had worked for this Day and had brought necessary provisions from the world for their success here. Therefore, they will not be stupefied and confounded as will be those who had invested all their energies

and capabilities 'in their struggle for achieving worldly successes only, and had never thought that there would be life hereafter also for which they should make some provision. Contrary to them, the believers will be satisfied that the Day for the sake of which they had given up the unlawful benefits and pleasures of life and had undergone hardships and toil, had at last come, and they will not be deprived of the rewards of their works."

109aAt several places in the Qur'an it has been stated clearly that an evil will be punished in the Hereafter only to the extent of the evil committed, but a good act will be rewarded much more generously by Allah than what the doer will actually deserve for it. For more examples of this, see Surah Yunus: 26-27, AlQasas: 84. Al-'Ankabut: 7, Saba': 37-38, Al-Mu'min: 40.

110As this Surah was sent down at a stage when the message of Islam was confined to Makkah and its addressees were the people of that City only, it was said, "I have been commanded that I should worship the Lord of this City." And the characteristic of the Lord was stated to be that He had made that City sacred. This was meant to warn the disbelievers of Makkah, as if to say, " You may if you so like prove thankless to that God Who has done you the great favor of making this City of yours a haven of peace in the strife-ridden land of Arabia, and Who by His grace has made it the center of spiritual affiliation for the whole of Arabia, but I have been commanded to be grateful to him and bow down before Him. None of your deities had the power to make this City a sanctuary and make the quarrelsome and plundering tribes of Arabia have respect for it. I cannot abandon my real Benefactor and bow down before those who have done me no favor at all.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

28. Surah Al Qasas (The Story)

Name

The Surah takes its name from verse 25 in which the word Al-Qasas occurs. Lexically, *qasas* means to relate events in their proper sequence. Thus, from the viewpoint of the meaning too, this word can be a suitable title for this Surah, for in it the detailed story of the Prophet Moses has been related.

Period of Revelation

As already mentioned in the introduction to Surah An Naml, according to Ibn Abbas and Jabir bin Zaid, Surahs Ash-Shu`araa', An-Naml and Al- Qasas were sent down one after the other. The language, the style and the theme also show that the period of the revelation of these three Surahs is nearly the same. Another reason for their lose resemblance is that the different parts of the Prophet Moses story as mentioned in these surahs together make up a complete story. In Surah Ash Shu`araa', excusing himself for not accepting the office of Prophethood the Prophet Moses submits, "The people of Pharaoh have the charge of a crime against me; therefore, I fear that they will put me to death." Then, when lie goes before Pharaoh, the latter says, "Did we not bring you up as a child in our house? You lived quite a few years of your life among us, and then you did what you did." Nothing more of this has been mentioned there, but in this Surah the other details have been supplied. Similarly, in Surah An-Naml the story starts abruptly from the time when the Prophet Moses was journeying with his family and suddenly saw a fire at a distance. In that Surah nothing has been said about the nature of his journey, or the place he was coming from, or his destination, but this Surah supplies all the necessary details. Thus, the three Surahs read together complete the story of the Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon him).

Theme and Topics

The main theme is to remove the doubts and objections that were being raised against the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and to invalidate the excuses which were being offered for not believing in him.

For this purpose, first the story of the Prophet Moses has been related, which, by analogy with the period of revelation, impresses the following points in the listeners mind automatically:

First, Allah provides the means and motives of whatever He wills to do, in imperceptible ways. Thus, Allah so arranged things that the child through whom Pharaoh had to be removed from power, was bred and brought up in his own house, and he could not know whom he was fostering. Who can then fight God and frustrate Him by his machinations.

Secondly, Prophethood is not granted to a person amid festivities by issuing a proclamation from the earth and heavens. You wonder how Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) has been blessed with Prophethood unexpectedly, all of a sudden, but Moses whom you yourselves acknowledge as a Prophet (v. 48) had also become a Prophet unexpectedly, while on a journey, and nobody had known what event had occurred in the desolation at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Even Moses himself did not know a moment before what he was going to be blessed with. He, in fact, had gone to bring a piece of the fire but had returned with the gift of Prophethood.

Thirdly, the person from whom Allah wants to take some service comes out without any army and armor and without an apparent helper or force at his back, yet he puts to rout much stronger and better equipped opponents. The contrast that existed between the strengths of Moses (peace be upon him) and Pharaoh was much more prominent and glaring than that which existed between Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the quraish; yet the world knows who had come out victorious in the end and who had been routed.

Fourthly, you refer to Moses again and again and say, "Why has Muhammad not been given the same which was given to Moses? i. e. miracles of the staff, the shining hand, etc. as if to suggest that you would readily believe only if you were shown the kind of the miracles that were shown by Moses to Pharaoh. But do you know what sort of response was made by those who were shown those miracles? They had not believed even after seeing the miracles, and had only said, "This is magic", for they were involved in stubbornness and hostility to the Truth. The same malady afflicts you today. Will you believe only when you are slowly the same kind of miracles?Then, do you know what fate the disbelievers had met even after seeing the miracles? They were annihilated by Allah. Do you now wish to meet the same doom by asking for the miracles in your obstinacy?

These were the things which were automatically impressed in the mind of every listener who heard this story in the pagan environment of Makkah, for a similar conflict was going on at that time between the Holy Prophet and disbelievers of Makkah as had already taken place between the Prophet Moses and Pharaoh before. This was the background against which the story of the Prophet Moses was narrated so that a perfect analogy was established automatically in every detail between the conditions prevailing then in Makkah and those existing in the time of the Prophet Moses. Then, from verse 43 onward the discourse turns to the real theme.

In the first place, the narration of a two thousand year old historical event by the Holy Prophet with such accuracy and detail, is presented as a proof of his Prophethood although he was un-lettered and the people of his city and clan knew full well that he had no access to any source of such information as they could point out.

Then the disbelievers of Makkah have been warned and put to shame for an event that occurred in those very days. Some Christians had come to Makkah and embraced Islam when they heard the Qur'an from the Holy Prophet. Instead of learning any lesson from this the Makkans were so upset at this that their leader, Abu Jahl, disgraced those people publicly.

In conclusion, the excuse that the disbelievers put forward for not believing in the Holy Prophet has been dealt with. What they feared was this:"If we give up the polytheistic creed of the Arabs and accept the doctrine of *Tauhid* instead, this will put an end to our supremacy in the religious, political and economic fields, which, in turn, will destroy our position of the most influential tribe of Arabia and we shall be left with no refuge anywhere in the land." As this was the real motive of the chiefs of the Quraish for their antagonism towards the Truth, and their doubts and objections were only the pretenses, which they invented to deceive the common people, Allah has dealt with these fully till the end of the Surah, considered each aspect of these in a wise manner and offered the remedy for their basic ailment due to which those people judged the Truth and falsehood only from the viewpoint of their worldly interests.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

طسٓمٓ ﴿١﴾

تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾

نَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكَ مِن نَّبَإِ مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] Ta. Sin. Mim. These are the verses of the lucid Book. We narrate to you accurately some of the history of Moses and Pharaoh[1] for the benefit of those who believe.[2]

إِنَّ فِرۡعَوۡنَ عَلَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهۡلَهَا شِيَعٗا يَسۡتَضۡعِفُ طَآئِفَةٗ مِّنۡهُمۡ
يُذَبِّحُ أَبۡنَآءَهُمۡ وَيَسۡتَحۡيِۦ نِسَآءَهُمۡۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُفۡسِدِينَ ٤

وَنُرِيدُ أَن نَّمُنَّ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسۡتُضۡعِفُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَنَجۡعَلَهُمۡ أَئِمَّةٗ
وَنَجۡعَلَهُمُ ٱلۡوَٰرِثِينَ ٥

وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا
مِنۡهُم مَّا كَانُواْ يَحۡذَرُونَ ٦

[4-6] The fact is that Pharaoh adopted an attitude of rebellion in the land[3] and divided its dwellers into groups,[4] one of which he debased, putting their sons to death, and letting their daughters live:[5] indeed he was one of the mischief-makers. And it was Our will to show favor to those who had been oppressed in the land to make them leaders and to make them the heirs,[6] to give them power in the land,[7] and to show Pharaoh and Haman,[8] and their hosts, at their hands, the same which they feared.

وَأَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنۡ أَرۡضِعِيهِۖ فَإِذَا خِفۡتِ عَلَيۡهِ فَأَلۡقِيهِ فِي ٱلۡيَمِّ وَلَا
تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحۡزَنِيٓۖ إِنَّا رَآدُّوهُ إِلَيۡكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ ٱلۡمُرۡسَلِينَ ٧

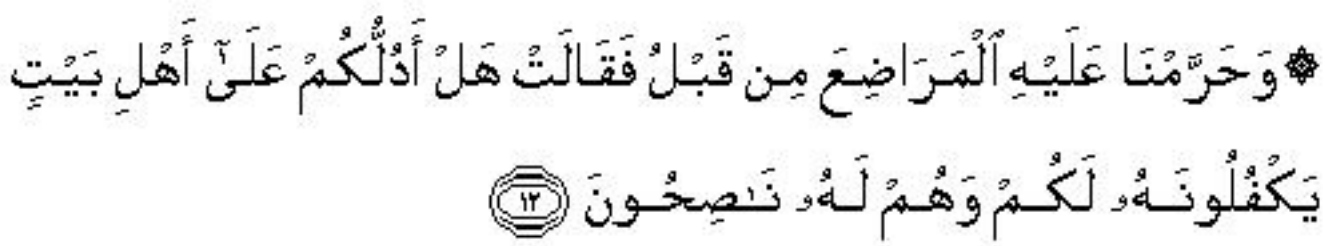
فَٱلْتَقَطَهُۥٓ ءَالُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَهَٰمَٰنَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا۟ خَٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٨﴾

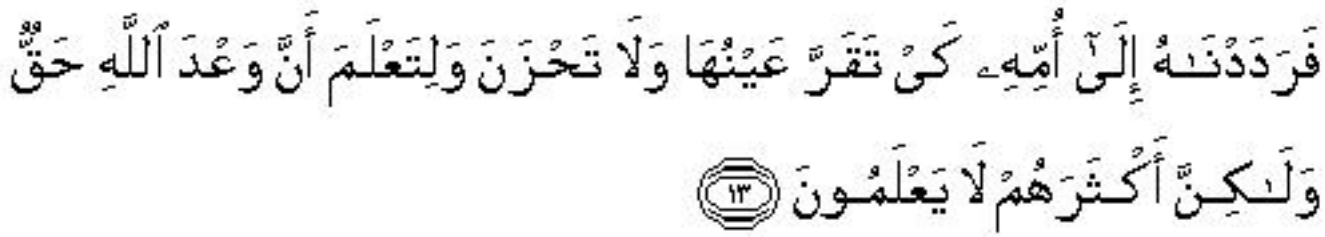
وَقَالَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِّى وَلَكَ ۖ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن
يَنفَعَنَآ أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[7-9] We[9] inspired the mother of Moses, saying, "Suckle him, and when you see any danger for him, cast him into the river, and fear not nor grieve, for We shall restore him to you and shall include him among the Messengers."[10] Consequently, Pharaoh's household picked him up (from the river) so that he may become their enema and cause of grief for them.[11] Really, Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were misguided (in their scheming). Pharaoh's wife said (to him), "He is a comfort of the eyes for me and for you! Do not kill him: maybe that he proves useful to us, or we may adopt him as a son."[12] And they were unaware (of the ultimate result).

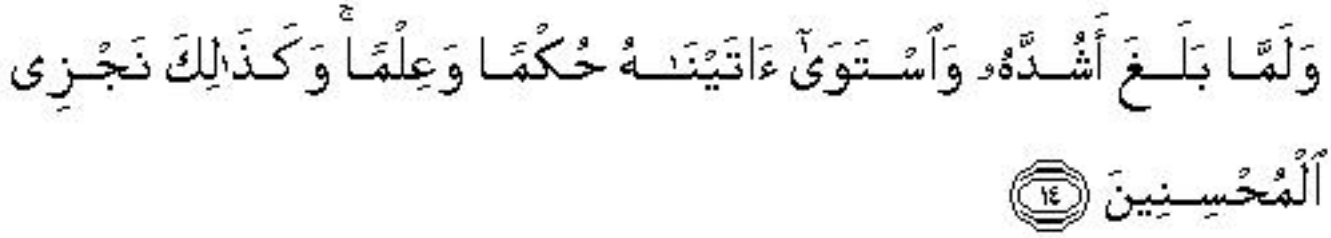
وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَٰرِغًا ۖ إِن كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِى بِهِۦ لَوْلَآ أَن رَّبَطْنَا
عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

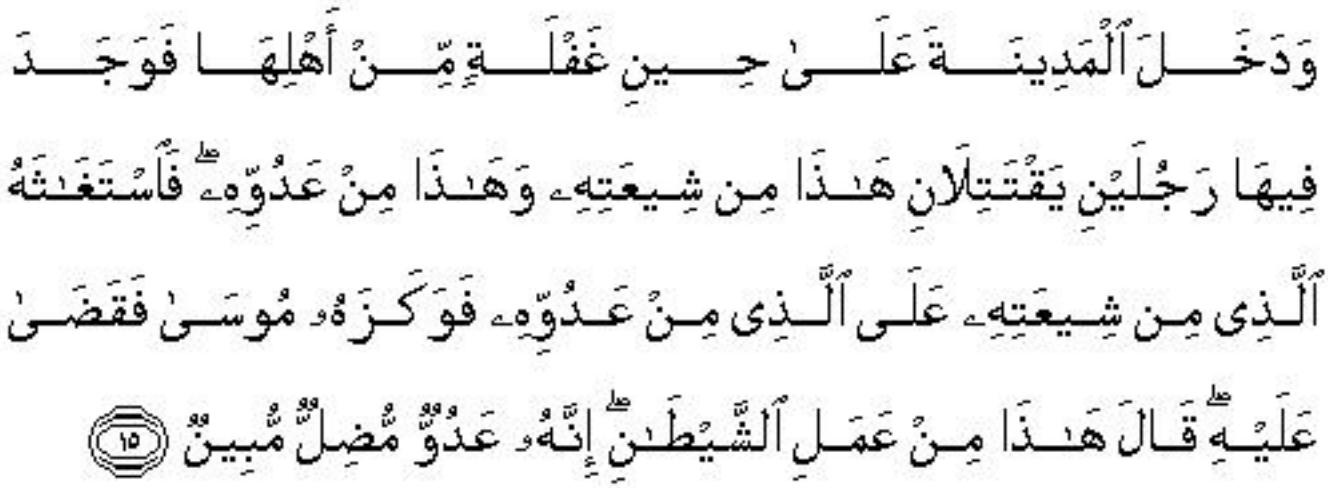
وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِۦ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِۦ عَن جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لَا
يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾

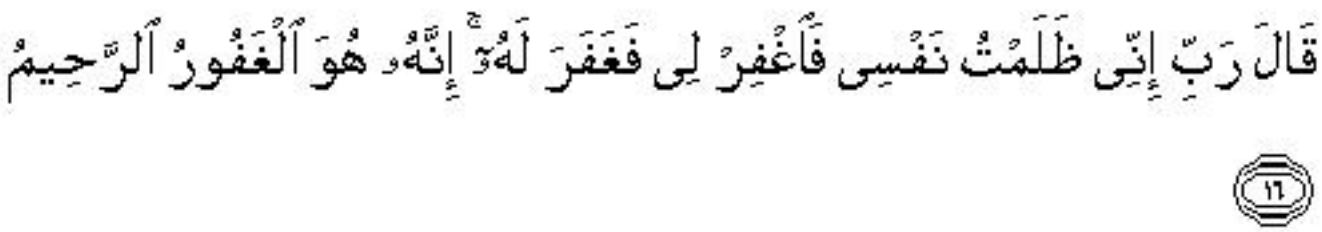


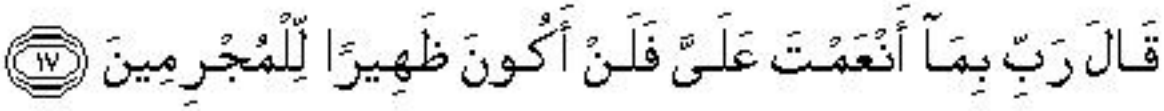


[10-13] On the other hand, the heart of Moses' mother was sorely distressed. She would have disclosed his secret, had We not strengthened her heart so that she might have faith (in Our promise). She said to his sister, "Follow him up." So, she watched him from a distance in a manner that (the enemies) did not notice it."[13] And We had already forbidden the breasts of the nurses for the child.[14] (On seeing this) the girl said to them, "Shall I tell you of a house whose people will bring him up for you and look after him well?"[15] Thus We restored Moses[16] to his mother so that her eyes might be cooled and she might not grieve and she might know that Allah's promise was true.[17] But most people do not know this.




وَدَخَلَ ٱلْمَدِينَةَ عَلَىٰ حِينِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ
فِيهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ هَٰذَا مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ وَهَٰذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهِۦ ۖ فَٱسْتَغَٰثَهُ
ٱلَّذِى مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ عَلَى ٱلَّذِى مِنْ عَدُوِّهِۦ فَوَكَزَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ
عَلَيْهِ ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾


قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِى فَٱغْفِرْ لِى فَغَفَرَ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ
﴿١٦﴾


قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ فَلَنْ أَكُونَ ظَهِيرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

[14-17] When Moses had reached his full maturity and become full grown,[18] We gave him judgment and knowledge;[19] thus do We reward the righteous. (One day) he entered the city at a time when the people were heedless.[20] There he saw two men fighting, the one of his own people, the other of his enemies. The one belonging to his own people asked his help against the one belonging to the enemy. Moses gave him a blow[21] and killed him. (On seeing what had happened) Moses said, "This is the work of Satan: he is a deadly enemy (of man) and an open misleader."[22] Then he said,[23] "O my Lord, I have sinned against myself, so forgive me. " So, Allah forgave him: He is the All-Forgiving, the All-Merciful.[24] Moses promised, "O my Lord, after this favor that You have shown me,[25] I shall never again be a helper of the criminals."[26]

فَأَصْبَحَ فِي ٱلْمَدِينَةِ خَآئِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِي ٱسْتَنصَرَهُۥ بِٱلْأَمْسِ
يَسْتَصْرِخُهُۥ ۚ قَالَ لَهُۥ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّكَ لَغَوِيٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾

فَلَمَّآ أَنْ أَرَادَ أَن يَبْطِشَ بِٱلَّذِي هُوَ عَدُوٌّ لَّهُمَا
قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ أَتُرِيدُ أَن تَقْتُلَنِي كَمَا قَتَلْتَ نَفْسًۢا بِٱلْأَمْسِ ۖ إِن تُرِيدُ
إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ جَبَّارًا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُرِيدُ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُصْلِحِينَ
﴿١٩﴾

وَجَآءَ رَجُلٌ مِّنْ أَقْصَا ٱلْمَدِينَةِ يَسْعَىٰ قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱلْمَلَأَ يَأْتَمِرُونَ بِكَ
لِيَقْتُلُوكَ فَٱخْرُجْ إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَآئِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ۖ قَالَ رَبِّ نَجِّنِي مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

[18-21] The next morning, as he was walking in a state of fear and caution in the city, suddenly he saw the same man who had asked his help the day before, again calling him for help. Moses said, "You are certainly a misguided man."[27] Then, when Moses was about to assault the man, who was their enemy,[28] he cried out,[29] "O Moses! would you kill me today just as you killed a person yesterday? You certainly wish to become a tyrant in the land and reform nothing." Then, a man came running from the other end of the city;[30] who said, "O Moses, the chiefs are holding consultations to kill you, so leave this place: I am your well-wisher." Hearing this, Moses left the place, in a state of fear and, vigilance, and prayed, "O my Lord, save me from the wicked people."

وَلَمَّا تَوَجَّهَ تِلْقَآءَ مَدْيَنَ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبِّيٓ أَن يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿٢٢﴾

وَلَمَّا وَرَدَ مَآءَ مَدْيَنَ وَجَدَ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ يَسْقُونَ وَوَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمُ ٱمْرَأَتَيْنِ تَذُودَانِ ۖ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُمَا ۖ قَالَتَا لَا نَسْقِي حَتَّىٰ يُصْدِرَ ٱلرِّعَآءُ ۖ وَأَبُونَا شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

[22-23] (Leaving Egypt) when Moses set his direction towards Madyan[31] he said "I expect that my Lord will guide me to the right path."[32] And when he arrived at the well of Madyan[33] he saw a multitude of people watering their animals and apart from them two women keeping their animals back. Moses asked the women "What is your worry?" They said "We cannot water our animals until these shepherds have taken away their animals; and our father is a very old man."[34]

فَسَقَىٰ لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّىٰٓ إِلَى ٱلظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَآ أَنزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَجَآءَتۡهُ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا تَمۡشِي عَلَى ٱسۡتِحۡيَآءٖ قَالَتۡ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدۡعُوكَ لِيَجۡزِيَكَ
أَجۡرَ مَا سَقَيۡتَ لَنَاۚ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُۥ وَقَصَّ عَلَيۡهِ ٱلۡقَصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفۡۖ نَجَوۡتَ
مِنَ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٢٥

[24-25] Hearing this Moses watered their animals for them, then turned and sought a shady place and said, "Lord, I stand in need of any good that You may send down to me." (Not long afterwards) one of the two women came bashfully towards him,[35] and said, "My father calls you so that he may reward you for watering our animals for us."[36] When Moses went to him and narrated to him his whole story he said, "Have no fear for you have now escaped from the wicked people."

قَالَتۡ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا يَٰٓأَبَتِ ٱسۡتَـٔۡجِرۡهُۖ إِنَّ خَيۡرَ مَنِ ٱسۡتَـٔۡجَرۡتَ ٱلۡقَوِيُّ ٱلۡأَمِينُ
٢٦

قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أُرِيدُ أَنۡ أُنكِحَكَ إِحۡدَى ٱبۡنَتَيَّ هَٰتَيۡنِ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تَأۡجُرَنِي ثَمَٰنِيَ
حِجَجٖۖ فَإِنۡ أَتۡمَمۡتَ عَشۡرٗا فَمِنۡ عِندِكَۖ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنۡ أَشُقَّ عَلَيۡكَۚ سَتَجِدُنِيٓ
إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ٢٧

قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ ۖ أَيَّمَا ٱلْأَجَلَيْنِ قَضَيْتُ فَلَا عُدْوَٰنَ عَلَيَّ ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

[26-28] One of the two women said to her father, "Dear father, employ this man as a servant, for the best man for you to employ as a servant can be the one who is strong and trustworthy."[37] Her father said (to Moses),[38] "I wish to give you one of my daughters in marriage provided that you serve me for eight years; and if you wish you may complete ten. I do not want to be harsh to you; if God wills, you will find me a righteous man." Moses replied, "Be it an agreement between me and you. Whichever of the two terms I complete, let there be no injustice to me after that; and Allah is a witness to what we have agreed upon.[39]

۞ فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى ٱلْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِۦٓ ءَانَسَ مِن جَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ نَارًا
قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ ٱمْكُثُوٓا۟ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّىٓ ءَاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ
مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَلَمَّآ أَتَىٰهَا نُودِىَ مِن شَـٰطِئِ ٱلْوَادِ ٱلْأَيْمَنِ فِى ٱلْبُقْعَةِ ٱلْمُبَـٰرَكَةِ مِنَ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ
أَن يَـٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنِّىٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَءَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَآنٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ
يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَـٰمُوسَىٰٓ أَقْبِلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ ۖ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلْـَٔامِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

ٱسۡلُكۡ يَدَكَ فِي جَيۡبِكَ تَخۡرُجۡ بَيۡضَآءَ مِنۡ غَيۡرِ سُوٓءٖ وَٱضۡمُمۡ إِلَيۡكَ
جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ ٱلرَّهۡبِۖ فَذَٰنِكَ بُرۡهَٰنَانِ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۚ
إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ قَوۡمٗا فَٰسِقِينَ ٣٢

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلۡتُ مِنۡهُمۡ نَفۡسٗا فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقۡتُلُونِ
٣٣

وَأَخِي هَٰرُونُ هُوَ أَفۡصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانٗا فَأَرۡسِلۡهُ مَعِيَ رِدۡءٗا يُصَدِّقُنِيٓۖ
إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ ٣٤

قَالَ سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجۡعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلۡطَٰنٗا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيۡكُمَاۚ
بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أَنتُمَا وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكُمَا ٱلۡغَٰلِبُونَ ٣٥

[29-35] When Moses completed the term[40] and he was traveling with his family, he saw a fire in the direction of Tur.[41] He said to his family, "Stay a while: I have seen a fire: I may bring some information from there, or a burning brand with which you may warm yourselves." When he 'reached there, a voice called out from a tree in the blessed ground[42] on the right side[43] of the valley: "O Moses, I am Allah, Lord of the universe." And (it was commanded), "Cast down your staff." When Moses saw that the staff was writhing like a snake, he turned about and fled and did not even look behind. (It was said,) "Moses, come back and have no fear: you are quite safe. Put your hand into your bosom: it will come out shining, without any harm to you;[44] and fold back your arm to ward off fear.[45] These are

two clear Signs from your Lord to be shown to Pharaoh and his courtiers: they are very disobedient people indeed."[46] Moses submitted, "My Lord, I have killed a man of theirs: I fear that they will put me to death;[47] and my brother Aaron is more eloquent of tongue than I, send him with me as a helper so that he may support me; I fear that they will treat me as a liar. " Allah said, "We shall strengthen your hand with your brother and shall give both of you such authority that they will not be able to harm you in any way. With Our Signs you and your followers only shall triumph. "in any way. With Our Signs you and your followers only shall triumph. "in any way. With Our Signs you and your followers only shall triumph."[48]

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا بَيِّنَـٰتٍ قَالُوا۟ مَا هَـٰذَآ
إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَمَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَـٰذَا فِى ءَابَآئِنَا ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن جَآءَ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ مِنْ عِندِهِۦ وَمَن تَكُونُ لَهُۥ
عَـٰقِبَةُ ٱلدَّارِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[36-37] Then, when Moses came to those people with Our clear Signs, they said"This is nothing but false magic,[49] and we have never heard of such things in the time of our forefathers.[50] Moses replied, "My Lord is fully aware of the person who has brought guidance from Him and He alone knows who will fare best in the end; the truth is that the unjust never attain true success."[51]

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَـٰهٍ غَيْرِى فَأَوْقِدْ
لِى يَـٰهَـٰمَـٰنُ عَلَى ٱلطِّينِ فَٱجْعَل لِّى صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّىٓ أَطَّلِعُ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَـٰهِ مُوسَىٰ
وَإِنِّى لَأَظُنُّهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْكَـٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

[38] And Pharaoh said, "O chiefs, I do not know of any other god of yours than myself.[52] Burn for me bricks of clay, O Haman, and build me a high tower so that I may climb it to see the God of Moses for I consider him to be an utter

liar."[53]

وَٱسۡتَكۡبَرَ هُوَ وَجُنُودُهُۥ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ بِغَيۡرِ ٱلۡحَقِّ وَظَنُّوٓاْ أَنَّهُمۡ إِلَيۡنَا لَا يُرۡجَعُونَ ٣٩

فَأَخَذۡنَٰهُ وَجُنُودَهُۥ فَنَبَذۡنَٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡيَمِّۖ فَٱنظُرۡ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٤٠

وَجَعَلۡنَٰهُمۡ أَئِمَّةٗ يَدۡعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِۖ وَيَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ٤١

وَأَتۡبَعۡنَٰهُمۡ فِي هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا لَعۡنَةٗۖ وَيَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ هُم مِّنَ ٱلۡمَقۡبُوحِينَ ٤٢

[39-42] He and his hosts assumed haughtiness in the land unjustly, without any right,[54] and they thought they had never to return to Us.[55] Consequently, We seized him and his hosts and cast them into the sea.[56] Now behold what fate the wicked people met! We made them leaders who invited the people to Hell-fire,[57] and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be able to get any help from anywhere. We set a curse to follow them in this world and on the Day of Resurrection, they shall be involved in an awkward predicament.[58]

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا ٱلْقُرُونَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ بَصَآئِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلْغَرْبِيِّ إِذْ قَضَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَى ٱلْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَلَٰكِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَا قُرُونًا فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْعُمُرُ ۚ وَمَا كُنتَ ثَاوِيًا فِىٓ أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ تَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا وَلَٰكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَمَا كُنتَ بِجَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا وَلَٰكِن رَّحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّآ أَتَىٰهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَلَوْلَآ أَن تُصِيبَهُم مُّصِيبَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُوا۟ رَبَّنَا لَوْلَآ أَرْسَلْتَ
إِلَيْنَا رَسُولًا فَنَتَّبِعَ ءَايَـٰتِكَ وَنَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

[44-47] After We had destroyed the former generations, We gave Moses the Book, which We made a means of enlightenment for the people, and a Guidance and a Mercy, so that they may learn lessons.[59] (O Muhammad,) you were not present on the western side[60] when We gave Moses the Law, nor were you among the witnesses,[61] but after him (until your time) We have raised up many a generation, and a long time has passed over them.[62] You were also not present among the Midianites that you might have recited to them Our Revelations,[63] but it is We Who are sending to you (this news of that time). And you were also not present at the side of Tur when We had called out (to Moses for the first time), but this is your Lord's Mercy (that you are being given this information[64]) so that you should warn those to whom no warner had come before you:[65] may be they take heed. (This We have done) lest, when a calamity befalls them in consequence of their own misdeeds, 'they should say, "Our Lord, had You sent a messenger to us, we would have obeyed Your Revelations and been among the believers."[66]

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُوتِىَ مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰٓ ۚ أَوَلَمْ
يَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ أُوتِىَ مُوسَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ قَالُوا۟ سِحْرَانِ تَظَـٰهَرَا وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا بِكُلٍّ
كَـٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

قُلْ فَأْتُوا۟ بِكِتَـٰبٍ مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ مِنْهُمَآ أَتَّبِعْهُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ
﴿٤٩﴾

فَإِن لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَكَ فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنِ ٱتَّبَعَ
هَوَىٰهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

۞ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ ٱلْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

[48-51] But when the Truth came to them from Us, they said, "Why has he not been given the same which was given to Moses?"[67] Have they not rejected that which had been given to Moses before?[68] They said, "Both are works of magic,[69] which assist each other." And they said, "We believe in neither." (O Prophet,) say to them, "Well, bring a book from Allah, which may give better guidance than these two, if you are truthful I shall follow the same."[70] Now, if they do not meet this demand of yours, you should know that they are, in fact, the followers of their own lusts. And who could go farther astray than the one who follows his own lusts, without guidance from Allah ? Allah does not at all guide such wicked people. And We have conveyed to them the admonition over and over again so that they may take heed.[71]

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ هُم بِهِۦ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦٓ إِنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن
قَبْلِهِۦ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُواْ وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ
وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

وَإِذَا سَمِعُواْ ٱللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُواْ عَنْهُ وَقَالُواْ لَنَآ أَعْمَٰلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلُكُمْ سَلَٰمٌ
عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْتَغِى ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِى مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَهْدِى
مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

[52-56] The people whom We gave the Book before this, believe in this (Qur'an),[72] and when it is recited to them, they say, "We have believed in it: this is indeed the Truth from our Lord: we were Muslims even before this."[73] These are the people who shall be given their reward twice[74] for the fortitude they showed;[75] they repel evil with good[76] and spend out of what We have provided them with.[77] And when they heard vain talk,[78] they withdrew from it, saying, "Our deeds are for us and your deeds are for you: peace be on you: we do not seek the way of the ignorant." O Prophet, you cannot give guidance to whom you please, but Allah gives guidance to whom He pleases, and He best knows those who would accept guidance.[79]

They say, "If we follow this guidance with you, we shall be snatched away from our land."[80]

وَقَالُوٓاْ إِن نَّتَّبِعِ ٱلۡهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نُتَخَطَّفۡ مِنۡ أَرۡضِنَآۚ أَوَلَمۡ نُمَكِّن لَّهُمۡ
حَرَمًا ءَامِنٗا يُجۡبَىٰٓ إِلَيۡهِ ثَمَرَٰتُ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ رِّزۡقٗا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَلَٰكِنَّ
أَكۡثَرَهُمۡ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ٥٧

[57] Is it not a fact that We have made a safe Sanctuary a dwelling place for them, to which fruits of every kind are drawn, as a provision from Ourself? But most of them do not know this.[81]

وَكَمۡ أَهۡلَكۡنَا مِن قَرۡيَةِۭ بَطِرَتۡ مَعِيشَتَهَاۖ فَتِلۡكَ مَسَٰكِنُهُمۡ لَمۡ تُسۡكَن
مِّنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗاۖ وَكُنَّا نَحۡنُ ٱلۡوَٰرِثِينَ ٥٨

[58] And how many habitations have We destroyed whose people exulted in their means of subsistence! Just see those dwellings of theirs only a few of which have been inhabited after them. At last, We alone became the heirs.[82]

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهۡلِكَ ٱلۡقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبۡعَثَ فِيٓ أُمِّهَا رَسُولٗا
يَتۡلُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتِنَاۚ وَمَا كُنَّا مُهۡلِكِي ٱلۡقُرَىٰٓ إِلَّا وَأَهۡلُهَا ظَٰلِمُونَ ٥٩

[59] And your Lord would never destroy habitations until He had sent in their central place a Messenger, who recited to them Our Revelations; and We would not destroy Habitations until their dwellers had become wicked.[83]

وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن شَىۡءٖ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَزِينَتُهَاۚ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيۡرٞ
وَأَبۡقَىٰٓۚ أَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُونَ ٦٠

أَفَمَن وَعَدۡنَٰهُ وَعۡدًا حَسَنٗا فَهُوَ لَٰقِيهِ كَمَن مَّتَّعۡنَٰهُ مَتَٰعَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا
ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ مِنَ ٱلۡمُحۡضَرِينَ ٦١

[60-61] Whatever you have been given, is merely a provision for this worldly life and its adornment; and that which is with Allah is better and more lasting. Do you not use common sense? Can the person to whom We have made a good promise, which he would certainly meet, be ever like the one, whom We have only given the provisions of the worldly life, and who, on the Day of Resurrection, would be presented for punishment.[84]

وَيَوۡمَ يُنَادِيهِمۡ فَيَقُولُ أَيۡنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُنتُمۡ تَزۡعُمُونَ
٦٢

قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡقَوۡلُ رَبَّنَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ٱلَّذِينَ أَغۡوَيۡنَآ أَغۡوَيۡنَٰهُمۡ كَمَا
غَوَيۡنَاۖ تَبَرَّأۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَۖ مَا كَانُوٓاْ إِيَّانَا يَعۡبُدُونَ ٦٣

وَقِيلَ ٱدۡعُواْ شُرَكَآءَكُمۡ فَدَعَوۡهُمۡ فَلَمۡ يَسۡتَجِيبُواْ لَهُمۡ وَرَأَوُاْ ٱلۡعَذَابَۚ لَوۡ
أَنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ يَهۡتَدُونَ ٦٤

[62-64] And (let them not forget) the Day when He will call them and ask. "Where are those associates of Mine whom you deemed as such?"[85] Those concerning whom this Word will be true,[86] will say, "Our Lord, these are indeed the people whom we had misled: we led them astray even as we ourselves were led astray. We plead our innocence before You:[87] they did not worship us."[88] Then it will be said to them. "Call now on those whom you held as (Allah's) partners."[89] They will call them, but will get no answer and they will see the torment. Would that they had followed the guidance!

وَيَوۡمَ يُنَادِيهِمۡ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَآ أَجَبۡتُمُ ٱلۡمُرۡسَلِينَ ٦٥

فَعَمِيَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡأَنۢبَآءُ يَوۡمَئِذٖ فَهُمۡ لَا يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ٦٦

فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا فَعَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحِينَ ٦٧

[65-67] And (Let Them not forget) the Day when He will call them and ask. "What answer did you give to Our Messengers?" At that time, no reply will strike them, nor will they be able to consult one another. However, the one who has repented here and believed and done good works, can expect to be among those who will attain true success there.

وَرَبُّكَ يَخۡلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيَخۡتَارُۗ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ ٱلۡخِيَرَةُۚ سُبۡحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ
عَمَّا يُشۡرِكُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

وَرَبُّكَ يَعۡلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمۡ وَمَا يُعۡلِنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

وَهُوَ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَۖ لَهُ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ فِي ٱلۡأُولَىٰ وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۖ وَلَهُ
ٱلۡحُكۡمُ وَإِلَيۡهِ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

قُلۡ أَرَءَيۡتُمۡ إِن جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلَّيۡلَ سَرۡمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ مَنۡ إِلَٰهٌ
غَيۡرُ ٱللَّهِ يَأۡتِيكُم بِضِيَآءٍۖ أَفَلَا تَسۡمَعُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

قُلۡ أَرَءَيۡتُمۡ إِن جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلنَّهَارَ سَرۡمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ مَنۡ إِلَٰهٌ
غَيۡرُ ٱللَّهِ يَأۡتِيكُم بِلَيۡلٖ تَسۡكُنُونَ فِيهِۖ أَفَلَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

وَمِن رَّحۡمَتِهِۦ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيۡلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ لِتَسۡكُنُواْ فِيهِ وَلِتَبۡتَغُواْ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ٧٣

[68-73] Your Lord creates whatever He wills; and chooses (for His work whomever He pleases). To choose is not for them.[90] Allah is Pure and Exalted far above the shirk that these people commit. Your Lord knows what they hide in their hearts and what they reveal.[91] He is Allah, the One: none but He is worthy of worship: to Him is all praise due, both in this world and in the Hereafter: Sovereignty is His, and to Him shall all of you be returned. O Prophet, say to them, "Have you ever considered that if Allah should make the night perpetual for you, till the Day of Resurrection, which deity, besides Allah, would bring you light? Don't you hear anything?" Ask them, "Have you ever considered that if Allah should make the day perpetual for you, till the Day of Resurrection, which deity, besides Allah, would bring you the night so that you may have rest in it? Don't you see anything?" It is His Mercy that He has made the night and the day for you so that you may have rest (in the night) and seek your Lord's bounty (in the day); maybe that you are grateful.

وَيَوۡمَ يُنَادِيهِمۡ فَيَقُولُ أَيۡنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُنتُمۡ تَزۡعُمُونَ ٧٤

وَنَزَعۡنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٖ شَهِيدٗا فَقُلۡنَا هَاتُواْ بُرۡهَٰنَكُمۡ فَعَلِمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱلۡحَقَّ لِلَّهِ وَضَلَّ عَنۡهُم مَّا كَانُواْ يَفۡتَرُونَ ٧٥

[74-75] (They should be mindful of) the Day when He will call them and ask "Where are those associates of Mine whom you deemed as such?" And We shall bring forth from every nation a witness[92] and say, "Bring now your proof."[93] Then they will come to know that the Truth is with Allah alone, and all falsehoods that they had forged will vanish.

۞ إِنَّ قَـٰرُونَ كَانَ مِن قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰ فَبَغَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ
وَءَاتَيْنَـٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْكُنُوزِ مَآ إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُۥ لَتَنُوٓأُ بِٱلْعُصْبَةِ أُو۟لِى ٱلْقُوَّةِ إِذْ
قَالَ لَهُۥ قَوْمُهُۥ لَا تَفْرَحْ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْفَرِحِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

وَٱبْتَغِ فِيمَآ ءَاتَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةَ ۖ وَلَا تَنسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَأَحْسِن
كَمَآ أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَلَا تَبْغِ ٱلْفَسَادَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوتِيتُهُۥ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِندِىٓ ۚ أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ
أَهْلَكَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا ۚ وَلَا
يُسْـَٔلُ عَن ذُنُوبِهِمُ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[76-78] The fact[94] is that Korah was of the people of Moses, but he rebelled against them;[95] and We had given him so many treasures that their very keys would have weighed down a band of strong men.[96] Once his people said to him, "Do not exult, for Allah does not like the exultant. Seek through the wealth that Allah has given you to make your abode in the Hereafter, and also do not forget your share from this world; and do good to others as Allah has done good to you; and do not strive to make mischief on the earth, for Allah does not like the mischief-makers. " But he replied, "All that I have been given is by virtue of the knowledge that I possess."[97] Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him many such people who were mightier than him in power and strength?[98] But the criminals are not asked as to their sins.[99]

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ فِى زِينَتِهِۦ ۖ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا
يَٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ قَٰرُونُ إِنَّهُۥ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ
ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا وَلَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[79-80] One day he came out before his people in all his fineries. Those who sought the life of this world, said, "Would that we had the like of what Korah has been given! He is indeed a very lucky man." But those who possessed the knowledge, said, "Alas for you! Allah's reward is better for him who believes and does good works, and this fortune is attained only by those who show patience."[100]

فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِۦ وَبِدَارِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُۥ مِن فِئَةٍ يَنصُرُونَهُۥ مِن دُونِ
ٱللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُنتَصِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَأَصْبَحَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا۟ مَكَانَهُۥ بِٱلْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقْدِرُ ۖ لَوْلَآ أَن مَّنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ بِنَا ۖ وَيْكَأَنَّهُۥ
لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[81-82] Consequently, We sank him and his people in all his dwelling place underground; then he had no host of supporters, who could help him against Allah, nor was he able to help himself. Now the same people who yearned

for his lot the day before, began to say, "Alas! We had forgotten that Allah extends the provisions for whom He wills of His servants and restricts it for whom He wills.[101] If Allah had not been gracious to us, He would have sunk us also underground. Alas! We did not remember that the disbelievers do never prosper."[102]

تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْأَخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۚ
وَٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

مَن جَآءَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُۥ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا ۖ وَمَن جَآءَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى ٱلَّذِينَ
عَمِلُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

[83-84] That abode of the Hereafter[103] We shall reserve for those who do not seek glory in the earth,[104] nor wish to make mischief;[105] and the ultimate good is only for the God fearing.[106] Whoever brings a good deed shall have a better reward than that, and whoever brings an evil deed, the evil-doers will have their rewards according to their deeds.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِى فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لَرَآدُّكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادٍ ۚ قُل رَّبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ مَن جَآءَ
بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَمَنْ هُوَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨٥﴾

وَمَا كُنتَ تَرْجُوٓا۟ أَن يُلْقَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۖ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ
ظَهِيرًا لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[85-86] O Prophet, be assured that the One Who has ordained this Qur'an for you[107] will certainly bring you to the

best end.[108] Tell these people, "My Lord best knows who has brought the guidance, and who is involved in obvious error." You never hoped that the Book would be sent down to you. Only through your Lord's mercy (has it been sent own to you);[109] therefore, do not be a helper of the unbelievers.[110]

وَلَا يَصُدُّنَّكَ عَنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أُنزِلَتْ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَلَا
تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ ۘ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ كُلُّ شَىْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُۥ ۚ لَهُ
ٱلْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

[87-88] And let it never happen that the unbelievers should divert you[111] from Allah's revelations when they are sent down to you. Invite (the people) towards your Lord and do not join the mushriks, nor invoke any deity other than Allah. There is no deity but He. Everything is perishable except Himself: Sovereignty is His,[112] and to Him will all of you be returned.

1For comparison, see Al-Baqarah: 47-59, Al-A'raf: 100-141, Yunus: 75-92. Hud: 96-109, Bani Isra'il: 101-111, Maryam: 51-53. Ta Ha: 1-89, Al- Mu'minun: 45-49, Ash-Shu`araa: 10-68, An-Naml: 7-14, Al-`Ankabut: 39-40, Al-Mu'min: 23-50, Az-Zukhruf: 46-56, Ad-Dukhan: 1 7-33, Adh-Dhariyat: 38-40, An-Naziyat: 1 5-26.

2That is, "For the benefit of those who are not obstinate and stubborn, for it would be useless to address those who are not at all inclined to listen to you.

3The words ala fil-ard in the Text are comprehensive and mean that he adopted a rebellious attitude in the land, assumed independence and godhead and superiority instead of behaving like a servant and a subordinate, and started oppressing his subjects like a tyrannical and haughty ruler.

4That is, "He did not rule his subjects with an even hand giving equal rights to all of them, but he had adopted the polity of dividing them into groups. He bestowed privileges and preferential rights on some to be made the ruling class and reduced others to serfs to be oppressed and exploited."

Here, nobody should think that an Islamic government also discriminates between its Muslim and dhimmi subjects, and does not allow them equal rights and privileges in every way This doubt is misplaced because this distinction, contrary to Pharaonic discrimination, is not based on any distinction owing to race, color, language or class, but on the distinction of ideology and way of life. In the Islamic system there is absolutely no difference between the legal rights of the Muslims and the dhimmis. The only difference is in their political rights, for the simple reason that in an ideological state the ruling class can only be the one which believes in its basic ideology. Every person who accepts this ideology can enter that class, and anyone who rejects it quits it. Thus, there can be no element of resemblance between this discrimination and the Pharaonic discrimination according to which no member of the oppressed race can ever enter the ruling class, under which the people of the oppressed race do not even enjoy the basic human rights, not to speak of their political and economic rights; so much so that they are even deprived of their right to live and survive, and denied security of any right whatever, all special privileges and benefits and high of offices and good things of life being reserved for the ruling class and for every such person who happens to have been born in it.

5The Bible elucidates this as follows:

"Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them: lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them task masters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Ra`amses ....And the Egyptians trade the children of Israel to serve with rigour; And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour .... And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives .... And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live." (Exod. 1: 8-16).

This shows that after the passing away of the Prophet Joseph a nationalist revolution took place in Egypt, and when the Copts regained power the new nationalist government employed every means to subdue the Israelites. They did not _ only humiliate and disgrace them and took mean services from them, but, over and above this, they adopted the policy of reducing their population, by killing their sons and allowing their daughters to live so that their women should gradually pass into the Copts' hands and produce the Coptic instead of the Israelite race. The Talmud adds that this revolution had taken place a little over a hundred years after the death of the Prophet Joseph. According to it, the new government, in the first instance, deprived the Israelites of their fertile lands and houses and possessions, and then removed them from the government jobs and offices. Even after this whenever the Coptic rulers felt that the Israelites and their Egyptian coreligionists were becoming formidable they would disgrace them and employ them in rigorous jobs on little or no wages at all. This is the explanation of the Qur'anic verse: "He debased a section of the Egyptian population", and of verse 49 of Al Baqarah: "They had inflicted a

dreadful torment on you. "

However, neither the Bible nor the Qur'an mentions that the Pharaoh was told by an astrologer that a boy would be born among the Israelites, who would become a cause of his deposition from power and to meet this danger he had issued orders to kill the male children born in the Israelite homes, or that Pharaoh himself had seen a dreadful dream and the explanation given was that a son would be born among the Israelites, who would cause his downfall. Our commentators have taken this ¦`legend from the Talmud and other Israelite traditions. (See Jewish Encyclopedia, under ;"Moses", and The Talmud Selections, pp. 123-24).

6That is, "Make them leaders and guides of the people in the world."

7That is, "Bestow on them inheritance of the land so that they should be rulers over it.

8The Western orientalists have been very critical of this. They say that Haman was a courtier of the Persian King Xerxes, who reigned hundreds of years after the Prophet Moses, from 486 to 465 B.C., but the Qur'an has made him a minister of Pharaoh in Egypt. This is nothing but an instance of sheer prejudice. After all, what historical evidence have these orientalists got to prove that there never lived any other person called Haman before Xerxes' courtier Haman? If an orientalist has been able to discover, through authentic means, a complete list of all the ministers and chiefs and courtiers of the Pharaoh under discussion which dues not contain the name of Haman he should make it public, or publish a photostat of it, because there could be no better or more effective instrument than this c f the refutation of the Our'an.

9That a son was born in the same period to an Israelite parents who was later known by the name of Moses to the world, has been omitted. According to the Bible and the Talmud, the family descended from Levi, a son of the Prophet Jacob, and the name of the Prophet Moses' father was Amram, which has been pronounced as Imran by the Qur'an. They already had two children before Moses, the elder a daughter, named Miriam, and the younger her brother, Aaron. Probably the proclamation that every male child born in an Israelite home would be killed, had not yet been issued when the Prophet Aaron was born; therefore, he was saved. The third child was born when the proclamation was in full force.

10That is, "She was not commanded to cast the child into the river immediately after birth, but to suckle it till she felt a real danger for it. For instance, if she felt that the secret had been exposed and the enemies had come to know of the child's birth through some means, or through some wretched informer from among the Israelites themselves, she should place the child in a box and cast it into the river, without any hesitation. According to the Bible, the Prophet Moses' mother kept him hidden for three months after his birth. The Talmud adds that the Pharaoh's government had appointed Egyptian women who carried infants into the Israelite homes, and would make these babies cry, so as to make any hidden Israelite

infants also cry and be thus discovered. This new method of spying worried Moses' mother and in order to save her child's life, she cast him into the river three months after his birth. Upto this point the version given by these Books is the same as the Qur'an's, and the event of casting the box into the river has also been described just as the Qur'an has described it. In Surah Ta Ha it has been said: Put this child in a box and place the box in the river." (v.39). The same has been said by the Bible and the Talmud. According to these, the Prophet Moses' mother made a basket of reeds and covered it with slime (tar) and with pitch to make it watertight. Then she laid the child in it and placed it in the river Nile. But the most important thing, which the Qur'an mentions, has found no mention anywhere in the Israelite traditions, that is, that the Prophet Moses' mother had done all this according to an inspiration from Allah, and Allah had already assured her that by following that device not only would her child remain safe and secure but the child would ultimately be restored to her, and that her child would become Allah's Messenger in the future.

11This was not their aim, but the ultimate destiny of their act. They picked up the child through whom they were to be destroyed in the end.

12What one understands from this is briefly so: "When the ark or the basket was carried by the river to the place where Pharaoh's palaces were situated, the servants of Pharaoh picked it up and took it before the king and the queen. It is just possible that the king and the queen were at that time strolling along the river bank and might have noticed the basket and ordered it to be picked up. When they saw a child in it, they could easily guess that it belonged to an Israelite family. For it came from the quarters inhabited by the Israelites, whose sons were being put to death in those days. It was understood that somebody had hidden the child for some time but when it could not be hidden any longer, it was cast to the river in the hope that it might be picked up and rescued from death. With this in view the most obedient servants. submitted that the king order the child to be killed forthwith, for it might prove dangerous for him. But the Pharaoh's wife was a woman and might even be childless. Then it was a lovely child, as Allah has reminded Moses in Ta Ha: 39, thus: "I had cast on you love from Myself." That is "I had made you such a lovely child that the beholders could not help regarding you with love." Therefore, the woman could not help feeling for him, and said to the king, "Do not kill him, but let us adopt him. When he grows up in our house as our son, he will not know that he was an Israelite: he will rather think he is one of Pharaoh's own kinsfolk, and he will be useful for us as against the Israelites."

According to the Bible and the Talmud, the woman who had counseled adoption of, Moses was Pharaoh's daughter, but according to the Qur'an his wife (imra'at-u-Fir 'aun). Obviously, the direct Word of Allah is more reliable than the verbal traditions which were compiled centuries afterwards. Therefore, it is absolutely needless to translate imra'at-u-Fir 'aun as a woman of Pharaoh's family" against the Arabic idiom and usage only for the sake of seeking conformity with the Israelite traditions.

13That is, the girl walked along and watched the floating basket in such a manner that the enemies could not know that she had anything to do with the child in it. According to the Israelite traditions, this sister of

the Prophet Moses was 10 to 12 years old. She followed up her brother intelligently and cleverly and ascertained that he had been picked up by the Pharaoh's household.

14That is, "The child would not take to any nurse whom the queen would call for suckling him."

15This shows that the sister did not go and sit back at home when she found that her brother had reached Pharaoh's palace, but cleverly hung about the palace to watch every new development. Then, when she found that the child was not taking to any nurse, and the queen was anxious to get a nurse who would suit it, the intelligent girl went straight into the palace, and said, "I can tell you the whereabouts of a nurse, who will bring him up with great affection." Here it should be borne in mind that in old days the well-to-do and noble families of these countries generally used to entrust their children to nurses for bringing up. We know that in the time of the Holy Prophet also nurses from the suburbs used to visit Makkah from time to time in order to get infants from the well-to-do families for suckling and nursing on rich wages. The Holy Prophet himself was brought up by Halimah Sa diyah in the desert. The same custom was prevalent in Egypt. that is why the Prophet Moses' sister did not say that she would bring a suitable nurse, but said that she would tell them of a house whose people would take up the responsibility of bringing him up with care and affection.

16According to the Bible and the Talmud, the child was named "Moses" in Pharaoh's house. It is not a Hebrew but a Coptic word, which means, "I drew him out of the water", for in Coptic mo meant water and oshe rescued.

17Another good thing that resulted from this wise device by Allah was that the Prophet Moses could not become a real prince in Pharaoh's house, but grew up among his own people and became fully aware of his family and community traditions and his ancestral religion. Thus, instead of growing up as a member of Pharaoh's class and people he arose sentimentally and intellectually as a full-fledged Israelite.

In a Hadith the Holy Prophet has said: "He who works to earn his livelihood and keeps in view Allah's goodwill also, has a likeness with the Prophet Moses' mother, who suckled her own son as well as received her wages for the service, too." That is, although such a person works to earn a living for his children, since he works honestly with a view to pleasing God he is just and upright in his dealings with others, seeks lawful provisions for himself and his children in the spirit of God's worship he does deserve a reward from Allah even for earning his own livelihood.

18That is, when he had attained his full mental and physical development. In this connection, different ages of the Prophet Moses have been mentioned in the Jewish traditions. Some say he was 18, others have mentioned 20 years and still others 40 years. According to the New Testament, he was 40 years old. (Acts, 7: 23). But the Qur'an does not mention any age. For the purpose of the incident being mentioned in the following verses, it is enough to know that he had attained his full maturity at that time.

19Hukum implies wisdom, understanding and power of judgment, and 'llm is both religious and worldly knowledge. The Prophet Moses became familiar with the teachings of his forefathers the Prophets Joseph. Jacob, Isaac and Abraham (peace be upon all of them) through his contact with his parents, and with the sciences prevalent in Egypt by virtue of his training as a prince in the king's palace. Here the gift of Hukm (wisdom) and `Ilm (knowledge) does nor refer to the gift of Prophethood, because Prophethood was bestowed on Moses several years afterwards, as is mentioned below, and has already been mentioned in Ash-Shu`araa: 21 above.

Regarding his education and training while as a prince the New Testament says: "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and' in deeds." (Acts, 7: 22). The Talmud says: Moses grew up, a handsome lad, in the palace of the king: he dressed royally, was honored by the people, and seemed in all things of royal lineage. He visited the land of Goshen daily, observing the rigor with which his brethren were treated.... Moses urged the king of Egypt to grant the men of Goshen one day of rest from the labor, in each week, and the king acceded to his request. Moses said, "If you compel them to labor steadily their strength will fail them; for your benefit and profit allow them at least one day in the week for rest and renewal of strength", And the Lord was with Moses, and his fame extended through all the land. " (H. Polano: The Talmud Selection pp. 128-29).

20It might be the early morning, or midday in summer, or night in winter, when the roads were deserted and there was all quiet in the city. The words "entered the city" indicate that the royal palaces were situated outside the capital, away from the common population. The words used are "entered the city" and not "came out in the city", because the Prophet Moses lived in the royal palace.

21The word wakaza in the original means both giving a slap and giving a blow. We have adopted "Moses gave a blow" for the reason that a blow can cause death but not so a slap.

22One can imagine the state of utter remorse and confusion in which the Prophet Moses uttered these words when he saw the Egyptian fall down after receiving the blow and breathe his last. He had no intention to murder, nor is a blow struck to kill, nor can one expect that a healthy person would die on receiving a blow. That is why the Prophet Moses exclaimed: "This is the work of Satan! He has made me do this in order to work some great mischief, so that I am accused of killing an Egyptian while defending an Israelite, and a violent storm of 'anger and indignation is aroused in the whole of Egypt not only against me but the whole Israelite community." In this connection, the Bible gives a different version from the Qur'an. It declares the Prophet Moses to be guilty of willful murder. It says that when Moses saw an Egyptian and an Israelite fighting, "He (Moses) looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, He slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand." (Exodus 2: 12). The same is the version of the Talmud also. Now anybody can see how the Israelites brand the characters of their elders with infamy and how the Qur'an exonerates them. The verdict of common sense also is that a wise and discreet person, who was to become a great Prophet in the future, and who had to give man a great code

of law and justice, could not be such a blind nationalist that seeing a member of his own community fighting with a man of the other community he would be so infuriated that he would kill the other person willfully. Evidently, it could not be lawful to kill the Egyptian only for the sake of rescuing an Israelite from his tyranny.

23What the Prophet Moses meant by this prayer was: "O my Lord, forgive this sin of mine, which you know I have not committed willfully, and also cover and conceal it from the people."

24This has two meanings and both are implied here: Allah pardoned Moses' error as well as concealed his sin from the people so that neither any Egyptian nor any official of the Egyptian government passed that way at that time that he might witness the incident. So, the Prophet Moses got an opportunity to escape undetected from the place of the occurrence of murder.

25That is, "The favor of concealing my `act' from my enemies and enabling me to escape unharmed from Egypt."

26This pledge of the Prophet Moses is in very comprehensive words. What he meant by this was that he would neither become a helper of an individual nor of those who perpetrated cruelty and tyranny in the world. Ibn Jarir and several other commentators have rightly understood this to mean that on that very day the Prophet Moses pledged to sever his relations with Pharaoh and his government, for it was a tyrannical government, which had set up a wicked system on God's earth. He realized that it was not for any honest person to continue as a functionary of a tyrannical kingdom and become an instrument of increasing its power and grandeur.

The Muslim scholars in general have deduced from this pledge of the Prophet Moses that a believer should completely refrain from helping a tyrant, whether the tyrant is an individual, or a group, or a government or kingdom. Somebody asked Hadrat `Ata' bin Abi Rabah the well-known follower of the Companions, "My brother is secretary to the governor of Kufah, under the Umayyids. Though he does not decide the disputes of the people, the decisions, however, ate issued through his pen. He has to continue in this service because this is his only source of income." Hadrat 'Ata` recited this verse, and said, "Your brother should throw away his pen: the Providence is Allah.

Another secretary asked `Amir Sha`bi, "O Abu `Amr, I am only responsible for writing down and issuing the judgments: I have nothing to do with passing them. Is it lawful provision for me ?" He replied, "It is just possible that a sentence of murder is passed against an innocent person and it is issued under your pen; or a person's property is confiscated unjustly; or somebody's house is ordered to be pulled down, and the orders are issued under your pen." Then the said Imam recited this verse, hearing which the secretary said, "After this day my pen will not be used for issuing judgments of the Umayyids." The Imam said, "Then Allah also will not deprive you of your daily bread."

'Abdur Rehman bin Muslim had only asked Dahhak to go to Bukhara and distribute the salaries of the officials there, but he declined even this. When his friends said there was nothing wrong in it, he replied, "I do not want to be a helper of the unjust in any way." (Ruh al-Ma`ani, Vol. XX. p. 49)

All of Imam Abu Hanifah's authentic biographers including Al-Muwaffaq al-Makki, Ibn al-Bazzaz al-Karvari, Mulla `Ali Qari, etc.. have related that Hasan bin Qahtubah, the commander-in-chief of Mansur, had tendered his resignation only on his instruction, saying, "Whatever I have done to support your kingdom until today, is enough for me if it was in the cause of Allah, but if it was for injustice and tyranny, then I do not want to add to my crimes in my conduct-book.

27That is, "You seem to be a quarrelsome man:you have daily a new quarrel with one or the other person."

28Here, the Biblical version is different from the Qur'anic. The Bible says that the fight on the next day was between two Israelites, but according to the Qur'an this fight also was between an Israelite and an Egyptian. This second version seems to be credible, for the manner in which the secret of the murder of the first day became known, as is being mentioned below, could be possible only if a member of the Coptic community had come to know of the matter. An Israelite's knowledge of it could not be so treacherous: he could not have gone to inform the Pharaonic government of such a heinous crime committed by the prince, who was a great supporter of his own community.

29The one who cried out was the same Israelite whom the Prophet Moses wanted to help against the enemy. When after scolding and rebuking him, he turned to assault the Egyptian, the Israelite thought that Moses was going to strike him; therefore, he raised a hue and cry and disclosed the secret of the previous day's murder by this own folly.

30This happened when in the second day's fight, the secret of the murder became known and the Egyptian informed the authorities about the case accordingly.

31Both the Bible and the Qur'an agree that after leaving Egypt the Prophet Moses had gone to live in Madyan (Midian). But the Talmud tells the absurd story that Moses fled to Ethiopia and became a great favorite with the king there. After the king's death the people made Moses their king and leader and gave him the widow of the king for a wife, but during the 40 years of his reign there he never had intercourse with his African wife. Then the queen of Ethiopia, who was a wife to Moses in name only, said to the people, "Why should this stranger continue to rule over you '? He has never worshiped the gods of Ethiopia." At this the people of Ethiopia deposed him and made him many rich presents and dismissed him with great honors. Then he came to Midian and met with the events being mentioned below. At this time he was 67 years old.

A clear proof of this story's being absurd is that according to it Assyria (northern Iraq) in those days was under Ethiopia, and the Prophet Moses and the Ethiopian king, his predecessor, had led military campaigns to crush the Assyrian revolts. Now anybody who has a little acquaintance with the history and geography can have a look at the map and see things for himself. Assyria could be under Ethiopian domination and have been attacked by the Ethiopian army only in case Egypt and Palestine and Syria had been under its subjugation, or the whole of Arabia under its sway, or, at least the Ethiopian navy so powerful as to have conquered 'Iraq across the Indian ocean and the Persian Gulf. History, however, does not support the view that the Ethiopians ever held sway over these countries, or their naval force was ever so powerful. This indicates how imperfect was the Israelites' knowledge of their own history, and how the Qur'an corrects their errors and presents the true facts in their pure form. Nevertheless, the Christian and the Jewish orientalists are never ashamed of asserting that the Qur'an has plagiarized the Israelite traditions for its narratives.

32The right path: "The path that may take me to Midian safely." It should be borne in mind that Midian in those days was outside Pharaoh's empire. Egypt did not have control over the whole of the Sinai Peninsula but only on its western and southern parts. The Midianites who inhabited the eastern and western coasts of the Gulf of 'Agabah were free from Egyptian influence and authority. That is why the Prophet Moses had headed for Midian after leaving Egypt, because that was the nearest free and inhabited land. But to reach Midian he had to pass through Egyptian territories; avoiding the Egyptian police and military posts on the way. That is why he prayed to God to put him on the right track which should take him to Midian safely.

33This place where the Prophet Moses had arrived was situated, according to the Arab tradition, on the western coast of the Gulf of 'Agabah, a few miles to the north of Magna . Today it is called Al-Bid, and is a small habitation. I visited this place in December, 1952, when I was traveling from Tabuk to 'Agabah. The natives told me that, as they had heard from their elders, Midian was situated there. From Josephus to Burton, all ancient and modern explorers and geographers, have generally confirmed this very place as the location of ancient Midian. Nearby there is the place now called Magha`irShu'aib or Magharat Shu'aib. There are some Thamudic monuments here. A mile or so away, There are some ancient ruins, where we saw two dry wells, one of which was said to be the well where the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had watered the goats. The same has been related by Abu Fida' (d. 732 A.H.) in Taqvim al-Buldan and Yaqut in Mu jam al-Buldan, on the authority of Abu Zaid Ansari; (d. 216 A.H.), that the natives point to the same well there as the well of Moses. This indicates that the tradition is being handed down since centuries among the people, and therefore, it can be confidently asserted that this is the same place which has been mentioned in the Qur'an. See some photographs of this on the opposite page.

34That is, "We are women: it is not possible for us to water our animals by resisting these shepherds. Our father is too old to perform this rigorous duty. There is no other male member in the house either. Therefore we, the womenfolk, have to come out to perform these chores, and until all the shepherds have watered their animals and left, we have to wait." This whole meaning was conveyed by the ladies in a

brief sentence, which is indicative of their modesty. They did not want to have a lengthy conversation with a stranger, but at the same time, they did not like that he should form a wrong impression about their family, thinking how lethargic were the manfoIk who sat back in their homes and sent the women to perform outdoor duties.

About the father of these ladies traditions that have become current among the Muslims are that he was the Prophet Shu`aib (peace be upon him), but the Qur'an makes no allusion to this, although Prophet Shu`aib is a prominent character of the Qur'an. If he were really the father of the ladies, it would have been clearly mentioned here. No doubt there are some traditions in which his name has been mentioned, but both 'Allama Ibn Jarir and Ibn Kathir concur that none of them has been authentically reported. That is why great commentators like Ibn `Abbas, Hasan Basri, Abu `Ubaidah and Said bin Jubair have relied on the Israelite traditions and mentioned the same names of this personage which appear in the Talmud. etc. Evidently, if the name of Shu'aib had actually been reported froth the Holy Prophet these scholars would not have mentioned any other name.

The Bible mentions him as Re'uel in one place and Jethro in another (Exod. 2: 16-18, 3: 1, 18: 5), and says that he was the priest of Midian. In the Talmudic literature he has been variously called as Re'uel, Jethro and Hobab. The present-day Jewish scholars are of the view that Jethro was a synonym for "his excellency' and his real name was Re'uel or Hobab. Similarly, they differ about the meaning of the word Kohen. Some regard it as a synonym of priest and others of prince.

According to the Talmud Re'uel used to visit Pharaoh from time to time before the birth of Prophet Moses, and pharaoh relied on his knowledge and good counsel and mature opinion. But when the royal council of Egypt started consultations for the subduing of the Israelites and it was decided that their male children be killed on their birth, he did his best to stop Pharaoh from enforcing this wrong decision, warned him of its evil consequences and counselled that if he found the Israelites unbearable, he should let them go to Canaan, the laud of their forefathers. These words of Re'ue angered Pharaoh, and he sent him in shame front his presence. Re'uel then left Egypt for his country. Midian, and settled there ever afterwards.

As to his religion it is commonly believed that, like the Prophet Moses, he was a follower of Prophet Ibraham's Faith, for just as the Prophet Moses was a ' Descendant of Isaac, son of Abraham (peace be upon bath of them), so was he a descendant of Midian, son of Abraham. Probably due to this relationship he tried to prevent Pharaoh from persecuting the Israelites and angered him. Nisaburi, the commentator, writes on the authority of Hasan Basri: "He was a Muslim: he had embraced the religion of the Prophet Shu`aib." The Talmud says that he publicly condemned the idol-worship of the Midianites as a folly. Due to this the people of Midian had turned his opponents.

35Hadrat `Umar has explained this sentence, thus: "She came walking modestly, with her face covered with a part of her outer garment, unlike those immodest women, who go about wherever they like, and enter wherever they like without any hesitation." Several traditions bearing on this subject have been

reported by Said bin Mansur, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim-and Ibn al-Mundhir from Hadrat 'Umar through authentic chains of authorities. This shows that the Islamic concept of modesty which the Companions of the Holy Prophet had understood from the Qur'an and the teaching and training of the Holy Prophet was absolutely opposed to keeping the face exposed to the other then and moving about immodestly. outside the house. hadrat `Umar has clearly regarded covering of the face as a symbol of modesty and exposing it to the other men as an immodesty and shamelessness.

36She said this also out of modesty, for she had to give a sound reason for her coming to another man all alone; otherwise it was not at all necessary that a gentleman should have been rewarded if he had rendered some service to the (helpless) women in trouble. And then, in spite of hearing of a reward, the Prophet Moses' willingness to follow her forthwith to her house indicates the state of extreme helplessness in which he found himself at that time. He had left Egypt empty-handed and might have taken at least eight days to reach Midian. He must be hungry and worn out by journey. And, above all, he must be anxious to find a shelter in the unfamiliar land and a sympathetic person to give him refuge. Under this very compulsion, in spite of hearing that he was being called to be rewarded for a small service he had rendered, the Prophet Moses felt no hesitation in going with the woman. He must have thought that the prayer he had just made to God was being answered thus by God Himself. Therefore, he did not think it was right to turn down the means of hospitality provided by his Lord by an unnecessary show of self-respect.

37It is not necessary that the girl said this to her father in his very first meeting with Moses. Most probably her father made the traveler stay with him for a couple of days, and the girl counseled him thus during that time. What she meant by this counsel was: "Father, you are old, and therefore, we girls have to go out to perform outdoor duties. We have no brother either, who could take up these chores. You may, therefore, employ this man as a servant: he is strong and will be able to face all kind of rigors, and he is also trustworthy. He helped us only due to his noble nature when he found us standing helpless, but he never raised his eyes at us."

38It is also not necessary that the father should have said this to Moses immediately at the daughter's counsel. One feels that he must have formed this opinion after due consideration. He must have thought: "No doubt he is a noble person, but employing a healthy and strong young man like him as a servant in a house where there are grown up daughters would not be the right thing. When he is a gentle, educated and civilized man of a noble family (as he must have come to know from the story told by Moses), why shouldn't he be kept as a son-in-law in the house?" After reaching such a decision, he might have spoken to Moses at a suitable time.

Here again the Israelites have done a grave injustice to their illustrious Prophet, greatest benefactor and national hero. The Talmud says, "Moses lived with Re'uel, and he looked with favor upon Ziporah, the daughter of his host, and married her." Another Jewish tradition related in the Jewish Encyclopedia is to the effect: When Moses related his story to Jethro, the latter understood that he was the person at whose

hand the kingdom of Pharaoh was to be destroyed according to prophecies. Therefore, he immediately imprisoned Moses so that he should hand him over to Pharaoh and get a reward. He remained imprisoned for seven or ten years in a dark underground cell, but Jethro's daughter, Ziporah, whom he had first met at the well of water, kept visiting him in the cell secretly and providing him with food and drink;. They had even decided to marry. After seven or ten years Ziporah said to her father, "Years ago you put a man in the cell and then forgot him altogether. He should have died by now. But if he is still alive, he must be a godly person." Hearing this when Jethro went to the prison, he found Moses alive and was convinced that he had miraculously remained so. Then he married Ziporah to him.

Have the Western orientalists who are ever on the lookout for the sources of the Qur'anic narratives ever cared to see this manifest difference that exists between the Qur'anic version and the Israelite traditions?

39Some people have taken this conversation between the Prophet Moses and the girl's father for a contract of marriage, and have started the dispute whether service under the father can be looked upon as a dower of the daughters marriage, and whether such external conditions can be laid down for the marriage contract; whereas the words of the verses under discussion themselves indicate this was not the contract of marriage but the initial proposal that is generally made before the execution of the marriage contract itself. After all, how can this be taken for a contract of marriage when it had not yet been decided which of the girls was to be given away in marriage. The purport of the conversation was that the girl's father said, "I am prepared to marry one of my daughters to you provided that you promise that you will stay in my house for eight to ten years and help me in performing household chores, for I am old and have no son either, who could manage my properties. I have only daughters whom I have to send to perform outdoor duties. I want you to strengthen me as my would-be son-in-law. If you are willing to accept this responsibility, and do not intend to take away your wife soon after marriage, I will marry one of my daughters to you." The Prophet Moses himself was in search of a shelter at that time, so he accepted the proposal. Evidently, it was a sort of contract that had been agreed upon between the two parties before the marriage. After this the actual marriage must have taken place according to the law and the dower also settled. There could be no question of including the condition of service in the marriage bond itself.

40According to Hadrat Hasan bin `Ali bin Abi Talib, the Prophet Moses had completed the ten years term instead of the eight years. According to Ibn 'Abbas, this has been related on the authority of the Holy Prophet himself. He has said, "Moses (peace be upon him) completed the term which was more perfect and more agreeable to his father-in-law, i.e. ten years."

41That the direction of the journey was towards Mt. Tur shows that the Prophet Moses might be traveling to Egypt with his family, for Tur lies on the way from Midian to Egypt. Probably Prophet Moses thought that he had stayed away from home for ten long years and the Pharaoh in whose reign he had left Egypt had also died, if he quietly went back and stayed with his people, nobody would know it.

The Biblical version of the sequence of events is different from the Qur'an's. It says that the Prophet Moses `led the flocks (of his father-in-law) to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb." There God spoke to him, and appointed him to Prophethood and commanded him to go to Egypt. Then Moses went back to Jethro, his father-in-law, took his permission and went to Egypt with his family. (Exod. 3: 1, 4: 18) Contrary to this, the Qur'an says that the Prophet Moses left Midian with his family after completing the term and during this journey Allah spoke to him and appointed him to Prophethood.

Both the Bible and the Talmud agree that the Pharaoh in whose house Prophet Moses had been brought up had died during his stay in Midian, and now another Pharaoh was the king of Egypt.

42That is, in the ground which was being lit up by Divine Light.

43That is, on that side of the valley which lay to the right of the Prophet Moses.

44These two miracles were shown to the Prophet Moses at that time so that, firstly, he himself is fully convinced that the same Being Who is speaking to him is, in fact, the Creator and Master and Ruler of the whole system of the universe and secondly, he should have full satisfaction that he was not going unarmed before Pharaoh, to perform the dangerous mission assigned to him, but would go well armed with the two powerful weapons.

45That is, "Whenever you experience the fear of any danger, fold back your arm to yourself: this will strengthen your heart and will deliver you completely from every feeling of fear and dread."

The arm probably implies the right arm. The arm can be folded back in two ways: either by bringing the arm and pressing it against the side, or by pressing one hand under the armpit of the other. Probably the first way was implied, for in that case the other person cannot perceive that one is specially doing so in order to ward off fear.

The Prophet Moses was taught this device because he was being sent to counter a tyrannical government without any army and worldly equipment. He was going to meet with many a dreadful situation when a great Prophet also could not remain safe from fear and terror. Allah said to him, "Whenever you face such a situation, just do this* and Pharaoh will not be able to shake your heart in spite of all the power of his mighty kingdom."

46The words by themselves imply: "Go to Pharaoh with these Signs and present yourself as Allah's Messenger, and invite him and his chiefs to the obedience and worship of Allah, Lord of the worlds." That is why his appointment has not been specified here, though at other places it has been clearly stated, thus: 'Go to Pharaoh for he has become rebellious' "(Ta Ha: 24) And: "When your Lord called Moses,

saying: "Go forth to the wicked people--the people of Pharaoh'." (Ash-Shu'araa: 10).

47It did not mean that he was hesitant to go there because of the fear, but it meant this: "Kindly make some such arrangement that I am not apprehended on the charge of murder just on arrival even before I may convey to them Your message, for in that case the very object for which I am being sent will be defeated." The next verse makes it plain that the Prophet Moses, by this submission, did not at all mean to reject the office of Prophethood and refuse to go before Pharaoh because of the fear.

48This meeting of the Prophet Moses with Allah and the mutual conversation has been described in much greater detail in Surah Ta Ha (vv. 9-48). Anyone possessed of fine taste, who compares this Qur'anic version with the story given in the Bible (Exod., chs. 3, 4), will be himself able to judge which of the two is Divine Revelation and which the result of human story-telling. Besides, he will also be able to judge whether the Qur'anic version is, God forbid, a plagiarism of the Bible and Israelite traditions, or that God Himself is describing the actual event, Who had honored Moses by calling him up into His Presence. (For further explanation, see E.N. 19 of Surah Ta Ha).

49The words of the Text mean "Fabricated or forged magic." If fabrication is taken to mean falsehood, it would mean, "The staff's turning into a serpent and the shining of the hand is not any real change in the nature of the thing itself, but a mere illusion, which this man calls a miracle in order to deceive us." And if it is taken to mean a forgery it will imply: "This person has forged something which appears to be a staff; but when it is thrown on the ground, it moves like a snake. As for the hand, he has rubbed something on it so that when he draws it out of the armpit, it shines. He himself works these magical tricks but tries to make us believe that these are miracles which God has granted him."

50The reference is to the teachings which the Prophet Moses had presented while conveying this message of Tauhid. The details have been given at other places in the Qur'an. For example, according to Surah An-Naziyat: 18-19, he said to Pharaoh: "Will you mind to purify yourself, that I may guide you to your Lord so that you may have fear (of Him)?" And in Surah Ta Ha: 47-48: "We have come to you with Signs from your Lord; peace is for him who follows the Right Way. We have been informed by Revelation that there is punishment for him who rejects it and turns away." And: "We are Messengers from your Lord: so let the Israelites go with us." It was about these things that Pharaoh said, "Even our forefathers had never heard that there was a Being more powerful than Pharaoh of Egypt, Who was authorized to command him, to punish him, to send a man to his court to convey His instructions to him, and to warn the king of Egypt to fear Him. These are strange things which we are hearing today from a man like you."

51That is, "You think I am a magician and a forger, but my Lord is well aware of me. He knows what sort of a man is the person whom He has appointed as a Messenger; and the final judgment rests with Him. If I am a liar, I shall meet an evil end; and if you are a liar, you should know that your end will not be good.

In any case, the inevitable fact is that the unjust will not attain true success. He who is not Allah's messenger but falsely presents himself as a messenger for selfish motives, is also unjust and will not attain success. And the one who rejects a true Messenger by false accusations and suppresses the Truth by deceit and fraud, is also unjust and will never attain success."

52By this Pharaoh did not, and could not, mean that he was the creator of his people and the earth and the heavens, for such a thing be uttered only by a madman. Likewise; he also did not mean that they had no other deity besides him for the Egyptians worshiped many gods, and the Pharaoh himself had been made the incarnation of the sun god. The Qur'an testifies that the Pharaoh himself worshiped many gods: "The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said, `Will you leave Moses and his followers free to spread disorder in the land, and to discard you and your deities'?" (Al-A`raf: 127) Therefore, inevitably, the Pharaoh had not used the word "god" here for himself as a creator and deity, but as an absolute and supreme sovereign. What he meant was this: "I am the owner of this land of Egypt: I alone will rule here: My law will be the law of the land; I alone shall be accepted as the fountainhead of all commands and prohibitions here. None else is entitled to give commands in this country. Who is this Moses, who has appeared as the delegate of the Lord of the universe and is conveying orders to me as though he is the ruler and I am his subordinate?" That is why he addressed his courtiers, thus: "O people: Is not the kingdom of Egypt mine? And are not these canals flowing beneath me?" (Az-Zukhruf: 51) And that is why he said to Moses again and again, "Have you come to turn us away from the faith of our forefathers so that you too may dominate over the land?" (Yunus: 78) "O Moses, have you come to drive us out of our land by the power of your sorcery?" (Ta Ha: 57) "I fear he will change your religion, or cause mischief to appear in the land." (Al-Mu'min: 26)

If the matter is considered from this angle it will become evident that the position of Pharaoh was no different from the position of those states which claim political and legal sovereignty independent of Divine Law brought by the Prophets. Whether they accept a king as the fountainhead of law and commands and prohibitions, or the will of the nation, in any case as long as they stick to the position that the country will be ruled by their law and not by the Law of Allah and His Messengers, there will be no fundamental difference between their position and that of Pharaoh. It is, however, a different thing that the ignorant people curse Pharaoh but approve these as lawful. A person who understands reality will look for the spirit and sense and not merely for words and terminology. Pharaoh had used the word "god" for himself but these stales use the term "sovereignty" in the same sense. (For further explanation, see E. N. 21 of Ta Ha.

53This was the same kind of mentality as the Russian communists of today are displaying. They launch Sputniks and Lunics and tell the world that these balls have not found God anywhere above. That stupid man of yore wanted to see God from the top of a tower. This shows that the extent of the imagination of the straying people during the past 3,500 years has remained where it was. They have not advanced even an inch. It is not known who told them that the Being Whom the God-worshipers acknowledge as the Lord of the universe resided some where above according to their belief. And if they do not see Him a

few thousand feet or a few lakh miles above the earth's surface in this limitless universe, it will be a proof that He exists nowhere.

The Qur'an does not specify whether Pharaoh actually got such a tower built and tried to see God from the top of it, but it only relates what he said. Apparently, he did not commit the folly. He only meant to befool the people.

This also is not clear whether Pharaoh was, in actual fact, a disbeliever in the Being of the Lord of the universe, or talked atheism only due to stubbornness. In this regard his sayings point to the same mental confusion which one finds in the statements of the Russian Communists. Sometimes he wanted to climb into the sky and come back to tell the world that he had nowhere seen the God of Moses, and sometimes he would say, "Why were not bracelets of gold sent down on him, or a company of angels as attendants?" (Az-Zukhruf: 53) These things are not much different from what a former Prime Minister of Russia, Khrushchev, said. He sometimes rejected God and sometimes invoked Him and swore by Him. We are of the opinion that after the passage of the period of the Prophet Joseph and his successors when Egypt was dominated by the Coptic nationalism and a political revolution took place in the country owing to the racial and nationalistic prejudice, the new leaders, in their nationalistic enthusiasm, revolted against the God also towards Whom the Prophet Joseph and his followers, the Israelites and the Egyptian Muslims, had been calling the people. They thought that if they believed in God, they would never be able to shed the influence and impact of the civilization brought about by the Prophet Joseph. For if that civilization remained, they would never be able to consolidate, their political influence. For them belief in God and Muslim sovereignty were inseparable and inter-dependent. Therefore, to get rid of the one it was necessary to reject the other, although they could not root out belief in One God from the depths of their hearts.

54That is, Allah, Lord of the worlds, alone is entitled to the right to greatness, but Pharaoh and his hosts assumed greatness when they attained a little power in a small territory on the earth.

55That is, "They thought they were answerable to none and with this assumption they started behaving absolutely independently in their day to day life."

56Allah in these words has depicted their worthlessness and insignificance as against their false pride. They thought they were big people, but when the respite Allah had granted them to reform themselves came to an end, they were thrown into the sea like so much rubbish.

57That is, "They have set a precedent for the later generations as to committing injustices, rejecting the Truth and persistence in their rejection till the last, and using all sorts of devices to defend falsehood against the Truth." They showed these ways to the people and have gone to Hell, and now their descendants are following in their footsteps and rushing towards the same doom.

58The words in the Text mean: "On the Day of Resurrection they will be among the maqbuhin ", which has several meanings: (l) They will stand rejected and repulsed; (2) they will be wholly deprived of Allah's mercy; and (3) they will be severely beaten up and their faces will become distorted .

59That is, "When the former generations met with the evil consequences of turning away from the teachings of the Prophets, and they met the doom that was experienced by Pharaoh and his hosts, then Moses was granted the Book so as to usher in a new era for mankind."

60"Western side": Mount Sinai, which lies to the west of the Hijaz and on which the Prophet Moses was given the Divine Law.

61"The witnesses": the seventy of the elders of Israel who had been summoned along with Moses for the covenant to follow the Law. (For reference, see Al-A'raf: 155 and Exod., ch. 24)

62That is, "You had no direct means of obtaining this information. All this is being revealed to you by Allah. That is how you have been enabled to relate these two-thousand-year old events, in a manner as if you were an eye-witness."

63That is, "You did not exist at the time when the Prophet Moses reached Midian, passed ten years of his life there, and then left for Egypt. You were not preaching in the habitations of Midian that which you are preaching in the streets of Makkah. You are not relating those events as an eye-witness, but because you have been given the knowledge of these by Us through Revelation."

64These things have been presented as a proof of the Holy Prophet's Prophethood. At the time when these were cued all the chiefs of Makkah and the common disbelievers were bent upon somehow proving him as a non-prophet, and, God forbid, a false claimant to Prophethood. To help and assist them in their campaign there were the Jewish scholars and the Christian monks also, who were living in the habitations of the Hijaz. Besides, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him) had not appeared all of a sudden from somewhere and started reciting the Qur'an to the people, but he was a resident of the same city of Makkah, and no aspect of his life was hidden from the people of his city and clan. That is why when these three things were presented like an open challenge as a proof of his Prophethood, not a single person from Makkah and Hijaz and the entire land of Arabia could stand up to say the absurd thing which the modern orientalists say, although those people were no less . efficient in fabricating falsehood than these so-called scholars. But how could they utter an unprofitable lie that could not survive for a single moment? How could they say, "O Muhammad, you have attained this information from such and such a Jewish scholar and a Christian monk?" For, this purpose, they could not mention any name in the entire land. For whatever name they mentioned, it would become manifest there and then that the Holy Prophet had not obtained any information from him. How could they say, "O Muhammad, you possess a full-fledged library containing all sorts of books an ancient history and

sciences and literature, from which you take help to prepare all your discourses?"' For not to speak of a library, no one could seize even a scrap of paper from his house containing such information. Everyone in Makkah knew that Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him) was un-lettered and no one could also say that he had had some translators at his disposal, who supplied him with translations from Hebrew and Assyrian and Greek books. Then, none of them could be so shameless as to dare claim that he had obtained this information during the trade journeys to Syria and Palestine, for he had not performed those journeys alone, but had traveled in company with trade caravans of Makkah. Had somebody made any such assertion, hundreds of living witnesses would have refuted this and testified that he had received no such instruction from anyone there. Then, within two years of the Holy Prophet's death war had started between the Romans and the Muslims. If he had any son of discussion anywhere in Syria and Palestine with any Christian monk or Jewish rabbi, the Roman Empire would not have hesitated to launch a propaganda campaign, saying, that Muhammad (peace be upon him), God forbid, had learned everything from them and gone back to Makkah and proclaimed himself a Prophet. In short, at that time when the challenge of the Qur'an was the knell of the disbelieving Quraish and the polytheists and the need of those people to refute it was far greater then of the modern orientalists, no one could discover any material by which he could prove that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) had some other means than Revelation for obtaining that information .

One should also know that the Qur'an has not given this challenge only here, but at several other places also in connection with different stories. After narrating the story of the Prophet Zacharias and Mary, it was said: "These are of the 'unseen' things We are revealing to you: you were not present there when the priests of the Temple were casting lots by throwing their quills to decide which of them should be the guardian of Mary: nor were you there with them when they were arguing about it." (Al-i-`Imran: 44) At the end of the Prophet Joseph's story it was said: "This story which We are revealing to you is of those things that were not known to you: for you were not with the brothers (of Joseph), when they had conspired together a plot against Joseph." (Yusuf: 102) Similarly, after relating the full story of the Prophet Noah, it was said: "These are some of the tidings of the `unseen' which We are revealing to you. You did not know these before nor did your people." (Hud: 49) That this thing has been reiterated several times shows that this was one of the main arguments that the Qur'an gave to prove its being Allah's Word and the Holy Prophet's being a Messenger of Allah. For there was no perceptible means of knowledge available to the Holy Prophet who was an unlettered person, apart from Revelation, through which he could narrate so accurately the events that had happened hundreds and thousands of years in the past. And this was one of the important reasons why the contemporaries of the Holy prophet were coming to believe, in larger and still larger numbers, that he was really a Prophet of Allah and received Allah's Revelations. Now one can easily imagine how important it must have been for the opponents of the Islamic movement at that time to meet this challenge, and what efforts they must have made to collect arguments and proofs against it. One can also see that if, God forbid, there was the slightest weakness. in this challenge, it would not have been at all difficult for the contemporary people to provide evidence for its refutation.

65No prophet had been born especially in Arabia after the Prophets Ishmael and Shu`aib (peace be upon them both), during the past two thousand years or so, though teachings of the Prophets like Moses and Solomon and Jesus (peace be upon all of them) had reached the people of that land.

66This very thing has been presented at several places in the Qur'an as the reason for sending the Messengers, but it will not be correct to conclude from this that a Messenger should be sent on every occasion at every place for this purpose. AS long as the message of a Prophet remains intact in the world and the means of conveying it to others exist, there is no need for a new Prophet, unless need arises to supplement the previous message, or to supplant it by a new message, Nevertheless, when the teachings of the Prophets are forgotten, or become mixed up with errors and deviations and can no longer be relied upon as means of guidance, then the people do get a chance to make the excuse that there existed no arrangement whatever to make them aware of the distinction between the Truth and the untruth and guide them to the right way: so they could not be guided aright. To meet such an excuse Allah sends the Prophets in such conditions so that any one who follows a wrong way after that may himself be held responsible for his going astray.

67That is, "Why has. not Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) been given all those miracles which had been given to the Prophet Moses? He also should have shown us the miracle of the staff; his hand also should have shone like the sun; his deniers also should have been struck with storms and plagues from the earth and heaven; and he also should have brought them Commandments written on stone tablets."

68This is a reply to their objection, which implies: "The disbelievers of Makkah had not believed in Moses either, nor followed his teachings. Therefore they had no right to say: Why has the Prophet Muhammad not been given the same miracles that were given to the Prophet "Moses?" In Surah Saba': 31, this saying of the disbelievers of Makkah has been related: "We shall never believe in this Qur'an, nor in any other Book which came before it."

69That is, the Qur'an and the Torah both.

70That is, "I have to follow the guidance in any case, provided that it is not forged but is real guidance from God. If you possess a Divine Book which gives better guidance than the Qur'an and the Torah, you should produce it: I shall follow it without any hesitation."

71That is, "As far as conveying of the admonition is concerned, we have done full justice to it in the Qur'an in the best way. But guidance is attained only by him who gives up stubbornness and frees his heart from prejudices and is inclined to accept the Truth willingly and sincerely."

72This does not mean that all the people of the Book (the Jews and the Christians) affirm faith in it. This,

in fact, contains an allusion to the event that occurred during the period when this Surah was revealed, and was meant to put to shame the people of Makkah, as if to say, "You are denying and rejecting a blessing that has been sent in your own city, whereas the people from far off places, when they hear of it, come to recognize its worth and benefit from it."

This event has been related by lbn Hisham, Baihaqi and others on the authority of Ibn Ishaq, thus: "After the migration to Habash when the news about the Holy Prophet's advent and message spread in that land, a deputation of about twenty Christians came to Makkah to find out the truth, and they met the Holy Prophet in the Masjid-al-Haram A crowd of the Quraish also gathered around them to watch what happened. The members of the deputation asked the Holy Prophet some questions, which he answered. Then he invited them to accept Islam and recited some verses of the Qur'an before them. When they heard the Qur'an, tears came down from their eyes and they confirmed its being Allah's Word and believed in the Holy Prophet. When the meeting was over and the people left, Abu Jahl and some of his men overtook them on the way, and rebuked them severely, saying, "Never has a more stupid company come here before: O foolish men you were sent here by your people with a view to inquiring about this man. but no sooner did you meet him than you gave up your own faith! " Those gentle people answered, "Peace be to you! We have no wish to enter all argument with you: you are responsible for your faith and we are for ours: we cannot afford to deprive ourselves knowingly of goodness." (Ibn Hisham, Vol. II, p. 32; Al-Bidayah wan Nihayah, Vol. III, p. 82. For further details, see E.N. 123 of Ash-Shu`araa).

73That is, "Even before this we were believers in the Prophets and the Divine Books. Therefore, we had no other Faith than Islam and we have believed in that Book too, which this Prophet has brought from Allah. Thus, no change has occurred in our religion: we were Muslims before even as we are Muslims now."

This saying clearly indicates that Islam is not the name of the Faith brought by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the term "Muslim" is not only applicable to his. followers, but Islam has been the Faith of all the Prophets since the very beginning and their followers were Muslims in every age. These Muslims became disbelievers only when they refused to acknowledge a true Prophet who came afterwards. But no interruption occurred in the Islam of those people who believed in the former Prophet and also affirmed faith in the Prophet who succeeded him. They continued to be Muslims as they had been Muslims before.

It is strange that even some learned men also have failed to comprehend this fact, and this clear verse also could not satisfy them. `Allama Suyuti wrote a treatise on the subject that the term "Muslim" was only reserved for the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him). Then, as he himself says, when this verse came before him he was stunned: he prayed to God that He guide him in the matter. At last, instead of revising his opinion he stuck to it even more firmly and gave several interpretations of the verse, each to which is more meaningless than the other. For example, one of his interpretations is: "We were Muslims even before this" means: We intended to become Muslims even

before the revelation of the Qur'an, because we had been foretold by our Scriptures that it would come, and we hadthe intention that when it came we would accept Islam." Another interpretation is: "In this sentence, the word bi-hi after muslimin is omitted, implying: We believed in the Qur'an beforehand, because we expected it would come, and had believed in it in anticipation. Therefore, we were Muslims, not because we believed in the Torah and the Gospels, but because we had believed in the Qur'an as Allah's Word even before its revelation." The third interpretation is: "It had been divinely destined for us that we would accept Islam on the advent of the Holy Prophet and the revelation of the Qur'an; therefore, we were Muslims even before this." None of these interpretations bears any impress that Divine help had become available for the right understanding of this verse.

The fact is that the Qur'an has expressed this fundamental principle not only here, but at scores of other places also that the real Way of life is only Islam (submission to Allah), and in God's universe there can be no other way of life than this for His creatures. Since the beginning of the creation every Prophet who came for the guidance of mankind brought this very Way of Life: the Prophets themselves have always been Muslims, and they impressed upon their followers also to live as Muslims, and all their followers who submitted to the Divine Command brought by the Prophets, were also Muslims in every age. Consider the following few verses for instance:

(1) Indeed, Islam is the only right way of life in the sight of Allah." (Al-'Imran: 19)

(2) "Whoever adopts any other than this way of submission (Islam), it will not be accepted from him." (Al-i-`imran: 85)

(3)"My reward is with Allah, and I have been commanded to believe like a Muslim." (Yunus: 72)

About Prophet Abraham and his descendants it has been said:

(4) "When his Lord said to him, 'Surrender', he promptly responded, 'I have surrendered to the Lord of the universe (and become a Muslim)'. He also enjoined on his children to follow the same way. Jacob also did the same and his last will to his sons was: 'O my children, Allah has chosen the same way of life for you. Hence, remain Muslims up to your last breath.' (Dare you deny this?) Were you present at the time when Jacob was on the point of death ? He asked his children, `Whom will you worship after me?' They all answered, `We will worship the same One Allah Whom you, your forefathers Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac acknowledged as their Allah and to Him we all surrender as Muslims'." (Al-Baqarah: 133) (5) "Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Muslim, sound in the Faith." (AI-i-`Imran: 67) Prophets Abraham and Ishmael themselves prayed:

(6) "Lord, make us Thy Muslims and raise from our offspring a community which should also be Muslim (submissive to Thy will)." (Al-Baqarah: 128). In connection with the story of the Prophet Lot it has been said:

(7) "We did not find in it any house of the Muslims except one." (Ad Dhariyat: 36) The Prophet Joseph prayed to Allah:

(8) "Let me die as a Muslim, and join me with the righteous in the end." (Yusuf: 101) Prophet Moses says to his people:

(9) "O my people, if you sincerely believe in Allah, put your trust in Him, if you are Muslims." (Yunus: 84)

The real religion of the Israelites was not Judaism but Islam as was known to their friends and foes alike. That is why the last words that Pharaoh said while drowning were:

(10) "I have believed that there is no god but the real God in Whom the children of Israel have believed, and I am of the Muslims." (Yunus:90)

Islam was the Way of life of all the Israelite Prophets:

(11) "Indeed, We sent down the Torah wherein was Guidance and Light: thereby all the Prophets, who were Muslims, judged the cases of those who had become Jews." (Al-Ma'idah: 44).

The same was the Prophet Solomon's way of life. So when the queen of Sheba believed in him, she said.

(12) "I submit myself (as a Muslim) with Solomon to Allah, Lord of the wands." (An-Naml: 44).

And the same was the religion of the disciples of the Prophet Jesus:

(13) "And when I inspired the disciples to believe in Me and My Messenger, they said: `We believe and bear witness that we are Muslims'." (AlMa'idah: 111).

In this connection, if somebody expresses the doubt that the Arabic words "Islam" and "Muslims" could not have been used in different languages and countries, it would obviously be a foolish objection. For the real thing is not the Arabic words but the meaning in which they are used in Arabic. In fact, what has been stressed in the above-cited verses is that the real Way of life sent by God was neither Christianity nor Mosaicism nor Muhammadanism, but to surrender to the Divine Commands taught by the Prophets and the Scriptures, and whoever adopted this Way anywhere and at any time in the world, is the follower of the same universal, eternal and everlasting true Way of Life. For those who have adopted this Way consciously and sincerely, it is no change of the faith to believe in Jesus after Moses and in Muhammad after Jesus(may Allah's peace be upon all of them), but a natural and logical demand following the same real Way of life (Islam). Contrary to this, those people who got into the Prophets' communities without due understanding or were born in them, and for whom nationalistic and racial and tribal prejudices were the

religion, became mere Jews or Christians, and on the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) their ignorance was exposed. For by refusing to believe in the Last Prophet of Allah, they not only refused to ,remain Muslims in the future but also proved that they were not "Muslims" even before: they had been charmed by the personality of a Prophet or Prophets, or had taken blind conformity to their forefathers for religion.

74That is, one reward for affirming faith in the Prophet Jesus (Allah's peace be upon him) and the second for affirming faith in Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him). The same thing has been expressed in the Hadith which Bukhari and Muslim have related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Musa Ash`ari. He says that the Holy Prophet said: "One of the three persons who will get a double reward is he who belonged to the people of the Book, had full faith in his Prophet and then affirmed faith in Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him)."

75That is, "They will get a double reward for the reason that they avoided nationalistic, racial and tribal prejudices and remained steadfast on the way of true Faith. When, on the advent of the new Prophet, they were confronted by a hard test, they proved by their conduct that they were not Christ-worshipers but God worshipers: they were not charmed by Christ's personality but were followers of "Islam". That is why when the new Prophet after Christ brought the same Islam that Christ had brought, they adopted the way of Islam under his leadership; without any hesitation, and gave up the way of those who remained stuck to Christianity. "

76That is, "They answer evil and falsehood with what is good and right: they repel injustice and mischief with what is just and noble; and they do not pay the other man back in the same coin."

77That is, "They also make monetary sacrifices in the way of the truth. There might also be in it an allusion to this that those people had traveled from Habash to Makkah in search of the truth: they had no material gain in view when they undertook a toilsome journey involving a lot of expenses. When they heard that a man in Makkah had made a claim to be a Prophet, they thought it necessary to go and find out the truth, so that if a prophet had really been sent by God, they should not be deprived of affirming faith in him and being guided aright."

78The reference is to the "vain talk" that Abu Jahl and his men had with the Christians from Habash, as mentioned in E.N. 72 above.

79The context shows that the object of addressing this sentence to the Holy Prophet, after mentioning the affirmation of the Faith by this Christians from Habash, was to put the disbelievers of Makkah to shame, as if to say. "O unfortunate people, what wretches you are! People from far off places are coming to benefit from the fountainhead of blessings that has been made available in your own city, but you are willfully depriving yourselves of it." But the same thing has been said like this: "O Muhammad, you wish

that your clansmen and your kinsfolk; and your near and dear ones should benefit from this life-giving nectar, but your willing alone cannot avail. To give guidance is in the power of Allah: He favours with it only those whom He finds inclined to accept guidance. If your kinsfolk lack this inclination, how can they be favored with this blessing?"

According to Bukhari and Muslim. this verse was sent down with regard to the Holy Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib. When he was about to breathe his last, the Holy Prophet tried his utmost that he should affirm faith in La ilaha illallah, so that he might die as a Muslim, but he preferred to die on the creed of `Abdul Muttalib; that is why Allah said: "You cannot give guidance to whom you please.." But this is a well-known method of the traditionalists and commentators that when they find that a particular verse applies to an event of the Prophet's time, they regard it as the occasion of the verse's revelation. Therefore, it cannot be necessarily concluded from this and the other similar traditions that have been related in Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad, etc. on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Ibn `Abbas, Ibn `Umar, etc. that this verse of Surah Al-Qasas was revealed on the occasion of Abu Talib's death. This only shows that the truth of its meaning became most evident only on that occasion. Though the Holy Prophet sincerely wished that every man should be blessed with guidance, the person whose dying on disbelief could cause him the greatest anguish and of whose guidance he was most desirous on account of personal bonds of love and affection, was Abu Talib. But when he was helpless in affording guidance even to him, it became evident that it did not lie in the power of the Prophet to give guidance to one or withhold it from another, but it lay wholly in the power of Allah. And Allah bestows this favor on whom ever He wills not on account of a family or tribal relationship, but on the basis of one's sincerity, capability and inclination of the heart.

80This was the most important excuse which the unbelieving Quraish made for not accepting Islam. To understand fully we shall have to see what was the position of the Quraish historically which they feared would be affected if they accepted Islam.

The importance that the Quraish gained initially in Arabia was due to them being genealogically the descendants of the Prophet Ishmael, and therefore, the Arabs looked upon them as the children of the Prophets. Then, when they became the custodians of the Ka`bah through Qusayy bin Kilab's sagacity, and Makkah became their home, their importance grew, because they were the attendants of the most, sacred shrine of Arabia, and its priests too. Therefore, every Arab tribe had to have relations with them on account of the annual pilgrimage. Taking advantage of this central position the Quraish started gaining prominence as a commercial people, and to their great good fortune, the political conflict between the Eastern Roman Empire and Iran helped them to gain an important place in the international trade. Iran in those days had blocked entrance to all the trade routes between Rome, Greece, Egypt and Syria in the north and China, India, Indonesia and eastern Africa in the south-east. The only exception was the Red Sea route. This also was blocked when Yemen fell to Iran. After this no way of the transit of trade goods remained except that the Arab merchants should transport merchandise of the Roman territories to the harbors of the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf, and then lift trade goods of the eastern countries from these harbors and transport them to the Roman territories This sort of arrangement made Makkah an

important center of the international trade, and the Quraish were its monopolists. But the chaotic conditions prevailing in Arabia did not allow smooth transit of the trade goods unless the Quraish had had pleasant relations with the tribes through whose territories the trade caravans passed. For this the religious influence of the Quraish was not enough; they had had to enter into treaties with the tribes concerned, pay them dividends from their profits, and make gifts to the tribal chiefs and other influential people. Besides, they traded in money-lending also on a vast scale, which had ensnared the merchants and the chiefs of almost all the neighboring tribes.

Such were the conditions when the Holy Prophet gave his message of Tauhid. More than the prejudice of ancestral religion what caused the Quraish the greatest provocation against it was that in it they saw their own interests in jeopardy. They thought that even if polytheism and idol-worship were proved wrong and . Tauhid right by rational arguments and reasoning, it was ruinous for them to accept Tauhid. For as soon as they did so the whole of Arabia would rise in revolt against them. Then, they would be ousted from the custodianship of the Ka'bah, and all their bonds and pacts of friendship with the polytheistic tribes would be severed, which alone guaranteed the safe transit of their trade caravans through their territories. Thus, the new Faith would not only put an end to their religious influence but also to their economic prosperity, and they might even be forced by the Arabs to quit Makkah.

This presents a strange phenomenon of the lack of insight on the part of the world-worshipers. The Holy Prophet tried his best to make them believe that if they accepted his Message, the whole world would yield and submit to them. (See also Introduction to Surah Sad). But they saw their death in it. They thought that the change of the Faith would not only deprive them of their wealth and prosperity and influence but would render them so completely helpless in the land that the birds of the sky would pick and eat their flesh. They could not foresee the time when a few years afterwards the whole of Arabia was going to be ruled by' a central government under the Holy Prophet himself. Then even during the lifetime of their own generation Iran and `Iraq and Syria and Egypt were going to fall, one after the other, to the same central authority and within a century of this utterance by them Caliphs from the clan of the Quraish itself were to rule over vast territories, from Sind to Spain and from Caucasus to the coasts of Yemen.

81This is the first reply to their excuse by Allah. It means this: It is all due to the sacredness and the central position of this Sanctuary that the merchandise of the entire world is being drawn and attracted to this barren and uncultivated valley, for your benefit and use. You should know that you are in no way responsible for giving it the central position it enjoys and for the state of security that prevails in the areas around it. 2;500 years ago a servant of Allah came to this barren valley in the bare mountains with his wife and suckling child. Here he built a small room with stone and mud, proclaimed that Allah had made it a Sanctuary, and that the people should come to visit it and go round it in worship and adoration. Now this is only due to Allah's blessing that this Sanctuary has been the center of Arabia for the past 25 centuries. Peace reigns here even when there is chaos all around. It is held in the highest esteem by every Arab, and thousands of people are drawn to it every year for going round it in worship. It is only by virtue of this blessing that you are looked upon as the spiritual leaders of Arabia and a large part of the

international trade is under your control. Now, do you think; that if you turned and revolted against that God Who has favored you with this blessing. you will prosper, but as soon as you followed His Faith you would he ruined?

82This is the second answer to their excuse. It means to imply this: The worldly wealth and prosperity of which you are so proud and whose probable danger of loss makes you stick to falsehood and turn away from the Truth was also possessed once by `Ad and Thamud and Saba' and the people of Lot. Then, did it save them from destruction? After all, a high standard of living is not the only aim in life that man should endeavor to pursue it regardless of every consideration for truth and falsehood, and refuse to accept the right way only because there was a risk of losing it if one did so. Do you have any guarantee that if you persisted in the errors and evils that ruined the prosperous peoples of the past, you would remain safe and never meet the doom that they met?

83This is the third answer to their excuse. It means: "The nations which were destroyed before you had become wicked. To warn them finally Allah sent His Messengers, but when they took no notice of their warnings and persisted in their evil ways, they were destroyed. The same is the case with you now. You have also become wicked, and a Messenger has come to you to warn you too. Now if you persist in your disbelief and denial, you will not be safeguarding your prosperity and comforts of life but endangering them. The destruction that you are afraid of will overtake you not because of believing but on account of refusal to believe.

84This is the fourth answer to their excuse. To understand it fully one should bear in mind two things:

First, the present life which is no more than a few years for anyone, is only the temporary phase of a journey. The real life which will be everlasting is yet to come. In this life man may amass as much provision as he may please and live the few years at his disposal as comfortably as he can, it will in any case come to an end, and man will depart from the world empty-handed. No sensible person will like to make the bad bargain of suffering the everlasting distress and affliction in the Hereafter in exchange for the pleasures and comforts of his brief sojourn in the world. As against this, he would rather prefer to face a few years of hardships here and earn the goodness that may earn him everlasting bliss and comfort in the eternal life of the Next World.

Secondly, Allah's religion does not demand that man should totally refrain from seeking and enjoying the good things of life and discard its adornments in any case. Its only demand is that he should prefer the Hereafter to the world, for the world is perishable and the Hereafter everlasting; and the pleasures of the world are inferior and of the Hereafter superior. Therefore, man must try to attain those provisions and adornments of the world that may enable him to fare well in the everlasting life of the Next World, or at least protect him from the eternal loss there. But in case there is a question of a comparison between the two, and the success of the world and of the Hereafter oppose and contradict each other, the Faith demands, and this is the demand of man's good sense too, that he should sacrifice the world to the

Hereafter, and should never adopt the way of only seeking the transitory provisions and adornments of this world, which inevitably lead to his ruin in the Hereafter forever.

Keeping these two things in view let us see what Allah says to the disbelievers of Makkah in the foregoing sentences. He does not tell them to wind up their business, stop their trade and follow His Prophets and become mendicants. What He says is that the worldly wealth of which they are so enamored, is very meager and they can utilize it only for a few days in this worldly life. Contrary to this, that which is with Allah is much better both in quality and in quantity and is also everlasting. Therefore, they would be foolish if for the sake of benefiting by the limited blessings of this transitory life, they adopted the way whose evil results they will have to suffer in the form of everlasting loss in the Next World. They should judge for themselves as to who is successful: He who exerts himself in the service of his Lord and then is blessed with His favors for ever, or he who will be produced as a culprit in His Court, only after having had an opportunity of enjoying unlawful wealth for a few days in the world.

85This discourse is in continuation of the fourth answer, and is linked with the last sentence of the preceding verse. It means to imply this: Those who persist in the evil of shirk and idol-worship and refuse to believe in the Prophet only for the sake of their worldly interests, will meet with such and such evil consequences in the eternal life of the Hereafter. They should, therefore, carefully judge for themselves whether it would be a good bargain if they were to be doomed to such an end, after they had enjoyed fully the provisions and adornments of the short worldly life even if no calamity befell them in the world.

86This implies those satans from among jinns and men, who had been set up as associates, of God in the world, whose teachings had been followed in preference to Divine Commandments, and dependence on whom had made the people give up the Right Way and adopt the wrong ways of life. Such persons may not have been called gods and lords as such, but since they were worshiped and obeyed as one should worship and obey only God, they were inevitably made partners in Godhead.

87That is, "We did not lead them astray forcibly. We neither deprived them of their powers of seeing and hearing nor of their powers of thinking, nor there ever arose a situation when they wanted to follow the right way but we might have forcibly pulled them to the wrong way. But just as we ourselves had gone astray of our own free will, so they also of their own free will accepted the wrong way when we presented it before them. Therefore, we are not responsible for what they did: we are responsible for our acts and they are responsible for theirs."

There is a subtle point to be noted here. Allah, in fact, will question those who had set up others as associates with Him, but before they make an answer, those who had been set up as associates will speak up. The reason is: When the common polytheists will be questioned thus, their leaders and guides will feel that their doomsday had come, for their followers will certainly blame them for their deviation. Therefore, even before the followers say something in response, the leaders will forestall them and start pleading their innocence.

88That is, "They did not serve us but served their own selves alone."

89That is, "Invoke them for help. In the world you had relied on them and rejected Our Commandments. So invoke them to come to your rescue here also and save you from the punishment."

90This, in fact, is a refutation of shirk. Allah objects to the setting up of countless gods froth among His creatures by the mushriks and assigning to them from themselves of attributes and ranks and offices, and says: "We Ourselves bless with whatever attributes, capabilities and powers whomever We like from among the men, angels, jinns and other servants whom We have created, and employ whomever We will for whatever service We will. But, how and where from have the mushriks got the authority that they should make whomever they like from among My servants remover of hardships, bestower of treasures and answerer of prayers? That they should make someone the lord of rain, another the giver of jobs and children, still another bestower of health and ill-health? That they should look upon whomever they please as the ruler of a part of My Kingdom and assign to him whichever of My powers they like? Whether it is an angel or a jinn, or a prophet, or saint, or anybody else, he has been created by Us Whatever excellences he has, have been granted by Us, and whatever service We willed to take from him, We have taken. Therefore, the selection. of someone for a particular service does not mean that he should be raised from the position of a servant to godhead and worshiped instead of God, invoked for help, prayed to for fulfillment of needs, taken as maker or destroyer of destinies and possessor of divine; attributes and powers.

91The object for which this thing has been said in this context is: A person (or persons) can make a claim before the people in this world that he is fully satisfied on rational grounds that the deviation he has adopted is sound and right, and the arguments that are given against it are not convincing; that he has adopted the deviation not due to any evil motive but with the sincerest and purest intentions; that he has never been confronted by anything that might have proved him to be in the wrong. But he cannot advance such an argument before Allah, for Allah is not only aware of the open, but also of the hidden secrets of the mind and heart: He knows directly what kind of knowledge and feelings and sentiments and desires and intentions and conscience a certain person has: He is aware of the occasions and the means and the ways through which a person was warned, through which the Truth reached him, through which falsehood was proved to be Falsehood to him, and also the real motives for which he preferred his deviation to the Right Way.

92A witness": the Prophet who had warned that community, or a rightly-guided person from among the followers of the Prophets, who had performed the duty of preaching the Truth in the community, or a means through which the message of the Truth had reached the community.

93That is, "Present a cogent argument in your defense so that you are pardoned. You should either

prove that the shirk and the denial of the Hereafter and Prophethood in which you persisted were the correct creed and you had adopted it on rational grounds, or, if you cannot do that, you should at least prove that no arrangement had been made by God to warn you of this error and guide you to the right path."

94This fact also is being related in continuation of the answer to the excuse which has been the theme of the discourse from verse 57 onward. In this regard, one should bear in mind the fact that the people who feared that the Holy Prophet Muhammad's message would affect the overall national interests adversely were, in fact, the big money owners, money-lenders and capitalists of Makkah, who by virtue of their international trade and money-lending business had become the Korahs of their time. These were the people who thought that the real truth was to earn and amass maximum wealth. Anything that seemed to vitiate this object was an untruth which could not be accepted in any case. On the other hand, there were the common people who looked with longing eyes at these magnates and earnestly desired that they should also attain the same heights as those people had attained. In an atmosphere charged with the love of money, as it was, people considered it to be a weighty argument that if the invitation of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) towards Tauhid and the Hereafter and the moral code was accepted it would spell ruin for the Quraish not only commercially but economically too.

95Qarun who has been called Korah in the Bible and the Talmud was a first cousin of the Prophet Moses. According to the account of descent given in Exodus (ti: 18-21) the fathers of the Prophet Moses and Korah were real brothers. At another place in the Qur'an it has been stated that this man had joined with Pharaoh in spite of being an Israelite and become one of his favorites; so much so that one of the two ring-leaders of opposition to Prophet Moses after Pharaoh was this same Korah: "We sent Moses to Pharaoh and Haman and Korah with Our Signs and a clear authority of appointment, but they said, `He is a sorcerer, a liar'." (Al-Mu'min :23-24).

From this it follows that Korah had rebelled against his own people and become a supporter of the hostile forces which were bent upon wiping out the Israelites. On account of this rebellion against his own people he had attained a high place with Pharaoh and the two persons, besides Pharaoh, to whom the Prophet Moses had been sent were Pharaoh's minister, Haman, and this Israelite capitalist, Korah. All other chiefs and couriers were of inferior status, who were not worth mentioning. The same position of Korah has been alluded to in Al' Ankabut: 39.

96In the story related of him in the Bible (Num., ch. 16), there is no mention of this man's wealth. But according to the Jewish traditions, he possessed immense wealth, so much so that three hundred mules were required to carry the keys of his treasures. (Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VII, p. 556). Though greatly exaggerated this statement shows that even according to the Israelite traditions, Korah was a very wealthy man of his time.

97The words of the Text can have two meanings: (1) "Whatever I have obtained is by virtue of my own

ability. It is not a bounty which somebody else might have given me as a favor without my deserving it as a right, and now I may have to render thanks for it by giving a portion of it to those who have not been given anything, as a favor, or give some of it in charity so that the bounty is not withdrawn from me." (2) "I think God has given me this wealth in view of my qualities and excellences Had I not been a likable person, He would not have given me all this. That He has bestowed on me all kinds of blessings is a proof that I am His favorite and he approves of the way of life that I am following."

98That is, "Did this person who was proud of being so knowledgeable and wise and well-informed and capable never know that people with greater wealth and grandeur and power and might than him had lived before him in the world, and Allah at last, had annihilated them completely? if capability and skill and competence are the only factors conducive to worldly progress, then why didn't these virtues avail them when they were destroyed? And if the worldly progress of a person is a sure proof that Allah is pleased with him and approves of his deeds and qualities, then why were those people doomed to destruction at all?"

99That is, "The criminals have always been claiming to be the best people, who are free from every evil, but their punishment is not dependent on their own confessions. Whenever they are seized; they are not seized on the basis of their own confessions of sins, etc."

100That is, "'This kind of character and the way of thinking and the bounty of Allah's reward falls to the lot of only those who stick firmly and steadfastly and patiently to the lawful ways in life, whether by so doing they are able to earn only a bare living, or are enabled to become millionaires, but are never inclined to follow the unlawful ways even if they promise all the benefits and wealth of the world. In this verse, "Allah's reward" means the bounteous provision that is gained by man in the world and the Hereafter as a result of labor and toil undertaken within the bounds set by Allah; and "patience" means to have control over one's emotions and desires, to stick to honesty and righteousness as against greed and lust, to bear the losses that one may have to incur on account of the truth and justice, to spurn the gains that might accrue from employing unlawful devices, to remain content and satisfied with the lawful earning even if it is meager and insufficient, to eschew feelings of envy and jealousy at the splendor of the corrupt people and avoid ;even casting a glance at it, and to be satisfied with the thought that for an honest man the colorless purity that Allah has granted him by His grace is better than the lustrous filth of evil and corruption. As for "fortune", it implies Allah's reward as well as the pure mentality by virtue of which a believing and righteous person finds it easier to suffer hunger and starvation than become a multi-millionaire by adopting dishonest and corrupt ways and means."

101That is "The extension or the restriction of provisions is always according to the will of Allah, and Allah's will is determined by His own reasons and considerations. His favoring somebody with generous provisions does not necessarily mean that Allah is well pleased with him and is honoring him with gifts. Mostly it so happens that a person is under Allah's wrath, but He goes on favoring him with wore and

more wealth till, at last, the same wealth causes Allah's torment to descend on him. Contrary to this, if somebody is being given restricted provisions it does not necessarily mean that Allah is displeased with him and is punishing him. Mostly the righteous then live in hardship although they are Allah's favorites, and in many cases the same hardship becomes a cause of Allah's mercy for them. Consequently, a person who does not understand this reality looks with envious eyes at the prosperity of those who actually deserve Allah's wrath."

102That is, "We had the misconception, that worldly prosperity and wealth by themselves constituted real success. Therefore, we thought that Korah was highly .successful, but now we have come to know that real success is an entirely different thing, and it is never attained by the disbelievers."

This moral of the story of Korah has been mentioned only in the Qur'an. The Bible and the Talmud are without it. However, according to the details given in these books, when the Israelites left Egypt, Korah also accompanied theta along with his men, and then conspired against the Prophets Moses and Aaron and was joined in this by 250 of his followers. At last, Allah's wrath descended on him, and the earth opened up and swallowed him and his followers together with their possessions."

103That is, Paradise which is the abode of real success.

104"Who do not seek glory": who are not desirous of establishing their own glory in God's earth: who do not live like rebels and tyrants and arrogant people but like humble servants: who do not seek to make God's servants their personal servants

105"Mischief" implies the chaos that inevitably appears in human life in consequence of violating the truth. Whatever man does when he disobeys Allah and turns away from His service is nothing but mischief. Partly this mischief occurs when wealth is amassed through unlawful means and expended in unlawful ways.

106"The God fearing": those who refrain from His disobedience.

107That is, "He has placed on you the responsibility of conveying the Qur'an and teaching it to the people, and reforming the world according to the guidance contained in it."

108The word ma ad in the original means the place to which one has to return ultimately. Its use as a common noun implies that it is a place of eminence and glory. Some commentators think it refers to Paradise. But there is no reason why it should be restricted only to Paradise. Let it remain indefinite as Allah Himself has put it so that the promise become applicable both his world and to the Next World. The context also requires that it should be looked upon as a promise to bestow the highest glory and eminence on the Holy Prophet ultimately not only in the Hereafter but in this world too. In the saying of

the disbelievers of Makkah, which has been the theme of the discourse from verse 57 until now, they had said, "O Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), do you want us also to be doomed with you ? If we join you and adopt this Faith, it will become hard for us to live in Arabia." In response to this, Allah tells His Prophet: "O Muhammad, that God Who has placed the burden of conveying the message of the Qur'an on you, will not destroy you: rather He will exalt you to the rank which these people cannot even imagine today." And, in actual fact, in a few years after this, even in this world, Allah granted the Holy Prophet complete authority over the whole of Arabia, and there was no power to resist him, and no religion to stand its ground. There had been no precedent in the history of Arabia that the whole peninsula might have come under the sway of one man so completely that no opponent might be there to challenge him and no soul to dare disobey his orders. Then it was not only a political domination but religious too, for the whole population had been won over to Islam.

Some commentators opine that this verse of Surah Al-Qasas was sent down on the way during the Holy Prophet's migration from Makkah to Madinah, and in this Allah had promised His Prophet that He would again bring him back to Makkah. But, firstly, the words of the verse do not allow that "ma `ad" be taken to mean "Makkah". Secondly, this Surah, both according to the traditions and the internal evidence of its theme, was revealed some time during the time of the migration to Habash, and one cannot understand that if this verse was revealed after several years on the way during the migration to Madinah. why was it inserted in this context without any relevance? Thirdly, in this context, the mention of the Holy Prophet's return to Makkah seems quite irrelevant. For if the verse is taken to mean this, it will not be a reply to the disbelievers' excuse but would rather strengthen it. It would mean this: "No doubt, what you say, O people of Makkah, is correct. Muhammad will be expelled from this city, but he will not remain an exile for ever, but eventually We will bring him back to this very place." Though this tradition has been reported by Bukhari, Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir and other traditionalists on the authority of Ibn `Abbas, it is, in fact, Ibn `Abbas's own opinion; it is not a tradition that might have been received direct from the Holy Prophet that one may have to accept it.

109This thing is being presented as a proof of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood. Just as the Prophet Moses was wholly unaware that he was going to be appointed a Prophet, and sent on a grand mission-when he had never even expected or wished for such a thing, but had been suddenly called upon while on a journey and made a Prophet and assigned a mission which had no relevance with his previous life-so was precisely the case with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him). The people of Makkah knew full well what kind of life he was leading till a day before the day when he came down from the Cave of Hira' with the message of Prophethood. They were fully aware of his occupations, of the topics of his conversation, of the nature of his interests and activities. No doubt it was a life which was an embodiment of truth, honesty and righteousness, a model of nobility, peacefulness, fulfillment of obligations and rights of others and of the service to humanity, but there was nothing in it which could give somebody any idea that the righteous man was going to make a claim to Prophethood the next day. There was no one among his most intimate friends and relations and neighbors, who could say that he had already been preparing to become a Prophet. No one had ever heard a word on the

themes and problems and topics from him, which became the subject of his daily conversation all of a sudden after the revolutionary moment in the Cave of Hira'. No one had heard him employing the kind of diction and words and terms, which the people started hearing from him in the shape of the Qur'an. He had never stood up for preaching, had never given a message or started a movement, and none of his activities had ever indicated that he was anxious to undertake a program for the solution of the social problems or for religious or moral reformation. Till a day before this revolutionary moment he was leading the life of a trader, who earns his living by fair and lawful means. who lives a happy life with his family, receives his guests, helps the poor and treats his relatives well, and at times retires from society into seclusion for the sake of worship. For such a person it would be a great change if he started making, all of a sudden, world-moving orations, preaching a revolutionary message, producing a sublime literature and propounding an enduring philosophy of life and a profound system of thought and morality and social life. For psychologically too, such a change is not possible through any kind of preparation and conscious effort. Any such effort and preparation, in any case, has to pass through certain evolutionary stages, which cannot remain hidden from the people among whom a person is passing his life. Had the Holy Prophet's life passed through any such stages of gradual development, hundreds of the people in Makkah would have come out to say, "Did we not tell you beforehand that this man would one day make a tall claim?" But history bears evidence that no one in Makkah ever made such an objection although the disbelievers of Makkah raised all sorts of other objections against the Holy Prophet.

Then another thing: the Holy Prophet himself never wished for or expected or awaited his appointment to prophethood, but he came across this experience all of a sudden quite unexpectedly. This is supported by the event that has been reported in the Traditions in connection with the beginning of Revelation. After his first meeting with the Angel Gabriel and the revelation of the initial verses of Surah Al-`Alaq he rushes back home from Hira' trembling with fear, and says to his wife, "Cover me with a cloak! Cover me with a cloak!" After a while when he recovers a little from the state of anxiety, he relates what he had experienced to his wife and says, "I feel there is danger to my life!" She responds, "No, never! Allah will never bring you to grief: you render the rights of your kindred, you support the indigent, help the poor, treat your guests well, and are ever ready to contribute to a good cause."Then she takes him to Waraqa bin Naufal, who was her cousin and a righteous and knowledgeable person from among the people of the Book. Hearing from him what had happened, Waraqa says without any hesitation, "The one who came to you is the same Namus (the specially appointed Divine Messenger), who used to come to Moses. I wish I were a young man and could live till the time when your people will expel you." The Holy Prophet asks, "Will my people expel me?" He replies, "Yes; no one has passed before, who brought same thing that you have brought, and his people did not turn hostile to him. "

This whole event depicts the state which a simple man will naturally undergo when he is confronted unexpectedly by a most extraordinary experience all of a sudden. If the Holy Prophet had already been anxious to become a prophet and thinking that a man like him ought to be a prophet, and had been meditating and straining his mind and awaiting the arrival of an angel with a message, he would have been filled with delight at the experience in the Cave, and descending from the mountain would have

gone straight before his people and proclaimed Prophethood. But, quite to the contrary, he is confounded at what he had seen, reaches home trembling and lies in bed fully covered up. When he is composed a little, he tells his wife quietly what had happened in the solitude of the Cave, and expresses feelings of anxiety and insecurity. How different is this state from the state of a candidate for prophethood !

Then , who can be better aware of the husband's life, his ambitions and thoughts, than the wife? If she had perceived before-hand that the husband was a candidate for prophethood and had been anxiously awaiting the arrival of the angel, her reply would have been different from what Hadrat Khadijah said. She would have answered, "Dear husband! Why are you so agitated? You have got what you have been longing since long. Now, flourish as a saint: I too shall get ready for collecting gifts and offerings." But on the basis of what she had seen of her husband during her 15-year-long companionship, she did not take more than a moment to understand that Satan could not have come to a righteous and selfless man like him, nor could Allah have put him to a severe test. Therefore, whatever he had seen was the very truth and reality.

The same is also true in the case of Waraqa bin Naufal. He was not an outsider, but a member of the Holy Prophet's own clan and a brother-in-law by a close relationship. Then being a knowledgeable Christian he could discriminate the prophethood and book and revelation from fabrication and fraud. Being the Holy Prophet's senior by many years his whole life since childhood had been spent before him. Therefore, when he heard what the Holy Prophet had to say about his experience in the Cave, he at once said that it was most surely the same Angel who used to bring Divine messages to the Prophet Moses. For in this case also precisely the same thing had happened as in the case of the Prophet Moses. He also was a pure and righteous person, simple in thought and without any preconceived notions about prophethood, he also had experienced the same thing unexpectedly in full consciousness similarly. Therefore, without the least hesitation, he was led to the firm conclusion that there was no self-deception or satanic insinuation involved but whatever the truthful man had seen, without any will or desire on his own part, was in fact, an experience of the Reality.

This is such a clear proof of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood that a realistic person can hardly deny it. That is why it has been presented as a proof of Prophethood at several places in the Qur'an For example, in Surah Yunus it has been said: "O Prophet, say to them: Had Allah willed so, I would never have recited this Qur'an to you, nor would He have told you anything (about its existence). I have already lived a lifetime among you before its revelation. Do you not use common sense?" (v. 16) And in Surah Ash-Shura it has been said: "O Prophet, you did not know at all what was the Book and what was the Faith but We made that Revelation a light by which We show the way to any of Our servants We will." (v. 52) For further explanation, see E.N. 21 of Surah Yunus, E.N.'s 88 to 92 of Al-'Ankabut, and E.N. 84 of Ash-Shu'ara.

110That is, "When Allah has granted you this blessing without your asking for it, you are under an obligation to exercise all your energies and spend all your efforts in upholding it conveying it to others and

promoting its cause. Any slackness in this regard would mean that you helped the disbelievers. This does not mean that, God forbid, there was any chance of such slackness on the part of the Holy Prophet. Allah, in fact, is exhorting the Holy Prophet, as if to say, "You should go on doing your mission in spite of the disbelievers' opposition and their uproar, and do not at all mind what fears the enemies of the Truth express regarding your message's being harmful to their national interests.

111divert you : divert you from conveying them to others and acting in accordance with them in practical life.

112Another meaning can be: "Sovereignty is for Him, for He alone is entitled to it by right. "

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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29. Surah Al Ankabut (The Spider)

Name

The Surah takes its name from verse 41 in which the word *Ankabut* (Spider) has occurred.

Period of Revelation

Verses 56 to 60 clearly show that this Surah was sent down a little before the migration to Habash, and this is supported by the internal evidence of the subject matter as well. Some commentators have opined that since it mentions the hypocrites, and hypocrisy appeared in Madinah, the first ten verses of this Surah were revealed at Madinah and the rest of it at Makkah; whereas the people whose hypocrisy has been mentioned here are those who had adopted a hypocritical way of life because they were afraid of the oppression and extreme physical torture to which the Muslims were being subjected by the disbelievers. Evidently, this kind of hypocrisy could be there only at Makkah and not at Madinah. Similarly, some other commentators, seeing that in this Surah the Muslims have been exhorted to migrate, have regarded it as the last Surah to be revealed at Makkah, whereas the Muslims had migrated to Habash even before their migration to Madinah. These opinions are not based on any tradition but on the internal evidence of the subject matter, and this internal evidence, when considered against the subject matter of the Surah as a whole, points to the conditions prevailing in the time of the migration to Habash and not to the last stage at Makkah.

Theme and Subject matter

A perusal of the Surah shows that the period of its revelation was the period of extreme persecution of the Muslims at Makkah. The disbelievers were opposing and fighting Islam tooth and nail and the new converts were being subjected to the severest oppression. Such were the conditions when Allah sent down this Surah to strengthen and encourage the sincere Muslims as well as to put to shame those who were showing weakness of the faith. Besides, the disbelievers of Makkah have been threatened and warned not to invite for themselves the fate that the antagonists of the Truth have been experiencing in every age.

In this connection, the questions that some young men answered. For instance, their parents were urging them to abandon Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him), and return to their ancestral religion, for they argued: "The Qur'an in which you have put your faith, regards the rights of the parents as the uppermost; therefore, listen to what we say; otherwise you will be working against the dictates of your own Faith." This has been answered in verse 8.

Similarly, the people of some clans said to the new converts to Islam, "Leave the question of punishments, etc., to us. Listen to us and abandon this man. If God seizes you in the Hereafter, we will come forward and say, 'Lord, these people are innocent: we had forced them to give up the Faith; therefore, seize us'." This has been dealt with, in vv. 12-13.

The stories mentioned in this Surah also impress the same point mostly, as if to say, "Look at the Prophets of the past: they were made to suffer great hardships and were treated cruelly for long periods. Then, at last they were helped by Allah. Therefore, take heart: Allah's succor will certainly come. But a period of trial and tribulation has to be undergone." Besides teaching this lesson to the Muslims, the disbelievers also have been warned, as if to say, "If you are not being immediately seized by Allah, you should not form the wrong impression that you will never be seized. The signs of the doomed nations of the past are before you. Just see how they met their doom and how Allah succored the Prophets."

Then the Muslims have been instructed to the effect: "If you feel that the persecution has become unbearable for you, you should give up your homes, instead of giving up your Faith: Allah's earth is vast: seek a new place where you can worship Allah with the full peace of mind." Besides all this, the disbelievers also have been urged to understand Islam. The realities of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter have been impressed with rational arguments, *shirk* have been refuted, and drawing their attention towards the signs in the universe, they have been told that all these Signs confirm the teachings that the Prophet is presenting before them.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾

أَحَسِبَ ٱلنَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوٓاْ أَن يَقُولُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢﴾

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُواْ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] Alif. Lam. Mim. Do the people think that they will be left alone after they have once said, "We have believed," and they will not be tested?[1] The fact is that we have put to test all those who have gone before them.[2] Surely, Allah has to see[3] who are the truthful and who the liars.

أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن يَسْبِقُونَا ۚ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٤﴾

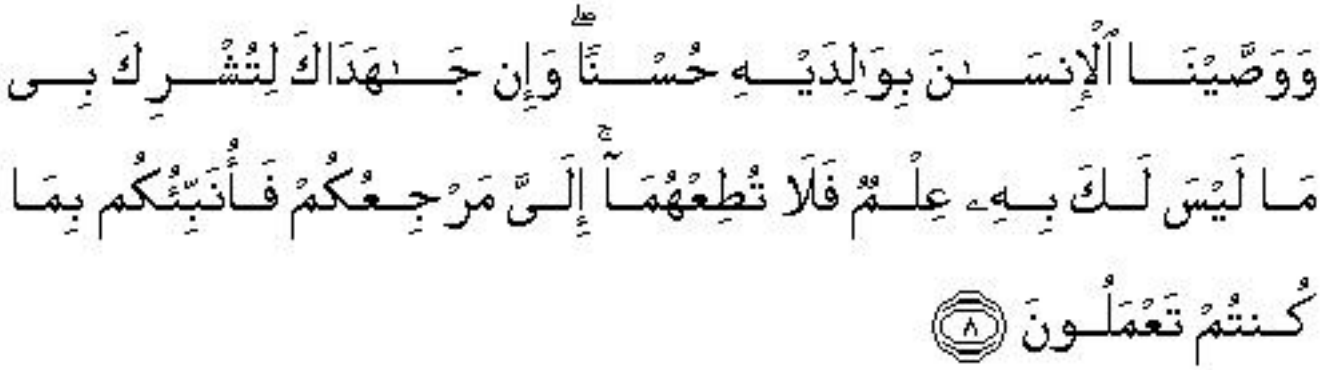
[4] And do those who are committing evil deeds[4] reckon that they will outstrip Us?[5] Evil is their judgment.

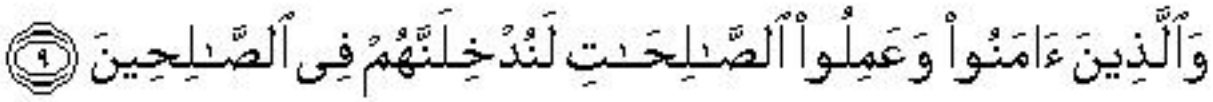
مَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ لِقَآءَ ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ لَءَاتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

وَمَن جَٰهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَٰهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَغَنِىٌّ عَنِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦﴾

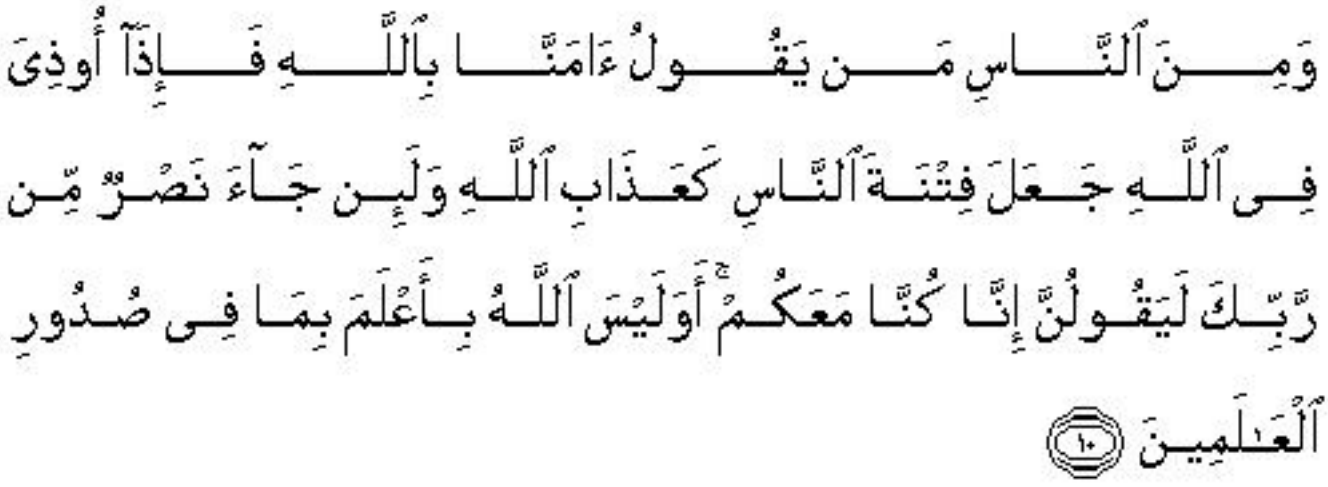
وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَنُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَحْسَنَ ٱلَّذِى كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

[5-7] Whoever expects to meet Allah (should know that) Allah's appointed time is about to come,[6] and Allah hears everything and knows everything.[7] Whoever will exert will exert for his own good.[8] Allah is certainly Independent of all His creations.[9] As for those who believe and do good works, We shall wipe off their evils and reward them for the best of their deeds.[10]


وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا ۖ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِى
مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَآ ۚ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾


وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَنُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٩﴾

[8-9] We have conjoined man to do good to his parents, but if they force you to associate with Me another (deity) whom you do not know (as such), you should not obey them."[11] You have all to return to Me: then I shall tell you what you had been doing[12] And those who will have believed and done good deeds, We shall certainly include them among the righteous.


وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ فَإِذَآ أُوذِىَ
فِى ٱللَّهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ ٱلنَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَئِن جَآءَ نَصْرٌ مِّن
رَّبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَكُمْ ۚ أَوَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِى صُدُورِ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

[10-11] There is among the people such a one, who says,[13] "We have believed in Allah", but when he was persecuted in the cause of Allah, he deemed the persecution by the people as the punishment of Allah.[14] Now if there comes help and victory from your Lord, the same person Will say, "We were with you".[15] Is not Allah fully aware of what is in the hearts of the people of the world? And surely Allah has to see who are the believers and who the hypocrites.[16]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّبِعُواْ سَبِيلَنَا وَلْنَحْمِلْ خَطَٰيَٰكُمْ
وَمَا هُم بِحَٰمِلِينَ مِنْ خَطَٰيَٰهُم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَلَيَحْمِلُنَّ أَثْقَالَهُمْ وَأَثْقَالًا مَّعَ أَثْقَالِهِمْ ۖ وَلَيُسْـَٔلُنَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عَمَّا كَانُواْ
يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

[12-13] The disbelievers say to the believers, "Follow our way and we will bear (the burden of) your sins",[17] whereas they will not bear (the burden of) your sins.[18] They are utter liars. Of course, they shall bear their own burdens as well as many other burdens in addition to their own.[19] And on the Day of Resurrection, they will surely be questioned about their scandal mongering.[20]

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا
فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

فَأَنجَيْنَٰهُ وَأَصْحَٰبَ ٱلسَّفِينَةِ وَجَعَلْنَٰهَآ ءَايَةً لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

[14-15] We sent Noah to his people[21] and he lived among them for a thousand years save fifty.[22] Consequently, the Flood overtook them while they persisted in wickedness.[23] Then We rescued Noah and those in the Ark[24] and made it an object of warning for the people of the world.[25]

وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ ۖ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا وَتَخْلُقُونَ إِفْكًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا فَٱبْتَغُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرِّزْقَ وَٱعْبُدُوهُ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۖ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَإِن تُكَذِّبُوا۟ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أُمَمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا عَلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٨﴾

[16-18] And (We) sent Abraham,[26] when he said to his people “Worship Allah and fear Him,[27] this is better for you only if you know it. Those whom you worship instead of Allah are mere idols, and you are forging a lie.[28] In fact, Those whom you worship, besides Allah, have no power to give you any sustenance. Ask Allah for sustenance, and worship Him alone and be grateful to Him, for to Him you will be returned.[29] And if you deny, many a nation before you also have denied (the Truth),[30] and the Messenger's only responsibility is to convey the message clearly.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

قُلْ سِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ بَدَأَ ٱلْخَلْقَ ۚ ثُمَّ ٱللَّهُ يُنشِئُ ٱلنَّشْأَةَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَرْحَمُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ تُقْلَبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۖ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِقَآئِهِۦٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَئِسُوا۟ مِن رَّحْمَتِى وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

[19-23] Have[31] these people never seen how Allah originates the creation, and then repeats it? Surely this (repetition) is easier for Allah.[32] Say to them, "Go about in the earth and see how He has begun the creation; then

Allah will recreate life: surely Allah has power over everything.[33] He may punish whom He wills and show mercy to whom He wills; to Him you shall be turned back. You can neither make (Him) helpless in the earth nor in the heaven,[34] and you have no patron and helper to save you from Allah.[35] Those who have denied Allah's Revelations and their meeting with Him, have despaired of My Mercy,[36] and they will have a painful punishment.

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُواْ ٱقْتُلُوهُ أَوْ حَرِّقُوهُ فَأَنجَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ
ٱلنَّارِ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَقَالَ إِنَّمَا ٱتَّخَذْتُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْثَٰنًا مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ
ثُمَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُم بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا
وَمَأْوَىٰكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

۞ فَـَٔامَنَ لَهُۥ لُوطٌ ۘ وَقَالَ إِنِّى مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّىٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٦﴾

[24-26] Then[37] the only answer his people gave was to say, "Kill him or burn him."[38] At last, Allah saved him from the fire;[39] surely in this there are Signs for those who believe.[40] He said,[41] “Here in the worldly life you have made the idols, instead of Allah, a means of love among yourselves,[42] but on the Day of Resurrection, you will disown and curse one another.[43] Fire will be your abode and you shall have no helper." Then Lot believed in him,[44] and Abraham said "I shall migrate towards my Lord.[45] He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."[46]

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِى ذُرِّيَّتِهِ ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَٱلْكِتَٰبَ
وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ أَجْرَهُۥ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

[27] And We bestowed on him (children like) Isaac and Jacob,[47] and placed in his progeny the Prophethood and the Book,[48] and give him his reward in, this world, and in the Hereafter he will surely be among the righteous.[49]

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلْفَٰحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِّنَ
ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ ٱلرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ ٱلسَّبِيلَ وَتَأْتُونَ فِى نَادِيكُمُ ٱلْمُنكَرَ ۖ
فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ ٱئْتِنَا بِعَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ
ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱنصُرْنِى عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[28-30] And We sent Lot[50] when he said to his people, "You commit the indecency which no other people has ever committed before you in the world. What! Do you go to the males,[51] and commit robbery and indulge in indecencies in your assemblies?"[52] Then the only answer his people gave was to say, "Bring forth the torment of Allah if you are truthful." Lot said, "O my Lord, help me against these mischief makers."

وَلَمَّا جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُنَآ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ بِٱلۡبُشۡرَىٰ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا مُهۡلِكُوٓاْ أَهۡلِ هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِۖ
إِنَّ أَهۡلَهَا كَانُواْ ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

قَالَ إِنَّ فِيهَا لُوطٗاۚ قَالُواْ نَحۡنُ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَن فِيهَاۖ لَنُنَجِّيَنَّهُۥ
وَأَهۡلَهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱمۡرَأَتَهُۥ كَانَتۡ مِنَ ٱلۡغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَلَمَّآ أَن جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُنَا لُوطٗا سِيٓءَ بِهِمۡ وَضَاقَ بِهِمۡ
ذَرۡعٗا وَقَالُواْ لَا تَخَفۡ وَلَا تَحۡزَنۡۖ إِنَّا مُنَجُّوكَ وَأَهۡلَكَ إِلَّا ٱمۡرَأَتَكَ
كَانَتۡ مِنَ ٱلۡغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

إِنَّا مُنزِلُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِ هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِ رِجۡزٗا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَفۡسُقُونَ
﴿٣٤﴾

وَلَقَد تَّرَكۡنَا مِنۡهَآ ءَايَةَۢ بَيِّنَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَعۡقِلُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[31-35] And when Our messengers came to Abraham with the good news,[53] they said to him, "We are going to destroy the people of this habitation,[54] for its people have become very wicked." Abraham said, "Lot is there."[55] They

replied, "We know full well who is in it we shall save him and all his household except his wife." His wife was of those who remained behind.[56]

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا فَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱرْجُوا۟ ٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْءَاخِرَ
وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

[36] Then, when Our messengers came to Lot, he grew anxious for them and distressed at heart.[57] They said, "Do not fear nor grieve:[58] we shall save you and your household, except your wife, who is of those who will remain behind. We are going to bring down a torment from the sky upon the people of this habitation on account of the evil they have been committing" And We have left from the habitation a clear Signs[59] for those who use their common sense.[60]

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ فِى دَارِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[37] And to Madyan, We sent their brother Shu'aib.[61] He said, "O my people, worship Allah and look forward to the Last Day,[62] and do not commit excesses in the land wickedly." But they treated him as a liar.[63] Consequently, a severe earthquake overtook them, and they lay lifeless in their dwelling-places.[64]

وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا۟ وَقَد تَّبَيَّنَ لَكُم مِّن مَّسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۖ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا۟ مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَقَٰرُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ سَٰبِقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[38-39] And We destroyed `Ad and Thamud. You have seen the places where they lived.[65] Satan made their deeds seem fair to them and misled them from the right path, although they were sensible people.[66] And We destroyed Korah and Pharaoh and Haman. Moses came to them with clear Signs, but they assumed arrogance in the land, whereas hey could not outstrip[67] Us.

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنۢبِهِۦ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا
وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ
أَغْرَقْنَا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ
٤٠

[40] Consequently, We seized each one of them on account of his sin: then against some We sent a wind to rain stones on them;[68] some others were overtaken by a terrible blast,[69] and some other We sank underground,[70] and some We drowned.[71] Allah was not unjust to them, but they were themselves being unjust to their souls.[72]

مَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْلِيَآءَ كَمَثَلِ ٱلْعَنكَبُوتِ ٱتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا ۖ
وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ ٱلْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ ٱلْعَنكَبُوتِ ۖ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ٤١

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٤٢

وَتِلْكَ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْعَٰلِمُونَ ٤٣

خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ بِٱلۡحَقِّۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٤٤

[41-44] The likeness of those who have taken other patrons than Allah, is the likeness of a spider, which makes itself a dwelling; and the weakest of all dwellings is the dwelling of a spider. Would that these people had knowledge! [73] Allah surely knows whomever they invoke instead of Him: He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[74] These parables We cite for the instruction of the people, but only those people understand them, who have knowledge. Allah has created the heavens and the earth with the Truth.[75] Indeed there is a Sign in this for the believers.[76]

ٱتۡلُ مَآ أُوحِيَ إِلَيۡكَ مِنَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَۖ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنۡهَىٰ
عَنِ ٱلۡفَحۡشَآءِ وَٱلۡمُنكَرِۗ وَلَذِكۡرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكۡبَرُۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ مَا تَصۡنَعُونَ ٤٥

[45] (O Prophet,) recite this Book which has been revealed to you, and establish the Salat.[77] Surely the Salat restrains from indecent and evil acts,[78] and the remembrance of Allah is a thing even greater[79] than this; Allah knows whatever you do.

۞ وَلَا تُجَٰدِلُوٓاْ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحۡسَنُ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُواْ مِنۡهُمۡۖ وَقُولُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا بِٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكُمۡ وَإِلَٰهُنَا
وَإِلَٰهُكُمۡ وَٰحِدٞ وَنَحۡنُ لَهُۥ مُسۡلِمُونَ ٤٦

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَۚ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِهِۦۖ
وَمِنۡ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَن يُؤۡمِنُ بِهِۦۚ وَمَا يَجۡحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ٤٧

[46-47] And[80] do not dispute with the people of the Book except in the best manner,[81] save with those who are wicked among them[82] and say to them, "We have believed in that which has been sent down to us as well as in that which had been sent down to you. Our God and your God is One, and to Him we have surrendered[83] (as Muslims). (O Prophet,) We have likewise sent down the Book to you;[84] therefore, those to whom We gave the Book before this, believe in it,[85] and so do many of these people,[86] and none but the disbelievers deny Our Revelations.[87]

وَمَا كُنتَ تَتْلُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ مِن كِتَٰبٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُۥ بِيَمِينِكَ ۖ إِذًا لَّٱرْتَابَ
ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

بَلْ هُوَ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ فِى صُدُورِ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ
إِلَّا ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْـَٔايَٰتُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَإِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً
وَذِكْرَىٰ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۖ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَكَفَرُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

[48-52] (O Prophet,) you did not read any book before this, nor did you write any with your hand. If it were so, the worshipers of falsehood could have been involved in doubt.[88] These are, in fact, clear Signs in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge;[89] and none deny Our Revelations except the wicked. They say, "Why have Signs[90] not been sent down upon this person from his Lord?" Say, "The Signs are with Allah: I am only a plain warner." Is this (Sign) not enough for these people that We have sent down to you the Book, which is recited to them?[91] Indeed, there is mercy in it and admonition for those who believe.[92] (O Prophet,) say, "Allah suffices as a witness between me and you. He knows all that is there in the heavens and the earth. Those who believe in falsehood and deny Allah, shall be the losers."

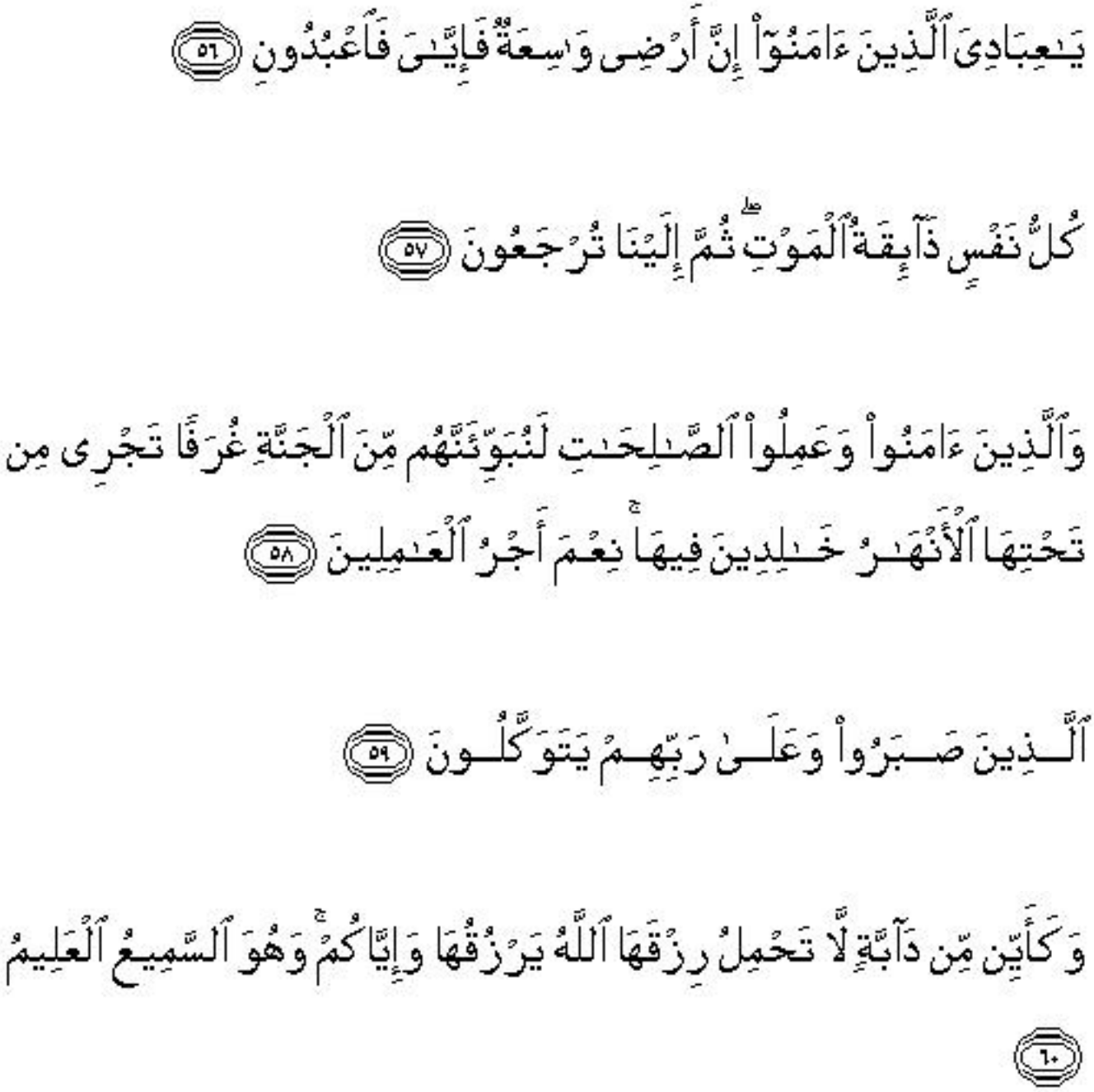
وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلْعَذَابِ ۚ وَلَوْلَآ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى لَّجَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّهُم
بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

يَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلْعَذَابِ وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةٌۢ بِٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

يَوْمَ يَغْشَىٰهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُولُ
ذُوقُوا۟ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[53-55] These people wish that you hasten the torment on them.[93] Had a time not been fixed for it, the torment would

already have overtaken them. And most certainly it shall come (at the appointed time) suddenly while they would least expect it. They challenge you to hasten the torment, whereas Hell has encircled the disbelievers, (and they will know of it) on the Day when the torment will cover them from above them as well as from beneath their feet, and will say, "Now taste your own misdeeds."



[56-60] O My servants, who have believed, My earth is vast: so worship Me alone.[94] Every living being has to taste death: then, ultimately you shall all be returned to Us.[95] Those who have believed and done good works, We shall lodge them in the high palaces of Paradise, beneath which canals will be flowing: therein they shall live for ever. What an excellent reward for the doers (of good)[96] for those who have shown patience[97] and put full trust in their Lord![98] How many creatures are there that do not carry their provisions with them: Allah provides for them and for

you too: He hears everything and knows everything.[99]

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ
وَٱلْقَمَرَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

ٱللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ نَّزَّلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ
ٱلْأَرْضَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ
﴿٦٣﴾

[61-63] If you ask them,[100] "Who has created the earth and the heavens and Who has subjected the moon and the sun?" they will surely say, "Allah." How are they then being deceived? Allah it is Who gives abundantly to those of His servants He pleases and sparingly to those He wills. Surely Allah knows everything. If you ask them, "Who sent down rainwater from the sky and thereby raised the dead earth back to life?" they will surely say, "Allah!" Say, "Praise be to Allah!"[101] Yet most of them do not use their common sense.

وَمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ لَهِىَ ٱلْحَيَوَانُ ۚ لَوْ
كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا۟ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰهُمْ إِلَى
ٱلْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

لِيَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ وَلِيَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا وَيُتَخَطَّفُ ٱلنَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ ۚ أَفَبِٱلْبَٰطِلِ
يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[64-67] And the life of this world is nothing but a sport and a pastime![102] The home of real life is the Hereafter. Would that they knew![103] When they board the ship, they invoke Allah, making their Faith pure for Him only; then, when He brings them safe to land, they start committing shirk that they may show ingratitude to Him for safe deliverance and enjoy (the life of this world).[104] Well, they will soon come to know. Do they not see that We have made a safe Sanctuary, while the people are snatched away from all around them?[105] Do they yet believe in falsehood and deny the favors of Allah?

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُۥ ۚ أَلَيْسَ
فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُوا۟ فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

[68-69] Who would be more wicked then he who forges a lie against Allah, or denies the Truth when it has reached him?[106] Is not Hell the fit abode for such disbelievers? Those who will strive in Our cause, We shall guide them to Our own paths,[107] and surely Allah is with the righteous.

1When this thing was said, the conditions prevailing in Makkah were extremely trying. Whoever accepted Islam was made a target of tyranny and humiliation and persecution. If he was a slave or a poor person, he was beaten and subjected to unbearable tortures; if he was a shopkeeper or artisan, he was made to suffer economic hardships, even starvation; if he was a member of an influential family, his own people would tease and harass him in different ways and make life difficult for him. This had created an atmosphere of fear and fright in Makkah, due to . which most people were afraid of believing in the Holy Prophet although they acknowledged him to be a true Prophet in their hearts; and some others who believed would lose heart soon afterwards and would submit and yield to the disbelievers when they confronted dreadful persecutions. Though these trying circumstances could not shake the determination of the strong-willed Companions, naturally they also were sometimes overwhelmed by an intense feeling of anxiety and distraction. An instance of this is found in the tradition of Hadrat Khabbab bin Arat, which has been related by Bukhari, Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i. He says, "During the time when we had become sick of our persecution by the mushriks, one day I saw the Holy Prophet sitting in the shade of the wall of the Ka`bah. I wen up to him and said, `O Messenger of Allah, don't you pray for us !' Hearing this his face became red with feeling and emotion, and he said, `The believers who have gone before you had been subjected to even greater persecutions. Some one of them was made to sit in a ditch in the earth and was sawed into two pieces from head to foot. Someone's joints were rubbed with iron combs so as to withhold him from the Faith. By God, this Mission will be accomplished and the time is not far when a person will travel without apprehension from San`a' to Hadramaut and there will be none but Allah Whom he will fear."

In order to change this state of agitation into forbearance, Allah tells the believers, "Ho one can become worthy of Our promises of success in the world and the Hereafter merely by verbal profession of the Faith, but every claimant to the Faith will have to pass through trials and tribulations so as to furnish proof of The truth of his claim. Our Paradise is not so cheap, nor Our special favors in the world so low-priced, that We should bless you with all these as soon as you proclaim verbal faith in Us. The vial is a pre-requisite for them. You will have to undergo hardships for Our sake, suffer losses of life and property, face dangers, misfortunes and difficulties; you will be tried both with fear and with greed; you will have to sacrifice everything that you hold dear for Our pleasure, and bear every discomfort in Our way. Then only will it become manifest whether your claim to faith in Us was true or false. This thing has been said at every such place in the Qur'an where the Muslims have been found placed in hardships and difficulties and obsessed by fear and consternation. In the initial stage of life at Madinah, after the migration, when the Muslims were in great trouble on account of economic hardships, external dangers and internal villainy of the Jews and the hypocrites, Allah said:

"Do you think that you will enter Paradise without undergoing such trials as were experienced by the

believers before you? They met with adversity and affliction and were so shaken by trials that the Prophet of the time and his followers cried out, `when will Allah's help come?' (Then only they were comforted with the good tidings:) "Yes, Allah's help is near!"' (Al-Baqarah: 214).

Likewise, when after the Battle of Uhud, the Muslims again confronted a period of afflictions, it was said: "Do you think that you will enter Paradise without undergoing any trial? whereas Allah has not yet tried you to see who among you are ready to lay down their lives in His way and who will show fortitude for His sake." (Al-i-`Imran: 142).

Almost the same thing has been said in Al-i-'Imran: 179, Taubah: 16 and Surah Muhammad: 31. Allah in these verses has impressed on the Muslims that trial is the touchstone by which the pure and the impure are judged. The impure is turned aside by Allah and the pure is selected so that Allah may honor them with His favors which the sincere believers only deserve.

2That is, "This is not a new thing which you alone may be experiencing. The same has been happening before also. Whoever made a claim to the Faith was made to pass through trials and tribulations. And when the others were not given anything without the trial, you are in no way any special people that you should be favored and rewarded merely on verbal profession of the Faith."

3Literally, "It is necessary that Allah should find out." A question may be asked: "When Allah already knows the truth of the truthful and the untruth of the liar, why should He put the people to the test for the sake of these?" The answer is: Until a person has manifested his potential and capability to do a thing in practical terms, justice requires that he neither deserves any rewards nor any punishment. One man, for example, is capable of being trustworthy and another man of being un-trustworthy. Unless both are tried and one manifests trustworthiness and the other the lack of it practically, it will not be justice on the part of Allah that He should reward one for trustworthiness and punish the other for the lack of it only on the basis of His knowledge of the unseen. Therefore the knowledge Allah already possesses about the capabilities of the people and about their conduct in the future is not enough to satisfy the requirements of justice until the people have manifested their potentialities in practical ways. Justice with Allah is not based on the knowledge that a person possesses a tendency to steal and will commit a theft, but on the knowledge that he has actually committed a theft. Likewise, Allah does not bestow favors and rewards on the basis of the knowledge that a person has the potential and capability to become a great believer and fighter in His way, but on the basis of the knowledge that the person concerned has practically proved by deed and action that he is a sincere believer and a brave fighter in His way. That is why we have translated the words of the verse as: "Allah has to see..."

4This may refer to all those people who disobey Allah's Commands but here particularly it implies those wicked chiefs of the Quraish, who were in the forefront in their antagonism to Islam and persecution of the converts to Islam, e.g. Walid .bin Mughirah, Abu Jahl, `Utbah, Shaibah,`Uqbah bin Abi Mu`ait, Hanzalah bin Wail, etc. Here the context itself requires that after exhorting the Muslims to patience and

fortitude against the trials and tests, those people also should be chided and scolded, who were persecuting the believers."

5It may also mean: "...that they will escape Our grasp." The words yasbiquna in the original may have two meanings: (1)`Whatever we will (i.e. the success of the mission of Our Messenger) should meet with failure, and whatever they wish (i.e. to frustrate the mission of Our Messenger) should be accomplished;" and (2) "We may want to seize them for their excesses and they should be able to escape and get out of Our reach."

6That is, "The case of the one who does not believe in the life hereafter and thinks he is answerable to none for his deeds and there is no accountability whatever, is different. He may remain heedless and act as he likes, for he will himself see the consequences when they appear against his expectations. But those who expect that they have to meet their Lord one day and rewarded and punished according to their. deeds, should not have the misunderstanding that the time of death is yet tar off. They should rather think that it is near at hand and the respite for action is about to come to an end. Therefore, whatever they can do for their well-being in the Hereafter, they should do. They should not delay self-reform on account of the baseless belief that they have yet to live a long life."

7That is, "That God before Whom they will appear to render their accounts is not uninformed. He hears everything and knows every thing, and nothing about them is hidden from Him."

8The word mujahadah means to struggle and exert one's utmost against an opponent , and when the particular opponent force is not pointed out, the word implies an all-out, many-sided struggle. The struggle that a believer has to make in the world, is of this very nature. He has to fight against Satan, who frightens him every moment of the possible losses he they have to incur for the sake of good and allures him with the benefits and pleasures of the evil. He has to fight his own self also, which exerts to make him the slave of its lusts. He has also to fight all those men, from home to the world outside, whose ideology, trends, morality, customs way of life and social and economic principles may be in conflict with his Faith; and he has to fight that state too, which enforces its laws independent of obedience to Allah, and employs its forces to promote evil instead of the good. This struggle is not of a day or two, but of a lifetime, of every moment of the day and night. And it is not a struggle in one field only but on every front of life. It is about this that Hadrat Hasan Basri has said: "Man exerts in the way of Allah, even though he may not strike one sword at any time."

9That is, "Allah is not asking you to exert your utmost because he stands in need of any help from you to establish His Godhead and keep it established and sustained. But He instructs you to enter this conflict because this opens the way to your own progress. Through this way only you can get rid of the evil and follow the way of truth; through this way alone you can develop the ability and power to rise as the standard-bearers of goodness in the world and become worthy of Allah's Paradise in the Hereafter. By

waging this war you will not do any favor to Allah. but will only be helping your own selves.

10Iman means to believe in and accept sincerely all those things to which the Messenger of Allah and this Book invite; and "good works" are those which are performed in accordance with the guidance of Allah and His Messenger. The good work of the heart and mind is that man's thinking and his ideas and his intentions should be right and pure. The good work of the tongue is that man should refrain from talking evil things, and whatever he says should be just and right and true; and the good work of the limbs is that man's entire life should be spent in Allah's worship and in obedience to His Commands and Law. Two results of the belief and righteous deeds have been mentioned: (1) That man's evils will be wiped off; and (2) that he will be rewarded for the best of his deeds better than what he will actually deserve.

Wiping off of evils means several things: (1) All kinds of sins that man might have committed before his affirmation of the Faith will be pardoned as soon as he believes; (2) the errors that man might have committed after the affirmation of the faith due to human weakness, but not because of a rebellious attitude, will be overlooked in view of his good deeds; (3) man's self reform will automatically take place when he adopts a life of belief and righteousness. and most of his weaknesses will be removed from him.

The sentence, "We shall reward them for the best of their deeds", has two meanings: (1) Man will be given his rewards on the basis of the best of his deeds; and (2) he will be rewarded better and more handsomely than what he will actually deserve for his deeds. This thing has been stated at other places also in the Qur'an. For instance, in Surah Al-An`am. :160, it has been said: "He who will bring a good deed before Allah, will receive a tenfold reward for it", and in Surah AlQasas :4: "Whoever brings a good deed, shall have a better reward than that", and in Surah An-Nisa :40: "Indeed Allah does not wrong anyone even by a jot: if one does a good deed, He increases it manifold. "

11According to Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Abu Da'ud and Nasa`i, this verse was Sent down in respect of Hadrat Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas. He was 18 or 19 years old when he embraced Islam. When his mother, Hamnah, daughter of Sufyan bin Umayyah (neice of Abu Sufyan), came to know that her son had become a Muslim, she said, "I will neither eat nor drink nor sit in shade unless you disown Muhammad. The rights of the mother are supermost even according to Allah's Command. Therefore if you disobey me, you will be disobeying Allah too." Hadrat Sa'd was perplexed and came before the Holy Prophet and told his whole story. At this, this verse was revealed. Possibly other young men who embraced Islam in the initial stage at Makkah were also confronted with similar situations. Therefore, the same theme has been repeated forcefully in Surah Luqman: 15 also.

What the verse means to impress is this: The rights of the parents, among the creation of Allah, are to be held as the supreme, but even if the parents force a person to adopt shirk, they should not be obeyed. The words, "If both of them force you to associate..." imply that a lesser pressure, or a pressure by either of them, deserves to be set aside much more promptly. The next sentence, ".... whom you do not know (as such)," is also noteworthy. This gives a sound reason for not obeying the parents in this regard. The

parents certainly have the right that the children should serve them, respect them, and obey them in lawful things. But they do not have the right that one should obey them blindly against one's knowledge of the reality. Therefore, there is no reason why a person should go on following his parents' religion just because it is their religion. If the children come to know that their parents are following a false religion, they should give it up and adopt the right religion. and should not follow the wrong way whose falsehood has become clear to them even if the parents use every kind of pressure for it. When this is so in the case of even the parents, it should be so with every other person, too. No one deserves to be followed and obeyed unless one is sure that the person being followed is on the right path.

12That is, "The relationships of the world and their obligations are confined to the world. At last, the parents as well as the children have to return to their Creator, and before Him everybody will be held answerable only on the basis of his personal responsibility. If the parents have misled the children, they will be called to account . If the children have accepted deviation for the sake of the parents, they will be punished. And if the children adopted the right way, and showed no slackness in rendering the parents' lawful rights either, but the parents ill-treated them only for the reason that they did not join them in their deviation, they will not be able to escape Allah's punishment."

13Though the speaker is a single person, he uses the plural pronoun and says, "We have believed," Imam Razi has pointed out a subtle point in it. He says that the hypocrite always tries to be counted among the believers and mentions his faith as though he is also a true believe like others. His case is like that of a cowardly soldier who accompanies an army to the battlefield where the soldiers have fought well and put the enemy to rout. This cowardly person might have made no contribution at all, but when he returns home, he will say, "We put up a good fight and routed the enemy", as if he was one of the heroes of the battlefield.

14That is, "Just as one should desist from disbelief and sin due to fear of Allah's punishment, so did this man desist from faith and goodness due to fear of persecution by the people. When after belief he was confronted with threats and imprisonment and harsh treatment from the disbelievers, he thought that Allah's punishment in Hell which he will have to suffer after death in consequence of his disbelief, will be no severer than that. Therefore, he decided that he would suffer the torment of the Next World at its own time, but should give up faith and rejoin the disbelievers so that he might save himself from the torment of this world and pass an easy life."

15That is, "Today he has joined the disbelievers in order to save his skin. and has abandoned the believers for he is not prepared even to suffer a thorn prick in the cause of promoting Allah's religion, but when Allah will favor with .access and victory those who are struggling in His cause with their lives and properties, this person will come forward to have his share of the fruits of the victory and will tell the Muslims, "Our hearts were with you: we used to pray for your success: we thought very highly of your devotion to duty and your sacrifices."

Here, one should understand that in case of an unbearable persecution and loss and extreme fear, one is permitted to disown Islam and save one's life, provided that one remains firm in one's faith with a sincere heart. But there is a big difference between the sincere Muslim who disowns Islam under compulsion in order to save his life and the time-server who ideologically believes in Islam as a true religion but joins the disbelievers when he sees the dangers and risks involved in the life of Faith. Apparently, they do not seem to be much different from each other, but the thing which sets them poles apart is this: The sincere Muslim who utters disbelief under compulsion not only remains attached to Islam ideologically, but practically also his sympathies remain with Islam and the Muslims; he feels happy over their successes and unhappy at their defeat. Even under compulsion he tries to avail himself of every opportunity to cooperate with the Muslims, and remains on the look-out for a chance to join his brethren-in-faith as soon as the grip of the enemies loosens a little. Contrary to this, when the time-server finds that the way of the Faith is difficult to follow and calculates carefully that the disadvantages of siding with Islam outweigh the advantages of re joining the disbelievers, he turns away from Islam and the Muslims for the sake of personal safety and worldly gains, establishes friendship with the disbelievers and is prepared to carry out for his own interests any service for them, which may be utterly opposed to the Faith and harmful to the Muslims. But at the same time, he does not close his eyes to the possibility that Islam also might prosper some time in the future. Therefore, whenever he gets an opportunity to talk to the Muslims, he acknowledges their ideology and admits his faith and pays homage to their sacrifices most generously, so that his verbal admissions might be helpful as and when required. At another place in the Qur'an this same bargaining mentality of the hypocrites has been described, thus: "The hypocrites are watching you closely to see (how the wind blows). If victory comes to you from Allah, they will say to you, `Were we not with you?' And if the disbelievers gain the upper hand, they will say to them, `Were we not strong enough to fight against you'? Yet we defended you from the Muslims'." (An-Nisa': 141).

16That is, "Allah provides occasions for the trial again and again so that the faith of the believers and the hypocrisy of the hypocrites become manifest, and whatever is hidden in the hearts becomes exposed. The same thing has been said in Al-i-`Imran: 179: "Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you happen to be at present: He will surely separate the pure from the impure people."

17What they meant to say was: "In the first place, the talk about life hereafter and Resurrection and accountability is all meaningless. But supposing there is another life in which the people will be called to account for their deeds, we take the responsibility that we shall take the punishment, etc. on our own selves. You should, therefore, listen to us and give up this new Faith and return to your ancestral religion." According to the traditions several chiefs of the Quraish used to counsel thus the people who embraced Islam in the beginning. So, when Hadrat `Umar accepted Islam, Abu Sufyan and Harab bin Umayyah bin Khalaf met him and said these very things."

18That is, "It is not at all possible that a person should take the responsibility for another before Allah, and thus enable the actual sinner to escape the punishment of his sin, for every person will be responsible for his own deeds there. "No bearer of a burden shall bear the burden of another." (An-Najm:

38) But if at all it be so, none will have the nerve, in face of the blazing Hell got ready to punish the disbelievers, to say to Allah, only for the sake of honoring his pledge in the world, "Lord, forgive this person and send him to Paradise: he had turned apostate on my counseling: I offer myself to suffer the punishment for my own disbelief as well as for his in Hell."

19That is "Though they will not bear the burdens of others, they will neither escape bearing a double burden: one burden of their own selves going astray, and the burden of leading the others astray." This can be understood by an example. A person commits theft and also asks another person to join him. Now if the other person also commits theft, no judge will let him off only because he had committed the offense on someone else's prompting. He will in any case be punished for the theft and it will not be fair according to any law of justice to let him off and punish instead of him the first thief who had prompted him to commit the theft. However, the first thief will suffer punishment for two offenses: the offense of committing theft himself and the offense of turning another person into a thief along with himself. This principle has been stated at another place in the Qur'an thus ".....so that they should bear the full brunt of their own burdens On the Day of Resurrection together with some of the burdens of those whom they are leading astray in their ignorance." (An-Nahl: 25) The same principle has been elucidated by the Holy Prophet in this Hadith: "whoever invited others to the right path will be granted a reward equal to the rewards of all those who listened to him and adopted the right path, without diminishing their rewards in any way. And whoever invited others to deviation will earn a sin equal to the sins of all those who followed him, without diminishing their sins in any way."

20"Scandal-mongering" implies all those untruths which were hidden in this saying of the disbelievers: "Follow our way and we will bear the burden of your sins. " In fact, they said this on the basis of two presumptions: (1) The creed of shirk they are following is based on the truth and the Holy Prophet Muhammad's doctrine of Tauhid is false; therefore, there is nothing wrong if it is rejected; and (2) there is going to be no Resurrection, and the doctrine of the Hereafter which deters a Muslim from unbelief is baseless. With these presumptions they would counsel a Muslim, saying, "Well, if you think that disbelief is really a sin, and there is going to be Resurrection when you will be called to account for this sin, then we are ready to take this sin of yours on our Selves You leave it to us and give up the religion of Muhammad and return to your ancestral religion." In this two other false things were also included: (a) Their belief that a person who commits an offense on someone else's prompting can be exempted from its responsibility, and the whole responsibility can be assumed by the one who had prompted the commission of the offense; and (b) their false promise that on the Day of Resurrection they will certainly assume the responsibility for those who might have turned apostates on their counseling. For when Resurrection will actually be established, and they will see Hell against their expectations, they will never be prepared to receive the punishment of their own disbelief as well as bear the whole burden of the sins of those others whom they had deceived and misled in the world.

21For comparison, see Al-i-`Imran: 33-34, An-Nisa': 163, Al-An`am: 84, Al-A'raf: 59-64, Yuuns: 71-73, Hud: 25-48, Al-Anbiyaa: 76-77, AlMu'minun: 23-30, Al-Furqan: 37, Ash-Shu araa: 105-123, As-Saffat: 75-

82, Al Qamar: .9-15, AI-Haaqqah: 11-12, Nuh (the whole of it).

One should keep the initial verses of the Surah in view in order to understand the relevancy of these stories in this context. There, on the one hand, it has been said to the believers, "We have put to the test all those believers who have passed before you", and, on the other, the wicked disbelievers have been warned to the effect: "You should not have the misunderstanding that you will outstrip Us and escape Our grasp." It is to impress these two things that these historical events are being related here .

22This does not mean that the Prophet Noah lived for 950 years, but it means that after his appointment to Prophethood till the coming of the Flood, he went on making efforts for 950 years for the reformation of his wicked people, and he did not lose heart even though he suffered persecutions for such a long time. The same is the aim of the discourse here. The believers are being told: "You have been suffering persecutions and experiencing stubbornness of your wicked opponents hardly for six years or so. Just imagine the patience and resolution and firmness of Our servant who braved such afflictions and hardships continuously for nine and a half centuries."

The Qur'an and the Bible differ about the age of the Prophet Noah. The Bible says that he lived for 950 years. He was 600 years old when the Flood came, and lived for another 350 years after the Flood. (Gen. 7: 6 and 9: 28-29). But according to the Qur'an, he must have lived for at least a thousand years, because 950 years is the time that he spent in preaching his mission after his appointment to Prophethood till the coming of the Flood. Evidently, he must have been appointed to Prophethood after he had attained his maturity, and must have lived some life after the Flood also.

For some people such a long life is inconceivable. But in this world of God strange happenings are not rare. Wherever one may look one will see extraordinary manifestations of His power. The occurrence of certain events and things in a usual form and manner is no proof that the event or thing cannot happen in an unusual and extraordinary way. To break these assumptions there exists a long list of unusual events and things that have taken place in every kind of creation in every part of the universe. In particular, the person who has a clear concept of God's being AII-Powerful, cannot be involved in the misunderstanding that it is not possible for God, Who is the Creator of life and death, to grant a life of a thousand years or so to any man. The fact is that man of his own will and wish cannot live even for a moment, but if Allah wills, He can make him live for as long as He pleases.

23That is, the Flood came when they still persisted in their wickedness. Had they desisted from it before the coming of the Flood Allah would not have sent this torment on them.

24That is, the people who had believed in Noah, and who had been permitted by Allah to board the Ark. This has been elucidated in Surah Hud: 40, thus: "Until when Our Command game to pass and at-Tannur began to boil up, We said, `(O Noah), take into Ark a pair from every species, and embark your own people-save those who have already been specifically marked--and also those who have believed; and

those who had believed with Noah were only a few."

25It can also mean this: "We made this dreadful punishment or this great event a Sign of warning for the later generations." But from the way this has been mentioned here and in Surah Qamar, it appears that the object of warning was the Ark itself, which remained on the top of the mountain for centuries and continued to remind the later generations that a Flood of such magnitude had once come in that land because of which the Ark had risen up to rest on the mountain. In Surah Qamar: 13-15, it has been said: "And We bore Noah upon a thing (Ark) made of planks and nails, which floated under Our care. This was a vengeance for the sake of him who had been slighted. And We left that Ark as a Sign. Then, is there any who would take admonition ?"

In his commentary on this verse of Surah Qamar, Ibn Jarir says on the authority of Qatadah that during the period of the Companions when the Muslims went to the land of al-Jazirah, they saw the Ark on mount Judi (according to another tradition, near the habitation of Baqirwa). In the modern times also news appear from time to time in the papers that expeditions are being sent to search out the boat, because something resembling a boat has been sighted many time from aeroplanes during flights over Mount Ararat. (For further details, see E.N. 47 of Al-A`raf and E.N. 46 of Hud).

26For comparison, see AI-Baqarah: 122-141. 258-260; AI-i-'Imran: 6471; AI-An'am: 71-82; Hud:.69-83; Ibrahim: 35-41; AI-Hijr: 45-60; Maryam: 4150; AI-Anbiyaa: 51-75; Ash-Shu'araa: 69-104; As -Saftat: 75-I 13; Az-Zukhruf: 26-35; Adh-Dhariyat: 24-46.

27That is, "Fear disobeying Him and associating others with Him."

28That is, "You are not forging idols but a lie. These idols are in themselves a lie. Then your beliefs that they are gods and goddesses, or they are incarnation of God, or His offspring, or His favorites, or intercessors with Him, ur that someone of them is bestower of health, or giver of children or jobs, are all lies, which you have invented from your own whims and conjecture. The fact is that they are in no way more than idols-lifeless, powerless and impotent.

29In these few sentences the Prophet Abraham has put together all rational arguments against idol-worship. There must necessarily be some reason for making somebody or something a deity. One such reason can be that somebody should be entitled to being a deity due to some personal excellence. Another, that he should be the creator of man, and man should be indebted to him for tiffs existence. Third, that he should be responsible for man's sustenance, his food and other means of life. Fourth, that man's future should be linked up with his support and bounty, and man may be afraid that annoying him would mean bringing about his own ruin. The Prophet Abraham said that none of these four things favored idol-worship, but they all favored and demanded pure God-worship. Saying that they are mere idols, he demolished the first argument, for a mere idol could have no excellence to entitle it to be a deity.

Then, by saying that "You are their creator", be refuted the second argument, and "they have no power to give you any sustenance" destroyed the third reason. Lastly. he said, "You have to return to Allah ultimately" and not to the idols; therefore, it was not in their power to make or mar your destiny, but in the power of God alone. Thus, after a complete refutation of shirk, the Prophet Abraham made it clear to them that all the reasons for which man could regard somebody as a deity only applied to Allah, Who alone should be worshiped without associating anyone else with him.

30That is, "If you reject my invitation to Tauhid and deny my message that you have to return to your Lord and render an account of your deeds, it will not be a new thing. In the history of mankind many Prophets-like Noah, Hud, Salih (on whom be Allah's peace) before also have brought the same teachings, and their peoples denied them likewise. Now you may judge for yourselves as to whether they harmed the Prophets or only themselves".

31From here to the end of verse 23 is a parenthesis, which has been interposed in the story of the Prophet Abraham and addressed to the disbelievers of Makkah. The relevance of this interposition in the story, which is being related for the admonition of the disbelievers, is that they were basically involved in two kinds of deviation: shirk and idol-worship, and the denial of the Hereafter. The first of these has been refuted in the Prophet Abraham's speech as related above. Now the second is being refuted in these few sentences by Allah Himself.

32That is, "On the one hand, countless new things come into existence from non-existence, and on the other, similar new members continue coming into existence to take the place of the dying members of every species. The polytheists acknowledged that that was all due to Allah's power of creation and invention. They never denied Allah's being a Creator, just as the polytheists of today do not do. Therefore, the argument has been based upon what they themselves acknowledged as a reality, as if to say, "How do you think that God, Who, according to your own belief, . brings things into existence from non-existence, and noes not create things just once, but goes on bringing into existence similar things in place of the dying things repeatedly in front of your very eyes, will not be able to raise you back to life after death ?" (For further explanation, see E.N. 80 of Surah An Naml).

33That is, "When you yourselves are witnessing things being created in the first instance by God's competence and skill, you should understand it well that re-creation shall also take place by the same competence and skill. Such a thing is not beyond His power nor can it be."

34That is, "You cannot escape Allah's grasp wherever you may flee. Whether you descend into the depths of the earth or climb into the heights of the sky, you will be apprehended in any case and brought before your Lord." The something has been said in Surah Ar-Rahman as a challenge to the jinns and mankind: "O company of jinns and men! If you have the power to escape across the bounds of the earth and heavens, then do escape! You shall not escape, for it requires a great power." (v. 33).

35That is,"Neither you yourselves have the power that you should escape Allah's grasp, nor is any of your guardians or patrons or supporters so powerful that he should give you refuge against Allah and save you from His punishment. None in the entire universe can dare rise as a supporter of those who have committed shirk and disbelief, who have refused to submit before Divine Commands, who have dared disobey Allah impudently, and raised storms of wickedness and mischief on His earth; and withhold enforcement of the Divine decree of torment against them, or have the nerve to say in God's Court: "They are my followers: therefore, whatever they might have done should be forgiven them."

36That is, "They have no share in My mercy, and they should entertain no hope whatever of getting any share of My mercy. When they denied the Revelations of Allah, they themselves gave up their right to benefit by the promises Allah has made to the believers. Then, when they have denied the Hereafter and do not at all believe that one day they will have to stand before their God, it only means that they cherish no hope at all of Allah's pardon and forgiveness. After this when they will open their eyes in the-Hereafter, against their expectations, and will also see the truth of those Signs of Allah, which they had denied, there is no reason why they should expect to receive any share from Allah's mercy."

37From here the discourse again turns to the story of the Prophet Abraham.

38That is, they had no answer to the Prophet Abraham's rational arguments. The only answer they gave was: "Cut off the tongue that talks the truth and let not the person live, who points out our error and tells us to give it up." The words, "Kill him or burn him", indicate that the whole crowd was unanimous that the Prophet Abraham should be put to death. However, they differed about the method. Some said that he should be killed, and others said that he should be burnt alive, so that no one in future should dare say the sort of the thing he said.

39This sentence by itself shows that they had at last decided to burn the Prophet Abraham and he was cast into the fire. Here it has only been said that Allah saved him from the fire; but in Surah AI-Anbiyaa it has been elucidated that Allah commanded: "O fire! Be cool and become safe for Abraham!" (v. 69) Evidently, if he was not at all cast into the fire, the Command to the fire to become cool and safe would be meaningless. This proves that properties of all things are dependent on Allah's Command and whenever He pleases He can change the property of anything He likes. Normally fire burns and every combustible thing catches fire. But this property of the tire is not of its own acquisition but given by God. And this property has in no way tied up God that He they give no Command against it. He is the Master of His fire. He can command it any time to give up the property of burning. At any time He can turn a furnace into a bed of roses. But events contrary to the course of nature occur only rarely to serve some great purpose or cause. However, the usual phenomena to which we are accustomed in our daily lives, cannot be made an argument to say that Allah's power has been tied up with these, and nothing unusual can take place even by Allah's Command.

40"Signs ... believe": Signs for the believers in this that the Prophet Abraham did not follow the religion of his family, community and country but Followed the true knowledge through which he came to know that shirk is falsehood and Tauhid the Reality; and in this that he went on exhorting his people to accept the Truth and to desist from falsehood in spite of their stubbornness and prejudices; and in this that he was even prepared to suffer the horrible punishment by the fire, but was not prepared to give up the Truth; and in this that Allah did not even spare the Prophet Abraham, His Friend, from the trials and tests; and in this that when the Prophet Abraham got successfully through the tests set by Allah, then did come Allah's succor, and in such a miraculous way that the bonfire was turned cool for him!

41The Prophet Abraham must have said this after his safe deliverance tram the fire.

42That is, "You have built up your collective life on the foundation of idol-worship instead of. God-worship, which can keep you bound together as a nation only to the extent of mundane life. For here in this world people can be got together around any creed, true or false, and any kind of agreement and concord on any belief, however wrong and ill-conceived, can become a means of the establishment of mutual friendships, kinships, brotherhoods, and all other religious, social, cultural, economic and political relationships."

43That is, "The collective life that you have built on the false creed in the world cannot endure in the Hereafter. Only those relationships of love and friendship and cooperation and kinship and mutual regard and esteem will endure there, which have been based on the worship of One God and virtue and piety in the world. All relationships founded on disbelief and shirk and deviation will be severed, and all kinds of love will change into enmity and hatred. The son and the father, the husband and the wife, the saint and the disciple, all will curse each other, and each will blame his deviation on the other, and will say, "This wicked person led the astray: he should be given a double punishment." This thing has been stated at several places in the Qur'an. For example, in Surah Zukhruf, it has been said: "Friends on that Day shall become enemies of one another, except the righteous." (v. 67) In Surah Al-A`raf: "As each generation will be entering Hell, it will curse Its preceding generation till all generations shall be gathered together there: then each succeeding generation will say regarding the preceding one, "O Lord, these were the people who led us astray; therefore, give them a double chastisement of the Fire." (v. 38) And in Surah Al-Ahzab: "And they will say; 'Our Lord, we obeyed our chiefs and our great men, and they led us astray front the right path. Lord, give them a doable chastisement and curse them severely." (vv. 67-68).

44The context shows that when the Prophet Abraham came out of the fire and spoke the preceding sentences, only Prophet Lot from the entire crowd came forward to proclaim his belief and adopt his obedience. It is just possible that many other people also on this occasion might have been convinced of the Prophet Abraham's being a true Prophet, but in view of the violent reaction that had been shown openly by the entire community and the government against Abraham's Faith, no one else could muster up courage to affirm faith in such a dangerous truth and follow it. This good fortune fell to the lot of only

one man, the Prophet Lot, the nephew of the Prophet Abraham, who at last accompanied his uncle and aunt (Hadrat Sarah) in their migration also.

Here, the question may arise: Was the Prophet Lot a disbeliever and a mushrik before this, and did he believe only after witnessing the miracle of the Prophet Abraham's emerging safe and sound from the fire? If it is so, can a person who has been a mushrikr be appointed to Prophethood? The answer is this: Here the Qur'an has used the words fa-amana la-hu Lut, which do not necessarily imply that the Prophet Lot disbelieved in God before this, or associated other deities with Him. They only show that after this he confirmed the Prophethood of the Prophet Abraham, and adopted his obedience. Possibly the Prophet Lot was a young boy then and this might be the first very occasion when he became acquainted with the teachings of his uncle and his Prophethood.

45That is, "I shall leave my country for the sake of my Lord and go wherever my Lord may take me."

46That is, "He possesses the power to help and protect me, and whatever He decides for me will be based on wisdom."

47The Prophet Isaac was the son and the Prophet Jacob the grandson. The other sons of the Prophet Abraham have not been mentioned here, because from his Midianite descendants only the Prophet Shu'aib was appointed a Prophet, and no Prophet was born among his Ishmaelite descendants for 2500 years or so till our Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). Contrary to this, the descendants of the Prophet Isaac (peace be upon him) continued to be blessed with the Prophethood and the Book till the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him).

48This covers all the Prophets who were raised from all the branches of the Prophet Abraham's progeny.

49What is meant to be said is this: The rulers and the learned men and the priests of Babylon who tried to defeat the mission of the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) and the polytheistic people who had followed their wicked chiefs blindly, have since been blotted out and no trace of them is to be found anywhere in the world, but the person whom they had wanted to annihilate by burning in the fire only because he had proclaimed the Word of Allah, and who eventually had to leave his country empty-handed, was so blessed by Allah that his name has been well known in the world since the past 4,000 years and will remain so till the Last Day. All the Muslims and the Christians and the Jews unanimously recognize that Friend of the Lord of the worlds as their spiritual Leader. Whatever guidance mankind has received during the past 40 centuries has been received through this one man and his righteous descendants. The unique reward that he will get in the Hereafter is assured, but the place of honor that he has gained even in this world has not been gained so far by any of those who have exerted themselves in pursuit of the worldly benefits and advantages.

50For comparison, see Al-A`raf: 80-84, Hud: 69-83; Al-Hijr: 57-79; Al-Anbiyaa: 71-75; Ash-Shu`araa: 16Q-175; An-Naml: 54 59;.As-Saffat: 133-138; AIQamar: 33-40.

51That is, "You satisfy your sex desire with the males." As stated in Al A'raf: 81: "you gratify your lust with men instead of women."

52That is, "You do not even hide yourself when you commit this filthy act, but commit it openly in your assemblies, in front of others." The same has been stated in Surah An-Naml: 54, thus: "Do you commit the indecency while you see it?"

53According to the details given of this in Surah Hud and A1-Hijr, the angels who had been sent to bring the torment on the people of the Prophet Lot, first came to the Prophet Abraham and gave him the good news of the birth of the Prophet Isaac and after him of the Prophet Jacob. Then they told him that they had been sent to destroy the people of Lot.

54"This habitation" refers to the territory of the people of Lot. The Prophet Abraham at that time resided in the Palestinian city of Hebron, now called Al-Khalil. A few miles to the south-east of this city lies that part of the Dead Sea, which was once inhabited by the people of Lot and which is now under sea water. It is a low-lying area and is clearly visible from the hill country of Hebron. That is why the angels, pointing towards it, had said "We are going to destroy this habitation." (See also E.N. 114 of Ash-Shu'araaa).

55According to the initial part of this story as related in Surah Hud, the Prophet Abraham at first was perturbed to see the angels in human shape, for he knew that the coming of the angels in human shape was always a prelude to some dangerous mission. Then, when they gave him the good news, his fear was allayed and he came to know that they had been sent to the people of Lot. Then he began making entreaties of mercy for those people (Hud: 7475), but his entreaties were not granted, and it was said: "Do not plead for them any more: your Lord's decree has been issued, and the punishment now cannot be averted." (v. 76) After this answer, when the Prophet Abraham lost all hope of any increase in the respite of Lot's people, he became anxious about the Prophet Lot himself, and said, what has been related here: "Lot is there." That is, "If the torment comes down when Lot is there, how will he and his household retrain safe from it?"

56According to Surah Tahrim: 10, this woman was not faithful to the Prophet Lot. That is why it was decreed that she too, would be afflicted with the torment in spite of being a Prophet's wife. Most probably when the Prophet Lot had come to Jordan after the migration and settled there, he might have married among the ,people living there. But the woman did not believe even after spending a lifetime with him, and her sympathies remained with her own people. As Allah has no consideration for relationships and brotherhoods and every person's case is decided on the basis of his own faith and morality, even being a Prophet's wife did not profit her in any way and she met her doom along with her own people with whom

she had remained attached in faith and morality.

57The reason for this anxiety and distress was that the angels had come in the shape of handsome, young boys. The Prophet Lot was aware of his people's morals. Therefore, he became perturbed at their arrival. He was thinking, "If I receive these guests in my house, it will be difficult to save them from the immoral people; if I do not receive them, it will be highly uncivil and unbecoming of the noble people. Moreover, if I do not provide shelter to these travelers, they will stay the night elsewhere, which would mean that I have myself given them away to the wicked people." What happened after this has not been related here. But according to the details given in Surahs Hud, AI-Hijr and AI-Qamar, the people of the city thronged to the Prophet Lot's house and insisted that the guests be handed over to them for immorality.

58That is, "As for us, you should neither fear that they will in any way he able to harm us, nor be anxious about how you will protect us from them." This was the time when the angels revealed their identity to the Prophet Lot, and said that they were not men but angels, who had been sent to bring the scourge on his people. According to the elucidation in Surah Hud, when the people were rushing into Lot's house and he felt that he could in no way save his guests from them, he cried out: "I wish I had the power to set you right, or I could find some strong support for refuge.'" (v. 80) At this time the angels said: "O Lot, we are messengers sent by your Lord; they will not be able to harm you at all." (v. 81).

59"A clear Sign": the Dead Sea, which is also called Sea of Lot. The Qur'an at several places has addressed the disbelievers of Makkah, saying, "A Sign of the torment that visited this wicked people on account of their misdeeds still exists on the highway, which you see night and day during your trade journeys to Syria." (AI-Hijr: 76; As-Saftat: 137). Today it is being admitted with near certainty that the southern end of the Dead Sea came into being as a result of a violent earthquake when the area in which Sodom, the central city of the people of Lot, was located sank underground. In this part there are still signs of some submerged habitations. Exploratory attempts are being made with the modern diving apparatus but the results are still awaited. (For further explanation, see E. N. 114 of Ash-Shu`araa A'raf.

60For the Islamic punishment of sodomy, see E.N. 68 of Surah Al 191.

61For comparison, see AI-'raf: 85-93, Hud: 84-96, Ash-Shu araa: 177

62This can have two meanings: (1) "Look forward to the life hereafter, and do not think that there is no life after this worldly life, when you will have to render an account of your deeds and be rewarded or punished accordingly." (2) "Work righteously so as to meet a good end in the Hereafter."

63That is, "They did not believe that the Prophet Shu`aib was a Messenger of Allah and the teachings he gave were from Allah and that if they rejected him they would be punished by a torment from Allah.

64"Dwelling-places": the whole area and country inhabited by those

65Every Arab was acquainted with the lands where these two nations had lived. The whole of southern Arabia now known as Ahqaf, Yaman and Hadramaut, was the land of 'Ad in the ancient times, and the Arabs knew it. The whole area in the north of the Hijaz, from Rabigh to 'Aqabah and from Madinah and Khaiber to Taima' and Tabuk. still abounds with Thamudic monuments, which must have been more prominent than they are today in the time when the Qur'an was being revealed.

66That is, "They were not ignorant and foolish people, but were the most civilized people of their own times. They performed and carried out their worldly duties and chores very carefully and intelligently. Therefore, it cannot be said that Satan deluded them and pulled them on to his way by artifice and deception. Nay, they adopted the way shown by Satan with open eyes and with full understanding because it promised great pleasures and advantages; and they abandoned the way presented by the Prophets because it appeared to be colorless, tasteless and troublesome due to moral restrictions."

67That is, "They could not have got away and escaped Allah's grasp: they had no power to frustrate and defeat Allah's plans and schemes."

68That is, `Ad who were subjected to a furious windstorm which blew on them for seven nights and eight days continuously.

69That is, Thamud.

70That is, Korah.

71That is, Pharaoh and Haman.

72The stories that have been related in the foregoing verses, have been addressed and directed both to the believers and to the disbelievers. To the believers they have been addressed so that they do not feel discouraged and distressed at heart, and keep aloft the banner of the Truth firmly and patiently even in the face of the severe persecutions and hardships, and should have full faith in Allah that His succor shall ultimately come, and He will frustrate the designs of the wicked people and make the Word of the Truth to prevail. On the other hand, these have been addressed to those wicked people also, who in their arrogance were bent upon exterminating the Islamic movement. They have been warned to the effect: "You have formed a wrong opinion about Allah's forbearance and clemency. You think; that His is a lawless Kingdom. If you have not been seized so far for your rebellion and your tyrannies and wicked deeds and have been granted a long respite so that you may reform yourselves, you have inferred that there exists no power whatever which can call you to account, and that one can go on doing whatever

one likes endlessly on this earth. This misconception will ultimately lead you to the same doom that has already been met by the peoples of Noah and Lot and Shu`aib, and experienced by `Ad and Thamud, and seen by Korah and Pharaoh.

73All the above-mentioned nations were involved in shirk, and their belief about their deities was that they were their supporters and helpers and guardians, and had the power to make or mar their destinies; so when they will have won their goodwill by worship and. presentation of offerings they will succor them in need and protect them against calamities and afflictions. But, as shown by the historical events cited above, all their beliefs and superstitions proved to be baseless when their destruction was decreed by Allah. Then no god, and no god incarnate, and no saint or spirit, and no jinn or angel, whom they worshiped came to their rescue, and they met their destruction with the realization that their expectations and beliefs had been false and futile. After relating these events, Allah is now warning the mushriks to the effect: "The reality of the toy-house of expectations that you have built on your faith in the powerless servants and imaginary deities, apart from the real Master and Ruler of the universe, is no more than the cobweb of a spider. Just as a cobweb cannot stand the slightest interference by a finger, so will the toy-house of your expectations collapse in its first clash with the scheme of Allah. It is nothing but ignorance that you are involved in the web of superstition. Had you any knowledge of the Reality you would not have built your system of life on baseless props. The fact is that none other than the One Lord of the worlds in this universe is the Owner of power and authority, and His support is the only support which is reliable. "Now whoever rejects taghut and believes in Allah has taken a firm support that never gives way. And Allah hears everything and knows everything." (Al-Baqarah: 256).

74That is, "Allah knows full well the reality of those beings and things which they have taken as their deities and which they invoke for help. They are absolutely powerless. The Owner of power is only Allah, Who is controlling the system of this universe according to His own wisdom and design." Another translation of this verse can be: "Allah knows full well that those whom they invoke, apart from Him, are nonentities, and He alone is the All Mighty, the All-Wise."

75That is, "The system of the universe is based on the truth and not on falsehood. Whoever ponders over this system with an unbiased mind will realize that the earth and the heavens owe their existence to reality and fact and not to superstition and fancy. Here there is no possibility that whatever a person may conceive in his mind and whatever philosophy he may invent out of his personal whim and conjecture should fit in with the system. Here only such a thing can succeed and endure, which is in harmony with the reality and actual fact. A structure that is raised on unreal presumptions and hypotheses will ultimately collapse when it clashes with the reality. The system of the universe clearly testifies that its Creator is One God, and One God alone is its Master and Disposer. If a person works against this basic Reality on the presumption that this world has no God, or that it has many gods, who devour the offerings of their devotees and in return give them a license to do whatever they please and a guarantee to live in peace and happiness, the Reality will not change due to his presumptions, but, on the contrary, he himself will some time meet with a grave disaster."

76That is, "A clear evidence exists in the creation of the earth and the heavens about the truth of Tauhid and the refutation of polytheism and atheism, but this evidence is found only by those who accept the teachings of the Prophets of Allah. Those who deny them do not find it even though they see everything."

77The address apparently is directed to the Holy Prophet but, in fact, it is meant for all the believers. Until now they were being counselled patience and reliance on Allah to brave the extreme trying conditions in which they found themselves and the persecutions they were being subjected to on account of their faith. Now they are being told to recite the Qur'an and establish the Salat as a practical device, for these are the two things which endow a believer with a strong character and a wonderful capacity by which he can not only brave successfully the most violent storms of evil and falsehood but can even subdue them. But man can acquire this power from the recitation of the Qur'an and the Prayer only when he does not retrain content with the mere recital of the words but also understands well the Qur'anic teachings and absorbs them in his soul, and his Prayer does not remain confined to physical movements but becomes the very function of his heart and the motive force for his morals and character. The desired quality of the Prayer is being mentioned by the Qur'an itself in the next sentence. As for its recitation, one should know that the recitation which does not reach the heart beyond the throat, cannot even give man enough power to remain steadfast to his faith, not to speak of enabling him to withstand the furies of unbelief. About such people, a Hadith says: "They will recite the Qur'an, but the Qur'an will not go beyond their throats; they will leave the Faith just as the arrow leaves the bow." (Bukhari, Muslim, Mu'atta`). As a matter of fact, the recitation which does not effect any change in a man's way of thinking, and his morals and character, and he goes on doing what the Qur'an forbids, is not the recitation of a believer at all. About such a one the Holy Prophet has said: ;'He who makes lawful what the Qur'an has declared unlawful, has not believed in the Qur'an at all." (Tirmidhi, on the authority of Suhaib Rumi). Such a recitation does not reform and strengthen a maws self and spirit, but makes him even more stubborn against Allah and impudent before his own conscience, and destroys his character altogether. For the case of the person who believes in the Qur'an as a Divine Book, reads it and comes to know what his God has enjoined, and then goes on violating His injunctions, is of the culprit, who commits a crime not due to ignorance but after full knowledge of the law. The Holy Prophet has elucidated this point in a brief sentence, thus: "The Qur'an is a testimony in your favor as well as against you." (Muslim). That is, "If you follow the Qur'an rightly it is a testimony in your favor. Whenever you are called to account for your deeds, here or in the hereafter, you can produce the Qur'an as a testimony in your defense, saying that whatever you did was in accordance with this Book. If what you did was precisely according to it, no jurist in the world will be able to punish you, nor will God in the Hereafter hold you accountable for it. But if this Book has reached you, and you have read it and found out what your Lord demands from you, what He enjoins and what He forbids, and then you adopt an attitude opposed to it, then this Book will be a testimony against you. It will further strengthen the criminal case against you in the Court of God. Then it will in no way be possible for you to escape the punishment, or receive a light punishment, by making the excuse of ignorance."

78This is an important characteristic out of the many characteristics of the Prayer, which has been

presented here prominently in view of its relevance to the context. To counter the severe storm of opposition and resistance that the Muslims were experiencing in Makkah, they stood in need of a moral force rather than any material power. To bring about the moral force and develop it suitably two practical devices were pointed out in the first instance, the recitation of the Qur'an and the establishment of the Salat. Now they are being told that the establishment of the Salat is the means through which they can get rid of those evils in which they themselves had been involved before they embraced Islam and in which the non-Muslim Arabs and the non-Arab world around them were involved at that time.

With a little thinking one can easily understand why this special advantage of the Prayer has been particularly mentioned here. Evidently, getting rid of the moral evils is not only useful insofar as it is beneficial for those who attain the moral purity, both here and in the Hereafter, but its inevitable advantage is that it gives them unique superiority over those who might be involved in diverse moral evils, and who might be exerting their utmost to sustain the impure system of ignorance, which nourishes those evils, against the efforts of the morally pure people. Indecent and evil acts are those which man by nature abhors, and which have always been held as evil in principle by the people of every community and society, however depraved and perverted practically. The Arab society in the days of the revelation of the Qur'an was no exception to this. Those people also were aware of the moral virtues and the evils: they valued the good above the evil and there might be none among them, who regarded the evil as identical with the good, or depreciated good. Under such conditions, in a perverted society like that, the emergence of a movement which revolutionized morally members of the same society itself as soon as they came into contact with it, and raised them in character high above their contemporaries, inevitably had widespread effects. The common Arabs could not possibly fail to feel the moral impact of the movement, which eradicated evils and promoted goodness, and instead go on following those who were themselves morally corrupt and were fighting to sustain the system of ignorance, which had been nourishing those evils since centuries. That is why the Qur'an at that time exhorted the Muslims to establish Salat instead of urging them to collect material resources and force and strength that could win over the people's hearts and defeat the enemy without any material force.

The virtue of the Prayer that has been mentioned here has two aspects: its essential and inseparable quality that it restrains from evil and indecent acts, and its desired quality that the one who performs it should in actual fact refrain from evil and indecent acts. As for the first quality the Prayer does restrain people from the evils. Anyone who ponders a little over the nature of the Prayer, will admit that of all the checks and brakes that can be put on man to restrain him from the evils, the Prayer can be the most effective. After all, what check could be more effective than this that man should be called upon five times a day for the remembrance of Allah and made to remind himself again and again that he is not wholly free and independent in this world but is the servant of One God, and his God is He Who is aware of his open as well as hidden acts, even of the most secret aims and intentions of his heart, and a time will surely come when he will have to account for all his deeds before his God. Then he is not only reminded of this but is given practical training at every Prayer time that he should not disobey any of his God's Commands even secretly. From the time that he stands up for the Prayer till its completion man has to

perform continuously certain acts in which there is no third person, besides him and his God, who can know whether he has obeyed God's law or , disobeyed it. For instance, if the man's wudu (state of ablutions) has become void and he stands up for the Prayer, there ca.. be no one, besides him and God, who will know that he is no longer in the state of wudu. If the man has expressed no intention of the Prayer but just goes on performing all the required movements and recites poetry, for instance, instead of the prescribed texts quietly, there is none, besides him and his God who can be aware of the secret that he has not, in fact, performed his Prayer at all. Not with standing this, if a person offers the Prayer five times a day, fulfilling faithfully all the conditions of the Divine law in respect of the cleanliness of the body and dress, and the essentials of the Prayer and its recitation, etc. it means that through this Prayer his conscience is being awakened to life several times a day, he is being helped to-become a responsible and dutiful person, and he is being practically trained that he should, under his own urge of obedience, abide by the law which he has believed in openly as well as secretly, regardless whether there is any external force to make him abide by it or not, and whether the people of the world have any knowledge of his intentions and deeds or not.

Thus considered, one cannot help admitting that the Prayer not only restrains man from the evils and indecencies, but, in fact, there is no other method of training in the world, which may be so effective as the Prayer is in restraining man from the evils. As for the question whether or not man in actual fact refrains from the evils even after attendance at the Prayer, this depends upon the man himself, who is undergoing training for self-reform. If he has the intention to benefit from it, and endeavors for it, the reformatory effects of the Prayer will certainly have their impact on him. Otherwise, evidently, no reformatory device in the world can be effective with a person, who is not prepared to receive any impact of it, or tries to avoid its impact intentionally. This can be explained by an example. The essential quality of food is to nourish the body and develop it. But this advantage can be had only when food is allowed to be assimilated. If a person vomits what he eats after every meal, his food cannot profit him in any way. Just as, keeping such a person in view, one cannot say that food is not nutritious for the body, because so-and-so is becoming a skeleton in spite of eating food, so can no one present the example of an unrighteous offerer of the Prayer and say that the Prayer does not restrain from the evils, because so-and-so is unrighteous in spite of his Prayer. Just as about such a person it will be apt to say that he does not offer the Prayer at all, so about the person who vomits everything he eats, it will be apt to say that he does not eat his food at all.

Precisely the same thing has been reported from the Holy Prophet and some great Companions and their followers. `Imran bin Husain reports that the Holy Prophet said: "He Whose Prayer did not restrain him from the evil and indecent acts, offered no Prayer at all." (Ibn Abi Hatim). -Ibn `Abbas has reported the Holy Prophet as saying: "The Prayer which did not restrain a person from the evil and indecent acts, led him further away from Allah." (Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabarani). A Hadith containing the same theme has been reported by Hasan Basri directly from the Holy Prophet (Ibn Jarir, Baihaqi). Another Hadith reported on the authority of Ibn Mas`ud is to the effect: "He who did not obey the Prayer, offered no Prayer at all, and obedience to the Prayer is that one should refrain from the evil and indecent acts." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi

Hatim). Several sayings to the same effect have been reported on the authority of 'Abdullah bin Mas`ud, `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hasan Basri, Qatadah and A`amash, etc. Imam Ja`far Sadiq has said: "He who wants to know whether his Prayer has been accepted or not, should see how far his Prayer has restrained him from the evil and indecent acts. If he has been restrained from the evils, his Prayer has been accepted." (Ruh al Ma `ani).

79This can have several meanings: (1) "That the remembrance of Allah (i.e. Prayer) is a thing of much higher value: it not only restrains from the evils, but, over and above that, it induces people to act righteously and urges them to excel one another in good acts," (2) "that Allah's remembrance in itself is a great thing: it is the best of acts: no act of man is greater in value than this. ` (3) "that Allah's remembrance of you is a greater thing than your remembrance of Him. Allah has said in the Qur'an: "So remember Me: I will remember you'." (Al-Baqarah: 156). Thus, when the servant remembers Allah in the Prayer, inevitably Allah also will remember him, and the merit of Allah's remembering the servant is certainly greater than the servant's remembering Allah. Besides these three meanings, there is another subtle meaning also, which the wife of Hadrat Abud Darda has explained. She says, "Allah's remembrance is not restricted to the Prayer, but, its sphere is much vaster. When a man observes a fast, or pays the Zakat or performs a righteous act, he inevitably remembers Allah. That is why the righteous act emanates from him. Likewise, when a man refrains from an evil act when an opportunity exists for it, even this also is the result of Allah's remembrance. Thus, the remembrance of Allah pervades the entire life of a believer."

80It should be noted that a little below in this Surah the people are being exhorted to migrate. At that time Habash was the only place of safety to which the Muslims could migrate, and Habash in those days was under the domination of the Christians. Therefore, in these verses the Muslims are being instructed as to how they should argue and discuss matters concerning religion with the people of the Book when such an occasion arises.

81That is, "The discussion should be conducted rationally, in a civilized and decent language, so that the ideas of the other person may be reformed. The preacher's chief aim should be to appeal to the addressee's heart, convey the truth to him and bring him to the right path. He should not fight like a wrestler whose only object is to defeat his opponent. He should rather conduct himself like a physician who is ever cautious not to cause the patient's ailment to worsen by any of his own mistakes, and tries to cure him with the least possible trouble. This instruction bas been given here especially in connection with the conduct of a discussion with the people of the Book, but is a general instruction pertaining to the preaching of the religion and it has been given at several places in the Qur'an. For example, "O Prophet, invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and excellent admonition and discuss things with the people in the best manner." (AnNahl: 125). "O Prophet, goodness and evil are not alike. Repel evil with what is best. You will see that he. with whom you had enmity, has become your closest friend. ' (Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 34). "O Prophet, repel evil with what is best: We are fully aware of what they utter against you." (Al-Mu'minun: 96) "O Prophet, adopt the way of leniency and forbearance; enjoin what is good and

avoid useless discussions with the ignorant people. If Satan ever excites you to anger, seek refuge in Allah."

82That is, "With those who adopt an attitude of wickedness a different attitude may also be adopted according to the nature and extent of their wickedness. In other words, one cannot, and should not adopt a soft and gentle attitude towards all sorts of the people under all circumstances at all time, which might be mistaken for the weakness and meekness of the inviter to the Truth. Islam does teach its followers to be polite, gentle and reasonable, but it does not teach them to be unduly humble and meek so that they are not taken for granted by every cruel and wicked person."

83In these sentences Allah Himself has provided guidance to the best method of discussion, which the inviters to the Truth should adopt. The method is this: "Do not make the error or deviation of the other person the basis and starting point of the discussion, but begin the discussion with those points of truth and justice which are common between you and your opponent. That is, the discussion should start' from the points of agreement and not from the points of difference. Then, arguing froth the agreed points, the addressee should be made to understand that, in the matter of the things in which you differ, your stand is in conformity with the agreed points whereas his stand is contradictory to them

In this connection, one should bear in mind the fact that the people of the Book did not deny Revelation, Prophethood and Tauhid, like the polytheists of Arabia, but believed in these realities just like the Muslims. After agreement on these basic things, the main thing that could become the basis of difference Between them could be that the Muslim would not believe in the Divine Scriptures sent down to them and would invite them to believe in the Divine Book sent down to themselves, and would declare them disbelievers if they did not believe in it. This would have been a strong basis of their conflict. But the Muslims had a different stand. They believed as true all those Books that were with the people of the Book, and then also had believed in the Revelation that had been sent down to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). After this it was for the people of the Book to tell the rational ground for which they believed in one Book sent by Allah and rejected the other. That is why Allah here has instructed the Muslims that whenever they have to deal with the people of the Book, they should first of all present before them this very point of view in a positive manner. Say to them: "We believe in the same God in Whom you believe and we are obedient to Him. We have submitted ourselves to all those Commands and injunctions and teachings that have come from Him, whether they were sent down to you, or to us. We are obedient servants of God and not of a country or a community or a race, that we should submit to God's Command when it is sent down in one place and reject it when it is sent down in another place. This thing has been repeated at several places in the Qur'an and particularly in relation to the people of the Book, it has been presented forcefully. For this,see Al-Baqarah: 4, 136, 177, 285; Al-i-`Imran: 84; An-Nisa': 136, 150 to 152, 162 to 164; Ash Shu'araa: 13.

84This can have two meanings:

(1) "Just as We had sent down the Books to the former Prophets, so We have sent down this Book to you"; and

(2) "We have sent down this Book with the teaching that it should be believed in not by rejecting Our former Books but by affirming faith in all of them. "

85The context itself shows that this does not imply all the people of the Book but only those who were blessed with the right understanding and the knowledge of the Divine Scriptures, and were "the people of the Book ' in the we sense. When this last Book of Allah came before them, confirming His earlier Books, they did not show any stubbornness or obstinacy but accepted it sincerely as they had accepted the previous Books.

86"These people": the people of Arabia. What it means to say is: The truth-loving people, whether they already possess a Divine Book or do not possess any, are affirming faith in it everywhere.

87Here, "the disbelievers" imply those people who are not prepared to give up their prejudices and accept the truth, or those who reject the truth because they do not want their lusts and their unbridled freedom to be subjected to restrictions.

88This is the same argument that has already been given in Surahs Yunus and Qasas as a proof of the Holy Prophet's Prophethood. (See E.N. 21 of Yunus and E.N.'s 64 and 109 of AI-Qasas. For further explanation, see E.N. 107 of An-Nahl, E.N. 105 of Bani Isra'il, E.N. 66 of AI-Mu'minun, E.N. 12 of Al-Furqan, and E.N. 84 of Ash-Shu`araa).

The basis of the argument in this verse is that the Holy Prophet was unlettered. His compatriots and his kinsmen among whom he had spent his whole life, from birth to old age, knew fully well that he had never read a book nor ever handled a pen. Presenting this actual fact Allah says: "This is a proof of the fact that the vast and deep knowledge of the teachings of the Divine Books, of the stories of the former Prophets, of the beliefs of the various religions and creeds, of the histories of the ancient nations, and the questions of social and moral and economic life, which is being presented through this unlettered, illiterate man could not have been attained by him through any means but Revelation. If he had been able to read and write and the people had seen him reading books and undertaking serious studies, the worshipers of falsehood could have had some basis for their doubts, that he had acquired the knowledge not through Revelation but through study and reading. But the fact of his being absolutely illiterate has left no basis whatever for any such doubt. Therefore, there can be no ground, except sheer stubbornness, which can be regarded as rational in any degree for denying his Prophethood."

89That is, "The presentation of a Book like the Qur'an by an unlettered person, and the manifestation by him, all of a sudden, of extraordinary qualities of character while nobody ever noticed him making any

preparation for these previously, are in fact the clearest Signs which serve as pointers to his Prophethood for those who are possessed of knowledge and wisdom. " If one reviews the life-story of any great historical personage, one can always discover the factors in his environment, which molded his personality and prepared him for the excellences and qualities that emanated from him in life. There always exists a clear relationship between his environment and the component aspects of his personality. But no source whatever can be discovered in his environment of the wonderful qualities and excellences that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him) displayed. In his case, neither in the contemporary Arab society nor in the society of the neighboring countries with which Arabia had any relations can one discover those factors which could have any remote relationship with the component aspects of the Holy Prophet's personality. This is the reality on whose basis it has been asserted here that the Holy Prophet Muhammad's personality is not one Sign but a collection of many clear Signs. An ignorant person may not see any of these Signs but those who are possessed of knowledge have become convinced in their hearts by seeing these Signs that he is most certainly a true Prophet of Allah.

90That is, miracles by seeing which one may be convinced that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is really a Prophet of Allah.

91That is, "A Book like the Qur'an has been sent down to you in spite of your being unlettered. Is it not by itself a great miracle which should convince the people of your Prophethood? Do they yet need another miracle after this? The other miracles were the miracles for those who witnessed them. But this miracle is ever present in front of them. It is being recited before them almost daily; they can witness it as and when they like.

Even after such an assertion and argument by the Qur'an the audacity of those who try to prove that the Holy Prophet was literate is astonishing. The fact, however, is that the Qur'an here has presented in clear terms the Holy Prophet's being illiterate as a strong proof of his Prophet hood. The traditions which lend support to the claim that the Holy Prophet could read and write, or had learnt reading and writing later in life, stand rejected at first glance, for no tradition opposed to the Qur'an can be acceptable. Then these traditions in themselves are too weak to become the basis for an argument. One of these is a tradition from Bukhari that when the peace treaty of Hudaibiya was being written down, the representative of the disbelievers of Makkah objected to the word Rasul Allah being added to the name of the Holy Prophet. At this the Holy Prophet ordered the writer (Hadrat `Ali) to cross out the word Rasul-Allah and write Muhammad bin 'Abdullah instead. Hadrat `Ali refused to cross out Rasul-Allah. Then the Holy Prophet took it in his own hand, struck out the word himself and wrote Muhammad bin `Abdullah.

But this tradition from Bara' bin `Azib appears at four places in Bukhari and at two places in Muslim and everywhere in different words:

(1)At one place in Bukhari (Kitab-us-S, ulh) the words of this tradition are to the effect: "The Holy Prophet told Hadrat `Ali to strike out the words. He submitted that he could not do that. At last, the Holy Prophet

crossed them out with his own hand."

(2) In the same book the second tradition is to the effect: "Then he (the Holy Prophet) said to `Ali: Cross out Rasul-Allah. He said: By God, I shall never cross out your name. At last, the Holy Prophet took the document and wrote: This is the treaty concluded by Muhammad bin `Abdullah."

(3) The third tradition, again from Bara' bin `Azib is found in Kitab-ul-Jizia in Bukhari to the effect: "The Holy Prophet himself could not write. He said to `Ali: Cross out Rasul-Allah. He submitted: By God, I shall never cross out these words. At this, the Holy Prophet said: Show me the place where these words are written. He showed him the place, and the Holy Prophet crossed out the words with his own hand."

(4) The fourth tradition is in Bukhari's Kitab-ul-Maghazi to the effect: "So the Holy Prophet took the document although he did not know writing, and he wrote: This is the treaty concluded by Muhammad bin `Abdullah."

(5) Again from Bara' bin `Azib there is a tradition in Muslim (Kitab-ul-Jihad) saying that on Hadrat `Alt's refusal the Holy Prophet himself wiped off the words Rasul-Allah. "

(6) The second tradition from him in the same book says, "The Holy Prophet said to `Ali: Show me where the word Rasul Allah is written. Hadrat `Ali showed him the place, and he wiped it off and wrote Ibn `Abdullah.

The disparity in the traditions clearly indicates that the intermediary reporters have not reported the words of Hadrat Bara' bin `Azib (may Allah be pleased with him) accurately. Therefore, none of these reports can be held as perfectly reliable so that it could be said with certainty that the Holy Prophet had written the words "Muhammad bin `Abdullah with his own hand. Probably when Hadrat 'Ali, refused to wipe off the word Rasul-Allah, the Holy Prophet might have himself wiped it off after finding, out the place where it was written, and then might have got the word Ibn `Abdullah substituted by him or by some other writer. Other traditions show that there were two writers who were writing down the peace treaty; Hadrat `Ali and Muhammad bin Maslamah (Fath al-Sari, Vol. V, p. 217). Therefore, it is not impossible that what one writer did not do was got done by the other writer. However, if the Holy Prophet actually wrote his name with his own hand, there are plenty instances of this in the world. The illiterate people learn to write their own name although they cannot read or write anything else.

The other tradition on whose basis it has been claimed that the Holy Prophet was literate, has been reported by Ibn Abi Shaibah and `Umar bin Shabbah from Mujahid. It says: "The Holy Prophet had learned reading and writing before his death." But in the first place, it is a weak tradition on account of its links as said by Hafiz Ibn Kathir: "It is weak: it has no basis." Secondly, it is weak otherwise also, for if the Holy Prophet had really learned reading and writing later in life, it would have become a well known fact. Many of the Companions would have reported it, and it would also have been known from which person

(or persons) he had learned this. But no one except one man, 'Aun bin 'Abdullah, from whom Mujahid heard this, has reported it. And this 'Aun was not even a Companion, but a follower of the Companions, who does not at all tell from which Companion (or Companions) he got this information. Evidently, on the basis of such weak traditions nothing which contradicts well known facts can become acceptable.

92That is, "The revelation of this Book is, without any doubt, a great bounty of Allah, and it contains great admonitions for the people. But only those people can benefit by it, who believe in it."

93That is,"They are challenging you again and again that If you are a true messenger and they are really denying the Truth, then you should not delay the torment with which you threaten them. "

94This is an allusion to the Hijrah, which implies this: if you feel that it is becoming difficult to worship God in Makkah, you may leave it and move to another place where you can live as the we servants of God, for God's earth is vast. You should serve Allah and not your nation and country." This shows that the real thing is not the nation and the home and the country but the worship of Allah If at some time the demands of the nation and country's love clash with the demands of Allah's worship, it is the time of trial for the believer's faith. The true believer will worship Allah and spurn the nation and the country and home. The false claimant to the Faith will abandon the Faith and remain clinging to his nation and his country and home. This verse is clearly indicative of the fact that a true worshiper of God can be a patriot but he cannot be a worshiper of the nation and the country. For him the worship of God is the dearest thing in life for the sake of which he will sacrifice everything else, but with never be prepared to sacrifice it for anything else.

95That is, "Do not be anxious for your life: one has to die sooner or later. No one has come to live for ever in this world. Therefore, your real problem is not how to save life, but your real problem is how to save your Faith, and fulfill the requirements of God-worship. You have ultimately to return to Us. If you lost your faith for the sake of saving your life the result in the Hereafter will be different, but if you lost your life for the sake of saving your faith the result will be just the opposite. Therefore, you should be anxious only about what you will bring when you return to Us. Will you come with a faith sacrificed for the sake of life, or a life sacrificed for the sake of the faith?"

96That is, "Even if you remained deprived of all the worldly blessings because of your faith and righteousness and ended up as a total failure from the worldly point of view, you should rest assured that you will be compensated for it; and not only compensated but rewarded excellently."

97"Who . . patience": who remained steadfast in faith in the face of hardships and afflictions and losses and persecutions; who have endured the consequences of the faith and have not turned away; who have seen the advantages and benefits of abandoning the faith and have not been lured away by them; who have seen the disbelievers and the wrongdoers prosper in the world and have not cast even a stray

glance at their wealth and splendor."

98"Put . . . Lord": Who did not put their trust in their possessions and their business and their clans and tribes but in their Lord; who were prepared to fight every power and endure every danger for the sake of their faith only on the basis of their trust in their Lord irrespective of the worldly means, and left their homes if their faith so demanded; who trusted their Lord that He would not let go waste the rewards of their faith and good works, and were sure that He would succor His believers and righteous servants even in this world and bless them with the best rewards in the Hereafter as well.

99That is, "While migrating you should not be worried about your means of livelihood as you should not worry about your life's safety. For none of the birds and the animals of the land and the sea that you find around yourself carries its provision with it. Allah is providing for all of them; wherever they go they get their provision through Allah's bounty. Therefore, do not be disheartened by the thought that if you left your homes for the sake of your faith, you would have nothing to eat. Allah will provide for you as well from the sources from which He is providing for the countless of His other creatures:"

Precisely the same thing was taught by the Prophet Jesus (may Allah's peace be upon him) to his disciples when he had said:

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold :o the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than treat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall . we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (Matthew. 6: 2434).

The background of these discourses of the Qur'an and the Gospel is the same. There always comes a stage in the way of the propagation of the Truth when the follower of the Truth is left with no alternative but to stake his very life only with trust in Allah, regardless of the support and means of the material world. In these conditions, those who are too calculating about the possibilities of the future and seeking guarantees of the safety of life and assurance of provisions cannot do anything. Indeed, such conditions

are changed only by the efforts and power of those who rise fearlessly in face of every danger and are even prepared to risk their very lives. It is all due to their sacrifices that ultimately the Word of Allah is raised high and all other words and creeds stand humbled and subdued before it.

100From here the discourse is again directed to the disbelievers of Makkah.

101Here the word al-hamdu-lillah (Praise be to Allah) gives two meanings: (1) "When all this is done by Allah, then He alone is worthy of all praise, and none else", and (2) "Thank God that you yourselves also admit this."

102That is "The reality of it is no more than the children's engaging in a sport and pastime for a while, and then returning home. The one has become a king here, has not become a king in reality but is only playing the king. A time comes when his play ends, and ne leaves the royal throne as empty-handed as he was when he had entered the world. Similarly, no phase of life here is enduring and lasting. Every one is playing his part only temporarily for a limited time. Those who are charmed by the short-lived triumphs of this life and are able to collect some means of enjoyment and pleasure and of glory and grandeur by losing their conscience and faith, are only engaged in a pastime. What will these toys profit them when after amusing themselves with these for a score or three score and ten years in the world they will enter through the gate of death empty-handed into the Next World of eternal life and find their same allurements to have caused them an everlasting affliction?"

103That is, "If these people had known the reality that the life of this world is only a period of preparation for the test, and the real life for man, which is everlasting, is the life hereafter, they would not have wasted this preparatory period in sport and merry-making, but would instead have utilized each moment of it in works conducive to better results in the eternal life of the Hereafter.

104For explanation, see E.N.'s 29 and 41 of Surah Al-An`am; E.N.'s 29 and 31 of Surah Yunus and E.N. 84 of Surah Bani Isra'il.

105That is, Has the City of Makkah, in whose surroundings they enjoy perfect safety and security, been made a sacred place by some Lat or Hubal? Was it possible for a god or goddess to have secured this place against all sorts of mischief and violence for 2,500 years or so, in a strife-ridden land like Arabia? Who could then keep and maintain its sacredness and sanctity except Us?

106That is, "The Prophet has made a claim to Prophethood, and you have denied him. Now there can be only two alternatives: If the Prophet has made a false claim in the name of Allah, there can be no one more wicked than he, and if you have belied a true Prophet, there can be no one more wicked than you."

107The word mujahadah has already been explained in E.N: 8 above. There it was said that a person

who exerts will exert for his own good (v. 6.). Here it is being reassured that Allah does not leave alone those who strive in His cause sincerely, even at the risk of a conflict with the entire world, but He helps and guides them and opens for them ways towards Himself. He teaches them at every step the way of winning His approval and good-will and He shows them the light at every turning point to discriminate between the Right Way and the wrong ways of life. In short, Allah helps and succors and guides them according to their sincerity and intensity of desire for goodness.

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30. Surah Ar Rum (The Romans)

Name

The Surah takes its name Ar-Rum from the second verse in which the words *ghulibat-ir-Rum* have occurred.

Period of Revelation

The period of the revelation of this Surah is determined absolutely by the historical event that has been mentioned at the outset. It says: "The Romans have been vanquished in the neighboring land."In those days the Byzantine occupied territories adjacent to Arabia were Jordan, Syria and Palestine, and in these territories the Romans were completely overpowered by the Iranians in 615 A. D. Therefore, it can be said with absolute certainty that this Surah was sent down in the same year, and this was the year in which the migration to Habash took place.

Historical Background

The prediction made in the initial verses of this Surah is one of the most outstanding evidences of the Quran's being the Word of Allah and the Holy Prophet Muhammad's being a true Messenger of Allah. Let us have a look at the historical background relevant to the verses.

Eight years before the Holy Prophet's advent as a Prophet the Byzantine Emperor Maurice was overthrown by Phocus, who captured the throne and became king. Phocus first got the Emperor's five sons executed in front of him, and then got the Emperor also killed and hung their heads in a thoroughfare in Constantinople. A few days after this he had the empress and her three daughters also put to death. The event provided Khusrau Parvez, the Sassanid king of Iran; a good moral excuse to attack Byzantium. For Emperor Maurice had been his benefactor; with his help he had got the throne of Iran. Therefore, he declared that he would avenge his godfather's and his children's murder upon Phocus, the usurper. So, he started war against Byzantium in 603 A. D. and within a few years, putting the Phocus armies to rout in succession, he reached Edessa (modern, Urfa) in Asia Minor, on the one hand, and Aleppo and Antioch in Syria, on the other. When the Byzantine ministers saw that Phocus could not save

the country, they sought the African governor's help, who sent his son, Heraclius, to Constantinople with a strong fleet. Phocus was immediately deposed and Heraclius made emperor. He treated Phocus as he had treated Maurice. This happened in 610 A. D., the year the Holy Prophet was appointed to Prophethood.

The moral excuse for which Khusrau Parvez had started the war was no more valid after the deposition and death of Phocus. Had the object of his war really been to avenge the murder of his ally on Phocus for his cruelty, he would have come to terms with the new Emperor after the death of Phocus. But he continued the war, and gave it the color of a crusade between Zoroastrianism and Christianity. The sympathies of the Christian sects (i. e. Nestorians and Jacobians, etc.) which had been excommunicated by the Roman ecclesiastical authority and tyrannized for years also went with the Magian (Zoroastrian) invaders, and the Jews also joined hands with them; so much so that the number of the Jews who enlisted in Khusrau's army rose up to 26,000.

Heraclius could not stop this storm. The very first news that he received from the East after ascending the throne was that of the Iranian occupation of Antioch. After this Damascus fell in 613 A. D. Then in 614 A.D. the Iranians occupying Jerusalem played havoc with the Christian world. Ninety thousand Christians were massacred and the Holy Sepulcher was desecrated. The Original Cross on which, according to the Christian belief, Jesus had died was seized and carried to Mada'in. The chief priest Zacharia was taken prisoner and all the important churches of the city were destroyed. How puffed up was Khusrau Parvez at this victory can be judged from the letter that he wrote to Heraclius from Jerusalem. He wrote: "From Khusrau, the greatest of all gods, the master of the whole world: To Heraclius, his most wretched and most stupid servant: You say that you have trust in your Lord. why didn't then your Lord save Jerusalem from me?"

Within a year after this victory the Iranian armies over-ran Jordan, Palestine and the whole of the Sinai Peninsula, and reached the frontiers of Egypt. In those very days another conflict of a far greater historical consequence was going on in Makkah. The believers in One God, under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace be upon him), were fighting for their existence against the followers of *shirk* under the command of the chiefs of the Quraish, and the conflict had reached such a stage that in 615 A. D., a substantial number of the Muslims had to leave their homes and take refuge with the Christian kingdom of Habash, which was an ally of the Byzantine Empire. In those days the Sassanid victories against Byzantium were the talk of the town, and the pagans of Makkah were delighted and were taunting the Muslims to the effect: "Look the fire worshipers of Iran are winning victories and the Christian believers in Revelation and Prophethood are being routed everywhere. Likewise, we, the idol worshipers of Arabia, will exterminate you and your religion."

These were the conditions when this Surah of the Quran was sent down, and in it a prediction was made, saying:"The Romans have been vanquished in the neighboring land and within a few years after their defeat, they shall be victorious. And it will be the day when the believers will rejoice in the victory granted by Allah." It contained not one but two predictions: First, the Romans shall be victorious; and second, the Muslims also shall win a victory at the same time. Apparently, there was not a remote chance of the fulfillment of the either prediction in the next few years. On the one hand, there were a handful of the Muslims, who were being beaten and tortured in Makkah, and even till eight years after this prediction there appeared no chance of their victory and domination. On the other, the Romans were losing more and more ground every next day. By 619 A. D. the whole of Egypt had passed into Sassanid hands and the Magian armies had reached as far as Tripoli. In Asia Minor they beat and pushed back the Romans to Bosporus, and in 617 A. D. they captured Chalcedon (modern, Kadikoy) just opposite Constantinople.

The Emperor sent an envoy to Khusrau, praying that he was ready to have peace on any terms, but he replied, "I shall not give protection to the emperor until he is brought in chains before me and gives up obedience to his crucified god and adopts submission to the fire god." At last, the Emperor became so depressed by defeat that he decided to leave Constantinople and shift to Carthage (modern, Tunis). In short, as the British historian Gibbon says, even seven to eight years after this prediction of the Quran, the conditions were such that no one could even imagine that the Byzantine Empire would ever gain an upper hand over Iran. Not to speak of gaining domination, no one could hope that the Empire, under the circumstances, would even survive.

bid`i sinin*, and the word *bid` in Arabic applies to a number upto ten. Therefore, make the bet for ten years and increase the number of camels to a hundred." So, Hadrat Abu Bakr spoke to Ubayy again and bet a hundred camels for ten years.

In 622 A. D. as the Holy Prophet migrated to Madinah, the Emperor Heraclius set off quietly for Trabzon from Constantinople via the Black Sea and started preparations to attack Iran from rear. For this he asked the Church for money, and Pope Sergius lent him the Church collections on interest, in a bid to save Christianity from Zoroastrianism. Heraclius started his counter attack in 623 A. D. from Armenia. Next year, in 624 A. D., he entered Azerbaijan and destroyed Clorumia, the birthplace of Zoroaster, and ravaged the principal fire temple of Iran. Great are the powers of Allah, this was the very year when the Muslims achieved a decisive victory at Badr for the first time against the *mushriks*. Thus both the predictions made in Surah Rum were fulfilled simultaneously within the stipulated period of ten years.

The Byzantine forces continued to press the Iranians hard and in the decisive battle at Nineveh (627 A.D.) they dealt them the hardest blow. They captured the royal residence of Dastagerd, and then pressing forward reached right opposite to Ctesiphon, capital of Iran in those days. In 628 A. D. in an internal revolt, Khusrau Parvez was imprisoned and 18 of his sons were executed in front of him and a few days later he himself died in the prison. This was the year when the peace treaty of Hudaibiya was concluded, which the Quran has termed as "the supreme victory", and in this very year Khusrau's son, Qubad II, gave up all the occupied Roman territories, restored the True Cross and made peace with Byzantium. In 628 A. D., the Emperor himself went to Jerusalem to install the "Holy Cross" in its place, and in the same year the Holy Prophet entered Makkah for the first time after the Hijrah to perform the *`Umra-tul-Qada'*.

After this no one could have any doubt about the truth of the prophecy of the Quran, with the result that most of the Arab polytheists accepted Islam. The heirs of Ubayy bin Khalaf lost their bet and had to give a hundred camels to Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq. He took them before the Holy Prophet, who ordered that they be given away in charity, because the bet had been made at a time when gambling had not yet been forbidden by the *Shari`ah*; now it was forbidden. Therefore, the bet was allowed to be accepted from the belligerent disbelievers, but instruction given that it should be given away in charity and should not be brought in personal use.

Theme and Subject matter

The discourse begins with the theme that the Romans have been overcome and the people the world over think that the empire is about to collapse, but the fact is that within a few years the tables will be turned and the

vanquished will again become victorious.

This introductory theme contains the great truth that man is accustomed to seeing only what is apparent and superficial. That which is behind the apparent and superficial he does not know. When in the petty matters of life, this habit to see only the apparent and superficial can lead man to misunderstandings and miscalculations, and when he is liable to make wrong estimates only due to lack of knowledge about "what will happen tomorrow", how stupendous will be his error if he risks his whole life-activity by placing reliance only upon what is visible and apparent with respect to his worldly life as a whole.

In this connection, the Signs of the universe which have been presented as evidence to prove the doctrine of the Hereafter arc precisely the same which support the doctrine of *Tauhid*. Therefore from verse 28 onward, the discourse turns to the affirmation of *Tauhid* and the refutation of *shirk*, and it is stressed that the natural way of life for man is none else but to serve One God exclusively. *Shirk* is opposed to the nature of the universe as to the nature of man. Therefore, whenever man has adopted this deviation, chaos has resulted. Again here, an allusion has been made to the great chaos that had gripped the world on account of the war between the two major powers of the time, and it has been indicated that this chaos too, is the result of *shirk*, and all the nations who were ever involved in mischief and chaos in the history of mankind were also *mushriks*.

In conclusion, a parable has been presented to make the people understand that just as dead earth comes to life, all of a sudden, by a shower of rain sent by God and swells with vegetation and plant life, so is the case with the dead humanity. When God sends a shower of His mercy in the form of Revelation and Prophethood, it also gives a new life to mankind and causes it to grow and develop and flourish. Therefore: "If you take full advantage of this opportunity, the barren land of Arabia will bloom by Allah's mercy and the whole advantage will be your. But if you do not take advantage of it, you will harm only your selves. Then no regret will avail and no opportunity will be provided to make amends."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾

غُلِبَتِ ٱلرُّومُ ﴿٢﴾

فِيٓ أَدۡنَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَهُم مِّنۢ بَعۡدِ غَلَبِهِمۡ سَيَغۡلِبُونَ ﴿٣﴾

فِي بِضۡعِ سِنِينَۗ لِلَّهِ ٱلۡأَمۡرُ مِن قَبۡلُ وَمِنۢ بَعۡدُۚ وَيَوۡمَئِذٖ يَفۡرَحُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾

بِنَصۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ يَنصُرُ مَن يَشَآءُۖ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

وَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِۖ لَا يُخۡلِفُ ٱللَّهُ وَعۡدَهُۥ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

[1-6] Alif. Lam. Mim. The Romans have been overcome in the neighboring land,[1] and within a few years after their defeat, they shall be victorious. Allah's is the authority before as well as afterwards.[2] And it will be the day when the believers will rejoice in the victory granted by Allah.[3] Allah helps whomsoever He wills: He is the All-Mighty, the All-Merciful. This is Allah's promise: Allah never breaks His promise; but most people do not know.

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَٰهِرًا مِّنَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ
غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِم ۗ مَّا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ
ٱلنَّاسِ بِلِقَآئِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ
كَانُوٓا۟ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَعَمَرُوهَآ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا
وَجَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ
يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓأَىٰٓ أَن كَذَّبُوا۟
بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَانُوا۟ بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

[7-10] The people only know the outward aspect of the worldly life, and of the Hereafter they are heedless.[4] Have they never reflected in their own selves?[5] Allah has created the earth and the heavens and all that lies between

them, with the truth, and only for an appointed term;[6] but most people disbelieve in the meeting with their Lord.[7] And have they never traveled in the earth that they could see the end of those who have gone before them?[8] They were mightier than these in strength: they tilled the land[9] and built more on it than these people have.[10] Their Messengers came to them with clear Signs.[11] then it was not Allah Who was unjust to them, but it was they who were being unjust to themselves.[12] At last, evil was the end of those who had committed' evil because they had denied the Revelations of Allah and scoffed at them.

ٱللَّهُ يَبۡدَؤُاْ ٱلۡخَلۡقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ ثُمَّ إِلَيۡهِ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾

وَيَوۡمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يُبۡلِسُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَلَمۡ يَكُن لَّهُم مِّن شُرَكَآئِهِمۡ شُفَعَٰٓؤُاْ وَكَانُواْ بِشُرَكَآئِهِمۡ كَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَيَوۡمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يَوۡمَئِذٖ يَتَفَرَّقُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَهُمۡ فِي رَوۡضَةٖ يُحۡبَرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَكَذَّبُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَلِقَآءِ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ فِي ٱلۡعَذَابِ مُحۡضَرُونَ ١٦

[11-16] Allah originates the creation; then He it is Who will repeat it,[13] and then to Him you will be returned. And when the Hour[14] is established, the criminals will be dumb-founded;[15] none of those whom they have set up as associates (with Allah) will intercede for them,[16] and they will even disown their associates.[17] The Day the Hour is established, (mankind) on that Day will be separated into groups.[18] Those who have believed and done good works, will be kept in a Garden,[19] happy and rejoicing;[20] and those who have disbelieved[21] and rejected Our Revelations and the meeting of the Hereafter, will be presented for punishment.

فَسُبۡحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ حِينَ تُمۡسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصۡبِحُونَ ١٧

وَلَهُ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَعَشِيّٗا وَحِينَ تُظۡهِرُونَ ١٨

يُخۡرِجُ ٱلۡحَيَّ مِنَ ٱلۡمَيِّتِ وَيُخۡرِجُ ٱلۡمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلۡحَيِّ وَيُحۡيِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَاۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ تُخۡرَجُونَ ١٩

[17-19] So,[22] glorify Allah[23] in the evening and in the morning: praise is due to Him alone in the heavens and the earth; and (glorify Him) in the afternoon and at the declining of the day.[24] He brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living, and gives life to the earth after its death.[25] Likewise, you too, shall be taken out (of the state of death).

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَنتُم بَشَرٌ تَنتَشِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[20] Of His[26] Signs is this that He has created you from dust; then behold, you are men who are multiplying (in the earth).[27]

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ
بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

[21] And of His Signs is this that He has created for you wives from your own species[28] that you may find peace with them,[29] and created love and mercy between you.[30] Surely in this there are many Signs for those who reflect.

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَـٰفُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَٰنِكُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّلْعَـٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[22] And of His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth[31] and the difference of your tongues and colors.[32] Surely in this there are many Signs for the learned.

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ مَنَامُكُم بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَٱبْتِغَآؤُكُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ
فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[23] And of His Signs is your sleep by night and by day and your seeking of His bounty.[33] Surely in this there are many Signs for those who pay heed.

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ يُرِيكُمُ ٱلْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَيُحْىِۦ
بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[24] And of His Signs is this that He shows you the lightning, for fear as well as for hope,[34] and He sends down rainwater from the sky and thereby gives life to the earth after its death.[35] Surely in this there are many Signs for those who use their common sense.

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَن تَقُومَ ٱلسَّمَآءُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِۦ ۚ ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِّنَ
ٱلْأَرْضِ إِذَآ أَنتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَلَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ كُلٌّ لَّهُۥ قَـٰنِتُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَبْدَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُۥ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَلَهُ ٱلْمَثَلُ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ
فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٧﴾

[25-27] And of his Signs is this that the Heaven and the Earth stand firm by His Command,[36] then as soon as He summons you out of the earth, you shall come out at one call.[37] Whoever exist in the heavens and the earth, are His servants; all are obedient to Him. He it is Who originates the creation; then He alone will repeat it, and this is easier for Him.[38] His are the most exalted attributes in the heavens and the earth, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

ضَرَبَ لَكُم مَّثَلًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ هَل لَّكُم مِّن مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُم
مِّن شُرَكَآءَ فِى مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ فَأَنتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ
كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ
٢٨

بَلِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَهْوَآءَهُم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ فَمَن
يَهْدِى مَنْ أَضَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ٢٩

[28-29] He draws[39] out a comparison for you from your own selves: Are there among the slaves that you possess any such slaves also who may be sharing with you equally the wealth that We have given you, and you fear them as you fear one another among yourselves?[40] Thus do We present the Revelations clearly for those who use their common sense. But the wrongdoers are following their own desires, without any knowledge. Now, who can guide the one whom Allah has led astray?[41] Such people can have no helper.

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ
لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٣٠

۞ مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَٱتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ٣١

مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍۭ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[30-32] So,[42] (O Prophet and the followers of the Prophet,) set your face sincerely and truly[43] towards this Faith[44] and be steadfast on the Nature whereupon Allah has created mankind.[45] There can be no alteration in the Nature made by Allah.[46] This is the right and true Faith,[47] but most people do not know. (Be steadfast on this) turning wholly towards Allah,[48] and fear Him,[49] and establish the Salat,[50] and do not be of the mushriks who have set up their separate creeds and divided themselves into sects, each sect rejoicing in what it has.[51]

وَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلنَّاسَ ضُرٌّ دَعَوْا۟ رَبَّهُم مُّنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَذَاقَهُم مِّنْهُ رَحْمَةً إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

لِيَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ ۚ فَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

أَمْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[33-35] When an affliction befalls the people, they invoke their Lord, turning penitently towards Him[52] then when He makes them taste of His Mercy, some of them start committing shirk[53] so that they may show ingratitude for Our favors. Well, enjoy yourselves, for soon you shall know. Have We sent down to them an authority, which may testify to the truth of the shirk they are committing?[54]

وَإِذَآ أَذَقْنَا ٱلنَّاسَ رَحْمَةً فَرِحُوا۟ بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ
سَيِّئَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَقْنَطُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَـَٔايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

فَـَٔاتِ ذَا ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ
يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَا۟ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِ ٱلنَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوا۟ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ
وَمَآ ءَاتَيْتُم مِّن زَكَوٰةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ ٱللَّهِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُضْعِفُونَ
﴿٣٩﴾

[36-39] When We make the people taste mercy, they exult at it; and when an affliction befalls them on account of their own misdeeds, they grow despondent.[55] Do they not see that it is Allah Who gives abundantly to whom He wills and sparingly (to whom He wills)? Surely in this there are many Signs for those who believe.[56] Therefore, (O believers,) give to your relative his due, and to the needy and the wayfarer (his due).[57] This is the best way for those who seek Allah's goodwill: such alone will attain true success.[58] The interest that you give in order to increase the wealth of the people, does not increase in the sight of Allah;[59] and the Zakat that you pay in order to win Allah's approval, its payers do indeed increase their wealth.[60]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ هَلْ مِن
شُرَكَآئِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا
يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

ظَهَرَ ٱلْفَسَادُ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِى ٱلنَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعْضَ
ٱلَّذِى عَمِلُوا۟ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

قُلْ سِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ
كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّشْرِكِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ ٱلْقَيِّمِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ مِنَ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصَّدَّعُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[40-43] Allah[61] it is Who created you, then provided for you,[62] then He causes your death, and then He will bring you back to life. Is there among the associates you have set up (with Allah) anyone who can do any of these things?[63] Glorified is He and far exalted above the shirk these people commit. Mischief has appeared in the land and the sea on account of men's own doings that He may make them taste same of their (evil) works: maybe they mend their ways.[64] (O Prophet,) say to them, "Go about in the land and see what has been the end- of those who lived before (you). Most of them were mushriks (idolaters).[65] So, (O Prophet,) set your face firmly towards the true Faith before that Day arrives of which there is no chance of being averted by Allah.[66] On that Day people will break asunder.

مَن كَفَرَ فَعَلَيۡهِ كُفۡرُهُۥۖ وَمَنۡ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا فَلِأَنفُسِهِمۡ يَمۡهَدُونَ ٤٤

لِيَجۡزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ٤٥

[44-45] The one who has disbelieved, will bear the burden of his disbelief,[67] and those who have acted righteously, are indeed preparing the way for their own true success, so that Allah may reward with His bounty those who believed and did good works. Surely He does not like the disbelievers.

وَمِنۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَن يُرۡسِلَ ٱلرِّيَاحَ مُبَشِّرَٰتٖ وَلِيُذِيقَكُم مِّن رَّحۡمَتِهِۦ وَلِتَجۡرِيَ ٱلۡفُلۡكُ بِأَمۡرِهِۦ وَلِتَبۡتَغُواْ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ٤٦

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ رُسُلًا إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِمۡ فَجَآءُوهُم بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ فَٱنتَقَمۡنَا مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَجۡرَمُواْۖ وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيۡنَا نَصۡرُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٤٧

[46-47] Of His Signs is this that He sends the winds to give good news[68] and to bless you with His Mercy and to make the ships sail by His Command,[69] so that you may seek His bounty[70] and be grateful to Him. And We sent before you Messengers to their peoples who came to them with clear Signs.[71] Then We took vengeance on the guilty ones[72] and it was their right on Us that We should help the believers.

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِي يُرْسِلُ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهُۥ فِي
ٱلسَّمَآءِ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ وَيَجْعَلُهُۥ كِسَفًا فَتَرَى ٱلْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ
مِنْ خِلَٰلِهِۦ ۖ فَإِذَآ أَصَابَ بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦٓ إِذَا هُمْ
يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمُبْلِسِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

فَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِ رَحْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْىِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ
لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَلَئِنْ أَرْسَلْنَا رِيحًا فَرَأَوْهُ مُصْفَرًّا لَّظَلُّوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

فَإِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تُسْمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ ٱلدُّعَآءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا
مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَمَآ أَنتَ بِهَٰدِ ٱلْعُمْىِ عَن ضَلَٰلَتِهِمْ ۖ إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَن
يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا فَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

[48-53] It is Allah Who sends the winds, which raise the cloud; then He spreads the clouds in the sky as He pleases, and breaks them up; and then you see drops of rainwater falling from the cloud. When He showers this rain upon those of His servants He pleases, they are filled with joy, though before its coming they had lost all hope. Just see the Signs of Allah's Mercy, how He brings back to life the dead earth.[73] Likewise, He will bring back the dead to life: He has power over everything. And if We send a wind due to which they see their crops turn yellow,[74] they do become even more firm in their disbelief.[75] (O Prophet,) you cannot make the dead hear you,[76] nor can you make the deaf to hear your call, when they show their backs and turn away[77] nor can you take the blind out of their deviation and guide them aright.[78] You can only make those people to hear you, who believe in Our Revelations and bow down in submission.

۞ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنۢ
بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْقَدِيرُ ﴿٥٤﴾

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا۟ غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
كَانُوا۟ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَٱلْإِيمَٰنَ لَقَدْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِى كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ
إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْبَعْثِ ۖ فَهَٰذَا يَوْمُ ٱلْبَعْثِ وَلَٰكِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ
٥٦

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يَنفَعُ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مَعْذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ٥٧

[54-57] Allah it is Who originated your creation from a state of weakness; then He gave you strength after that weakness; then made you weak and old after that strength. He creates whatever He wills.[79] He knows everything and has power over everything. And when the Hour is established,[80] the criminals will swear that they had not stayed for more than an hour;[81] thus they used to be deceived in their worldly life.[82] But those who had been given knowledge and faith, will say, "You have stayed, according to the book of Allah, till the Day of Resurrection: so this is the same Day of Resurrection, but you did not know." So, on that Day, the excuse of the wicked will not avail them anything, nor will they be asked to seek forgiveness.[83]

وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِى هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَلَئِن جِئْتَهُم بِـَٔايَةٍ
لَّيَقُولَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا مُبْطِلُونَ ٥٨

كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٥٩

فَٱصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ وَلَا يَسْتَخِفَّنَّكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُوقِنُونَ ٦٠

[58-60] We have set forth in this Qur'an every sort of argument to make the people understand, but whatever Sign you may bring, the disbelievers will certainly say, "You are following falsehood." Thus Allah seals the hearts of those who lack knowledge. So, (O Prophet,) have patience: surely Allah's promise is true;[84] and let not those who lack (certainty of) faith find you light.[85]

1From what Ibn `Abbas and the other Companions and their followers have said, it appears that the Muslims' sympathies in this war between Byzantium and Iran were with Byzantium and of the disbelievers of Makkah with Iran. This had several reasons. First, the Iranians had given it the colour of a crusade between Magianism and Christianity, and, apart from the object of political conquest, they were making it a means of spreading Magianism. In the letter that Khusrau Parvez wrote to the Emperor Heraclius after the conquest of Jerusalem, he had clearly mentioned his victory as a proof of the truth of Magianism. In principle, the Magian creed resembled the polytheistic creed of the people of Makkah, because the Magis too, were disbelievers of Tauhid they believed in two gods and worshiped the fire. That is why the mushriks of Makkah were in sympathy with them. Contrary to them, the Christians, however corrupted their monotheism might be, still regarded belief in One God as the basis of religion, believed in the Hereafter and admitted Revelation and Prophethood as the source of guidance. Thus, their religion in principle resembled Islam, and therefore, the Muslims were naturally in sympathy with them, and could not like that a polytheistic people should dominate them. Secondly, the people who believe in a previous Prophet before the advent of a new Prophet are naturally regarded and counted as Muslims until the message of the new Prophet reaches them and they clearly discard it. (Please see E.N. 73 of Surah Al-Qasas also). At that time only five to six years had passed since the Holy Prophet's advent as a Prophet and his message had not yet reached outside Arabia. Therefore, the Muslims did not look upon the Christians as disbelievers, but they certainly regarded the Jews as disbelievers because they had rejected the Prophet Jesus (may peace be upon him) to be a Prophet. Thirdly, the Christians from the very beginning had been treating the Muslims with sympathy as already mentioned above in Al-Qasas: 52-55, and in Al-Ma'idah: 82-85, and many of them were even accepting the message of the Truth with an open heart. Then, the way the Christian king of Habash had given refuge to the Muslims on their migration there and turned down the demand of the disbelievers of Makkah to return them, also required that the Muslims should wish the Christians well as against the Magians.

2That is, "When the Iranians became victorious first, it did not mean that the Lord of the worlds, God forbid, had been humbled and when the Romans will gain victory afterwards, it will not mean that Allah's lost kingdom will be restored to Him. Sovereignty in any case belongs to Allah. Allah gave victory to the side that became victorious first, and Allah will give victory to the side that will gain victory after wards. For no one in his Kingdom can achieve domination solely by his own power. He whom He raises, rises and he whom He causes to fall, falls."

3Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Said Khudri, Sufyan Thauri;, Suddi and others have stated that the Romans' victory against the Iranians and the Muslims' victory at Badr against the polytheists took place almost at the same time. The Muslims, therefore, were doubly pleased. The same is supported by the histories of

Byzantium and Iran. 624 A.D. is the year in which the Battle of Badr was fought and the same is the year in which the Byzantine Emperor destroyed the birth-place of Zoroaster and ravaged the principal fire-temple of Iran.

4That is, "Although there are plenty of Signs and evidences which point to the Hereafter, and there is no reason why one should be heedless of it, yet the people are being heedless of it due to their own short-sightedness. They only see the apparent and the outward aspect of the worldly life and are unaware of what is hidden behind it; otherwise there has been no slackness on the part of God to warn them of it. "

5This in itself is a strong argument for the Hereafter. It means this: "If these people had reflected over their own selves, apart from the external phenomena, they would have found in themselves the arguments which prove the necessity of a second life after the present life. There are three special characteristics of man which distinguish him from the other creations on the earth:

(l) The earth and the countless things around it have been subjected for him, and he has been granted vast powers to exploit them.

(2) He has been life free to choose a way of life for himself. He can follow the way of belief or disbelief, obedience or sin, virtue or vice, as he likes. Any way of life, right or wrong, that he chooses, he is helped to follow it and allowed to use and exploit all the means and resources provided by God, whether the way chosen is of God's obedience or of His disobedience.

(3) An innate moral sense has been placed in him, by which he discriminates between the voluntary and the involuntary actions; he judges the voluntary acts as good and bad, and decides spontaneously that a good act ought to he rewarded and an evil act ought to be punished.

These three characteristics which are found in man's own self serve as a pointer to the fact that there must be a time when man should he called to account for his deeds, when he should be asked how he used the powers delegated to him over what he had been given in the world, when it should be seen whether he had adopted the right way or the wrong way by use of the freedom of choice given to him, when his voluntary acts should be judged, and good acts be rewarded and evil acts punished. This time inevitably can come only after man's life-activity has ceased and the account-book of his actions closed, and not before it. And this time should necessarily come only when the account-book of not one man or of one nation but of all mankind has closed. For on the passing away of one man or of one nation the influence that he or it has generated by his or its acts does not cease to operate. The good or bad influence left by him should also be credited to his account. How can accountability be carried out and full rewards and punishments given with justice unless the influences are allowed to run their full course" Thus, man's own self testifies that the position he occupies in the world by itself demands that after his present life there should be another life when a Court should be established, his life-record examined justly and every person rewarded or punished according to his deeds.

6In this sentence, two more arguments have been given for the Hereafter. It says that if man makes a deep observation of the system of the universe, he will see two things very outstanding about it: First, that the universe has been created with the truth. It is not a plaything of a child, which he might have made to amuse himself, and whose making and un-making might be meaningless. But it is a serious system whose every particle testifies that it has been created with great wisdom, its each component has a law underlying it, and everything in it has a purpose behind it. Man's whole social and economic life and all his sciences and arts are a witness that whatever man has done in the world became possible only because he was able to discover the laws working behind everything and the purpose for which it was made. Had he been placed as a puppet in a lawless and purposeless toy-house, no science and no civilization and social life could be conceived. Now, how does it stand to reason that the Wise Being Who has created this world with such wisdom and design and Who has placed in it a creation like man, who is endowed with great mental and physical capabilities, powers and authority, freedom of action and choice, moral sense and entrusted with unlimited means and resources of the world, would have created him without a purpose and design ? That man would live a full life involving both goodness and evil, justice and injustice, virtue and vice, and end up in the dust, and his good and evil acts will not bear any fruit ? That each act of man will influence his own life as well as the lives of thousands of other men like himself and countless other things in the world, for good or for evil, and the whole record of his life-activity will be just set aside after his death, without accountability?

The other thing that becomes apparent after a deep observation of the system of the universe is that nothing here is immortal. Everything has an age . appointed for it after attaining which it dies and expires, and the same is the case with the universe as a whole. AII the forces that are working here are limited. They can work only till an appointed term and they have inevitably to run out in time, and this system has to end. In the ancient days the philosophers and scientists who said that the world was eternal and everlasting could have their way, due mainly to lack of knowledge. But modern science almost definitely has cast its vote in favor of the God-worshipers in the debate that had been going on since centuries between them and the atheists regarding the eternal and the temporal nature of the world. Now the atheists are left with no leg to stand on. They cannot claim on the basis of reason and knowledge that the world has existed since eternity and will exist for ever and there is going to be no resurrection. The ancient materialistic creed rested on the belief that matter was indestructible, only its form could be changed, but after every change matter remained matter and no increase or decrease occurred in its quantity. Therefore, it was inferred that this material world had neither a beginning nor an end. But now the discovery of the atomic energy has demolished the entire materialistic edifice. Now it has come to light that energy changes into matter, and matter changes back into energy with the result that nothing persists, neither form nor appearance. The Second Law of Thermodynamics has proved that this material world has neither existed since eternity nor will last till eternity. It certainly began in time and has to end in time. Therefore, it is no longer possible to deny the Hereafter even according to science. And obviously, when science has surrendered, how will philosophy stand to deny the Hereafter?

7"Disbelieve...meeting": disbelieve that they have to appear before their Lord after death.

8This is an historical argument for the Hereafter. It means this: "The Hereafter has not been denied only by a couple of the people in the world, but a large number of them have been involved in this disbelief in human history. Even there have been entire nations which either denied it altogether or lived heedless of it, or invented such false beliefs about life-after-death as rendered the concept of the Hereafter meaningless. Then the continuous experience of history reveals that in whatever form the Hereafter has been denied, its inevitable result has been that the people became corrupted morally, they lived irresponsible lives they transgressed all limits of tyranny and wickedness, which became the cause of the destruction of one nation after the other. Does not this experience of thousands of years of history, which has been faced by human generations successively, prove that the Hereafter is a reality whose denial is fatal to man? Man has come to believe in gravitation only because he has always experienced and seen material things falling to the ground. He has recognized poison to be poison only because whoever took poison died. Similarly, when the denial of the Hereafter has always led to the corruption of morals for man, is not this experience enough to teach the lesson that the Hereafter is a reality, and to live one's life heedless of it is dangerous?

9The words athar-ul- and in the original may either mean to plough the land for cultivation, or to dig the earth for taking out canals, underground water channels, minerals, etc.

10This contains an answer to the argument of those who regard mere material progress as the sign of a nation's being righteous. They argue like this: "Haw is it possible that Allah will make fuel of Hell those people who have exploited the resources of the earth on such a large scale, who have constructed wonderful works on the earth and given birth to grand civilizations ?" The Qur'an refutes this argument, thus: "Such works of construction have been built before also by many nations on a large scale. Then, have you not seen that those nations have perished along with their civilization and their grand and magnificent "works" ? There is no reason why the Law of God that has so treated in the world the mere material progress of a people lacking the right belief and conduct, will not treat them likewise in the Next World and make them fuel of Hell."

11That is, "They came with such Signs as were sufficient for anyone to be convinced of their being the true Prophets." The mention of the coming of the Prophets in this context implies this: "On the one hand, there are evidences in man's own self, and in the universe around him, and in the continuous experience of human history, and, on the other, there also came such Prophets, one after the other, who showed clear Signs of their being true Prophets and warned (the people) that the Hereafter is sure to come."

12That is, "The destruction that overtook those nations afterwards was not due to Allah's being unjust to them but due to the injustice they had done to themselves. The person (or persons) who neither thinks rightly himself nor adopts the right attitude by listening to others, will be himself responsible for his evil

end if he meets destruction. God cannot be blamed for this, for God has not only made arrangements for conveying to man the knowledge of the reality through His Books and His Prophets, but also blessed man with the intellectual resources and powers by exploiting which he can always judge the authenticity of the knowledge brought by the Prophets and the Divine Books. Had God deprived man of this guidance and these resources and he had to meet with the consequences of following a wrong way then doubtlessly could God have been blamed for injustice."

13Though this thing has been put forward as a claim, it contains the basis of the claim too. Commonsense testifies that the One Who can originate creation, can reproduce the same creation far more easily. The origination of the creation is an actuality, which exists before everybody, and the disbelievers and the mushriks also admit that this is the work of Allah alone: Now it will be clearly absurd on their part to think that God Who has originated this creation, cannot reproduce it."

14"The Hour": the Hour of returning to Allah and appearing before Him.

15The word iblas in the Text means to be dumbfounded on account of a sudden shock and despair, to be confounded on finding one-self in a hopeless situation, to stand aghast on finding no means of help and support. When this word is used for a culprit, it depicts a person who is caught red-handed, who then find no way to escape, nor expects to save himself by offering a plea in self-defense; therefore, he stands dumb and dejected and depressed.

One should also understand that "the criminals" here does not only imply those people, who have committed murders and thefts and robberies, etc. in the world, but all those who have rebelled against God, refused to accept the guidance and teachings of His Messengers, denied the accountability of the Hereafter, or lived heedless of it, and have been worshiping others than God in the world, or their own selves, whether or not, besides this basic deviation, they also committed those acts, which are commonly called crimes. Besides, it includes those people also, who in spite of believing in God and His Messengers and the Hereafter, have knowingly disobeyed their Lord and persisted in their rebellious conduct till the end. When these people will suddenly come back to life in the Hereafter, against their expectations, and will find that they are confronted with the second life, which they had denied, or ignored, in their life-activity in the world, they will stand dumbfounded as has been depicted in the words: yublisul-mujrimun.

16"Associates" (shuraka') includes three kinds of beings:

(1) The angels, prophets, saints, martyrs and the righteous men, to whom the polytheists assigned divine attributes and powers in different ages and whom they worshiped as gods. On Resurrection Day, they will say to their worshipers, "You did whatever you did without our consent, rather against our teachings and guidance. Therefore, we have nothing to do with you. Do not place any hope in us that we will intercede

for you before Allah Almighty."

(2) Inanimate things like the moon, the sun, the planets, trees, stones, animals, etc. The polytheists worshiped them as gods, prayed to them, but the poor things themselves were unaware that the vicegerent of Allah was worshiping them so humbly and devotedly. Evidently, none of these also will come forward to intercede for him.

(3) The arch-criminals, who by deception and fraud, or by use of force, compelled the servants of God to worship thetas, e.g. Satan, false religious guides, and tyrants and despots. They themselves will be in trouble there. Not, to speak; of interceding for others, they will rather try to prove before God that their worshipers and followers were themselves responsible for their crimes, and therefore, they should not be made to bear the burden of their deviation. Thus, the polytheists there will not get any intercession from anywhere.

17That is, "The polytheists will themselves admit that they had wrongly held them associates of God. They will realize that none of them really had any ,hare in Godhead. Therefore, in the Hereafter they will disown the shirk on which they insist in the world.

18That is, "All communities and groups that have been formed in the world on the basis of race, country, language, tribe and clan, and economic and political interests, will break, and the people will be re-grouped on the basis of true belief, morality and character. On the one hand, all the believing and righteous people will be separated froth all the nations of mankind and put in one group, and on the other, people professing every false ideology and committing every kind of crime in the world will be sorted out severally from the multitudes of mankind and put into separate groups. In other words, the thing which Islam regards as the real basis of separation and union in the world and which the worshipers of ignorance refuse to accept, will become the basis of separation and union in the Hereafter. Islam says that the real thing which joins men together or divides them is the belief and morality. Those who believe and build the system of life on Divine guidance are one community, whether they belong to any race, any country and any region. The two cannot belong to one nation. They can neither walk together on a common path of life in the world, nor can meet with the same end in the Hereafter. Froth the world to the Hereafter they tread separate paths and have separate destinations. Contrary to this, the worshipers of falsehood have been insisting in every age, and still insist, that mankind should be classified and grouped on the bases of race and country and language. The people who have a common race and country and language should constitute a separate nation, regardless of their religion and belief, and should offer a common front against the other similar nations. And this nation should have such a system of life which should bind the followers of Tauhid and the polytheists and the atheists together: The same was the concept of Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab and the chiefs of the Quraish. That is why they accused the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace he upon him) again and again of having stirred up divisions in their nation. That is why the Qur'an is warning that the groups made in the world on wrong bases will ultimately break and mankind will be permanently divided on the basis of the belief and the philosophy of

life and morality and character on which Islam wants to build it in the world. The people who do not have a common destination cannot follow a common way of life.

19"A Garden": A garden of bliss and perfect happiness as a reward and source of everlasting joy.

20The word yuhbarun in the original implies this: "They will be lodged in it with honor, will remain happy and be provided with every kind of pleasure."

21One thing here is noteworthy. "Good works" have been mentioned as a necessary adjunct of the "faith", which will earn one the blissful Garden, but no mention has been made of the "evil acts" while mentioning the evil end of "disbelief . This clearly indicates that disbelief by itself is enough to mar the destiny of a person, whether it is accompanied by the evil act or not.

22"So", here, implies: "When you have come to know the good results of belief and righteous acts and the evil consequences of disbelief and denial of the Truth, you should adopt the following conduct." It also means: "By holding the life Hereafter to be impossible, the polytheists and disbelievers are, in fact, holding Allah to be helpless. Therefore, as against them, you should glorify Allah, and proclaim that He is free from this weakness." This Command has been addressed to the Holy Prophet and through him to all the believers.

23"To glorify Allah" means to proclaim Allah's being free from and exalted above the defects and faults and weaknesses, which the mushriks ascribe to Him due to their shirk and denial of the Hereafter. The best form of this proclamation and expression is the Prayer. That is why Ibn 'Abbas; Mujahid, Qatadah, Ibn Zaid and other commentators say that here "to glorify" means to offer the prescribed Prayer. A clear indication in favor of this commentary is contained in the verse itself. It lays down certain definite times for the glorification of Allah. Evidently, if it was meant to instill the belief that Allah is free from all defects and weaknesses, there should be no question of the restriction of the times of the morning and evening, and the early and late afternoon, for a Muslim should always have this belief. Similarly, if it was meant to teach. glorifying Allah merely verbally, it' should be meaningless to specify the tunes, for a Muslim should express Allah's glory at all times. Therefore, inevitably the Command to glorify Allah with the restriction of the times points to its particular practical form which is none other than the Prayer.

24This verse clearly points to the times of the Fajr (morning), Maghrib (evening). 'Asr (late afternoon) and the Zuhr (early afternoon) Prayers. Besides this, the other allusions made to the times of the Prayer in the Qur'an are as follows:

"Establish the Salat from the declining of the sun to the darkness of the night, and be particular about the recital of the Qur'an at dawn." (Bani Isra'il 78)

"Establish the ,Salat at the two ends of the day and in the early part of the night." (Hud: 114).

"And glorify your Lord with His praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting, and glorify Him again during the hours of the night and at the extremes of the day. " (Ta Ha: 130)

The first of these verses tells that the times of the Prayer are from the declining of the sun to the darkness of the night (`Isha`) after which is the time of the morning Prayer (Fajr). In the second verse, the `"two ends of the day" imply the times of the morning (Fajr) and the evening (Maghrib) Prayers, and "in the early part of the night" implies the time of 'Isha`. In the third verse, "before the rising of the sun" implies the Fajr time and "before its setting" the Asr tune, and "during the hours of the night" implies the times of both the Maghrib and the 'Isha' Prayers; and the "extremes of the day" are three: the morning, the declining of the sun and the evening. Thus, the Qur'an at different places has pointed to the five Prayer times at which the Muslims the world over offer their Prayers. But, obviously, no one by merely reading these verses could have determined the Prayer times unless the divinely appointed teacher of the Qur'an, the Holy Prophet himself, had given guidance to these by his word and deed.

Let us pause a while here and consider the boldness of the deniers of Hadith. They make fun of "offering the Prayer", and say that the Prayer that the Muslims offer today is not at all the thing prescribed by the Qur'an. They assert that the Qur'anic injunction to establish the Salat does not mean the offering of the Prayer but establishing the Nizam-i-Rububiyat(Order of Providence). Ask them: "What is that order of Providence which can either be established before the rising of the sun or after the declining of the sun till the early hours of the night? And what is that order of Providence which is required to be established especially on Fridays? ("O believers when you hear the call to the Friday Prayer, hasten to the remembrance of Allah".--(LXII: 9). And what is that special kind of the order of Providence for establishing which one has first to wash one's face and the hands up to the elbows and the feet up to the ankles and wipe one's head with wet hands, otherwise one will not establish it ? ("O believers, when you stand up to offer the Salat, you must wash your faces and your hands and arms up to the elbows, and wipe your heads with wet hands."--(V: 6). And what is this peculiarity of this order of Providence that one cannot establish it unless one has completely washed oneself after sexual intercourse? ("O believers, do not offer the Prayer . . . if you are unclean until you take your bath, except when passing on the way."--(IV: 433) And what is this odd thing that if one has touched the women, one will have to strike one's hands on pure dust and wipe thereby one's face and hands in case one does not find water, for the purpose of establishing this strange order of Providence ? ("... or if you have touched women and you can find no water, then cleanse yourselves with pure dust: strike your palms on it and wipe your Bands and faces with it."--(1V: 43). And what is this amazing order of Providence that while on a journey one should establish only half of it? ("When you go on a journey, there is no harm if you shorten the Salat. "--(IV : 101) Then, what an odd thing that during a war half of the soldiers should fall out,.carrying their weapons, in order to' establish the order of Providence behind the Imam, and the other half should stick to their positions and continue fighting the enemy; when the first group has performed one sajdah behind the Imam in its effort to establish the "order of Providence" it should go to relieve the other group, which

should fall out and start establishing the "order of Providence" behind the Imam? ("And when you, O Prophet, are among the Muslims and are going to lead them in salat (in a state of war), let a party of them stand behind you, carrying their weapons with thetas. When they have made their prostrations, they should fall back, and let another party of them, who have not yet offered their Salat say it with you. "--(IV 102)

All these verses of the Qur'an clearly indicate that to establish the Salat implies the Prayer that the Muslims offer everywhere in the world today. But the deniers of Hadith seem to be bent upon changing the Qur'an instead of changing themselves. The fact is that unless a person becomes wholly fearless of Allah, he cannot dare play with His Word as these people do. Or, only such a person can engage in a pastime like this with respect to the Qur'an who believes it is not Allah's Word, but intends to mislead the Muslims in the name of the Qur'an. (See also E.N. 50 below in this connection).

25That is . "How can that God Who is doing all this perpetually in front of your eyes, be helpless in raising man to life after death? He is causing absolutely dead matter to be discharged from living men and animals. He is ever bringing into existence countless animals and human beings by breathing life into dead matter, whereas the substances themselves which make up the bodies of the living beings are absolutely without life He is making you witness the ' phenomenon that wherever water becomes available, lands previously lying barren start blooming and blossoming with animal and vegetable life. In spite of witnessing all this if a person thinks that the God Who is sustaining the universe will be helpless to raise man back to life after death, he is wholly devoid of the common sense. His mind's eyes do not see the clear realities gleaming from the manifestations which his head's eyes see."

26It should be noted that from here to the end of verse 27, the Signs of Allah that are being mentioned point, on the one hand, to the possibility and occurrence of the life hereafter, in the context of the foregoing discourse, and on the other, the same Sings also point to the reality that this universe is neither Godless nor under many gods, but One God alone is its Creator, Disposer, Master and Ruler, except for Whom there should be no other deity of man. Thus, this section (vv.20-27) is fully well connected, with the discourse preceding it and the discourse following it

27That is, "The stuff from which man has been created is nothing but a few dead substances which are found in the earth, like carbon, calcium, sodium and a few other elements like them. With their combination a wonderful being, called man, has been raised up, and in him have been placed great powers of sentiments, consciousness, imagination, none of which can be traced back to any of the constituent substances of his physical being. Then, not only has just one man so risen up by a there accident, but in him has also been placed that wonderful procreative power by which millions and billions of human beings are coming continuously into being bearing the same physical structure and capabilities and possessing countless hereditary and personal characteristics. Therefore, O man! Does your intellect approve that this extremely wise creation has come into being of itself without the creative power of a Wise Creator? Can you say, being in your senses, that making a wonderful design of the creation of man

and bringing it into effect and rendering the countless powers of the earth and heavens favorable and subservient to human life could be the result of the thinking and design of many gods? And will you be in your right senses when you think that the God Who has brought man into being from absolute nothingness, will not be able to raise the same man back to life after giving him death?"

28That is, "The Creator's perfect wisdom is such that He has not created man in one sex only but in two sexes, which are identical in humanity, which have the same basic formula of their figure and form, but the two have been created with different physical structures, different mental and psychological qualities, and different emotions and desires. And then there has been created such a wonderful harmony between the two that each is a perfect counterpart of the other. The physical and psychological demands of the one match squarely with the physical and psychological demands of the other. Moreover, the Wise Creator is continuously creating the members of the two sexes in such a proportion since the dawn of the creation that in no nation and in no region has it ever happened that only boys or only girls may have been born. This is one thing in which human intelligence has absolutely no part to play. Man cannot at all influence the course of nature according to which girls continue to be born with the feminine qualities and the boys with the masculine qualities, which are perfectly complimentary to each other, nor has he any means by which he may change the proportion in which men and women continue to be born everywhere in the world. The working of this system and' arrangement so harmoniously and perpetually in the birth of millions and billions of human beings since thousands of years cannot be accidental either, nor the result of the. common will of many gods. This is a clear indication of the reality that One Wise Creator and One only, in the beginning made a most appropriate design of a man and a woman by His Infinite Wisdom and Power and then made arrangements that precisely in accordance with that design countless men and countless women should be born along with their separate individual qualities in the right proportion."

29That is, "This system has not come about by chance, but the Creator has brought it about deliberately with the object that the man should find fulfillment of the demands of his nature with the woman and the woman. with the man, and the two should find peace and satisfaction in association and attachment with each other. This is the wise arrangement which the Creator has made the means of the survival of the human race, on the one hand, and of bringing the human civilization into existence, on the other. If the two sexes had been created on different patterns and designs, and the state of agitation which changes into peace and tranquility only through union and attachment between the two had not been placed in each, the human race might have survived like sheep and goats, but there was no possibility of the birth of a civilization. Contrary to all other species of animal life; the fundamental factor that has helped create human civilization is that the Creator by His wisdom has placed a desire and a thirst and a lodging in the two sexes for each other, which remains unsatisfied unless the two live in complete attachment and association with each other. This same desire for peace and satisfaction compelled them to make a home together. This same desire brought families and clans into being, and this same desire made social life possible for man. In the development of social life man's mental capabilities have certainly been helpful, but they were not its real motives. The real motivating force was the same longing with which man and woman were endowed and which compelled them to establish the '"home". Can anyone

possessed of common sense say that this masterpiece of wisdom has come about by chance through the blind forces of nature? Or, that it has been arranged so by many gods, and countless men and women have been continuously coming into being with the same natural longing since thousands of years? This is a Sign of the wisdom of One Wise Being, and of One only, which the people devoid of common sense only can refuse to acknowledge.

30"Love" here means sexual love, which becomes the initial motive for attraction between man and woman, and then keeps them attached to each other. "Mercy" implies the spiritual relationship which gradually develops in the matrimonial life, by virtue of which they become kindly, affectionate and sympathetic towards each other; so much so that in old age, sexual love falls into the background and the two partners in life prove to be even more compassionate towards each other than they were when young. These two are the positive forces which the Creator has created in man to support the initial longing of his nature. That longing and restlessness only seeks peace and satisfaction and brings the man and the woman into contact with each other. After that these two forces emerge and bind the two strangers brought up in different environments so intimately together that the two remain attached to each other through every thick and thin of life. Evidently, this love and mercy which is being experienced by millions and millions of people in their lives, is not anything material, which may be weighed and measured, nor can it be traced back to any of the constituent element of human body, nor the cause of it birth and growth found out in a laboratory. The only explanation of this can be that the human self has ban endowed with it by a Wise Creator, Who has done so of His own will to serve a special purpose.

31That is, "Their coming into existence from nothingness and their being established an eternal law, and the functioning in them of innumerable forces in great harmony and equilibrium, contain many Signs of the reality that One Creator, and One only, has brought the entire universe into existence, and He alone is running this grand system. On the one hand, by reflecting over the origin of the initial energy that assumed the form of matter, then the transformation of the matter into so many elements, then the combination of the elements in a wonderful and wise proportion and coming into being of an awe-inspiring system of the universe, and then the functioning of this system since billions of centuries With such regularity and discipline, every unbiased mind will come to the conclusion that all this could not happen by mere chance, without the. all-embracing will of an All-Knowing, All-Wise Creator. Then, on the other hand, if one sees that every thing from the earth to the farthest stars in the universe is made up of the same basic elements and the same law of nature is working in it, every intellect, which is not stubborn, will certainly admit that this cannot be the result of the godhead of many gods but there is One God Who is the Creator and Sustainer of this whole universe."

32That is, "Although your vocal chords are similar, and there is no difference in the structure of the mouth, the tongue and the brains, yet people speak different languages in different regions of the world. Even in the regions where the same language is spoken different dialects are spoken from city to city and from town to town. Moreover, the accent and pronunciation and the style of speech of every person is different from the other. Similarly, although the semen and the formula of your physical structure is the

same, yet your colors are so different that, nations apart, even the color of the two sons of the same parents is not exactly the same. In this verse, attention has been drawn only to two aspects, but if one looks around one will notice an unite variety everywhere in the world. One will find countless differences in the species of man, animal, plants and other things in spite of the basic uniformity in their different members; so much so that no member of the species is exactly identical with the other. Even the two leaves of a tree are not exactly alike. This shows that the world is not a factory in which automatic machines might be working and turning out things in mass production bearing the stamp of their own separate species. But in this factory there is a Master-Artist at work, Who gives individual attention to everything and produces it on a new design with new embellishments and proportions and qualities, and everything thus produced is unique in its own way. His inventive genius is turning out a new model of everything every moment, and His creative power abhors repeating the same design the second time. Anyone who sees this wonderful phenomenon with open eyes, can never be involved in the foolish misconception that the Maker of the universe has gone to sleep after having made it go. This is, on the contrary, a clear proof of the fact that He is ever engaged in His creative activity, and is giving individual attention to each and everything in His creation.

33"To seek bounty" is to seek the livelihood. Though man generally sleeps at night and works for his living in the day, this is not a law. Many people also sleep in the day and work for their livelihood at night. That is why the night and the day both have been mentioned and it has been said: "In both day and nights you sleep as well as work for your livelihood. "

This also is a Sign which points to the design of the Wise Creator: Furthermore, it also points to the fact that He is not merely a Creator but also extremely Compassionate and Merciful to His creations, and is more anxious than the creation to meet its needs and requirements. Man cannot constantly labor but needs to have a rest of a few hours after every few hours of hard work so as to rebuild energy to take up work again. For this purpose, the Wise and Merciful Creator has not rested content with creating a feeling of fatigue and a desire for rest in man, but has placed in his nature a powerful urge for the "sleep", which without his will, even in spite of resistance from him, overpowers him automatically after every few hours of work and wakefulness, and compels him to have a few hours of rest, and leaves him as soon as the need has been fulfilled. Man has so far been unable to understand the nature and real causes of the sleep. This is something wholly innate, which has been placed in the nature and structure of man. Its being` precisely according to the requirements of man is enough to testify that it is not anything accidental, but has been provided by a Wise Being in accordance with a purpose and plan. It is based on a clear wisdom and reason and purposefulness. Moreover, the sleep itself testifies that the One Who has placed this compulsive urge in man is a greater well wisher of man than man himself, otherwise man would have deliberately resisted the sleep and endeavored to keep constantly awake and worked continuously hard and thus exhaust not only his work-power but also his vital powers.

Then, by using the word "seeking Allah's bounty" for the seeking of livelihood, allusion has been made to another series of the Signs. How could have man sought and found his `livelihood if the innumerable and

unlimited forces of the earth and heavens had not been put to work to provide means of the livelihood and supply countless resources for man to seek it in the earth? Not only this. Man could not have exploited these means and resources had he not been given appropriate limbs and suitable physical and mental capabilities for the purpose. Thus the ability in man to seek the livelihood and the presence of the resources of the livelihood outside of him, clearly indicate the existence of a Merciful and Beneficent God. An intellect which is not sick can never presume that all this has happened by chance, or is the manifestation of the godhead of many gods, or some merciless, blind force is responsible for these bounties and blessings.

34That is, "Its thunder and lightning give hope that rain will come and help the crops, but at the same time they cause a fear that the lightning may strike somewhere, or heavy rain may fall, which may wash away everything."

35This thing, on the one hand, points to the life hereafter, and on the other, proves that God exists, and there is One God alone, Who is controlling the earth and the heavens. innumerable creatures of the earth live on the products that come out from the earth. These products depend on the productivity of the earth. The productivity depends on the rain, whether it directly falls on the earth, or its water gathers together on the surface of the earth, or takes the form of underground water channels or springs or wells, or freezes on the mountains and then flows down in the form of rivers. Then the rain depends on the heat of the sun, the change of seasons, atmospheric changes in temperature, circulation of the winds, and on the lightning, which causes the rain to fall as well as mixes a kind of natural manure in the rainwater. The establishment of a harmony and proportion between different things existing from the earth to the sky, their becoming favorable and subservient to a variety of aims and objects, and their remaining continuously and constantly favorable in perfect harmony for millions of million years cannot be the product of mere chance. Has it all happened without the all-embracing will and plan and wisdom of a Fashioner and Designer? And is it not a proof of the fact that the Creator and Lord of the earth, the sun, the water, the heat and coolness is One and only One?

36That is, "Not only have they come into being by His Command, but their continuous existence and the functioning in them of a grand workshop of life constantly is also due to His Command. If His Command does not sustain them even for a moment, the entire system should break down at once."

37That is, "It is not at all difficult for the Creator and Controller of the universe to raise you back to life; for this He will have to make no preparation. His one call will be enough to raise and muster together from every corner of the earth all human beings who have been born since the beginning of creation and will be born in the future.

38That is, "If it was not difficult for Him to create you in the first instance, how can it be difficult for Him to re-create you? Your first creation was not difficult for Him because your present existence is a living proof

of that. Now it is simple commonsense that the re-making of a thing should be relatively easier for the one who trade it for the first time .

39In the forgoing section, arguments have been given both for Tauhid and for the Hereafter; now the discourse turns to only Tauhid.

40The mushriks, even after admitting that Allah is the Creator and Master of the earth and heavens and all that they contain, held some of His creatures as associates in His attributes and powers, and prayed to them, presented offerings and performed rites of worship before them. Their belief regarding their self-made associates is found in the words of the Talbih that they used to pronounce while going round the Ka'bah. They said: "Here I am, O Allah, here I am in Thy presence! Thou hast no partner except the partner who is Thy own. Thou art his owner as well as owner of what he owns." (Tabarani on the authority Ibn 'Abbas) Allah has refuted this kind of shirk in this verse. The argument is to this effect: "When you do not make your own slaves partners in your wealth, how do you think and believe that Allah will make His creatures partners in His Godhead?" (For further details, see E.N. 62 of An-Nahl).

41That is, "When a person neither thinks on the right lines himself, nor is prepared to listen to a well-wisher, his intellect comes under the curse of Allah. After this everything that can help reasonable person to reach the Truth, only helps this stubborn and ignorant person to be involved more and more deeply in further deviation and error. This is what has been conveyed in the word "leading astray". When a truth-loving person invokes Allah for the grace of guidance, Allah creates for him maximum means of the guidance according to the sincerity of his invocation. And when a strayed person insists on his deviation, Allah creates for him the means which mislead him further and further away from the Truth."

42This "so" implies that when the reality has become clear to you, and you have come to know that none but Allah is the Creator and Master and Sovereign of this universe and of man himself, then inevitably your conduct should be such as indicated in this verse.

43"Set your face. .truly": "Do not turn your face to any other direction after you have .adopted this way of life. ' Then you should think like a Muslim and your likes and dislikes should be of a Muslim. Your values and standards should be the ones set by Islam and your character and conduct should bear the stamp of Islam, and the affairs of your individual and collective life should be ordered according to the way taught by Islam."

44"This Faith": the Faith that the Qur'an presents, in which none but Allah is worthy of worship and obedience, in which none can be held as an associate of Allah in His Divinity, in His attributes and His powers and rights, in which man by his own free will chooses to order his life in accordance with the Guidance and Law of Allah.

45That is, "All human beings have been created on the nature that none but One Allah is their Creator and Lord and Deity. You should be steadfast on this nature. If you adopt the attitude of independence, you will be following a way opposed to your nature, and if you serve and worship another besides Allah, then also you will be working against your nature."

This subject has been explained by the Holy Prophet in a number of Ahadith, According to Bukhari and Muslim,the Holy Prophet said: "Every child who is born, is born on we human nature; it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian, etc. afterwards. Its example is of an animal which gives birth to complete and sound young ones - none is born with torn and cut off ears-but the mushriks tear their ears afterwards on account of their superstitions of ignorance."

According to another Hadith reported in Musnad Ahmad and Nasa'i, the Muslims in a war killed even the children of the enemy. When the Holy Prophet came to know of it, he became very angry, and said: "What has happened to the people that they have transgressed the limits and killed even the children?" A man said, "Sir, were they not the children of the Mushriks?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Even the best of your people are the children of the mushriks!"Then he said: "Every living being is born on we nature: then when he becomes able to speak, his parents turn him into a Jew or a Christian."

In another Hadith which has been reported by lmam Ahmad on the authority of 'Ayad bin Himar-ul-Mujashi'i, it has been related that one day the Holy Prophet said during an address: "My Lord says: I had created all My servants on true Faith; then the satans came and led them astray from their Faith, and made unlawful what I had made lawful for them, and commanded them to associate with Me those for whom I have seat down no authority'."

46That is, "God has made man His servant and created him only for his own service. This natural disposition of man cannot be altered, however hard one may try. Neither can man effect a change in his position of a servant, nor can anything other than God become his God in the real sense. Man may make for himself as many gods as he may please, but the fact remains that he is the servant of none but One God alone. Man by his own folly and ignorance may regard anyone as holder of Divine attributes and powers and take any one as the maker and un-maker of his destiny, but the fact of the matter is that neither does anyone other than Allah possess Divine attributes nor His authority, nor has anyone else the power to make or mat the destiny of man."

Another translation of this verse can be: "Do not effect any alteration in the Nature trade by Allah." That is, it is not right to corrupt and spoil the Nature on which Allah has created man.

47"Right and true Faith": To remain steadfast on one's true Nature.

48That is, "Whoever has adopted an attitude of independence and freedom and turned away from his we

Lord, and whoever has adopted service of another than Allah and proved to be disloyal to his real and we Lord, should desist from this, and return to the service of the One God. Whose real servant he is by birth."

49That is, "You should have the fear that if in spite of being a servant of Allah by birth, you adopted the way of living independently of Him, or served another beside Him, you will have to suffer a severe punishment for rebellion and ingratitude. Therefore, you should avoid every such way of life which earns you the wrath of God."

50Both turning to Allah and having fear of His wrath are the acts of the heart. This state of the heart, for its manifestation and stability, inevitably needs a physical act, which they make it known to others in society that so-and-so has really returned to the service of One Allah alone, and which, at the same time, may go on nourishing and developing the state of piety and devotion in one's own self also by means of practical experience and discipline. That i why immediately after giving the Command for a mental change Allah has given the Command for this physical act, i,e. establishment of the Salat. As long as an idea is only an idea in the mind of man, it can neither be stable nor enduring. It may fade away or even change. But when he starts practicing it, the idea takes root in him and goes on increasing in stability and strength with more and more practice; so much so that when it has become a belief it can neither change nor fade away easily. Considered from this viewpoint, no act can be more effective than the offering of the Prayer regularly five times a day for strengthening piety and fear of God in oneself. The other act, whatever it be, is carried out at intervals, or in different forms on different occasions, but the Prayer is an act, which is performed every few hours in one and the same specific form permanently, in which man has to rehearse over and over again the whole lesson taught him by the Qur'an about Islam, so that he does not forget it. Furthermore, both the believers and the disbelievers have to know who among the people has given up the way of rebellion and adopted the way of obedience to the Lord. The believers have to know this so that they can form into a community and society and can cooperate with one another in the way of Allah; then as soon as the relationship of any one of them starts showing signs of laxity with respect to the Faith and Islam, this should become known to all of them at once. The disbelievers have to know this so that the dormant nature in them wakens up when they see the people from their own kith and kin turning humbly to their real God over and over again, and till their nature wakes up they continue to be awe-stricken when they see the practical enthusiasm of the obedient servants of God. For these two objectives also the establishment of the Prayer is the most effective means.

Here, it should be noted that the Command for the establishment of the Prayer was given at Makkah at a time when a handful of the Muslims were being severely persecuted by the disbelieving Quraish, and went on being persecuted for another nine years after this. At that time there was 'no sign of the Islamic government yet in sight. If the offering of the Prayer was meaningless without the Islamic government, as some ignorant people think, or if the establishment of the Salat did not mean the offering of the Prayer at all but the establishment of Nizami-Rububiyat (order of Providence), as the deniers of Hadith claim, the

Qur'anic injunction at that stage would have been meaningless. The question is: How did the Holy Prophet and the Muslims carry out this Command for nine years after it had been enjoined?

51This is an allusion to the fact that the real way of life for mankind is the same Way of Nature as elucidated above. This way of life has not evolved from a polytheistic creed to Tauhid as thought by those who invent a philosophy of religion on the basis of speculation. But, contrary to this, all the religions found in the world today have appeared because of the corruption of the original Way of life. This corruption occurred because different people added their different self-made creeds to the natural realities and created separate sects and every-one became a devotee of the additional thing, which was the basis of the separate sect, and gave up the original Way of life. Now the only way of attaining true guidance is that one should return to the original Reality which was the basis of the true Faith, and rid oneself of all the later additions and excrescences and their devotees. If he still keeps any kind of contact with them, he will only be harming the true Faith.

52This is a clear proof of the fact that in the depths of their heart there still exists an evidence of Tauhid. Whenever the hopes start crumbling, their hearts cry out from within that the real Ruler of the universe is its Master and His help alone can improve their lot.

53That is, "They again start presenting offerings before other deities, and claiming that their misfortune has been removed through the help and grace of such and such a saint and shrine."

54That is "What authority have they got to say that the calamities are not averted by God but by the so-called saint? Does common sense approve of it? Or, is there any Divine Book which says that Allah has delegated His powers to such and such saints, and that they should now be invoked by the people to help them out of difficulties?"

55In the preceding verse man has been censured for his ignorance, folly and ingratitude. In this verse, he has been censured for puerility and meanness When a person attains a little wealth and power and respect, and he sees that his business has started flourishing, he forgets that he has been given all this by Allah. He exults at his success and is so puffed up and conceited that he has neither any regard left for Allah nor for the people. But as soon as good luck deserts him, he loses heart and a single stroke of ill-luck so disheartens and frustrates him that he is prepared to do any mean thing, even commit suicide.

56That is, "The believers can learn how disbelief and shirk affect man's morality and what is the impact of belief in Allah on his morals. The person who sincerely believes Allah and looks upon Him as the Master of the treasure-houses of provisions, can never be involved in meanness, in which those forgetful of God are involved. If he is given abundantly he will not be puffed up; he will rather be grateful to Allah, will treat his fellowmen generously and benevolently, and will expend 'his God-given wealth for His sake. On the other hand, he will exercise patience; he will never gamble away his honesty and self-respect, but will

have hope of Allah's bounty till the last. Such a moral excellence can neither fall to the lot of an atheist nor of a polytheist."

57It has not been said: "Give charity to the relative, the needy and the wayfarer, but their due because this is their right (due to them from you), which you must give them in any case. You will not do them any favor if you part with a part of your wealth for their sake. You should remember it well that if the real owner of the wealth has given you more than others, your extra wealth is, in fact, the right of others, which has been given to you for your trial so that your Lord may see whether you recognize the rights of others and render their rights to them or not."

Anyone who reflects over this Divine Command and its real spirit cannot help feeling that the way proposed by the Qur'an. for man's moral and spiritual development inevitably envisages the existence of a free society and economy. This development is not possible in a social environment in which the people's rights of ownership are set aside and stifled. The system in which the state assumes ownership of all resources and the government machinery the entire responsibility of distributing provisions among the people, so much so that neither can an individual recognize the right of the other and render it, nor a person develop a feeling of goodwill for the other after he has received help, is a purely communist system. Such an economic and social system, which is being advocated in our country today under the deceptive name of the 'Qur'anic Order of Providence" (Nizam-i Rububiyat), is entirely opposed to the Qur'anic scheme itself, for it suppresses the development of individual. morality and formation of character altogether. The Qur'anic scheme can operate and function only in a society where the individuals own some resources of wealth, possess rights to expend it freely, and then render willingly and sincerely the rights of God and His servants. In such a society alone there can arise the possibility that, on the one hand, the people may develop individually the virtues of sympathy, kindliness and affection, sacrifice, recognition of the rights of others and rendering those rights in the right spirit, and on the other, the beneficiaries may develop in their hearts pure feelings of well-wishing, gratitude and thankfulness for the donors. This system only can produce the ideal conditions in which the elimination of evil and the promotion of goodness does not depend on the intervention of a law-enforcing authority but the people's own purity of the self and their own good intentions take up this responsibility.

58This does not mean that true success can be attained just by rendering the rights of the needy and the wayfarer and the relative and nothing else is needed to be done for this. But it means that those who do not recognize these rights of others nor render them, will not attain true success. It will be attained by those who render the rights sincerely only for the sake of Allah's goodwill and pleasure.

59This is the first verse revealed in the Qur'an that condemned interest. It only says this: "You pay interest thinking that it will cause an increase in the wealth of the money-lender. But actually, in the sight of Allah, interest does not increase the wealth, but the wealth is increased by the payment of the Zakat ". Afterwards when the Commandment prohibiting interest was sent down at Madinah, it was said: "Allah deprives interest of all blessing and develops charity." (For the later Commands, see AI-i-`Imran: 130,

and Al-Baqarah: 275 to 281).

This verse has been given two interpretations by the commentators. One section of them says: Here riba does not mean the interest which is forbidden by the Shari'ah, but it means the gift or the present which is. given with the intention that the recipient will return it redoubled, or will perform some useful service for the donor, or his becoming prosperous will be beneficial for the donor himself. "This is the view of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Dahhak, Qatadah, 'Ikrimah, Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurzi and Sha'bi. Probably this comment has been made by these scholars for the reason that in this verse the only consequence mentioned of the act is that in the sight of Allah such wealth will not increase at all; if, however, it had meant the interest forbidden by the Shari'ah, it would have been positively said that it will be severely punished by Allah.

The other group differs from this and says that it means the same well known riba' which has been forbidden by the Shari ah. This is the opinion of Hasan Basri and Suddi, and 'Allama Alusi also has opined that the apparent meaning of the verse is the same, for riba, in Arabic is used in the same meaning. This interpretation has been adopted by the commentator Nisaburi also.

In our opinion also this second interpretation is correct, for the argument given in favor of the first interpretation is not enough for discarding the well known meaning of the word riba'. In the period when Surah Ar-Rum was sent down, interest had not been forbidden yet. The prohibition was made several years afterwards. The way of the Qur'an is that it first prepares the minds for the thing that it has to prohibit at a later stage. About wine also the only thing said in the beginning was that it is not pure food. (An-Nahl: 67). Then in Al-Baqarah: 219, it was said that the harm of its sin is greater than its benefit. Then it was enjoined that the Prayer should not be offered in the state of intoxication. (An-Nisa': 43). Then, finally, it was prohibited totally. Similarly, about interest here it has been only said that it does not increase the wealth, but the real increase is caused by the Zakat. After this, the compound interest was forbidden (Al-i-`Imran: 130); and finally, interest itself was made absolutely unlawful. (Al-Baqarah: 275).

60There is no limit to this increase. The greater the sincerity of intention, the deeper the sense of sacrifice, the greater the intensity of desire for Allah's pleasure with which a person spends his wealth in His way, the greater and snore handsome will be the rewards that Allah will give him. According to an authentic Hadith, even if a person gives a fig in the way of Allah, Allah will increase it to the size of Mount Uhud.

61From here again the discourse turns to the theme of Tauhid and the Hereafter for the admonition of the disbelievers and the mushriks.

62That is, "He provided all the various means in the earth for your sustenance and made such arrangements that everyone should receive something from the circulation of the provision."

63That is, "If those whom you have set up as deities can neither create, nor provide sustenance, nor have power over life and death, nor can raise you back to life after death, then what for have you set them up as your deities?"

64This is again an allusion to the war that was going on between Byzantium and Iran, which was telling on the whole of the Middle East. "Man's own doings" means the wickedness and oppression and tyranny, which inevitably appear in human conduct and character as a result of adopting shirk and atheism and ignoring the Hereafter. "Maybe they mend their ways" means that Allah shows the evil consequences of some of the acts of men in this world before the punishment of the Hereafter so that they understand the reality, feel the error of their conjectures and turn to the righteous belief, which the Prophets of Allah have been presenting before man since the earliest times, and besides adopting which there is no other way of ordering human conduct on sound foundations. This subject has been presented at several places in the Qur'an, e.g. in At-Taubah: 126, Ar-Ra'd: 31, As-Sajdah: 21, Al-Tur: 47.

65That is, "The disastrous war between Byzantium and Iran is not a new thing of its kind. The past history of mankind is full of the accounts of the destruction of great nations. The root cause of the evils that caused the destruction of those nations was shirk which you are today being admonished to avoid."

66That is, "The Day which neither Allah Himself will avert nor has He given power to anyone else to avert it."

67This is a comprehensive sentence which encompasses all those harms which can afflict a disbeliever on account of his disbelief. No list of the harms could be so comprehensive as this.

68That is, to give good news of the rain.

69This refers to winds, which are helpful in sailing. In ancient times, sailing boats and ships mostly depended on favorable winds and adverse winds were disastrous for them. Therefore, the mention of these winds after the rain bringing winds has been made as a special favor of Allah.

70"To seek His bounty": To perform trade journeys.

71That is, "One kind of the Signs are those which are scattered in the world around man, which he comes across at every moment of his life, one of which is the system of the circulation of winds, as mentioned in the preceding verse. The other kind of the Signs are those which the Prophets of Allah brought in the form of the miracles and Divine Revelations and the extraordinary pure characters and their healthy and life-giving influence on human society. Both kinds of the Signs point to the same Reality, which is this: The Tauhid which the prophets teach is based on the Truth. Each of these Signs supports the other. The Signs of the universe testify to the truth of what the Prophets say, and the Signs brought

by the Prophets explain the reality being pointed out by the Signs of the universe.

72"The guilty ones": those who remained blind to these two kinds of the Sighs and persisted in their denial of Tauhid and their rebellion against God.

73There is a subtle allusion in the mention of the Prophethood and the rain, one after the other, to the reality that the advent of a Prophet is a blessing for man's moral life even as the coming of the rain proves to be a blessing for his material life. Just as the dead earth awakens to life by a shower of the rain from the sky and starts blooming and swelling with vegetation, so is the morally and spiritually desolate human world quickened to life at the coming down of Divine Revelation and starts blossoming with moral excellences and virtues. This is the disbelievers' own misfortune that they show ingratitude, and regard the blessing of Prophethood as a portent of death for themselves instead of a good news of life.

74That is, a frosty wind or a heat wave which ruins their crops after they started flourishing by the shower of rain.

75That is, they start cursing God and blaming Him for all their misfortunes and troubles, whereas when God had showered His blessings on them, they had shown ingratitude instead of being grateful to Him. Here again there is a subtle allusion to the theme that when the Messengers of Allah bring the messages of Mercy to the people, they do not listen to them and reject the blessing; then when God imposes tyrants and despots upon them in consequence of their disbelief. who persecute them severely, and destroy their humanity, the same people start abusing and blaming God for creating a world full of tyranny and cruelty.

76That is, those whose consciences have become dead, whose moral selves have become devoid of life, whose self-worship and stubbornness and obstinacy have destroyed their capacity to understand and accept the Truth.

77"The deaf" : those who have put locks on their minds and hearts so that they do not understand anything although they hear everything; then, when such people also try that the message of the Truth should not at all eater their ears, and they should avoid and keep away from the inviter, nobody can make them hear and understand anything.

78That is, "It is not for the Prophet that he should help and guide the blind by the hand to the the right way all through the life. He can only show guidance to the right path. But guiding those whose mind's eyes have been blinded and who do not at all see the way that the Prophet tries to show them, is not within the power of the Prophets."

79That is, "The states of childhood and youth and old age have all been created by Him. It is dependent upon His will that He may create whomever He pleases weak and whomever He pleases strong; He may

give death to whomever He pleases before attaining manhood and whomever He pleases in the prime of youth; He may grant a long life and yet keep in sound health whomever He pleases and bring to a wretched, agonizing old age after a brimful youth whomever He likes. Man may live in self-conceit and arrogance if he so likes, but he is so helpless in God's powerful grip that he cannot change by any artifice the state that He may place him in.

80That is, Resurrection, which is being foretold here.

81That is, from the time of death till Resurrection. Even if thousands of years might have elapsed since their death they will feel that they had gone to sleep a few hours earlier and then a sudden calamity had roused them froth sleep.

82That is, "They used to make similar wrong estimates in the world, There also they lacked the realization of Reality, and therefore, used to assert there was going to be no Resurrection, no life-after-death, and no too. that accountability before God."

83Another translation can be:". .nor it will be required of them to please their Lord", because they will have lost all opportunity for recourse to repentance and Faith and righteous acts, and wasted the time allotted for the test and reached the eve of the announcement of the result.

84The allusion is to the promise made in verse 47 above. There, Allah has mentioned His way of taking vengeance on those criminals who denied and resisted and ridiculed the clear Signs brought by the Messengers of Allah stubbornly, and of helping the believers.

85That is, "Let not the enemies find you so weak as to suppress you by their uproar, nor to cow you by their campaign of slander-mongering, nor to dishearten you by their jesting, taunts and derision, nor frighten you by their threats, show of power and persecution, nor allure you by offering baits, nor make you effect a compromise with them on the basis of their appeals in the name of national interests. Instead of this, they should find you so sagacious in the awareness of your objective, so firm in faith and conviction, so resolute in determination, and so strong in character that they should neither be able to cow you by threats, nor purchase you, nor lure you away by temptation, nor strike any bargain with you in the matter of the Faith. T. his whole theme has been compressed in a short sentence by Allah, saying: "Let not those who lack faith find you light." Now this is borne out by the firm evidence of history that the Holy Prophet proved to be as invincible and indomitable as Allah wanted His Last Prophet to be. Anyone who tried his strength with him in any field and sphere was routed, and eventually the Holy Prophet succeeded in bringing about the desired revolution in spite of every kind of opposition and resistance put up by the whole of polytheistic and unbelieving Arabia.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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31. Surah Luqman

Name

The Surah has been named Luqman after Luqman the Sage, whose admonitions to his son have been related in vv. 12-19 of this Surah.

Period of Revelation

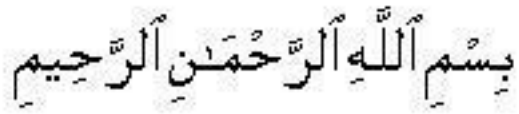
A perusal of the subject matter shows that it was sent down in the period when persecution to suppress and thwart the invitation to Islam had begun and every sort of machination had started being employed for the purpose. This is borne out by vv. 14-15, in which the young converts to Islam have been told that although the rights of the parents are the uppermost after God, they should not listen to them if they prevented them from accepting Islam, or compelled them to revert to the creed of shirk and polytheism. The same thing has been said in Surah Al-Ankabut, which indicates that both these Surahs were sent down in the same period. A study of the style and subject matter of the two Surahs on the whole, however, shows that Surah Luqman was sent down earlier, for one does not see any sign of the antagonism in its background though, contrary to this, while studying Surah Al-Ankabut one can clearly feel that the Muslims were being severely persecuted during the period of its revelation.

Theme and Subject matter

In this Surah the people have been made to understand the meaninglessness and absurdity of *shirk* and the truth and reasonableness of *Tauhid*, and they have been invited to give up blind imitation of their forefathers, consider with a cool mind the teachings which the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is presenting from the Lord of the worlds, and see with open eyes the manifest Signs found in the universe around them and in their own selves, which bear evidence to its truth.

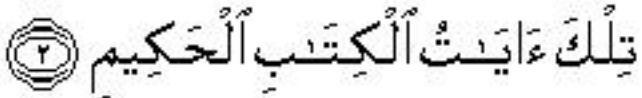
In this connection, it has also been pointed out that this is not a new teaching which might have been, presented in the world, or in the land of Arabia, for the first time, and with which the people might be unfamiliar. The learned and

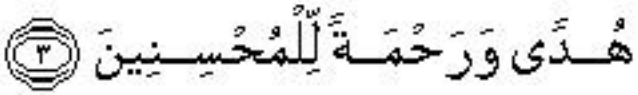
wise people of the past ages said and taught the same thing which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is teaching today. It is as if to say, "O people! In your own country there has lived a wise man, named Luqman, whose wisdom has been well known among you, whose proverbs and wise sayings are cited in your daily conversation and who is often quoted by your poets and orators. Now you should see for yourselves what creed and what morals he used to teach."

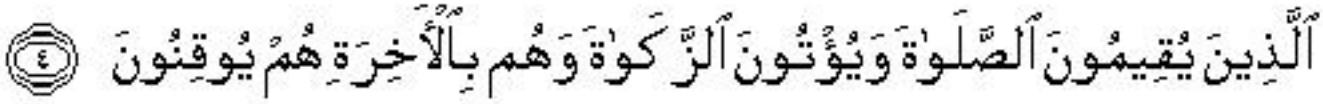


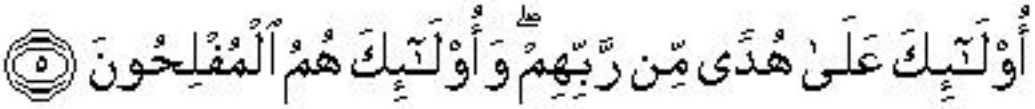
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.





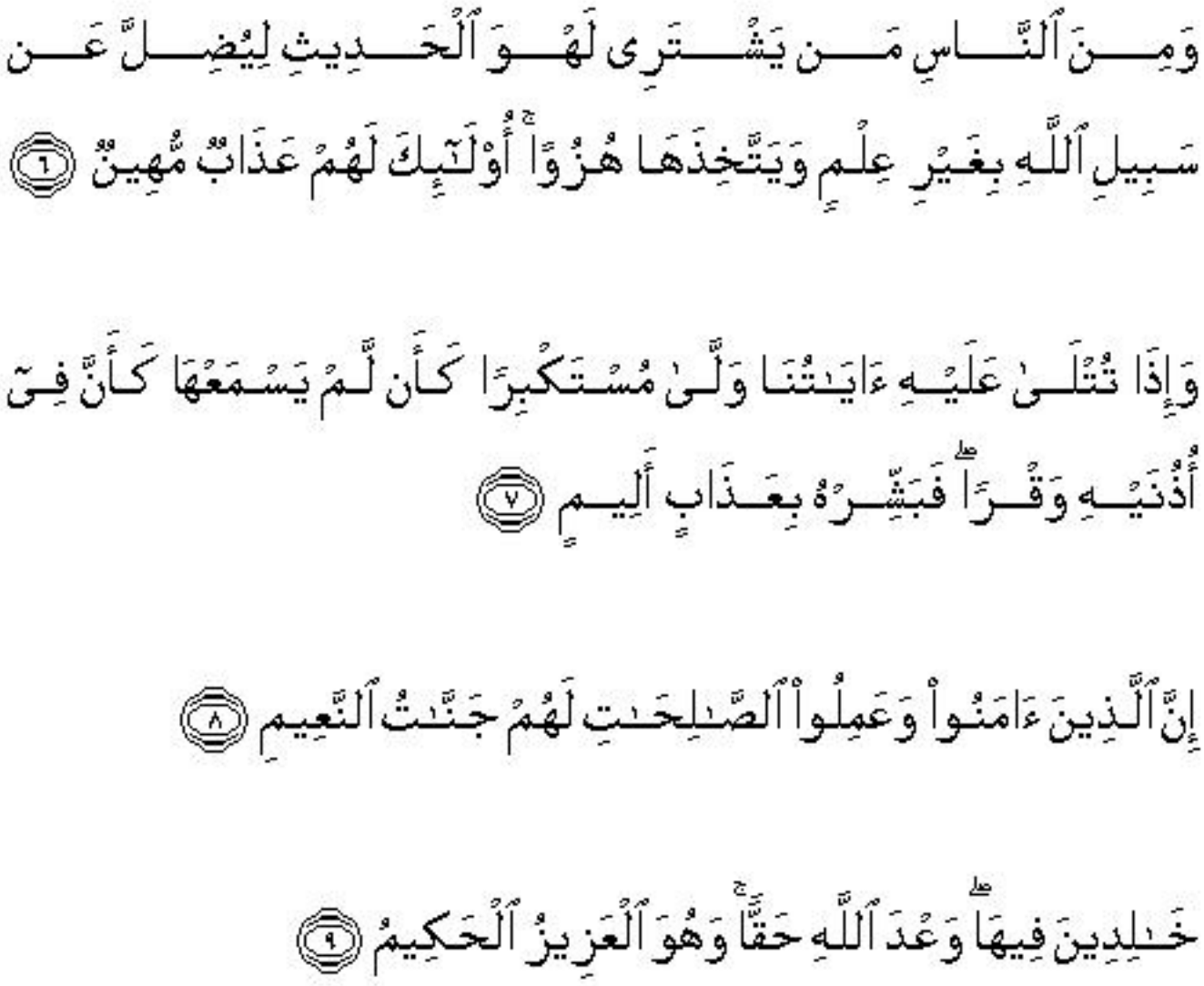






[1-5] Alif. Lam. Mim. These are the verses of the wise Book,[1] a Guidance and Mercy for the righteous people[2] who establish the Salat. pay the Zakat and fully believe in the Hereafter.[3] They are the ones who are on the right path

enjoined by their Lord, and they are the ones who will attain true success.[4]


وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَشۡتَرِي لَهۡوَ ٱلۡحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن
سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِغَيۡرِ عِلۡمٖ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًاۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ مُّهِينٞ ٦
وَإِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِ ءَايَٰتُنَا وَلَّىٰ مُسۡتَكۡبِرٗا كَأَن لَّمۡ يَسۡمَعۡهَا كَأَنَّ فِيٓ
أُذُنَيۡهِ وَقۡرٗاۖ فَبَشِّرۡهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٧
إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ٨
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۖ وَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقّٗاۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٩

[6-9] And there is among the men such a one also,[5] who buys alluring tales[6] so that he may lead the people astray from Allah's Way, without any knowledge,[7] and make a mockery of the invitation to it.[8] For such people there is a disgraceful torment.[9] When Our Revelations are recited to huh, he turns his face away disdainfully as though he did not hear theta, as though his ears were deaf. Well, give him the good news of a painful torment. However, for those who believe and do good works, there are blissful Gardens[10] wherein they shall live for ever. This is a true promise of Allah: He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[11]

خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيۡرِ عَمَدٖ تَرَوۡنَهَاۖ وَأَلۡقَىٰ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ رَوَٰسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ
بِكُمۡ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ دَآبَّةٖۚ وَأَنزَلۡنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ
زَوۡجٖ كَرِيمٖ ١٠

هَٰذَا خَلۡقُ ٱللَّهِ فَأَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦۚ بَلِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ فِي
ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ ١١

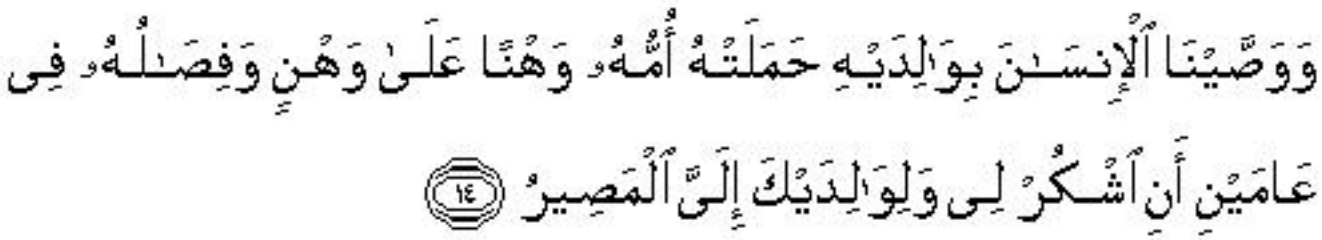
[10-11] He[12] created the heavens without pillars that you could see.[13] He set mountains in the earth lest it should tilt away along with you.[14] He scattered all kinds of animals in the earth, and sent down rainwater froth the sky and caused a variety of bounteous vegetation to grow in it. This is Allah's creation: now, show Me what have these others created?[15] The fact is that these wicked people are involved in manifest error.[16]

وَلَقَدۡ ءَاتَيۡنَا لُقۡمَٰنَ ٱلۡحِكۡمَةَ أَنِ ٱشۡكُرۡ لِلَّهِۚ وَمَن يَشۡكُرۡ فَإِنَّمَا يَشۡكُرُ
لِنَفۡسِهِۦۖ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٞ ١٢

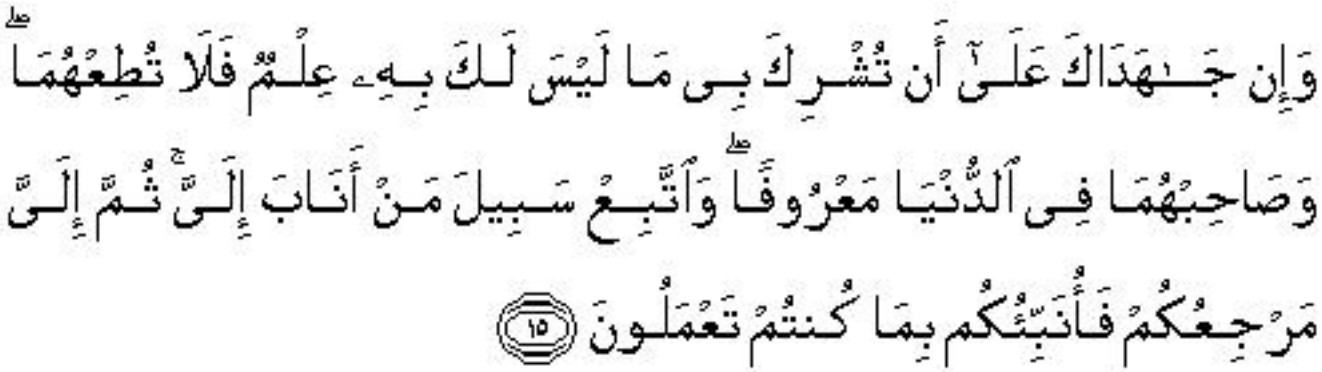
[12] We[17] had bestowed wisdom on Luqman that he may be grateful to Allah.[18] Whoever is grateful, his gratefulness is for his own good, and whoever is ungrateful, then Allah is indeed Self-Sufficient and Self-Praiseworthy.[19]

وَإِذۡ قَالَ لُقۡمَٰنُ لِٱبۡنِهِۦ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُۥ يَٰبُنَيَّ لَا تُشۡرِكۡ
بِٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرۡكَ لَظُلۡمٌ عَظِيمٞ ١٣

[13] Remember the time when Luqman was admonishing his son, saying, "My son, join not another as an associate with God:[20] the truth is that joining associates (with God) is a grave iniquity."[21]

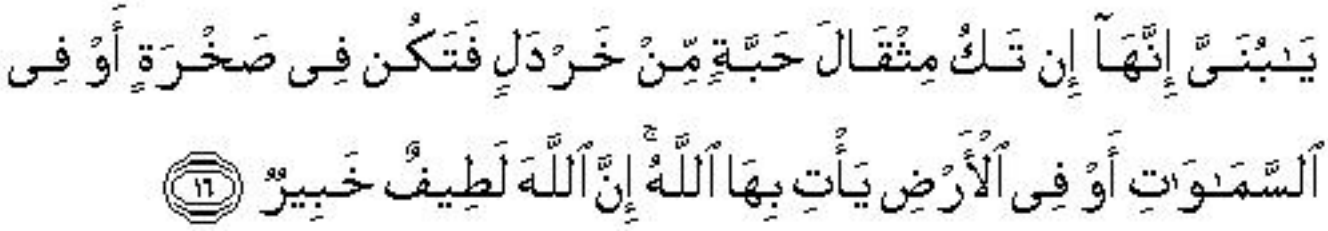


وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُۥ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَـٰلُهُۥ فِى
عَامَيْنِ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِى وَلِوَٰلِدَيْكَ إِلَىَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾



وَإِن جَـٰهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا
وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَٱتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَىَّ ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ
مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

[14-15] And[22] the fact is that We have Ourself enjoined on man to recognize the rights of his parents: his mother bore him in her womb with weakness upon weakness and his weaning took two years.[23] (That is why We admonished him to the effect:) "Give thanks to me and to your parents: to Me you have to return. But if they press you to join with Me another about whom you have no knowledge,[24] do not obey them at all. Treat them kindly in the world, but follow the way of him who has turned to Me. Then to Me will all of you return;[25] then I shall tell you what you had been doing.[26]



يَـٰبُنَىَّ إِنَّهَآ إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُن فِى صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِى
ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ أَوْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا ٱللَّهُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾

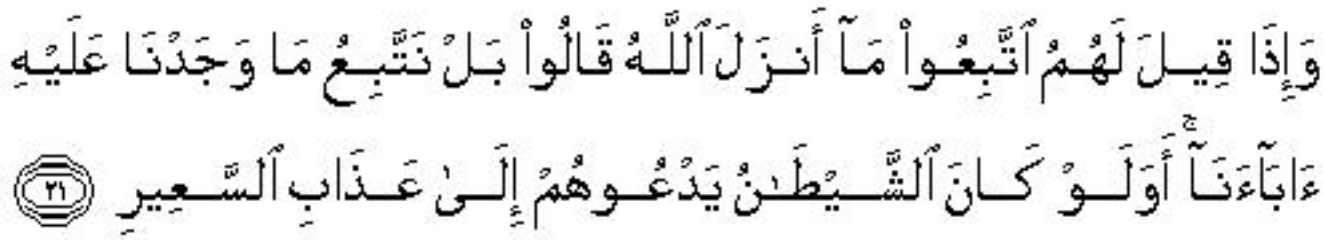
يَٰبُنَيَّ أَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأۡمُرۡ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَٱنۡهَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ
وَٱصۡبِرۡ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَكَۖ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ عَزۡمِ ٱلۡأُمُورِ ١٧

وَلَا تُصَعِّرۡ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمۡشِ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ مَرَحًاۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
مُخۡتَالٖ فَخُورٖ ١٨

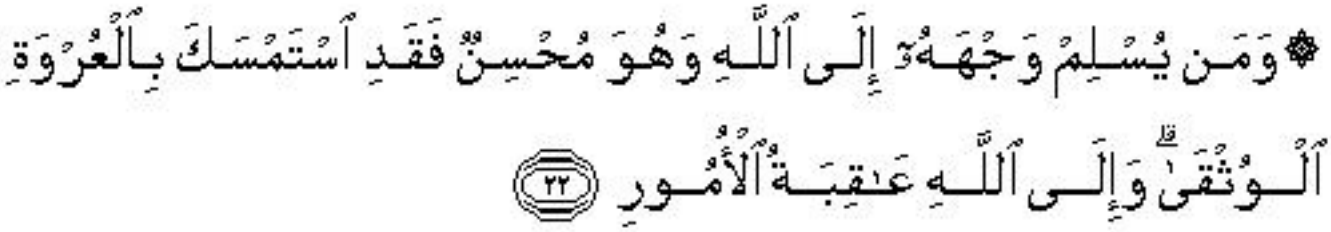
وَٱقۡصِدۡ فِي مَشۡيِكَ وَٱغۡضُضۡ مِن صَوۡتِكَۚ إِنَّ أَنكَرَ ٱلۡأَصۡوَٰتِ
لَصَوۡتُ ٱلۡحَمِيرِ ١٩

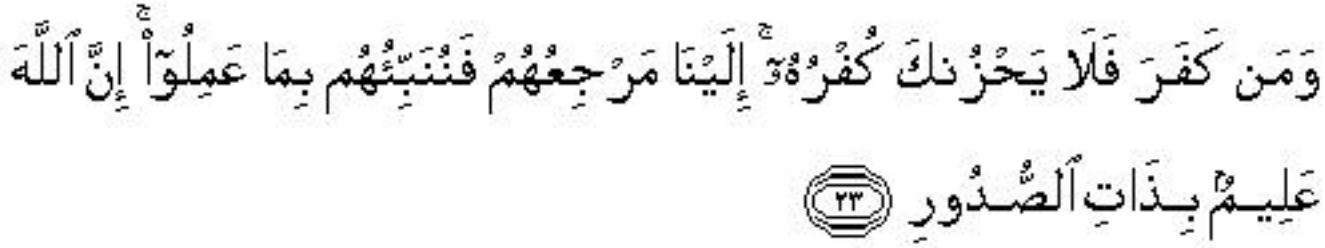
[16-19] (And Luqman[27] had said:) "My son, even if a thing be equal to a grain of mustard seed and hidden in a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth.[28] He is Knower of subtleties and is All-Aware. O my son. establish the Salat, enjoin good, forbid evil and bear with fortitude every affliction that befalls you.[29] These are the things which have been strictly enjoined.[30] And do not speak to the people with your face turned away,[31] nor walk proudly. on the earth, for Allah does not love any self-conceited, boastful person.[32] Be moderate in your gait,[33] and lower your voice, for the most disagreeable of all voices is the braying of the asses."[34]

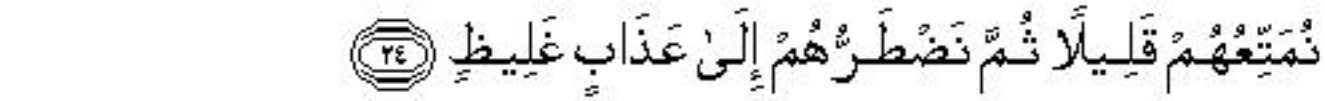
أَلَمۡ تَرَوۡاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ
وَأَسۡبَغَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ نِعَمَهُۥ ظَٰهِرَةٗ وَبَاطِنَةٗۗ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُجَٰدِلُ فِي ٱللَّهِ
بِغَيۡرِ عِلۡمٖ وَلَا هُدٗى وَلَا كِتَٰبٖ مُّنِيرٖ ٢٠



[20-21] Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you whatever is in the earth and the heavens,[35] and has bestowed on you all His favors, visible as well as invisible?[36] Yet there are some among the people who wrangle about Allah,[37] without any knowledge, or guidance, or an enlightening Book.[38] And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has sent down," they say, "We shall only follow that upon which we found our forefathers." What! Will they still be following them even if Satan had been calling them to the raging Fire?[39]







[22-24] Whoever surrenders himself to Allah,[40] and is a doer of good,[41] he has indeed taken hold of a reliable support[42] and the ultimate disposal of all affairs is in the hand of Allah. As for the one who disbelieves, let not his disbelief grieve you.[43] To Us they have to return; then We shall tell them what they had been doing. Most surely Allah knows the hidden secrets of the breasts. We are allowing them to enjoy themselves for a while in the world; then We shall drag them to a severe torment in a helpless condition.

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ
أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٦﴾

[25-26] If you ask them, "Who has created the earth and the heavens?" they will surely say, "Allah." Say, "Praise is then only for Allah,"[44] but most of them do not know.[45] Whatever is in the heavens and the earth, is Allah's.[46] Indeed, Allah is self-Sufficient and Self Praiseworthy.[47]

وَلَوْ أَنَّمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَٰمٌ وَٱلْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ سَبْعَةُ
أَبْحُرٍ مَّا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

مَّا خَلْقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعْثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

[27-28] If all the trees in the earth were to become pens and the ocean (an ink pot) which is replenished with ink by seven more oceans, (the writing of) Allah's Words would trot exhaust.[48] Allah is indeed All-Mighty and All-Wise. Your creation and your resurrection are as simple for Him as (the creation and resurrection) of a single soul. The fact is that Allah hears everything and sees everything.[49]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ
ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِىٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ
٢٩

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
هُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ٣٠

[29-30] Do you not see that Allah causes the night to pass into the day and the day into the night? He has subjected the sun and the moon,[50] each voyaging (in its course) till an appointed time.[51] And (do you not know) that Allah is aware of whatever you do? This is because Allah is the very Truth,[52] and all those whom the people invoke instead of Allah, are false,[53] and (this is because) Allah alone is the High, the Great.[54]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱلْفُلْكَ تَجْرِى فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِنِعْمَتِ
ٱللَّهِ لِيُرِيَكُم مِّنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ
٣١

وَإِذَا غَشِيَهُم مَّوْجٌ كَٱلظُّلَلِ دَعَوُا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰهُمْ
إِلَى ٱلْبَرِّ فَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَآ إِلَّا كُلُّ خَتَّارٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

[31-32] Do you not see that the ship sails in the sea by Allah's grace so that he may show you some of His Signs?[55] Indeed, there are many signs in this for every patient and, grateful person.[56] And when a wave (in the sea) covers them like the mountains, they invoke Allah making their faith pure for Him alone. Then, when He brings theta safe to the land, some one among them follows the middle ways[57] and does not deny Our Signs except the one who is treacherous and ungrateful.[58]

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ وَٱخْشَوْا۟ يَوْمًا لَّا يَجْزِى وَالِدٌ عَن وَلَدِهِۦ وَلَا
مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَن وَالِدِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿٣٣﴾

[33] O people! Avoid the wrath of your Lord and fear the Day when no father shall avail anything for his son, nor shall any son avail anything for his fathers[59] Allah's promise is surely true.[60] So let not this world' life deceive you,[61] nor let the deceiver deceive you concerning Allah.[62]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَيُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْحَامِ ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى
نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۖ وَمَا تَدْرِى نَفْسٌۢ بِأَىِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ
خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

[34] Allah alone has the knowledge of the Hour: He alone sends down the rain and He alone knows what is taking shape in the wombs of the mothers. No living being knows what he will earn the next day, nor does anybody know in what land he will die. Allah alone is All-Knowing, All-Aware.[63]

1That is, "verses of the Book which is full of wisdom and whose every teaching is based on wisdom."

2That is, "These verses give guidance to the Right Way and have been sent down as a mercy from God. But the people who can profit by this mercy and guidance are only those who adopt a righteous attitude, who wish to become good, who crave for their own well-being, whose quality is that they avoid the evil when they are warned of it, and follow the good when they are shown the ways to it. As for the wicked and mischievous people, they will neither profit by this guidance nor receive any share from this mercy. "

3It does not mean that "the righteous people" bear only these three qualities. By using the common epithet of "righteous" for them, it has been pointed out that they refrain from all those evils which this Book forbids and practice all those good things which this Book enjoins. Then, the three qualities of the "righteous" have been especially mentioned in order to show that all other good acts depend on these three things. They establish the Salat which engenders God-worship and piety as a permanent habit with them; they pay the Zakat which strengthens the spirit of sacrifice in them, subdues the love of the world and arouses a desire for the goodwill of Allah; and they believe in the Hereafter, which instills the sense of responsibility and answerability, which does not allow them to live like an animal, which is free to graze at will in the pasture, but like a man who is fully conscious of the fact that he is not independent but the slave of a Master before Whom he is answerable for all his activities of life. Owing to these three qualities, these "righteous" people are not the kind of the righteous persons who happen to do good just by chance, who may commit evil as often and as freely as they would do good. Contrary to this, these qualities inculcate in them an enduring system of thought and morality owing to which goodness issues forth from them in a regulated and systematic manner, and the evil, if at all committed, is committed just by chance. They do not have any deep-rooted motives, which might be arising from their own system of thought and morality and leading them on to the evil way under their own nature impulse.

4At the time when these verses were sent down, the disbelieves of Makkah thought, and said so openly, that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and those who accepted his message were wasting and ruining their lives. Therefore, it was rejoined with full force and emphasis: "..these are the ones who will attain true success." That is, 'They will not ruin themselves as you seem to dunk in your ignorance, but they in fact are the ones who alone will attain true success, and the utter failures will be those who have refused to adopt this way."

Here the one who regards 'true success" as confined to the world, in the sense of material prosperity, will be wholly missing the Qur'anic concept of it. To understand the real concept of the true success one should study the following verses of the Qur'an along with the relevant E.N.'s: Al-Baqarah: 2-5, Al-'Imran: 102, 130, 200, Al-Ma'idah: 35, 90, Al-An'am: 21, Al-A'raf; 7, 8, 157, At-Taubah: 88, Yunus: 17, An-Nahl: 116, Al-Hajj: 77, Al-Mu'minun: 117, An-Nur: ,51, Ar-Rum: 38.

5That is, "On the one hand, there is this Mercy and Guidance sent down by Allah, of which some people arc taking full advantage, and on the other, there are also some unfortunate people living side by side with the fortunate ones, who are adopting this sort of attitude as against the Revelations of Allah. "

6The words lahv al-hadith in the Text imply such a thing as may allure and absorb a listener completely and make him heedless of everything else around him. Lexically, there is nothing derogatory in these words, but in custom and usage they apply to evil and useless and vain things, such as gossip, nonsensical talk, joking and jesting, legends and tales, singing and merry-making, etc.

"To buy" alluring tales may also mean that the person concerned adopts falsehood instead of the Truth, turns away from the guidance and turns to those things which can neither benefit him in the world nor in the Hereafter. But this is the metaphorical meaning. The real meaning of the sentence is that a person should purchase an absurd and useless thing for his money, and this is supported by many traditions. Ibn Hisham has related on the authority of Ibn Ishaq that when the disbelievers of Makkah could not stop the message of the Holy Prophet from spreading in spite of their best efforts, Nadr bin Harith said to the people of Quraish: "The way you are counteracting this man will avail you nothing. He has lived a lifetime among you. Until now he was the best of your men morally: he was the most truthful and the most trustworthy person among you. Now you say that he is a sorcerer and enchanter and a poet and a madman. Who will believe all this? Don't the people know the way the sorcerers talk? Don't they know the enchanters and the way they conduct their business? Are they unaware of poetry and of. the states of madness? Which of these accusations sticks to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) by exploiting which you would turn the people's attention away from him? Look! I will tell you how to deal with him." Then he left Makkah for Iraq and managed to get from there legends and tales about the kings of Iran and Rustam and Isfandyar and started to arrange tale-telling parties to distract the people from the Qur'an and to absorb them in the tales. (Ibn Hisham. vol. I, pp. 320-321). The same tradition has been cited by Vahidi in Asbab un Nazul on the authority of Kalbi and Muqatil. And according to Ibn 'Abbas, Nadr had bough singing girls also for the purpose. Whenever he heard that someone was coming under the Holy Prophet's influence, he would impose a singing girl an him with the instruction: "Feed him and entertain him with your songs so that he is absorbed in you and distracted from the other side." This was the same device which the arch-criminals of the nations have been employing in every age. They try to get the common people so absorbed in fun and sport and musical entertainment's in the name of culture that they are left with no time and sense to attend to the serious problems of life, and in their heedlessness they do not even feel what destruction they are being driven to.

The same commentary of lahv al-hadith has been reported from a large number of the Companions and their immediate followers. 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud was asked, 'What does lahv al-hadith mean in this verse ?" He said thrice emphatically. 'By God! it means singing." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Shaibah. Hakim, Baihaqi). Similar traditions have been reported from scholars like 'Abdullah bin' Abbas, Jabir bin 'Abdullah, Mujahid, 'Ikrimah, Said bin Jubair, Hasan Basri: and Makhul. Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim and Tirmidhi have related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Umamah Baheli that the Holy Prophet said, "It is not

lawful to buy and sell and trade in singing girls nor is it lawful to take their price." In another tradition, the last sentence is to the effect: ... it is unlawful to eat their price" . Yet another tradition from Abu Umamah is to the effect: To teach music to slave-girls and to trade in them is not lawful and their price is forbidden." AII these Ahadith also elucidate that the verse containing lahv al-hadith was sent down in this very connection. Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabi has related in the Ahkam alQur'an a Hadith from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mubarak and Imam Malik on the authority of Hadrat Anas, saying, that the Holy Prophet said: 'He who hears the song of a singing-girl in a musical concert, will have molten lead poured into his ear on the Day of Judgment" (In this connection, one should also note that the culture" of music in those days flourished almost entirely through the slave-girls: Free women had not yet become "artists" . That is why the Holy Prophet spoke about trading in slave-girls, and described their wages and earnings as their price. and used the word qaynah for the singing-girl, which is specifically used for a slave-girl in Arabic).

7"Without any knowledge" may be connected with "buys" and also "lead...astray". In the first case, it would mean: 'The ignorant foolish person buys this alluring thing and does not know that he is buying a ruinous thing at the cost of a highly valuable thing. On the one hand, there are the Divine verses which are full of wisdom and guidance, which he can obtain without any cost, but he turns away from them. On the other, there are these absurd things, which are disastrous for his morals and he is expending his wealth to obtain them. " In the second case, it would mean: "He has come out to guide the people without any knowledge: he does not know what burden of sin he is taking on himself by trying to lead the people astray from Allah's Way."

8That is, This person wants to make fun of the Divine Revelations by alluring and absorbing the people in legends and tales and music. He intends that the invitation of the Qur'an should be derided and ridiculed and laughed away. He plans to fight the Religion of God with the strategy that as soon as Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) should come out to recite Revelations of God to the people, there should be a charming, sweet-voiced damsel giving her performance in a musical concert. on the one hand, and a glib-tongued story teller telling tales and legends of Iran, on the other, and the people should become so absorbed in these cultural activities" that they may not be in a mood to hear anything about God and the morals and the Hereafter."

9This punishment will be in accordance with their crime. They want to debase and disgrace God's Religion, His Revelations and His Messenger; God will rake His vengeance on them by giving them a disgraceful torment.

10Instead of saying 'There are blessings of Paradise (Gardens) for them," it has been said, there are blissful Gardens for them." In the first case, it would have meant this: "They will enjoy the blessings but the Gardens will not belong to them." In the second case, it automatically becomes evident that the whole Gardens will be handed over to them, and they will take advantage of their blessings as an owner does of his own possession, and not like the one who is allowed to use something without giving him ownership rights over it."

11That is, "Nothing can withhold Him from fulfilling His promise, and whatever He does, He does strictly according to the demands of wisdom and justice. The object of mentioning these two attributes of Allah after saying: This 'is a true promise of Allah", is to stress that Allah neither violates His promise willfully nor is there in this universe any such power as can prevent Him from fulfilling His promise. Therefore, there can be no chance that one may not receive what Allah has promised to give as a reward for faith and righteous deeds. Moreover, Allah's open promise to bestow this reward is wholly based on His wisdom and His justice. He does not misjudge: it cannot be that He may deprive a deserving person of his reward, and reward a non-deserving one instead. The people characterized by taste faith and righteous deeds indeed deserve this reward and Allah will bestow this on them only."

12After the above introductory sentence, the discourse now turns to the real theme, i.e.., the refutation of shirk and the invitation to Tauhid.

13The actual words bi -ghair i amad-in tarauna-ha in the Text may have two meanings:

(1) "You can see for yourself that they stand without pillar"; and

(2) 'they stand on the pillars which you cannot see"

Ibn 'Abbas and Mujahid have favored the second meaning, and many other commentators take the first meaning. If the meaning is expressed in terms of the natural sciences of the present day, it can be said that the countless stars and planets in the heaven have been established in their positions and orbits without any visible support and prop: there are no strings and wires which might have tied them together; there are no iron bars which might be withholding them from falling on one another. It is the law of gravitation which is supporting the system. This interpretation is according to the present-day knowledge. It may be that tomorrow some new addition to our knowledge enables us to interpret the reality better.

14For explanation, see E. N . 12 of Surah An-Nahl .

15"These others" 'the beings whom you have set up as your deities, whom you regard as makers and un-makers of your destinies, whom you have been worshiping as such persistently"

16That is, "When they do not point out in this universe any creation of anyone else than Allah, and obviously they cannot, their setting up the non creators as associates in Godhead and bowing before them in worship and invoking them for help, is nothing but mere stupidity, because their foolish conduct cannot be explained in any other way. Unless a person has taken leave of his senses he cannot commit the folly that he should himself admit before you that his deities are non-creators and that Allah alone is the Creator, and yet insist on their being the deities. If somebody has a little of the common sense, he will

inevitably think how the one who has no power to create anything, and who has no share whatever in the creation of anything in the earth and heavens, can be our deity. Why should man bow before it and adore it as a deity? Does it possess any power that it could fulfill one's needs and requirements? Even if it hears one's prayers, whet could it do to answer them when it did not have any power to create anything? For, evidently, afflictions can be removed only by him who can create something and not by him who can create nothing."

17After presenting a rational argument to refute shirk the Arabs arc being told that this rational point of view is not being presented before them for the first time, but the wise and learned people before them also have been saying the same thing, including their own famous sage, Luqman. Therefore, they cannot refute the Holy Prophet's message, saying, "If shirk was an irrational creed, why didn't it strike so to somebody else before?"

Luqman was well known as a wise and learned man in Arabia. He has been mentioned in the poetry of the pre-Islamic poets like Imra'ul-Qais, Labid, A'asha, Tarafa and others. Some educated Arabs also possessed a collection of the wise sayings of Luqman. According to traditions, three years before the Hijrah the very first person of Madinah to be influenced by the Holy Prophet was Suwaid bin Samit. He went to Makkah for Hajj. There the Holy Prophet was as usual preaching Islam to the pilgrims coming from different places, at their residences. When Suwaid heard his speech, he submitted, "I have also got a thing similar to what you preach," When the Holy Prophet asked what it was, he said, "The roll of Luqman." Then on the Holy Prophet's instance, he read out a portion of it, whereupon the Holy Prophet said, "This discourse is fine, but that which I have is better still.' Then he recited the Qur'an to him, and Suwaid admitted that that was certainly better than the wisdom of Luqman. (Ibn Hisham, vol. II, p. 3781. According to the historians, this person (Suwaid bin Samit) was known by the title of Kamil (Perfect) in Madinah on account of his ability, bravery, nobility and poetry. Bet when after his meeting with the Holy Prophet he returned to Madinah. He was killed in the battle of Bu'ath, which was fought some time afterwards. His tribesmen were of the opinion that he had become a Muslim after his meeting with the Holy Prophet

Historically. Luqman is a disputed personage. In the dark centuries of ignorance there was no compiled history. The only source of information were the traditions that were being handed down since centuries. According to these, some people thought that Luqman belonged to the people of 'Ad and was a king of Yaman. Relying on these traditions, Maulana Sayyid Suleman Nadvi has expressed the opinion in the Ard al-Qar'an that Luqman was a descendent of the believers who remained safe with the Prophet Hud after the destruction of the people of 'Ad by a Divine torment, and he was one of the kings of Yaman when it was ruled by the 'Ad. But other traditions which have been reported from sane learned Companions and their immediate followers do not support this view. Ibn 'Abbas says Luqman was a negro slave, and the same is the opinion of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Mujahid, 'Ikrimah and Khalid ar-Rabi. According to Hadrat Jabir bin'Abdullah Ansari, he belonged to Nirbah. S'id bin al-Musayyib says that Ire was an Egyptian negro. These three sayings closely resemble one another. The Arabs generally called

the black people negroes (Habashis) in those days, and Nirbah is the country south of Egypt and north of Sudan. Therefore, calling the same person an Egyptian and a Nubian and a negro, in spite of the difference in words. is one and the same thing. Then the elucidations made by Suhayli in Raud al-Unuf nd Mas'udi in Muruj adh-Dhahab also throw some light on the question as to how the wisdom of this Sudanese slave spread in Arabia. They both agree that this person though originally a Nubian was an inhabitant of Madyan and Aylah (modern, 'Aqabah). That is why he spoke Arabic and his wisdom spread in Arabia. Besides, Suhayli also elucidates that Luqman the Sage and Luqman bin 'Ad were two different persons, and it is not correct to regard them as one and the same man. (Raud al-Unuf, vol. I, p. 266; Mas'udi, vol. I, p. 57).

Another thing may also be made clear here. The Arabic manuscript from the Library of Paris, which the orintalist Derenbourg has published under the title Amthal Luqman Hakim (Fables De Luqman Le Sage) is a fabricated thing which has nothing to do with the Roll of Luqman. These Fables were compiled by somebody in the 13th century A.D. Its Arabic is poor, and a perusal shows that it is, in fact, a translation of some other book in a different language, which the author or translator has himself ascribed to Luqman the Sage. The orientalists make such researches with a special object in view. They bang out such forged and fake things in order to prove that the narratives of the Quran are unhistorical legends and therefore unreliable. Anyone who reads B. Helle's article on 'Luqman" in the Encyclopeadia of Islam will not fail to understand the real motive of these people.

18That is, "The very first demand of the wisdom and knowledge, insight and sagacity, granted by Allah was that man should have adopted the attitude of gratefulness and obedience before his Lord, and not of ingratitude and thanklessness. And this gratefulness should not have merely been lip-service but expressed and translated in thought and word and deed. One should have the conviction in the depths of one's heart and mind that whatever one has got, has been given by God. One's tongue should always be acknowledging the favors of God; and practically also one should be trying to prove by carrying out His Commands, by avoiding sins, by striving to achieve His good-will, by conveying His blessings and favors to His servants and by fighting those who have rebelled against Him that one is really a grateful servant of one's God."

19That is,"The one who is ungrateful and unbelieving, his unbelief is harmful to his own self. Allah does not lose anything. He is Independent and does not stand in need of anyone's gratitude. The gratitude of someone does not add anything to His Godhead, nor does anyone's ingratitude and disbelief change the factual reality that whatever the servants have got, has been granted by Him. He is Self-Praiseworthy whether someone praises Him or not. Every particle in the universe bears testimony to His Perfection and Beauty, His Creativity and Providence, and every creature is paying homage to His glory perpetually."

20This particular admonition from the wisdom of Luqman has been cited here for two reasons: (1) He gave this admonition to his son, and obviously, no one can be insincere to one's own children. A person may deceive others, may behave hypocritically towards them, but no one, not even a most depraved

person, will try to deceive and defraud his own children. Therefore, Luqman's admonishing his son thus is a clear proof of the fact that in his sight shirk was indeed the most heinous sin, and for that very reason he first admonished his dear son to refrain from this iniquity. (2) The second reason for this narration is that many parents from among the disbelievers of Makkah were compelling their children to turn away from the message of Tauhid being preached by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and remain steadfast on the creed of shirk, as is being stated in the following verses. Therefore, those foolish people are being told, as if to say, The well-known sage of your own land had wished his children well by admonishing thetas to avoid shirk, now you should judge it for yourself whether you are wishing your children well or ill when you compel them to follow the same creed of shirk."

21Zulm means to deprive someone of his right and to act unjustly. Shirk is a grave iniquity because man sets up such beings as equals with his Creator and Providence and Benefactor as have no share whatever in creating him, nor in providing for him, nor in bestowing the blessings on him, which he is enjoying in the world. There could be no greater injustice than this. The Creator's right on man is that he should worship Him alone, but he worships others and so deprives Him of His right. Then, in whatever he does in connection with the worship of others than Allah, he exploits many things, from his own mind and body to the earth and heavens, whereas, all these things have been created by Allah, the One. and man has no right to use any of them in the worship of any other than Allah Then, the right of man's own self on him is that he should not debase and involve it in punishment. But when he worships others than his Creator. he debases his self as well as makes it deserving of the punishment. Thus, the entire life of a mushrik becomes Zulm in every aspect and at all times and his every breath becomes an expression of injustice and iniquity.

22The whole passage from lure to the end of the paragraph is a parenthesis, which Allah has inserted as a further explanation of the saying of Luqman.

23From these words, Imam Shafe'i, Imam Ahmad, Imam Abu Yusuf. and Imam Muhammad have drawn the conclusion that the suckling period of the child is two years. If a child has been suckled by a woman within this period, they will be forbidden for each other, but if outside and beyond this period, they will not be so. A saying of Imam Malik also supports this. But Imam Abu Hanifah has proposed the period of two and a half years as a precaution, and has added that it' the child has been weaned after two years, or even earlier, and it is no longer dependent upon suckling for its food, no woman would be forbidden for him If she gave him suck after that period, However, if the real food of the child is still milk. suckling during the period will render him and her forbidden for each other in spite of his eating the other food in a more or less quantity. For, the verse does not mean that the child should be suckled necessarily for two years. In Surah AI Baqarah it has been said: 'The mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, if the fathers desire the suckling to be completed." (v. 233). Ibn 'Abbas from these words has concluded, and other scholars have agreed with him in this, that the shortest period of pregnancy is six months, for the Qur'an at another place says: "His bearing (in the womb) and his weaning took thirty months." (Ahqaf: 15) This is an important legal point which helps resolve many disputes concerning legitimate and

illegitimate births.

24That is, "About wham you have no knowledge that he is My associate."

25"All of you": the children as well as the parents.

26For explanation, see E. N.'s 11 and 12 of Surah Al-'Ankabut.

27The other admonitions of Luqman are being narrated here to imply that like the basic beliefs, the teachings pertaining to morals that the Holy Prophet is presenting, are not anything new in Arabia.

28That is, "Nothing can escape Allah's knowledge and His grasp. A seed in the rock may be hidden for you, but it is known to Allah. A particle in the heavens may be very distant for you, but for Allah it is very near. A thing lying in the layers of the earth may be lying in darkness for you but for him it is in full light. Therefore, you cannot do anything good or bad, anywhere or any time, which may remain hidden from Allah. He is not only aware of it, but when the time for accountability comes, He will place before you a full record of each act of yours. "

29In this there is a subtle allusion to this that whoever will enjoin good and forbid evil, will inevitably have to face and undergo afflictions and hardships in the world.

30Another meaning can be: "These are things which require courage and resolution. To rise for the reformation of the people and to brave the hardships of the way cannot 1>e the job of a mean-spirited and cowardly person."

31Tusa'ir in the original is from se 'ar. a disease in the camel's neck clue to which it keeps its face turned to one side. The idiom implies the attitude of a person who shows arrogance and vanity, turns his face away and treats others with scant respect.

32Mukhtal in the original implies a person who has an over-high opinion of himself, and fakhur is the one who boasts of his superiority over others. A man becomes haughty and arrogant and vain in his gait only when he is puffed up with pride, and wants that others should feel his superiority.

33According to some commentators it means this: 'Walk neither fast nor slow but at a moderate pace :" but the context shows that here the pace or the rate of walking is not the question. There is nothing morally wrong with a fast or a slow pace in itself, nor can there be a rule made for it. When a man is in a hurry. he has to walk fast, and there is nothing wrong if one walks slow when walking for pleasure. Even if there is a standard for the moderate pace, it cannot be made a law for every person at all times. What is actually meant by this is to reform the state of the self under which a person walks haughtily. The

haughtiness and arrogance of a person inevitably manifests itself in his gait and style of walking, which shows the state of his mind and also the cause of his pride and haughtiness. Wealth, authority, beauty. knowledge, power and such other things cause a man to became proud and vain, and each of these gives him a special style of gait. Contrary to this, manifestation of humility in the gait is also the result of one or the other morbid mental state. Sometimes the hidden conceit of the self of a man takes on the form of ostentatious humility, piety and godliness and this is shown by his gait; and sometimes man really feels so embittered by the frustrations of the world that he adopts a sick man's gait. What Luqman means to say is this: "Avoid these states of the mind and self and walk the gait of a simple, honest and noble person, which neither shows any vanity and haughtiness nor weakness nor ostentatious piety and humility."

The taste of the Holy Prophet's great Companions in this regard can be judged from a few instances. When Hadrat Umar once saw a man walking with his head hung down, he shouted out to him, saying, "walk with your head raised up. Islam is not sick. "He saw another person walking like a weak, sick man, and said, wretch! Do not sully our religion! " Both these incidents show that in the sight of Hadrat 'Umar religious piety did not at all require that one should walk cautiously. like the sick man and show undue humility by one's gait. Whenever he saw a Muslim walking such a gait, he would have the apprehension that it would misrepresent Islam and would depress the other Muslims. A similar incident was once met with by Hadrat 'A'ishah. She saw a person walking as if run down and exhausted. She asked what was the matter. It was said, 'He is one of the reciters of the Qur'an (i e a person who remains engaged in reciting and teaching the Qur'an and in worship)." At this she said, 'Umar was the chief of the reciters of the Qur'an, but as it was he would walk with a firm foot, and he would speak with force and strength, and he would give a good beating if he had to." (For further explanation. see E.N. 43 of Bani Isra'il and E.N. 79 of AI-Furqan).

34This does not mean that one should always speak in a low voice and should never raise one's voice. By citing the braying of the asses, it has been clearly indicated what son of the tone and voice in speech is meant to be discouraged. One kind of lowness and loudness"roughness and softness, of the rove and voice is that which is needed under natural and genuine requirements. For example, when speaking to a man close at hand, or to a small group of the people, one would speak in a low voice, and when speaking to a man at a distance or to a large number of the people, one would inevitably have to speak loudly. Similar is inevitably the difference in tones depending on the occasion and situation. The tone of praise has to be different from the tone of condemnation. and of the expression of goodwill from that of indignation. This thing is in no way objectionable. Nor does the admonition of Luqman imply that one should always speak in a soft and low voice and tone regardless of the occasion and requirement. What is objectionable is that one should shout oneself hoarse and produce a voice like the ass's braying in order to bully and debase and browbeat the other person."

35A thing can be subjected to somebody in two ways:

(1) The thing may be made subordinate to him and he may be authorized to use and exploit it as he likes, and

(2) the thing may be subjected to a law and system so that it becomes useful for him and serves his interests accordingly. Allah has not subjected everything in the earth and heavens to man in one and the same sense, but has subjected certain things in the first sense and certain others in the second sense. For example, He has subjected the air, water, earth, fire, vegetation, minerals, cattle and many other things in the first sense, and the sun, the moon, etc. in the second sense.

36"Visible favors" imply those favors which are perceived by man in one way or the other, or arc known to him. And the "invisible favors" arc those which are neither perceived by him nor arc known to him. There are countless things in mans own body and in the world outside him, which are working in his interest, but man is utterly unaware of the means which his Creator has provided for his protection and safety, for his development and provision of sustenance to him, and for his well-being and happiness. Research of man in the different branches of science is revealing many such favors of God as were hidden from him before. And the favors and blessings which have so far been revealed are insignificant as against those which still lie hidden froth man.

37"Who wrangle about Allah": Who wrangle and dispute aborts questions such as these: Does Allah exist or not? Is He One God alone, or are there other gods also? What are His attributes and what is their nature? What is the nature of His relationship with His creations etc.?

38That is, `They neither have any means of knowledge by which they might themselves have observed or experienced the reality directly, nor do they have the guidance of a guide available to them, who might have guided them after observing the reality, nor do they possess a Divine Book, which might be the basis of their belief."

39That is, It is not at all necessary that the forefathers of every person and every family and nation should have been on the right path. The mere argument that a particular way of life had been bequeathed by the elders cannot be a proof of its being right also. No sane person can commit the folly that he should blindly go on following the way of his forefathers even if they were not rightly guided, and should never bother to find out where the way is leading him."

40"Whoever.....Allah": Who submits himself wholly to the service of Allah, entrusts all his affairs to Him and makes His Guidance the law of his entire life.

41That is, practically also he should adopt the attitude of an obedient servant of Allah.

42That is, He will neither have the apprehension that he will be misguided, nor the fear that he will meet

an evil end after having served Allah.

43This means to say, "O Prophet, the one who refuses to listen to you, thinks that by rejecting Islam and insisting on unbelief he has harmed you, but in fact he has not harmed you but harmed only himself. If he does not listen to you, you need not bother yourself about him at all. "

44That is, "Thank God that you at least know this and believe in this. But if this be the reality, all praise should then belong to Allah alone. How can any other being deserve praise when it has no share whatever in the creation of the universe?"

45That, is, Most of the people do not know what are the inevitable results and demands of accepting Allah as the Creator of the universe, and what contradicts it. When a person acknowledges Allah as the Creator of the earth and the heavens. He should also acknowledge that Allah alone is the Deity and Lord: that He alone is worthy of worship and obedience: that He alone can be invoked for needs, and no one other than He can be the Law-Giver and Ruler of His creation. To acknowledge one as the Creator and another as the deity is contrary to reason and a contradiction in terms, which can be upheld only by an ignorant person. Likewise, it would be a contradiction in terms to believe in one Being as the Creator and to regard another from among the creation as remover of hardships or as a deity and possessor of power and authority and sovereignty. which no reasonable will acknowledge and accept."

46That is, 'The reality is not merely this that Allah is the creator of the earth and the heavens, but in fact He alone is the Master of all things found in the earth and heavens. Allah has not created his universe and left it to others to become masters of the whole or a part of it, but He Himself is Master of His creation and everything that exists in this universe is His. Here. He alone possesses Divine rights and powers and no one else. "

47This has been explained in E. N. 19 above.

48"Allah's Words": Allah's creative works and the manifestations of His power and wisdom. This very theme has been presented in Surah AI-Kahf: l()<) above a little differently. A person might think there is exaggeration in this. but if one considers the matter a little deeply, one will feel that there is in tact no exaggeration whatever in it. AII the pens that can be made from the trees of the world and all the ink that can be provided by the oceans of the world, which are replenished by seven more oceans, cannot perhaps help prepare a complete list of all the creations in the universe, not to speak of all the manifestations of Allah's power and wisdom and creative works. When it is impossible even to count all the things found on the earth only, how can one bring into writing all the creations found in this limitless universe?

Here, the object is to make man realize that no creature can become a deity and an associate in the

works of Allah. Who has brought into being such a vast Universe, Who is administering its affairs and Whose powers and resources are limitless. Not to speak of becoming an associate in the administration of this vast Kingdom, it is not within the power of any creation to obtain a mere nodding acquaintance with the minutest portion of it. How can then one imagine that one or the other creation can have any share in the Divine powers and authority on the basis of which it may answer prayers and make or un-make destinies?

49That is, 'He is hearing every sound in the universe distinctly at one and the same time, and no sound can absorb his hearing so completely that He may hear no other sound. Likewise, He is seeing the whole universe in each of its details as to thing and event at one and the same time and nothing can absorb His sight so completely that He may see nothing else. The same precisely is the case concerning the creation of men and their re-creation also. He can re-create instantaneously all the men who have been born since the beginning of the creation and will be born till the end of time, His creative power is not absorbed so completely in the creation of one man that He may be unable to create other men at the same time. For Him the creation of one man and of the billions of men. therefore, is equal and one and the same thing.

50That is, "The appearance and alternation of the day and night consistently and regularly by itself shows that the sun and the moon have been subjected to a system. " The sun and the moon have been mentioned here in particular because both these are the most prominent bodies of the heaven, which man has been worshiping as deities since the earliest times, and which many people worship as gods even today. The fact, however, is that Allah has bound all the stars and planets of the universe including the earth into an unalterable system from which they cannot deviate even by an inch.

51That is, nothing in the world, whether the sun or the moon, or any other star or planet, in the universe, is eternal and ever-lasting. Everything has a term for it and can function only till its expiry. Everything has a beginning in time before which it was not there and an end in time after which it will not be there. This means to imply that such temporal and powerless things cannot become the deities of men.

52That is, the real Sovereign is Allah. He alone is the real Owner of power and authority over the creation and its disposal.

53That is, "They are figments of your own imagination. You have yourselves presumed that so-and-so has got a share in Godhead, and so-and-so has been given the powers to remove hardships and fulfill needs, whereas in fact none of them has any power to make or un-make anything."

54That is, 'He is the Highest of all before Whom everything is low, and He is the Greatest of all before Whom everything is small."

55That is, "Such Signs as show that all powers rest only with Allah. Man may make as strong and suitable ships for his sea journeys as he likes, and may achieve whatever perfection in marine science and in the related knowledge and experience, these by themselves cannot avail him anything to perform safe voyages especially when confronted by the terrible forces at the sea, unless he is succored by the grace of Allah. As soon as Allah's grace is withdrawn, man immediately realizes how meager and insufficient are the means and resources and knowledge of the sciences. Similarly, man in the state of peace and security may be a hardened atheist or polytheist, but when his boat loses balance in the storm at sea, even the atheist comes to realize that there is God and the polytheist that there is only One God. "

56That is When the people who possess these two qualities, recognize the reality by these signs, they come to understand Tauhid clearly and stick to it firmly. The first quality is that they should be patient: they should not be fickle but fine and persistent: they should remain steadfast on the righteous belief under all circumstances, pleasant or unpleasant, difficult or easy, favorable or unfavorable. They should not have the weakness that when the hard times come they Stan imploring God humbly, and when they change into good times, they forget God altogether. Or that, to the contrary, they should worship God in good times and start cursing Him when touched by afflictions and misfortunes. The other quality is that they should be grateful: they should not prove ungrateful and thankless: but appreciative of favor and should remain perpetually disposed from within to render thanks to the one who conferred the favor."

57"Iqtisad" in the original may mean uprightness or moderateness. In the first case, the verse would mean: "A few of them only remain steadfast on Tauhid, which they had promised to follow when overwhelmed by the stone, and this makes them adhere to uprightness ever afterwards." If it is taken to mean moderateness, it would mean: Some of them become moderate and less rigid in their creed of atheism and polytheism, or they lose some of their fervor and enthusiasm that had been caused by the incident of calamity." Most probably Allah has used this meaningful sentence here in order to allude to all the three states simultaneously. The object probably is to point out the fact that during the storm at sea the mind of everybody is automatically set right, and everybody gives up atheism and polytheism and starts invoking One Allah for help. But as soon as they safely land on the shore, only a few of them seem to have learned any enduring lesson from their experience. Then, this small number also is divided into three groups: those who adopt uprightness ever afterwards, and those who become moderate in their disbelief, and Those who retain some of the spirit of enthusiasm caused temporarily by the calamity.

58These two qualities are the antithesis of the two qualities mentioned in the preceding verse. A treacherous person is he who is utterly disloyal and who has no regard for his promise and pledge, and the ungrateful he who does not acknowledge the good and the gains and the benefits received by him, and even behaves rebelliously towards his benefactor. The people having these qualities return to their disbelief, their atheism and their polytheism without any hesitation as soon as the danger has been averted. They do not admit that they had perceived some signs in their own selves as well as outside themselves of Allah's existence and of His being only One when overwhelmed by the stone, and their

invoking Allah was in fact the result of their recognition of the same reality. The atheists among them explain away their act, saying, "It was a weakness which we manifested in the state of confusion and bewilderment, whereas there exists no God, Who might have saved us from the storm: we in fact succeeded in escaping by virtue of such and such a device and means and resources. " As for the mushriks, they generally say, "We had the succor and protection of such and such a saint or god and goddess available to us by virtue of which we escaped. " Therefore, as soon as they land on the shore, they start giving thanks to these false gods and presenting offerings at their shrines. They do not bother to think that when they had lost hope, there was none beside Allah, the One, whom they might have implored and invoked for help.

59That is, "The relationship of a person with his friend, or his leader, or his spiritual guide, etc. is not so close and intimate as the relationship that exists between the children and their parents. But on the Day of Resurrection even the son and the father will not be able to help each other. The father will not have the courage to come forward and say that he may be seized instead of the son for his sins, nor will the son have the nerve to say that he may be sent to Hell instead of the father. How can then a person expect that one will be able to avail something for the other there? Therefore, foolish is the person who spoils his Hereafter in the world for the sake of another, or adopts the way of sin and deviation by dependence on others. Here, one should keep in view the theme of verse 15, in which the children have been admonished not to accept deviation in the matter of the faith and religion on behest of the parents, though in affairs of mundane life they are duty bound to serve them as best as they can. "

60"Allah's promise" : the promise of Resurrection, when the Court of Allah will be established and everyone will be called to render an account of his deeds.

61The life of the world involves the people, who only see the superficial, in different kinds of misunderstandings. Someone thinks that life and death only belong to this world, and there is no life hereafter; therefore, whatever one has to do, one should do it here and now. Another one who is lost in his wealth and power and prosperity, forgets his death and gets involved in the foolish idea that his grandees and his power are everlasting. Another one overlooking the moral and spiritual objectives regards the material gains and pleasures in themselves as the only objectives and does not give anything any importance but the "standard of living", no matter whether his standard of humanity gas on falling lower and lower as a result thereof. Someone thinks that worldly prosperity is the real criterion of truth and falsehood: every way of life that ensures this is the truth and everything contradictory to it is falsehood. Someone regards this very prosperity as a sign of being Allah's favorite, and assumes the law that whoever is leading a prosperous life here is Allah's beloved no matter by what means he might have achieved this prosperity, and whoever is leading a miserable life in the world, even if it be so due to his love of the truth and his uprightness, will live a miserable life in the Hereafter, too. These and other such misunderstandings have been called "deceptions of the worldly life" by Allah.

62Al-gharur (the deceiver) may be Satan or a man or a group of then, or even man's own self, or

something else. The reason for using this comprehensive and meaningful word in its absolute form without identifying a particular person or thing, is that for different people there are different means that cause them deception. Any particular means or cause that deceived a person to be misled and misguided from the right way to the wrong way, will be al-gharur in his particular Case.

"To deceive (someone) concerning Allah" are also comprehensive words, which include countless kinds of deceptions. "The deceiver" deceives one man with the idea that there is no God at all, and another man with the idea that God after making the world has handed over its control and administration to the men and is no more concerned with it; he misleads another one, saying, "There arc some favorite ones of God: if you attain nearness to them, you will surely win your forgiveness whatever you may do, or may have done, in the world; " he deceives another one, saying, "God is AII-Forgiving and All-Merciful: you may go on committing sins freely, and He will go on forgiving each sin of yours. " He gives another person the idea of determinism and misguides him, saying, "Everything that you do is pre-ordained: if you commit evil, it is God Who makes you commit it: if you avoid goodness, it is God Who makes you avoid it." Thus, there are countless kinds of such deceptions with which man is being deceived concerning God. When analyzed it comes to light that the basic cause of all errors and sins and crimes is that man has been deceived concerning God in one way or the other, and that is how he has been misled to some ideological deviation or moral error.

63This verse is, in fact an answer to the disbelievers' question as to when the Hour of Resurrection will come, which they asked when they heard the Holy Prophet mention it and the promise of the Hereafter, again and again. The Qur'an has answered this sometimes by citing the question and sometimes without citing it, because the addressees knew what they were asking. This is one of those verses which answer the question without citing the question itself.

The first sentence: 'Allah alone has the knowledge of the Hour", is the real answer to the question. The four sentences that follow constitute the argument to support it. The argument means this: "O man. you do not have the knowledge even about those things with which you are most closely and intimately concerned in life. How then can it be possible for you to know as to when will the whole world cane to an end? Your prosperity and adversity mainly depend on the rain. But its control and regulation is entirely in the hand of Allah. He sends down the rain whenever and wherever and in whatever measure He pleases and withholds it whenever he pleases. You do not at all know how much of the rain will fall at a particular place at a particular time and which land will remain without it, and which land will be adversely affected in spite of it. Your wives conceive by your own sperm-drop, which perpetuates your race in the future, but you do not know what is taking shape in their wombs, and in what form and with what good or evil it will emerge. You do not even know what you are going to meet with the next day A sudden accident can change your destiny; but you are unaware of it even a minute before its occurrence. You do not know where your present life will eventually cane to an end. Allah has kept all this information with Himself alone; and has not given you any knowledge of any of these. You actually desire that you should have the knowledge of each of these things so that you may make necessary preparations beforehand, but

you have no other course open to you than to depend only on Allah's decree and disposal in these matters. Likewise, about the end of the world also there is no alternative but to rely on Allah's decree and decision. The knowledge of this also has neither been given to anybody, nor can it be given."

Here, another thing also should be understood well, and it is this: This verse does not give a list of the unseen and hidden things, which are known to no one but Allah. Here only some of the most apparent things have been pointed out only to serve as an illustration. These are the things with which man is most deeply and intimately concerned, yet he is unaware of them. From this it would be wrong to conclude that these are the only five unseen and hidden things which are known to no one but Allah. As a matter of fact, ghaib applies to every such thing which is hidden from the creation but is in the knowledge of Allah, and such things are countless and limitless. (For a detailed discussion of this, see An-Naml: 65 and the E. N.'s thereof).

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

32. Surah As Sajdah (The Prostration)

Name

The Surah has been entitled As-Sajdah after the theme of *Sajdah* (prostration) as expressed in verse 15.

Period of Revelation

From the style of the Surah it appears that it was sent down during the middle Makkah period, more particularly in its initial stage, for one does not find in its background that severity of the persecution and tyranny which one finds in the Surahs sent down in the later stages.

Theme and Topics

The main theme of the Surah is to remove the doubts of the people concerning *Tauhid*, the Hereafter and the Prophethood, and to invite them to all these three realities. The disbelievers of Makkah, when they talked of the Holy Prophet in private, said to one another, "This person is forging strange things sometimes he gives news of what will happen after death. He says: when you have become dust, you will be called to render your accounts, and there will be Hell and Heaven. Sometimes he says: these gods and goddesses and saints are nonentities: One God alone is the Deity. And sometimes he says: the discourses which I recite are not my own but Allah's Word. All these are strange things which he presents."The answer to these doubts and misgivings forms the theme and subject matter of this Surah.

In this connection, the disbelievers have been told: "Most certainly it is Allah's Word, which has been sent down in order to arouse a people who are sunk in heedlessness, being deprived of the bounties and blessings of Prophethood. How can you call it a fabrication when its having been sent dawn from Allah is manifest and self evident?"

Then, they have been asked, "Use your common sense and judge for yourselves which of the things presented by

the Quran is strange and novel?Look at the administration of the heavens and the earth: consider your own creation and structure. Don't these things testify to the teaching which this Prophet is presenting before you in the Quran? Does the system of the universe point to *Tauhid* or to *shirk*? When you consider this whole system and your own creation, does your intellect testify that the One Who has given you your present existence, will not be able to create you once again?"

Then a scene of the Hereafter has been depicted, the fruits of belief and the evil consequences of disbelief have been mentioned and the people exhorted to give up disbelief even before they meet their doom and accept the teaching of the Quran, which will be to their own advantage in the Hereafter.

Then they have been told: It is Allah's supreme Mercy that He does not seize man immediately for his errors to punish him finally and decisively but warns him beforehand by afflicting him with small troubles and hardships and calamities and losses and strokes of misfortune so that he may wake up and take admonition.

Then it is said: "This is not the first and novel event of its kind that a Book has been sent down upon a man from God. Before this the Book had been sent upon Moses also, which you all know. There is nothing strange in this at which you should marvel. Be assured that this Book has come down from God, and note it well that the same will happen now as has already happened in the time of Moses. Leadership now will be bestowed only on those who will accept this Divine Book. Those who reject it shall be doomed to failure."

Then the disbelievers of Makkah have been admonished to the effect:"See the end of the doomed communities of the past by whose ruined habitations you pass during your trade journeys. Will you like to meet the same doom yourself? Do not be deluded by the apparent and superficial. Today you see that no one is listening to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) except a few young men and some slaves and poor men, and he is being made the target of curses and ugly remarks from every side. From this you have formed the wrong impression that his mission will fail. But this is only a deception of your eyes. Don't you see the phenomenon in your daily life that a land previously lying absolutely barren starts swelling with vegetation and plant life everywhere just by a single shower of the rain though before this no one could ever imagine that under the layers of its soil there lay hidden such treasures of greenery and herbage?"

In conclusion, the Holy Prophet has been addressed to the effect: "These people mock at what you say and ask as to when you will attain this decisive victory. Tell them: when the time comes for the final judgment regarding you and us, believing then will not profit you at all. If you have to believe, believe now. But if you intend to await the final judgment, then await it as you please."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

الٓمٓ ﴿١﴾

تَنزِيلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۚ بَلْ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّآ أَتَىٰهُم مِّن نَّذِيرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] Alif. Lam Mim. The revelation of this book is, without any doubt, from the Lord of the Worlds.[1] Do[2] the people say that this man himself has forged it?[3] Nay, but it is the Truth from your Lord so that you may warn a people to whom no warner has come before you.[4] Maybe they are guided aright.[5]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ۖ مَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤﴾

يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِى يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُۥٓ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٥﴾

ذَٰلِكَ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٦﴾

ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقَهُۥ ۖ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ
مِن طِينٍ ﴿٧﴾

ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُۥ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿٨﴾

ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِهِۦ ۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ
وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[4-9] Allah it is[6] Who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six days, and then sat Himself upon the throne.[7] You have no supporter and helper besides Him nor any intercessor before Hun. Will ,you not then take heed?[8] He administers the affairs of the world from the heavens to the earth, and the report of this administration ascends (to be presented) before Him in a Day whose length, according to your reckoning, is a thousand years.[9] He alone is the Knower[10] of the hidden and the open, the All-Mighty,[11] the Compassionate,[12] Who gave everything He created the best form.[13] He began the creation of man from clay; then spread his progeny by an extract the nature of a despicable water;[14] then He shaped him[15] and breathed into him of His Spirit;[16] and He gave you the ears, and the eyes and the hearts:[17] yet you are seldom grateful.[18]

وَقَالُوٓاْ أَءِذَا ضَلَلۡنَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَءِنَّا لَفِي خَلۡقٖ جَدِيدِۭۚ بَلۡ هُم بِلِقَآئِ رَبِّهِمۡ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

۞قُلۡ يَتَوَفَّىٰكُم مَّلَكُ ٱلۡمَوۡتِ ٱلَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمۡ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمۡ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾

[10-11] And[19] the people say, "When we have become dust, shall we be created again?" The fact is that they disbelieve in the meeting with their Lord.[20] Say to them, "The angel of death who has been appointed over you, shall seize you completely, and then to your Lord you will be made to return."[21]

وَلَوۡ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ نَاكِسُواْ رُءُوسِهِمۡ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ رَبَّنَآ أَبۡصَرۡنَا وَسَمِعۡنَا فَٱرۡجِعۡنَا نَعۡمَلۡ صَٰلِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَلَوۡ شِئۡنَا لَأٓتَيۡنَا كُلَّ نَفۡسٍ هُدَىٰهَا وَلَٰكِنۡ حَقَّ ٱلۡقَوۡلُ مِنِّي لَأَمۡلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ ٱلۡجِنَّةِ وَٱلنَّاسِ أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

فَذُوقُوا۟ بِمَا نَسِيتُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَآ إِنَّا نَسِينَٰكُمْ ۖ وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ
ٱلْخُلْدِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

[12-14] Would[22] that you could see the criminals when they will be standing before their Lord with hanging heads. (Then they will be saying: "Our Lord, we have indeed seen and heard: now send us back so that we may act righteously: we are now convinced." (In reply it will be said :) "Had We so willed We would have given every soul its guidance from the beginning,[23] but the Word of Mine, which I had said, has been fulfilled that I shall fill Hell with jinns and men,[24] all together. So, taste now the recompense of your having forgotten the meeting of this Day.[25] We, too, have forgotten you now! Taste the everlasting torment in consequence of your misdeeds."

إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ بِهَا خَرُّوا۟ سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا۟ بِحَمْدِ
رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ۩ ﴿١٥﴾

تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا
وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِىَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

أَفَمَن كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَن كَانَ فَاسِقًا ۚ لَّا يَسْتَوُۥنَ ﴿١٨﴾

أَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَلَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلۡمَأۡوَىٰ نُزُلَۢا بِمَا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ١٩

وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ فَسَقُواْ فَمَأۡوَىٰهُمُ ٱلنَّارُۖ كُلَّمَآ أَرَادُوٓاْ أَن يَخۡرُجُواْ مِنۡهَآ أُعِيدُواْ فِيهَا وَقِيلَ لَهُمۡ ذُوقُواْ عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ٱلَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِۦ تُكَذِّبُونَ ٢٠

[15-20] Only such people believe in our Revelations, who, when these are recited to them for their admonition. fall down prostrate and glorify their Lord with His praises, and are not proud;[26] who forsake their beds and invoke their Lord in fear and in hope;[27] and who spend out of what We have given them.[28] No living being knows what comfort of the eyes has been kept hidden from them as a recompense for their deeds.[29] Can he who is a believer be like him who is a sinner?[30] They cannot be alike.[31] For those who have believed and done good works, there will be Gardens for their dwellings,[32] an entertainment as a recompense for their deeds. As for those who have adopted evil, their abode shall be Hell. Whenever they try to get out of it, they will be pushed back into it and it will be said to them, "Taste now the torment of the Fire which you used to deny."

وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ ٱلۡأَدۡنَىٰ دُونَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ ٱلۡأَكۡبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡجِعُونَ ٢١

وَمَنۡ أَظۡلَمُ مِمَّن ذُكِّرَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِۦ ثُمَّ أَعۡرَضَ عَنۡهَآۚ إِنَّا مِنَ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ مُنتَقِمُونَ ٢٢

[21-22] Even in this world We shall make them taste (one or the other) lesser torment before that greater torment;

may-be they desist (from their rebellious attitude).[33] And who could be more wicked than the one who is admonished by the Signs of his Lord and he spurns them?[34] We shall certainly take vengeance on such criminals.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ فَلَا تَكُن فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّن لِّقَآئِهِۦ ۖ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُ
هُدًى لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا۟ ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا
يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

[23-25] Before this We gave Moses the Book. You should, therefore, have no doubt on receiving the same.[35] We had made that Book a Guidance for the children of Israel;[36] and when they showed patience and continued to have faith in Our Revelations, We raised among them such leaders as guided (the people) by Our Command.[37] Surely on the Day of Resurrection your Lord alone will decide those things about which (the Israelites) have been differing among themselves.[38]

أَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ يَمْشُونَ فِى مَسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۚ
إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَٰتٍ ۖ أَفَلَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

أَوَلَمۡ يَرَوۡاْ أَنَّا نَسُوقُ ٱلۡمَآءَ إِلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ ٱلۡجُرُزِ فَنُخۡرِجُ بِهِۦ زَرۡعٗا تَأۡكُلُ
مِنۡهُ أَنۡعَٰمُهُمۡ وَأَنفُسُهُمۡۖ أَفَلَا يُبۡصِرُونَ ٢٧

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلۡفَتۡحُ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ٢٨

قُلۡ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡفَتۡحِ لَا يَنفَعُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِيمَٰنُهُمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ يُنظَرُونَ ٢٩

فَأَعۡرِضۡ عَنۡهُمۡ وَٱنتَظِرۡ إِنَّهُم مُّنتَظِرُونَ ٣٠

[26-30] And have they found no guidance (in the historical events) that before them We have destroyed many a nation in whose dwelling places they move about?[39] There are many Signs in this. Do they not hear? And have they never seen how We cause the water to flow to a barren land and there from bring forth crops of which their animals and they themselves eat? Do they not see anything?[40] They ask, "When will this judgment take place if you are truthful?[41] Tell them, "To believe on the Day of Judgment will not in any way profit those who have disbelieved, nor will they get any respite after that."[42] Well, leave them to themselves, and wait: they too are waiting.

1Several Surahs of the Qur'an begin with one or the other such introductory sentence, which is meant to declare at the outset therefrom this discourse is being issued. This is apparently the same sort of an introductory sentence as an announcer speaks in the beginning of a radio program to tell which radio station he is speaking from. But unlike the ordinary announcement from a radio station, when the extraordinary declaration at the beginning of a Surah is made to the effect that this message is being issued by the Ruler of the Universe, it is not merely meant to specify the origin of the discourse, but, besides, it also puts forward a big claim, a great challenge and a severe warning, for at the very outset it gives the big news that this .is not human but the Lord of the Worlds' Word. This declaration at once brings man face to face with the grave question: "Should I or should I not accept this claim? If I accept it I shall have to bow my head in submission before it for ever. Then, I shall be left with no freedom concerning it. If I do not accept it, I shall have to take the great risk that if it be really the Lord of the

Worlds' Word, I shall have to meet with eternal misery and misfortune in consequence of rejecting it." That is why this introductory sentence solely on account of its extraordinary nature compels man to listen to this Word with frill attention and seriousness,. and then take the decision whether he would accept it as Divine Word or not;

Here, what has been said is not merely that this Book has been sent down by the Lord of the Worlds, but, besides, it also asserts most forcefully:" It is without any doubt the Book of God: there is absolutely no room for doubt about its having been revealed by Allah." If this assertive sentence is studied in the actual context itself, it will be seen that it contains the argument also along with the assertion, and this argument was not hidden from the people of Makkah before whom the assertion was being made. The whole life of the person presenting it had been spent before them. They had known him before he presented the Book as well as after he had presented it. They knew that the person presenting the Book with that assertion was the most righteous, the most serious and the most pious and virtuous man of their society. They also knew that until a day before he made the claim to Prophethood, no one had ever heard from him those things which he had started presenting suddenly just after his claim to Prophethood. They found a marked difference between the diction and style used in the Book and the diction and style used by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself, in his daily life, and they also recognized naturally that one and the same person could not have two styles so different from each other. They were also experiencing the highly miraculous literature being presented in the Book and, being the Arabic speaking people themselves, knew that all their literary men and poets were feeling utterly helpless in producing anything the like of it. They were also not unaware that there was a world of difference between the literary productions and orations of their poets and sorcerers and orators, and the Divine discourses being recited before them and the sublimity of the pure themes being presented in them. They did not see in the Book and in the message of the one presenting it any trace whatever of selfishness, which is always present in the work and message of a false claimant to prophethood. They could not find out, however, hard they might have tried, that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) by laying claim to Prophethood was trying to secure a certain benefit for himself or his family or his clan and tribe, or that he had any vested interest in the message he gave. Then, they could also see what sort of the people of their society were being drawn to his message and what great revolution was taking place in them as soon as they came in contact with his invitation. AII these things together supported and proved the assertion and claim. That is why in that background it was enough to say that it is beyond any doubt a Book that pas been sent down by the Lord of the Worlds. No further argument was needed to substantiate the claim.

2After the above introductory sentence, the first objection of the polytheists of Makkah, which they raised concerning the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet, is being dealt with.

3This is not merely a question but also an expression of great surprise and astonishment. It means to imply this: In spite of all those things on account of which this Book is, without any doubt, a Revelation from Allah, do those people yet say stubbornly that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) has

himself forged it and is falsely attributing it to Allah? Don't they feet any shame in uttering such a senseless and baseless accusation? Don't they at all realize what opinion will those people form who are aware of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his work and his discourses and also understand the Book, when they hear their absurd accusation?

4Just as in the first verse it was considered sufficient to say, 'It is without any doubt the Book of God," and no further argument was needed to be advanced to prove the Qur'an to be Divine Word, so in this verse also the only thing being said to refine the disbelievers' charge that the Qur'an was being forged is: "It is the Truth from your Lord." The reason for it is the same as we have given in E.N. 1 above. The listeners were well aware of the person who was presenting the Qur'an, of the environment in which he was presenting it and the confidence and grace with which he was presenting it; they also knew the Book, its diction and literary excellence and its themes; they were also feeling the influence and impact it was having on contemporary society of Makkah. Under those conditions the Book's being the Truth sent down by the Lord of the Worlds, was such an evident factual reality that the mere mention of it in clear and definite terms was enough to refute the accusation of the disbelievers. Any attempt to strengthen this assertion by resort to reasoning would have caused it to be weakened instead. The case would be like this. Supposing it's day and the sun is shining bright, and a stubborn person calls it a dark night. To refute him it would be enough to say: "Do you call it a night when the bright day is clearly visible all around`.'" If after this, one tried to bring logical arguments to prove the day to be day. it would not in any way strengthen the reply but would rather weaken it instead.

5That is; "Just, as its being the Truth and a Revelation from Allah is absolutely certain, so is its being based on wisdom and Allah's mercy for you also evident. You yourselves know that for the past many centuries no Prophet has been raised among you, and you also know that your entire nation has been involved in ignorance and moral degeneration and sheer backwardness. In a state like this if a Prophet has been raised among you to awaken you and show you the right way, you should not be surprised. This was a great need which Allah has fulfilled for the sake of your own welfare and well-being.

One should note that in Arabia the light of the true Faith was first of all spread by the Prophets Hud and-Salih, who lived in the pre-historic age. They were followed by the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael, who lived 2,500 years before the Holy Prophet. After them the last Prophet to be raised in Arabia before the Holy Prophet was the Prophet Shu'aib, who had passed about 2,000 years earlier. This is a very long period. That is why it has been said, and rightly so, that no warner had come to those people. This did not mean that no warner had ever come to them, but it meant that the people had long stood in need of a warner.

Here, another question may arise in the minds, which should be answered straightaway. One may ask: When no Prophet had come to the Arabs for hundreds of years before the Holy Prophet, what would be the basis of accountability of the people who had lived in that age of ignorance? They could not tell guidance from deviation and error. Then, if they had gone astray, how could they be held responsible for

their deviation? The answer is this: The detailed knowledge of the true Faith might have been lost to those people, but even in that age of ignorance the people were not unaware that the true Faith was based on TauhId, and the Prophets had never taught idol-worship to their followers. This truth was also contained in those traditions which the Arabs had received from the Prophets born in their own land, and they were also aware of this through the teachings of the Prophets Moses, David, Solomon and Jesus (peace be upon all of them) who had been born in the land adjoining their own. In the traditions of Arabia also it was well known that in the earliest times the Arabs' real religion was the Religion of Abraham and that idol-worship had been .introduced among them by a person named `Amr bin Luhayy. In spite of the prevalence of shirk and idol-worship, there were living in different parts of Arabia many such people, who rejected shirk, professed Tauhid and openly condemned offering of sacrifices at the shrines of idols. In the age close to the Holy Prophet's own, there had passed people like Quss bin Sa`idat-il-Iyadi, Umayyah bin Abi as-Salt, Suwaid bin `Amr alMustaliqi, Waki' bin Salamah bin Zuhair al-Iyadi', `Amr bin Jundub al-Juhani, Abu Qais Sarmah bin Abi Anas, Zaid bin `Amr bin Nufail, Waraqah bin Naufal, 'Uthman bin al-Huwairith, `Ubaidah bin Jahsh, `Amir bin az-Zarb al-'Advani ' Allaf bin Shahab at-Tamimi; , Al-Mutalammis bin Umayyah al-Kinani; , Zuhair bin Abi Salma, Khalid bin Sinan bin Ghais al-'Absi, `Abdullah al-Quda`i and many others, who were known as Hunafa'. These people publicly professed Tauhid as the basis of the Faith and declared their dissociation from the religion of the mushriks. Obviously they had got this concept from whatever had remained behind from the influence of the teaching of the Prophets. Moreover, the inscriptions belonging to the 4th and 5th centuries A. D. , which have been discovered in Yaman as a result of modern archaeological research and investigation, reveal that a monotheistic religion existed there in that age, whose followers acknowledged ar-Rahman (the All-Merciful) and Rabb-us-sama' wa!-ard (Lord of the heavens and earth) alone as the One and only Deity. An inscription. dated 378 A.D. has been found from the ruins of a house of worship, which says that this house of worship has been built for the worship of "God of heavens" or "Lord of heavens". In an inscription of 465 A.D. there are words which clearly point to the doctrine of Tauhid. Similarly, an inscription of 512 A.D. has been discovered at Zabad, a place between the river Euphrates and Qinnasrin, in northern Arabia, bearing the words: Bism-ilahu, la 'izza illa lahu, /a shukra, ills lahv. All this shows that before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the teachings of the former Prophets had not altogether been forgotten, and there still existed many means which at least reminded man of the truth: "Your God is only One God. " (For further explanation, see E.N. 84 of Surah Al-Furqan).

6Now the second objection of the mushriks which they raised against the Holy Prophet's message of Tauhid, is being dealt with: They were severely critical of him because he rejected their gods and saints and openly invited the people to the creed that there is no helper, no fulfiller of needs except Allah and no answerer of prayers, no remover of ills and no sovereign other than Him.

7For explanation, see E.N. 41 of Al-A'raf, E.N. 4 of Yunus and E.N. 3 of Ar-Ra'd.

8That is, "Your real God is the Creator of the heavens and earth. But you in your folly have set up others than Him as your helpers and supporters in the vast 'Kingdom of this Universe. The Creator of this whole

Universe and whatever it contains is Allah. Here, everything except Himself is created, and Allah has not gone to sleep after having created and made the world go. But He Himself is the Ruler and Sovereign and Sustainer of His Kingdom. Then, how senseless you are that you have set up a few of His creatures as the masters of your destinies! If Allah does not help you, none of them has the power to help you. If Allah should seize you, none of them has the power to secure your liberty. If Allah does not permit, none of them has the power to intercede for you before Him. "

9That is, "The events of a thousand years of your history are a day's work for Allah." He entrusts His scheme of work to the "angels of destiny", who submit their report of work before Him and receive orders for the scheme of the next day (whose length according to your calculation would be a thousand years). "This thing has been expressed at two other places also in the Qur'an, the study of which can help to understand it fully well. The disbelievers of Arabia said, "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) claimed to be a Prophet many years ago. He has warned us again and again that if we did not accept his message and rejected his invitation, we would be seized by Allah's torment. He has been repeating this threat since many years, but the torment has not overtaken us, although we have denied and rejected him clearly over and over again. Had his threats any substance in them, we would have been seized in the torment long ago " In this connection, in Surah AI-Hajj Allah says: "These people are demanding of you to hasten the chastisement. Allah will never fail to fulfil His threat, but a day with your Lord is equal to a thousand years as you reckon." (v. 47)

In Surah AI-Ma'arij (vv. 1-7), it has been said: "An asker has asked for a torment, (the torment) which must befall the disbelievers. There is none to avert it. It is from that God Who is the Owner of the Steps of Ascent. The angels and the Spirit ascend to His Presence in a day whose measure is fifty thousand years. So, have patience, O Prophet, a graceful patience! They think it is far off, but We see it near at hand. "

What is meant to be impressed in these verses is this: Allah's decrees are not passed and enforced in the history of mankind according to the earthly watches and calendars. When a nation is warned that if it adopted such and such an attitude in life, it would meet with such and such an end, the people would be foolish if from this they understood that the predicted consequences would follow their evil acts and deeds immediately. Not to speak of days and months and years, the occurrence of the results may even take centuries.

10That is, "For others one thing may be open and known but countless other things hidden. Whether angels or jinns, prophets or saints, or other pious people, none of them has the knowledge of everything. It is Allah alone Who knows everything. He knows all that has passed, all that is present, and all that will happen in the future. "

11"The All-Mighty": The One Who is dominant over everything: no power in the universe can hinder Him in His Design and Will and obstruct His Command from being enforced. Everything is subdued. to Him

and nothing can resist Him.

12That is, He is not tyrannous to His creatures but is Gracious and Merciful in spite of being overwhelmingly dominant and possessor of all power and authority.

13That is, "In this limitless universe He has created countless numbers of things, but none of them is ugly and ill-shaped: everything has its own special beauty: everything is proportionate and symmetrical in its own way. Whatever He has made for a particular purpose, He has given it the most appropriate, form and invested it with the most :unable qualities for it. No better and more appropriate structure could be conceived, for example, for the eye and the ear which have been made for seeing and hearing. The air has precisely the same qualities which it should have for the purpose for which it has been made, and the water precisely the same qualities for the purpose for which it has been made. No one can point out any defect or flaw in the design of anything made by God; nor can anyone offer an alteration or modification in it."

14That is, "In the beginning He created man directly by His own act of Creation, and- then placed in man himself such a procreative ability that similar men continue being produced by his sperm-drop. By one excellent act He gave life and consciousness and intellect to a combination of earthly elements by His creative Command so that a wonderful creation like man came into being; by another excellent act He placed in man's own organism such a wonderful machinery for the production of similar more men in the future, whose mode of functioning is highly astonishing and amazing.

This is one of those verses of the Qur'an, which points to the direct creation of the first man. The scientists since the time of Darwin have felt greatly critical of this concept and have rejected it with contempt as unscientific. But the fact is that they cannot get rid of the concept of the direct creation of the first germ, if not of the first man, or of the first species of animals. If creationism is not accepted, then one will have to accept the utterly absurd idea that life originated merely accidentally; whereas even the simplest form of life as found in the single cell organism is so full of complexities and subtleties that regarding it as the result of an accident would be a million times more unscientific an idea than what the evolutionists think of creationism. And if once it is accepted that the first germ came into being by an act of direct creation, it would be no longer difficult to accept that the first member of every species of animal life was created by the Creator's own act of creation, and then its race started through different forms of procreation. If accepted this concept would explain away all those riddles and complexities which have remained unsolved in their theory of evolution in spite of all the scientific theorizing by the upholders of Darwinism. (For further explanation, see E.N. 1 of An-Nisa', E.N. 10 and 146 of Al-A'raf, and E.N. 17 of Al-Hijr).

15"Shaped him": developed him from a microscopic organism into a full-fledged human being and perfected him with limbs and other organs of the body.

16"Spirit" does not merely imply the life because of which a living thing moves, but the essential human characteristic which imbues man with consciousness and thought, discretion and judgment, discernment, -and discrimination, by virtue of which he is distinguished from all other earthly creations and becomes possessor of a personality and self and worthy of Allah's vicegerency. Allah has called this "Spirit" His own either because it belongs to Him alone, and its being attributed to Himself is just like a thing's being attributed to its master, or because the attributes of knowledge, thought, consciousness, will, judgment, discretion, etc. with which man has been characterized are a reflection to the attributes of Allah. They have not arisen from any combination of matter, but from Allah Himself. Man has received knowledge from Allah's Knowledge, wisdom from Allah's Wisdom, and discretion and authority from Allah's Authority. He has not received these from a source which is without knowledge, without wisdom and without discretion and authority. (For further explanation, see E.N. 19 of Al-Hijr).

17This is a fine way of saying something. Before the mention of "breathing into him of His spirit", man has been referred to in the third person: "He created him ..... spread his progeny ..... shaped him ..... breathed into him His spirit," for till then he was not even worthy of being addressed. Then, when the spirit had been breathed into him, he became worthy of the honor and it was said: "He gave you the ears . . . gave you the eyes . . . gave you the hearts," for after having been blessed with the Spirit, man became worthy of being addressed.

The ears and the eyes imply the instruments by which man obtains knowledge. Although the senses of taste and touch and smell are also instruments of obtaining knowledge, hearing and sight are the major and by far the more important senses. Therefore, the Qur'an has mentioned only these two at different places as the most important gifts of God to man. "The Heart" implies the mind which arranges the information obtained through the senses and draws inferences from it, and selects a possible way of action and decides to follow it.

18That is, "The wonderful human spirit with such excellent qualities has not been given to you so that you may live like the animals in the world and plan life for yourselves as an animal would. You were given the eyes so that you may see things with insight and not that you should live like the blind people; you were given the cars so that you may hear things with attention and not that you should live like the deaf people; you were given the hearts so that you may understand the reality and adopt the right way in thought and action and not that you should expend all your capabilities for collecting the means of nourishing and sustaining your animality, or that you may devise philosophies and programs of rebellion against your Creator. After having received these invaluable blessings from God, when you adopt polytheism and atheism, when you assume godhead yourself or become servants of other gods, when you lose yourself in sensual pleasure by serving your lusts, you in fact tell your God: "We were not worthy of these blessings: You should have made us a monkey, or a wolf, or an alligator, or a crow, instead of man."

19After answering the disbelievers' objections about the Prophethood and Tauhid now their objection

about the Hereafter, which is the third basic belief of Islam, is being dealt with. The conjunction waw(and) in the beginning of the verse connects this paragraph with the foregoing theme, as if the sequence were like this: "They say: Muhammad is not Allah's Messenger," "They say: Allah is not One and the only Deity," and "They say: we shall not be raised back to life after death.

20The gap between the preceding and this sentence has been left for the listener to fill. The objection of the disbelievers as cited in the first sentence is so absurd that no need has been felt to refute it. Only its citation was regarded as enough to show its absurdity. For the two parts which make up the objection arc both unreasonable. Their saying: "When we have become dust" is meaningless for that which is "we" can never become dust. Dust is the destiny of the body after it has become devoid of the "we" The body itself is not the "we". When alive, limbs and other parts of the body may be cut off one by one, but the "we" remains intact. No part of it is cut off with the cut off limb. And when the "we" has vacated a body, the "we" remains no longer applicable even in its remotest sense although the body still remains intact. That is why a sincere lover goes and buries the body of his beloved, because the beloved is no more in the body. He buries not the beloved but the empty body, which was once the home of his beloved. Thus, the very first premise of the disbelievers' objection is baseless. As for its second part, "Shall we be re-created?" this question containing surprise and denial would not have arisen, had the objectors considered and taken into account the meaning of the "we" and its creation. The present existence of this "we" is nothing more than that a little of coal and iron and lime and sonic other earthly substances got together from here and there to combine themselves into a body, which became the home of the "we". Then what happens when it dies? When the "we" has left .the body, the constituent substances of its abode which had been gathered together from different parts of the earth go back to the same earth. The question is: He who had made this home for the "we", can He not make the same home from the same substances once again and settle the "we" in it? When this was possible before and has in actual fact existed, what can hinder its possibility and its existing as an actual fact once again? These are such things as can be understood by the application of a little of the common sense. But why doesn't man allow his mind to think on these lines? Why does he raise the meaningless objections about the life hereafter and the Hereafter? Leaving out all these details, Allah has answered this question in the second sentence, saying: "The fact is that they disbelieve in the meeting with their Lord." That is, "The real thing is not this that the recreation of man is something odd and remote in possibility, which they cannot understand, but in fact, what prevents them from understanding this is their desire w live freely and independently in the world and commit any sin, any excess that they please and then escape Scot-free from here: they should not be held accountable for anything, nor answerable for any of their misdeeds."

21That is, "Your `ego' will not mix in the dust,` but as soon as its term of action comes to an end, God's angel of death will come and will take it out of the body and seize it completely. No part of it will be allowed to become dust with the body. It will be taken intact into custody and produced before its Lord."

Let us consider in some detail the facts which have been presented in this brief verse:

(1) It says that death does not occur as a matter of course, like the stopping of a watch suddenly when it needs re-winding, but for this purpose Allah has appointed a special angel, who comes to receive the soul precisely in the manner as an official receiver takes something into his custody. From the details which have been mentioned at other places in the Qur'an, it becomes apparent that the chief angel of death has a whole staff of the angels under him, who perform a variety of duties in connection with causing the death, seizing the soul and taking it into custody. Moreover, their treatment of a guilty soul is different from their treatment of a believing, righteous soul. (For details, see An-Nisa': 97, Al-An`am: 93, An-Nahl: 28, Al-Waqi'ah: 83-94).

(2) It also shows that man does not cease to exist after death, but his soul survives the body. The words of the Qur'an: "The angel of death shall seize you completely," point out the same reality. For something which does not exist cannot be seized. Seizing something and taking it into custody implies that the seized thing should be in possession of the seizer.

(3) It also shows that at the time of death that which is seized is not the biological life of man but his self, his ego, which is connoted by the words like "I" and "we" and "you". Whatever personality this ego may have developed during its life-activity in the world, the same is taken out intact as a whole, without effecting any increase or decrease in its characteristics, and the same is made to return to its Lord after death. The same personality will be given a new birth and a new body in the Hereafter; the same will be subjected to trial; the same will be called to account; and the same will have to experience rewards or punishments.

22This will be the scene when after returning to its Lord the human 'ego' will be standing before Him to render an account of its deeds.

23That is, "Had it been Our will w give guidance to the people after having made them observe and experience the reality, We would not have brought you here after making you undergo this hard test in the world. We could have given you such guidance even before. But We had a different scheme for you from the very beginning. We wanted to test you by keeping the reality hidden from your eyes and senses in order to see whether you could recognize it by your intellect after perceiving its signs in the universe and in your own selves or not, whether you could take advantage of the help that We provided to you through Our Prophets and Our Books to recognize the reality or not, and whether after knowing the reality you could attain such control over your self or not that you should free yourselves from the service of your desires and lusts and believe in the reality and mend your ways and attitudes accordingly. You have failed in this test. Now setting the same test once again will be useless. If the second test is set in a condition when you remember everything that you have seen and heard here, it will be no test at all. And if, like before, you are given re-birth in the world, while you do not remember anything and the reality is kept hidden from you, and you are set the test once again as before the result will not be, any different. " (For further explanation, sec Al-Baqarah: 210, Al-An`am: 7-9, 27-28, 158; Yunus: 19; Al-Mu'minun: 99-100).

24The allusion is to what Allah had said, addressing Satan, at the creation of Adam: In vv. 69-88 of Surah Sad the whole story of that time has been related. When Satan refused to prostrate himself before Adam and asked for respite till Resurrection in order to seduce mankind, Allah had replied: "The truth is this, and the truth only I speak, that I shall fill Hell with you and all those who follow you from among mankind. "

The word ajma'in (all together) here does not mean that all jinns and all men will be cast into Hell, but it means that the satans and the men who follow them, will be cast into Hell all together.

25That is, "You became so absorbed in pleasure-seeking in the world that you totally forgot that you had to meet your Lord on this Day."

26In other words, they do not regard it as below their dignity to give up their false notions and believe in Allah's Revelations and adopt His service and obedience. Their conceit does not hinder them from accepting the truth and obeying their Lord.

27That is, "They worship their Lord instead of enjoying sensuous pleasures at night. They are not like the world-worshipers, who seek entertainments in music and dancing, drinking and merry-making, in the night in order to get relief from the day's fatigue and labor and toil. Instead, when they are free from their day's work and duties, they devote themselves to the adoration of their Lord, spend their nights in His remembrance, tremble out of fear of Him, and pin all their hopes on Him." "Who forsake their beds" does not mean that they do not sleep at all at night, but that they spend a part of the night in Allah's worship.

28In the original, rizq: lawful provisions. Unlawful provisions have nowhere been called rizq by Allah. The verse therefore means: They spend from whatever little or much of pure provisions We have given them; they do not overspend and do not grab unlawful wealth in order to meet their expenses.

29Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Imam Ahmad have in different ways cited on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet said: "Allah says: I have got ready for My righteous servants that which has neither been seen by the eye, nor heard by the ear, nor ever conceived by any man. " The same thing has been reported with a little difference in wording by Hadrat Abu Sa' id Khudri, Mughirah bin Shu`bah and Sahl bin Sa'd as-Sai'di from the Holy Prophet and related with authentic links by Muslim. Ahmed, Ibn Jarir and Tirmidhi.

30Here mu min (believer) and Fasiq (sinner) have been used as two contrasting terms. Mu 'min is he who believes in Allah as his Lord and the One and only Deity and adopts obedience of the Law which Allah has sent down through His Prophets. Contrary to this, Fasiq is he who adopts the attitude of fisq (disobedience, rebellion, independence and obedience to others than Allah).

31That is, "They can neither have the same way of thinking and life in the world nor can they be treated alike by God in the Hereafter."

32That is, "The Gardens will not merely be a means of entertainment for them, but the same will be their dwelling-places in which they will live for ever.

33"The greater torment" is the torment of the Hereafter, which will be imposed on the guilty ones in consequence of disbelief and disobedience. "The lesser torment", in contrast, implies those calamities which afflict man even in this world, e.g., diseases in the life of individuals, deaths of the near and dear ones, serious accidents, losses, failures, etc. and storms, earthquakes, floods, epidemics, famines, riots, wars and many other disasters, in collective life, which affect hundreds of thousands of the people simultaneously. The reason given for sending these calamities is that the people should take heed even before they are involved in the "greater torment" and give up the attitude and way of life in consequence of which they will have to suffer the greater torment ultimately. In other words, it means this: Allah has not kept man in perfect security in the world so that he may live in full peace, and become involved in the misunderstanding that there is no power above him, which can cause him harm. But Allah has so arranged things that He sends disasters and calamities on individuals as well as on nations and countries from time to time, which give man the feeling that he is helpless and that there is about him an All-Powerful Sovereign Who is ruling His universal Kingdom. These calamities remind each individual and group and nation that there is another Power above him Who is controlling their destinies. Everything has not been placed at man's disposal. The real Power is in the hand of the Sovereign. When a calamity from Him descends on man, you can neither avert it by any artifice, nor can escape from it by invoking a jinn, or a spirit, or a god or goddess, or a prophet or saint. Considered in this light, these calamities are not mere calamities but warnings of God, which are sent to make man conscious of the reality and to remove his misunderstandings. If man learns a lesson from these and corrects his belief and conduct here in the world, he will not have to face the greater torment of God in the Hereafter."

34"The Signs of his Lord" include all kinds of the Signs. A perusal of all the Qur'anic verses in this regard shows that these Signs are of the following six kinds:

(1) The Signs which are found in everything from the earth to the heavens and in the system of the universe as a whole.

(2) The Signs which are found in man's own creation and in his constitution and body.

(3) The Signs which are found in man's intuition, his unconscious and subconscious mind and in his moral concepts.

(4) The Signs which are found in the continuous experience of human history.

(5) The Signs which are found in the , coming down of the earthly and heavenly calamities on man.

(6) And, over and above all these, the Revelations which Allah sent through His Prophets so that man may be made conscious in a rational way of those realities, which are pointed out by all the above-mentioned Signs.

All these Signs proclaim consistently and clearly: `O man, you are neither without God, nor the servant of many gods, but your God is only One God: no other way of life is correct for you except the way of His service and obedience. You have not been left to live a free and independent and irresponsible lift in this world, but you have to appear before yow God and render an account of your deeds after your life-activity here has come to an end, and be rewarded or punished accordingly. Therefore, it is in yow own interest that you should follow the guidance which your God has sent through His Prophets and His Books for your instruction and desist from an independent way of lift." Now, obviously, the man who has been warned in so many different ways, for whose admonition countless different Signs have been provided, and who has been blessed with the eyes to see and the cars to hear and the mind to think, and yet he closes his eyes to all these Signs, and closes his cars to the admonitions of his well-wishers, and uses his mind also for inventing stupid and blind philosophies only can be a wretched and wicked person. He only deserves to be given full punishment for rebellion when he appears before his God after the expiry of the period of test in the world.

35The address apparently is to the Holy Prophet, but the real addressees are the people who doubted his Prophethood and the revelation of the Divine Book to him. From here the discourse turns to the same theme that was mentioned in the beginning of the Surah (vv. 2-3). The disbelievers of Makkah were saying: "No book has come down to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) from Allah. He 'has himself forged it, but claims that it has been sent down by Allah." The first answer to this was given in the initial verses. This is the second answer. The first thing said in this regard is: "O Prophet, these ignorant people regard it as impossible that a Book should be sent down to you, and want that every other person also should at least be involved in suspicion about it even if he does not reject it altogether. But the revelation of a Book to a servant from Allah is not a novel and new event, which might have occurred for the first time today in human history. Before this Books have been sent down to several Prophets, the most welt-known among these being the Book which was sent down to the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him). A Book of the same nature has been sent down to you now. Therefore, there is nothing odd and strange in this, which may cause doubts in the minds of the people. "

36That is, "That Book was made a means of guidance for the children of Israel, and this Book, likewise, has been sent down for your guidance. " As has already been elucidated in verse 3, the full meaning of this verse can be understood only if one keeps in view the historical background. History bears evidence, and the disbelievers of Makkah also were not unaware, that the children of Israel had been passing miserable lives for centuries in Egypt. At such a. Juncture, Allah. raised the Prophet Moses among them,

and delivered them from bondage. Then He sent down the Book among them, because of which the same very suppressed and subdued nation got guidance and became a prominent nation in the world. Alluding to this historical background, the Arabs are being told: 'Just as that Book was sent for the guidance of the Israelites, so has this Book been sent for your guidance. "

37That is, "Whatever progress the children of Israel made and whatever heights they attained by that Book, was not simply due to the reason that a Book had been sent among them. It was not an amulet that they might have hung around their necks and they might have started ascending the steps of glory under its good and protective influence. But the glory was the direct result of their firm faith in the Revelations of Allah, and of the patience and perseverance that they showed in following the Divine Commandments. Among the Israelites themselves also leadership fell to the lot of only those who were true believers of the Book of Allah and were not tempted at all by the greed of worldly gains and enjoyments. When in their love of the truth they stood firm against every danger, endured every loss and affliction, and exerted their utmost against every hostile force, from the lusts of their own selves to the external enemies of the true Faith, then only did they become the leaders of the world. The object is to warn the disbelievers of Arabia that just as the coming of the Book of Allah had decided the destinies of the children of Israel, so will this Book decide the destinies among you. Now only those people will become the leaders, who will believe in it and follow the Truth presented by it patiently and resolutely. Those who turn away from it are destined to end up in failure and wretchedness."

38The allusion is to the differences and schisms in which the children of Israel were involved after they became deprived of the faith and belief and gave up obedience of their righteous leaders and were given to the worship of the world. One result of this is obvious and before the whole world: they suffer from disgrace and infamy and misfortune; the other result is that which is not known, to the world: it will appear on the Day of Resurrection."

39That is, "Have they not learned any lesson froth this continuous experience of history that to whichever nation a Messenger came, the decision of its destiny became dependent upon the attitude it adopted with regard to him? If it rejected its Messenger, it could not escape its doom. The only people to escape were those who believed in the Messenger. Those who disbelieved became an object of warning for ever and ever."

40Keeping the context in view it becomes obvious that this thing has not been mentioned here for the sake of providing an argument for the life-after-death, as generally found in the Qur'an, but in this context its object is different. This, in fact, contains a subtle allusion to this effect: "Just as a person seeing a barren land cannot imagine that it will ever bloom and swell with vegetation, .but a single shower of the rain sent by God changes its color altogether, so is the case with the message of Islam at this juncture. People think that it is not going to gain ground, but a single manifestation of Allah's power and grace will cause it to gain such glory that people will be amazed at its progress."

41That is, "You say that Allah's succor will at last reach you and your rejectors will be struck down by His wrath. Then, tell us: When will this happen? When will judgment be passed between you and us?"

42That is, "It is not a thing for which you should feel so impatient and restless. When the torment of Allah comes, you will get no time to mend your ways. Make the best of the time which is available before the coming of the torment. If you will believe only when you see the torment, it will not avail you anything then.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

33. Surah Al Ahzab (The Clans)

Name

The Surah derives its name *Al-Ahzab* from verse 20.

Period of Revelation

The Surah discusses three important events which are: the Battle of the Trench (or *Al-Ahzab*: the Clans), which took place in Shawwal, A. H. 5; the raid on Bani Quraizah, which was made in Dhil-Qa'dah, A. H. 5; and the Holy Prophet's marriage with Hadrat Zainab, which also was contracted in Dhil-Qa'dah, A. H. 5. These historical events accurately determine the period of the revelation of this Surah.

Historical Background

The Islamic army's setback in the Battle of Uhud (A. H. 3) that resulted from the error of the archers appointed by the Holy Prophet so boosted up the morale of the Arab pagans and the Jews and the hypocrites that they started entertaining the hope that they would soon be able to exterminate Islam and the Muslims completely. Their high state of morale can be judged from the events that occurred in the first year after Uhud. Hardly two months had passed then the tribe of Bani Asad of Najd began to make preparations for a raid on Madinah, and the Holy Prophet had to dispatch an expedition under Abu Salamah to counteract them. In Safar A. H. 4 some people of the tribes of Adal and Qarah asked the Holy Prophet to send some men to instruct them in Islam. Accordingly six of the Companions were allowed to accompany them for the purpose. But when they reached Raji (a place between Rabigh and Jeddah), they summoned Hudhail against them, who killed four of the Companions, and took the other two (Hadrat Khubaib bin Adi and Hadrat Zaid bin ad-Dathinnah) to Makkah and sold them to the enemy. Then in the same month of Safar, on the request of a chief of Bani Amir, the Holy Prophet sent another deputation of 40 (according to others, 70) preachers, consisting of the Ansar young men, to Najd. But they were also betrayed. The people of Usayyah and Ri'l and Dhakwan, tribes of Bani Sulaim, surrounded them suddenly at Bir Maunah and slew all of them. Meanwhile the Jewish tribe of Bani an-Nadir of Madinah, getting encouragement, continued to commit

breaches of the treaties; so much so that in Rabi'ul Awwal, A.H. 4, they plotted against the life of the Holy Prophet himself. Then in Jamadi al-Ula, A. H. 4, Bani Thalbah and Bani Muharib, the two tribes of Bani Ghatafan, started making preparations to attack Madinah and the Holy Prophet had to go to punish them. Thus, after their setback at Uhud, the Muslims went on encountering repercussions continuously for seven to eight months.

However, it was the Holy Prophet's determination and wisdom and his great Companions' spirit of sacrifice that changed these adverse conditions completely within a short span of time. The economic boycott by the Arabs had made life hard for the people of Madinah. All the polytheistic tribes around Madinah were becoming rebellious. Inside Madinah itself the Jews and the hypocrites were beat upon mischief. But the successive steps taken by a handful of the sincere Muslims, under the leadership of the Holy Prophet, not only restored the image of strength of Islam in Arabia but also increased it manifold.

Raids Preceding the Battle of the Trench

The first such step was taken immediately after the Battle of Uhud. The very next day when quite a large number of Muslims lay wounded and the martyrdom of the near and dear ones was being mourned in many houses, and the Holy Prophet himself was injured and sad at the martyrdom of his uncle, Hadrat Hamzah, he called out to the devoted servants of Islam to accompany him in pursuit of the pagans so as to deter them from returning and attacking Madinah again. The Holy Prophet's assessment was absolutely correct. He knew that, although the Quraish had retreated without taking any advantage of their almost complete victory, they would certainly regret their folly when they would halt and consider the whole matter coolly on the way, and would return to attack Madinah again. Therefore, he decided to go in pursuit of them, and 630 of of the Muslims at once volunteered to accompany him. When they reached Hamra al-Asad on the way to Makkah and camped there for three days, the Holy Prophet came to know through a sympathetic non- Muslim that Abu Sufyan had stayed at Ar-Rauha, 36 miles short of Madinah, with an army 2,978 strong: they were regretting their error and were, in fact, planning to return and attack Madinah once agaln. But when they heard that the Holy Prophet was coming in pursuit of them with an army, they lost heart and gave up their plan. Thus, not only were the Quraish deterred by this action but the other enemies living around Madinah also realized that the Muslims were being led by a person, who was highly well informed, wise and resolute, and that the Muslims were ever ready to lay down their lives at his command.(For further details, see Introduction to Surah Al-i-`Imran and E.N. 122 thereof).

Then as soon as the Bani Asad started making Preparations for a raid on Madinah, the Holy Prophet's secret agents gave him timely information about their intention. Thus, before they could come in force to attack Madinah, he sent an army 150 strong, under Hadrat Abu Salamah (the first husband of Hadrat Umm Salamah) to punish them. They took Bani Asad by surprise, who fled in panic leaving all their possessions behind, which fell into the Muslim hands.

After this came the turn of the Bani an-Nadir. The day they plotted against the life of the Holy Prophet, and the secret was disclosed, the Holy Prophet ordered them to leave Madinah within ten days and warned that anyone who remained behind after that would be put to death. Abdullah bin Ubayy, the chief of the hypocrites of Madinah, encouraged them to defy the order and refuse to leave Madinah. He even promised to help them with 2,000 men, and assured them that the Bani Ghatafan from Najd also would come to their aid. Accordingly, the Bani an- Nadir

sent word that they would not leave no matter what the Holy Prophet might do.

As soon as the time limit of ten days come to an end, the Holy Prophet laid siege to their quarters, but none of their supporters had the courage to come to their rescue. At last, they surrendered on condition that every three of them would be allowed to load a camel with whatever they could carry and go away leaving the rest of their possessions behind. Thus, the whole suburbs of the city which were inhabited by the Bani an-Nadir, and their gardens and their fortresses and other properties fell to the Muslims, and the people of this treacherous tribe became scattered in Khyber, Wad il Qura and Syria.

Then the Holy Prophet turned his attention to the Bani Ghatafan, who were preparing for a war against Madinah. He took 400 of the Muslims and overtook them at Dhat ar-Riqa. They were so taken by surprise that they fled their houses without a struggle and took refuge in the mountains.

After this in Shaban A. H. 4, the Holy Prophet went forth to Badr to fight Abu Sufyan. At the end of the Battle of Uhud, he had challenged the Holy Prophet and the Muslims, saying, "We shall again meet you in combat at Badr next year." In reply the Holy Prophet announced through a Companion: "All right: we accept your challenge." Accordingly, at the appointed time he reached Badr with 1,500 of the Muslims. From the other side, Abu Sufyan left Makkah with an army of 2,000 men, but could not have the courage to march beyond Marr-az-Zahran (modern, Wadi Fatimah). The Holy Prophet waited for him at Badr for eight days; the Muslims during these days did profitable business with a trading party. This incident help- ed more than restore the image of strength of the Muslims that had been tarnished at Uhud. It also made the whole of Arabia realize that the Quraish alone could no longer resist Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). (Please also refer to E.N. 124 of Al-i-`Imran).

This image and position of the Muslims was further strengthened by another event. Dumat al-Jandal (modern, Al-Jauf) was an important place at the border between Arabia and Syria. When the caravans of the Arabs, trading between Iraq in the south and Syria and Egypt in the north, passed that way, they were harassed and looted by the natives. In Rabi al- Awwal, A. H. 5, the Holy Prophet himself went to punish them with an army of 1,000 men. They could not muster up courage to come out and fight him and, therefore, fled the place. This caused the whole of northern Arabia to dread the power of Islam, and the tribes began to realize that the great power emerging from Al-Madinah was formidable and could no longer be resisted by one or a few of the tribes.

The Battle of the Trench

Such were the conditions when the Battle of the Trench took place. It was in fact a combined raid by many of the Arab tribes, who wanted to crush the power of Madinah. It had been instigated by the leaders of the Bani an-Nadir, who had settled in Khyber after their banishment from Madinah. They went round to the Quraish and Ghatafan and Hudhail and many other tribes and induced them to gather all their forces together and attack Madinah jointly. Thus, in Shawwal, A. H. 5, an unprecedentedly large army of the Arab tribes marched against the small city of Madinah. From the north came Jews of Bani an-Nadir and Bani Qainuqa who after their banishment from Madinah, had settled in Khaiber and Wad il Qura. From the east advanced the tribes of Ghatafan, Bani Sulaim, Fazarah, Murrah, Ashja, Sad, Asad, etc. and from the south the Quraish, along with a large force of their allies. Together they numbered from ten to twelve thousand men.

Had it been a sudden attack, it would have been disastrous. But the Holy Prophet was not unaware of this in Madinah. His intelligence men and the sympathizers of the Islamic movement and the people influenced by it were present in every tribe, who kept him informed of the enemy's movements. Even before the enemy could reach his city, he got a trench dug out on the north-west of Madinah in six days, and having the Mount Salat their back, took up a defensive position with 3,000 men in the protection of the Trench. To the south of Madinah there were many gardens (even now there are) so that it could not be attacked from that side. To the east there are lava rocks which are impassable for a large army. The same is the case with the south western side. The attack, therefore, could be made only from the eastern and western sides of the Uhud, which the Holy Prophet had secured by digging a trench. The disbelievers were not at all aware that they would have to counter the trench outside Madinah. This kind of a defensive stratagem was unknown to the Arabs. Thus, they had to lay a long siege in winter for which they had not come prepared.

After this, only one alternative remained with the disbelievers: to incite the Jewish tribe of Bani Quraizah, who inhabited the south eastern part of the city, to rebellion. As the Muslims had entered a treaty with them that in case of an attack on Madinah they would defend the city along with them, the Muslims had made no defensive arrangement there and had even sent their families to take shelter in the forts situated on that side. The invaders perceived this weakness of the Islamic defenses. They sent Huyayy bin Akhtab, the Jewish leader of the Bani an-Nadir, to the Bani Quraizah so as to induce them to break the treaty and join the war. In the beginning, they refused to oblige and said that they had a treaty with Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) who had faithfully abided by it and given them no cause for complaint. But when Ibn Akhtab said to them, "Look, I have summoned the united force of entire Arabia against him: this is a perfect opportunity to get rid of him. If you lose it, you will never have another opportunity," the anti Islamic Jewish mind prevailed over every moral consideration and the Bani Quraizah were persuaded to break the treaty.

The Holy Prophet received news of this. He at once told Sad bin Ubadah, Sad bin Muadh, Abdullah bin Rawahah and Khawwat bin Jubair, chiefs of the Ansar, to go and find out the truth. He advised them that if they found Bani Quraizah still loyal to the treaty, they should return and say so openly before the Muslim army; however, if they found that they were bent upon treachery they should only inform him so that the common Muslims would not be disheartened. On reaching there the Companions found the Bani Quraizah fully bent on mischief They told the Companions openly, "There is no agreement and no treaty between us and Muhammad." At this they returned to the Islamic army and submitted their report to the Holy Prophet, saying, "'Adal and Qarah." That is, "The Quraizah are bent upon doing what the Adal and Qarah had done with the preachers of Islam at Raji."

This news spread among the Muslims and caused great consternation among them, for they had been encircled and their city had been endangered on the side where there existed no defensive arrangement and where they had also sent their families to take shelter in the forts. This further increased the activities of the hypocrites and they started making psychological attacks to break the morale of the Muslims. One said, "How strange! We were being foretold that the lands of Caesar and Chosroes would fall to us, but here we are that not one of us can go out even to relieve himself." Another one asked for permission to leave his post at the Trench so that he could go and protect his own house which was in danger. Another one started making secret propaganda to the effect: "Settle your affair with the invaders yourselves and hand over Muhammad to them." This was a highly critical hour of trial, which exposed every person who harbored any hypocrisy in his heart. Only the true and sincere Muslims remained firm

and steadfast in their resolve and devotion.

In the meantime Nuaim bin Masud, a member of the Ashja branch of the Ghatafan tribe, became a Muslim and came before the Holy Prophet and submitted: "No one as yet knows that I have embraced Islam: You can take from me whatever service you please." The Holy Prophet replied: "Go and sow the seeds of discord among the enemy.'" So, first of all, Nu'aim went to the Quraizah with whom he was on friendly terms, and said to them, "The Quraish and the Ghatafan can become wearied of the siege and go back, and they will lose nothing, but you have to live here with the Muslims. Just consider what will be your position if the matter turns that way. Therefore, I would advise you not to join the enemy until the outsiders should send some of their prominent men as hostages to you." This had the desired effect upon the Bani Quraizah and they decided to demand hostages from the united front of the tribes. Then he went to the chiefs of the Quraish and the Ghatafan and said to them, "The Bani Quraizah seem to be slack and irresolute. May be they demand some men as hostage from you, and then hand them over to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) to settle their affair with him. Therefore, be very firm and cautious in your dealing with them." This made the leaders of the united front suspicious of Bani Quraizah. and they sent them a message, saying, "We are tired of the long siege; let there be a decisive battle; let us, therefore, make a general assault simultaneously from both the sides." The Bani Quraizah sent back the word, saying, "We cannot afford to join the war unless you hand over some of your prominent men to us as hostages." The leaders of the united front became convinced that what Nuaim had said was true. They refused to send hostages. And the Bani Quraizah, on the other side, also felt that Nuaim had given them the correct counsel. Thus, the strategy worked: it divided the enemy against itself.

The siege was prolonged for more than 25 days. It was winter. The supply of food and water and forage was becoming more and more scarce everyday and division in the camp was also a great strain on the state of morale of the besiegers. Then, suddenly one night a severe windstorm accompanied by thunder and lightning hit the camp. It added to the cold and darkness. The wind overthrew the tents and put the enemy in disarray. They could not stand this severe blow of nature. They left the battleground even during the night and returned to their homes. When the Muslims awoke in the morning, there was not a single enemy soldier to be seen on the battlefield. The Holy Prophet, finding the battlefield completely empty, said: "The Quraish will never be able to attack you after this: now you will take the offensive." This was a correct assessment of the situation. Not only the Quraish but the united front of all the enemy tribes had made their final assault against Islam and had failed. Now they could no longer dare invade Madinah; now the Muslims were on the offensive.

Raid on Bani Quraizah

When the Holy Prophet returned from the Trench, Gabriel came to him in the early afternoon with the Divine Command the the Muslims should not lay aside the arms yet but should deal with the Bani Quraizah as well. On receipt of this Command, the Holy Prophet got announced: "Everyone who is steadfast in obedience should not offer his Asr Prayer till he reaches the locality of the Bani Quraizah." Immediately after this, he dispatched Hadrat Ali with a contingent of soldiers as vanguard towards the Quraizah. When they reached there, the Jews climbed on to their roof tops and started hurling abuses on the Holy Prophet and the Muslims, but their invectives could not save them from the consequences of their treachery. They had committed breach of the treaty right at the most critical moment of the war, joined hands with the invaders and endangered the entire population of Madinah. When they saw the contingent of Hadrat Ali, they thought that they had come only to overawe them. But when the whole

Islamic army arrived under the command of the Holy Prophet himself and laid siege to their quarters, they were very frightened. They could not stand the severity of the siege for more than two or three weeks. At last, they surrendered themselves to the Holy Prophet on the condition that they would accept whatever decision Hadrat Sad bin Muadh, the chief of the Aus, would give. They had accepted Hadrat Sad as their judge because in the pre-Islamic days the Aus and the Quraizah had been confederates and they hoped that in view of the past ties he would help them quit Madinah as had happened in the case of the Bani Qainuqa and the Bani an-Nadir before. The people of the Aus themselves wished that Hadrat Sad treat their previous allies leniently. But Hadrat Sad had just experienced and seen how the two Jewish tribes who had been allowed to leave Madinah previously had instigated the other tribes living around Madinah and summoned the united front of ten to twelve thousand men against the Muslims. He was also aware how treacherously this last Jewish tribe had behaved right on the occasion when the city was under attack from outside and threatened the safety of the whole of its population. Therefore, he decreed that all the male members of the Quraizah should be put to death, their women and children taken prisoners, and their properties distributed among the Muslims. The sentence was carried out duly. When the Muslims entered their strongholds they found that the treacherous people had collected 1,500 swords, 300 coats of mail, 2,000 spears and 1,500 shields in order to join the war. If Allah's succor had not reached the Muslims, all this military equipment would have been used to attack Madinah from the rear right at the time when the polytheists were making preparations for a general assault on the Muslims after crossing the Trench. After this disclosure there remained no doubt that the decision of Hadrat Sad concerning those people was absolutely correct.

Social Reforms

Though the period of two years between the Battles of Uhud and the Trench was a period of disturbance and turmoil and the Holy Prophet and his Companions could hardly relax in peace and security even for a day, the work of reform as a whole and the reconstruction of the Muslim society continued uninterrupted. This was the time when the Islamic laws pertaining to marriage and divorce were complemented; the law of inheritance was introduced, drinking and gambling were prohibited, and the new laws and regulations concerning many other aspects of the economic and social life were enforced.

In this connection, an important thing that needed to be reformed was the question of the adoption of a son. Whoever was adopted by the Arabs as a son was regarded as one of their own offspring: he got share in inheritance; he was treated like a real son and real brother by the adopted mother and the adopted sister; he could not marry the daughter of his adopted father and his widow after his death. And the same was the case if the adopted son died or divorced a wife. The adopted father regarded the woman as his real daughter-in-law. This custom clashed in every detail with the laws of marriage and divorce and inheritance enjoined by Allah in Surahs Al-Baqarah and An-Nisa. It made a person who could get no share in inheritance entitled to it at the expense of those who were really entitled to it. It prohibited marriage between the men and the women who could contract marriage perfectly lawfully. And, above all, it helped spread the immoralities which the Islamic Law wanted to eradicate. For a real mother and a real sister and a real daughter cannot be like the adopted mother and the adopted sister and the adopted daughter, however one may try to sanctify the adopted relations as a custom. When the artificial relations endued with customary sanctity are allowed to mix freely like the real relations, it cannot but produce evil results. That is why the Islamic law of marriage and divorce, the law of inheritance and the law of the prohibition of adultery required that the concept and custom of regarding the adopted son as the real son should be eradicated completely.

This concept, however, could not be rooted out by merely passing a legal order, saying, The adopted son is not the real son. The centuries old prejudices and superstitions cannot be changed by mere word of mouth. Even if the people had accepted the command that these relations were not the real relations, they would still have looked upon marriage between the adopted mother and the adopted son, the adopted brother and the sister, the adopted father and the daughter, and the adopted father- in-law and the daughter-in- law odious and detestable. Moreover, there would still exist some freedom of mixing together freely. Therefore, it was inevitable that the custom should be eradicated practically, and through the Holy Prophet himself. For no Muslim could ever conceive that a thing done by the Holy Prophet himself, and done by him under Allah's Command, could be detestable. Therefore, a little before the Battle of the Trench, the Holy Prophet was inspired by Allah that he should marry the divorced wife of his adopted son, Zaid bin Harithah (may Allah be pleased with him), and he acted on this Command during the siege of the Bani Quraizah. (The delay probably was caused for the reason that the prescribed waiting period had not yet ended, and in the meantime the Holy Prophet had to become busy in the preparation for war).

Storm of Propaganda at the Marriage of Hadrat Zainab

As soon as the marriage was contracted, there arose a storm of propaganda against the Holy Prophet. The polytheists, the hypocrites and the Jews, all were burning with jealousy at his triumphs which followed one after the other. The way they had been humbled within two years after Uhud, in the Battle of the Trench, and in the affair of the Quraizah, had made them sore at heart. They had also lost hope that they could ever subdue him on the battlefield. Therefore, they seized the question of this marriage as a god send for themselves and thought they would put an end to his moral superiority, which was the real secret of his power and success. Therefore, stories were concocted that Muhammad, God forbid, had fallen in love with his daughter-in-law, and when the son had come to know of this, he divorced his wife, and the father married his daughter-in-law. The propaganda, however, was absurd on the face of it. Hadrat Zainab was the Holy Prophet's first cousin. He had known her from childhood to youth. So, there could be no question of his falling in love with her at first sight. Then he himself had arranged her marriage with Hadrat Zaid under his personal influence, although her whole family had opposed it. They did not like that a daughter of the noble Quraish should be given in marriage to a freed slave. Hadrat Zainab herself was not happy at this arrangement. But everyone had to submit to the Holy Prophet's command. The marriage was solemnized and a precedent was set in Arabia that Islam had raised a freed slave to the status of the Quraishite nobility. If the Holy Prophet had in reality any desire for Hadrat Zainab, there was no need of marrying her to Hadrat Zaid; he himself could have married her. But in spite of all this, the shameless opponents invented stories of love, spread them with great exaggeration and publicized them so vehemently that even some Muslims also began to accept them as true.

Preliminary Commandments of Purdah

The fact that the tales invented by the enemies also became topics of conversation among the Muslims was a clear sign that the element of sensuality in society had crossed all limits. If this malady had not been there, it was not possible that minds would have paid any attention whatever to such absurd and disgusting stories about a righteous and pure person like the Holy Prophet. This was precisely the occasion when the reformative Commandments pertaining to the law of *Hijab* or Purdah were first enforced in the Islamic society. These reforms were introduced in

this Surah and complemented a year later in Surah An-Nur, when a slander was made on the honor of Hadrat Aishah.(For further details, see Introduction to Surah An-Nur).

Domestic Affairs of the Holy Prophet

There were two other problems which needed attention at that time. Though apparently they pertained to the Holy Prophet's domestic life, it was necessary to resolve them for the domestic and mental peace of the person, who was exerting every effort to promote the cause of Allah's Religion and was day and night absorbed in this great mission. Therefore, Allah took these two problems also officially in His own hand.

The first problem was that economically the Holy Prophet at that time was in straitened circumstances. During the first four years he had no source of income whatever. In 4 A. H. after the banishment of the Bani an-Nadir, a portion of their evacuated lands was reserved for his use by the Command of Allah, but it was not enough for his family requirements. On the other hand, the duties of the office of Prophethood were so onerous that they were absorbing all his energies of the mind and body and heart and every moment of his time, and he could not make any effort at all for earning his livelihood. In conditions such as these when his wives happened to disturb his mental peace because of economic hardships he would feel doubly strained and taxed.

The other problem was that before marrying Hadrat Zainab, he had four wives already in the houses: Hadrat Saudah, Hadrat Aishah, Hadrat Hafsah, and Hadrat Umm Salamah. Hadrat Zainab was his fifth wife. At this the opponents raised the objection, and the Muslims also started entertaining doubts, that as for others it had been forbidden to keep more than four wives at a time, but how the Holy Prophet himself had taken a fifth wife also.

Subject Matter and Topics

These were the questions that were engaging the attention of the Holy Prophet and the Muslims at the time Surah Al-Ahzab was revealed, and replies to the same form the subject matter of this Surah.

A perusal of the theme and the background shows that the Surah is not a single discourse which was sent down in one piece but it consists of several injunctions and commandments and discourses, which were sent down, one after the other, in connection with the important events of the time, and then were put together in one Surah. Its following parts stand out clearly distinguished from one another:

1. Verses 1-8 seem to have been sent down before the Battle of the Trench. Their perusal, keeping the historical background in view, shows that at the time of their revelation Hadrat Zaid had already divorced Hadrat Zainab. The Holy Prophet was feeling the necessity that the concepts and customs and superstitions of ignorance concerning the adoption of the son should be eradicated, and he was also feeling that the delicate and deep sentiments the people cherished about the adopted relations merely on emotional grounds would not be rooted out until he himself took the initiative to eradicate the custom practically. But at the same time he was hesitant and considering seriously that if he married the divorced wife of Hadrat Zaid then, the hypocrites and the Jews and the *mushriks* who were already bent on mischief would get a fresh excuse to start a propaganda campaign against Islam. This was the occasion of the revelation of vv. 1-8.

2. In verses 9-27 an appraisal has been made of the Battle of the Trench and the raid against the Bani Quraizah. This is a clear proof that these verses were sent down after these events.

3. The discourse contained in vv. 28-35 consists of two parts. In the first part, Allah has given a notice to the wives of the Holy Prophet, who were being impatient of the straitened circumstances, to the effect:"Choose between the world and its adornments, and Allah, His Prophet and the Hereafter. If you seek the former, you should say so openly: you will not be kept back in hardship even for a day, but will be sent off gracefully. And if you seek the latter, you should cooperate with Allah and His messenger and bear patiently." In the second part, initial steps were taken towards the social reforms whose need was being felt by the minds moulded in the Islamic pattern themselves. In this regard, reform was started from the house of the Holy Prophet himself and his wives were commanded to avoid behaving and conducting themselves in the ways of the pre Islamic days of ignorance, ,to remain in their houses with dignity, and to exercise great caution in their conversation with the other men. This was the beginning of the Commandments of Purdah.

4. Verses 36-48 deal with the Holy Prophet's marriage with Hadrat Zainab. In this section the opponents' objection about this marriage have been answered; the doubts that were being created in the minds of the Muslims have been removed; the Muslims have been acquainted with the Holy Prophet's position and status; and the Holy Prophet himself has been counseled to exercise patience on the false propaganda of the disbelievers and the hypocrites.

5. In verse 49 a clause of the law of divorce has been laid down. This is a unique verse which was sent down on some occasion probably in connection with the same events.

6. In verses 50-52 a special regulation of marriage has been laid down for the Holy Prophet, which points out that he is an exception to the several restrictions that have been imposed on the other Muslims in regard to marital life.

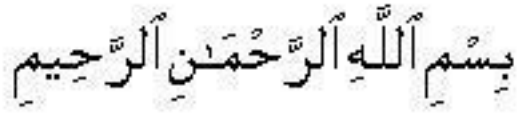
7. In verses 53-55 the second step was taken towards social reform. It consists of the following injunctions: Restriction on the other men to visit the houses of the Holy Prophet's wives; Islamic etiquette concerning visits and invitations; the law that only the near relatives could visit the holy wives in their houses; as for the other men, they could speak to or ask them a thing from behind a curtain; the injunction that the Holy Prophet's wives were forbidden for the Muslims like their mothers; and none could marry any of them after him.

8. In verses 56-57 warning was given to stop criticizing the Holy Prophet's marriage and his domestic life, and the believers instructed not to indulge in fault finding like the enemies of Islam, but to invoke the blessings of Allah for their Prophet; moreover, they were instructed that they should avoid falsely accusing one another even among themselves, not to speak of the person of the Prophet.

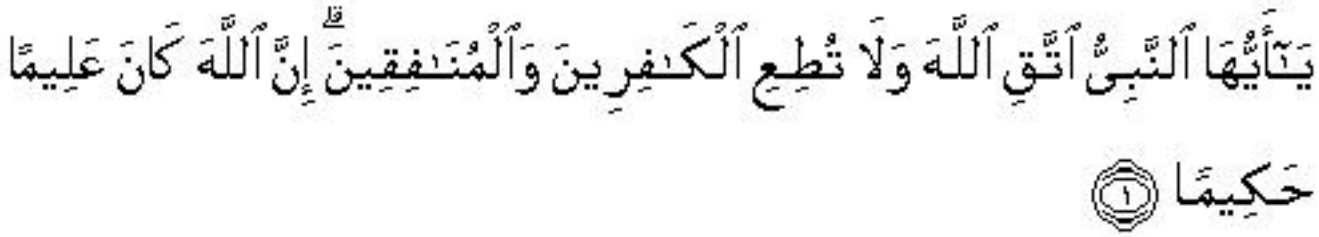
9. In verse 59 the third step for social reform was taken. All the Muslim women were commanded that they

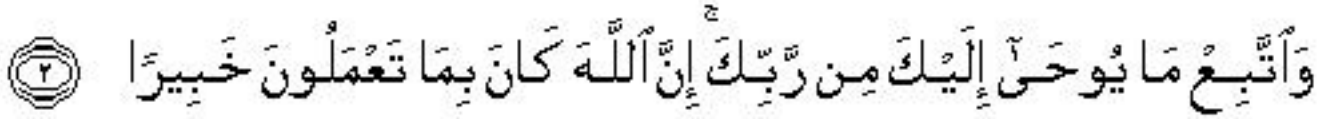
should come out well covered with the outer garments and covering their faces whenever they came out of their houses for a genuine need.

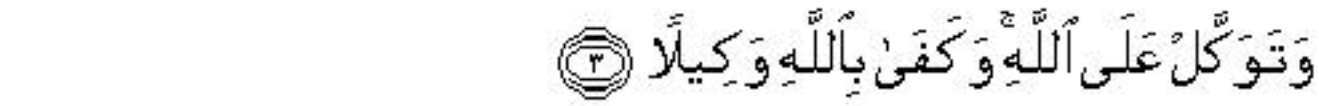
After this till the end of the Surah the hypocrites and other foolish and mean people have been rebuked for the propaganda that they were carrying on at that time against Islam and the Muslims.


بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.


يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ ٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُطِعِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١﴾


وَٱتَّبِعْ مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾


وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] O Prophet,[1] fear Allah and do not obey the disbelievers and the hypocrites; in fact, Allah alone is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[2] Follow that which you are being inspired with from your Lord: Allah is aware of whatever you do.[3] Have trust in Allah, for Allah alone is sufficient as a Guardian.[4]

مَّا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِى جَوْفِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَزْوَٰجَكُمُ
ٱلَّٰٓـِٔى تُظَٰهِرُونَ مِنْهُنَّ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَآءَكُمْ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ ۚ
ذَٰلِكُمْ قَوْلُكُم بِأَفْوَٰهِكُمْ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَقُولُ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِى ٱلسَّبِيلَ ﴿٤﴾

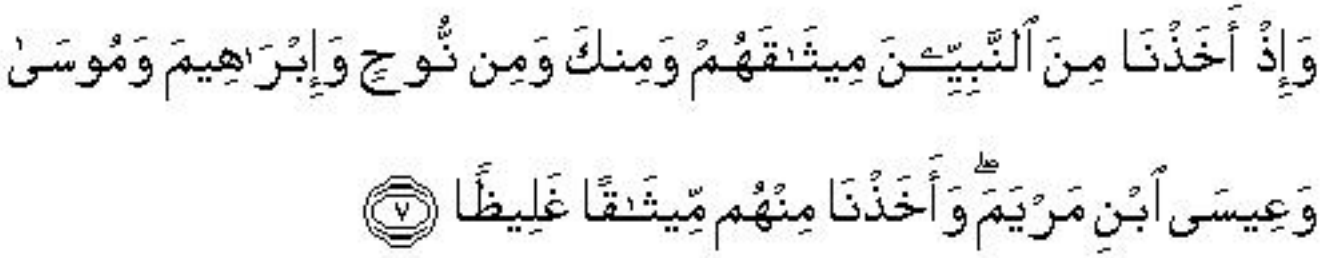
ٱدْعُوهُمْ لِءَابَآئِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ
فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَمَوَٰلِيكُمْ ۚ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَآ أَخْطَأْتُم بِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن
مَّا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥﴾

[4-5] Allah has not put two hearts in a person's body,[5] nor has He made those wives of yours whom you divorce by Zihar your mothers,[6] nor has made your adopted sons your real sons.[7] These are the things which you utter from your mouths, but Allah says that which is based on the reality and He alone guides to the Right Way. Call your adopted sons after their fathers' names: this is more just in the sight of Allah.[8] And if you do not know who their fathers are, then they are your brothers in faith and your friends.[9] There is no blame on you if you say something unintentionally, but you will surely be to blame for what you say with the intention of your hearts.[10] Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[11]

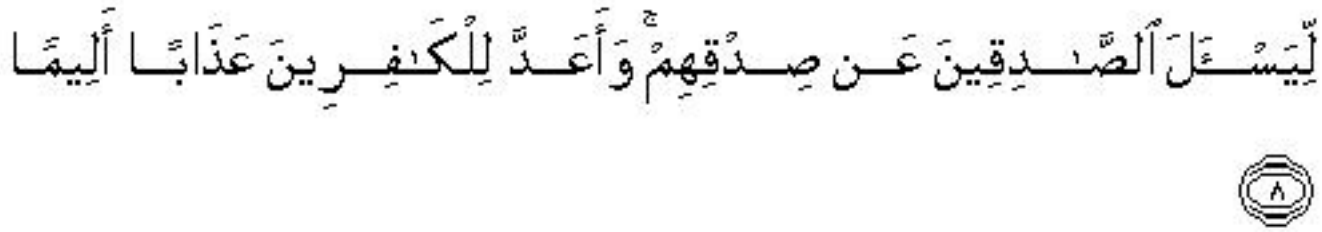
ٱلنَّبِىُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَأَزْوَٰجُهُۥٓ أُمَّهَٰتُهُمْ ۗ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْحَامِ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِى كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ إِلَّآ
أَن تَفْعَلُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآئِكُم مَّعْرُوفًا ۚ كَانَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مَسْطُورًا ﴿٦﴾

[6] Indeed, the Prophet is preferable for the believers to their own selves,[12] and the Prophet's wives are their mothers.[13] But, according to the Book of Allah, the blood relations have a greater right on one another than the other

believers and the migrants. However, you may do any good (you wish) to your friends.[14] This is written in the Divine Book.

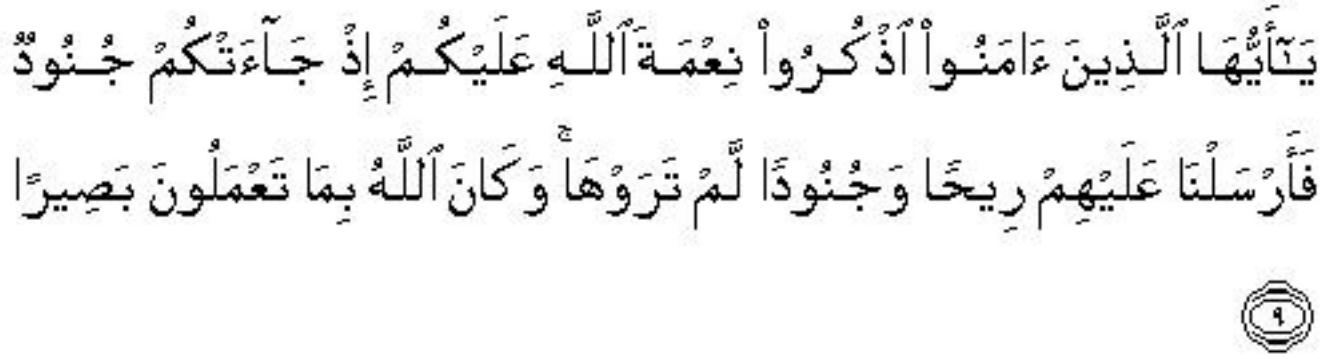


وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِيثَـٰقَهُمْ وَمِنكَ وَمِن نُّوحٍ وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ
وَعِيسَى ٱبْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَـٰقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٧﴾

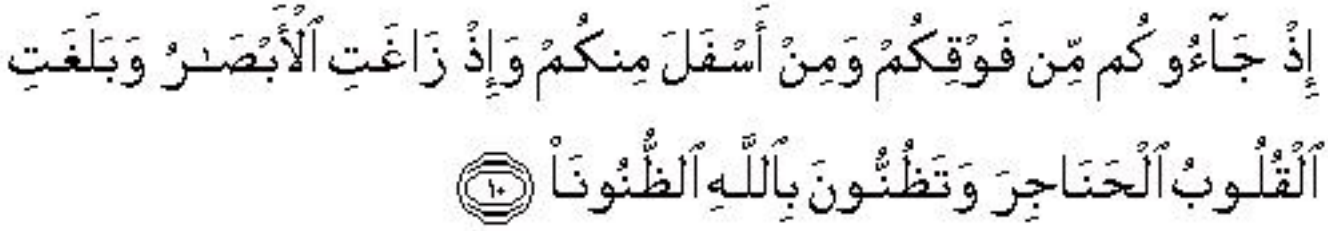


لِّيَسْـَٔلَ ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ عَن صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لِلْكَـٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
﴿٨﴾

[7-8] And (O Prophet,) remember the Covenant that We took from all the Prophets-from you as well as from Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jesus son of Mary. We took a solemn Covenant from all of theme[15] so that (their Lord) may question the truthful about their truth;[16] as for the disbelievers, He has indeed reserved a painful punishment for them.[17]



يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَآءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ
فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا وَجُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا
﴿٩﴾



إِذْ جَآءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ ٱلْأَبْصَـٰرُ وَبَلَغَتِ
ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّونَ بِٱللَّهِ ٱلظُّنُونَا۠ ﴿١٠﴾

هُنَالِكَ ٱبْتُلِىَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُوا۟ زِلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا ﴿١١﴾

[9-11] O people[18] who have believed! Remember the bounty of Allah, which He has (just now) shown you. When the hosts came down on you, We sent against them a violent wind and the armies which you could not see.[19] Allah was watching all that you were doing. When the enemies came upon you from above and from below you?[20] when eyes were petrified due to fear and the hearts leapt up to the throats, and you began to entertain all sorts of doubts about Allah, the believers then were thoroughly tested and severely shaken.[21]

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ مَّا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

وَإِذْ قَالَت طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَٱرْجِعُوا۟ ۚ وَيَسْتَـْٔذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمُ ٱلنَّبِىَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِىَ بِعَوْرَةٍ ۖ إِن يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴿١٣﴾

وَلَوْ دُخِلَتْ عَلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَقْطَارِهَا ثُمَّ سُئِلُوا۟ ٱلْفِتْنَةَ لَأَتَوْهَا وَمَا تَلَبَّثُوا۟ بِهَآ إِلَّا يَسِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾

وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا۟ عَٰهَدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مِن قَبْلُ لَا يُوَلُّونَ ٱلْأَدْبَٰرَ ۚ وَكَانَ
عَهْدُ ٱللَّهِ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿١٥﴾

[12-15] Remember the time when the hypocrites and all those whose hearts were diseased were openly saying that the promises Allah and His Prophet had made with them[22] were nothing but a delusion; when a party of them said, "O people of Yathrib, you have no chance to stay, so go back,"[23] when a section of them sought leave of the Prophet, saying, "Our homes are insecure,"[24] whereas they were not insecure.[25] in fact, they wished to flee (the battle front). If the enemies had made entry from all sides of the city, and these people had been urged to treachery,[26] they would have committed it, and would have little hesitated .to become partners in it. They had indeed already made a pledge with Allah that they would not show their backs; and the pledge made with Allah had to be questioned.[27]

قُل لَّن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلْفِرَارُ إِن فَرَرْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ أَوِ ٱلْقَتْلِ وَإِذًا لَّا تُمَتَّعُونَ
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٦﴾

قُلْ مَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يَعْصِمُكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً ۚ
وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٧﴾

[16-17] O Prophet, say to them, "If you flee from death or slaughter, your flight will avail you nothing; after that you will enjoy life but for a little while only."[28] Ask them, "Who can protect you from Allah if He intends harm for you? And who can prevent Him if He intends to show you mercy?" In fact, they cannot find a protector and helper against Allah.

۞ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُعَوِّقِينَ مِنكُمْ وَٱلْقَآئِلِينَ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا ۖ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ
ٱلْبَأْسَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾

أَشِحَّةً عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ ٱلْخَوْفُ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ تَدُورُ
أَعْيُنُهُمْ كَٱلَّذِى يُغْشَىٰ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَإِذَا ذَهَبَ ٱلْخَوْفُ سَلَقُوكُم
بِأَلْسِنَةٍ حِدَادٍ أَشِحَّةً عَلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ فَأَحْبَطَ ٱللَّهُ
أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾

يَحْسَبُونَ ٱلْأَحْزَابَ لَمْ يَذْهَبُوا۟ ۖ وَإِن يَأْتِ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ يَوَدُّوا۟ لَوْ أَنَّهُم بَادُونَ
فِى ٱلْأَعْرَابِ يَسْـَٔلُونَ عَنْ أَنۢبَآئِكُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كَانُوا۟ فِيكُم مَّا قَٰتَلُوٓا۟ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
﴿٢٠﴾

[18-20] Allah knows very well those among you, who create hindrances (in the war efforts), who say to their brothers, "Come to us,"[29] who take part in the fighting only to be counted in, who are ever reluctant to join you.[30] When there is danger, they look towards you, their eyes rolling like the one who is fainting, being on the point of death. But when the danger is gone, they come out to greet you with their scissor-like sharp tongues in greed for gains.[31] These people have not believed at all; so Allah has made all their works fruitless,[32] and this is an easy thing for Allah.[33] They think that the invading hosts are not yet gone, and if they should attack again they would (rather) wish to be in the desert among the Bedouins and seek information about you from there. However, even if they remained among you, they would take but little part in the fighting.

لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِى رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْأَخِرَ وَذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

وَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلْأَحْزَابَ قَالُواْ هَـٰذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَصَدَقَ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ ۚ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّآ إِيمَـٰنًا وَتَسْلِيمًا ﴿٢٢﴾

مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُواْ مَا عَـٰهَدُواْ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُۥ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنتَظِرُ ۖ وَمَا بَدَّلُواْ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾

لِّيَجْزِىَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ بِصِدْقِهِمْ وَيُعَذِّبَ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقِينَ إِن شَآءَ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾

[21-24] There was indeed the best model for you in the Messenger of Allah,[34] for every such person who looks forward to Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much.[35] And when the true believers (at that time)[36] saw the invading hosts, they cried out, "This is what Allah and His Messenger had promised us: Allah and His Messenger were absolutely true."[37] This increased them all the more in faith and resignation.[38] There are among the believers those who have been true in their pledge to Allah: some one of them has fulfilled his vow, and some other is waiting for it,[39] they have made no change in their attitude. (All this happened) so that Allah may reward the truthful for their truthfulness, and punish the hypocrites, or accept their repentance as He will. Indeed Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.

وَرَدَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِغَيۡظِهِمۡ لَمۡ يَنَالُواْ خَيۡرٗاۚ وَكَفَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٱلۡقِتَالَۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ قَوِيّٗا عَزِيزٗا ٢٥

وَأَنزَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَٰهَرُوهُم مِّنۡ أَهۡلِ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ مِن صَيَاصِيهِمۡ وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلرُّعۡبَ فَرِيقٗا تَقۡتُلُونَ وَتَأۡسِرُونَ فَرِيقٗا ٢٦

وَأَوۡرَثَكُمۡ أَرۡضَهُمۡ وَدِيَٰرَهُمۡ وَأَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ وَأَرۡضٗا لَّمۡ تَطَـُٔوهَاۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٗا ٢٧

[25-27] Allah turned back the disbelievers: they retreated in their rage without gaining any advantage, and Allah was sufficient to fight on behalf of the believers: Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty. Allah brought down from their fortresses those of the people of the Book, who had joined forces with the invaders[40] and created such terror in their hearts that some of them you are slaying today and some taking as prisoners. He made you heirs. of their land and their dwellings and their wealth and gave you that land which you had never trodden before. Allah is All-Powerful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزۡوَٰجِكَ إِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدۡنَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيۡنَ أُمَتِّعۡكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحۡكُنَّ سَرَاحٗا جَمِيلٗا ٢٨

وَإِن كُنتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلدَّارَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَٰتِ
مِنكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

[28-29] O Prophet,[41] say to your wives, "If you seek the world and its adornments, come, I shall give you of these and send you off in a good way. But if you seek Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, you should rest assured that Allah has prepared a great reward for those of you who do good."[42]

يَٰنِسَآءَ ٱلنَّبِىِّ مَن يَأْتِ مِنكُنَّ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ يُضَٰعَفْ لَهَا
ٱلْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

۞ وَمَن يَقْنُتْ مِنكُنَّ لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا نُّؤْتِهَآ أَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ
وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهَا رِزْقًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

[30-31] Wives of the Prophet, whoever among you commits a manifest indecency, will be doubly punished.[43] This is an easy thing for Allah.[44] And whoever among you obeys Allah and His Prophet, and does good works, We shall doubly reward her,[45] and for her We have prepared an honorable provision.

يَٰنِسَآءَ ٱلنَّبِىِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ۚ إِنِ ٱتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِٱلْقَوْلِ
فَيَطْمَعَ ٱلَّذِى فِى قَلْبِهِۦ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ﴿٣٢﴾

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ ٱلْجَـٰهِلِيَّةِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ۖ وَأَقِمْنَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَءَاتِينَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَطِعْنَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ
ٱلرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ ٱلْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

وَٱذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِنْ ءَايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْحِكْمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

[32-34] Wives of the Prophet, you are not like the other women.[46] If you are God fearing, do not talk in a soft voice lest the man of the diseased heart should cherish false hopes from you, but speak in an unaffected manner.[47] Stay in your houses,[48] and do not go about displaying your fineries as women used to do in the days of ignorance.[49] Establish the Salat, pay the Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only intends to remove uncleanliness from you, O people of the Prophet's household, and purify you completely.[50] Remember the Revelations of Allah and the wise sayings which are recited in your houses.[51] Surely, Allah is the Knower of everything[52] and is All-Aware.

إِنَّ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَٱلْمُسْلِمَـٰتِ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَـٰتِ وَٱلْقَـٰنِتِينَ وَٱلْقَـٰنِتَـٰتِ
وَٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ وَٱلصَّـٰدِقَـٰتِ وَٱلصَّـٰبِرِينَ وَٱلصَّـٰبِرَٰتِ وَٱلْخَـٰشِعِينَ
وَٱلْخَـٰشِعَـٰتِ وَٱلْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَٱلْمُتَصَدِّقَـٰتِ وَٱلصَّـٰٓئِمِينَ وَٱلصَّـٰٓئِمَـٰتِ
وَٱلْحَـٰفِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَٱلْحَـٰفِظَـٰتِ وَٱلذَّٰكِرِينَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَٱلذَّٰكِرَٰتِ
أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

[35] Most surely[53] the men and the women who have surrendered themselves to Allah;[54] who are believing,[55] obedient,[56] truthful,[57] and patient;[58] who bow down before Allah,[59] practice charity,[60] observe the fasts,[61] guard their private parts[62] and remember Allah much.[63] Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward.[64]

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥٓ أَمْرًا أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ
ٱلْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَن يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَٰلًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٣٦﴾

[36] It[65] does not behoove a believing man and a believing woman that when Allah and His Messenger have given their decision in a matter, they should exercise an option in that matter of theirs; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Prophet, has indeed strayed into manifest error.[66]

وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِىٓ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَٱتَّقِ
ٱللَّهَ وَتُخْفِى فِى نَفْسِكَ مَا ٱللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى ٱلنَّاسَ وَٱللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَن
تَخْشَىٰهُ ۖ فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَٰكَهَا لِكَىْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِىٓ أَزْوَٰجِ أَدْعِيَآئِهِمْ إِذَا قَضَوْا۟ مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ
ٱللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾

[37] O Prophet,[67] remember the time when you were saying to the man,[68] whom Allah as well as you had favored,"Keep your wife and fear Allah."[69] You were at that time keeping hidden in your heart that which Allah intended to reveal: you were fearing the people, whereas Allah has a greater right that you should fear Him.[70] So, when Zaid had fulfilled his desire of her,[71] We married (the divorced woman) to you[72] so that there remains no hindrance for the believers in regard to the wives of their adopted sons when they have fulfilled their desire of them.[73] And Allah's Command had to be carried out.

مَّا كَانَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ ۖ سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ فِى ٱلَّذِينَ
خَلَوْا۟ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَّقْدُورًا ﴿٣٨﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَلِّغُونَ رِسَٰلَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَخْشَوْنَهُۥ وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ أَحَدًا إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۗ
وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿٣٩﴾

[38-39] There is no harm for the Prophet to do a thing which Allah has " ordained for him.[74] The same has been the Way of Allah with regard to all the Prophets who have gone before, and Allah's Command is an absolutely settled decree.[75] (This is the Way of Allah for those) who convey His messages, who fear Him alone and fear none but One God: Allah is enough to take account.[76]

مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَآ أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ ۗ
وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

[40] (O people) Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophets and Allah is the Knower of everything.[77]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾

وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُصَلِّى عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتُهُۥ لِيُخۡرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِۚ وَكَانَ بِٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿٤٣﴾

تَحِيَّتُهُمۡ يَوۡمَ يَلۡقَوۡنَهُۥ سَلَٰمٌۚ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمۡ أَجۡرًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٤٤﴾

[41-44] O you who have believed, remember Allah much and glorify Him morning and evening.[78] He it is Who blesses you, and His angels pray for His blessings for you, so that He may bring you out of darkness into light: He is very Kind to the believers.[79] Their salutation on the day they meet Him will be "Peace",[80] and Allah has prepared for them an honorable reward.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ شَٰهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى ٱللَّهِ بِإِذۡنِهِۦ وَسِرَاجًا مُّنِيرًا ﴿٤٦﴾

وَبَشِّرِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ فَضۡلًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٤٧﴾

وَلَا تُطِعِ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ وَٱلۡمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَدَعۡ أَذَىٰهُمۡ وَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى ٱللَّهِۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٤٨﴾

[45-48] O Prophet,[81] We have sent you as a witness,[82] a bearer of good news and a warner,[83] an inviter to Allah by His leave[84] and a luminous lamp. Give good news to those who have believed (in you) that there are great bounties in store for them from Allah, so do not yield to the disbelievers and the hypocrites, disregard their persecution and put your trust in Allah: for Allah is sufficient for being entrusted with all one's affairs.

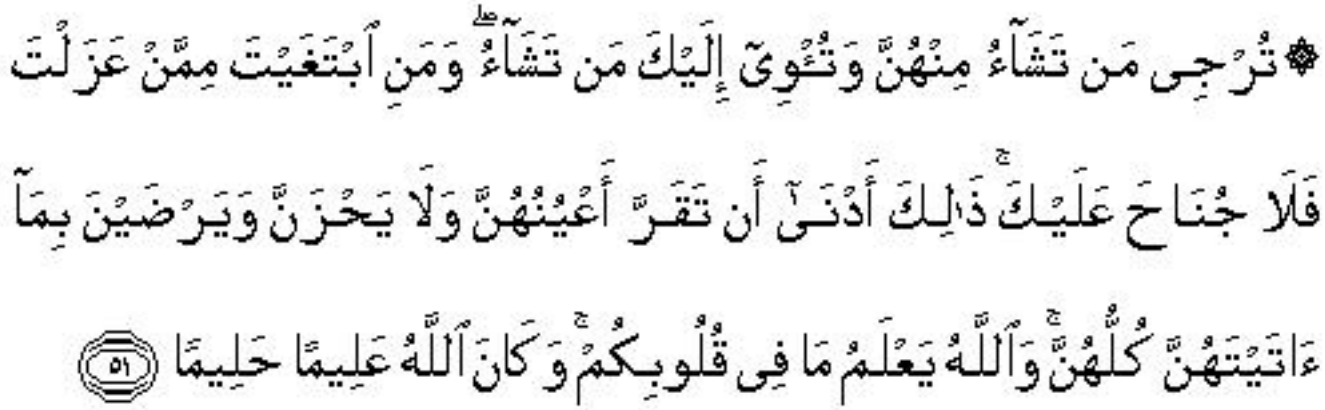
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ثُمَّ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِن قَبْلِ أَن
تَمَسُّوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُّونَهَا ۖ فَمَتِّعُوهُنَّ وَسَرِّحُوهُنَّ
سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

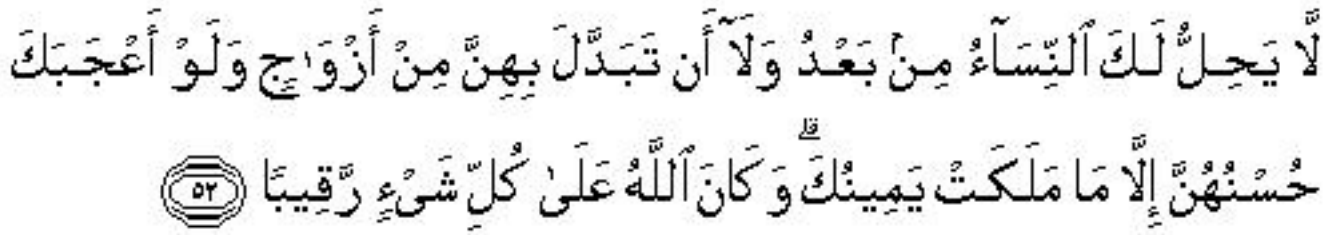
[49] O you who have believed, when you marry the believing women, and then divorce them before you have touched them,[85] they do not have to fulfill a waiting term, whose completion you may demand of them; so provide them with something and send them off gracefully.[86]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ إِنَّآ أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَٰجَكَ ٱلَّٰتِىٓ ءَاتَيْتَ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ
يَمِينُكَ مِمَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّٰتِكَ وَبَنَاتِ
خَالِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَٰلَٰتِكَ ٱلَّٰتِى هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَٱمْرَأَةً مُّؤْمِنَةً إِن وَهَبَتْ
نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِىِّ إِنْ أَرَادَ ٱلنَّبِىُّ أَن يَسْتَنكِحَهَا خَالِصَةً لَّكَ مِن دُونِ
ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا فَرَضْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِىٓ أَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ لِكَيْلَا يَكُونَ عَلَيْكَ حَرَجٌ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٥٠﴾

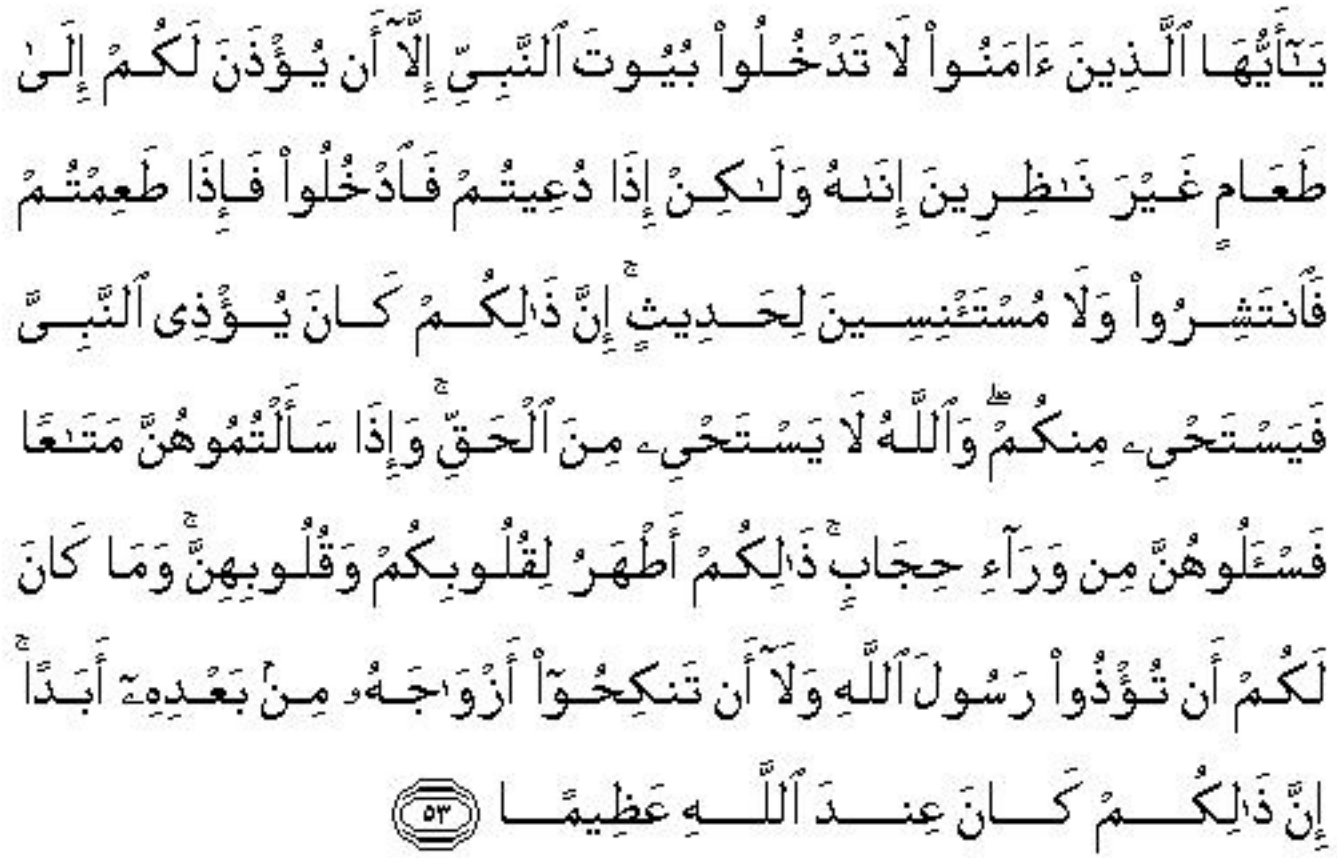
[50] O Prophet, We have made lawful to you those of your wives, whose dowers you have paid,[87] and those women who come into your possession out of the slave girls granted by Allah, and the daughters of your paternal uncles

and aunts, and of your maternal uncles and aunts, who have migrated with you, and the believing woman who gives herself to the Prophet if the Prophet may desire to marry her.[88] This privilege is for you only, not for the other believers.[89] We know what restrictions We have imposed on the other believers concerning their wives and slave girls. (You have been made an exception) so that there may be no hindrance to you;[90] and Allah is All Forgiving, All Merciful.


۞ تُرۡجِي مَن تَشَآءُ مِنۡهُنَّ وَتُـٔۡوِيٓ إِلَيۡكَ مَن تَشَآءُۖ وَمَنِ ٱبۡتَغَيۡتَ مِمَّنۡ عَزَلۡتَ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡكَۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدۡنَىٰٓ أَن تَقَرَّ أَعۡيُنُهُنَّ وَلَا يَحۡزَنَّ وَيَرۡضَيۡنَ بِمَآ
ءَاتَيۡتَهُنَّ كُلُّهُنَّۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمۡۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَلِيمًا ٥١


لَّا يَحِلُّ لَكَ ٱلنِّسَآءُ مِنۢ بَعۡدُ وَلَآ أَن تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنۡ أَزۡوَٰجٖ وَلَوۡ أَعۡجَبَكَ
حُسۡنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتۡ يَمِينُكَۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ رَّقِيبًا ٥٢

[51-52] You are granted the option that you may keep aside any of your wives you please, and keep to yourself any of them you please, and call back any of them you had set aside: there is no blame on you in this regard. Thus, it is expected that their eyes will be cooled and they will not grieve, and they will all remain well satisfied with whatever you give them.[91] Allah knows whatever is in your hearts, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Forbearing.[92] No other women are lawful to you after this, nor are you allowed to have other wives instead of them, even if their beauty may be very pleasing to you.[93] You may, however, have slave-girls.[94] Allah is Watchful over everything.


يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَدۡخُلُواْ بُيُوتَ ٱلنَّبِيِّ إِلَّآ أَن يُؤۡذَنَ لَكُمۡ إِلَىٰ
طَعَامٍ غَيۡرَ نَٰظِرِينَ إِنَىٰهُ وَلَٰكِنۡ إِذَا دُعِيتُمۡ فَٱدۡخُلُواْ فَإِذَا طَعِمۡتُمۡ
فَٱنتَشِرُواْ وَلَا مُسۡتَـٔۡنِسِينَ لِحَدِيثٍۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمۡ كَانَ يُؤۡذِي ٱلنَّبِيَّ
فَيَسۡتَحۡيِۦ مِنكُمۡۖ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَسۡتَحۡيِۦ مِنَ ٱلۡحَقِّۚ وَإِذَا سَأَلۡتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَٰعٗا
فَسۡـَٔلُوهُنَّ مِن وَرَآءِ حِجَابٖۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ أَطۡهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمۡ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّۚ وَمَا كَانَ
لَكُمۡ أَن تُؤۡذُواْ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَن تَنكِحُوٓاْ أَزۡوَٰجَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦٓ أَبَدًاۚ
إِنَّ ذَٰلِكُمۡ كَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٣﴾

إِن تُبۡدُواْ شَيۡـًٔا أَوۡ تُخۡفُوهُ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾

[53-54] O you who have believed, do not enter the houses of the Prophet without permission,[95] nor stay watching for the meal time; but if you are invited to meals, do come,[96] and when you have taken food, disperse. Do not engage in talk and discussion,[97] for such behavior causes trouble to the Prophet but he is shy of saying anything, and Allah does not feel shy in telling the truth. If you have to ask the wives of the Prophet for something, ask for it from behind a curtain. This is a better way for the purity of your as well as their hearts.[98] It is not at all permissible that you should trouble the Messenger of Allah,[99] nor is it permissible that you should marry his wives after him.[100] This is a grave offense in the sight of Allah. Whether you reveal something or conceal it, Allah has full knowledge of everything.[101]

لَّا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡهِنَّ فِيٓ ءَابَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبۡنَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ إِخۡوَٰنِهِنَّ وَلَآ أَبۡنَآءِ إِخۡوَٰنِهِنَّ
وَلَآ أَبۡنَآءِ أَخَوَٰتِهِنَّ وَلَا نِسَآئِهِنَّ وَلَا مَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُهُنَّۚ وَٱتَّقِينَ ٱللَّهَۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ شَهِيدًا ﴿٥٥﴾

[55] There is no blame on the wives of the Prophet that they are visited in their houses by their fathers, their sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons,[102] their familiar women[103] and their slaves.[104] (O women,) you should avoid the disobedience of Allah, for Allah observes everything.[105]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتَهُۥ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِيِّۚ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ صَلُّواْ عَلَيۡهِ
وَسَلِّمُواْ تَسۡلِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

[56] Indeed Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet.[106] O you who have believed, you also should ask and send blessings and peace on him.[107]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡذُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمۡ
عَذَابٗا مُّهِينٗا ﴿٥٧﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡذُونَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنَٰتِ بِغَيۡرِ مَا ٱكۡتَسَبُواْ فَقَدِ ٱحۡتَمَلُواْ
بُهۡتَٰنٗا وَإِثۡمٗا مُّبِينٗا ﴿٥٨﴾

[57-58] Allah has cursed in this world and in the Hereafter those who cause trouble to Allah and His Messenger, and has prepared for them a disgraceful punishment.[108] And those who cause trouble to the believing men and women for no fault of theirs, have indeed born on their head the burden of a grave slander[109] and a manifest sin.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّأَزۡوَٰجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَآءِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ يُدۡنِينَ عَلَيۡهِنَّ مِن
جَلَٰبِيبِهِنَّۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدۡنَىٰٓ أَن يُعۡرَفۡنَ فَلَا يُؤۡذَيۡنَۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورٗا رَّحِيمٗا
٥٩

[59] O Prophet, enjoin your wives and daughters and the women of the believers that they should let down over their faces a part of their outer-garments;[110] it is expected that they will thus be recognized and not molested.[111] Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[112]

۞لَّئِن لَّمۡ يَنتَهِ ٱلۡمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٞ وَٱلۡمُرۡجِفُونَ
فِي ٱلۡمَدِينَةِ لَنُغۡرِيَنَّكَ بِهِمۡ ثُمَّ لَا يُجَاوِرُونَكَ فِيهَآ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗا ٦٠

مَّلۡعُونِينَۖ أَيۡنَمَا ثُقِفُوٓاْ أُخِذُواْ وَقُتِّلُواْ تَقۡتِيلٗا ٦١

سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ فِي ٱلَّذِينَ خَلَوۡاْ مِن قَبۡلُۖ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ تَبۡدِيلٗا
٦٢

[60-62] If the hypocrites and those whose hearts are diseased[113] and the scandal-mongers in Madinah[114] do not

desist, We shall stir you up to take action against them; then they will hardly be able to live in this city as your neighbors. They will be cursed from every side and will be seized wherever they are found and killed mercilessly. This has been the Way of Allah with regard to such people before, and you will never find any change in the Way of Allah.[115]

يَسْـَٔلُكَ ٱلنَّاسُ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ
لَعَلَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ تَكُونُ قَرِيبًا ﴿٦٣﴾

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَعَنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴿٦٤﴾

خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ لَّا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٦٥﴾

يَوْمَ تُقَلَّبُ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِى ٱلنَّارِ يَقُولُونَ يَٰلَيْتَنَآ أَطَعْنَا ٱللَّهَ وَأَطَعْنَا
ٱلرَّسُولَا ﴿٦٦﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّآ أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَآءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا ٱلسَّبِيلَا ۠
﴿٦٧﴾

رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ وَٱلْعَنْهُمْ لَعْنًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٦٨﴾

[63-68] The people ask you as to when will Resurrection take place.[116] Say, "The knowledge of it is with Allah alone: you may not know that it may well be near at hand. In any case, it is certain that Allah has laid curse on the disbelievers and has prepared for them a blazing Fire, in which they will live for ever and will have no protector and helper. On, the Day their faces are rolled about on the Fire, they will say, "Would that we had obeyed Allah and His Messenger!" And (they) will say, "Our Lord, we obeyed our chiefs and our great men, and they led us astray from the right path. Lord, give them a double chastisement and curse them severely."[117]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاذَوْا۟ مُوسَىٰ فَبَرَّأَهُ ٱللَّهُ
مِمَّا قَالُوا۟ ۚ وَكَانَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَجِيهًا ﴿٦٩﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾

يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَٰلَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ
فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

[69-71] O you who have believed,[118] do not be like those who had realigned Moses; then Allah cleared him of what they said of him, and he was honorable in the sight of Allah.[119] O believers fear Allah and say the right thing: Allah will adorn your deeds and will overlook your errors Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, has indeed attained a great success.

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا ٱلْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا
وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿٧٢﴾

لِّيُعَذِّبَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ وَيَتُوبَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾

[72-73] We offered this trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains but they refused to bear it and were afraid of it, the but man undertook to bear it. Indeed, he is unjust and ignorant.[120] (The inevitable result of bearing the burden of the trust is) that Allah should Punish the hypocritical men and women and mushrik men and women, and accept the repentance of the believing men and women: Allah is indeed Forgiving and Merciful.

1As we have mentioned in the introduction to the Surah, these verses were sent down at a time when Hadrat Zaid had already divorced Hadrat Zainab. , Then the Holy Prophet himself was feeling, and Allah also had inspired him with this, that that was the right time for striking at the root of the tradition and customs of ignorance regarding the adopted relations, and that he should take the initiative and marry the divorced wife of his adopted son (Zaid) so that the custom was completely eradicated. But the reason why he was hesitant in this regard was the fear that this would provide a strong excuse to the disbelievers and the hypocrites; who were already burning with jealousy at his successive victories, to start a propaganda campaign against him. This fear was not due to any apprehension for personal defamation, but for the reason that it would harm Islam; it would cause mistrust of Islam among the people who were inclined towards it; it would make the neutral people to join the enemy; and it would cause the weak-minded people among the Muslims themselves to be involved in doubts and suspicions. Therefore, the Holy Prophet thought it was unwise to take a step for the eradication of a custom of ignorance, which would harm the greater interests and objectives of Islam.

2In the first very sentence, in the beginning of the discourse, Allah removed all the apprehensions of the Holy Prophet, as if to say: "We know better what is useful and beneficial for ow Religion and what is not. We know what would be wise and what unwise in this regard. Therefore, you should not behave in a manner which would suit the disbelievers and the hypocrites, but you should behave in a manner which is according to Our W ill. You should fear Us and not the disbelievers and the hypocrites."

3This sentence is addressed to the Holy Prophet as well as to the Muslims and the opponents of Islam. It means : "If the Prophet earns defamation by acting according to the Command of Allah, and bears patiently the attacks of the enemy on his honor, his devoted and sincere services will not remain hidden from Allah. . The state of the Muslims who remain steadfast in their loyalty to the Prophet and of those who are involved in doubts and suspicions will be known to Allah. And Allah will also not remain unaware of the attempts of the disbelievers and the hypocrites who try to defame the Prophet."

4The addressee of this sentence is again the Holy Prophet. He is being instructed to the effect "Carry out the duty that is being entrusted to you with full confidence in Allah, and do not care at all even if the whole world turns hostile to you." When a man comes to know with certainty that a certain Command has been given by Allah, he should have the satisfaction that his whole well-being and his good lies in its compliance. Then, it is not for him to see and understand its wisdom, but he should carry it out with full confidence in Allah. Allah is enough for him that the servant should entrust all his affairs to Him. He is enough for his guidance as well as help, and He alone is also responsible that the one working under His guidance should never meet with evil consequences.

5That is, "One and the same person cannot be a believer and a hypocrite, truthful and false, wicked and righteous, at one and the same time. He does not have two hearts in this chest that one should have sincerity in it and the other fearlessness of God. Therefore, a man can have only one kind of character. at a time: either he will be a believer or a hypocrite, a disbeliever or a Muslim. Now if you call a believer a hypocrite, or a hypocrite a believer, it will not change the reality. The true character of the person will inevitably remain the same."

6Zihar is a term in Arabic. In old days when an Arab; in the heat of a domestic quarrel, would say to his wife: "Your back for me is as the back of my mother," it was thought that the woman was no longer lawful for him because he had compared her to his mother. About this Allah says: "A woman does not become a man's mother just because he has called her his mother or compared her to his mother. His mother is the woman who bore him. Only his Balling his wife his mother cannot change the reality." (For the Islamic Law concerning Zihar, see Surah Mujadalah: 2-a).

7This is what is intended to be said. The two preceding sentences are meant to support and emphasize this same point.

8The first reform introduced in connection with the implementation of this Command was that Zaid, the adopted son of the Holy Prophet, began to be .called Zaid bin Harithah, after his real father, instead of Zaid bin Muhammad. Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Nasa'i have related this tradition from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Umar that in the beginning the people called Zaid bin Harithah Zaid bin Muhammad. After the revelation of this verse they began calling him Zaid bin Harithah. Moreover, after this Revelation it was forbidden that a person should assign his parentage to any other man than his own real father.

Bukhari, Muslim and Abu Da'ud have related on the authority of Hadrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas that the Holy Prophet said: "Paradise is forbidden for the one who called himself son of another person than his own father. " Other traditions bearing on the subject have been related in Ahadith, which have regarded this as a heinous sin.

9That is, even in such a case it will not be right to ascribe the parentage of a person to someone else.

10It means: "There is no harm if a person is called a son out of love. Likewise, there is no sin if someone calls another one a mother, or a daughter, or sister or brother, etc. out of affection and regard, but if such a thing is said with the intention that the one being called so will be accorded the same status and position and rights and privileges as actually belong to these relations, it would certainly be objectionable and one will be held answerable for it. "

11That is, 'Allah has forgiven the errors already committed in this regard; no one will be called to account for them." Another meaning is: "Allah does not call a people to account for actions done unintentionally. He will not punish a person for doing something which he did not do intentionally although it resembled a forbidden act apparently."

12That is, "The relationship of the Holy Prophet with the Muslims and of the Muslims with the Holy Prophet is of a superior nature, over and above all human relationships. No other relationship is in any way comparable with the relationship that exists between the Holy Prophet and the believers. The Holy Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) is more compassionate and affectionate and a greater well-wisher of the Muslims than their own parents, even theft own selves. Their parents and their wives and children can harm them, can treat them in a selfish manner and mislead them, can make them commit errors and mistakes, can push them into Hell, but the Holy Prophet's cast is different: he will do for them only that which results in and leads to their eternal well-being and enduring happiness. They can commit follies resulting in their own ruin and disaster, but the Holy Prophet will wish for them only that which is beneficial and useful for them. And when it is so, the Holy Prophet also has a right on the Muslims that they should regard him dearer than their own parents, their own children, even their own selves. They should lout him more than anything and anybody else in the world; should prefer his judgment and opinion to their own and should submit to every command that he gives.

The same thing has been said by the Holy Prophet in a Hadith, which Bukhari and Muslim and others have related with a little difference in wording: "No one of you can be a believer until I become dearer to him than his own father and his own children and all mankind. "

13On the basis of the special relationship mentioned above, another characteristic of the Holy Prophet is that his wives are forbidden to the Muslims just like their own real mothers although their adopted mothers are in no sense their real mothers. This thing is peculiar only to the person of the Holy Prophet

and of no other man in the world.

In this connection, one should also know that the wives of the Holy Prophet are mothers of the believers only in the sense that the Muslims are under obligation to have reverence and respect for them, and no Muslim could marry them. As for other matters they are not like the mothers. For example, apart from their real relatives, all other Muslims were non-mahram for them from whom they had to observe Purdah; their daughters were not like real sisters for the Muslims, so that no Muslim could marry them; their brothers and sisters were not like the maternal uncles and aunts for the Muslims; they could not be inherited by a Muslim, unless a close relative, as a mother is inherited by her son.

Another noteworthy point in this connection is that according to the Qur'an, this status accrues to all the wives of the Holy Prophet among whom Hadrat 'A'ishah is also included. But, when a section (of the Muslims) made Hadrat `AIi and Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with them) and their children the center of their Faith and made the whole system of religion revolve around them, and made Hadrat `A'ishah also, along with many other Companions, the target of curse and abuse, this verse became a hindrance for them, for according to it every person who claims to be a believer has to acknowledge her as his mother. Consequently, to overcome this difficulty a strange claim was made to the effect: The Holy Prophet had given Hadrat 'Ali the authority that after his death he could allow any of his wives he liked to retain her position of the holy wife and divorce any other on his behalf. Abu Mansur Ahmad bin Abu Talib Tabrasi has written this in Kitab al-Ihtijaj and Suleman bin `Abdullah al-Bahrani has related that the Holy Prophet said to Hadrat `Ali "O Abul Hasan: this honor will last till the time that we remain steadfast on obedience to Allah. Therefore, you may divorce any of my wives, who after me disobeys Allah by revolting against you, and deprive her of the honor that belongs to the mothers of the faithful. "

This is a false -tradition even according to the principles of reporting Hadith. But if one studies vv. 28-29 and 51-52 of this very Surah Al-Ahzab itself, one finds that this tradition goes against the Qur'an as well. For after the revelation of the "verse of the option" (v. 29), the Holy Prophet's right of divorce against those of his wives who chose to remain with him through every difficulty had been curtailed. For further explanation, see E.N.'s 42 and 93 below.

Moreover, if an unbiased person only uses his common sense and considers this tradition carefully, he will find that it is utterly absurd and highly derogatory in respect to the Holy Prophet. The rank and position of the Messenger of Allah is very high and exalted. It cannot even be expected of an ordinary man that he would think of divorcing his wife after his death and on leaving the world would authorize his son-in-law to divorce her on his behalf if there arose a dispute between him and her in the future. This shows what regard these sectarians have for the honor and reverence of the Holy Prophet himself; and even for the Divine Law.

14The verse means this: As for the' Holy Prophet the nature of the Muslims' relationship with him is unique. Hut as far as the common Muslims are concerned, their mutual relationship will be based on the

principle that the rights of the relatives on one another are given priority over the rights of others. No charity is right if a person overlooks the needs and requirements of his own parents and children and brothers and sisters, and gives away charities to others: The Zakat money also will be used first of all to help one's own poor relatives and then the other needy people. The inheritance will necessarily be divided among those who are nearest in relation to the deceased. As for others, the dying person may give them a part of his wealth as a gift or by trust and will. But in no case is he allowed to deprive his rightful heirs and give away everything to others. After this Divine Command the system of "Brotherhood" that had been established between the Muhajirin and the Ansar after the Hijrah also became abolished, for according to it the Muhajirin and the Ansar became heirs to one another only on the basis of their relationship of being the brethren in faith. Allah enjoined the law that inheritance will be divided only on the basis of blood relationship; however, a person could help his brother-in-faith by making him a gift or through a will if he so liked.

15Allah in this verse has reminded the Holy Prophet that, like all other Prophets, He has taken from him too a solemn covenant which he should abide by strictly. A study of the preceding verse shows that the Covenant implies: "The Prophet will first himself obey and follow every Command received from Allah, and then make others also to obey and follow it: he will convey Allah's Commands intact to others and will show no laxity in the struggle to enforce them practically." This Covenant has been mentioned at several other places in the Quran, e.g.

(1)"He has appointed for you the same way of life whim he appointed for Noah and which (O Muhammad,) We have now revealed to you, and which We had already enjoined on Abraham and Moses and Jesus, stressing : `Establish this Way and be not divided in it." (Ash-Shura:13).

(2) "And remember that Allah had made the Covenant with the people who had been given the Scripture, and enjoined: `You shall spread the teachings of the Book among the people and shall not conceal them. " (Al`Imran: 187).

(3)"Remember that We made a solemn Covenant with the children of Israel to the effect: `Worship (and submit to) none save Allah." (Al-Baqarah: 83).

(4) "Has not the Covenant of the Book been taken from them.. .: `Hold fast the Book We have given you, and keep in mind what it contains: it is expected that you will refrain from wrong ways." (Al-A'raf: 169-171).

(5) "Keep in mind the blessing Allah has bestowed on you and do not forget the solemn Covenant which He made with you, when you said, `We have heard and submitted.' " (A1-Ma`idah: 7)

The reason why Allah is reminding of this Covenant in this context is that the Holy Prophet was feeling hesitant to break the custom of ignorance in respect of the adopted relations due to the apprehension

that the enemies of Islam would put him to a disadvantage. He was feeling shy time and again at the thought: The question is of marrying a woman. I may take this initiative with the purest intention only for the sake of a social reform, but the enemies will certainly say that I have done so for the purpose of satisfying my sensual desires, and I am in fact trying to deceive others under the guise of a reformer. That is why Allah assures him, saying: "You arc a Prophet appointed by Us. Like all other Prophets, you also are bound in the Covenant that you will carry out whatever Command We give yourself and command others to follow it. Therefore, you should not bother at all about taunts and derision by others, do dot be afraid and fight shy of others, and carry out without hesitation the service that We want to take from you."

A section of the people think that this Covenant is the covenant that was taken from all the Prophets and their communities, who came before the Holy Prophet, to the effect that they would believe in the Prophet who came afterwards and cooperate with him. On the basis of this interpretation they claim that the door to Prophethood is still open after the Holy Prophet and this covenant has been taken from the Holy Prophet too, that his followers will believe in the prophet who will come after him. But the context in which the verse occurs is explicit that this interpretation is absolutely wrong, There is no occasion whatever in the context to indicate that other prophets will come also after the Holy Prophet and his followers should believe in them. If the verse is read in this sense, it becomes irrelevant and incoherent. Moreover, there is no indication in the words of the verse to show which covenant is implied here. Therefore, to find out the nature of the covenant, we shall have to turn to other verses of the Qur'an in which mention has been made of the covenants taken from the Prophets. Now, if only one sort of the covenants had been mentioned in the entire Qur'an, i.e., the covenant that the people shall believe in the prophets coming afterwards, it would be correct to think that here also the covenant implied the same covenant. But anyone who has studied the Qur'an with an open mind knows that it has mentioned many covenants, which were taken from the Prophets and their followers. Therefore, only that covenant from among the different covenant would be implied here, which fitted in with the context here, and not the one which was altogether irrelevant. Such wrong interpretations reveal the mentality of the people who wish to draw no guidance from the Qur'an but want to reinterpret it instead.

16That is, "Allah has not just taken the covenant but will also question as to how far it has been kept. Then only those who will have kept Allah's Covenant faithfully, will be declared to be the truthful. "

17To understand the theme of vv. 1-8 well these should be read together with vv. 36-41 of this Surah.

18In vv. 9-27 an appraisal has been made of the Battle of the Trench and the raid against the Bani Quraizah and were revealed at the end of the raid. One should keep the details of these events in view as given in the Introduction above.

19The windstorm did not lash the enemy hordes immediately on their arrival but it occurred when the siege of Madinah had lasted about a month. "Armies which you could not see" implies the hidden powers

which operate in the affairs of men under Allah's Command and of which men are wholly unaware. Man regards the occurrence of events and incidents as resulting from apparent causes and does not take into account the hidden forces at work, whereas in most cases these very hidden forces play the decisive role. As these forces function under the Command of Allah's angels, the "armies" may imply the angels as well though there is no indication here of sending the armies of the angels.

20It may mean: "The enemies came upon you from every side, and also that those coming from Najd and Khaiber came from above and those coming from Makkah from below you."

21"The believers" : All those who accepted the Holy Prophet as Allah's Messenger and became included among his followers, which comprised both the true believers and the hypocrites. In this paragraph Allah has made mention of the Muslim community as a whole. In the following three paragraphs the attitude of the hypocrites has been commented upon, and the next two deal with the Holy Prophet and the true believers.

22That is, "Promises to the effect that the believers will get Allah's support and succor and will be helped to attain victory in the end. "

23This sentence has two meanings: The apparent meaning is that there is no chance for them to stay at the Trench against the polytheists; therefore, they should return to the city. And the hidden meaning is that there is no chance for them to remain in Islam; therefore, they should return to their ancestral religion, so that they might escape the danger in which they had involved themselves by earning the hostility of the whole of Arabia. The hypocrites uttered such mischievous things so that they could make the one who would listen to them understand the intended hidden meaning, but in case someone took exception to their words, they could say they had been misunderstood.

24That is, "When the Bani Quraizah also joined the invaders, the hypocrites had a good excuse for defection and they started asking the Holy Prophet for leave to go and protect their houses and families, which, they said, had been endangered, whereas at that time the Holy Prophet was responsible for the defense and protection of all the people of Madinah. After the treachery of the Quraizah it was for the Holy Prophet to devise plans for the protection of the city and its people and not of the soldiers of the army individually."

25That is, "The Holy Prophet had already made arrangements for protection against the danger, which were a part of the collective scheme of defense being implemented by him as Commander of the Islamic forces. Therefore, there was no immediate danger in the face of which these people could justifiably make such an excuse. "

26"Urged to treachery": Urged by the disbelievers to join them to vanquish the Muslims after entering the

city as conquerors.

27That is, "They had felt regret at the weakness they had shown on the occasion of the Battle of Uhud and pledged to Allah that they would compensate for their error in any trial that they would confront in the future. But Allah cannot be deceived by empty words. He puts to one or the other test everyone who makes a pledge with Him so that his sincerity of intention or otherwise is found out. Therefore, just after two years of the Battle of Uhud, He made them confront an even more serious danger and discovered how far they were sincere in their pledge."

28That is, "This flight of yours will not add anything to your life. In no case will you live for ever and gain the whole wealth of the world. Hardly a few years will you live after your flight and enjoy life only as long as it is destined for you.

29That is, "Abandon this Prophet and do not become involved in dangers and afflictions only for the sake of the Faith and Truth. Live a life of ease and comfort as we do."

30"Who are ever reluctant...: "Who are not at all willing to spend their energies, their time, their wealth, etc. in any way in which the true believers are expending whatever they have. Not to speak of exerting themselves and braving the dangers, they do not want to cooperate with the believers in anything with an open heart. "

31Lexically, this verse has two meanings:

(1) "When you return victorious from a war, they receive you warmly, and try to impress you with a glib tongue that they too are sincere believers and they too have made their contribution to promote the cause of Islam, and therefore, they too deserve a share from the booty."

(2) "If victory is attained these people show great powers of the tongue at the time of the division of the spoils and make great demands for their shares, recounting their services to the cause of Islam."

32That is, "Allah will make null and void all the prayers that they offered, all the fasts that they observed, the Zakat that they paid, and other good works that they did after embracing Islam, and will give them no reward for these. For Allah does not judge actions and deeds according to their external form but on the basis of the faith and sincerity underlying them. When the actions are altogether devoid of this quality, there will be mere show and, therefore, meaningless. Here, one thing is especially noteworthy. A clear verdict has been given about the people who professed to believe in Allah and His Messenger, offered the Prayers, observed the fast, gave the Zakat and co-operated with the Muslims in other good works, to the effect that they did not believe at all. This verdict has been given because when they were put to the test during the conflict between Islam and un-Islam, they showed double-facedness, preferred selfish

interests above the interests of the Faith, and shirked offering their selves and their wealth and their energies for the protection of Islam. This shows that the real criterion of the judgment are not the apparent deeds but the loyalties of man. If a person is not loyal to God and His Way, his profession of the Faith and his worship and other good deeds are worthless."

33That is, "As their deeds and actions do not carry any value, Allah renders them fruitless without the slightest hesitation; and as they do not have any power to resist Allah has no difficulty in destroying their deeds altogether."

34In view of the context in which this verse occurs, the object of presenting the Holy Prophet's conduct and way of life as a model was to teach a lesson to the people, who had been motivated by considerations of selfish interests and personal safety on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench. They are being addressed, as if to say: "You claimed to be the believers and Muslims and followers of the Holy Messenger. You should have seen how the Messenger whose followers you claimed to be conducted himself on the occasion. If the leader of a group is himself a seeker of personal security, is lazy and indolent, gives preference to personal interests to everything else, and is ever ready to flee danger, it would be reasonable to expect manifestation of such weakness from his followers. But here the case was different. The Holy Prophet endured along with others every toil and labor that he asked others to endure, and endured better than others; there was no trouble which others might have experienced and he himself did. not. He was among those who dug the trench, and endured hunger and other afflictions just as the common Muslims did. He did not leave the battlefront even for a moment during the siege nor retreated an inch. After the betrayal of the Bani Quraizah his own family had also been exposed to danger even as the families of the other Muslims were. He did not make any special arrangement for his own and his family's protection, which did not exist for others. He was always in the forefront to offer maximum sacrifices for the great objectives for which he was constantly asking others to make sacrifices. Therefore, whoever made a claim of being his follower should have followed the practical example set by the leader.

This is the meaning of the verse in the context here. But its words are general and there is no reason why it should be confined to these meanings only. Allah does not. say that only in this respect His Messenger's life is a model for the Muslims to follow, but has regarded it as a model absolutely. Therefore, the verse demands that the Muslims should take the Holy Prophet's life as a model for themselves in every affair of life and should mold their character and personality according to it.

35That is, "The Prophet's life is no model for the person who is forgetful of God, but it certainly is a model for him who remembers Allah much and consistently and not only occasionally just by chance. Likewise, this life is no model for him who has no hope from Allah and does not expect Resurrection to take place, but it is most surely a model for the person who is hopeful of Allah's grace and His favors, and who is also mindful that the Day of Judgment will come when his well-being will wholly depend on how closely his conduct resembled the conduct and character of the Messenger of Allah in this world. "

36After drawing attention to the model of the Holy Prophet, Allah now presents the model of his Companions so that the character of the false claimants to faith and of the sincere followers of the Messenger is clearly contrasted.

Although both were alike apparently in the affirmation of the faith, both were counted as Muslims, and both attended at the Prayers, they were separated from each other as soon as the time of the trial approached, and it became clear who were loyal to Allah and His Messenger and who were Muslims only in name.

37Here, one should keep verse 12 in view. There it was said that when the hypocrites and the people with diseased hearts found themselves surrounded by a huge force of ten to twelve thousand men from the front and by the Bani Quraizah from behind, they openly started saying: "The promises that Allah and His Messenger had made with us were nothing but a delusion. We were promised that if we believed in Allah's religion, His succor would be at our back and we would rule Arabia and the world outside and all the wealth of Caesar and Chosroes will be ours, but here we are that the whole of Arabia is bent upon exterminating us, and there is no sign yet of the armies of the angels in sight, who would save us and protect us against this grave calamity." Now they are being told: "One meaning of the promise of Allah and His Messenger was that which was understood by these false claimants to faith. The other meaning is that which is understood by the sincere and true Muslims. When they saw the storms of danger gathering, they too remembered the promises of Allah, but these promises did not mean that as soon as they affirmed the faith they would overwhelm and subdue the whole world without the slightest effort, and the angels would come to perform their coronation, but the promises actually meant that they would have to pass through severe trials, endure extreme hardships and afflictions, offer supreme sacrifices; then only will Allah bless them with His grace and they will be granted successes of the world and the Hereafter, which Allah has promised His believing servants.

"Do you think that you will enter Paradise without undergoing such trials as were experienced by the believers before you? They met with adversity and afflictions and were so shaken by trials that the Prophet of the time and his followers cried out: `When will Allah's help come?" - "Yes, Allah's help is near." (AI-Baqarah: 214).

"Do the people think that they will be left alone after they have once said, `We have believed', and they will not be tested ? The fact is that We have put to the test all those who have gone before them. Surely, Allah has to see who are the truthful and who the liars. " (AI-`Ankabut: 2-3).

38That is, "On seeing the hard, times of affliction approaching they did not waver in their faith but were strengthened in it all the mote, and instead of giving up Allah's obedience they became ready to resign and surrender to Him whatever they had with complete conviction and satisfaction of the heart. "

Here, one should fully understand that faith and resignation is indeed a quality of the self which is put to trial and test at every command and demand of the Faith. At every step in life man comes across situations where the Faith either enjoins something or forbids something, or requires one to make sacrifices of life and wealth and time and desires of the self. At every such occasion the faith and conviction of the person who deviates from obedience will suffer decline and the faith and conviction of him who submits to the command and demand will be strengthened and enhanced. Although in the beginning a man becomes a believer and Muslim only by embracing the fundamental creed (Kalimah) of Islam, yet his state of faith does not remain static but is open to both deterioration and development. Decline in sincerity and the spirit of obedience causes it to deteriorate; so much so that constant retrogression may cause the person to reach the last limits of the faith where the slightest move backward may turn him from a believer to a hypocrite. Contrary to this, the more sincere a person is, the more perfect his obedience and the greater his devotion and dedication to the cause of the true Faith, the stronger and more sound will he grow in faith and may even attain the supreme rank of the truthful. But this increase and decrease in the faith has only the moral significance which can be judged and reckoned by none but Allah. As for the man, faith is simply the act of affirmation by which a Muslim enters Islam and is regarded as a Muslim as long as he remains steadfast to it. In this regard we cannot say that so and so is half a Muslim, or one-third a Muslim, and another one double a Muslim or triple a Muslim. Likewise, in legal rights the Muslims are equal and alike. It cannot be that one is regarded a greater believer and given more rights and another one a lesser believer and given less rights. In these aspects there can be no question of the increase and decrease in the faith, and in fact, in this very sense has Imam Abu Hanifah said: "Faith in Islam neither increases nor decreases. "

39That is, "Someone has already offered his life in the way of Allah, and someone is awaiting the time when he will offer it for the sake of his Faith.

40That is, Jews of the Bani Quraizah.

41The verses from here to 35 were sent down in the period contiguous to the Battle of the Trench and the raid on Bani Quraizah, whose background we have touched upon in the Introduction to this Surah. According to a tradition related in Muslim on the authority of Hadrat Jabir bin `Abdullah, "One day when Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Umar visited the Holy Prophet, they saw that his wives were sitting around him and he was quiet. Addressing Hadrat `Umar, he said: `They are sitting around me as you see: they are asking for money for household expenditure'." At this both the Companions rebuked their daughters and said, "Why do you embarrass the Holy Prophet and demand from him that which he does not have." This event shows how hard pressed the Holy Prophet was economically at that time and how distressed and embarrassed he was feeling at his wives' demand for domestic expenditure during the period when a bitter conflict was going on between Islam and paganism.

42At the time when this verse was sent down, the Holy Prophct had four wives with him: Hadrat Saudah,

Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Hafsah and Hadrat Umm Salamah. He had not yet married Hadrat Zainab. (Ibn `Arabia Ahkam ai-Qur an. Egyptian Edition, 1958, vol. III, pp. 512-13). When this verse was revealed, he first spoke to Hadrat 'A'ishah, and said: "I ask you a thing; do not be hasty in answering; consult your parents, then decide." Then he told her of Allah's Command and recited this verse. She replied: "Should I consult my parents about this?-I seek Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter. After this he went to each of his wives and asked the same thing and each one gave the same reply as had been given by Hadrat `A'ishah. (Musnad Ahmad, Muslim, Nasa'i).

This is termed takhyir, i. e. to give the wife the option to decide for herself whether she would stay in wedlock or would separate from the husband. This was obligatory for the Holy Prophet because he had been commanded by Allah to offer such an option to his wives. If a lady from among the holy wives had opted to separate she would not have separated automatically but would have been separated by the Holy Prophet, as is clear from the words: " . . . I shall give you of these and send you off gracefully." But the Holy Prophet would certainly have separated her because as a Prophet it would not behoove him not to honor the word. After divorce apparently the lady would have stood excluded from the category of the holy wives, and she would not be forbidden to any other Muslim; for she would have chosen divorce from the Holy Prophet only for the sake of the world and its adornments of which she had been given the choice, and obviously the option could not be exercised in case she was forbidden to re-marry. On the other hand, the intention of the verse also seems that the Holy Prophet was not left with any authority to divorce the wives who chose Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter in preference to the world. For takhyir had only two sides: if a wife opted for the world, she would be divorced; if she opted for Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter, she would not be divorced. Obviously, if a lady chose one alternative, the other would become forbidden in her case by itself.

In Islamic Law takhyir. in fact, amounts to delegation of the right to obtain divorce. The husband himself gives the wife the choice to stay in wedlock with him or be separated. Here are briefly the injunctions which the jurists have derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah in this regard:

(1) Once a husband has given this choice to a wife, he can neither withdraw it nor stop her from exercising it. However, it is not necessary that the woman must exercise it. She may choose to remain in wedlock with the husband, or may prefer to separate, or may opt nothing and let the right of divorce be annulled.

(2) There are two conditions of this choice being transferred to the woman: (a) The husband should have given her the right of divorce in clear words, or if there was no clear mention of the divorce, he should have had the intention of giving this right; e.g. if he says, "You have the choice" or "your business is in your own hand," such indirect words will not transfer the right of divorce to the woman without the intention of the husband. If the woman claims it and the husband states on oath that he had no intention of giving the right of divorce, his statement will be admitted, unless the woman produces evidence to the effect that those words were said during a dispute, or in connection with divorce, because in that context

delegation of the right would mean that the husband had the intention of giving the right of divorce. (b) The woman knows that she has been given the right of divorce. If she was absent, she should receive information of this, and if she is present, she should hear the words. Unless she hears the words, or receives the news, the right will not be transferred to her.

(3) As to the time limit within which the wife has to exercise her right if the husband gives it her absolutely without specifying any limit, there is a difference of opinion among the jurists. Some jurists have expressed the opinion that the woman can exercise the right at the same sitting at which the husband gave it her; if she leaves the place without making a response, or turns her attention to something else which indicates that she does not want to make a response, she forfeits the right invested in her and her choice no longer remains. This is the opinion of Hadrat `Umar, Hadrat `Uthman, Hadrat Ibn. Mas`ud, Hadrat Jabir bin `Abdullah, `Atta, Jabir bin Zaid, Mujahid, Sha'bi, Nakha`i, Imam Malik, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Shafe`i, Imam Auza`i, Sufyan Thauri `and Abu Thaur. The other opinion is that her exercise of the choice is not confined to that sitting but she can exercise it even afterwards. This opinion is held by Hadrat Hasan Basri, Qatadah and Zuhri.

(4) If the husband specifies a time limit and says, for instance, "You have the option for a month or a year, or your business is in your own hand for so long," the wife would enjoy the option only for that long. However, if he says, "You can exercise this option as and when you like," her option would be unlimited.

(5) If the woman intends to obtain separation, she should express her intention clearly and definitely. Vague words which do not express the intention clearly will have no effect.

(6) Legally, the husband can give the option to the waft in three forms: (a) He may say, "Your business is in your own hand;" or (b) he may say: "You have the option; " or (c) "You are divorced if you so please. " The legal consequences of each arc separate as explained below:

(a) If the husband has said: "Your business is in your own hand," and the woman responds clearly to the effect that she would opt for separation, it would amount to an irreversible divorce according to the Hanafites. That is, after this the husband will forfeit his right to have her back as his wife. However, they can remarry if they so like after the expiry of the waiting period. And if the husband said, "Your affair is in your own hand to the extent of one divorce," this will be regarded as the first reversible divorce. That is, the husband can take her back as his wife within the waiting-period. But if the husband had the intention of all the three divorces at the time of delegating to the woman the right of divorce, or mentioned this specifically, the woman's exercise of the option in such a case would amount to divorce no matter whether she pronounces divorce thrice on herself or says only once that she has chosen separation or divorced herself.

(b) If the husband gives the woman the option to separate with the words: "You have the option," and the woman opts for separation in clear words, it will amount to one reversible divorce according to the

Hanafites even if the husband had the intention of giving option for three divorces. However, if the husband has clearly given option for three divorces, the three divorces will take place only on the woman's exercise of the option for divorce. According to Imam Shafe'i, if at the time of giving the option, the husband had the intention of divorce, and the woman opts for separation, it will amount to one reversible divorce. According to Imam Malik, it will amount to three divorces in case the wife had been enjoyed; in case she had not been enjoyed, the husband's claim to have intended only one divorce will be admitted.

(c) In case the words "You are divorced if you so please" have been used and the woman has opted for divorce, it will be a reversible divorce and not an irreversible one.

(7) If after the husband has given the option for separation, the woman chooses to remain in wedlock, no divorce will take place at all. This is the opinion of Hadrat 'Umar, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Abu ad-Darda, Ibn `Abbas and Ibn `Umar, and the same has been adopted by majority of the jurists. When Masruq asked Hadrat `A'ishah about this, she replied: "The Holy Prophet had given his wives the option and they chose to continue to live as his wives. Then, was it deemed to be a divorce?" The opinion of Hadrat `Ali and Zaid bin Thabit that has been reported in this regard is that one reversible divorce will take place. But according to another tradition these two great Companions also held the opinion that no divorce will take place at all.

43This does not mean that three was, God forbid, any chance of the Holy Prophet's wives committing an indecency, but this was meant to make them realize that they were the mothers of the Muslims; therefore, their responsibilities were accordingly very high, and so their moral conduct should be the purest. This is , just like Allah's addressing the Holy Prophet to the effect: "If you committed shirk, all your works would be rendered vain." (Az-Zumar: 65). This also does not mean that there was, God forbid, any chance of the Holy Prophet's committing shirk, but this is meant to make the Holy Prophet realize, and through him the common Muslims, that shirk, is a most heinous crime which must be guarded against most judiciously.

44That is, "You should not be under the delusion that your being the Prophet's wives will protect you from Allah's punishment, or that it will be difficult for Allah to call you to account on account of your high rank and position in the world."

45The reason for giving a double punishment for a sin and a double reward for a good work is that those whom Allah honors with a high rank in society generally become the leaders of men and the majority of the people follow them for good or for evil. Thus, their evil does not remain their own evil but becomes the cause of a people's degeneration, and their goodness does not remain them own goodness but becomes the cause of the true success of many other people also. Therefore, when they commit evil they are punished for their own as well as for others degeneration, and when they do good they are not only rewarded for their own good works but also for this that they guided others also to do good.

This verse also gives the principle that the greater the degree of prohibition and trust in respect of somebody and something the greater and more serious will be the crime of violating that prohibition and trust and the greater will be the punishment for it. For example, drinking in the mosque is a much more serious crime than drinking privately in the house, and therefore, it will entail a severer punishment. Likewise, committing adultery with the prohibited relations is a far more serious crime than committing it with another woman, and therefore, will call for a severer punishment.

46The verses from here to the end of the paragraph are those with which the Commandments of Purdah were introduced in Islam. In these verses though the wives of the Holy Prophet only have been addressed, the intention is to enforce reforms in all the Muslim houses. The object of addressing the Holy Prophet's wives particularly is that when a pure way of life will start from his house, it will be followed by the women of all other Muslim houses as well, because this house was looked upon by the Muslims as a model to follow. Some people, when they see that these verses have been addressed only to the wives of the Holy Prophet, assert that these Commandments were only meant for them. But when one reads what follows in these verses one feels that there is nothing which might have been meant particularly for the holy wives and not for the other Muslim women. Could Allah have intended only this that the holy wives alone should be fret from uncleanliness and they alone should obey Allah and His Prophet and they alone should offer the Salat and pay the Zakat? If this could not be the intention, then how could the Command for them to stay in their houses and avoid displaying the fineries and abstain from talking to the other men in an alluring voice be meant particularly for them to the exclusion of all other Muslim women? Is there any rational proof on the basis of which some Commands in one and the same context and series be regarded as general and some others as particular and special?

As for the sentence, ¦You are not like the other women," it also does not mean that the other women should come out in full make-up and should talk to the other men coquettishly and flirt with them, but "as for you, you should not adopt such a conduct. " The style, to the contrary, is such as if a gentleman would tell his child, `You are not like the common children of the street: you should not use abusive language." From this no sensible person would ever conclude that the speaker regarded only his own child using abusive language as bad; as for others he would not mind if they used abusive language.

47That is, "There is no harm if the other man is spoken to in case of a genuine need, but on such an occasion the woman's tone and manner of speech should be such as does not let the other man think that he could cherish any false hope from her. There should be no undue softness in her tone, no allurement in her conversation, no consciously affected mellowness in her voice, which should excite the male hearer's emotions and encourage him to make advances.

About such a manner of speech Allah clearly says that this does not behoove a woman who has any fear of God in her heart and desire to avoid evil. In other words, this is the way and manner of the wicked and unchaste woman's speech and not of the believing pious woman's speech: If this verse is read together with verse 31 of Surah An-Nur, in which Allah says: "They should not stamp the ground in walking lest

their hidden decoration is revealed," the intention of the Lord clearly seems to be that the women should not attract other men by their voice or the jingle of their ornaments unnecessarily and if at all they have to speak to the other men, they should speak to them in an un-affected tone and manner. That is why it is forbidden for the woman to pronounce the call to the Prayer. Moreover, if a woman is attending a congregational Prayer and the Imam commits a mistake, she is not permitted to say Subhan-Allah like the males but should only tap her hands to call the imam's attention to the error.

Now just consider this: When Islam disallows the woman to talk to other men in a soft and sweet tone and even forbids her to produce her voice before the other men without a genuine need, will it approve her to appear on the stage and sing, dance, flirt and behave coquettishly? Will it permit her to sing love songs over the radio and excite the people's emotions by presenting sweet melodies full of obscene themes? Will it permit that she should play the roles of the wives and sweet-hearts of others in dramas? Or that the women should be made the air hostesses and be especially trained to charm and allure the passengers? Or that they should visit clubs and attend social functions and gatherings in full make-up and mix freely with men and have fun and a good time with them? From which Qur'an has this culture been derived? For the Qur'an that was sent down by God there is to be found no hint as to the admissibility of this sort of culture.

48The word qarna in the original is derived from qarar according to some lexicographers and from waqar according to others. In the first sense, it will mean: `Settle down, stick firmly;" and in the second sense: "Live peacefully, sit with dignity." In both the cases the verse means to impress that the woman's real sphere of activity is her home; she should carry out her functions within that sphere peacefully, and she should come out of the house only in case of a genuine need. This meaning is clear from the words of the verse itself and the Holy Prophet's Ahadith also impress it even more forcefully. Hafiz Abu Bakr Bazzar has related on the authority of Hadrat Anas that the women made a submission to the Holy Prophet, saying: "All kinds of virtues have been secured by the men: they fight and accomplish great deeds in the way of Allah. What should we do that we may also get a reward equal to that of the warriors?" The Holy Prophet replied: The one who sits in her house from among you; will attain the reward of the warriors." What he meant was : The warrior can fight confidently and with full peace of the mind in the way of Allah only when he is sure that all is well at home: his wife is there to look after the house and the children, and there is no cause for him to worry that she will betray him in his absence. The woman who will provide him this satisfaction and peace of the mind will be an equal partner with him in his fighting though she will be sitting back at home. According to another tradition that Bazzar and Tirmidhi have related on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas`ud, the Holy Prophet said: `The woman must remain veiled and concealed. When she comes out of her house, Satan stares at her. And she is closer to Allah's mercy when she is inside her house." (For further details, see E.N. 49 of Surah An-Nur).

In the presence of such a clear and express command of the Qur'an, it is not at all permissible that the Muslim women should seek membership of the councils and parliaments; that they should run after social activities outside the house; that they should work side by side with men in the government offices,

should get education along with boys in the colleges, serve as nurses in the male wards of hospitals, should be employed as hostesses in the airplanes and rail cars, and should be sent abroad for education and training. The greatest argument that is given in support of the permissibility of the women's outdoor activities is that Hadrat 'A'ishah had taken part in the Battle of the Camel. But the people who present this argument perhaps do not know what was Hadrat `A'ishah's own opinion in this regard. `Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Hanbal has related in his Zawa id az-Zuhd and Ibn Mundhir, Ibn Abi Shaibah and Ibn Sa'd in their own books the tradition from Masruq, saying that when Hadrat `A'ishah during her recitation of the Qur'an would reach this verse (wa qarna fi buyut-i kunna), she would start crying involuntarily; so much so that her head-wrapper would become wet, for this reminded her of the error that she had committed in the Battle of the Camel.

49In this verse two important words have been used, which must be understood for the proper understanding of its intention. They are tabarruj and jahiliyyat al-ula.

The word tabarruj in Arabic means to become manifest and appear openly before others. The Arabs use the word baraj for every conspicuous and elevated object. A burj (tower) is so called because of its prominence and elevation. A sailing-boat is called barijah, because its sails become visible from a distance. The word tabarruj when used in respect of a woman will have three meanings: (1) that she should show the charms of her face and body before the people; (2) that she should display the adornments of her dress and ornaments before others; and (3) that she should make herself conspicuous by her gait and figure and coquetry. The same explanation of this word has been given by the leading lexicographers and commentators. Mujahid, Qatadah and Ibn Abi Nujaih say: "Tabarruj means to walk in a vain, alluring and coquettish manner." Muqatil says: ¦It means a woman's displaying of her necklaces, ear-rings and bosom. " Al-Mubarrad says: "That a woman should reveal her adornments which she should conceal. " Abu 'Ubaidah comments: "This that a woman should make herself conspicuous by display of her body and dress to attract the attention of men."

The word jahiliyyat has been used at three other places in the Quran besides this, in Al-i `Imran: 154, where about those who shirk fighting in the way of Allah, it has been said: ¦They began to cherish about Allah thoughts of Ignorance Uahiljyyat) which were void of the truth," and in Al-Ma`idah: 50, where about those who want to be judged by their own law instead of the law of Allah, it has been said: "Do they desire to be judged by the laws of ignorance (Jahiliyyat)?" and in Al-Fath: 26, where the prejudice of the people of Makkah due to which they did not permit the Muslims to perform 'Umrah, has been called as "the haughty spirit of paganism (jahiliyyat). " According to a Hadith once Hadrat Abu ad-Darda' in the heat of a quarrel abused another person in respect of his mother. When the Holy Prophet heard of it, he remarked: "You still have jahiliyyat in you. " According to another Hadith the Holy Prophet said: "Three things show jahiliyyat to taunt the lineage of another person, to take omens from the movement of the stars, and to mourn over the dead. " All these customs show that jahiliyyat in the Islamic terminology is every such conduct which goes against Islamic culture and civilization and Islamic morality and etiquette and Islamic way of thinking and behavior. Thus, jahiliyyat al-ula would mean all those evils in which the

Arabs of the pre-Islamic days and the people of the entire world were involved.

This explanation makes it abundantly clear that what Allah forbids women is to move out of their houses showing off their physical charms and beauty. He instructs them to stay in their houses because their real sphere of activity is their home and not the world outside. However, if they have to move out of the house for an cut-door duty, they should not move out as the women used to do in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. For it does not behoove the women of a Muslim society to walk out fully embellished to make their face and figure conspicuous by adornments and tight-fitting or transparent dresses, and to walk coquettishly. These are the ways of ignorance which Islam does not approve. Now everybody can see for himself whether the culture which is being made popular in our country is the culture of Islam, according to the Qur'an, or the culture of ignorance.

50The context in which this verse occurs makes it manifest that the word ahl al-bait (people of the house) here implies the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), because the address begins with: "O wives of the Prophet," and they are the addressees in the whole discourse preceding it as well as following it. Moreover, the word ahl al-bait in Arabic is used precisely in the sense in which the word "household" is used in English, which includes both a man's wife and children. No one would exclude the wife from the "household." The Qur'an itself has used this word at two other places besides this, and at both the wife is included in its sense, rather as the most important member of the family. In Surah Hud, whcn the angels give the Prophet Abraham the good news of the birth of a son, his wife exclaims: "Shall I bear a child now when I have grown too old, and this husband of mine has also become old?" The angels say: What! Are you surprised at Allah's decree, O people of Abraham's household? Allah's mercy and blessings are upon you." In Surah Al-Qasas, whcn the Prophet Moses reaches the Pharaoh's house as a suckling, and the Pharaoh's wife is in search of a suitable nurse for the child, the Prophet Moses' sister says, "Shall I tell you of a household whose people will bring him up for you and look after him well?" Thus, the Arabic idiom and the usage of the Qur'an and the context of this verse, 'all point clearly to the fact that the Holy Prophet's wives as well as his children are included in his ahl al-bait; rather the more correct thing is that the verse is actually addressed to the wives and the children become included in the household only because of the sense of the word. That is why according to Ibn 'Abbas and 'Urwah bin Zubair and `Ikrimah, the word ahl al-bait in this verse implies the wives of the Holy Prophet.

But if somebody says that the word ahl al-bait has been used only for the wives and none else can be included in it, it will also be wrong. Not only this that the word "household" includes all the members of a man's family, but the Holy Prophet has himself explained that this includes even himself. According to Ibn Abi Hatim, once when Hadrat `A'ishah was asked about Hadrat `Ali, she said, Do you ask me about the person who was among the most loved ones of the Holy Prophet and whose wife was the Holy Prophet's daughter and most beloved to him?" Then she related the event when the Holy Prophet had called Hadrat 'Ali and Fatimah and Hasan and Husain (may Allah be pleased with them all) and covered them all with a sheet of cloth and prayed: "O Allah, these are my household, remove uncleanness from them and make them pure." Hadrat 'A'ishah says, "I said: I also am included among your household (i.e. I may

also be covered under the sheet and prayed for). " Thereupon the Holy Prophet replied" You stay out: you, . of course, are already included." A great many Ahadith bearing on this subject have been related by traditionalists like Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Ibn Jarir, Hakim, Baihaqi, etc. on the authority of Abu Said Khudri, Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Anas, Hadrat Umm Salamah, Hadrat Wathilah bin Aqsa' and some other Companions, which show that the Holy Prophet declared Hadrat 'Ali and Fatimah and their two sons as his ahl al-bait. Therefore, the view of those who exclude them from the ahl al-bait is not correct.

Similarly the view of those people also is not correct, who, on the basis of the above-cited Ahadith, regard the wives of the Holy Prophet as excluded from his ahl al-bait. In the first place, anything which has been clearly stated in the Quran cannot be contradicted on the basis of a Hadith. Secondly, these Ahadith also do not have the meaning that is put on them. As related in some traditions that the Holy Prophet did not cover Hadrat 'A'ishah and Hadrat Umm Salamah under the sheet of cloth which he put on the four members of his family, dces not mean that he had excluded those ladies from his "household." But it means that the wives were already included in ahl al-bait, because the Qur'an, in fact, had addressed them as ahl al-bait. The Holy Prophet, however, thought that the apparent words of the Qur'an might cause somebody the misunderstanding about these members that they were excluded from the ahl al-bait. Therefore, he felt the need for clarification in their case and not in the case of his wives.

A section of the people have not only misconstrued this verse to the extent that they have made the word ahl al-bait exclusively applicable to Hadrat `Ali and Fatimah and their children to the exclusion of the holy wives, but have gone even further and concluded wrongly from its words "Allah only intends to remove uncleanliness from you and purify you completely", that Hadrat 'Ali and Fatimah and their children are infallible like the Prophets of Allah. They say that "uncleanliness" implies error and sin, and, as Allah says, these ahl al-bait have been purified of this, whereas the words of the verse do not say that uncleanliness has been removed from them and they have been purified. But the words are to the effect: "Allah intends to remove uncleanliness from you and purify you completely. " The context also does not tell that the object here is to mention the virtues and excellences of the Holy Prophet's household. On the contrary, they have been advised here what they should do and what they should not, because Allah intends to purify them. In other words, they have been told that if they adopted such and such an attitude and way of life, they will be blessed with cleanliness, otherwise not. However, if the words "Allah intends to remove uncleanliness from yon . . . " are taken to mean that Allah has made them infallible, then is no reason why all the Muslims who perform their ablutions before offering the Prayer are not held as infallible, because about them also Allah says: "But Allah wills to purify you and complete His blessings upon you." (Al-Ma'idah: 6)

51The word wadhkurna in the original has two meanings: Remember and mention. According to the first meaning the verse would mean: "O wives of the Prophet, you should never forget that yours is the house from where the would is being instructed in Divine Revelations and Wisdom; therefore, your responsibility is very great. Let it not happen that the people might see specimens of ignorance in this very house." According to the second meaning, it would mean: "O wives of the Prophet, you should mention and relate

before the people whatever you hear and see, for by virtue of your close and constant social association and attachment with the Prophet you will know and experience many such things which the other people. will not be able to know by any other means than you. "

Two things have been mentioned in this verse: (1) The Revelations of Allah; and (2) the wise sayings. The revelations of Allah are the verses of Allah's Book, but hikmat (wisdom) is a comprehensive word which includes all those wise things which the Holy Prophet taught the people. This word may also imply the teachings of the Book of Allah, but there is no reason why it should be made exclusively applicable to them. It inevitably includes the wisdom that the Holy Prophet taught by his pure character and by his sayings besides reciting the verses of the Qur'an. Some people, only on the basis that the word ma yutla (that which is recited) has been used in the verse, make the assertion that the "Revelations of Allah" and "Wisdom" imply only the Qur'an, for the word "recitation" as a term is specifically used for the recitation of the Qur'an. But this reasoning is absolutely wrong. The use of the word "recitation" specifically as a term for the recitation of the Qur'an or the Book of Allah is the work of the people of the later ages. The Qur'an has not used this word as a term. In Surah AI-Baqarah: 102, this same word has been used for the incantation of the magical formulas which the satans falsely attributed to the Prophet Solomon and taught the people. ("They followed that which the satans recited attributing it to the kingdom of Solomon. ") This shows that the Qur'an uses this word in its lexical meaning, and does not specify it for reciting the verses of the Book of Allah.

52"Knower of everything" : Knower of even the most secret and hidden things."

53Presentation of this theme immediately after the foregoing paragraph contains a subtle allusion to the fact that the -instructions given above to the Holy Prophet's wives are not exclusively meant for them but the Muslim society as a whole should reform itself in accordance with them.

54"Who have surrendered themselves to Allah : Who have accepted Islam as a code of life for themselves, and have decided to follow it in their lives, and who have no wish to resist the Islamic way of life and thought, but have adopted the way of obedience and submission to it.

55"Who are believing": Whose obedience is not merely outward nor unwilling but who sincerely regard the guidance given by Islam as based on the truth whose faith is that the way shown by the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is the only right and straight way in following which alone lies their true success. That which has been declared as wrong by Allah and His Prophet is certainly wrong even according to their judgment and that which has been declared as right by Allah and His Prophet is certainly right even according to their thinking and sense. Psychologically and intellectually also they do not regard as improper any injunction that has been enjoined by the Qur'an and Sunnah, and do not remain on the lookout to change it somehow to suit their own desire or mold it according to the current trends of the world, avoiding at the same time the blame that they have effected a change in the Command given by Allah and His Prophet. The Holy Prophet has

described the true state of faith in a Hadith in these words:

"He who reconciled himself to Allah as his Lord and to Islam as his Way of Life and to Muhammad as his Messenger, has the true taste of Faith." (Muslim)

In another Hadith, he has explained it thus:

"None of you becomes a believer until the desires of his self become subordinate to what I have brought." (Sharh as-Sunnah)

56That is, "They do not rest content with mere belief but are obedient practically also. They are not the sort of the people who would honestly believe that what Allah and His Messenger have commanded was true but would violate it in practice: that they would sincerely regard what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden as bad but would go on following the same in practical life."

57That is, "They are truthful in their speech and honest in thou dealings. They do not deal in lies, deceptions, frauds and forgeries. They utter with their tongues only what their conscience approves as true. They practice and perform only what they honestly find to be in accordance with righteousness and truth, and they are honest in all their dealings with others."

58That is, "They patiently and steadfastly bear and face all the obstacles, dangers, difficulties and losses that they might have to encounter in following the right way taught by Allah and His Messenger and in establishing Allah's Religion in the world; no fear and no temptation and no lust of the self can succeed in diverting them from the right way."

59That is, "They are free from pride, vanity and haughtiness: they have full understanding of the reality that they arc servants and they have no other position than that of servitude. Therefore, their hearts as well as their bodies remain bowed before Allah, dominated by fear of Him. They never display the attitude which is the hall-mark of the lives of those who are fearless of God and arc involved in arrogance. " From the sequence it appears that the mention of Khushu' (expression of humility) in particular along with the general attitude of the fear of God implies the Prayer, for the mention of the practice of charity and fast has been made just after it.

60This does not only imply payment of the obligatory Zakat, but it also includes general charity. It means to say that they spend their wealth freely in the way of Allah and they are not at all niggardly in the matter of helping the servants of Allah as much as they can. No orphan and no sick or afflicted person, no weak or disabled person, no poor and needy one remains deprived of their support in their dwelling; and if there arises the need for monetary help for promoting the cause of Allah's Religion, they arc never miserly in expending their wealth for that purpose.

61This includes both the obligatory and the voluntary fasts.

62This has two meanings: (1) They refrain from adultery; and (2) they avoid nudity. One should also note that nudity does not only mean being naked but it is also nudity to put on a thin dress which shows the body, or is so tight-fitting that it reveals all the outlines of the body.

63"Remember Allah much" means that one should mention Allah's name in one way or other at all times in every business of life. Man cannot develop such a state of the mind unless the thought of God becomes deeply embedded in his heart. When this idea has passed beyond his conscious mind and settled deep in his subconscious and unconscious mind, then only he will remember and mention God's name in whatever he does and in whatever he says. He will begin with bismillah when he eats and say al-hamdu lillah when he finishes; he will remember Allah when he goes to bed, and mention Allah's name when he gets up. In his conversation also he will again and again pronounce bismillah, al-hamdu-lillalh, insha-Allah, ma sha Allah, etc. and ask for Allah's help in every matter, and thank Him for every blessing. He will seek His mercy in every affliction, and turn to Him in every trouble. He will fear Him on encountering every evil, and ask for His forgiveness when he happens to have committed an error and will pray to Him for fulfillment of every need. In short, in every state and in every business of life his function will be to remember Allah.

This. In fact, is the essence of the Islamic life. For all other acts of worship there is a prescribed time when they are performed, and one is free when one has performed them. But this is the worship which has no special time; it has to be performed constantly so that it links up the man's life with Allah and His service permanently. The other worships and religious acts themselves also become meaningful only when the heart of man remains inclined to Allah not only at the time when the act is actually being carried out but at all times when the tongue is uttering Allah's name constantly. In such a state as this worship and religious acts develop and flourish in a man's life precisely in the same manner as a plant grows in a congenial climate and environment. Contrary to this, the example of the religious services and worships which are carried out only on special times and occasions in the life which is devoid of this constant remembrance of Allah is of the plant which has been planted in an un-congenial climate, and which is growing only due to the special attention and care of the gardener. This very thing has been explained by the Holy Prophet in a Hadith, thus:

"Mu'adh bin Anas Juhani relates that a person asked the Holy Prophet of Allah. who among those who fight in the way of Allah will get the highest reward? He replied: The one who remembers Allah the most. The man asked: Who among the observers of the fast will get the highest reward? He replied: The one who remembers Allah the most. The man then asked the same question about the offerer of the Prayer, the payer of the Zakat and charities and the performer of Hajj and the Holy Prophet in every case gave the same answer, saying: He who remembers Allah the most." (Musnad Ahmad)

64This verse plainly tells what qualities and characteristics are of real worth in the sight of Allah. These are the basic values of Islam which have been compressed into one sentence. As regards these, there is no difference between the man and woman. However, as for their life-activity, the two sexes have separate spheres to function. The males have to function in some particular spheres and the females in some others. But if they possess these qualities and characteristics equally, Allah will raise them to equal ranks and bless them with equal rewards. It will in no way affect their rank and reward if one carried out household chores and the other performed the duties of caliphate and enforced the Shari'ah injunctions; one reared children in the house and the other went to the battlefield and fought for the sake of Allah and His religion.

65From here begin the verses which were sent down in connection with the Holy Prophet's marriage with Hadrat Zainab.

66Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah, 'Ikrimah and Muqatil bin Hayyan say that this verse was sent down at the time when the Holy Prophet proposed Hadrat Zainab for Hadrat Zaid, and Zainab and her relatives did not agree. According to Ibn 'Abbas, when the Holy Prophet made the proposal, Hadrat Zainab said, "I am better than him in lineage." Ibn Sa'd says that she also said, "I do not approve him for myself. I am a Quraishite by birth. " The same sort of disapproval was expressed by her brother, 'Abdullah bin Jahsh, because Hadrat Zaid was a freed slave of the Holy Prophet and Hadrat Zainab was the daughter of his paternal aunt, Umaimah bint 'Abdul Muttalib. They did not like the Holy Prophet to propose a girl of a noble Quraishite family, who was none other than his own first cousin, for his freed slave. At this, this verse was sent down and on hearing it Hadrat Zainab and all her relatives yielded to the proposal at once. Then the Holy Prophet married them, paid ten diners and 60 dirhams from his own pocket as dower on behalf of Zaid, provided the bridal dress and sent some articles of food for domestic use.

Though this verse was sent down on g special occasion, the injunction given in it is the cardinal principle of the constitutional law of Islam, and it applies to the entire Islamic system of life. According to it no Muslim individual or nation, or institution, or court or parliament or state, is entitled to use its own freedom of opinion in a matter in which Allah and His Prophet have already given a decision. To be a Muslim means to surrender one's freedom of opinion and action before Allah and His Messenger. It would be a contradiction in terms if a person or a nation claimed to be Muslim and then reserved for itself the freedom of choice and action. No sensible person can think of combining the two contradictory attitudes together. The one who desires to remain a Muslim will inevitably have to bow down to the Command of Allah and His Prophet, and the one who is not inclined to bow will have to admit that he is not a Muslim. If he does not admit he will be regarded as a hypocrite both by God and by the people even though he might proclaim to be a Muslim at the top of his voice.

67The discourse from here to verse 48 was sent down after the Holy Prophet had married Hadrat Zainab, and the hypocrites, the Jews and the mushriks had started a relentless propaganda campaign against him. While studying these verses one should bear in mind the fact that this Divine discourse was not

meant for the instruction of the enemies who were engaged. in a willful campaign of vilification and slander and falsehood to defame the Holy Prophet intentionally and to satisfy their rancor. But its real object was to protect the Muslims against the influence of their campaign and to safeguard them against doubts and suspicions. Evidently, the Word of Allah could not satisfy the unbelievers. It could give peace of mind only to those who knew and believed it to be Allah's Word. There was a danger that those righteous people also might be confused and influenced by the objections that were being raised by their enemies. Therefore, on the one hand, Allah removed all possible doubts from their minds, and on the other, taught the Muslims as well as the Holy Prophet himself how they should conduct themselves under the circumstances.

68It refers to Hadrat Zaid as has been mentioned clearly below. In order to understand how Allah had favored him and how the Holy Prophet, it is necessary here to relate his story briefly. He was the son of Harithah bin Shurahbil, a person of the Kalb tribe, and his mother, Su'da bint Tha'labah, was from the Bani Ma'n, a branch of the Tay tribe. When he was eight years old, she took him along to her parents. There the people of Bani Qain bin Jasr raided their camp, plundered their good: and took some men prisoners, Hadrat Zaid included. Then they sold Zaid at the fair of 'Ukiiz near Ta'if. His buyer was Hakim bin Hizam, a nephew of Hadrat Khadijah. Hakim brought him to Makkah and presented him to his paternal aunt. When the Holy Prophet married Hadrat Khadijah he found Zaid in her service and was so impressed by his good manners and conduct that he asked him of her. Thus, this fortunate boy entered the service of the best of men, whom Allah, after a few years, was going to appoint a Prophet. Hadrat Zaid at that time was 15 years old. Afterwards when his father and uncle came to know that their child was at Makkah, they came to the Holy Prophet and requested him to return him in exchange for ransom. The Holy Prophet said, "I shall call the boy and leave it to him whether he would like to go with you or stay with me. If he chose to go, I would take no ransom but would Iet Trim go with you. However, if he chose to stay back, I am not the one who would turn out a person who would like to stay with me." They said, "This is perfectly right and just. Please ask the boy." The Holy Prophet called Zaid and asked him, Do you know these two gentlemen?" He said, "Yes sir, this is my father and this my uncle." The Holy Prophet then said, "Well, you know them as well as me. You have the choice to go with them, or stay with me if you so desire. " He said, "I have no wish to leave you and go with anyone else. " His father and uncle said, I 'Zaid, will you prefer slavery to freedom, and choose to stay with others in preference to your parents and family?" He replied, "After what I have seen of this person I cannot now prefer anything else of the world to him." Hearing the reply the father and uncle of Zaid were reconciled to his remaining with the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet set Zaid free immediately and proclaimed before a gathering of the Quraish in the Ka'bah, "Bear witness that hence-forth Zaid is my son: he will receive inheritance from me and I from him." Thereafter, he began to be called Zaid bin Muhammad by the people. All this happened before the Holy Prophet's advent as a Prophet. Then, when he was blessed with Prophethood by Allah, there were four persons who accepted his claim to it without a moment's hesitation as soon as they heard of it from him. They were Hadrat Khadijah, Hadrat Zaid, Hadrat 'Ali and Hadrat Abu Bakr. Hadrat Zaid was 30 years old then, and had already spent 15 years in the Holy Prophet's service. In the fourth year after Hijrah, the Holy Prophet marred him to his first cousin Hadrat Zainab, paid her dower on his behalf

and provided them with necessary articles for setting up the house.

This is to what Allah has alluded in the verse, saying: "Whom Allah as well as you had favored. "

69These words were said when the relations between Hadrat Zaid and Hadrat Zainab had become very strained, and after making repeated complaints Hadrat Zaid had finally told the Holy Prophet that he intended to divorce her. Although Hadrat Zainab had accepted to be married to him in obedience to Allah and His Messenger's command, she could not overcome her feeling that Zaid was a freed slave, who had been brought up by her own family, and she in spite of being the daughter of a noble Arab family, had been wedded to him. Due to this feeling she could never regard Hadrat Zaid as her equal in matrimonial lift, and this caused more and more bitterness between them. Thus after a little more than a year the marriage ended in divorce.

70Some people have misconstrued this sentence to mean this: The Holy Prophet desired to marry Hadrat Zainab and wanted that Zaid should divorce her. But when Zaid came to the Holy Prophet and said that he wanted to divorce his wife, the Holy Prophet stopped him from this only half-heartedly. At this Allaln said: 'You were keeping hidden in your heart that which Allah intended to reveal. The real meaning, however, is contrary to this. If this the sentence is read with verses 1, 2, 3 and 7 of this Surah, one can clearly see that in the very days when bitterness was increasing between Hadrat Zaid and his wife, Allah had hinted to His Prophet that when Zaid had divorced his wife, he would have to marry the divorced lady. But since the Holy Prophet knew what it meant to marry the divorced wife of the adopted son in the contemporary Arab society, and that too at a time when apart from a handful of the Muslims the entire country had become jealous of him, he was hesitant to take any step in that direction. That is why when Hadrat Zaid expressed his intention to divorce his wife, the Holy Prophet said to him, `Fear Allah and do not divorce your wife." What he meant by this was that Zaid should not divorce his wife so that he was saved from facing the trial, otherwise in case the divorce was pronounced he would have to comply with the command, and thus provoke a severe storm of criticism and vilification against himself. But when the Holy Prophet deliberately forbade Zaid to divorce his wife so that he himself might be saved from what he feared would cause him defamation, Allah found this below the high position that He wanted His Prophet to enjoy, whereas Allah intended to effect a great reform through this marriage of the Prophet. The words 'You were fearing the people, whereas Allah has a greater right that you should fear Him," clearly point to the same theme.

The same explanation of this verse has been given by Imam Zain-ul-'Abedin Hadrat 'Ali bin Husain (may Allah be pleased with him). He says, Allah had indicated to His Prophet that Zainab would be included among his wives. But when Zaid complained about her to him, the Holy Prophet admonished him to fear Allah and keep his wife. At this Allah said to His Prophet, 'I had informed you that I would marry you to Zainab. But when you were forbidding Zaid to divorce his wife, you were hiding that which Allah was going to reveal'." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir on the authority of Ibn Abi Hatim).

'Allama Alusi also in his Ruh al-Ma ani has given the same meaning of it. He says, 'This is an expression of displeasure on abandoning the better course, which was that the Holy Prophet should have kept quiet, or should have told Zaid to do as he liked. The displeasure amounted to this: 'Why did you tell Zaid to keep his wife, whereas I had informed you beforehand that Zainab would be included among your wives?"

71That is, Zaid divorced his wife and her waiting-period came to an end. The words "fulfilled his desire of her" by themselves give the meaning that Zaid was left with no desire attached to her. And this state of affairs does not appear on mere pronouncement of the divorce, because even during the waiting period the husband can take his wife back if he has any interest in her; and the husband also has this desire left with the divorced wife that it should become known whether she is pregnant or not. Therefore, the desire of her former husband with the divorced wife comes to an end only on the expiry of the waiting period.

72These words are explicit that the Holy Prophet had married Hadrat Zainab not because of any personal desire but under the Command of Allah.

73These words clearly indicate that Allah accomplished this social reform through the Holy Prophet to effect a great change which could not be enforced" by any other means. There was no way to put an end to the wrong customs that had become prevalent in Arabia in respect of the adopted relations but that Allah's Messenger himself should take initiative to abolish them. Therefore, Allah arranged this marriage not for the sake of adding a wife to the Holy Prophet's household but for enforcing an important social change.

74These words show that for the other Muslims such a marriage is just permissible but for the Holy Prophet it was a duty which Allah had imposed on him.

75That is, "For the Prophets it has always been a law that whatever Command they receive from Allah, they have to act on it as a duty which they cannot in any case avoid. When Allah enjoins something on His Prophet, he has to accomplish it even if the whole world is deadly opposed to it."

76The words in the Text have two meanings:

(1) That Allah is enough to counter every fear and danger; and

(2) that Allah is enough to take account: none else but Allah should be feared for accountability.

77This one sentence arts at the root of all those objections which the opponents were raising in connection with this marriage of the Holy Prophet.

Their first objection was that he had married his own daughter-in-law, whereas according to his own law the son's wife is forbidden for the father. This was answered by saying: "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men." That is, Zaid was not his real son, and so it was not unlawful to marry his divorced wife.

Their second objection was that even if his adopted son was not his real son, it was not necessary that he should have marred his divorced wife. This was answered by saying: " . . . but he is the Messenger of Allah." That is, it was his duty as the Messenger of Allah to put an end to all kinds of prejudices about a lawful thing which custom and tradition had made unlawful without good reason and declare it to be lawful once again.

The point was stressed by saying: " ... and (he is) the last of the Prophets." That is, not to speak of a Messenger, no other Prophet would be raised after him, who could make up for a possible deficiency in the enforcement of a reform in the law and society that might have been left un-enforced in his time. Therefore, it had become all the more necessary that he should himself root out the custom of ignorance.

Again, to further emphasize this point, it was said: "Allah has knowledge of everything. " that is, Allah knows best why it was imperative to get the custom of ignorance rooted out at that juncture through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) rather than let it remain as it was. He knows that no other prophet would be coming after him in the future; therefore, if He did not abolish this custom through His Last Prophet, no other person after him would be able to abolish it for all the Muslims of the world for ever. Even if the later reformers would abolish it, no action of any one of them will have the permanent and universal authority behind it so that the people of every country and every age might - start following it, and none of them would have a personality endowed with that holiness and sanctity that an action's being merely his way (Sunnah) might root out every feeling of aversion and abhorrence from the mind of the people.

It is a pity that a section of the people in our age have given wrong interpretations of this verse and opened the way to a great mischief. We have therefore added a comprehensive appendix at the end of the commentary of this Surah for the explanation of the question of the Finality of Prophethood and the eradication of the misunderstanding spread by these people.

78This is meant to instruct the Muslims to the effect: When the Messenger of Allah is being showered with taunts and abuses by the enemies and his person being made the target of a propaganda campaign to frustrate his mission, the believers should neither listen to these absurd things unconcerned nor should become themselves also involved in the doubts and suspicions spread by the enemies nor should resort to abusive language in retaliation, but they should turn to Allah and remember Him more than usual as a special measure, The meaning of "remembering Allah much" has been explained in E.N. 63 above. 'To glorify Allah morning and evening" means to glorify Him constantly, to express His holiness and purity by word of mouth and not merely by counting beads on the rosary.

79This is meant to make the Muslims realize this: 'The jealousy and malice of the disbelievers and hypocrites towards you is only due to the mercy that Allah has shown you through His Messenger. It is through him that you have been blessed with the faith, that you have come out from the darkness of unbelief and ignorance into the light of Islam, that you have developed the high moral and social qualities by virtue of which you stand distinguished above others. It is this which has filled the jealous people with malice and rage against the Messenger of Allah. However, in this state you should not adopt any unbecoming attitude which might alienate you from the mercy of Allah."

The word Salat when used with the preposition 'ala by Allah in respect of the servants, it means mercy and kindness and compassion and when used by the angels in respect of the human beings, it means the prayer for mercy. That is, the angels pray to Allah to bless the human beings with His bounty and favors. Another meaning of yusalli 'alaikum is: "Allah blesses you with renown among the people and exalts you to a high rank so that the people begin to praise you and the angels begin to eulogize you."

80This can have three meanings: (1) That Allah will Himself receive them with: Peace be upon you," as has been stated in Surah Ya Sin :58: "...they have been greeted with 'peace' from the Merciful Lord." (2) That the angels will greet them, as stated in Surah An-Nahl: 32: "This is the reward for those pious people whose souls are received in a pure state, by the angels, who welcome them, saying: 'Peace be upon you: enter into Paradise as the reward of your good deeds." (3) That they will greet one another among themselves, as stated in Surah Yunus:10 thus: `Therein their prayer will be `Glory to Thee, O Lord,' and their greeting: 'Peace be to you,' and the burden of their hymn: `Praise is for Allah alone, Lord of the universe."

81After admonishing the Muslims, Allah now addresses a few words of consolation to His Prophet, as if to say: `We have blessed you with such and such a high rank and raised you to an exalted place of honor. Your opponents will not be able to harm you in any way by their propaganda campaign of slander and calumny. Therefore, you should not take their mischief to heart, nor give any weight to their propaganda. You should continue doing the duties of your mission, and let them utter whatever nonsense they like." Along with this, incidentally, the other people, both the believers and the unbelievers, also have been told that the person they have to deal with is not an ordinary man but a great personality, whom Allah has raised to the highest ranks of honor and glory.

82The meaning of the Prophet's being a "witness" is very vast. It includes three kinds of evidence:

(1) Verbal evidence, i.e. the Prophet should bear out the truth of the realities and principles on which Allah's Religion is based and tell the world plainly that they are the truth and all that is opposed to them is falsehood. He should rise to proclaim without hesitation and fear the Being of Allah and His Unity, the existence of the angels, the corning down of Revelation, the occurrence of life-after-death, the Hell and Heaven, all arc realities, even if they appear strange to the world, and the people mock the one presenting them, or call him a madman. Likewise, the Prophet should openly present before the people

the concepts, values, principles and rules pertaining to morality and civilization and social life that God has revealed to him, and reject as wrong all the concepts and ways which are prevalent and are opposed to them, even if the whole world rejects them as wrong and violates them in practice. Similarly, the Prophet should proclaim as lawful what is lawful in Allah's Law even if the whole world regards it as unlawful, and should proclaim as unlawful whatever is unlawful in Allah's Law even if the world regards it as lawful and pure.

(2) Practical evidence: That is, the Prophet in his own life should practically demonstrate all that he has been commissioned to present before the world. His life should be free from every shade of that which he calls evil, and his own character should clearly reflect that which he calls good; he should be the foremost in carrying out what he regards as obligatory, and most cautious in refraining from what he calls sinful. He should exert his utmost to enforce the code of life which he calls Divine. His own character and conduct should bear out how sincere and truthful he is in his invitation; and his own self should be such a model of his teaching that anyone who sees him should know what kind of a man he wants to produce by the Faith to which he invites the world, what kind of a character he wants to instill in him and what system of life he wants to be established through him in the world.

(3) Evidence in the Hereafter That is, when the Court of Allah is established in the Hereafter, the Prophet should give evidence to prove that he had conveyed to the people the whole message, without making any alteration or change in it, that had been entrusted to him, and that he had shown no slackness in making the truth manifest before them, by word and by deed. On the basis of this evidence it will be determined what reward the believers deserve and what punishment the disbelievers deserve

From this one can have an idea of how great a responsibility had Allah placed upon the Holy Prophet by raising him to the position of a "witness", and how great should be the personality worthy of that high position. Evidently, there has been no slackness whatever on the part of the Holy Prophet in the matter of giving evidence with regard to the Faith, verbally as well as practically. That is why in the Hereafter he will be able to testify that he had made the Truth plain to the people, and that is how Allah's argument will be established against them; otherwise, if, God forbid, there had been any slackness on the pan of the Prophet in providing evidence, he could neither be a witness against them in the Hereafter nor could any case be established against the deniers of the truth.

Some people have tried to give a different interpretation to the word witness". They say that the Holy Prophet in the Hereafter will bear witness to the acts and deeds of the people. From this they conclude that the Holy Prophet is watching and witnessing the acts of all the people; otherwise he could not bear the witness. But according to the Qur'an this interpretation is absolutely wrong. The Qur'an tells us that Allah has arranged a different system for recording the acts of the people. For this purpose His angels are preparing the conduct-book of every person. (See in this connection Surah Qaf: 17-18, and Al-Kahf: 49). After this He will make the people's own limbs also to bear witness against them. (Ya Sin: 65, Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 20-21). As for the Prophets, they are not to testify to the acts of the people, but to give

evidence to prove that they had conveyed the Truth to the people. The Qur'an clearly says:

"On the Day when Allah will assemble all the Messengers, He will ask: 'What was the response you received?' They will answer, `We have no knowledge: You alone have the full knowledge of all that is hidden'." (AI-Ma`idah: 109)

In the same connection, the Quran says about the Prophet Jesus that when he will be questioned about the deviation of the Christians, he will say: "I was a witness to their conduct as long as I remained among them, but after You recalled me. You watched over them." (AI-Ma'idah: 117)

These verses clearly show that the Prophets will not be witnesses in regard to the acts of the people. As to what they will bear witness to the Qur'an gives an equally clear answer:

"O Muslims, We have made you a community of the 'Golden Mean' so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind and the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you." (AI-Baqarah: 143)

"(O Muhammad, warn them of) the Day when We shall call a witness from among every community to testify against it. And We shall call you to testify against these people." (An-Nahl: 89)

This shows that on the Day of Resurrection the Holy Prophet's evident in its nature will not be any different from the evidence for bearing which the Holy Prophet's community and the witnesses in regard to every other community will be summoned. Evidently, if it be an evidence in regard to the acts, then the omnipresence of all of them also becomes necessary. And if these witnesses will be called to give evidence to confirm that the Creator's message had reached His creation, inevitably the Holy Prophet also will be called upon to give a similar evidence.

The same is supported by the Hadith which Bukhari. Muslim, Tirmidhi. Ibn Majah, lmam Ahmad and others have related on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Mas'ud, 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, Abu ad-Darda', Anas bin Malik and many other Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all), whose common theme is this: 'The Holy Prophet on the Day of Resurrection will sec some of his Companions bing brought, but instead of caning to him they will either be going or being pushed to the other side. Thereupon the Holy Prophet will say: 'O Allah, they are my Companions!' Allah will say: 'You do not know what misdeeds they committed after you'." This theme has been reported by numerous Companions and with so many chains of authorities that there remains no doubt about its authenticity. This proves that the Holy Prophet is not at all a witness to each individual of his community acid to each of his acts. As for the hadith which says that the acts of the people of his Ummah are presented before him, it does not in any way contradict this, because its purport is that Allah keeps him informed of the affairs of his Ummah, which does not mean that the Holy Prophet is actually witnessing the acts of every person.

83One should note that a person's giving the good news of a good end for belief and righteous acts and

the warning of an evil end for disbelief and evil acts, in his personal capacity, is a different thing, and another's being appointed by Allah as a bearer of the good news and a warner is quite another thing. The one who is appointed to this office by Allah necessarily possesses an authority to give the good news and administer the warnings due to which his good news and his warnings are invested with legality. His giving a good news for an act has the meaning that the Greatest of all Judges, Who has sent him, approves of the act and holds it worthy of a reward; so, it is certainly imperative or obligatory or commendable in nature, and its doer will surely get a reward. On the other hand, his giving a warning of an evil end for an act has the meaning that the Sovereign forbids that act; so, it is certainly sinful and unlawful, and its doer will surely be punished. The good news and warnings of the one who is not divinely appointed cannot ever be invested with such an authority.

84Here also the same difference as pointed out above exists between the preaching of a common man and of a Prophet. As for the invitation to Allah, it is given, and can be given, by every preacher, but he is not appointed by Allah to do so. Contrary to this, a Prophet rises to call the people towards Allah by the leave of Allah. His call is not mere preaching but has also the support of the authority of the Lord of the Universe, Who sent him. That is why resistance and opposition to the inviter to Allah amounts to rebellion against Allah Himself precisely as resistance to a government official when he is performing official duty is regarded as hostile to the government itself.

85This sentence is explicit that the word nikah here has been used for the contract of marriage only. The lexicographers have greatly disputed over the real meaning of the Arabic word nikah. One section of them says that as a word it is common both for intercourse and for the contract of marriage. The second section says that in its meaning it is common for both. The third section opines that its real meaning is the contract of marriage and for intercourse it is used only figuratively. And the fourth section expresses the opinion that its real meaning is intercourse and for the contract of marriage it is used only figuratively. Each section has cited Arabic poetry in support of its view. But Raghib Isfahani has emphatically asserted this: "The real meaning of the word nikah is contract of marriage; it has been used for intercourse metaphorically. It is impossible that its real meaning be intercourse and may have been used for the contract of marriage only metaphorically." The argument he gives is that all the words that have been actually coined for intercourse in Arabic, or in other languages of the world, arc obscene and vulgar. No gentleman would like to utter them in a civilized gathering. Therefore, it is not possible that a society should use the word which has actually been coined for this act for marriage as a metaphor. For conveying this meaning only chaste words have been used in every language of the world and not obscene words.

As far as the Qur'an and Sunnah arc concerned, nikah is a term, which either implies only contract of marriage, or intercourse after the contract of marriage; but it has nowhere been used for intercourse outside marriage. This kind of intercourse has been called zina (adultery) by the Qur'an and Sunnah and not nikah.

86This is a unique verse which was sent down probably in the same period respecting some case of divorce, and so inserted in this context. This shows that it was sent down after the preceding and before the following discourse. Below is given a summary of the legal injunctions that have been derived from this verse:'

(1) Although the word "believing women" has been used, which apparently may give the impression that the law enunciated in this verse is not applicable to the women of the people of the Book, yet all scholars are agreed that this very injunction is applicable to them also. That is, in case a Muslim has married such a woman, all the injunctions relating to her divorce, dower, waiting-period ('iddat) and provision at divorce are the same as of marriage with 'a believing woman. The scholars arc also agreed that Allah's mentioning the believing women here in particular is actually meant to tell the Muslims that only the believing women are suitable for them. That is, although it is permissible for them to marry Jewish and Christian women, it is not proper and commendable. In other words, the Qur'an seems to impress that Allah expects that the believers would marry only the believing women.

(2) The word mas (to touch) here has been used for intercourse by implication. Thus, the verse apparently implies that if the husband has not had intercourse with the woman, even though he has had seclusion with her and has even touched her with the hand, she will riot have to observe the waiting-term (iddat) in case of divorce. But the jurists, for the sake of precaution, have decreed that if they have had seclusion proper (i.e. seclusion during which intercourse could be possible), waiting-period will have to be observed if divorce is pronounced after it, and the waiting-period would be annulled only in case divorce was pronounced before they have had the seclusion.

(3) The annulment of the waiting-period in case of divorce before the event of seclusion means that in this case the man forfeits his right to take the woman back as his wife, and the woman becomes entitled to marry anyone she likes immediately after the divorce. But it should be borne in mind that this applies only to the divorce which is pronounced' before the event of the seclusion. If a woman's husband dies before having had seclusion, the waiting-period that has to be observed after death will not be annulled, but she will have to pass the same waiting-period of four months and ten days as is obligatory for a married woman in normal conditions. ('Iddat is the waiting-period before the expiry of which a divorced woman or a widow is forbidden to remarry).

(4) The words "they do not have to fulfill a waiting-period for you", show that the waiting-period is a right of the man on the woman. But it does not mean that this is only the man's right. It, in fact, includes two other rights as well: the right of the children, and the right of Allah or of the Law. The man's right is on the ground that he has the right to take the woman back as his wife during the period, and also on the ground that the proof of the parentage of his children, which depends on the woman's being pregnant or otherwise, becomes established in the waiting-period. The reason for including the right of the children is that the proof of a child's parentage is necessary for the establishment of his legal rights and his moral status also depends on this that his parentage should not be doubtful. The reason for including the right

of Allah (or the right of the Law) is that even if the people and their children become heedless of their rights, the Divine Law requires that their rights should be protected. That is why even if a man gives a warrant to a woman that after his death or after obtaining divorce from him, there will be no waiting-period binding on her from him, the Divine Law will in no case annul it.

(5) "Provide them with something and send them away with kindness"; The intention of this injunction would be fulfilled by acting in either of the two ways: If the dower had been fixed at the time of marriage, and then divorce pronounced before the event of seclusion proper, payment of half of the dower will be obligatory, as enjoined in Al-Baqarah: 237. To give more than what is obligatory is not binding but certainly commendable. For instance, it is commendable that besides paying half of the dower the man should let the woman retain the bridal garments, or any other articles that he had sent her for the occasion of marriage. But if no dower had been fixed at the time of marriage, it is obligatory to pay her something before sending her away, and this "something" should be according to the status and financial means of the man, as has been enjoined in Al Baqarah: 236. One section of the scholars hold that something in any case has to be paid in case of divorce as an obligation whether dower has been fixed or not.

(6) "sending off gracefully" does not only mean that the woman should be provided with something on divorce but this also that separation should be adopted in a gentlemanly way, without any kind of vilification. If a man does not happen to like a woman, or there has been some other cause of complaint due to which he does not want to keep the woman, he should divorce her like a gentleman and send her away. He should not start mentioning her faults and relating his complaints against her before the people so as to also prejudice them against her. This instruction of the Qur'an clearly shows that annexing the enforcement of divorce to the permission of a local council or court is wholly against the wisdom and spirit of the Divine Law, for in that case there remains no chance of `sending her away gracefully", but defamation, revilement and vilification do inevitably result even if the man does not so will. Moreover, the words of the verse also do not admit that the power of the man to divorce should be bound up with the permission of a local council or court. The verse is clearly giving the married man the power of divorce and placing on him alone the responsibility that if he wants to release the woman before touching her he must pay her half the dower as an obligation, or something else according to his means. From this the object of the verse clearly seems to be that in order to prevent divorce from being taken lightly the man should be placed under the burden of a financial responsibility so that he himself uses his power of divorce with sense, and there is no chance of an external interference in the internal affairs of the two families.

(7) Ibn 'Abbas, Said bin al-Musayyib, Hasan Basri, 'Ali bin al-Husain (Zain al-'Abidin), Imam Shafe'i and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal have deduced from the words, 'when you marry...and then divorce ..." that divorce takes effect only when marriage has been contracted. Divorce before the contract of marriage ' is without effect. Therefore if a person says, "If I marry such and such a woman, or a woman of such and such a tribe or nation, or any other woman, she is divorced," it will be an absurd and meaningless thing;

no divorce can take effect from this. The following Ahadith are presented in support of this view:

"The son of Adam is not entitled to use his power of divorce in respect of that which he does not possess." (Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah). And: "There is no divorce before marriage." (Ibn Majah). But a great number of the jurists hold that this verse and these Ahadith apply in the case when a man says to a woman, who is not his wife, "You have divorce on you," or "I divorce you." Saying such a thing is no doubt absurd, and is of no legal consequence, but if he says, "If I marry you, you are divorced," this is not divorcing before the marriage, but the person is in fact declaring his intent that when the woman is married to him, she will stand divorced. Such a declaration cannot be absurd and without effect, but, as a matter of fact, whenever the woman is married to him, divorce will fall on her. The jurists who hold the view have further differed as to rite extent this kind of divorce will have effect.

Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Muhammad and Imam Zufar hold that divorce will take place in any case whether a person specifics a woman or a tribe or a nation, or talks generally so as to say. 'Any woman whom I marry is divorced." Abu Bakr al-Jassas has cited the same opinion also from Hadrat 'Umar, 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Ibrahim Nakha'i, Mujahid and 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz (may Allah show mercy to them all).

Sufyan Thauri and 'Uthman al-Batti say that divorce will take place only in case the person says, "If I marry such and such a woman, she is divorced."

Hasan bin Salih, Laith bin Sa'd and 'Amir ash-Sha'bi, say that such a divorce will take place even if something is said in general terms provided that a particular class of the people has been mentioned; for instance, if the person has said. "If I marry a woman of such and such a family, or such and such a tribe, or such and such city or country or nation, she is divorced."

Ibn Abi Laila and Imam Malik, disputing the above opinion, have added a condition that the time limit also should be determined. For example, if the man Said. " If I marry within this year or the next ten years such and such a woman or a woman from such and such a class, she is divorced," divorce will take place, otherwise not. Imam Malik also adds that if the time limit is so long that the man is not expected to outlive it, Iris declaration will have no effect.

87This, in fact, is an answer to the objection of the people who said that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) forbade others to keep more than four wives at a time but had himself taken a fifth wife. This objection was raised because at the time the Holy Prophet married Hadrat Zainab, he already had four wives with him:

(1) Hadrat Saudah whom he had married in the 3rd year before the Hijrah,

(2) Hadrat 'A'ishah whom he married in the 3rd year before the Hijrah but who came to live with him in

Shawwal, A.H. I,

(3) Hadrat Hafsah whom he married in Sha'ban, A.H. 3, and

(4) Hadrat Umm Salamah whom he married in Shawwal. A.H. 4. Thus, Hadrat Zainab was his fifth wife. Here Allah has answered the objection of the disbelievers and the hypocrites, as if to say, O Prophet, We have made lawful for you all these five wives whom you have married by giving them their dowers." In other words, the answer means this: "It is We Who have imposed the restriction of four wives on others, and it is also We Ourselves Who have made Our Prophet an exception to the restriction. When We could impose the restriction, We could also make the exception."

About this answer also one should note that it was not meant to satisfy the disbelievers and the hypocrites but those Muslims to whom the opponents of Islam were trying to impart evil suggestions. Since they believed that the Qur'an is Allah's speech and has been sent down in Allah's own words, Allah declared through a clear and decisive verse that the Prophet had not made himself an exception from the general law about four wives of his own accord, but the exception in regard to him had been decreed by Allah.

88Besides making the fifth wife lawful for the Prophet, Allah in this verse also granted him the permission to marry a few other kinds of the women:

(1) The woman who came into his possession from among the slave-girls granted by Allah. According to this the Holy Prophet selected for himself Hadrat Raihanah from among the prisoners of war taken at the raid against the Bani Quraizah, Hadrat Juwairiyah from among the prisoners of war taken at the raid against the Bani al-Mustaliq, Hadrat Safiyyah out of the prisoners of war captured at Khaiber, and Hadrat Mariah the Copt, who was presented by Maqauqis of Egypt. Out of these he set three of them free and married them, but had conjugal relations with Mariah on the ground of her being his slave-girl. In her case there is no proof that the Holy Prophet set her free and married her.

(2) The ladies from among his first cousins, who emigrated along with him. The words "who emigrated with you"do not mean that they accompanied the Holy Prophet in his migration journey but this that they also had migrated in the way of Allah for the sake of Islam. The Holy Prophet was given the choice to marry any one of them he liked. Accordingly, in A.H. 7 he married Hadrat Umm Habibah. (Incidentally, in this verse it has been elucidated that the daughters of one's paternal and maternal uncles and aunts are lawful for a Muslim. In this regard the Islamic Law is different both from the Christian Law and from the Jewish Law. Among the Christians one cannot marry a woman whose line of descent joins one's own anywhere in the last seven generations, and among the Jews it is permissible even to marry one's real niece, i.e. daughter of one's brother or sister).

(3) The believing woman who gives herself to the Prophet, i.e. who is prepared to give herself in marriage

to the Prophet without a dower, and he may like to marry her. On account of this permission the Holy Prophet took Hadrat Maimunah as his wife in Shawwal, A.H. 7, but he did not think he should have conjugal relations with her without paying her the dower. Therefore, he paid her the dower even though she did not demand or desire it. Some commentators say that the Holy Prophet did not have any wife who had offend herself to him; but this in fact means that he did not keep any wife without paying her the dower although she offered herself to him.

89If this sentence is taken to be related with the preceding sentence, it will mean that it is not permissible for any Muslim to take in marriage a woman who gives herself to him, without paying her the dower; and if it is taken to be related with the whole preceding passage, it will imply that the concession to marry more than four wives is only reserved for the Holy Prophet, not for the other Muslims. This verse also shows that certain commandments are specifically meant for the Holy Prophet to follow and are not applicable to the other Muslims. A study of the Qur'an and Sunnah reveals several such commandments. For example, the Tahajjud prayer was obligatory for the Holy Prophet but is voluntary for the Ummah. It is unlawful for him and his family to receive charities though it is not so for others. The inheritance left by him cannot be divided; as for the inheritance left by others relevant commandments have been given in Surah An-Nisa'. Keeping of more than four wives was made lawful for him though he was not enjoined to do equal treatment with them. He was permitted to marry a woman who gave herself to him without any dower, and after his death his wives wen forbidden for the Ummah. None of these privileges could be enjoyed by any other Muslim. Another special thing that the commentators have mentioned in this regard is that it was forbidden for the Holy Prophet to marry a woman from among the people of the Book though it is lawful for the Muslims to do so.

90This is the reason why Allah made the Holy Prophet an exception to the general rule. "So that there may be no restraint on you" does not mean that he was, God forbid, a very lustful person, and therefore, he was permitted to marry several wives so that he might not feel any hindrance due to the restriction to four wives. This meaning will be understood only by the person who, blinded by prejudice, forgets that the Holy Prophet at the age of 25 married a lady who was 40 years old, and lived a happy, contented married life with her for full 25 years. Then, when she died, he marred another old lady Hadrat Saudah, who remained his only wife for the next four years. Now, no sensible and honest person can imagine that when he became over fifty-three he was suddenly filled with lust and needed to have more and more wives. In fact, in order to understand the meaning of "no restraint", one should, on the one hand, keep in view the great task whose responsibility Allah had placed on the Holy Prophet, and on the other, understand the conditions and circumstances under which he had been appointed to accomplish the great task. Anyone who understands these two things with an unbiased mind, will certainly realize why it was necessary to grant him freedom in respect of the wives and what 'hindrance" was there for him in the restriction to tour wives.

The task entrusted to the Holy Prophet was that he should mold and chisel by all-round education and training an uncouth, uncultured nation which was not uncivilized only from the Islamic point of view but

from a general viewpoint as well, into a highly civilized, refined and virtuous nation. For this purpose it was unbiased mind, will certainly realize why it was necessary to grant him freedom in respect of the wives and what "hindrance" was there for him in the restriction to four wives.

The task entrusted to the Holy Prophet was that he should mold and chisel by all-round education and training an uncouth, uncultured nation which was not uncivilized only from the Islamic point of view but from a general viewpoint as well, into a highly civilized, refined and virtuous nation. For this purpose it was not enough only to train men but the training of the women also was equally necessary. However, the principles of social life and civilization which he had been appointed to teach forbade free mixing of the sexes together, and it was not possible for him to impart direct training to the womenfolk himself without violating this rule. Therefore, for imparting education to the women the only alternative left for him was that he should marry several women of different ages and mental capabilities and should prepare them by education and training to become his helpers, and then employ them to give religious instructions to the young, middle-aged and old women of the city and desert and teach them the new principles of morality and civilization.

Moreover, the Holy Prophet had also been appointed to abolish the system of life of the pre-Islamic days of ignorance and replace it with the Islamic system of life practically. For the accomplishment of this task a conflict was inevitable with those who upheld the system of ignorance, and this conflict was being encountered in a country where the tribal system of life was prevalent with all its peculiar customs and traditions. Under these conditions, besides other devices, it was also necessary that the Holy Prophet should marry in different families and clans in order to cement many ties of friendship and put an end to enmities. Thus, the selection of the ladies whom he marred was to some extent determined by this object besides their personal qualities. By taking Hadrat 'A'ishah and Hadrat Hafsah to wife he further strengthened and deepened the relations with Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Umar. Hadrat Umm Salamah was the daughter of the family to which Abu Jahl and Khalid bin Walid belonged, and Umm Habibah was the daughter of Abu Sufyan. These marriages neutralized the enmity of these families to a large extent; so much so that after Umm Habibah's marriage Abu Sufyan never confronted the Holy Prophet on the battlefield. Hadrat Safiyyah, Hadrat Juwairiah and Raihanah belonged to Jewish families. When the Holy Prophet married them, after setting them free, the hostile Jewish activities against him subsided. For according to the Arab traditions when the daughter of a clan or tribe was married to a person, he was regarded as the son-in-law of not only the girl's family but of the entire tribe, and it was disgraceful to fight the son-in-law.

Practical reformation of the society and abolition of its customs of ignorance was also included among the duties of his office. Therefore, he had to undertake one marriage for this purpose also, as has been related in detail in this surah Ahzab itself.

For these reasons it was essential that there should be no restriction for the Prophet in respect of marriage so that in view of the requirements of the great mission entrusted to him he could marry as

many women as he wanted.

This also brings out the error of the view of those people who think that polygamy is permissible only under special personal requirements and apart from these there can be no other object for which it may be permissible. Evidently, the reason for the Holy Prophet to marry more wives than one was not that the wife was sick, or barren, or that he had no male child. or that there was the question of the bringing up of some orphans. Without these restrictions he married all his wives either in view of the educational requirements, or for the reformation of society, or for political and social objectives. The question is, when Allah Himself has not kept polygamy restricted to a few particular needs, which arc being mentioned these days and the Messenger of Allah took several wives for many purposes other than these, how is another person entitled to propose some restrictions in the law and then claim that he is imposing these in accordance with the Shari'ah? As a matter of fact, the root cause for the imposition of these restrictions is the Western concept that polygamy is an evil in itself. That very concept has given rise to the idea that this unlawful thing can become lawful only in case of extreme circumstances. Now, however hard one may try to label this imported concept with Islam artificially. it is entirely alien to the Qur'an and ,Sunnah and the whole Muslim literature.

91This verse was meant to relieve the Holy Prophet of the domestic worries and anxieties so that he could carry out his duties with full peace of mind. When Allah clearly gave hire the power and the authority to treat any of his wives as he liked, there remained no chance that those believing ladies would trouble him in any way, or would create complications for him by their mutual rivalries and domestic squabbles. But in spite of having this authority from Allah the Holy Prophet meted out full justice to his wives. He did not prefer one to the other and would visit each of them regularly by turns. Only Abu Razin from among the traditionalists has said that the Holy Prophet visited only four of his wives (Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Hafsah, Hadrat Zainab and Hadrat Umm Salamah) by turns and no turn had been fixed for the other wives. But all other traditionalists and commentators contradict this and prove by authentic traditions that even after having this authority the Holy Prophet visited all his wives in turn and treated there alike. Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i, Abu Da'ud and others have reported on the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah that even after the revelation of this verse the Holy Prophet's practice was that whenever he wanted to visit any of us, his wives, on the turn of another wife, he would first ask her permission for it. Abu Bakr al-Jassas relates from 'Urwah bin Zubair that Hadrat 'A'ishah told him, "As to our rants the Holy Prophet never preferred any of us to the other, although it seldom happened that he did not visit all his wives on the same day, but he never touched a wife unless it was her day by turn." And this also is a tradition from Hadrat 'A'ishah that during his last illness when it became difficult for him to move about he asked for his other wives' permission to stay with her, and only on their approval he passed his last days in her apartment. Ibn Abi Hatim has cited this from Imam Zuhri that the Holy Prophet is not known to have deprived any of his wives of her turn. To this Hadrat Saudah only was an exception, who on account of her advanced age had willingly surrendered her turn in favor of Hadrat 'A'ishah

Here, nobody should entertain the doubt that Allah had, God forbid, shown an undue privilege to His

Prophet and deprived his wives of their rights. As a matter of fact, the great objectives for the sake of which the Holy Prophet had been made an exception to the general rule in respect of the number of wives, also demanded that he should be afforded full peace in domestic life and anything that could cause him distraction and embarrassment should be eradicated. It was a unique honor for the holy wives that they were privileged to be the life-partners of the greatest of all men like the Holy Prophet, and by virtue of this they got the opportunity to become his Companions and helpers in the great task of reform and invitation that was to become the means of true success for mankind till the end of time. Just as the Holy Prophet was offering every kind of sacrifice for the sake of this objective and the Companions also were following his example according to their capabilities, so it was the duty of his wives also to display selflessness in every way. Therefore, all the wives accepted Allah's decision with regard to themselves happily and willingly.

92This is a warning for the Holy Prophet's wives as well as for all other people. For the wives it is a warning in the sense that if after the coming down of this Divine Command they did not feel reconciled to it in their hearts, they would not escape Allah's punishment. And for others the warning is that if they entertained any kind of suspicion in their hearts in regard to the Holy Prophet's matrimonial life, or harbored any misgiving in any recess of their minds, this would not remain hidden from Allah. Along with this Allah's attribute of forbearance also has been mentioned so that one they know that although even a thought of insolence in regard to the Prophet is also punishable, yet if a person got rid of such a suspicion he might have the hope of His forgiveness.

93This has two meanings:

(1) `No other woman except those made lawful to you in verse 50 above, is any more lawful to you"; and

(2) 'when your wives have become pleased and ready to stay with you through every kind of hardship and have rejected the world in preference to the Hereafter, and are satisfied that you may treat them as you please, it is no longer lawful for you that you should divorce any of them and take another wife instead."

94This verse explains why one is permitted to have conjugal relations with one's slave-girls besides the wedded wives, and there is no restriction on their number. The same thing has also been stated in Surah An-Nisa': 3, AI-Mu'minun: b, and AI-Ma'arij: 30. In all these verses the slave-girls have been mentioned as a separate class from the wedded wives, and conjugal relations with them have been permitted. Moreover, verse 3 of Surah An-Nisa' lays down the number of the wives as four, but neither has Allah fixed the number of the slave-girls, in that verse nor made any allusion to their number in the other relevant verses. Here, of course, the Holy Prophet is being addressed and told: "It is no more lawful for you to take other women in marriage, or divorce any of the present wives and take another wife in her stead; slave-girls, however, are lawful." This shows that no restriction has been imposed in respect of the slave girls.

This, however, does not mean that the Divine Law has provided the rich an opportunity to purchase as many slave-girls as they like for their carnal indulgence. This is in fact how the self-seeking people have exploited and abused the Law. The Law had been made for the convenience of the people; it had not been made to be abused. One could, for instance, similarly abuse the Law concerning marriage. The Shari'ah permits a man to marry up to four wives and also gives him the right to divorce his wife and take another one. This law had been made in view of man's requirements and needs. Now, if a person, merely for the sake of sensual enjoyment, were to adopt the practice of keeping four wives for a time and then divorcing them to be replaced by another company of them, it would be abusing the provisions of the law, for which the person himself would be responsible and not the Shari`ah. Likewise the Shari'ah has allowed that the women who are captured in war and whose people do not exchange them for Muslim prisoners of war nor ransom them, may be kept as slave-girls, and gave the persons to whom they are assigned by the government the right to have conjugal relations with them so that they do not become a moral hazard for the society. Then, as it was not possible to determine the number of the prisoners of war, legally also it could nor be determined how many slave girls a person could keep at a time. The sale of the slaves and slave-girls was also allowed for the reason that if a slave or a slave-girl could not pull on well with a master, he or she could be transferred to another person so that the same person's permanent ownership did not become a cause of unending torture for both the master and the captive. The Shari`ah made all these laws keeping in view human conditions and requirements for the convenience of men. If these have been made a means of sexual enjoyment and luxury by the rich, it is they who are to blame for this and not the Shari'ah .

95This is an introduction to the general Command that was given in Surah An-Nur: 27 about a year later. In the ancient times the Arabs would enter one another's house unceremoniously. If a person had to see another person he did not drink it was necessary to call at the door or take permission for entry, but would enter the house and ask the womenfolk and children whether the master was at home or not, This custom of ignorance was the cause of many evils and would often give rise to some serious evils. Therefore, in the beginning a rule was made in respect of the houses of the Holy Prophet that no person, whether a close friend or a distant relative, could enter them without permission. Then in Surah An-Nur a general command was given to enforce this rule for the houses of all the Muslims.

96This is the second command in this connection. An uncivilized practice prevalent among the Arabs was that the visitors would call on a friend or acquaintance right at the time of the meals, or would come and prolong their stay till the meals time approached. This would often cause the master of the house great embarrassment. He could neither be so discourteous as to tell the visitors to leave because it was his meals time, nor could feed so many unexpected guests together. For it is not always possible for a person to arrange meals immediately for as many visitors as happened to call on him at a time. Allah disapproved of this practice and commanded that the visitors should go for meals to a house only when invited. This Command did not in particular apply to the Holy Prophet's house only but the rules were in the beginning enforced in that model household so that they become general rules of etiquette in the

houses of the other Muslims as well.

97This was to reform yet another foolish practice. The guests at a feast, after they had finished eating, would sit down to endless gossip and discussions much to the inconvenience of the people of the house. They would often embarrass the Holy Prophet also by this practice, but he would forbear and forget. At last on the day of the marriage feast of Hadrat Zainab the embarrassment thus caused crossed all limits. According to the Holy Prophet's special attendant, Hadrat Anas bin Malik, the feast was held at night. Most of the people left after taking food but a couple or two of them got engaged jn gossip. Disconcerted the Holy Prophet rose and went round to his wives. When he returned he found the gentlemen still sitting. He turned back and sat in Hadrat 'A'ishah's apartment. When a good deal of the night had passed he came to know that the gentlemen had left. Then he returned and went to the apartment of Hadrat Zainab. After this it became inevitable that Allah Himself should warn. the people of these evil practices. According to Hadrat Anas these verses were sent down on this occasion. (Muslim, Nasa'i Ibn Jarir).

98This is the verse which is called "the verse of the veil". Bukhari has related on the authority of Hadrat Anas that before the coming down of this verse, Hadrat 'Umar had made a suggestion several times to the Holy Prophet to the effect: "O Messenger of Allah, all sorts of the people, good and bad, come to visit you. Would that you commanded your wives to observe hijab. According to another tradition, once Hadrat 'Umar said to the holy wives, "If what I say concerning you is accepted, my eyes should never see you. " But since the Holy Prophet was not independent in making law, he awaited Divine Revelation. At last, this Command came down that except for the mahram males (as being stated in v. SS below) no other man should enter the Holy Prophet's houses, and whoever had to ask some thing from the ladies, should ask for it from behind a curtain. After this Command curtains were hung at the doors of the apartments of the wives, and since the Holy Prophet's house was a model for the Muslims to follow, they too hung curtains at their doors. The last sentence of the verse itself points out that whoever desire that the hearts of the men and women should remain pure, should adopt this way.

Now whosoever has been blessed with understanding by Allah can himself see that the Book which forbids the men and women to talk to each other face to face and commands them to speak from behind a curtain because `this is a better way for the purity of your as well as their hearts," could not possibly permit that the men and women should freely meet in mixed gatherings, educational and democratic institutions and offices, because it did not affect the purity of the hearts in any way. For him who does not want to follow the Qur'an, the best way would be that he should disregard its Commands and should frankly say that he has no desire to follow it. But this would be the height of meanness that he should violate the clear Commandments of the Qur'an and then stubbornly say that he is following the ¦spirit" of Islam which he has extracted. After all, what is that spirit of Islam which these people extract from sources outside the Qur'an and the sunnah?

99The allusion is to the false allegations that were being made in those days against the Holy Prophet, and some weak-minded Muslims also were joining the disbelievers and the hypocrites in doing this.

100This is the explanation of what has been said in verse 6:"...the Prophet's wives are mothers of the believers."

101That is, "If a person entertains an evil thought in his heart against the Holy Prophet, or harbors an evil intention about his wives, it will not remain hidden from Allah, and he will be punished for it. "

102For explanation, see E.N.'s 38 to 42 of Surah An-Nur. 'Allama Alusi's commentary in this connection is also noteworthy. He says, "Brothers and sons of brothers and sisters include all those relatives who are unlawful for a woman, whether they are blood relations or foster relations. This list does not mention the paternal and maternal uncles because they are like the parents to the woman, or perhaps they have been left out because there was no need to mention them after mentioning their sons, For the reason for not observing purdah from the brother's son and sister's son is the same as of not observing it from the paternal and maternal uncles." (Ruh al-Ma ani.)

103For explanation, see E. N. 43 of An-Nur.

104For explanation, see E. N. 44 of An-Nur.

105It means this: After the coming down of this absolute Command no person outside the circle of the relatives, who have been made an exception, should be allowed to enter the houses without purdah being observed from them, " Another meaning is: "The woman should never adopt the attitude that they should observe purdah when the husband is present, but should appear without purdah before the other men, when he is away. Such a conduct may remain hidden from the husband but not from Allah.

106"Allah's sending His blessings on His Prophet" means this: Allah is very kind to His Prophet: He praises him, blesses his work, exalts his name, and showers His mercies on him. " `Blessings of the angels" means: "They love the Prophet most dearly and pray to Allah to bless him with the highest ranks, cause his religion and Shari'ah to flourish and exalt him to the laudable position. " One can clearly see from the context. why this thing has been said here. This was the rime when the enemies of Islam were making all sorts of false allegations against the Holy Prophet in order to satisfy their jealousy on the success of Faith, By sullying him they thought they would destroy his moral influence through which Islam and the Muslims were gaining more and more ground every day. Such were the conditions when Allah sent down this verse, as if warn the people: "However Bard the disbelievers and the hypocrites and the polytheists might try to vilify and slander My Prophet with a view to frustrating his mission, they are bound to suffer disgrace and humiliation in the end, for I am kind to him, and the angels, who are administering the entire universe, are his supporters and admirers. His enemies Cannot gain anything by their condemnation of him because I am exalting his name and My angels are adoring him constantly. They cannot harm him by their mean machinations when My mercies and blessings are with him, and My

angels pray for him day and night to the effect: "O Lord of the worlds, raise Muhammad to even higher ranks and make his Religion flourish and prosper."

107In other words, it means this: "O people, who have found the right path through Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, you should recognize his the worth and be grateful to him for his great favors to you. You were lost in the darkness of ignorance: He afforded you the light of knowledge: you had become morally bankrupt: he raised you high on the moral level so that the people now feel envious of you; you had sunk to barbarism and savagery: he adorned you with the most refined human civilization. The disbelievers everywhere have turned his enemies only because he has done you these favors; otherwise personally he has not done any harm to anyone. Therefore, the inevitable demand of your gratitude to him is that you should regard him with an equal, or even greater love than the malice and grudge these people display against him; that you should show a greater attachment to him than the hatred these people show towards him; that you should praise and adore him even more fervently than they condemn him; that you should wish him well even more heartily than they wish him ill, and pray for him just as the angels do day and night, saying: "O Lord of the worlds: Just as Your Prophet has done us countless and endless favors, so do You also show him endless and limitless mercy: raise him to the highest ranks in the world and bless him with the greatest nearness to Yourself in the hereafter.'

In this verse, Muslims have been commanded two things: (1) Sallu alaihi; and (2) sallimu taslima. The word Salat when used with the associating panicle 'ala gives three meanings: (1) To be inclined to some body, to attend to him with love, and to bend over him; (2) to praise somebody; and (3) to pray for somebody. Obviously, when the word is used in regard to Allah, it cannot be in the third meaning, for it is absolutely inconceivable that Allah should pray to someone else; it can only be used in the first two meanings. But when this word is used for the servants, whether angels or men, it will be in all the three meanings. It will contain the sense of love as well as praise and prayer for mercy. Therefore, the meaning of giving the Command of sallu'alaihi to the believers for the Holy Prophet is: 'Be attached to him, praise and adore him and pray for him."

The word salam also ' as two meanings: (1) To be secure from every kind of affliction and fault and defect; and (2) to be at peace and refrain from opposing the other person. Therefore, one meaning of sallimu taslima in regard to the Holy Prophet is: "You should pray for his well-being and security," and another meaning is: "Cooperate with him with all your heart and mind; refrain from opposing him and obey him most faithfully and sincerely."

When this Command was sent down, several of the Companions said to the Holy Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, you have taught us the method of pronouncing salam (i.e.. of saying as-salamu 'alaika ayyuhannabiyyu wa rahmatullahi wa barakat-u-hu in the Prayer, and as-salamu alaika ya Rasul-Allah as a greeting, but what is the method of sending Salat on you ?" In response to this, the methods of pronouncing Salat and darud that the Holy Prophet taught to many people on different occasions are as follows:

Ka'b bin'Ujrah: Allahumma salli ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama sallaita ala Ibrahima wa ala al-i Ibrahima irmaka Hamidum-Majid, wa barik 'ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama barakta 'ala Ibrahima wa 'ala al-i Ibrahima innaka Hamid-um-Majid. This darud with a little difference in wording has been reported by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Imam Ahmad, Ibn Abi Shaibah, 'Abdur Razzaq, Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir on the authority of Hadrat Ka'b bin 'Ujrah.

Ibn 'Abbas: From him also the same darud as given above has been reported with a slight difference. (Ibn Jarir).

Abu Humaid Sa'idi:Allahumma salli ala Muhammad-in wa azwaji-hi wa dhurriyati-hi kama sallaita ala Ibrahima wa 'ala al-i Ibrhima wa barik ala Muhammad-in wa azwaji-hi wa dhurriyat-hi kama barakta 'ala al-i Ibrahima irmaka Hamid-um-Majid. (Malik, Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i, Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah).

Abu Mas'ud Badri: Allahumma salli ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama sallaita 'ala Ibrahima wa 'ala al-i Ibrahima wa barik ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama barakta 'ala Ibrahima fil- alamin innaka Hamid-um-Majid (Malik, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i Ahmad, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Habban, Hakim).

Abu Sa' id Khudri: Allahumma salli ala Muhammad-in abdika wa rasuli-ka kama sallaita 'ala Ibrahima wa barik 'ala Mahammad-in wa 'ala al-i Muhammad-in kama ba rakta ala Ibrahim. (Ahmad, Bukhari, Nasa'i Ibn Majah).

Buraidah al-Khuza'i: Allahumm-aj'al Salataka wa rahmataka wa barakati-ka ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama Ja 'altaha ala Ibrahima innaka Hamid-um-Majid. (Ahmad, 'Abd bin Humaid, Ibn Marduyah).

Abu Hurairah: Allahumma salli ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in wa barik ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama sallaita wa barakta 'ala Ibrahima wa 'ala al-i Ibrahim fil- `alamin innaka Hammid-um-Majid. (Nasai).

Talhah: Allahumma salli ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama sallaita `ala Ibrahima innaka Hamid-um-Majid wa barik ala Muhammad-in wa ala al-i Muhammad-in kama barakta ala Ibrahima innaka Hamid-um-Majid. (Ibn Jarir).

All these daruds agree in meaning despite the difference in wording. A few points concerning them should be understood clearly:

First, in all these the Holy Prophet tells the Muslims that the best way of sending darud and Salat on him is that they should pray to Allah, saying, "O God: send darud on Muhanunad. " Ignorant people who do

not possess full understanding of the meaning intermediately raise the objection: 'How strange that Allah commands us to send darud on His Prophet, but we, in return, implore Allah that He should send it." The fact, however, is that the Holy Prophet has instructed the people, as if to say, 'You cannot do full justice to sending of darud and Salat on me even if you want to. Therefore, pray only to Allah to bless me with Salat. " Evidently, the Muslims cannot raise the ranks of the Holy Prophet, Allah only can raise them; the Muslims cannot repay the Holy Prophet for his favors and kindness, Allah only can adequately reward him for this; the Muslims cannot attain any success in exalting the Holy Prophet's name and promoting the cause of religion unless Allah favors them with His help and succor. So much so that the Holy Prophet's love can be impressed in our hearts only by Allah's help; otherwise Satan can turn us away from him by every kind of evil suggestion sand suspicions. May Allah protect us from this! Therefore, there is no other way of doing full justice to sending of darud and salat on the Holy Prophet than that we should supplicate Allah to send salat on him. The person who says: Allahumma salli 'ala Muhammad-in, in fact, admits his helplessness before Allah, and says: "O God: it is not in my power to send salat on Your Prophet as it should be sent. I. therefore, implore You to send it on my behalf and take from me whatever service You will in this regard."

Secondly, the Holy Prophet did not want to have this prayer reserved for only himself bat included his followers and his wives and offspring also. The meaning of the wives and offspring is obvious. As for the word al it does not merely denote the people of the Holy Prophet's household, but it applies to all those people who follow him and adopt his way. Lexically, there is a difference between the words al and ahl. By the al of a person are understood all those people who are his companions, helpers and followers, whether they are related to him or not, and his ahl are those who are related to him, whether or not they are his companions and followers. The Qur'an has used the word al Fir aun at fourteen places but nowhere has it been used to mean the people of Pharaoh's household only; everywhere it implies all those who sided with him in the conflict against the Prophet Moses. (For example, see Al-Baqarah: 49-50, AI-i-'Imran: 11, AI-A'raf; 130, Al-Mu'min: 46). Thus, from al-Muhammad is excluded every such person who is not on the way of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), whether he be a member of his household, and in it is included every such person, who is following in his footsteps, whether he is not even distantly related to him by blood. However, those members of the Prophet's household who arc related to him by blood and are also his followers are most worthy to be regarded as al-Muhammad.

Thirdly, the same thing found in all the daruds taught by the Holy Prophet is that he may be blessed with the same kindness with which Abraham and the followers of Abraham have been blessed. The people have found it difficult to understand this. The scholars have given different interpretations of it but none of them is appealing. In my opinion the correct interpretation is this (though the real knowledge is with Allah): Allah blessed the Prophet Abraham in particular with something with which He has blessed no one else in the world, and it is this: AII those human beings who regard the Prophethood and the Revelation and the Book as the source of guidance are agreed on the leadership of the Prophet Abraham, whether they are Muslims or Christians or Jews. Therefore, what the Holy Prophet means to say is this: "O Allah,

just as You have made the Prophet Abraham the refuge of the followers of all the Prophets, so You make me also the refuge, so that no one who is a believer in Prophethood, may remain deprived of the grace of believing in my Prophethood."

That it is an Islamic practice to send darud on the Holy Prophet, that it is commendable to pronounce it when the Holy Prophet's name is mentioned, that it is a Sunnah of the Prophet to recite it in the Prayer in particular, is agreed upon by all the scholars. There is also a consensus that it is obligatory to pronounce the darud on the Holy Prophet at least once in a lifetime, because Allah has clearly commanded it, but apart from this there are differences among the scholars regarding it.

Imam Shafe' i holds the view that it is obligatory to recite salat on the Prophet during tashahhud in the final sitting of the Prayer, for without it the Prayer would be void. Hadrat Ibn Mas'ud, Abu-Mas'ud Ansari, Ibn 'Umar and Jabir bin 'Abdullah from among the Companions, Sha'bi, Imam Muhammad bin Baqir, Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurzi and Muqatil bin Hayyan from among the immediate followers of the Companions, and Ishaq bin Rahwayah from among the jurists also held the same opinion, and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal also had adopted the same in the end.

Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik and the majority of the scholars hold that the pronouncing of the Salat is obligatory only once in a life time. It is just like the Kalimah: whoever affirmed the divinity of Allah and the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah once in a lifetime carried out his duty. Likewise, the one who pronounced the darud and salat once in his lifetime would be deemed to have done his duty of pronouncing the darud on the Holy Prophet. After it, it is neither obligatory (fend) to recite the Kalimah nor the darud.

Another group holds that it is absolutely wajib to recite it in the Prayer but not necessarily in the tashahhud.

Still another group holds the view that it is wajib to pronounce the darrid in every supplication. Some others say that it is wajib to pronounce it whenever the Holy Prophet's name is mentioned, and according to another group recitation of the darrid is wajib only once in an assembly or sitting no matter how often the name of the Holy Prophet is mentioned during it.

These differences only pertain to the darud's being obligatory in status or otherwise. As for its merit and excellence, its being conducive to high spiritual rewards and its being a great righteous act, there is complete unanimity among the Ummah. No one who is a believer in any degree can have any different opinion about it. The darud is the natural supplication of the heart of every Muslim, who realizes that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon Whom be Allah's peace) is the Ummah's greatest benefactor after Allah. The greater one's appreciation of Islam and the Faith, the greater will one be appreciative of the favors of the Holy Prophet himself; and the greater one's appreciation of the favors of the Holy Prophet, the more often will he pronounce the darud and salat on him. Thus, in fact, the frequency with which a person

pronounces the darud is the measure which shows the depth of his relationship with the Holy Prophet's Religion and the extent of his appreciation of the blessing of the Faith. On this very basis the Holy Prophet has said: "The angels send darud on him who sends darud on me, as long as he does so." (Ahmad, Ibn Majah). "He who sends darud on me once, Allah sends darud on him ten times over." (Muslim) "The one who sends darud on me most often will deserve to remain close to me on the Day of Resurrection" (Tirmidhi). Niggardly is the person who does not send darud on me when I am mentioned before him." (Tirmidhi)

As to whether it is permissible to use the words Allahumma salli ala so and so, or sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, or similar other words for others than the Holy Prophet, it is disputed. One group of the scholars of whom Qadi `Iyad is most prominent holds it as absolutely permissible. Their argument is this: Allah Himself has used the word salat in respect of those who were not prophets at several places in the Qur'an, e.g. in Al-Baqarah; 157, At-Taubah: 103, Al-Ahzab:43. Similarly, the Holy Prophet also prayed for those who were not' prophets using the word sale) on several occasions. For example, he prayed for a Companion, thus: Allahumma salli 'ala al Abi Aufa; on the request of Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah's wife, he said: Sallallahu alaihi wa 'ala zaujiki. Then concerning those who came with the Zakat money, he would say: Allahumma salli 'alaihim. Praying for Hadrat Sa'd bin 'Ubadah he said: Allahumma aj'al salataka wa rahmataka ala al-i Sa'd bin 'Ubadah. And about the soul of the believer the Holy Prophet gave the news that the angels prayed for him, thus: Sallallahu 'alaika wa ala jasadika. However, the majority of the Muslim scholars opine that it was correct for Allah and His Messenger but not so for the Ummah. They say that it has become a convention with the Muslims to use salat-o-salam exclusively for the Prophets. Therefore, it should not be used for those who are not prophets. On this very basis Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz once wrote to one of his governors, saying: "I hear that some preachers have started using the word salat in respect of their patrons and supporters in the manner of salat 'alas-Nabi. As soon as you receive this letter, stop them from this practice and command them to use Salat exclusively for the Prophets and remain content with the prayer for the other Muslims." (Ruh al-Ma'eni). Most scholars also hold that using the words sallallahu alaihi wa sallam for any other Prophet than the Holy Prophet is not correct.

108"To trouble Allah" implies two things: That Allah should be disobeyed, that an attitude of disbelief and shirk and atheism be adopted with regard to Him, and that things made unlawful by Him be made lawful; and (2) that His Messenger be troubled, for just as obedience to the Messenger is obedience to Allah, so is opposition and disobedience of the Messenger opposition and disobedience of Allah.

109This verse determines the definition of slander. It is to ascribe a fault to a person which he does not have, or an error which he has not committed. The Holy Prophet also has explained it. According to Abu Da'ud and Tirmidhi, when he was asked as to what is ghibat (backbiting), he replied: 'It is to make mention of your brother in a manner derogatory to him. " The questioner said, "And if the fault is there in my brother?" . The Holy Prophet replied: `If the fault that you mentioned is there in him, you backbite him; if it is not there, you slandered him." Such an act is not only a moral sin, which will entail punishment in

the Hereafter, but this verse also requires that in the law of an Islamic State also false allegation should be held as a culpable offense.

110Jilbab is a large sheet and idna' is to draw close and wrap up, but when this word is used with the associating particle ala, it gives the meaning of letting something down from above. Some modern translators, under the influence of the West, have translated this word "to wrap up" so as to avoid somehow the Command about covering of the face. But if Allah had meant what these gentlemen want to construe, He would have said: yudnina ilai-hinna and not yudnina alai-hinna. Anyone who knows Arabic knows that yudnina 'alai-hinna cannot merely mean "wrapping up. " Moreover, the words min jalabib-i hinna also do not permit of this meaning. It is obvious that the preposition min here signifies a part of the sheet, and also that wrapping up is done by means of a whole sheet and not merely by a part of it. The verse, therefore, clearly means : The women should wrap themselves up well in their sheets, and should draw and let down a part of the sheet in front of the face.

This same meaning was understood by the major commentators who lived close to the time of the Holy Prophet. Ibn Jarir and Ibn al-Mundhir have related that Muhammad bin Sirin asked Hadrat `Ubaidah as-Salmani the meaning of this verse. (This Hadrat `Ubaidah had become a Muslim in the time of the Holy Prophet but had not been able to visit him. He came to Madinah in the time of Hadrat 'Umar and settled down there. He was recognized as equal in rank with Qadi Shuraih in jurisprudence and judicial matters). Instead of giving a verbal reply Hadrat 'Ubaidah put on his sheet and gave a practical demonstration by covering his head and forehead and face and an eye, leaving only the other eye uncovered. Ibn 'Abbas also has made almost the same commentary. In his statements which have been reported by Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Marduyah, he says: "Allah has commanded the women that when they move .out of their houses for an outdoor duty, they should conceal their faces by drawing and letting down aver themselves a part of their sheets, keeping only the eyes uncovered. " The same explanation of this verse has been given by Qatadah and Suddi.

All the great commentators who have passed after the period of the Companions and their immediate followers have given the same meaning of this verse. Imam Ibn Jarir Tabari, in his commentary of this verse, says: "The respectable women should not look like the slave-girls from their dress when they move out of their houses, with uncovered faces and loose hair; they should rather draw and let down over them a part of their sheets or outer-garments so that no evil person may dare molest them." (Jami'al Bayan, vol. XXII, p. 33).

'Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas says: "This verse points out that the young woman has been commanded to conceal her face from the other men; when moving out of the house she should cover herself up well to express chastity and purity of character so that people of doubtful character do not cherish any false hope when they see her. " (Ahkam al-Qur'an, vol. III, p. 458).

'Allama Zamakhshari says: "It means that they should let down a part of their sheet over themselves, and

should cover their faces and wrap up their sides well." (AI-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 221). 'Allama Nizamuddin Nishapuri says: "That is, they should let down a part of the sheet over them: in this verse, the women have been commanded to cover the head and face. " (Ghara'ib al-Qur an, vol. XXII, p. 32).

Imam Razi says: "What is mean is that the people may know that they are not promiscuous women. For the woman who covers her face, though the face is not included in the satar, cannot be expected to uncover her satar, which is obligatory to cover before the other man. Thus, everyone will know that they are modest and virtuous women who cannot be expected to do anything indecent." (Tafsir Kabir. vol. VI, p 591)

Incidentally, another thing that is proved by this verse is that the Holy Prophet had several daughters, for Allah Himself says: "O Prophet, enjoin your wives and daughters." These words absolutely refute the assertion of those people who without any fear of God make the claim that the Holy Prophet had only one daughter, Hadrat Fatimah, and the other daughters were not froth his own loins but by the former husbands. These people are so blinded by prejudice that they do not even bother to consider what crime they arc committing by denying the parentage of the children of the Holy Prophet, and what severe punishment will await them in the Hereafter. AII authentic traditions concur that from Hadrat Khadijah the Holy Prophet had not one daughter, Hadrat Fatimah, but three other daughters as well. The Holy Prophet's earliest biographer, Muhammad bin Ishaq, after mentioning his marriage with Hadrat Khadijah, says; "She was the mother of all the Holy Prophet's children except Ibrahim, namely Qasim and Tahir and Tayyib and Zainab and Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum and Fatimah." (Ibn Hisham, vol. I, p. 202).

The famous genealogist, Hashim bin Muhammad bin as-Sa'ib al-Kalbi, states: 'The first born child to the, Messenger. of Allah before his call to Prophethood was Qasim; then Zainab was born to him, then Ruqayyah, then Umm Kulthum." (Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd, vol. I, p. 133). Ibn Hazam writes in Jawami' asSirah that from Hadrat Khadijah the Holy Prophet had four daughters, the eldest being Zainab, then Ruqayyah, then Fatimah and then Umm Kulthum (pp. 38-39). Tabari, Ibn Sa'd, Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Habib (author of Kitab al-Muhabbar) and Ibn 'Abd al-Bart (author of Kitab al-lsti'ab) state on the strength of authentic sources that before her marriage with the Holy Prophet Hadrat Khadijah had two husbands, Abu Halah Tamimi by whom she had a son named Hind bin Abu Halah, and 'Atiq bin 'A'idh Makhzumi, by whom she had a daughter named Hind. Then she was married to the Holy Prophet and all the genealogists agree that from his loins she had the four daughters as stated above. (See Tabari, vol. ll, p. 411: tabaqat Ibn Sa'd, vol. VIII, pp. 14-16; Kitab al-Muhabbar, pp. 78, 79, 452; .9l-Isti'ab, vol. II, p. 718). AII these statements are authenticated by the Qur'anic declaration that the Holy Prophet had not one but several daughters.

111"... will thus be recognized": will be recognized to be noble and chaste women from their simple and modest dress, and not w omen of ill repute from whom some wicked person could cherish evil hopes. ".. are not molested": will not be teased but let alone.

Let us pause here for a while and try to understand what spirit of the social law of Islam is being expressed by this Qur'anic Command and what is its object which Allah Himself has stated. Before this in Surah An-Nur: 31, the women have been forbidden to display their adornments before others except such and such men and women, and "also that they should not stamp their feet on the ground lest their hidden decoration (ornaments) should be known." If that Command is read with this verse of AI-Ahzab it becomes obvious that the intention of the Command for the woman to cover herself well with the sheet here is to conceal her adornments from others. And, evidently, this purpose can be fulfilled only if the sheet or the outer-garment itself is simple; otherwise wrapping up oneself with a decorated and attractive sheet will defeat the purpose itself. Besides, Allah does not only command the woman to conceal her adornment by covering herself with the sheet, but also enjoins that she should let down a pan of the sheet over herself. No sensible person can take any other meaning of this Command than that it requires to conceal the face along with the concealment of the adornments of the body and dress. Then, Allah Himself states the reason for enjoining the Command, saying: "This is an appropriate way by adopting which the Muslim women will be recognized and will remain safe from trouble." Evidently, this instruction is being given to those women who regard flirtation and stares and evil advances by men as annoying and troublesome and not as enjoyable, who do not want to be counted among ill-reputed, immodest society girls, but wish to be known as chaste and modest domestic women. To such noble and pious women Allah says: 'If you really wish to be known as good women, and the men's lustful attention is not pleasurable but embarrassing for you, then you should not come out of your houses in full make-up like the newly-wed brides so as to display your beauty and physical charms before the greedy eyes of the people, but the best way for this would be that you should come out in a simple sheet fully concealing your adornments and covering your face and walking in a manner that even the jingle of your ornaments does not attract attention. The woman who applies herself to make-up and does not step out of the house until she has fully embellished and decorated herself with every adornment cannot have any other intention that to become the center of attention of all the men, whom she herself allures. After this if she complains that the greedy looks of the people cause embarrassment to her, and she does not wish to be known as a "society woman" and a "popular lady", but wants to live as a chaste house-wife, it will be nothing but a fraud. It is not the word of the mouth of a person that determines his intention, but his real intention is manifested in his act and mode of behavior. Therefore, the act of the woman who appears before the other then attractively itself shows what motivates her behavior. That is why the mischievous people cherish the same hopes from her as can be cherished from such a woman. The Qur'an tells the women: "You cannot be chaste women and society women at one and the same time. If you want to live as modest, chaste women, you will have to give up the ways that are conducive to becoming society women only, and adopt the way of life that can be helpful in becoming chaste women. "

Whether a man's personal opinion is according to the Qur'an or opposed to it, and whether he wants to accept the Qur'anic guidance as a practical guide for himself or not, in any case if he does not wish to be intellectually dishonest in interpreting the Qur'an, he cannot fail to understand its real intention. If he is not a hypocrite he will frankly admit that the Qur'an's intention is what has been stated above. After this if he violates any Command, he will do so with the realization that he is violating the Qur'anic Command, or

regards the Qur'anic guidance as wrong.

112That is, "Allah will forgive the errors and mistakes that were committed in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, provided that you reform yourselves now when you have received clear guidance, and do not violate it intentionally."

113"Having diseased hearts" points to two kinds of evils:

(1) That a person should be an ill-wisher of Islam and the Muslims although he gets himself counted among the Muslims; and

(2) that he should be cherishing evil intentions and having criminal mentality and his evil tendencies be manifesting themselves in everything he thinks and does.

114This implies the people who, in order to cause panic among the Muslims and to lower their morale, used to spread rumors in Madinah to the effect that the Muslims had suffered such and such serious setback, that a huge army was gathering together against them at such and such a place, that Madinah was under threat of a sudden attack, etc. Besides this, they had another pastime. they would concoct and spread imaginary stories about the domestic life of the Holy Prophet's household and of other Muslims so as to produce suspicions among the common people and destroy the moral influence of the Muslims.

115That is, "This is a permanent law of Allah's Shari'ah that in an Islamic society and state such mischief-mongers are never given an opportunity to flourish and prosper. Whenever the system of society and state is established on Divine Law, such people will be warned to mend their ways and if they still persisted in their evil ways they would be severely dealt with and exterminated."

116The Holy Prophet was generally asked this question by the disbelievers and the hypocrites. By this they did not mean to obtain any knowledge but they did so out of fun and jest. As a matter of fact, they did not believe in the coming of the Hereafter at all; they regarded its concept as an empty threat only. They did not ask about the time of its coming so that they could set their affairs right, but what they really meant was : "O Muhammad, we have been doing everything to frustrate your mission, and you have not been able to do any harm to us so far; now let us know as to when will Resurrection take place when we will be taken to task by Allah."

117This thing has been stated at several places in the Qur'an. For instance, sec Al-A'raf: 187; An-Naziyat: 42-46: Saba: 3-5; Al-Mulk: 24-27; Al Mutaffifin: 10-17; Al-Hijr: 2-3; Al-Furqan: 27-29; Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 26-29.

118One should note that the Holy Qur'an has at some places addressed the true Muslims with: 'O you

who have believed," and at others the Muslim community as a whole, which includes the believers as well as the hypocrites and the Muslims of the weak faith, and at still others only the hypocrites. When the hypocrites and the Muslims of the weak faith are addressed with: "O you who have believed," it is meant to put them to shame, as if to say, "You claim to have affirmed faith, but your acts and deeds do not support your claim." A little study of the context can easily show which class of the people has been addressed at a particular place. Here, obviously, the common Muslims are being addressed.

119In other words, it means: "O Muslims, do not behave like the Jews. You should not behave towards your Prophet as the children of Israel behaved towards the Prophet Moses. " The Israelites themselves admit that the Prophet Moses was their greatest benefactor. Whatever they achieved as a nation was only due to him: otherwise in Egypt they would have been doomed to a worse fate than that of the Shudras in India. But how the Israelites treated the greatest benefactor of theirs can be judged by a cursory glance at the following places of the Bible: Exodus, 5: 20-21, 14: 12, 16: 2-3, 17: 3-4. Numbers, 11:1-15,14:1-10, 16 (the whole chapter), 20: 1-5.

The Qur'an by referring to this ingratitude of the children of Israel, warns the Muslims, so as to say: "Refrain from adopting this same attitude towards Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace); otherwise you should be ready to face the same fate as the Jews. "

This same thing was said by Holy Prophet himself on several occasions. Once he was dividing some goods among the Muslims. When the people dispersed, a man said; "Muhammad in this division has shown no regard for Allah and the Hereafter. " Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud heard this remark and told the Holy Prophet what had been said concerning him that day. He replied, "May Allah show mercy to Moses: he was maligned even more severely, but he showed patience." (Musnad Ahmad, TIrmidhi, Abu Da'ud).

120In the end, Allah wants man to realize his real position in the world; if in that position he regarded the life of the world as mere fun and sport and adopted a wrong attitude carelessly, he would only be working for his own doom.

Here, the word 'amanat" (trust) implies khilafat (caliphate) which, according to the Qur'an, tnan has been granted in the earth. The inevitable result of the freedom given to man to choose between obedience and disobedience, and the powers and authority granted him over countless creations for using that freedom, is that he himself be held responsible for his voluntary acts and should deserve rewards for his righteous conduct and suffer punishment for his evil conduct. Since man has not attained these powers by his own efforts but has been granted these by Allah, and he is answerable before Allah for their right or wrong use, these have been described by the word khilafat at other places in the Qur'an, and by amanat here.

In order to give an idea of how important and heavy this "trust" (amanat) is, Allah says that the heavens and the earth, in spite of their glory and greatness, and the mountains, in spite of their size and firmness, could not have the power and courage to bear it. But man, the weak and frail man, has borne this heavy

burden on his tiny self.

The presentation of the trust before the earth and the heavens and their refusal to bear it and their being afraid of it may be taste literally, or it may have been said so metaphorically. We can neither know nor can comprehend Allah's relationship with His creations. The earth and the sun and the moon and the mountains are dumb, deaf and lifeless for us but they may not be so also for Allah. Allah can speak to each of His creations and it can respond to Him, though its nature is incomprehensible for us. Therefore, it is just possible that Allah, in fact, might have presented this heavy trust before them, and they might have shuddered to see it, and they might have made this submission before their Master and Creator.

"Lord, we find our good and our convenience only in remaining as Your powerless servants: we do not find courage to ask for the freedom to disobey and do justice to it, and then suffer Your punishment in case we cannot do justice to it." Likewise, it is also quite possible that before this present life Allah might have given another kind of existence to mankind and summoned it before Himself, and it might have willingly undertaken to accept the delegated powers and authority. We have no rational argument to regard this as impossible. Only such a person, who might have made a wrong estimate of his mental and intellectual powers and capabilities, can think of regarding it as impossible.

However, this also is equally possible that Allah may have said so allegorically. In order to give an idea of the extraordinary importance of the matter, He may have depicted the scene as if the earth and the heavens and the mountains like the Himalayas were present before Him on one side and a 5 to 6 foot man, on the other. Then Allah might have asked:

"I want to invest someone of My creation with the power that being a subject of My Kingdom, it may acknowledge My Supremacy and obey My Commands of its own free will; otherwise it will also have the power to deny Me, even rebel against Me. After giving him this freedom I shall so conceal Myself from him as if I did not exist at all. And to exercise this freedom I shall invest him with vast powers, great capabilities, and shall give him dominion over countless of My creations so that he may raise any storm that he may in the universe. Then I shall call him to account at an appointed time. The one who will have misused the freedom granted by Me, will be made to suffer a most terrible punishment; and the one who will have adopted My obedience in spite of all chances and opportunities for disobedience, will be raised to such high ranks as no creation of Mine has ever been able to attain. Now tell, which of you is ready to undergo this test?"

Hearing this discourse a hush might have prevailed for a while all through the universe. Then one huge creation after the other might have bowed down and submitted that it should be excused from the severe test. Then, at last, this frail creation might have risen and submitted: "O my Lord, I am ready to undergo this test. I shall brave all the dangers inherent in the freedom and independence only in the hope that I shall be blessed with the highest office in Your Kingdom if I pass the test. "

By imagining this scene through his mind's eye only can man judge exactly what delicate position he holds in the universe. Allah in this verse has called the person ¦unjust and ignorant", who lives a carefree life in the place of test, and has no feeling at all of how great a responsibility he is shouldering, and what consequences he will encounter of the right or wrong decisions that he makes in choosing and adopting an attitude for himself in the life of the world. He is ignorant because the fool holds himself as responsible to no one; he is unjust because he is himself preparing for his doom and is also preparing the doom of many others along with him.

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34. Surah Saba (The Sabaeans)

Name

The Surah takes its name from verse 15 in which the word *Saba* has occurred, which implies that it is the Surah in which mention has been made of Saba (i. e. the Sabaeans).

Period of Revelation

The exact period of its revelation is not known from any reliable tradition. However, the style shows that it is either the middle or the early Makkan period. If it is the middle period, it was probably its initial stage when the persecution had not yet become tyrannical and the Islamic movement was being suppressed only by resort to derision and ridicule, rumor mongering, false allegations and casting of evil suggestions in the people's minds.

Theme and Subject Matter

The Surah deals with those objections of the disbelievers, which they were raising against the Holy Prophet's message of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter, and about his Prophethood itself, mostly in the form of absurd allegations and taunts and mockery. These objections have been answered, sometimes by citing them and sometimes without citing them, and the discourse itself shows which objection is being answered at a particular place. The answers mostly take the form of instruction and admonition and argument, but at some places the disbelievers have been warned also of the evil consequences, of their stubbornness. In this connection, the stories of the Sabaeans and the Prophets David and Solomon have been related to impress this lesson: "You have both these historical precedents before you. On the one hand, there were the Prophets David and Solomon, who had been blessed by Allah with great powers and such grandeur and glory as had been granted to hardly any people before them. In spite of this, they were not proud and arrogant, but remained grateful servants of their Lord. They were never rebellious. On the other hand, there were the people of Saba, who, when blessed by Allah, became proud, and were consequently so thoroughly destroyed and dispersed as to be remembered only in myths and legends. With these precedents in view, you may see and judge for yourselves as to which bind of the life is better: that which is built on belief in

Tauhid and the Hereafter and the attitude of gratefulness to Allah, or that which is based on disbelief and *shirk* and denial of the Hereafter and the worship of the world."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿١﴾

يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنزِلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ٱلْغَفُورُ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] Praise is for Allah alone Who is the Owner of everything in the Leavens and the earth,[1] and the praise is for Him alone in the Hereafter, too.[2] He is the All-Wise, the All-Aware.[3] He knows whatever goes into the earth and whatever comes out of it; and whatever comes down from the sky and whatever ascends into it: He is the All-Merciful, the All-Forgiving.[4]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَا تَأْتِينَا ٱلسَّاعَةُ ۖ قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّى لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ ۖ

لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَآ أَصْغَرُ

مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَآ أَكْبَرُ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣﴾

لِّيَجۡزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ
وَرِزۡقٞ كَرِيمٞ ٤

وَٱلَّذِينَ سَعَوۡ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مُعَٰجِزِينَ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ
مِّن رِّجۡزٍ أَلِيمٞ ٥

وَيَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡعِلۡمَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ مِن
رَّبِّكَ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقَّ وَيَهۡدِيٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡحَمِيدِ ٦

[3-6] The disbelievers say, "How is it that the Resurrection is not coming upon us?"[5] Say, "By my Lord, Knower of the Unseen, it shall certainly come upon you.[6] Not an atom's weight of anything is hidden from Him, neither in the heavens nor in the earth, nor anything smaller than an atom nor greater than it: everything is recorded in a clear register."[7] Resurrection shall take place so that Allah may reward those who have believed and done good works. For them there is forgiveness and a generous provision. As for those who have striven hard to discredit Our Revelations, for them there is a painful torment of the worst kind.[8] O Prophet, those who possess the knowledge fully well know that whatever has been revealed to you from your Lord, is the very Truth, and it guides to the Way of the All-Mighty, All-Praiseworthy God.[9]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ هَلۡ نَدُلُّكُمۡ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٖ يُنَبِّئُكُمۡ إِذَا مُزِّقۡتُمۡ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ
إِنَّكُمۡ لَفِي خَلۡقٖ جَدِيدٍ ٧

أَفۡتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَم بِهِۦ جِنَّةُۢۗ بَلِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ فِى
ٱلۡعَذَابِ وَٱلضَّلَٰلِ ٱلۡبَعِيدِ ﴿٨﴾

[7-8] The disbelievers say to the people, "Shall we point out to you a man who gives the news that when your body will have been scattered into particles, you will be resurrected once again? No one knows whether this man forges a lie in the name of Allah or is mad."[10]

أَفَلَمۡ يَرَوۡاْ إِلَىٰ مَا بَيۡنَ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَمَا خَلۡفَهُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ إِن
نَّشَأۡ نَخۡسِفۡ بِهِمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ أَوۡ نُسۡقِطۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡ كِسَفٗا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِۚ إِنَّ فِى
ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَةٗ لِّكُلِّ عَبۡدٖ مُّنِيبٖ ﴿٩﴾

[9] Nay, but those only, who do not believe in the Hereafter, will incur the punishment and they are involved in gross error.[11] Have they never seen the earth, which surrounds them from front and from behind? If We will, We can sink them underground, or cause some fragments of the sky to fall down upon them.[12] There is' indeed a Sign in this for every such servant who turns to God.[13]

۞ وَلَقَدۡ ءَاتَيۡنَا دَاوُۥدَ مِنَّا فَضۡلٗاۖ يَٰجِبَالُ أَوِّبِى مَعَهُۥ وَٱلطَّيۡرَۖ وَأَلَنَّا
لَهُ ٱلۡحَدِيدَ ﴿١٠﴾

أَنِ ٱعۡمَلۡ سَٰبِغَٰتٖ وَقَدِّرۡ فِي ٱلسَّرۡدِۖ وَٱعۡمَلُواْ صَٰلِحًاۖ إِنِّي بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ
بَصِيرٞ ١١

[10-11] We had blessed David with a great bounty from Ourself.[14] (We commanded:) "O mountains, join with him in glorification," and (the same Command We gave to) the birds.[15] We made iron soft for him, saying, "Make coats of mail and set the rings in proper measure."[16] (O people of David,) "Do good works: surely I see whatever you do."

وَلِسُلَيۡمَٰنَ ٱلرِّيحَ غُدُوُّهَا شَهۡرٞ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهۡرٞۖ وَأَسَلۡنَا لَهُۥ عَيۡنَ
ٱلۡقِطۡرِۖ وَمِنَ ٱلۡجِنِّ مَن يَعۡمَلُ بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡهِ بِإِذۡنِ رَبِّهِۦۖ وَمَن يَزِغۡ مِنۡهُمۡ
عَنۡ أَمۡرِنَا نُذِقۡهُ مِنۡ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ١٢

يَعۡمَلُونَ لَهُۥ مَا يَشَآءُ مِن مَّحَٰرِيبَ وَتَمَٰثِيلَ وَجِفَانٖ كَٱلۡجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٖ
رَّاسِيَٰتٍۚ ٱعۡمَلُوٓاْ ءَالَ دَاوُۥدَ شُكۡرٗاۚ وَقَلِيلٞ مِّنۡ عِبَادِيَ ٱلشَّكُورُ ١٣

[12-13] And for Solomon We subjected the wind which covered a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening[17] and We made a fountain of molten copper to flow for him[18] and subdued such jinns to him who served before him by the command of his Lord.[19] Whoever from among them swerved from Our Command, We made him taste the brazing Fire. They made for him whatever he desired: lofty edifies, images,[20] bowls like troughs and immovable heavy cooking-pots.[21] O people of David, work gratefully,[22] only a few of My servants are grateful.

فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ٱلْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَوْتِهِۦٓ إِلَّا دَآبَّةُ ٱلْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ
مِنسَأَتَهُۥ ۖ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ ٱلْجِنُّ أَن لَّوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ٱلْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا۟ فِى
ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْمُهِينِ ﴿١٤﴾

[14] Then, when we decreed death for Solomon, there was nothing to inform the jinns of his death except the wood louse which was eating away his staff. So, when Solomon fell down, it became clear to the Jinns[23] that if they had known the unseen, they would not have continued in the humiliating torment.[24]

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِى مَسْكَنِهِمْ ءَايَةٌ ۖ جَنَّتَانِ عَن يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ ۖ كُلُوا۟ مِن رِّزْقِ
رَبِّكُمْ وَٱشْكُرُوا۟ لَهُۥ ۚ بَلْدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ ﴿١٥﴾

فَأَعْرَضُوا۟ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ ٱلْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَٰهُم بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ
ذَوَاتَىْ أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثْلٍ وَشَىْءٍ مِّن سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ ﴿١٦﴾

ذَٰلِكَ جَزَيْنَٰهُم بِمَا كَفَرُوا۟ ۖ وَهَلْ نُجَٰزِىٓ إِلَّا ٱلْكَفُورَ
﴿١٧﴾

[15-17] For Saba[25] there was a Sign in their own dwelling-place:[26] two gardens,[27] on the right and on the left: eat of the provisions of your Lord and be grateful to Him: pure and pleasant is the land and Forgiving the Lord. But they turned away.[28] Consequently, We sent upon them a flood due to bursting of the dam[29] and replaced their two

gardens by two other gardens producing bitter fruit and tamarisks and a few lote bushes.[30] This was Our retribution for their disbelief and We recompense none with such a retribution except the ungrateful.

وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ ٱلْقُرَى ٱلَّتِى بَـٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرًى ظَـٰهِرَةً وَقَدَّرْنَا
فِيهَا ٱلسَّيْرَ ۖ سِيرُوا۟ فِيهَا لَيَالِىَ وَأَيَّامًا ءَامِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا بَـٰعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ فَجَعَلْنَـٰهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ
وَمَزَّقْنَـٰهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿١٩﴾

وَلَقَدْ صَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُۥ فَٱتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَمَا كَانَ لَهُۥ عَلَيْهِم مِّن سُلْطَـٰنٍ إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ مِمَّنْ
هُوَ مِنْهَا فِى شَكٍّ ۗ وَرَبُّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَفِيظٌ ﴿٢١﴾

[18-21] And We had made between them and the habitations which We had blessed, (other) conspicuous habitations and set between them their traveling distances,[31] "Travel on these ways night and day in complete security. " But they said, "Our Lord, make our journeys longer."[32] They wronged their own selves. Consequently, We made them mere legends and scattered them utterly.[33] Surely there are Signs in this for every patient and grateful person.[34] In their case Iblis found his suspicions correct, and they all followed him except for a small group of the believers.[35] Iblis did not have any power over them, but whatever happened, it happened because We wanted to see who believed in the Hereafter and who cherished any doubt about it.[36] Your Lord is Watchful over everything.[37]

قُلِ ٱدۡعُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ زَعَمۡتُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِۖ لَا يَمۡلِكُونَ
مِثۡقَالَ ذَرَّةٖ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا لَهُمۡ فِيهِمَا مِن
شِرۡكٖ وَمَا لَهُۥ مِنۡهُم مِّن ظَهِيرٖ ٢٢

وَلَا تَنفَعُ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ عِندَهُۥٓ إِلَّا لِمَنۡ أَذِنَ لَهُۥۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فُزِّعَ
عَن قُلُوبِهِمۡ قَالُواْ مَاذَا قَالَ رَبُّكُمۡۖ قَالُواْ ٱلۡحَقَّۖ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَلِيُّ ٱلۡكَبِيرُ
٢٣

[22-23] (O Prophet,)[38] say (to the mushriks), "Call those whom you worship as deities instead Of Allah.[39] They neither own an atom's weigh of anything in the heavens nor in the earth, nor have they anything to share in either, nor is any of them a helper of Allah. And no intercession before Allah can avail anyone except for the one for whom Allah permits it.[40] So much so that when dread is gone from their hearts, the people will ask (the intercessors), "What reply did your Lord give?" They will say, '`The right reply! And He is the Exalted, the Great!"[41]

۞ قُلۡ مَن يَرۡزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ قُلِ ٱللَّهُۖ وَإِنَّآ أَوۡ
إِيَّاكُمۡ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى أَوۡ فِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ ٢٤

قُل لَّا تُسۡـَٔلُونَ عَمَّآ أَجۡرَمۡنَا وَلَا نُسۡـَٔلُ عَمَّا تَعۡمَلُونَ ٢٥

قُلۡ يَجۡمَعُ بَيۡنَنَا رَبُّنَا ثُمَّ يَفۡتَحُ بَيۡنَنَا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَهُوَ ٱلۡفَتَّاحُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٦﴾

قُلۡ أَرُونِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَلۡحَقۡتُم بِهِۦ شُرَكَآءَ كَلَّاۚ بَلۡ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٧﴾

[24-27] (O Prophet), ask them, "Who gives you sustenance from the Heavens and the earth?" Say, "Allah[42] Only either we or you are on the Right Way or in manifest error."[43] Say to them, "You will not be questioned for the errors we have committed, nor shall we be answerable for what you are doing."[44] Say, "Our Lord will gather us together, then He will judge between us rightly. He is such a great Judge Who knows everything."[45] Say to them, "Just show me those whom you have made associates-with Him."[46] Nay, never! Allah alone is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا كَآفَّةٗ لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرٗا وَنَذِيرٗا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[28] And (O Prophet,) We have sent you to the entire mankind as a bearer of good news and a warner, but most people do not know.[47]

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلۡوَعۡدُ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

قُل لَّكُم مِّيعَادُ يَوۡمٖ لَّا تَسۡتَـٔۡخِرُونَ عَنۡهُ سَاعَةٗ وَلَا تَسۡتَقۡدِمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[29-30] These people say to you, "When will the promise (of Resurrection) be fulfilled if you are truthful?"[48] Say, "For

you the appointment of a day is fixed, which you can neither hold back for an hour nor hasten on by an hour."[49]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ بِهَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَلَا بِٱلَّذِى
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ مَوْقُوفُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يَرْجِعُ بَعْضُهُمْ
إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ٱلْقَوْلَ يَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ لَوْلَآ
أَنتُمْ لَكُنَّا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

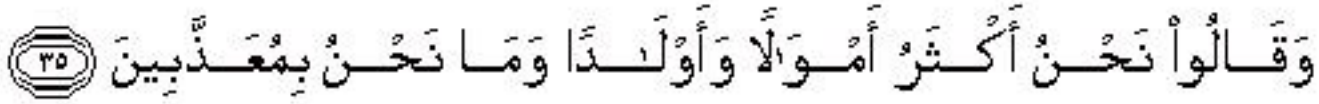
قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوٓا۟ أَنَحْنُ صَدَدْنَٰكُمْ عَنِ ٱلْهُدَىٰ بَعْدَ
إِذْ جَآءَكُم ۖ بَلْ كُنتُم مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

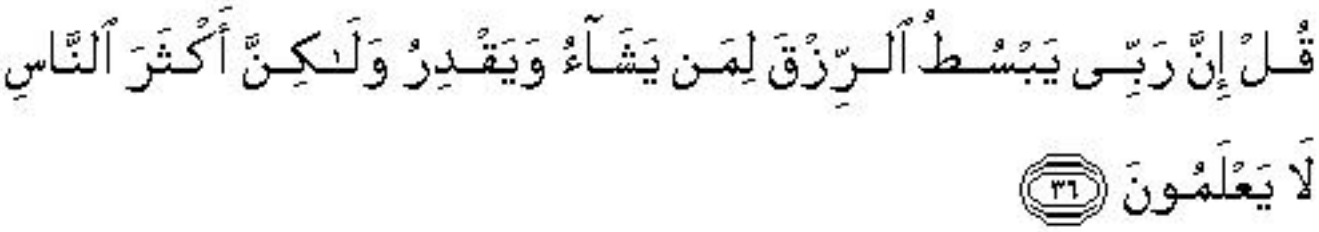
وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتُضْعِفُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ بَلْ مَكْرُ ٱلَّيْلِ
وَٱلنَّهَارِ إِذْ تَأْمُرُونَنَآ أَن نَّكْفُرَ بِٱللَّهِ وَنَجْعَلَ لَهُۥٓ
أَندَادًا ۚ وَأَسَرُّوا۟ ٱلنَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۚ وَجَعَلْنَا ٱلْأَغْلَٰلَ فِىٓ أَعْنَاقِ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

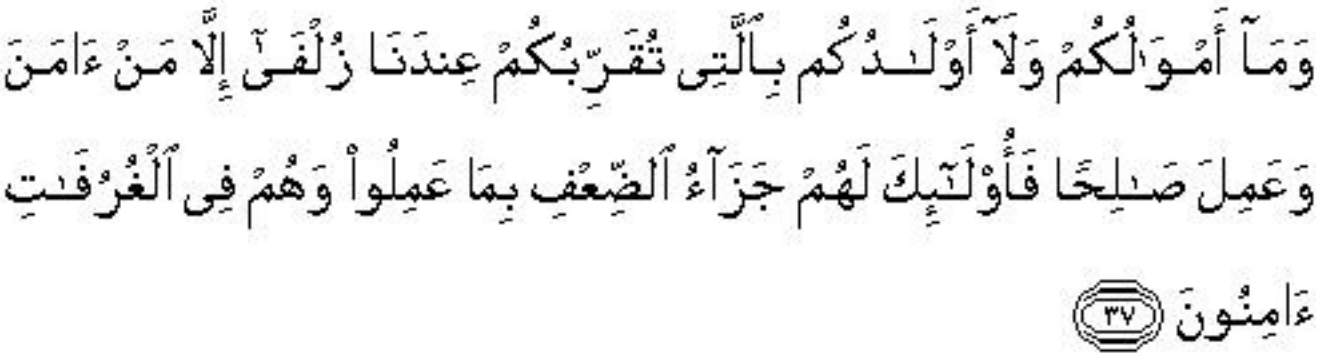
[31-33] The disbelievers say, "We shall never believe in this Qur`an, nor in any other Book which came before it."[50] Would that you could see these wicked people at the time when they will be standing before their Lord! Then, they will blame one another. Those who had been oppressed in the world, will say to the arrogant, "But for you we would have been the believers."[51] The arrogant ones will say to the oppressed once, "Did we hinder you from the guidance

when it came to you? Nay, but you yourselves were guilty."[52] The oppressed ones will say to the arrogant ones. "Nay, but it was your plotting by day and night when you told us to deny Allah and to set up others as equals with Him."[53] At last, when they will see the torment, they will repent in their hearts, and We shall put fetters on the necks of the disbelievers. Can the people be requited except in accordance with their deeds?


وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا فِي قَرۡيَةٖ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتۡرَفُوهَآ
إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرۡسِلۡتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ٣٤


وَقَالُواْ نَحۡنُ أَكۡثَرُ أَمۡوَٰلٗا وَأَوۡلَٰدٗا وَمَا نَحۡنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ٣٥


قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقۡدِرُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ
لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ٣٦


وَمَآ أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُكُم بِٱلَّتِي تُقَرِّبُكُمۡ عِندَنَا زُلۡفَىٰٓ إِلَّا مَنۡ ءَامَنَ
وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ جَزَآءُ ٱلضِّعۡفِ بِمَا عَمِلُواْ وَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡغُرُفَٰتِ
ءَامِنُونَ ٣٧

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَسۡعَوۡنَ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مُعَٰجِزِينَ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ فِي ٱلۡعَذَابِ مُحۡضَرُونَ ٣٨

[34-38] It has never happened that We sent a warner to a habitation and its people of means did not say, "We disbelieve the message you have brought."[54] They always said this: "We have more wealth and children than you, and we shall never be punished."[55] O Prophet, say to them, "My Lord gives abundantly to whom He wills and sparingly to whom He wills, but most people do not realize this."[56] It is not your wealth and your children, which bring you nearer to Us, save him who believes and does good works.[57] These are the ones who will have a double reward for their deeds, and they will live in peace in high mansions.[58] As for those who strive hard in order to frustrate Our Revelations, they shall be severely punished.

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

[39] O Prophet, say to them, "My Lord gives abundantly to whomever of His servants He wills and sparingly to whom He wills.[59] Whatever you spend, He replenishes it by other provisions: He is the best of Providers."[60]

وَيَوۡمَ يَحۡشُرُهُمۡ جَمِيعٗا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ لِلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَهَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِيَّاكُمۡ كَانُواْ يَعۡبُدُونَ ٤٠

قَالُواْ سُبۡحَٰنَكَ أَنتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِن دُونِهِمۖ بَلۡ كَانُواْ يَعۡبُدُونَ ٱلۡجِنَّۖ أَكۡثَرُهُم بِهِم مُّؤۡمِنُونَ ٤١

فَٱلۡيَوۡمَ لَا يَمۡلِكُ بَعۡضُكُمۡ لِبَعۡضٖ نَّفۡعٗا وَلَا ضَرّٗا وَنَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُواْ ذُوقُواْ عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ٱلَّتِي كُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ٤٢

[40-42] And the Day when He will gather all mankind together, He will ask the angels, "Did they really worship you?"[61] They will reply, "Glory be to Thee: our connection is with Thee, not with them.[62] They, in fact, worshiped the jinns, not us. It was in them that most of them believed."[63] (At that time We shall say:) "Today you can neither help nor harm one another." And to the wrongdoers We shall say, Now taste the torment of Hell which you used to deny."

وَإِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٖ قَالُواْ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّا رَجُلٞ يُرِيدُ
أَن يَصُدَّكُمۡ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعۡبُدُ ءَابَآؤُكُمۡ وَقَالُواْ مَا هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ إِفۡكٞ مُّفۡتَرٗىۚ
وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لِلۡحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمۡ إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحۡرٞ مُّبِينٞ

٤٣

وَمَآ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُم مِّن كُتُبٖ يَدۡرُسُونَهَاۖ وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡهِمۡ قَبۡلَكَ مِن نَّذِيرٖ

٤٤

وَكَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ وَمَا بَلَغُواْ مِعۡشَارَ مَآ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُمۡ فَكَذَّبُواْ رُسُلِي فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٤٥﴾

[43-45] When Our clear Revelations are recited to these people, they say, "This person only wants to turn you away from those deities whom your forefathers have been worshiping." And they say, "This (Qur'an) is only a forged falsehood." When the Truth came before these disbelievers, they said, "This is plain magic," whereas We had neither given them a book before that they might study it, nor sent to them any warner before you.[64] Those who have gone before them denied likewise. These people have not attained even a tenth of what We had given them. But when they treated My Messengers as liars, see how severe was My punishment![65]

۞ قُلۡ إِنَّمَآ أَعِظُكُم بِوَٰحِدَةٍۖ أَن تَقُومُواْ لِلَّهِ مَثۡنَىٰ وَفُرَٰدَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُواْۚ مَا بِصَاحِبِكُم مِّن جِنَّةٍۚ إِنۡ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٞ لَّكُم بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡ عَذَابٖ شَدِيدٖ ﴿٤٦﴾

قُلۡ مَا سَأَلۡتُكُم مِّنۡ أَجۡرٖ فَهُوَ لَكُمۡۖ إِنۡ أَجۡرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ شَهِيدٞ ﴿٤٧﴾

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَقۡذِفُ بِٱلۡحَقِّ عَلَّٰمُ ٱلۡغُيُوبِ ﴿٤٨﴾

قُلۡ جَآءَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَمَا يُبۡدِئُ ٱلۡبَٰطِلُ وَمَا يُعِيدُ ﴿٤٩﴾

قُلۡ إِن ضَلَلۡتُ فَإِنَّمَآ أَضِلُّ عَلَىٰ نَفۡسِيۖ وَإِنِ ٱهۡتَدَيۡتُ فَبِمَا يُوحِيٓ إِلَيَّ رَبِّيٓۚ
إِنَّهُۥ سَمِيعٞ قَرِيبٞ ٥٠

[46-50] O Prophet, say to them, "I shall advise you of one thing: Think hard singly or in twos for the sake of Allah and reflect as to what is there of madness in your companion.[66] He is only a warner to you before the coming of a dreadful torment."[67] Say to them, "If I have asked you for a reward, keep it with yourselves,[68] for my reward is with Allah and He is a witness over everything."[69] Say to them, "My Lord inspires (me) with the Truth,[70] and He is the Knower of all the hidden realities." Say, "The Truth has come; now falsehood cannot succeed whatever it may do." Say "If I have gone astray, the burden of my going astray is on myself alone, and if I am on right guidance, it is by virtue of what my Lord reveals to me. He hears everything and is - near at hand."[71]

وَلَوۡ تَرَىٰٓ إِذۡ فَزِعُواْ فَلَا فَوۡتَ وَأُخِذُواْ مِن مَّكَانٖ قَرِيبٖ ٥١

وَقَالُوٓاْ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمُ ٱلتَّنَاوُشُ مِن مَّكَانِۭ بَعِيدٖ ٥٢

[51-52] Would that you could see these people when they will be in a state of confusion! They will not be able to escape but will be seized from a place close by.[72] Then they will say, "We believe in it,"[73] whereas they cannot attain a thing gone far out of hand.[74]

وَقَدۡ كَفَرُواْ بِهِۦ مِن قَبۡلُۖ وَيَقۡذِفُونَ بِٱلۡغَيۡبِ مِن مَّكَانِۭ بَعِيدٖ ٥٣

وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ كَمَا فُعِلَ بِأَشْيَاعِهِم مِّن قَبْلُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
فِي شَكٍّ مُّرِيبٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

[53-54] Even before they had disbelieved and used to conjecture without true knowledge.[75] At that time they will be deprived of that which they will desire, as will have been deprived their likes before them: Indeed they had been involved in a misleading suspicion.[76]

1The Arabic word hamd is used both for praise and for gratitude and both the meanings are implied here. When Allah alone is the Owner of the whole universe and of everything in it, then inevitably He alone deserves to be praised for every beauty, perfection, wisdom, power and excellent skill and design shown and manifested by it. Therefore, every inhabitant of the world must thank Allah alone for any benefit and pleasure that he draws from anything here. For when no one else is a partner in the ownership of these things, no one else deserves to be praised or thanked.

2That is, "Just as every blessing in this world is granted by Allah alone, so in the Hereafter also whatever a person will get, he will get from His treasures and by His grace. Therefore, in the Hereafter too, Allah alone deserves to be praised as well as thanked. "

3That is, "All His works are based on perfect wisdom and knowledge. Whatever He does, He does right. He has full knowledge about every creation of His as to where it is, in what state it is, what are its requirements, what precisely needs to be done for its well-being, what it has done so far and what it will do in the future. He is not unaware of the world created by Himself, but is fully aware of the condition and state of every particle in it. "

4That is, "If a person (or persons) is not being seized in spite of rebellion against Him in His Kingdom, it is not because this world is a lawless kingdom and Allah is ruler, but because Allah is an inept All-Merciful and All-Forbearing, Although it lies in His power to seize the sinner and the wrongdoer immediately on the commission of sin, to withhold his sustenance, to paralyze his body, and to put rum to death suddenly, yet He does not do so. It is the demand of His Beneficence that" in spite of being All-Powerful He gives the disobedient servant plenty of rope and enough respite to mend his ways and as soon as he desists from his evil ways, He pardons and forgives him. "

5This they said satirically and mockingly. What they meant was: "This Prophet has been giving us the news of his coming of Resurrection for along tune now, but Resurrection has not overtaken us so far although we have openly denied and rejected him as a Prophet, have been insolent to him and have

ridiculed him in every way."

6The use of the attribute "Knower of the unseen" for Allah while swearing by him by itself points to the fact that the coming of Resurrection is certain, but no one knows except Allah, Knower of the unseen, when exactly it will come. This same theme has been explained at different places in the Qur'an in various ways. For details, see Al-A'raf: 187, Ta Ha: 15. Luqman: 34, Al-Ahzab: 63, Al-hulk: 25-26, An-Naziyat: 42-44.

7This is one of the arguments for the possibility of the Hereafter as is being stated in verse 7 below. One of the reasons why the deniers of the Hereafter regarded the life-after-death as irrational was ;' They said that when all human beings will have become dust after death, and scattered away in particles, how it will be possible to bring all the countless particles together and combine them to be re-created as the same human bodies once again. This doubt has been dispelled, saying, "Every particle wherever it is, is recorded in God's Register, and God knows where a particle is. Therefore, when He wills to recreate, He will not face any difficulty in gathering together all the particles of the body of each and every man. "

8The above was an argument for the possibility of the Hereafter: this is an argument for its need and necessity. It means: A time must come when the wicked should be requited for their wickedness and the righteous rewarded for their righteousness. Reason wants and justice demands that a worker of goodness should be rewarded and a worker of evil punished. Now when you see that in the present worldly life neither is an evildoer fully requited for his evil nor a worker of goodness for his goodness, rather there are opposite results of evil and goodness in most cases, you should admit that this necessary demand of both reason and justice must be fulfilled at some time in the future. Resurrection and the Hereafter will be the same time. It is not its coming but its not coming which is contrary to reason and against justice.

In this connection, another point becomes evident from the preceding verses. They tell that the result of faith and righteous acts is forgiveness and a bounteous provision, and for those who strive and act antagonistically in order to discredit and defeat Allah's Religion, there will be a torment of the worst kind. This makes it manifest that he who believes sincerely will not be deprived of forgiveness even though he may not get a bounteous provision owing to some flaw or weakness in his deeds. And the one who is a disbeliever but who does not adopt an attitude of enmity and antagonism towards the true Faith, will not be able to avoid the torment but he will be saved from the worst torment.

9That is, "These antagonists cannot succeed in their object to prove the truth presented by you false, however hard they may try, for they can only delude and misguide the ignorant people by their designs. Those possessed of knowledge cannot be deceived by them. "

10The chiefs of the Quraish knew full well that it was extremely difficult for the common people to accuse

Muhammad (upon wham be Allah' peace) of being a liar, for the whole nation knew that he was a completely truthful person, and no one had ever heard a lie from him all his life. Therefore, they presented their charge against him before the people like this: 'When this person utters an impossible thing like the life-after-death from his mouth, he is either uttering (God forbid) a falsehood deliberately, or he is mad.' But this accusation of madness also was as absurd as of falsehood, for a stupid person only could admit that such a wise and intelligent man as the Holy prophet could be mad. That is why Allah did not feel it was necessary to refute their absurd charge by an argument, and only made mention of their wonder which they expressed at the possibility of the life-after-death

11This is the first answer to their charge. It means: "O foolish people, it is you who have lost your reason. For you do not listen to the one who is informing you of the truth and arc recklessly galloping on the way that leads to Hell. But the height of your stupidity is that you are calling the one who is anxious for your salvation, mad."

12This is the second answer to their charge. To understand it well one should bear in mind the fact that three things were most prominent among the reasons for which the disbelieving Quraish denied the life-after-death: (1) They did not want to believe in any kind of accountability before God, for after believing in such a thing they would be left with no freedom whatever to behave and act as they pleased in the world. (2) They thought it was inconceivable that Resurrection would take place and the present material order of the universe would be destroyed and replaced by a new order. (3) They thought it was impossible that the people who had died hundreds of thousands of years in the past and whose bones even had decayed and disintegrated, would be raised back to life. With the same body and soul. The answer given above covers all these three aspects, and contains a severe warning as well. The details of the theme contained in these brief sentences are given below:

(1) If you ever had observed this earth and the heavens with clear sightedness, you would have seen that it is not a plaything nor has its creation come into being by accident. Everything in this universe points to the fact that it has been created by an All-Powerful Being with great wisdom. In such a wise system it would be highly absurd to think that somebody could be left to live an irresponsible and unaccountable life after he had been given the faculties of intellect and discrimination and authority.

(2) Anyone who sees the natural order with discerning eyes will realize that the occurrence of Resurrection is not at all difficult. It can take place suddenly as soon as the system in which the earth and the heavens are bound together is disturbed. And the same system testifies that the One Who has made and is running this world today can create another world again. If it were difficult for Him to do so, this world would not have existed as it does today.

(3) Your opinion and judgment about the Creator of the universe that it will be impossible for Him to resurrect the dead, is strange. The bodies of the men who die may utterly decay and disintegrate and be scattered but nevertheless remain within the bounds of this very universe and do not go anywhere

outside its bounds. Then it is not at all difficult for the God Who has created this earth and the heavens to gather together everything from the earth and water and air wherever it happens to be. Whatever makes up your body today was collected and combined by Him, and brought out from this very earth, water and air. When the collecting and assembling of these elements together is possible today, how will it be impossible tomorrow?

Besides these three arguments, the discourse also contains a subtle warning to the effect: "You arc surrounded by God's Kingdom on all sides. Wherever you may go, you would be covered and surrounded by the same universe. You cannot find any place of refuge against God, and God's power is such that He can afflict you whenever He likes with a calamity from under your feet or from above your heads. You do not know what forces might be working under the very surface of the earth which you find as an abode of perfect peace and safety for yourselves, and when they would cause an earthquake to take place and turn the' same earth into your grave. You do not know when a disaster might befall you-a lightning. or a devastating rain, or some other calamity-from the same sky under which you walk about with full peace and satisfaction of the heart as if it were the ceiling of your own house. In a state like this, your fearlessness of God, your heedlessness of any thought of the Hereafter and your vain and nonsensical talk against the admonition of a well-wisher has no other meaning than that you are only inviting your own doom."

13That is, "The person who is neither prejudiced nor obstinate and stubborn, but is a sincere seeker of guidance from his God, can learn many lessons from the observation of the earth and heavens; but the one whose heart is turned away from God, will sec everything in the universe, but will never perceive any Sign pointing to the Truth."

14This is an allusion to the countless favors with which Allah had blessed the Prophet David. He was an ordinary young man of the tribe of Judah, living at Bethlehem. In a campaign against the Philistines he slew the giant Goliath, the great enemy of Israel, and suddenly grew in esteem of the Israelites. With this event began his rise to prominence; so much so that after the death of Saul he was first elected king of Judah in Hebron (mod. AI-Khalid, and then a few years later he was made king over all the tribes of Israel. He took Jerusalem and made it the capital of the kingdom of Israel. It was under his leadership that for the first time in history a God-worshiping kingdom was established, whose boundaries extended from the Gulf of `Aqabah to the western banks of the River Euphrates. In addition to these favors, he was further graced with Divine bounties in the form of knowledge and wisdom, and the qualities of justice and mercy and devotion to the truth. (For details, see E.N. 273 of Al-Baqarah and E.N. 7 of Bani Isra'il).

15For this please refer to AI-Anbiya': 79 and E.N. 71 thereof.

16For this also please refer to AI-Anbiya': 80 and E.N. 72 thereof.

17For this also please refer to Al-Anbiya: 81 and E.N. 74 thereof.

18Some former commentators have taken this to mean that a spring from the earth had erupted for the Prophet Solomon from which molten copper flowed oat instead of water. But another interpretation of this verse can be that in the time of the Prophet Solomon the work of melting and molding copper for different uses was done on a very large scale and the same has been referred to here as the flowing of a spring of molten copper for him. (For further details, see E.N. 74 of AI-Anbiya').

19The question whether the jinns who had been subdued to the Prophet Solomon were human beings of the mountain tribes or really the jinns who are well known by this name as the hidden creation, has been discussed in detail in our commentary of Surah AI-Anbiya' and Surah An-Naml. (Please see E.N. 75 of AI-Anbiya' and E.N.'s 23, 45 and 52 of An-Naml).

20The word tamathil in the Text is the plural of timthal, which in Arabic is used for every such thing as is made to resemble a natural thing, whether it is a human being, an animal, a tree, a flower, a river, or some inanimate object. Timthal is the name of every artificial thing which may have been made to resemble something made by God. " (Lisan al- Arab). "Timthal is every such picture which may have been made to resemble the likeness of something else, whether living or dead." (The Commentary, Al-Kashshaf). On this basis the statement of the Qur'an does not necessarily imply that the "images" made for the Prophet Solomon were the pictures or images of human beings and animals. They might have been floral designs or natural landscape or different kinds of decorations with which the Prophet Solomon might have decorated his buildings and works.

The misunderstanding has been created by some commentators who have stated that the Prophet Solomon had got the pictures of the Prophets and the angels made for himself. They took such things from the Israelite traditions and then explained them saying that in the former Shari'ahs it was not forbidden to make the pictures. But while accepting and citing these traditions without question, these scholars did not keep in mind the fact that the Prophet Solomon was a follower of the Mosaic Law and in that Law also making of the pictures and images of human beings and animals was forbidden as it is in the Shari'ah of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). And they also did not remember that because of the enmity which a section of the Israelites bore against the Prophet Solomon they have accused him of crimes like polytheism, idolatry, sorcery and adultery. Therefore. one should not place reliance on the Israelite traditions and accept anything about this great Prophet, which might contradict any Shari'ah enjoined by God. Everyone knows that all the Prophets who came after the Prophet Moses till the Prophet Jesus among the Israelites were the followers of the Torah, and none of them had brought forth a new law, which might have abrogated the Law of the Torah. Now the Torah clearly enjoins repeatedly that making of the pictures and images of human beings and animals is absolutely forbidden.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." (Exod., 20: 4) "Ye shall

make you no idols nor graven image, nor rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it." (Levit., 26: 1)

'Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female. The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air. The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth." (Deut., 4: 16-18).

"Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and putteth it in a secret place." (Deut., 27: 15).

In the face of these clear and express injunctions how can it be accepted that the Prophet Solomon might have employed the jinns to make pictures and images of the Prophets and the angels for him? And how can this thing be admitted on the authority of the statements of the Jews who accuse the Prophet Solomon of idolatry due to his love for polytheistic wives? (t Kings, oh., 11).

However, the Muslim commentators, while citing the Israelite traditions, had made it clear that in the Shari'ah of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) this thing is forbidden; therefore, it is no more lawful for anybody to make pictures and images in imitation of the Prophct Solomon. But some people of the modern time, who want to make photography and carving of idols lawful in imitation of the West, took this verse of the Qur'an as an argument for themselves. They argue like this: "When a Prophet of Allah has done this and Allah Himself has mentioned this act of the Prophet in His Book, and has expressed no disapproval of it either, it must be lawful . "

This argument of these followers of the West is wrong for two reasons. First, the word tamathil that has been used in the Qur'an, does not explicitly give the meaning of the human and animal pictures, but it applies to the pictures of lifeless things as well. Therefore, only on the basis of this word, it cannot be concluded that it is lawful to make the human and animal pictures according to the Qur'an. Secondly, it is established by a large number of the Ahadith, which have been reported through authentic chains of transmitters, and commonly reported by many authorities, that the Holy Prophet absolutely forbade the making and keeping of the pictures of the living things. In this connection, we reproduce below the authentic Traditions of the Holy, Prophet and the verdicts given by the eminent Companions:

(1) Mother of the faithful Hadrat `A'ishah has reported that Hadrat Umm Habibah and Hadrat Umm Salamah had seen a church in Habash, which had pictures in it. When they mentioned this before the Holy Prophet, he said: "The custom among those people was that when a pious man from among them died, they would build a house of worship at his grave and would make his pictures in it. On the Day of Resurrection, these people will be among the most wretched creatures in the sight of Allah." (Bukhari: Kitab as-Salat,' Muslim: Kitab al-Masajid; Nasa`i: Kitab al-Masajid).

(2) Abu Hujaifah has reported that the messenger of Allah has cursed the maker of pictures. (Bukhari Kitab al-Buyu', Kitab at-Talaq, Kitab alLibas).

(3) Abu Zur'ah says, "Once when I entered a house along with Hadrat Abu Hurairah I saw that a painter was making pictures at the top. Thereupon, Hadrat Abu Hurairah said, 'I have heard the Holy Prophet say: Allah says who could be more wicked than the one who tries to create a thing like My creation? Let them, if they can, create a seed or an ant'." (Bukhari: Kitab al-Libas; Musnad Ahmad. According to the tradition in Muslim, this was the house of Marwan).

(4) Abu Muhammad Hudhali has reported on the authority of Hadrat `Ali: The Holy Prophet was present at a funeral prayer when he said: Who from among you would go to Madinah and demolish every idol that he sees, and level down every grave that he sees, and blot out every picture that he sees. A man said that he would go. So he went but came back without carrying out the task due to fear of the people of Madinah. Then Hadrat `Ali submitted that he would go, and the Holy Prophet allowed him to go. Hadrat `Ali went, then came back and said: I have demolished every idol and leveled down every grave and blotted out every picture. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "Now if any one made any of these things, he would be denying the teaching sent down on Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace)." (Musnad Ahmad; Muslim: Kitab al-Jana 'iz; Nasa' i (Kitab al-Jan 'iz) also contain a Tradition on the same subject).

(5) Ibn `Abbas has reported: ".....And he who made a picture would be chastised and compelled to breathe the soul into it, which he will not be able to do." (Bukhari: Kitab al-Ta 'bir, Tirmidhi: Abwab al Libas; Nasa`i: Kitab az-Zinah; Musnad Ahmad).

(6) Said bin al-Hasan says: "I was sitting with Ibn `Abbas when a man came and said: O Ibn `Abbas, I am a man who earns his living with his hand, and my profession is to make these pictures. Ibn `Abbas replied: I shall say to you the same that I have heard from the Holy Prophet. I have heard this from him that Allah will chastise the one who makes pictures, and . will not leave him till he breathes the saul into it, and he will never be able to breathe the soul into it. At this the man was much upset and his face turned pale. Ibn `Abbas said: Well, if you have to make the pictures, make of this tree, or of something which is lifeless. " (Bukhari: Kitab al-Buyu'; Muslim: Kitab al-Libas; Nasa`i; Kitab al-Zinah; Musnad Ahmad).

(7) "Abdullah bin Mas'ud has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "On the Day of Resurrection the ones to be most severely punished by Allah would be the painters of the pictures. "(Bukhari: Kitab al-Libas; Muslim: Kitab al-Libas; Nasa`i; Kitab al-Zinah; Musnad Ahmad).

(8) 'Abdullah bin `Umar has reported that the Holy Prophet said: Those who paint the pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection. They will be asked to put life into what they have made. (Bukhari: Kitab al-Libas; Muslim: Kitab al-Libas; Nasa`i; Kitab al-Zinah; Musnad Ahmad).

(9) Hadrat 'A'ishah says that she bought a cushion in which pictures had been painted. Then the Holy Prophet came and stood at the door and did not enter. I said: "I repent before God of any sin that I may have committed." The Holy Prophet asked: "What is this cushion for?" I said: "This is here so that you may sit and may recline on it." He said: "The painters of these pictures will be chastised on the Day of Resurrection: they will be asked to put life into what they have made; and the angels (i. e. the angels of mercy) do not enter a house which has pictures in it. "(Bukhari; : Kitab al-Libas; Muslim: Kitab al-Libas; Nasa`i: Kitab az-Zinah; Ibn Majah: Kitab at-Tajarat; Mu`watta': Kitab al-Istidhan).

(10) Hadrat `A'ishah says: Once the Holy Prophet came to my house, and I had hung a curtain which had pictures on it. The colour of his face changed. Then he took hold of the curtain and tore it and said: "Those who try to create like the creation of Allah will be among, those who will be severely punished by Allah on the Day of Resurrection." (Muslim: Kitab al-Libas; Bukhari: Kitab al-Libas; Nasa`i: Kitab az - Zinah).

(11) Hadrat `A'ishah says: Once the Holy Prophet came back; from a journey and I had hung a curtain at my door, which had the pictures of winged horses on it. The Holy Prophet commanded me to remove it and I removed it. (Muslim: Kitab al-Libas, Nasa'i: Kitab al-Zinah).

(12) Jabir bin `Abdullah says: The Holy Prophet prohibited keeping of the pictures in the house and also forbade that somebody should make pictures. (Tirmidhi: Abwab al-Libas).

(13) Ibn `Abbas has related on the authority of Abu Talhah Ansari: The Holy Prophet said that the angels (i.e. of mercy) do not enter a house where there is a dog, nor where there is a picture. (Bukhari: Kitab al-Libas).

(14) 'Abdullah bin `Umar says: Once Gabriel promised to pay the Holy Prophet a visit, but the time passed and he did not come. The Holy Prophet felt troubled and came out of his house and met him. When he complained to him, he (Gabriel) replied: "We do not enter a house where there is a dog or a picture. " (Bukhari: Kitab a/-Libas. Several Traditions on this subject have been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da`ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad on the authority of several Companions).

As against these, there are some other Traditions which allow some exceptions regarding the pictures. For example, according to a tradition of Abu Talhah Ansari, it is permissible to hang the curtain of a cloth which has pictures embroidered on it. (Bukhari: Kitab al-Libas); and according to Hadrat 'A'ishah's tradition, when she tore a cloth having pictures on it and made a cushion from it to be spread on the floor, the Holy Prophet did not forbid it. (Muslim: Kitab al-Libas); and Salim bin `Abdullah bin `Umar's tradition that the prohibition is of the picture which is displayed and installed prominently and not of the one which is used as a carpet: (Musnad Ahmad). But none of these traditions contradicts the Traditions which have been cited above. None of these sanctions the making and painting of the pictures. They only tell that if a

person has got a piece of cloth having pictures on it, how he should use it. In this regard, the tradition of Abu Talhah Ansari cannot at all be accepted because it contradicts many, other authentic Traditions in which the Holy Prophet not only forbade use of cloth having pictures on it as a curtain but even tore it into pieces. Moreover, Hadrat Abu Talhah Ansari's own practice that has been reported in Tirmidhi and Mu'watta', in this regard, was that he did not even like to use a piece of cloth which had pictures on it, as a carpet, not to speak of hanging it as a curtain.

As for the traditions related by Hadrat `A'ishah and Salim bin `Abdullah. they only permit that if a picture is not placed prominently out of respect and esteem but is used as a carpet disrespectfully and is trodden under the feet, it could be tolerable. After all, how can these Traditions be cited for obtaining sanction for the culture which regards the art of painting and portrait making and sculpture as an enviable achievement of the human civilization, and wants to popularize it among the Muslims?

The code of practice that the Holy Prophet left for his Ummah with regard to the pictures, Can be seen from the conduct and practice of the eminent Companions, which they adopted in this regard. The admitted principle of law in Islam is that the authentic and reliable Islamic Law is that which the Holy Prophet enjoined during the latter part of his life after it had passed through gradual and preliminary injunctions and exceptions. And after the Holy Prophet the eminent Companions' practice and persistence on a particular way is a proof that he left the Ummah on that way. Now Iet us sec how these holy and pious people treated and regarded the picntres.

Hadrat 'Umar said to the Christians: "We do not enter your churches because there are pictures in them. " (Bukhari: Kitab as -Salat).

Ibn 'Abbas would sometimes offer his Prayer in the church, but not in a church which had pictures in it. (Bukhari; : Kitab as-Salam).

Abu al-Hayyaj al-Asadi says: Hadrat 'Ali said to me: "Should I not send yon on the same mission on which the Holy Prophet had sent me? And it is this that you should not leave any idol that you should not break, and you should not leave any grave that you should not level down, and you should not leave any picture that you should not blot out." (Muslim: Kitab al-Jana'iz; Nasa'i: Kitab al .lane 'iz).

Hanash al-Kinani says: Hadrat 'AIi said to his chief of the police: "Do you know on what mission I am going to send you?-on the mission on which the Holy Prophet had sent me, that you should blot out every picture and level down every grave.' (Musnad Ahmad).

This very established Law of Islam has been accepted and acknowledged by the jurists of Islam and regarded as an article of the Islamic Law. Thus, 'Allama Badruddin 'Aini writes with reference to Tauhid.'

"Our elders (i. e. the Hanifite jurists) and other jurists say that making the pictures of a living thing is not

only unlawful but strictly forbidden and a major sin, whether the maker has made it for a purpose where it would be held with contempt or for some other use and purpose. The making and painting of the picture anyway is unlawful, because it is an attempt to create like the creation of Allah. Likewise. the making of pictures whether in the cloth, or in the carpet, or nn a coin, or in a utensil, or in a wall, is in any case unlawful. However, making the pictures of something else, for instance, of a tree, etc., is not forbidden. Whether the picture casts a shadow or not is immaterial. The same is the opinion of Imam Malik, Sufyan Thauri, Imam Abu Hanifah, and other scholars. Qadi Iyad says that the dolls of girls are an exception, but Imam Malik; disapproved of even buying them." (`Umdat al-Qari vol. XXII p. 70). Imam Nawawi has elucidated this same view in greater detail in his commentary of Muslim. Please refer to Sharh Nawawi, Egyptian Ed., vol. XIV, pp. 81-82).

This is then the injunction about the making of pictures. As regards the use of the pictures made by others, `Allama Ibn Hajar has cited the views of the jurists of Islam as follows:

"Ibn 'Arabi, the Malikite jurist, says that the consensus of opinion is that the picture that casts a shadow is unlawful, whether it is regarded with contempt or not. Only the dolls of girls are an exception .. .. Ibn 'Arab; also says that the picture which does not cast a shadow but which persists (as in the printed form, unlike the reflection of a mirror) is also unlawful, whether it is regarded with contempt or not. However, if its head is cut off, or its limbs or parts are separated, it may be used. ... Imam al-Harmayn has cited a verdict according to which a curtain or a cushion having pictures on it may be used, but the picture hung on the wall or ceiling is forbidden, for it would show respect and esteem for it, while the picture on the curtain or cushion, on the contrary, would be held with contempt. ... Ibn Abi Shaibah has related on the authority of 'Ikrimah that the scholars among the immediate followers of the Companions held the opinion that the picture's being in the carpet or cushion is disgraceful for it; they also opined that the picture hung prominently is unlawful, but the one trodden under the feet is permissible. The same opinion has been cited from Ibn Sirin, Salim bin 'Abdullah, 'Ikrimah bin Khalid and Said bin Jubair." (Fath al-Bari, vol. X, p. 300).

The details given above clearly show that the forbiddence of the pictures is not a controversial or doubtful matter in Islam, but it is an established article of the law according to the express instructions of the Holy Prophet, the practice of the Companions and the unanimous verdicts of the jurists of Islam, which cannot be changed by the hairsplitting of the people influenced by the alien cultures.

In this connection, certain other things should also be understood so that there remains no misunderstanding in this regard.

Some people try to make a distinction Between a photograph and a painting, whereas the Shari ah forbids the picture itself and not any process or method of making pictures. There is no difference between a photograph and a painting: they are both pictures. Whatever difference is there between them is due to the method of making them, and in this regard the Shari'ah injunctions make no difference

between them.

Some people give the argument that the picture was forbidden in Islam 'in order to put an end to idol-worship. As there is no such danger now, this injunction should be annulled. But this argument is absolutely wrong. In the first place, nowhere in the Traditions has it been said that the pictures have been made unlawful in order to avoid the danger of shirk and idol-worship. Secondly, the assertion that shirk and idol-worship have been eradicated from the world is also baseless. Today in the Indo-Pak sub-continent itself there are millions of idol worshipers and polytheists. Shirk is being practiced in different regions of the world in different ways. The Christian people of the Book also are worshiping the images and portraits of the Prophet Jesus and Mary and other saints; so much so that even a large number of the Muslims also are involved in the evil of worshiping others than God.

Some people say that only those pictures which are polytheistic in nature should be forbidden, i. e. , pictures and images of those persons who have been made gods. As for the other pictures and images there is no reason why they should be forbidden. But the people who argue like this, in fact, become their own law-givers instead of deriving law from the Commandments and instructions of the Law-Giver, They do not know that the picture does not become the cause of polytheism and idol-worship only but has become the cause of. many other mischiefs in the world, and is becoming so even today. The picture is one of those major means by which the aura of greatness of the kings, dictators and political leaders has been impressed upon the minds of the common people. The picture also has been used extensively for spreading obscenity and today this mischief has touched heights unknown to previous history. Pictures have also been used for sowing discord and hatred and for creating mischief between the nations and for misleading the masses in different ways. Therefore, the view that the Law-Giver forbade the picture only in order to eradicate idol-worship is basically wrong. The Law-Giver has absolutely forbidden pictures of the living things. If we are not our own law-givers but are the followers of the-Law-Giver, we should desist from this accordingly. It is not at all lawful for us that we should propose from ourselves a basis for a particular injunction and then, on the basis of it, should declare some pictures lawful and some as unlawful.

Some people refer to some apparently "harmless' kinds of pictures and say that there could be no danger from these: they could not cause the mischiefs of shirk, obscenity, political propaganda or other evils; therefore, they should not be forbidden. Here again the people commit the same error: they first propose a cause and a basis for an injunction, and then argue that when the cause is not found in a particular forbidden thing, it should not be forbidden. Furthermore, these people also do not understand the rule of the Islamic Shari ah that it does not make vague and ambiguous boundaries between the lawful and the unlawful from which a man may not be able to judge when he is within the bounds and when he has crossed them; but it draws a clear line of demarcation which every person can see like the broad daylight. The demarcation in respect of the picture is absolutely clear: pictures of living things are unlawful and of the lifeless things lawful. This line of demarcation does not admit any ambiguity. The one who has to follow the injunctions can clearly know what is permissible for him and what is not. But, if some pictures

of the living things had been declared lawful and some unlawful, no list of the two kinds of the pictures however extensive, would have made the boundary between the lawful and the unlawful clear, and the case of many pictures would still have remained ambiguous as to whether they were within the bounds of lawfulness or outside them. This is similar to the Islamic injunction about wine that one should completely abstain from it, and this marks a clear limit, Hut, if it had been said that one should abstain from such a quantity of wine as intoxicates, it would be impossible to demarcate between the lawful and the unlawful , and no one would have been able to decide what quantity of wine he could drink; and where he had to stop. (For a further discussion, see Rasa 'iI-o-Masa'il, Part 1, pp. 152-155).

21This gives an idea of the generous and large scale hospitality practiced by the Prophet Solomon. Big bowls like troughs had been arranged to serve as containers of food for the guests and heavy cooking pots were meant for cooking food for thousands of the people at one and the same time.

22"Work gratefully": work like grateful servants. The mere verbal thankfulness of a person who acknowledges only verbally the favors done by the benefactor but uses them against his will is meaningless. The truly grateful person is he who acknowledges the favors with the tongue as well as uses and employs the favors according to the will of the benefactor.

23Another meaning of the sentence can be: "The true state and condition of the jinns became clear and exposed. " According to the first meaning, it will mean: "The jinns realized that their claim to have the knowledge of the unseen was wrong. " According to the second, it will mean: "The people who thought that the jinns possessed the knowledge of the unseen, came to know that they had no such knowledge."

24Some modern commentators have interpreted it as follows: As the Prophet Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was unworthy and given to luxurious living and surrounded by flatterers, he could not sustain the heavy burden of responsibility that fell on his shoulders after the death of his great father. A short time after his succession, the kingdom collapsed, and the frontier` tribes (i. e. , of the jinns) whom the Prophet Solomon had subdued by his mighty power, rebelled and broke away. But this interpretation does not at all conform to the words of the Qur'an. The scene depicted by the words of the Qur'an is somewhat like this: Death came to the Prophet Solomon in a state when he was standing or sitting with-the support of a staff. His body stood in place due to the staff, and the jinns continued to perform their duties and services, thinking that he was living. At last, when the wood-louse started eating away the staff and it became hollow from within, the Prophet Solomon's body fell down; then the jinns realized that he had died. After all, why should this clear and unambiguous description of the event be construed to mean that the wood-louse implied the unworthiness of the Prophet Solomon's son, and the staff implied his power and authority and the falling down of his body implied the disintegration of his kingdom? Had Allah meant to say all this, there was no dearth of the words in the vast Arabic language. The Qur'an, in fact, has nowhere used such enigmatic language. How could the common Arabs, who were its first addressees, have solved this riddle?

Then, the most absurd part of this interpretation is that according to it the jinns imply the people of the frontier tribes whom the Prophet Solomon had subdued to perform certain services under him. The question is, which of these tribes had claimed to have the knowledge of the unseen, and whom did the mushriks regard as the knower of the unseen? A person who reads the last words of the verse with open eyes can himself see that jinn here necessarily implies a group of beings who either had themselves made a claim to have the knowledge of the unseen, or who, the people believed, had the knowledge of the unseen; and the secret of this group's being ignorant and unaware of the unseen became disclosed when they continued to serve the Prophet Solomon under the impression that he was living, whereas he had died. This statement of the Qur'an was enough to induce an honest person to revise his this opinion that the jinn imply the frontier tribes, but the people who feel shy of admitting the existence of the hidden creation called the jinn before the materialistic world stilt insist on this interpretation of theirs in spite of the plain meaning of the Qur'an.

At several places in the Qur'an Allah tells that the mushriks of Arabia regarded the jinns as the associates of Allah, and as His children, and used to seek their refuge:

"They set up the jinns as partners with Allah. whereas He has created them. " (Al-An'am:100). "And they have invented a blood-relationship between Allah and the jinns." (As-Saffat: 1S8). "And that, some people from among the men used to seek refuge with some people from among the jinns." (AI-Jinn: 6).

One of their beliefs was that they regarded the jinns as the knowers of the unseen and hidden. and used to turn to them to obtain knowledge of the hidden things. Allah has related this event here in order to repudiate this belief and to make the Arabs realize that they are following the false creeds of ignorance without any valid reason, whereas the fact is that chest beliefs are absolutely baseless. (For further explanation, see E.N. 63 below).

25To understand the continuity of the subject-matter one should keep in view the theme as expressed in vv.1-9. There it has been pointed out that the pagans of Arabia regarded the coming of the Hereafter as irrational, and declared openly that the Messenger who was presenting this doctrine was either a mad man or deliberately was fabricating falsehood. In reply to this, Allah first gave some rational arguments, which we have elaborated in E.N.'s 7, 8 and 12 above. Then in vv . 10-21 the story of the Prophets David and Solomon and of Saba has been related as an historical argument, which is meant to impress the reality that the history of the human species on the earth itself testifies to the law of retribution. If man studies his own history carefully he will see that this world is not a lawless kingdom, which might be functioning blindly, but it is being ruled by an All-Hearing and AII-Seeing Being, Who treats and deals with His grateful servants in one way and with the ungrateful and thankless people in quite another way. If one wants one can learn this lesson from the same history that in the Kingdom of God which has such a character, goodness and evil cannot have one and the same result. The necessary demand of its justice is that a time must come when goodness should be fully rewarded and evil fully punished.

26That is, "A Sign of this that whatever they have is the gift of some one else and not of their own creation, and a Sign of this that the one worthy of their service and worship and gratitude is that God Who has blessed them with these favors and not those who have no share in bestowing these, and a Sign of this that their wealth is not imperishable but can perish even as it has been amassed".

27This does not mean that there were only two gardens in the whole country, but that the entire land of Saba was like a garden. Wherever a man stood, he could see a garden on his right and a garden on his left.

28That is, "They adopted the way of disobedience and ingratitude instead of obedience and gratefulness."

29The word 'arim as used in sayl al- arim in the Text is derived from the South Arabic word ariman, which stands for a "dam". In the ancient inscriptions that have been unearthed in the ruins of the Yemen, this word has been commonly used in this meaning. For example, in an inscription dated 542 or 543 A.D., which Abraha, the Abyssinian governor of the Yemen, had got installed after the repairs to the great dam of Maa`rib, this word has been used repeatedly in the meaning of a dam. Therefore, sayl al- arim implies a flood that comes when a dam breaks.

30That is, "As a result of the flood that came after the dam burst, the whole land was laid waste. The canals which the Sabaeans had dug out by building dams between the mountains, were ruined and the irrigation system destroyed. Then the same land which had been like a garden before, became a jungle of wild growth and no eatable plants were left in it except the small plumlike fruit of the lote bushes."

31"Blessed habitations": the lands of Syria and Palestine, which have been generally mentioned in the Qur'an by this title, as for instance, in Al-A'raf: 137, Bani Isra`il: 1, Al-Anbiya`: 71, 81.

"Conspicuous habitations": habitations situated on the highway and not inside the country. It may also mean that the habitations were not very far apart but contiguous so that as the outlying areas of one habitation came to an end those of the other started coming into view.

"Set...distances" implies that from the Yemen to the borders of Syria the whole journey passed through inhabited lands, and the distances between one station and another were known and determined. That makes the distinction between the journey through inhabited land and the journey through uninhabited desert area. In the desert the traveler continues to travel as long as he wills and halts when tired. Contrary to this, in settled areas as the distance between one habitation and the other is well known, the traveler can plan beforehand when he would break his journey, where he would have his midday rest and when he would stay for the night.

32They may not have prayed thus in so many words. As a matter of fact, whoever is ungrateful to Allah

for His blessings, oils Allah, as if to say that he is not worthy of those blessings. Likewise, the nation which abuses the bounties of Allah, in fact, prays to Him, as if to say, "Our Lord, withdraw Your blessings from us: we are not worthy of these ."

Moreover, the words in the Text also seem to suggest that the Sabaeans perhaps regarded their large population as a calamity for themselves, and they also wanted like the other foolish people that their population should fall.

33That is, "The people of Saba were so dispersed in all directions that their dispersion became proverbial. Even today when the Arabs have to mention the complete Dispersion of any people they refer to the people of Saba as an example. When Allah caused His blessings to be withdrawn from them, the different tribes of the Sabaeans started leaving their homes and migrating an other parts of Arabia. The Banu Ghassan went to settle in Jordan and Syria, the Aus and Khazraj in Yathrib, and the Khuza`ah in Tihamah near Jeddah. The Azd left for 'Uman and the Bani Lakhm and Judham and Kindah were also forced to give up their homes for other places. Thus, the "Sabaeans" ceased to exist as a nation and became a mere legend. "

34In this context the "patient and grateful person" implies every such person (or persons) who does not lose his balance after he has received blessings from Allah, nor exults at prosperity, nor becomes heedless of God Who has blessed him with these. Such a person can learn great lessons from the history of those people who adopted the way of disobedience after attaining opportunities for progress and prosperity and ultimately met with their doom.

35History shows that in ancient times there lived among the Sabaeans a small group of the people, who believed in one God, apart from all other gods. The inscriptions that have been discovered in the ruins of Yaman as a result of modern archaeological research point to the existence of this small element. Some inscriptions of the period about 650 B.C. indicate that at several places in the kingdom of Saba there existed such houses of worship as were exclusively meant for the worship of dhu-samavi or dhu-samavi (i.e. Rabb as-Sama': Lord of the heavens). In some places this Deity has been mentioned as Makkan dhu-samavi (the King who is the Owner of the heavens). This remnant of the Sabaeans continued to live in Yaman for centuries afterwards. Thus, in an inscription of 378 A.D. also there is found the mention of a house of worship built in the name of Ilah dhu-semevi'. Then, in an inscription dated 465 A.D. the words are; Bi-nasr wa rida ilah-in ba'l samin wa ardin (i.e. with the help and support of that God Who is the Owner of the heavens and the earth). In another inscription of the period dated 458 A.D., the word Rahman has been used for the same God, the actual words being bi-rida Rahmanan (i. e. with the help of Rehman).

36That is, Iblis did not have the power to have forcibly misled these people to the way of God's disobedience although they had wanted to adopt His obedience. Allah had only given him the power that he may seduce and mislead them and make all such people his followers, who may like to follow him of

their own accord. And Iblis was provided these opportunities for seduction so that the believers of the Hereafter were distinguished from those who entertained doubts about its coming. "

In other words, this Divine statement makes the truth explicit that nothing in this world other than belief in the Hereafter can ensure man's adherence to the right way. If a man disbelieves that he is to be raised back to life after death and has to render an account of his deeds before his God, he will certainly be misled and go astray, for he will never be able to develop in himself the sense of .responsibility which alone can make him adhere to the right way. That is why the artifice of Satan by which he ensnares man is that he makes him heedless of the Hereafter. The one who escapes this satanic enticement can never agree that he should sacrifice the interests of his real everlasting life to the interests of the transient life of the world. On the contrary, the one who disbelieves in the Hereafter under the evil influence of Satan, or at least entertains doubts about it, can never be induced to withdraw from the cash bargain being made in this world only due to the apprehension that it might cause loss in some later life. Whoever has gone astray in the world, has gone astray only due to the denial of the Hereafter, or some suspicion about it; and whoever has adopted righteousness has done so because his righteous deeds have issued from his belief in the Hereafter.

37To understand fully the allusions made in the Qur'an to the history of the Sabaeans, one should also keep in view the information that has been obtained through other historical sources about this nation.

Historically, Saba' were a great nation of Southern Arabia. which comprised some large tribes. Imam Ahmad, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr and Tirmidhi have related from the Holy Prophet that Saba was the name of an Arab, from whose race issued the following tribes of Arabia: Kindah. Himyar, Azd, Ash ariyyin, Madhhij, Anmar (with its two branches: Khath'am and Bajilah), 'Amilah, Judham, Lakhm and Ghassan.

Since antiquity this Arabian nation has been well known to the rest of the world. Ur inscriptions of 2500 B. C. mention it by the name of Sabom. Then in the Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions and also in the Bible it has been mentioned several times. (See, for instance, Psalms 72:15; Jeremiah 6: 20; Ezekiel 27:22, 38: 13; Job 6: 19). The Greek and Roman historians and the geographer Theo-phrastus (288 B. C.) have mentioned it continuously for many centuries of the Christian era since before Christ.

Its home was the south-western corner of the Arabian peninsula, now called al-Yaman. Its rise to prominence started in 1100 B.C. In the time of the Prophets David and Solomon the Sabaeans had become world fatuous as a wealthy people. In the beginning they were a sun-worshiping nation. Then, when their queen affirmed faith at the hand of the Prophet Solomon (965-926 B.C.) probably most of them became Muslims. But then in some unknown later period they again began to worship gods and goddesses tike Almaqah (the moon-god), 'A thtar (Venus), Dhat Hamim, Dhat Bad'an (the sun-god), Harmatam or Harimat and many others. Almaqah was their chief deity, and the kings made claim to the people's obedience as representatives of this deity. Many inscriptions have been unearthed in the

Yaman, which show that the whole land abounded in the temples of these gods, especially of Almaqah, and thanks giving services for them were held at every important event.

As a result of the modern archaeological researches about 3,000 inscriptions have been discovered, which throw a good deal of light on the history of this nation. Besides these, if the information yielded by the Arabian traditionalists and the Roman and Greek historians is compiled, a detailed history of this nation can be prepared. According to this information the following are the important periods of its history:

(1) The Pre-mid-seventh Century Period: In this period Mukarrib was the title of the Sabaean kings. Probably a synonym of Muqarrib, it signified that the kings regarded themselves as the link between men and gods; or, in other words, they were the priest-kings. Their capital was Sirwah, whose ruins are found at a day's journey to the west of Maa'rib, and are now called al-Kharibah. The foundations of the great Maa'rib dam were laid in this period: then the different kings extended it from time to time.

(2) 650 B. C. to 115 B. C. : In this period the Sabaean kings discarded Mukarrib and adopted the title of Malik (king), which signified that theocracy was replaced by secular kingship. They left Sirwah and made Maa'rib their capital and extended it in every way. This place lay 3900 feet above the sea, and is some 60 miles east of San'a'. Even today its nuns bear evidence that it was once the centre of a highly civilized nation.

(3) 115 B. C. to 300 A.D. : In this period the Sabaean kingdom fell under the domination of the tribe of Himyar, a more numerous tribe of Saba. They discarded Maa'rib and made their central place, Raydan, their capital, which later became known as Zafar. Its nuns can still be seen on a circular hill near the modern city of Yarim. Close by it there resides a small tribe by the name of Hinmar, perhaps the remnant of the great nation which was once well known throughout the world for its glory and grandeur. In the same period the word Yamanat and Yamanat began to be used for the first time for a part of the kingdom, which gradually became Yaman and the name of the entire land, which extends from `Asir to Aden and from Bab al-Mandab to Hadramaut. During this very period the decline of the Sabaean began.

(4) 300 A.D. to the rise, of Islam :This is the period of the Sabaea's destruction. They started fighting civil wars, which provided occasion for external intervention. This resulted in the decline in their trade and their agriculture and even loss of political freedom. Taking advantage of the internal conflicts between the Himyarites and other tribes, the Abyssinians occupied the Yaman and ruled it briefly from 340 A.D. to 378 A.D. Then, though political freedom was restored, breaches began to appear in the great dam of Maa'rib, which in 450 or 451 A.D. led to the catastrophe occasioned by the "bursting of the dam" as has been referred to in verse 16 above. Although after it till the time of Abraha the dam was extensively repaired, the population that had dispersed could not be brought back, nor could the ruined system of irrigation and agriculture be restored. In 523 A.D., dhu-Nuwas, the Jewish king of the Yaman, carried out the great massacre of the Christians of Najran, which has been referred to in the Qur'an under "ashab al-ukhdud" (LXXXV: 4). In retaliation, the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia invaded Yaman and occupied the

whole land. Later the Abyssinian governor of Yaman, Abrahah, in a bid to put an end to the central position of the Ka`bah and to bring the whole of western Arabia into the sphere of the ByzantineAbyssinian influence invaded Makkah in 570 or 571 A.D., a few days

before the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). The Abyssinian army was completely destroyed as alluded to under ashab al-fil in the Qur'an. At last, in 575 A.D. Yaman fell to the Iranians; their rule came to an end in 628 A.D. when their governor Badhan embraced Islam.

The Sabaeans owed their prosperity to two main factors: agriculture and commerce. They had developed their agriculture by means of a wonderful irrigation system unknown in the ancient world except in Babylon. There were no natural rivers in their land; in the rainy season small hill-torrents rose on which they had built dams every where in the country and collected water in small lakes from which they had taken out canals to water their lands. This had virtually turned the whole country into a vast garden as mentioned in the Qur'an. The largest reservoir was the lake which had been formed by the construction of a dam on the opening in the Jabal Balaq near Maa`rib. But when Allah caused His favours to be turned away from them, the great dam burst in the mid-fifth century A.D. and the resultant floods went on breaking one dam after the other on the way, destroying the entire irrigation system, which could never again be restored.

For commerce the Sabaeans had been blessed by God with the most favorable geographical position of which they took full advantage. For more than a thousand years they monopolized the means of trade between the East and the West. On the one hand, they received silk from China, spices from Indonesia and Malabar, fabrics and swords from India, slaves, monkeys, ostrich feathers and ivory from East Africa at their ports, and on the other, they transported this merchandise to the Egyptian and Syrian marts, to be supplied onward to Rome and Greece. Besides, they themselves were great producers of frankincense and myrrh and other perfumes, which were in great demand in Egypt and Syria and in Rome and Greece.

Two great routes existed for this international trade: the sea route and the land route. The maritime trade remained in the Sabaeans' control for more than a thousand years for they alone knew the mysteries of the Red Sea monsoons, breakers and rocks and the anchorages, and no other nation could risk navigation through these dangerous waters. Through this maritime route they took their trade goods to the harbours of Jordan and Egypt. The land routes from Aden and Hadramaut joined at Ma'arib, from where a highway led to Petra through Makkah, Jeddah, Yathrib, AI-`Ula, Tabuk and Aylah, forking at the northern end to Egypt and Syria. Along this land route, a number of Sabaean colonies had been established right from the Yaman to the borders of Syria, as mentioned in the Qur'an, and trade caravans passed by these day and night. The signs of many of these colonies still exist on this route from which the Sabaean and the Himyarite inscriptions are being discovered.

After the first century after Christ Sabaean trade began w suffer a decline. When the Greek, and then the Roman, kingdoms were established in the Middle East, the citizens began complaining of the high prices

that the Arabian traders were charging for the oriental goods because of their monopoly, and urged their governments to take the initiative to break their supremacy in the sea trade. Thus, in the beginning, Ptolemy II (985-246 B.C.), the Greek ruler of Egypt, reopened the Nile-Red Sea canal originally dug by Pharaoh Sesostris some seventeen centuries previously. Consequently, it was through this canal that the Egyptian fleet entered the Red Sea for the first time, but it could not succeed much against the Sabaeans. When Egypt fell to the Romans they brought a stronger merchant marine into the Red Sea and put a naval fleet at its back. The Sabaeans could not withstand this force. Consequently, the Romans set up their trade colonies at every seaport, arranged supplies for the ships and also stationed their military troops wherever possible. At last, the time came when Aden passed under the military occupation of the Romans. In this connection, the Roman and the Abyssinian kingdoms also entered secret pacts against the Sabaeans, which ultimately deprived this nation of its political freedom as well.

After losing control over maritime trade the Sabaeans were left with trade over the land route only, but many factors combined to gradually break its back too. First, the Nabataeans ousted them from all the colonies of the upper Hejaz and Jordan, from Petra to Al-`Ula. Then in 106 A.D. the Romans put an end to the Nabataean kingdom and captured all the Syrian and Jordanian territories up to the Hejaz. After this Abyssinia and Rome jointly tried to ruin the Sabaean trade completely by taking advantage of their internal conflicts. That is why the Abyssinians intervened in the Yaman again and again, till at last they brought the whole land under their occupation.

Thus, Allah's wrath caused this nation to be toppled from the heights of glory and prosperity into oblivion from which they were never able to rise again. There was a time when the Greeks and the Romans felt tempted when they heard of the legendary wealth of this people. Strabo writes, "The Sabaeans use gold and silver utensils and even the ceilings, walls and doors of their houses are bedecked with ivory, gold, silver and jewels." Pliny says, "The whole wealth of Rome and Persia is flowing into Sabaean hands. They are the richest people of the world today, and their fertile land abounds in gardens, crops and cattle." Artemidorus says, "These people roll in luxury. They burn cinnamon, sandalwood and other sweet smelling wood as fuel. " Likewise, other Greek historians relate that the passengers passing by their shores can smell the perfumes of their land in the merchant ships at sea. For the first time in history they built a skyscraper, called the castle of Ghumdan, on the hill top in San`a'. This citadel, according to the Arab historians, had twenty stores, each story being 36 feet high. Thus did they prosper and enjoy life as long as Allah favored them with His bounties. At last, when they transgressed all limits in their ingratitude, the Almighty Allah also withdrew His attention, and they were so utterly destroyed as if they had never existed at all.

38Until now the mushriks' wrong notions about the Hereafter have been dealt with. From here the discourse turns to the refutation of shirk itself.

39That is, "Allah makes and un-makes the destinies of individuals and nations and kingdoms in ways as you have seen from the stories of the Prophets David and Solomon and the people of Saba. Now, you

may invoke, if you so like, these self-made gods of yours to see whether they also possess the power to change someone's good fortune into misfortune and misfortune into good fortune. "

40That is, "Not to speak of owning something, or being a partner in the ownership of something, or being a helper of Allah in any way, there exists no one in the universe, who of his own accord may intercede for someone before Allah. You are involved in the misunderstanding that there arc' some beloved ones of God, or some such powerful personalities, who can force and press God to accept their intercession, whereas the fact is that no one will dare utter a word of recommendation there without Allah's permission. Only such a one will be able to make his submissions, who is permitted by Allah to do so, and will intercede for him alone for whom permission for intercession is granted. (To understand the distinction between the Islamic concept of intercession and the polytheistic concept, see Yunus: 3, 18; Hud: 76, 105; Ta Ha: 109; Al-Anbiya': 28; AI-Hajj: 76).

41Here a graphic picture has been drawn of the time when on the Day of Resurrection an intercessor will be seeking permission to intercede on behalf of another. It presents this scene: "After submitting the application for permission, both the intercessor and the intercessee are awaiting the reply in a state of restlessness and awe. At last, when the permission is granted and the intercessee perceives satisfaction in the face of the intercessor he feels a little comforted and asks the intercessor: `What reply has been received?' The intercessor says, 'The right reply: permission has been granted.' What is meant to be impressed is this: `O foolish people! Such will be the awe of the great Court of Allah ! How dare you entertain the notion that anybody will have you forgiven by his own power, or dare behave stubbornly and tell Allah: These are my favorites: they will have to be forgiven!"

42There is a subtle gap between the question and the answer. The addressees were the mushriks who not only did not disbelieve in the existence of Allah but also knew and believed that the keys of the provisions are in His hand. But in spite of this they held others also as Allah's associates in His work. Now when they were confronted with the question: `Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth?" they were put in a tight comer. If they mentioned another beside Allah they would say a thing contrary to their own and their people's creed. If they showed stubbornness and said such a thing, they feared that their own people would immediately refute them. And if they acknowledged that Allah alone is their Sustainer, they would immediately be confronted with the next question:¦Then, why and what for have you made these others your gods?" When Allah is the Sustainer, why should these others be served and worshiped? Thus they stand confused and bewildered. Neither can they say that Allah alone is the Sustainer nor that another god is the sustainer. When the questioner sees that they do not make any answer, he himself answers his question and says, Allah."

43This sentence contains an important point of the wisdom of preaching. The logical conclusion of the question and answer cited above would be that the one who serves and worships Allah should be on right guidance and the one who worships others beside Him should be misguided. Therefore, apparently, the conclusion should have been: `Then, we are rightly guided and you are misguided." But such a plain

and straight reply, although correct and true, would not have been a wise thing from the point of view of preaching. For when a person is addressed and told plainly that he is misguided and the speaker claims to be rightly-guided himself, he will become obdurate and will never be inclined to accept and acknowledge the truth. As the Messengers of Allah are not sent only for the sake of speaking the plain truth, but are also entrusted with the duty of reforming the wrongdoers as tactfully as possible, Allah has not asked His Prophet to cell them plainly, after the question and answer, that they are all misguided and that he atone is rightly-guided. Instead of this, it was said: `Tell them: it has become clear that we regard as our Deity only Him Who is the Sustainer, and you have taken as deities those who are not sustainers. Now, it is not possible that both you and we should be on right guidance simultaneously. Only one of us can be rightly-guided, and the other inevitably will be misguided. Now it is for you to consider and judge who is being proved by reason to be in the right and who in the wrong. "

44The about question had already made the listeners to think seriously, This additional sentence was meant to make them think even more seriously, as if to say, `It is in our own interest individually that we should consider and decide the question of guidance and misguidance rightly. For if we are misguided, we shall ourselves bear the consequences of our error; you will not be held answerable for it. Therefore, it is in our own interest that we should consider seriously, before adopting a creed, that we are not following a wrong way. Likewise, you also should think seriously for your own sake, not for our sake in any way, and make sure that you are not investing your life's capital in a false creed. For if you committed an error in this regard, you would be harming only your own selves and not us. "

45This is the last and the strongest motive for the consideration of which the listeners' attention has been invited. It means to impress: "The thing is not only that there is the difference of the truth and the falsehood between you and us, but that both we and you have to be presented before our Lord, the Being Who knows the truth and is also fully aware of the affairs of each of us. There before Him not only will this thing be decided who, between you and us, was in the right and who in the wrong, but this issue also will be settled how we made every possible effort to make the truth plain to you, and how you opposed and resisted us in your antagonism to the truth. "

46That is, "Before ever you take the great risk due to your reliance on these deities, just tell me here who among them is so powerful as to arise in the Court of Allah as your supporter and save you from His punishment.

47That is, "You have not been sent as a Prophet for the people of this city, or this country, or this age alone, but for the people of the entire world and for ever, but your compatriots do not recognize your worth and they do not realize how great a person has been raised among them as a Prophet and how uniquely they have been blessed by Allah."

The fact that the Holy Prophet has not been appointed a Prophet only for his own country or for his own

age but for all mankind till Resurrection, has been stated at several places in the Qur'an. For instance,

"And this Qur'an has been revealed to me that I should thereby warn you and all those whom it may reach." (Al-An'am: 19).

"O Prophet, say: O mankind, I am a Messenger to all of you from Allah. " (Al-A'raf: 158).

"O Prophet, We have sent you to be a real blessing for all the people of the world. " (Al-Anbiya' : 107) .

"Highly blessed is He Who has sent down Al-Furqan to His servant so that he may be a warner to all mankind." (Al-Furqan: 1).

The same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet in a number of Ahadith in different ways. For example.

"I have been sent to all mankind, the black as well as the white." (Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyat Abu Musa Ash ari).

I have been sent to all mankind as a whole, whereas every Prophet before me was only sent to his own people." (Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'As).

"Before me every Prophet was specifically sent to his own people; but I have been sent for all mankind. " (Bukhari and Muslim: From Traditions related by Jabir bin 'Abdullah).

"My appointment as d Prophet and Resurrection are like this. Saying this the Holy Prophet raised his two fingers." (Bukhari and Muslim). What he meant by this was : "Just as no third finger intervenes between these two fingers, so there is no prophethood between the and Resurrection. After me there will be Resurrection only, and I shall be the Prophet till Resurrection."

48That is, "When will the time come about which you say: `Our Lord will gather u: together, then He will judge between us rightly?' We have been denying you persistently and opposing you openly for so long. Why is not then the judgment being passed against us ?"

49In other words, the reply means: "Allah's judgments arc not subject to your whims that He should be bound to do a thing at the time which you have fixed for it. He carries out His designs only according to His own discretion. You cannot understand how long is mankind to be allowed to function in this world in the scheme of Allah, how many individuals and how many nations are to be put to the test in different ways, and what Will be the right time for the Day of Judgment and summoning mankind of all ages for rendering their accounts. All this will be accomplished only at the time which Allah has fixed for it in His

scheme of things. Your demands can neither hasten it on by a second nor your supplications can withhold it by a second. "

50The allusion is to the pagans of Arabia, who did not believe in any Divine Book.

51That is, "The common people who are following their leaders, chiefs, saints and rulers blindly, and are not prepared to listen to any word of advice from a well-wisher against them. When the same people will see the actual reality and will also remember how their religious leaders used to misrepresent things, and when they will realize what doom they are going to meet on account of following their leaders, they will turn on them, and say, "O wretched people, you led us astray: you are responsible for all our afflictions. Had you not misguided us, we would have listened to the Messengers of Allah and believed in what they said."

52That is, They will say: We had no power by which a few of us could have compelled hundreds of thousands of the people like you to follow us: If you had the will to believe, you could have deposed us from leadership and power and authority and government. In fact, you were our army: you were the source of our wealth and power. But for your offerings and gifts and taxes we should have been paupers. Had you not sworn allegiance to us, we could not have flourished as saints even for a day. Had you not appreciated and applauded us as leaders, we would have remained unknown. Had you not become our army and fought against the whole world for our sake, we could not have ruled over a single individual. Now why don't you admit that you yourselves did not want to follow the way that the Messengers had presented before you. You were the slaves of your own lusts and desires, and the demands of your selves could not be fulfilled by the righteous way of life presented by the Messengers but by what we presented before you. You were heedless of the lawful and the unlawful and craved for the luxuries of life, which we only could provide you. You were in search of such guides as could give you the license to commit any sin, any crime, and take on themselves the responsibility to have you forgiven by God, in exchange for gifts. You wanted to listen to such religious scholars only who could please you by proving every kind of shirk and every innovation in religion and every lust of your self to be the very truth. You needed such forgerers who could invent a new religion by altering the Religion of God after your desires. You wanted to follow such leaders who could help you become prosperous in this world, no matter how you fared in the Hereafter. You wished to have such rulers who were immoral and dishonest so that under their patronage you also could have the freedom to indulge in any sin, any immorality. Thus, you and we were equal partners in the bargain. Now you cannot delude anyone by saying that you were absolutely innocent and that we had spoiled and corrupted you against your will.

53In other words, the common people's reply will be: "How can you hold us as equal partners in this responsibility? Do you also remember what sort of trickeries and deceptions and false propaganda you practiced and what efforts you used to make to tempt and entice the people day and night. It is not just that you presented the world before us and we were allured, but this also is a fact that you used to fool us by your frauds and deceptions and each one of you brought a new bait every day to tempt and lure the

simple people. "

The Qur'an has made mention of the dispute between the religious guides and their followers at different places in different ways. For details, see Al-A'raf: 38-39; Ibrahim: 21; Al-Qasas: 63; Al-Ahzab: 66-68; Al-Mu`min: 47-48; Ha Mim Sajdah: 29.

54That the message of the Prophets was first of all opposed and resisted by the well-to-do people who possessed wealth and influence and authority, has been stated at many places in the Qur'an. For instance, see Al-An'am: 123; Al-A'raf: 60, 66, 75, 88, 90; Hud: 27; Bani Isra`il: 16; Al-Mu`minun: 24, 33 to 38, 46, 47; Az-Zukhruf: 23. '

55Their reasoning was: "We are greater favorites of Allah than you. That is why He has favored us with the blessings of which you are deprived, or have received them in lesser measure. Why should Allah have given us all these provisions and wealth and power had He not been pleased with us? Now, how can we believe that Allah Who is showering us with all kinds of His blessings here will punish us in the Hereafter? He will punish only those who are deprived of His favors here,"

This misunderstanding of the world-worshipers also has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'an and refuted. For instance, see Al-Baqarah: 126, 212; At-Taubah: 55, 69; Hud: 3, 27; Ar-Ra'd: 26; Al-Kahf: 34 to 43; Maryam: 73 to 77; Ta Ha: 131; Al-Mu'minun: 55 to 61; Ash-Shu`ara': 111; Al-Qasas: 76 to 83; Ar-Rum: 9; Al-Muddaththir: 11-26: Al-Fajr: 15 to 20.

56They do not understand the wisdom on which the system of the distribution of provisions is based in the world, and are thus involved in the misunderstanding that whoever is being given abundantly is a beloved of Allah and whoever is being given sparingly is under His wrath. The fact, however, is that if a person looks around with open eyes he will see that in most cases the people with filthy and repulsive character are prosperous, and many good and noble people, who are known and recognized as morally pure, are found living in poverty. Now, how can a sensible person say that Allah dislikes the people of pure character and favors the wicked wrongdoers?"

57This can have two meanings and both are correct:

(1) That which brings the people nearer to Allah is not wealth and children but faith and righteous deeds; and

(2) wealth and children can become a means of nearness to Allah only for that believing, righteous person, who spends his wealth in the way of Allah and tries to make his children God-conscious and righteous by good education and training.

58Here there is also a subtle allusion that their blessing shall be imperishable, and their reward endless. For one cannot enjoy with full satisfaction of the heart a reward which is likely to perish or withdrawn suddenly at any time.

59The repetition of this theme is meant to impress this: The abundance or restriction of the provisions is connected with Allah's will, not with His pleasure and approval. Under the will of Allah every good or evil person is receiving his provision. Both those who believe in Him and those who do not believe are getting their provisions. Neither is abundance of the provisions a proof that one is Allah's favorite servant nor is its restriction a sign that one is under His wrath. Under His will a wicked and dishonest person prospers, although wickedness and dishonesty are disliked by Allah. On the contrary, under the same Divine will a truthful and honest man suffers losses and undergoes hardships although these qualities arc liked by Allah. Hence, the person who regards the material gains and benefits as the criterion for the good and evil is grossly mistaken. The real criterion is Allah's pleasure and approval which is attained through the moral qualities liked and approved by Him. With these qualities if a person gets -the worldly blessings as well it will certainly be Allah's bounty for which he should be grateful to Him. But if from the moral point of view a person is Allah's rebel and is disobedient to Him and in spite of that is being favored with worldly blessings, it would mean that he is preparing himself for a strict accountability and a most severe punishment.

60Sustainer, Creator, Inventor, Donor and many other such attributes are in actual fact the attributes of Allah, but are metaphorically applied to men also. For example, about a person we may say, He provided a job for so-and-so, or he made or invented such and such a thing, or he made a gift to so-and-so. " Accordingly, Allah has used the word Khair ar Raziqin (the Best of Providers) for Himself. It means to impress the fact that Allah is the best of Providers among all those about whom you think that they are in any way connected with arranging the provisions.

61Since the earliest times the polytheists in every age have been looking upon the angels as gods and goddesses and carving their idols and worshiping them. One has been regarded as the god of rain, another of lightning and another of wind; one is the goddess of wealth, another of knowledge and another of life and death. About this Allah says that on the Day of Resurrection the angels will be asked: ¦Were you being worshiped as deities by these people?" This question is not meant merely to find out the truth, but to ask, "Did you approve of their worship? Did you tell the people that you were their deities, so they should worship you? Or, did you wish that the people should do obeisance to you?" This question will not only be asked of the angels but of all those beings who have been worshiped as gods in the world. In Surah AI-Furqan it has been said: "On that Day (Allah) will gather all these people together as well as their deities, whom they worship beside Allah. Then he will ask them, 'Did you mislead these servants of Mine, or did they themselves go astray?' " (V. 17).

62That is, They will answer: You are Pure and Exalted far above that another should be made a partner

in Godhead with you. We have no connection with these people: we are not responsible for them, nor for what they did. We are Your servants only.

63In this sentence, jinn implies the satans among the jinns. The answer means: "Apparently these people worshiped us, by mentioning our names and by making our images according to their imaginations. But, in fact, they did not worship us but worshiped the satans, for the satans only had shown them the way that they should regard others than Allah as fulfillers of their needs, and should make offerings before them. "

This verse clearly brings out the error of the view of those people who take the word "jinn" to mean the dwellers of the mountains and deserts and rural areas. Can a sensible person imagine, on the basis of this verse, that the people used to worship the dwellers of the mountains and the deserts and the villages and believed in them?

This verse also throws light on another meaning of 'ibadat. It shows that 'ibadat is not mere worship and service, but it also implies carrying out somebody's orders and obeying him without question. Even if one curses another (as one curses Satan) but at the time follows his way, one would be performing his 'ibadat. For other examples, see An-Nisa': 117-119; Al-Ma'idah: 60; At-Taubah: 31; Maryam: 42; Al-Qasas:63. "

64That is, "Neither a book from God has come to them before this nor a messenger, who might have taught them to worship and serve others than God. Therefore, they are denying the invitation to Tauhid being given by the Qur'an and Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) due to sheer ignorance, and not on the basis of any knowledge. They have in fact no authority for this."

65That is, "The people of Makkah have not attained even one-tenth of the power and grandeur and prosperity that was possessed by those people. But just see how they went to their doom ultimately and their power and wealth could not avail them anything, when they refused to believe in the realities presented before them by the Prophets, and founded their system of life on falsehood."

66That is, "Free yourselves of selfish interests and whims and prejudices and consider this sincerely for the sake of Allah: consider this singly as well as jointly in two's and three's and four's in an objective manner and consider it well and deeply: What after all can be the reason that the person whom you call a madman today was, until yesterday, being looked upon as a very wise man among you ? The incident that happened a little before his appointment to Prophethood is well known among you. When after the re-construction of the Ka'bah the different clans of the Quraish were going to clash among themselves on the question as to who should place the Black Stone in the wall, you yourselves had unanimously agreed to accept Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) as the arbitrator, and he had settled the question amicably to the entire satisfaction of all concerned. Now, how is it that you have started calling the same

person mad, whose wisdom and sagacity has been thus tested and experienced by your whole nation? What is it if not stubbornness? Do you really mean the same that you say with your tongues?"

67That is, "Do you call him mad only for this reason? Do you regard as wist him who finds you following the path of ruin, and applauds you, and mad him who warns you beforehand of the coming of a disaster and shows you the way to safety and well-being?"

68Another meaning of this can be: "I do not sock anything but your well-being: My only recompense is that you should be reformed." This thing has been expressed at another place thus; "O Prophet, say to them: I do not ask of you any recompense for this: I only ask of the one, who will, to adopt the way of his Lord." (Al-Furqan 57)

69That is, "The accusers may say whatever they like but Allah knows everything. He is a witness that I am a selfless person:, I am not perforating this mission for any selfish motive "

70The words yaqdhifu bil-haqq give two meanings:

(1) "He inspires me with the knowledge of the truth by Revelation; " and

(2) "He is making the truth to prevail: He is crushing falsehood by means of the truth. "

71From this verse some people of the modern age have argued thus: According to it the Holy Prophet also could go astray: rather used to go astray. That is why Allah has made the Holy Prophet himself say: `If I have gone astray, I am myself responsible for this. And I am on right guidance only when my Lord sends down Revelation (i.e., verses of the Qur'an) to me." By this wrong interpretation these unjust people in fact want to prove that the Holy Prophet's life was, God forbid, a combination of guidance and error, and Allah had made him confess this before the disbelievers Lest one should adopt his obedience completely, taking him to be wholly on right guidance. The fact however is that whoever considers the theme in its correct context will know that here the words, 'If I have gone astray', are not meant to give the meaning that the Holy Prophet actually used to go astray, but it means: `If I have gone astray, as you accuse I have, and my claim to Prophethood and my this invitation to Tauhid are the result of the same deviation, as you seem to imagine, then the burden of my going astray, will be on me alone; you will not be held responsible for it. But if I am on right guidance, as in fact I am, it is because I receive Revelation from my Lord, by virtue of which I have obtained the knowledge of the guidance. My Lord is near at hand and is hearing everything. He knows whether I have gone astray or am on right guidance from Him.

72That is, "On the Day of Resurrection, every culprit will be seized in a way as though he lay in hiding close by. As he will try to flee, he will be seized immediately."

73"We believe in it": "We believe in the message presented by the Messenger in the world. "

74That is, "They should have believed when they lived in the world; they have come a long way away from it. After having arrived in the Next World how can they get a chance to repent and believe ?"

75That is, "They used to charge the Messenger and the believers with false accusations and used to taunt and mock his message. Some times they said he was a sorcerer or a madman; sometimes they ridiculed Tauhid and the concept of the Hereafter; sometimes they invented the story that another one taught him everything; and sometimes they said that the believers had started following him only on account of folly and ignorance "

76As a matter of fact, no one adopts shirk and atheism and denial of the Hereafter by conviction, nor can he, for conviction comes from knowledge. And no one has the knowledge that there is no God, or that many others have a share in Divine authority, or that there should be no Hereafter. Thus, whoever has adopted these beliefs in the world, has raised a structure on mere conjecture, which has no basis except doubt and suspicion, and this suspicion has led him to sheer error. Consequently, they doubted God's existence, they doubted the truth of Tauhid, they doubted the coming of the Hereafter; so much so that they made this doubt their faith and did not listen to the Prophets and expended and wasted their whole lifetime indulging in a wrong creed and way of life.

35. Surah Fatir (The Originator), also known as Surah Al Malaika (The Angels)

Name

The word *Fatir* of the first very verse is the title given to this Surah, which simply means that it is a Surah in which the word *Fatir* has occurred. The other name is *Al Malaika*, which also occurs in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

The internal evidence of the style shows that the period of the revelation of this Sarah is probably the middle Makkan period, and especially that part of it, when antagonism had grown quite strong and every sort of mischief was being adopted to frustrate the mission of the Holy Prophet.

Subject Matter and Theme

The discourse is meant to warn and reprove the people of Makkah and their chiefs for their antagonistic attitude that they had then adopted towards the Holy Prophet's message of *Tauhid*, like a well wisher, and also to admonish them like a teacher, as if to say: "O foolish people, the way to which this Prophet is calling you is to your own advantage. Your anger, your tricks and machinations against it and your conspiracies and designs to frustrate it are not directed against him but against your own selves. If you do not listen to him, you will be harming your own selves, not him. Just consider and ponder over what he says : there is nothing wrong in it. He repudiates shirk. If you look around carefully, you will yourself realize that there is no basis for shirk in the world. He presents the doctrine of *Tauhid*. If you use your common sense, you will come to the conclusion that there is no being, beside Allah, Creator of the Universe, which might possess divine attributes and powers and authority. He tells you that you have not been created to be irresponsible in this world, but you have to render an account of your deeds before your God, and that there is life after the life of this world when everyone will meet the consequences of what he has done here. If you thing a little you will see that your doubts and your astonishment about it are absolutely baseless. Don't you see the phenomenon of the reproduction of creation day and night. How can then your own recreation be

impossible for that God Who created you from an insignificant sperm drop? Doesn't your own intellect testify that the good and the evil cannot be alike? Then think and judge for yourselves as to what is reasonable, should the good and the evil meet with the same fate and end up in the dust, or should the good be requited with good and the evil with evil? Now, if you do not admit and acknowledge these rational and reasonable things and do not abandon your false gods, and wish to continue living only as irresponsible people in the world, the Prophet will not lose anything. It is you yourselves only who will suffer the consequences. The Prophet's only responsibility was to make the truth plain to you, which be has done."

In this connection, the Holy Prophet has been consoled again and again, as if to say :"When you are doing full justice to the preaching of your mission, you do not incur any responsibility for those who persist in their error and do not accept and follow the right way." Furthermore, he has also been consoled to the effect "You should neither grieve on account of those who do not want to believe, nor consume yourself with the thought of how to bring them to the rights path. Instead of this, you should pay your full attention to those who are inclined to listen to you."

The believers also, in this connection, have been given the good news so that they may feel strengthened and encouraged and remain steadfast on the path of the truth with full faith in the promises made by Allah.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُو۟لِىٓ أَجْنِحَةٍ
مَّثْنَىٰ وَثُلَٰثَ وَرُبَٰعَ ۚ يَزِيدُ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

مَّا يَفْتَحِ ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِن رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا ۖ وَمَا يُمْسِكْ فَلَا
مُرْسِلَ لَهُۥ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] Praise is only for Allah, Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and the Employer of the angels[1] having wings in twos and threes and fours,[2] as His messengers. He adds to His creation as He pleases[3] Surely Allah has power over everything. Whatever door of mercy Allah may open for the people, none can withhold it, and the door that He closes, none has the power to open it after Him.[4] He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[5]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ هَلْ مِنْ خَٰلِقٍ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ
يَرْزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣﴾

وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ
ٱلْأُمُورُ ﴿٤﴾

[3-4] O people, remember the favors Allah has done to you.[6] Is there beside Allah any other creator also, who provides for you from the heavens and the earth? There is no god but He. From where then are you being deceived?[7] Now (O Prophet,) if these people treat you as a liar,[8] (it is not a new thing, as) many Messengers before you also have been treated as liars. And all affairs shall ultimately be presented before Allah.[9]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۖ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم
بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْغَرُورُ ﴿٥﴾

إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَٱتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا ۚ إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا۟ حِزْبَهُۥ لِيَكُونُوا۟
مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿٦﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ شَدِيدٞۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ وَأَجۡرٞ كَبِيرٞ ٧

[5-7] O people, the promise of Allah is surely true.[10] Therefore, let not the worldly life deceive you,[11] nor let that great deceiver deceive you concerning Allah.[12] Indeed, Satan is your enemy; therefore, you also should treat kiln as your enemy. He is inviting his followers towards his way so that they may join the dwellers of Hell. Those who disbelieve[13] shall have a severe punishment, and those who believe and do good works shall have forgiveness and a rich reward.[14]

أَفَمَن زُيِّنَ لَهُۥ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِۦ فَرَءَاهُ حَسَنٗاۖ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهۡدِي مَن يَشَآءُۖ فَلَا تَذۡهَبۡ نَفۡسُكَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ حَسَرَٰتٍۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمُۢ بِمَا يَصۡنَعُونَ ٨

وَٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَرۡسَلَ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابٗا فَسُقۡنَٰهُ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٖ مَّيِّتٖ فَأَحۡيَيۡنَا بِهِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَاۚ كَذَٰلِكَ ٱلنُّشُورُ ٩

[8-9] (Can[15] the deviation of that person be imagined) whose evil deed is made seem fair to him and he deems it as good?[16] The fact is that Allah leads astray whomsoever He pleases and shows the Right Way to whomsoever He pleases. So, (O Prophet,) let not yourself be consumed with grief for the sake of these people.[17] Allah is aware of whatever they are doing.[18] Allah it is Who sends the winds; then they raise the cloud, then We drive it towards a waste land and revive it thereby after its death. Likewise shall be the Resurrection of the dead men.[19]

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ ٱلْكَلِمُ ٱلطَّيِّبُ وَٱلْعَمَلُ
ٱلصَّٰلِحُ يَرْفَعُهُۥ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۖ وَمَكْرُ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُوَ يَبُورُ ﴿١٠﴾

[10] Whoever seeks honor should know that the honor wholly belongs to Allah.[20] Only the pure Word rises up to Him, and the righteous deed causes it to rise.[21] As for those who plot evil,[22] there is a severe torment for them, and their plotting shall itself perish.

وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا ۚ
وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أُنثَىٰ وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِۦ ۚ وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِن مُّعَمَّرٍ وَلَا
يُنقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِۦٓ إِلَّا فِى كِتَٰبٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

وَمَا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْبَحْرَانِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ سَآئِغٌ شَرَابُهُۥ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ ۖ
وَمِن كُلٍّ تَأْكُلُونَ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُونَ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا ۖ وَتَرَى
ٱلْفُلْكَ فِيهِ مَوَاخِرَ لِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

يُولِجُ ٱلَّيۡلَ فِي ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِي ٱلَّيۡلِ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمۡسَ وَٱلۡقَمَرَ كُلّٞ
يَجۡرِي لِأَجَلٖ مُّسَمّٗىۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمۡ لَهُ ٱلۡمُلۡكُۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ تَدۡعُونَ
مِن دُونِهِۦ مَا يَمۡلِكُونَ مِن قِطۡمِيرٍ ١٣

إِن تَدۡعُوهُمۡ لَا يَسۡمَعُواْ دُعَآءَكُمۡ وَلَوۡ سَمِعُواْ مَا ٱسۡتَجَابُواْ لَكُمۡۖ وَيَوۡمَ
ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ يَكۡفُرُونَ بِشِرۡكِكُمۡۚ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثۡلُ خَبِيرٖ ١٤

[11-14] Allah[23] created you from dust, then from the sperm-drop,[24] then made you pairs (i.e., male and female). No woman conceives or is delivered but it is in the knowledge of Allah. No aging person grows old nor is anything reduced of his age except in accordance with a Book[25] this is an easy thing for Allah.[26] And the two bodies of water are not alike.[27] One is sweet and thirst-quenching, pleasant to drink, while the other is saltish and pungent; yet from both you get fresh flesh[28] and bring out decorations to wear,[29] and in the same waters you see the ships which plough through it so that you may seek Allah's bounty and be grateful to Him. He causes the night to pass into the day and the day into the night[30] and He has subjected the sun and the moon till an appointed time.[31] The same Allah (Whose works are these) is your Lord: Sovereignty is His. Those whom you invoke instead of Him do not own even a blade of grass.[32] If you call them, they cannot hear your prayers, and if they hear, they cannot answer you,[33] and on the Day of Resurrection they will disown your shirk.[34] None can inform you of the truth except the One Who is All-Aware.[35]

۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ أَنتُمُ ٱلۡفُقَرَآءُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِۖ وَٱللَّهُ هُوَ ٱلۡغَنِيُّ ٱلۡحَمِيدُ ١٥

إِن يَشَأۡ يُذۡهِبۡكُمۡ وَيَأۡتِ بِخَلۡقٖ جَدِيدٖ ١٦

وَمَا ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿١٧﴾

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَإِن تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ حِمْلِهَا لَا يُحْمَلْ مِنْهُ
شَىْءٌ وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۗ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَأَقَامُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۚ وَمَن تَزَكَّىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّىٰ لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾

وَمَا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٩﴾

وَلَا ٱلظُّلُمَٰتُ وَلَا ٱلنُّورُ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَلَا ٱلظِّلُّ وَلَا ٱلْحَرُورُ ﴿٢١﴾

وَمَا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْأَحْيَآءُ وَلَا ٱلْأَمْوَٰتُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسْمِعُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ
مَّن فِى ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِنۡ أَنتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ بَشِيرٗا وَنَذِيرٗاۚ وَإِن مِّنۡ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٞ ﴿٢٤﴾

[15-24] O people it is you who stand in need[36] of Allah: Allah is Self-Sufficient and Self-Praiseworthy.[37] If He wills He can remove you and bring a new creation in your place: this is not at all difficult for Allah.[38] No bearer of a burden will bear another's burden,[39] and if a laden soul cries out for help, none will come forward to share the least of its burden, even though it be the nearest kinsman.[40] (O Prophet,) you can only warn those who fear their Lord though they cannot see Him, and establish the Salat.[41] Whoever adopts purity does so for his own good, and to Allah shall all return. The blind and the seeing are not alike, nor are the darknesses and light alike, nor are the cool shade and the heat of the sun, nor the living and the dead alike.[42] Allah causes whomever He wills, to hear, but (O Prophet,) you cannot make those who are buried in the graves to hear you.[43] You are only a warner.[44] We have sent you with the Truth, as a bearer of good news and a warner. And there has been no nation which was not visited by a warner.[45]

وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدۡ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ جَآءَتۡهُمۡ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ وَبِٱلزُّبُرِ وَبِٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلۡمُنِيرِ ﴿٢٥﴾

ثُمَّ أَخَذۡتُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْۖ فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٢٦﴾

[25-26] Now if they treat you as a liar, those who lived before them also treated (their Messengers) as liars. Their Messengers came to them with clear proofs[46] and Scriptures and the enlightening Book.[47] Then I seized those who disbelieved, and behold, how terrible was My punishment!

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ ثَمَرَٰتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهَا ۚ
وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا
يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

[27-28] Do you not see that Allah sends down rainwater from the sky and we bring forth thereby a variety of fruits of different colors? In the mountains also there are streaks, white and red and black, with different hues. And likewise, men, beasts and cattle also have different colors.[48] The fact is that only those of His servants, who possess knowledge, fear Allah.[49] Surely, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Forgiving.[50]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا
وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَٰرَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿٢٩﴾

لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
بِعِبَادِهِۦ لَخَبِيرٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣١﴾

ثُمَّ أَوۡرَثۡنَا ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱصۡطَفَيۡنَا مِنۡ عِبَادِنَاۖ فَمِنۡهُمۡ ظَالِمٞ
لِّنَفۡسِهِۦ وَمِنۡهُم مُّقۡتَصِدٞ وَمِنۡهُمۡ سَابِقُۢ بِٱلۡخَيۡرَٰتِ بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكَ
هُوَ ٱلۡفَضۡلُ ٱلۡكَبِيرُ ٣٢

جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ يَدۡخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوۡنَ فِيهَا مِنۡ أَسَاوِرَ مِن
ذَهَبٖ وَلُؤۡلُؤٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمۡ فِيهَا حَرِيرٞ ٣٣

وَقَالُواْ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَذۡهَبَ عَنَّا ٱلۡحَزَنَۖ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٞ شَكُورٌ ٣٤

ٱلَّذِيٓ أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ ٱلۡمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٞ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا
لُغُوبٞ ٣٥

[29-35] Those who recite the Book of Allah and establish the Salat, and spend out of what We have given them, secretly and openly, do hope for a bargain which involves no loss. (They have invested their all in this bargain) so that Allah may give them their full rewards and bless them with even more from His grace.[51] Surely, Allah is Forgiving and Bounteous.[52] (O Prophet,) the Book that We have sent to you by revelation is the very Truth, which confirms the previous Scriptures.[53] Allah is indeed well aware of His servants, and watchful over everything.[54] Then We made those people heirs of this Book, whom We chose (for this inheritance) from among Our servants[55] Now someone of them is being unjust to his own self, and someone following a middle course, and someone excelling in good deeds by Allah's leave. This is the supreme bounty.[56] There are everlasting Gardens which they shall enter[57] to be decorated with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their dress will be of silk. They will say, "Praise be unto Allah Who has removed sorrow from us.[58] Surely, our Lord is Forgiving and Bounteous,[59] Who by His grace has lodged us

in an eternal abode.[60] Here we do neither experience any trial nor any weariness."[61]

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَهُمۡ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقۡضَىٰ عَلَيۡهِمۡ فَيَمُوتُواْ وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ
عَنۡهُم مِّنۡ عَذَابِهَاۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجۡزِي كُلَّ كَفُورٖ ٣٦

وَهُمۡ يَصۡطَرِخُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَآ أَخۡرِجۡنَا نَعۡمَلۡ صَٰلِحًا غَيۡرَ ٱلَّذِي كُنَّا
نَعۡمَلُۚ أَوَلَمۡ نُعَمِّرۡكُم مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَآءَكُمُ ٱلنَّذِيرُۖ
فَذُوقُواْ فَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ ٣٧

[36-37] And for those who have disbelieved[62] there is the Fire of Hell: neither will , it be decreed that they should die, nor will the torment of Hell be lightened for them in any way. Thus do We requite every disbeliever. There they will cry out and say, "Our Lord, take us out from here so that we may do good works other than those which we had been doing." (The reply will be) "Did We not give you lives long enough so that he who would, could take a warning?[63] And the warner also had come to you. Now taste (the torment). The wicked will have no helper here."

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَٰلِمُ غَيۡبِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمُۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ٣٨

هُوَ ٱلَّذِي جَعَلَكُمۡ خَلَٰٓئِفَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ فَمَن كَفَرَ فَعَلَيۡهِ كُفۡرُهُۥۖ وَلَا يَزِيدُ
ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ كُفۡرُهُمۡ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ إِلَّا مَقۡتٗاۖ وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ كُفۡرُهُمۡ
إِلَّا خَسَارٗا ٣٩

[38-39] Surely, Allah is aware of every secret thing in the heavens and the earth: He even knows the hidden secrets of the breasts. He it is Who has made you vicegerents in the earth.[64] Now whoever disbelieves shall himself bear the burden of his disbelief,[65] and for the disbelievers their disbelief does not increase anything except the wrath of their Lord and the disbelievers do not gain anything except an increase in their loss.

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ شُرَكَآءَكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَرُونِى مَاذَا خَلَقُوا۟
مِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ أَمْ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ كِتَٰبًا فَهُمْ عَلَىٰ
بَيِّنَتٍ مِّنْهُ ۚ بَلْ إِن يَعِدُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ بَعْضُهُم بَعْضًا إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿٤٠﴾

۞ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُمْسِكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ أَن تَزُولَا ۚ وَلَئِن زَالَتَآ إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُمَا مِنْ
أَحَدٍ مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ﴿٤١﴾

[40-41] (O Prophet,) say to them, "Have you ever seen those associates of yours[66] whom you invoke instead of Allah ? Tell me: What have they created in the earth, or what is their share in the heavens?" (If they cannot tell this, ask them :) "Have We given them a writing affording a clear sanction (for their shirk)?"[67] Nay, but these wicked people are only beguiling one another with delusions.[68] The fact is that it is Allah alone Who is sustaining the heavens and the earth from falling into oblivion and if they fall into the abyss there is none to sustain them after Allah.[69] Indeed, Allah is Forbearing and All-Forgiving.[70]

وَأَقْسَمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَٰنِهِمْ لَئِن جَآءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ لَّيَكُونُنَّ
أَهْدَىٰ مِنْ إِحْدَى ٱلْأُمَمِ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ نَذِيرٌ مَّا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا نُفُورًا

﴿٤٢﴾

ٱسۡتِكۡبَارٗا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَكۡرَ ٱلسَّيِّئِۚ وَلَا يَحِيقُ ٱلۡمَكۡرُ ٱلسَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهۡلِهِۦۚ
فَهَلۡ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا سُنَّتَ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَۚ فَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ ٱللَّهِ تَبۡدِيلٗاۖ وَلَن تَجِدَ
لِسُنَّتِ ٱللَّهِ تَحۡوِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾

أَوَلَمۡ يَسِيرُواْ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَيَنظُرُواْ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ
وَكَانُوٓاْ أَشَدَّ مِنۡهُمۡ قُوَّةٗۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعۡجِزَهُۥ مِن شَيۡءٖ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا
فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَلِيمٗا قَدِيرٗا ﴿٤٤﴾

وَلَوۡ يُؤَاخِذُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُواْ مَا تَرَكَ عَلَىٰ ظَهۡرِهَا مِن دَآبَّةٖ وَلَٰكِن
يُؤَخِّرُهُمۡ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمّٗىۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمۡ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ بَصِيرَۢا
﴿٤٥﴾

[42-45] These people used to swear on solemn oaths by Allah that if a warner had visited them, they would certainly have been better guided than any other nation in the world.[71] But when a warner did come to them, it increased them in nothing but aversion to the Truth. They began to behave even more haughtily in the land and to plot evil, whereas the plotting of evil recoils only on the plotters themselves. Now, are these people awaiting that they should be dealt with (by Allah) in the like way as the preceding nations were dealt with?[72] Well, you will never find any change in the Way of Allah, nor will you see that a power can turn the Way of Allah from its appointed course. Have they never traveled about in the land that they could see the end of those who have passed before them, and who were far mightier than they? There is nothing that could make Allah helpless, neither in the heavens nor in the earth: He knows everything and has power over everything. If Allah were to seize the people for their misdeeds, He

would not have left alive any living being on the earth. But He is giving them respite till an appointed time. So, when the appointed time comes, Allah will Himself see His servants.

1This can have two meanings:

(1) "That these angels perform the service of communicating messages between Allah and His Prophets :" and

(2) "that it is the duty of these angels to convey and enforce the Commands of Allah Almighty throughout the universe."

The object is to impress this truth: The position of the angels whom the polytheists have made their gods and goddesses is no more than of obedient servants of Allah, the One. Just as the servants of a king run about for the implementation of his orders, so do these angels fly about in the service of the real Sovereign of the Universe. These servants have no authority of their own; All powers rest with Allah, Who is the real Sovereign.

2We have no means to know what is the nature of the wings of these angels. But when Allah has used this word, which in human language is used for the wings of birds, instead of any other words, to express and depict the truth, one can certainly conclude that this very word of our language is nearest to the actual meaning. The mention of two and three and four pairs of the wings shows that different angels have been granted different degrees of powers by Allah. They have been equipped with different powers of speed and efficiency as demanded by the nature of service for which they arc employed.

3These words show that the number of the wings of the angels is restricted to four, but Allah has provided some angels with more wings than four. According to a Hadith related by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, the Holy Prophet once saw the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon hits) with six hundred wings. (Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi). Hadrat 'A'ishah relates that the Holy Prophet had seen Gabriel twice in his real shape: he had six hundred wings and had covered the whole horizon. (Tirmidhi)

4This also is meant to remove the misunderstanding of the polytheists, who believed that from among the servants of Allah some one gave them the jobs, some one the children and some one health to their patients. All these superstitions of shirk are baseless, and the pure truth is just that whatever of mercy reaches the people, reaches them only through Allah Almighty's bounty and grace. No one else has the power either to bestow it or to withhold it. This theme has been expressed at many places in the Qur'an and the Ahadith in different ways so that man may avoid the humiliation of begging at every door and at every shrine and may realize that making or marring of his destiny .n the power of One Allah alone and of none else.

5He is the All-Mighty": He is dominant and the owner of Sovereignty: none can stop His judgments from being enforced. Also "He is All-Wise": every of His is based on wisdom. When He gives somebody something He because it is demanded by wisdom, and when He withholds something judgment gives it from somebody He withholds it because it would be against wisdom to give it.

6"Remember.... you": "Do not be ungrateful: do not forget that whatever you have has been given by Allah". In other words, this sentence is meant to warn that whoever worships another than Allah, or regards a blessing as a favor done by another than Allah, or thanks another than Allah for a favor received, or prays to another than Allah for the grant of a blessing, is ungrateful".

7There is a subtle gap between the first and the second sentence, which is being filled by the context itself. To understand this, one may visualize the scene like this: The polytheists are being addressed. The speaker asks the audience: 'Is there another creator beside Allah, who might have created you, and might be arranging provisions for you from the earth and heavens ?" After this question the speaker waits for the answer. But there is no reply from anywhere. No one replies that there is another one beside Allah, who is their creator and sustainer. This by itself shows that the audience also believe that there is none beside Allah, who could be their creator and sustainer. Then the speaker says: "If so, then He alone can be the Deity also and no one else. How have you been so deceived ? Why have you taken these others as your deities, when Allah alone is your Creator and Sustainer?"

8"If they ...liar": `If they do not believe that there is no one worthy of worship but Allah, and accuse you of having made a false claim to Prophethood."

9That is, "It is not for the people to give the verdict that whomsoever they call a liar should in actual fact become a liar. The judgment rests with Allah. He shall in the end decide who was the liar, and shall bring the real liars to their evil end."

10"The promise" implies the promise of the Hereafter to which allusion was made in the preceding sentence, saying: 'All affairs shall ultimately be presented before Allah.

11"Let not...deceive you": "Deceive you that the world is an end in itself: that there is no Hereafter when one will have to render an account of one's deeds: or that even if there is the Hereafter, the one who is enjoying life here will enjoy life there, too."

12"Great deceiver": Satan, as is evident from the next sentence. And "deceive you concerning Allah" means:

(1) That he should stake some people believe that Allah does not exist at All;

(2) involve others in the misunderstanding that Allah after having once created the world, has retired and has now practically nothing to do with the universe any more;

(3) delude others into believing that Allah no doubt is running the universe, but He has taken no responsibility of providing guidance to man: therefore, Revelation and Prophethood are a mere deception; and

(4) give still others the false hope that since Allah is All-Forgiving and All-Merciful. He will forgive one whatever sins one might have committed, and that He has some beloved ones too: if one remains attached to them, success and salvation are assured.

13Those who disbelieve : those who will refuse to believe in this invitation of Allah's Book and His Messenger.

14That is, Allah will overlook their errors and will reward them for their good deeds not merely with what they will just deserve but much more richly and generously.

15Verses 3-7 were addressed to the common people. In this paragraph mention has been made of the standard-bearers of error and deviation, who were exerting their utmost to frustrate and defeat the mission of the Holy Prophet.

16That is, one kind of perverted person is he who commits evil but knows and understands that he is committing evil. Such a person can be reformed by counsel and advice, and sometimes his own conscience also pricks and brings him to the right path, for his habits only are perverted, not his mind But there is another kind of a person whose mentality has been perverted, who has lost the discrimination between good and evil, far whom the life of sin has become alluring and lustrous, who abhors good and takes evil for civilization and culture, who regards goodness and piety as things of the past, and sinfulness and wickedness as progressiveness, and for whom guidance becomes error and error guidance. Such a person is not amenable to any advice, any admonition. He neither takes warning from his own follies, nor listens to a well-wisher. It is useless to waste ones tube and energy for the reformation of such a person Instead, the inviter to the truth should turn his attention towards those whose consciences may still be alive and who may still be inclined to listen to the truth.

17The insertion of the words "Allah lends astray whomsoever He pleases and shows the Right Way to whomsoever He pleases", between the preceding and this sentence, clearly gives the meaning that Allah deprives, of the grace of guidance, those who become so perverted mentally, and leaves them to wander aimlessly in the ways in which they themselves wish to remain lost. After making the Holy Prophet realize this fact Allah exhorts him to the effect: "It is not within your power to bring such people to the right path; therefore, have patience in their regard. Just as Allah is indifferent about them, so should you also avoid

being unduly anxious about their reformation."

Here, one should bear in mind two things very clearly. First, the people being mentioned here were not the common people, but the chiefs of Makkah. who were employing every falsehood, every fraud and every trick to defeat the mission of the Holy Prophet. These people were in fact not involved in any misunderstanding about the Holy Prophet. They knew full well what he was calling theta to and what were the evils and moral weaknesses which they themselves were striving to maintain. After knowing and understanding All this they had firmly resolved not to let him succeed in his object, and for this purpose they did not feel any hesitation in using any mean or petty device. Now, evidently the people who deliberately and after annual consultation invent a new falsehood every next day and spread it against a person, can deceive the whole world but as for themselves they know that they are the liars and that the person whom they have accused is free of every blame. Then, if the person against whom the false propaganda is being made also does not react and respond in a way opposed to truth and righteousness, the unjust people also cannot help realizing that their opponent is a truthful and honest man. If in spite of this the people do not feel ashamed of their misconduct and continue to oppose and resist the truth with falsehood. their conduct itself testifies that they are under Allah's curse and they can no longer discriminate between good and evil.

Secondly, if Allah had only meant to make His Prophet understand the supreme truth, He could have secretly made him aware of this. There was no need to proclaim it openly in the Revelation. To mention it in the Qur'an and to proclaim it to the world was in fact meant to warn the common people that the leaders and the religious guides whom they were following blindly were the people of perverted mentality. whose mean conduct was itself an evidence that they were under the curse of Allah.

18This sentence in itself contains the threat that a time is coming when Allah will punish them for their misdeeds. When a ruler says that he is fully aware of the misdeeds of a culprit, it does not only mean that the ruler has the knowledge of his misconduct, but it necessarily contains the warning that he will also punish him for this certainly.

19That is, "These ignorant people think that the Hereafter is impossible. That is why they are living under the delusion that they may do whatever they like in the world, the time will never come when they will have to. appear before their God and render an account of their deeds. But this is no more than a delusion. On the Day of Resurrection, the dead men of all ages will suddenly rise back to life at one call of Allah just as the dead earth comes back to life at one shower of the rain and the roots, lying dead for ages, become green and start sprouting up from the layers of the earth."

20It should be noted that whatever the chiefs of the Quraish were doing against the Holy Prophet, they were doing it for the sake of their honor and dignity. They thought that if the Holy Prophet succeeded in his mission, their greatness and glory would fade away, their influence would die out and their honor among the Arabs would be ruined. At this it is being said: "The honor that you have attained for

yourselves by your disbelief in and rebellion against Allah. is a false honor, which is destined to be mined. The taste and enduring honor, which can never suffer debasement, can be attained only through service of Allah. If you turn sincerely and faithfully to Him, you will attain it; and if you turn away from Him you are bound to live an abject, wretched life. "

21This is the real means of attaining the honor. In the sight of Allah the false, vicious and mischievous can never rise and flourish. In His sight only such a word can rise and flourish; which is taste and pure and based on the truth, and in which a righteous creed and a correct point of view may have been expressed and presented. Then the thing which makes the pure word rise and prosper is the action which conforms to it. Wherever the word is pure but the action opposed to it, the purity of the word suffers a blemish. The mere extravagant rise of the tongue does not exalt a word: the power of the righteous action is needed to exalt and raise it high.

Here. one should also note that the Qur'an presents the righteous word and the righteous action as inter-dependent. No action can be righteous merely on the basis of its external and apparent form unless it has a righteous creed behind it. And no righteous creed can be reliable unless it is supported and confirmed by a person's action. For instance, if a person says that he regards Allah, the One, alone as his Deity, but worships others than Allah in practical life, his action belies his word. If a person says that he regards the wine as unlawful but drinks, his mere word can neither be acceptable to the people nor deserve approval in the sight of Allah.

22Those who plot evil": Those who propagate false and evil words by means of cunning tricks, deceit and deceptive reasoning, and do not feel any hesitation in employing any device, however mean and depraved, to frustrate and defeat the word of the truth. "

23From here again the discourse is directed to the common people.

24That is, man in the first instance was created from the dust directly, then his race was perpetuated through the sperm-drop.

25That is, "It is pre-ordained for everyone who is born in this world how long he will live. If a person lives a long life, he does so by Allah's decree, and if another one lives a short life, he too lives so by Allah's decree. Some ignorant people give the argument that in the past the death-rate of the newly-born children used to be high, and now it has been checked by the advancement of the medical science; and the people used to live short lives in the past, now due to better medical facilities the life-span has increased. But this argument could be presented in refutation of the Qur'anic argument only when it could be ascertained that Allah, for instance, had pre-ordained a two-year life for a certain person, and the modern medical facilities have enhanced it by a day. If a person has no such knowledge, he cannot refine this Qur'anic statement on any rational grounds. Only on the basis of the statistics that the death-rate

among children has fallen, or that the people now. are living longer lives, it cannot be argued that man has now become able to change the decrees of Allah. Rationally it is not impossible that Allah might have fixed different life-spans for the people born in different periods, and this might also be Allah Almighty's decree that man in such and such an age would be granted curative power to treat such and such diseases, and in such and such a period man would be given greater means for longevity.

26That is, "It is not at all difficult for Allah to give commands and pass judgments about each individual of His countless creations when He possesses detailed and perfect knowledge about them."

27That is, the body of water in the oceans, and the body of water in the rivers and springs and lakes.

28"Fresh flesh": Flesh of water animals.

29That is pearls and corals and, in some rivers, diamonds and gold.

30That is, "The light of the day starts diminishing and the darkness of the night increasing gradually so as to cover up everything completely. Likewise, towards the end of the night, in the beginning, a streak of the light appears on the horizon, and then the bright day dawns."

31"Subjected .." : subjected to a law.

32The word qitmira in the original means the thin skin that covers the stone of the date-fruit; but what is meant to be said is that the gods of the mushriks do not own anything whatever. That is why we have translated it "a blade of grass", which is an insignificant thing.

33This does not mean that they cannot tell aloud, in answer to your prayer whether your prayer has been accepted or not, but it means that .they cannot take any action on your supplications. If a person sends his application to someone who is not a ruler. his application miscarries. For the person to whom it has been sent, has no authority whatever: he can neither reject it nor accept it. However, if the same application is sent to the one who is really a ruler, one or the other action will certainly be taken on it.

34That is, "They will plainly say: We had never told theta that we are Allah's associates and that they should worship us. On the contrary, we were not at All aware that they regarded us as Allah's associates and were invoking us for help. None of their prayers has reached us, nor has any of their gifts and offerings" .

35"All-Aware": Allah Almighty Himself. It means this: The other person can at the most refine shirk and prove the powerlessness of the gods of the polytheists by rational arguments only, but We are directly aware of the Absolute Truth. We are telling you, on the basis of knowledge, that All those whom the

people believe to be possessing some powers in Our Godhead are absolutely powerless. They have no authority whatever by which they might do somebody good or harm. And We know this directly that on the Day of Resurrection, these gods of the mushriks will themselves refute their shirk. "

36That is, "You should not remain under the delusion that Allah stands in need of your help. If you do not accept Him as God, His Godhead will fail, and if you do not serve and worship Him, He will incur some loss. Nay, but the fact is that you stand in need of Him. You cannot remain alive for a moment if He does not keep you alive, and does not provide you with the means by which you remain alive in the world and function. Therefore, when you are told to adopt His service and obedience, it is not because Allah stands in need of it, but because upon it depends your own success here as well as in the Hereafter. If you do not do so, you will be harming your own selves only, and not Allah in any way."

37The word Ghani implies that He is the Owner of everything: He is Self-Sufficient and Independent of All: He does not stand in need of anyone's help. The word Hamid implies that He is Self-Praiseworthy: someone may praise Him, or may not, but He alone is worthy of hamd (praise and gratitude). These two attributes have been used together because one would be ghani even if one did not do any good to anyone by one's wealth. In such a case one would be ghani but not hamid One will be hamid only in case one does not draw any benefit for oneself but benefits others in every way from the treasures of one's wealth and resources. Since Allah is perfect in these two attributes, it has been said: "He is not just Ghani (self-sufficient) but such Ghani as is worthy of every kind of praise and gratitude, for He is fulfilling your needs as well as the needs of all other creatures.

38That is, You are not enjoying life on Allah's earth solely by dim of your own power and might. He has the power to remove you from here in no time and raise another people to take your place. Therefore, you should understand your true worth, and should desist from adopting the conduct which has been causing the downfall of the nations. When Allah wills to send someone to his doom. there is no one in the universe, who can stop Him and withhold His decree from being enforced.

39"Burden": the burden of the responsibilities of actions. It means: In the sight of Allah every one is responsible for his own actions and for no one else's. There is no possibility that Allah will place the burden of one man's responsibility upon the other, nor is there the possibility that a person will take the burden of another's responsibility upon himself and get himself seized for the crime committed by the other. This thing has been said here because the polytheist kinsmen and relatives of the people who were embracing Islam in Makkah, used to urge them, saying, Give up Islam and return to your ancestral faith. We take the responsibility of any punishment etc. on ourselves."

40In the preceding sentence, Allah's law of justice has been enunciated, according to which He will not seize any person for the sin committed by another, but will hold everyone responsible for his own sin. In this sentence the Muslims have been told: `Those who urge you to give up faith and commit evil on the

assurance that they will take on themselves the burden of your sins on the Day of Resurrection, are in fact giving you a false hope. When Resurrection comes and the people see what fate they are going to meet in consequence of their misdeed, everyone will be concerned only about himself. Brother will turn away from brother and father from son, and no one will be prepared to take even an atom's weight of another's burden on himself."

41In other words, "Your warnings cannot have any effect on obstinate and stubborn people. Your admonitions can bring only such people to the right path, who have fear of God in their hearts, and who are inclined to bow before their real Master."

42In these comparisons the present and the future of a believer and a disbeliever have been contrasted. There is a person who has closed his eyes to the realities and does not care to see as to what truth the whole system of the universe and his own existence itself are pointing. There is the other person, whose eyes are open and who clearly sees that everything outside and inside himself bears evidence to the Unity of God and to man's answerability before him. There is a person, who is wandering blindly in the superstitions of ignorance and the darknesses of presumptions and speculations, and is not inclined to benefit by the light of the candle lit by the Prophet. There is the other person, whose eyes are open and who, as soon as the light spread by the Prophet appears before him, comes to realize that All the ways being followed by the polytheists and the disbelievers and the atheists lead to destruction, and the way to success is only that which has been shown by the Messenger of God. Now how can it be possible that the attitude of the two persons be the same in the world and the two may follow one and the same path together ? And how can this also be possible either that the two should meet the same end and should both end up in the dust after death ? Neither should one be punished for his wrongdoings, nor the other be rewarded for his righteous conduct. The sentence, "the cool shade and the heat of the sun are not alike", points to the same fate. The one will be provided shelter tinder the shade of Allah's mercy and the other will bum in the fire of Hell. Thus, the notions that the two will ultimately meet the same end is utterly false. In the end, the believer has been likened to the living and the stubborn disbeliever to the dead. That is, the believer is he whose feeling, understanding and perception are alive and whose conscience is making him aware of the distinction between the good and the evil every moment. Contrary to this, the person who has been, wholly lost in the prejudices of disbelief is even worse than the blind person who is wandering about in darkness. Nay, he is like a dead person who has no sense or feeling left in him.

43That is, "As for the powers of Allah, they are unlimited. He can even make the stones to hear. But it is not within the power of the Messenger to make those people to listen to him whose consciences have become dead and whose ears deaf to every call to the truth. He can only make those people to hear him, who are inclined to listen to every reasonable thing.

44That is, "Your only duty is to warn the people and nothing else. If even after this a person does not come to his senses, and remains lost in his deviations, you are not to blame for that, for you have not been entrusted with the duty of making the blind to see and the deaf to hear.

45That there has been no community in the world for whose guidance Allah did not appoint the Prophets, has been stated at several places in the Qur'an. In Surah Ar-Ra'd: 7, it was said: "Every people has its guide ;" in Surah Al-Hijr: 10: "O Prophet, We have already sent Messengers before you among many of the ancient peoples;" in Surah An-Nahl: 36: "We sent to every community a Messenger;" and in Surah Ash-Shu'ara: 208: "We have never destroyed a habitation unless it had its warners to administer admonition. " But, in this connection, one should note two things so that there remains no misunderstanding. First, one and the same Prophet is enough for the lands to which his message may reach. It is not necessary that Prophets be sent to every separate habitation and to every separate community. Second, no new Prophet needs to be sent as long as the message and teaching and guidance given by a previous Prophet remains safe and intact. It is not necessary that a separate Prophet be sent for every race and every generation.

46Clear proofs": Proofs which clearly testified that they were Allah's Messengers.

47"Scriptures" probably consisted of good counsels and moral precepts and "the Book" comprised a complete code of the law.

48This is meant to impress that in the universe created by Allah nowhere is there homogeneity and uniformity; there is variety everywhere. From the same earth and by the same water different kinds of trees are appearing. Even the two pieces of the fruit of the same tree are not uniform in color and size and taste. In the same mountain one will see a variety of colors and a great difference in the material composition of its different parts. Even among human beings and animals one will not see two offspring of the same parents exactly alike. If a person seeks uniformity of the temperaments and dispositions and mentalities in this universe and is bewildered at the differences which have been alluded to in vv. 19-22 above, it will be his own perception and understanding to blame. This same variety and difference, in fact, point to the reality that this universe has been created by a Wise Being with great wisdom; its Maker is a Unique Creator and a Matchless Fashioner, Who does not have the same model of everything before Him, but has a variety of countless and limitless designs of everything. Then if one ponders over the differences in human temperaments and minds, in particular. one will see that it is not a mere accident, but in fact the masterpiece of the wisdom of creation. If all human beings had been created with the uniform temperaments and desires and feelings and inclinations and ways of thinking, and no room had been left for any difference, it would have been absolutely useless to bring about a new creation like man in the world. When the Creator decided to bring into existence a responsible creation, a creation having power and authority, the necessary inevitable demand of the nature of the decision was that room for all sorts of differences should be provided in its nature and structure. This is the main proof of the fact that the creation of man is not the result of an accident, but the result of a wonderful and wise plan and design. And obviously, wherever there is a wise plan and design, there must necessarily be a Wise Being working behind it, for the existence of wisdom without a Wise Being would be un-imaginable.

49That is, the more a person is unaware of the attributes of Allah, the more he will be fearless of Him. Contrary to this, the more a person is aware and conscious of Allah's powers, His knowledge, His wisdom, His vengeance and His omnipotence and His other attributes, the more he will fear His disobedience. Thus, in fact, ¦knowledge" in this verse does not imply knowledge of academic subjects like philosophy and science and history and mathematics, etc. but the knowledge of Divine attributes, no matter whether one is literate or illiterate. The one who is fearless of God is illiterate merely as regards this knowledge even if he has All the knowledge of the world. And the one who knows the attributes of God and fears Him in his heart, is learned even if he is illiterate. In the same connection, one should also know that in this verse the ' ulama ' does not imply the scholars in the technical sense, who are termed as religious scholars because of their knowledge of the Qur'an and Hadith and Fiqh and philosophy. They will prove true to this verse only when they possess fear of God in their hearts. The same thing has been said by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, thus: "knowledge is not due to much narration of Hadith but due to much fear of Allah." And also by Hadrat Hassan Basri, thus: "The scholar is he who fears Allah though he has not seen Him, and turns to what is approved by Him and keeps away from what makes Him angry."

50That is, He is All-Mighty, and therefore, can seize the disobedient as and when He likes: no one can escape His grasp. But He is All-Forgiving alsa and is, therefore, giving respite to the wrongdoers.

51This kind of conduct and practice of the believers has been likened to a trade bargain because in trade a man invests his money and labor and capabilities in the hope that he will not only get his capital back and his wages for the time and energy spent but in addition some profit as well. Likewise, a believer also invests his wealth and his time and his labor and capabilities in carrying out Allah's Commands and in His service and worship and in the struggle to promote the cause of His Religion in the hope that he will not only get his full rewards for it but Allah will bless him with much more from His bounty as well. But there is a great difference between the two kinds of bargains. In the worldly trade bargains there is the risk of loss also along with the hope of profits. Contrary to this, in the bargain that a sincere servant makes with his God there is : no risk of any loss whatever.

52That is, "Allah's relation with the sincere believers is not that of a miserly master who checks his servant on trivialities and brings all his services and loyalties to naught on account of a minor error. But Allah is the Most Beneficent. and Generous Master. He overlooks the errors of His obedient servant and appreciates whatever service he might be able to render."

53It means: This Book is not presenting anything new which might be opposed to the teaching brought by the former Prophets, but it is presenting the same eternal Truth which all the Prophets have been presenting from the very beginning.

54The object of mentioning these attributes of Allah here is to arouse the people to the aims and ideals in which their true well being lies, to the principles which alone can afford the right guidance and to the rules

and regulations which are precisely in accordance with them. None can know these except Allah, because He alone is aware of the nature of His servants and its demands, and He alone watches over their well-being and affairs. The people do not know their own selves as much as their Creator knows them. Therefore, the truth is that, and can only be that, which He has taught by Revelation.

55This implies the Muslims, who have been sorted out from all mankind so that they may become heirs to the Book of Allah, and convey its message to others after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Though this Book has been presented before all human beings, those who accepted it in the first instance, were chosen for the honor to become heirs to a great Book like the Qur'an and the trustees of the teaching and guidance imparted by a great Messenger like the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

56That is, "All these Muslims are not alike but are divided into three classes:

(1) Those unjust to themselves: They are those who believe sincerely and honestly that the Qur'an is the . Book of Allah and Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) the Messenger of Allah, but in practical life do not fully follow the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. They are believers but sinful; culprits but not rebellious; weak of faith but not hypocritical and unbelieving at heart. Therefore, although they are ¦unjust to themselves," they have been included among the chosen servants of God and among the heirs to the Book; otherwise, obviously the rebels and the hypocrites and the unbelieving people could not be so treated and honored. This class of the believers have been mentioned first of All because they are most numerous among the Muslims.

(2) Those following the middle course: They are the people who fulfill the obligations of this inheritance to some extent but not fully. They are obedient as well as erring. They have not left their self altogether free but try as best as they can to turn it to God's obedience; however, at times they give it undue freedom and become involved in sin. Thus, their life becomes a combination of both the good and the evil actions. They are less numerous than the first group but more than the third; that is why they have been mentioned second.

(3) Those excelling in good deeds: They are the people of the first rank among the heirs to the Book, and they are the ones who are doing full justice to the inheritance. They are in the forefront in following and adhering to the Book and the Sunnah; in conveying the message of God to His servants, in offering the sacrifices for the sake of the true Faith, and in every pious and good work. They arc not the ones who would commit a sin deliberately, but if they happened to commit a sin inadvertently, they would be filled with remorse as soon as they became conscious of it. They are less numerous than the people of the first two groups, and therefore, have been mentioned last, although they merit the first place in the matter of doing justice to the heritage of the Book of Allah

As for the sentence, "this is the supreme bounty', if it is related with the last sentence, it would mean that

to excel in good deeds is the supreme bounty, and the people who excel in good deeds are the best of the Muslim community. And if it is taken to be related with the first sentence, it would mean that to be a heir to the Book of Allah and to be chosen for this heritage is the supreme bounty, and the people who have been so chosen on account of their faith in the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad arc the best among the human beings created by Allah.

57One section of the commentators has held the view that this sentence is related with the two sentences immediately preceding it. That is, the ones who excel in good duds are the best of the people and they alone will enter the Gardens. As for the first two groups, nothing has been stated about them so that they became worried concerning their fate and try to improve their lot. This view has been presented by `Allama Zamakhshari forcefully and supported by Imam Razi.

But the majority of the commentators opine that it is related with the whole preceding discourse, which means that all the three classes of the Ummah shall eventually enter Paradise, whether without accountability, or afar the accountability, whether remaining secure from every punishment, or after receiving some punishment. This commentary is supported by the Qur'anic context, for a little below about those who are contrasted with the heirs of the Book, it has been said: "And for those who have disbelieved, there is the fire of Hell. " This shows that there is Paradise for all those who have believed in the Hook, and Hell for all those who have refused to believe in it. The same has been supported by the Hadith of the Holy Prophet, which Imam Ahmad, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabarani, Baihaqi and some other traditionalists have related on the authority of Hadrat Abu ad-Darda'. The Holy Prophet said:

Those who have excelled in good works shall enter Paradise without; and those who arc following the middle course, shall be subjected to accountability; but their accountability shall be light. As for those who have been unjust to themselves, they shall be detained throughout the long period of Resurrection and accountability (mahshar). Then Allah shall cover them also with His mercy. And they are the ones who will say: 'Thanks to Allah Who has removed sorrow from us!'"

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet has himself given a complete commentary of the verse under discussion, and stated separately the end to be met by each of the three groups of the believers. The "light accountability" for the ones following the middle course means this: The disbelievers will be punished for their disbelief as well as for each single crime and sin of theirs separately, but, contrary to this, the good and bad deeds of the believers who come with both the good and evil deeds will be judged on the whole: they will not be rewarded for each good deed and punished for each evil deed separately. As for those "who will be detained throughout the period of Resurrection and accountability because they had been unjust to themselves," it means: They will not be thrown into Hell, but will be sentenced to be detained "till the rising of the Court." In other words, they will be exposed to all the severities and rigors of the lengthy Day of Resurrection (and God alone knows how lengthy it will be !) till Allah Almighty will turn to them in His mercy and command at the rising of the Court that they too be admitted into Paradise. The traditionists have cited several sayings to the same effect from many Companions like Hadrat 'Umar,

Hadrat `Uthman, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat `A`ishah, Hadrat Abu Said Khudri and Hadrat Bara bin 'Azib. And obviously, the Companions could not have said any such thing in such matters unless they had heard it from the Holy Prophet himself.

But from this one should not form the impression that `those who have been unjust to themselves" from among the Muslims will only be sentenced to be detained "till the rising of the Court", and none of them will go to Hell at all. Several crimes have been mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith, whose perpetrator will go to Hell in spite of his faith. For instance, Allah Himself has declared that the believer who kills another believer willfully shall go to Hell. Likewise, Hell has been mentioned as the punishment of those people also who violate the provisions of the Divine Law of Inheritance. Those who devour interest even after its prohibition have been declared to be "the dwellers of Hell." Besides these, some other major sins also have been mentioned in Hadith, whose perpetrator shall go to Hell.

58"Sorrow": Sorrow of every kind: sorrows and Briefs and worries of the world and of the Hereafter with regard to the final end. It means : "Now we have nothing to worry about: now there can be no question of any sorrow and trouble afflicting us here. "

59That is "He has forgiven us our errors, has appreciated whatever little provision of deeds we had brought and blessed us with His Paradise as a reward."

60That is, "The world was a stage in our journey of life, which we have crossed, and the plain of Resurrection also is a stage of the same journey, which we have also crossed. Now we have reached a place which is our eternal abode: we have not to go elsewhere from here."

61In other words, "All our toils and afflictions have come to an end. Now we do not have to perform any work here in carrying out which we might have to experience any rigor or hardship and after carrying out which we might be fatigued."

62"Who have disbelieved": Who have refused to believe in the Book which Allah has sent down on Muhammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings).

63This implies every such age of life in which a person may be able to distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood, if he likes to, and turn to right guidance instead of deviation, if he wishes. If a person has died before attaining such an age, he will not be called to any account according to this verse. However, the one who has attained this age will certainly be held answerable for his actions. Then, as long as he lives after attaining this age and gets more and more opportunities for choosing and adopting the right path, his responsibility also will increase accordingly; so much so that the one who does not adopt right guidance even in old age will have no chance left for making any excuse. This same thing has been reported by Hadrat Abu Hurairah and Hadrat Sahl bin Sa'd as-Sa'idi in a Hadith, saying: "The one

who lives a short life has an excuse to offer, but there is no room for making an excuse for him who lives for 60 years or more." (Bukhari Ahmad, Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim).

64This can have two meanings:

(1) "Now He has settled you on His earth after the passing away of the previous generations and nations;" and

(2) "the powers and authority that He has given you over different things in the earth are not meant to make you the owners of these things but are meant to enable you to function as the representatives of their real Owner. "

65If the previous sentence is taken to mean that you have been made successors to the previous nations, this sentence would mean this: "The one who did not learn any lesson from the fate of the previous nations and adopted the conduct of disbelief due to which those nations have gone to their doom, will himself see the evil end of his folly." And if the sentence is taken to mean this that Allah has delegated to you powers and authority as His vicegerents in the earth, this sentence would mean: `He who forgot this position of vicegerency and became independent, or he who adopted service of someone else, apart from his real Master, would see the evil end of his rebellious conduct himself."

66"Associates of yours", because they are not in fact the associates of Allah, but the ones whom the polytheists themselves have made associates of Allah.

67That is, "Do they possess a written sanction from Us in which We might have indicated that We have given such and such persons the powers to heal the sick, or to get jobs for the jobless, or to fulfill needs of the needy, or that We have made such and such beings Our representatives in such and such parts of the earth and now it is in their hands to make or mar the destinies of the people of those parts; therefore, Our servants now should pray to them and present gifts and offerings before them, and for whatever blessings they receive they should thank those "demigods" only? If you possess any such sanction, produce it. And if you have no such sanction, you should consider on what grounds you have invented these polytheistic creeds and practices. When you are asked as to what sign is there in the heavens and the earth that may point to your self invented gods as being God's associates, you cannot point out any. When you arc asked to product any Divine sanction from any Book of Allah, or from your own possession, or from the possession of your self-invented gods, which may testify to God s having Himself delegated to them those powers which you assign to them, you do not produce any. What then is the basis of your these creeds and concepts? Are you the owners of the Divine rights and powers that you may assign and distribute them to whomsoever you please?"

68That is, "These religious guides, saints, priests, sorcerers, preachers and attendants of shrines and

their agents are fooling the people for selfish motives, and are concocting stories to give them false hopes that if they became the followers of such and such personalities, apart from God, they would have all their wishes and needs fulfilled in the world, and all their sins, no matter-how grave and numerous, forgiven by Allah in the Hereafter."

69That is, "This limitless universe is being sustained by Allah alone. No angel, or jinn, or prophet, or saint can sustain it. Not to speak of sustaining the universe these helpless creatures do not even have the power to Sustain their own selves. Each one of them is entirely dependent on Allah Almighty for his birth and survival every moment. To think that any one of them has any share in the attributes and powers of Divinity is sheer folly and deception. "

70That is, "It is Allah's Clemency and Forbearance that He is not seizing the culprits immediately in punishment in spite of All kinds of disobedience which are being shown towards Him "

71Before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the same thing used to be said by the Arabs, in general, and by the Quraish, in particular, when they witnessed the moral degeneration of the Jews and the Christians. Mention of this saying of theirs has also been made in Surah Al-An'am :156-157 above, and in Surah AsSaffat: 167-169 below.

72That is, this Law of Allah that the nation which repudiates its Prophet, is destroyed should be applied in their case as well.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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36. Surah Ya Sin

Name

The Surah takes its name from the two letters of the alphabet with which it begins.

Period of Revelation

A study of the style shows that it was either sent down during the last stage of the middle Makkan period, or it is one of those Surahs, which were sent down during the last stage of the Holy Prophet's stay at Makkah.

Subject Matter and Theme

The object of the discourse is to warn the Quraish of the consequences of not believing in the Prophethood of Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and of resisting and opposing it with tyranny, ridicule and mockery. The aspect of the warning is dominant and conspicuous although along with repeatedly giving the warnings, arguments also have been given for the correct understanding by the people.

Arguments have been given for three things: (1) For *Tauhid*, from the signs of the universe and from common sense; (2) for the Hereafter, from the signs of the universe, from common sense and from man's own existence itself; and (3) for the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad, from the fact that he was facing all kinds of hardships in the preaching of his message without any selfish motive, and from this that whatever he was inviting the people to was rational and reasonable, accepting which was in the people's own interest.

On the strength of these arguments, themes of reprobation, reproof and warning have been presented repeatedly in a highly forceful manner, so that hearts are shaken up and those which have any capacity for accepting the truth left in them should not remain unmoved.

Imam Ahmad, Abu Daud, Nasai, Ibn Majah and Tabarani have related on the authority of Hadrat Ma'qil bin Yasar

that the Holy Prophet said:"Surah Ya Sin is the heart of the Qur'an."This is similar to describing the Surah Al Fatiha has the *Umm al Qur'an* (the essence or core of the Qur'an), because Al Fatihah contains the sum and substance of the teaching of the whole Quran. The Surah Ya Sin has been called the throbbing heart of the Qur'an because it presents the message of the Qur'an in a most forceful manner, which breaks the inertness and stirs the spirit of man to action.

Again Imam Ahmad, Aba Da'ud and Ibn Majah have related from the same Ma'qil bin Yasar that the Holy Prophet said: "Recite Surah Ya Sin to the dying ones among you." The object is not only to revive and refresh the whole Islamic creed in the mind of the dying person but also bring before him, in particular, a complete picture of the Hereafter so that he may know what stages he would have to pass through after crossing the stage of this worldly life. In view of this, it would be desirable that along with the recitation of the Surah Ya Sin its translation also is made for the benefit of the person who does not know Arabic so that the purpose of the admonition is duly fulfilled.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يسٓ ﴿١﴾

وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ﴿٢﴾

إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣﴾

عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

تَنزِيلَ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٥﴾

لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّآ أُنذِرَ ءَابَآؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غَٰفِلُونَ ﴿٦﴾

[1-6] Ya Sin.[1] By the wise Qur'an, you are indeed one of the Messengers,[2] are on the Straight Way, (and this Qur'an) is the Revelation of the All-Mighty, the All-Merciful One,[3] so that you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, and so, they live in heedlessness.[4]

لَقَدْ حَقَّ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَىٰٓ أَكْثَرِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧﴾

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِىٓ أَعْنَٰقِهِمْ أَغْلَٰلًا فَهِىَ إِلَى ٱلْأَذْقَانِ فَهُم مُّقْمَحُونَ ﴿٨﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنۢ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَٰهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

وَسَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ مَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ ٱلذِّكۡرَ وَخَشِيَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنَ بِٱلۡغَيۡبِۖ فَبَشِّرۡهُ بِمَغۡفِرَةٖ
وَأَجۡرٖ كَرِيمٍ ١١

[7-11] Most of these people have already deserved the decree of torment; therefore, they do not believe.[5] We have put on their necks fetters which reach to their chins, so they stand with heads upright.[6] We have set a barrier before them and a barrier behind them: We have covered them, so they cannot see anything.[7] It is all the same for them whether you warn them or warn them not, they would not believe.[8] You can only warn him who follows the admonition and fears the Merciful God, though he cannot see Him. Give him the good news of forgiveness and of a generous reward.

إِنَّا نَحۡنُ نُحۡيِ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰ وَنَكۡتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُواْ وَءَاثَٰرَهُمۡۚ وَكُلَّ شَيۡءٍ
أَحۡصَيۡنَٰهُ فِيٓ إِمَامٖ مُّبِينٖ ١٢

[12] We shall certainly one day raise the dead to life. We are recording all the deeds they have done and also that which they have left behind.[9] We have preserved everything in an open Book.

وَٱضۡرِبۡ لَهُم مَّثَلًا أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِ إِذۡ جَآءَهَا ٱلۡمُرۡسَلُونَ ١٣

إِذۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡهِمُ ٱثۡنَيۡنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزۡنَا بِثَالِثٖ فَقَالُوٓاْ إِنَّآ
إِلَيۡكُم مُّرۡسَلُونَ ١٤

قَالُوا مَا أَنتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَمَا أَنزَلَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ مِن شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا تَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

[13-15] Tell them, for instance, the story of the people of the habitation when the Messengers came to it.[10] We sent to them two Messengers and they denied both. Then. We sent a third one to strengthen them, and they all said, "We have been sent to you as Messengers." The people said, "You are no more than men like us,[11] and the Merciful God has sent down nothing."[12] You are only telling a lie."

قَالُوا رَبُّنَا يَعْلَمُ إِنَّا إِلَيْكُمْ لَمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٧﴾

قَالُوا إِنَّا تَطَيَّرْنَا بِكُمْ ۖ لَئِن لَّمْ تَنتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَلَيَمَسَّنَّكُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

قَالُوا طَائِرُكُم مَّعَكُمْ ۚ أَئِن ذُكِّرْتُم ۚ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

[16-19] The Messengers said, "Our Lord knows that we have indeed been sent as Messengers to you and our only responsibility is to convey the message plainly"[13] The people said, "We regard you as an evil omen for ourselves. If you do not desist (froth this), we shall stone you, and you will receive a painful punishment from us."[14] The Messengers replied, "Your evil omen is with your own selves.[15] Do you say this because you have been admonished? The fact is that you are a people who have transgressed all limits"[16]

وَجَآءَ مِنْ أَقْصَا ٱلْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَىٰ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

ٱتَّبِعُوا۟ مَن لَّا يَسْـَٔلُكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

[20-21] In the meantime a man came running from the remote part of the city, and he said, "O my people, follow the Messengers: follow those who do not ask any reward of you and are on the Right Way."[17]

وَمَا لِىَ لَآ أَعْبُدُ ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنِى وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

ءَأَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً إِن يُرِدْنِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ بِضُرٍّ لَّا تُغْنِ عَنِّى شَفَٰعَتُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يُنقِذُونِ ﴿٢٣﴾

إِنِّىٓ إِذًا لَّفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

إِنِّىٓ ءَامَنتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَٱسْمَعُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾

[22-25] “Well, why should I not worship the Being Who has created me, and to whom all of you have to return?[18]

Should I take other gods than Him? Whereas if the Merciful God intends to harm me, their intercession cannot avail me anything, nor can they rescue me.[19] If I do so,[20] I would be involved in manifest error. I have believed in your Lord:[21] so, you also should listen to me."

قِيلَ ٱدۡخُلِ ٱلۡجَنَّةَۖ قَالَ يَٰلَيۡتَ قَوۡمِي يَعۡلَمُونَ ٢٦

بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ ٱلۡمُكۡرَمِينَ ٢٧

[26-27] (Consequently, they killed the man and) it was said to him, "Enter Paradise."[22] He said, "Would that my people knew how my Lord has forgiven me and included me among the honored ones!"[23]

۞ وَمَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦ مِن جُندٖ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا كُنَّا مُنزِلِينَ ٢٨

إِن كَانَتۡ إِلَّا صَيۡحَةٗ وَٰحِدَةٗ فَإِذَا هُمۡ خَٰمِدُونَ ٢٩

يَٰحَسۡرَةً عَلَى ٱلۡعِبَادِۚ مَا يَأۡتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ يَسۡتَهۡزِءُونَ ٣٠

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

وَإِن كُلٌّ لَّمَّا جَمِيعٌ لَّدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[28-32] After him We did not send any army against his people from heaven nor was it needful for Us to send one. There only occurred a single blast and they all became extinct.[24] Alas for the servants! There came no Messenger to them but they scoffed at him. Have they not seen many nations We have destroyed before them, and they never returned to them?[25] One day they will all be presented before Us!

وَءَايَةٌ لَّهُمُ ٱلْأَرْضُ ٱلْمَيْتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَٰهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنَّٰتٍ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَٰبٍ وَفَجَّرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ ٱلْعُيُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾

لِيَأْكُلُوا۟ مِن ثَمَرِهِۦ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۖ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

سُبۡحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلۡأَزۡوَٰجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنۢبِتُ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمِنۡ أَنفُسِهِمۡ وَمِمَّا لَا
يَعۡلَمُونَ ٣٦

[33-36] The[26] dead land is a Sign for these people.[27] We gave it life and produced grain from it, which they eat. We made gardens of date-palms and grapes in it and caused springs to gush out of it so that they may eat fruits thereof. It is not their hands which have made all this.[28] Do they not then give thanks?[29] Glorified is He[30] Who created in pairs all species, whether of vegetable kingdom or of their own (i.e., human) kind, or of those things of which they know nothing.[31]

وَءَايَةٞ لَّهُمُ ٱلَّيۡلُ نَسۡلَخُ مِنۡهُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُم مُّظۡلِمُونَ ٣٧

وَٱلشَّمۡسُ تَجۡرِي لِمُسۡتَقَرّٖ لَّهَاۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقۡدِيرُ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡعَلِيمِ ٣٨

وَٱلۡقَمَرَ قَدَّرۡنَٰهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَٱلۡعُرۡجُونِ ٱلۡقَدِيمِ ٣٩

لَا ٱلشَّمۡسُ يَنۢبَغِي لَهَآ أَن تُدۡرِكَ ٱلۡقَمَرَ وَلَا ٱلَّيۡلُ سَابِقُ ٱلنَّهَارِۚ وَكُلّٞ فِي فَلَكٖ
يَسۡبَحُونَ ٤٠

[37-40] Another Sign for them is the night: We remove the day from above it, and they are covered in darkness.[32] And the Sun: it is moving to its place of rest.[33] This is the decree of the All-Mighty, All-Knowing God. And the Moon: We have determined stages for it till it again becomes like an old dry palm-branch.[34] Neither is it possible for the Sun to overtake the Moon,[35] nor for the night to outstrip the day.[36] Each is gliding in its own orbit.[37]

وَءَايَةٌ لَّهُمْ أَنَّا حَمَلْنَا ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ فِى ٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلْمَشْحُونِ ﴿٤١﴾

وَخَلَقْنَا لَهُم مِّن مِّثْلِهِۦ مَا يَرْكَبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَإِن نَّشَأْ نُغْرِقْهُمْ فَلَا صَرِيخَ لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنقَذُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا وَمَتَٰعًا إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

[41-44] Yet another Sign for them is that We bore their progeny in a laden vessel,[38] and then made for them similar other vessels which they board.[39] If We please We can drown them when they would have no one to hear their cry, nor would they be rescued in any way. It is Our Mercy alone which sustains them and enables them to enjoy life till an appointed time.[40]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَمَا خَلْفَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِم مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ مِّنْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا۟ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَنفِقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟
أَنُطْعِمُ مَن لَّوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ أَطْعَمَهُۥٓ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

[45-47] When it is said to them, "Guard against the end which is before , you and which you have left behind,[41] so that you are shown mercy," (they pay no heed), whatever Revelation of the Revelations of their Lord reaches them, they turn away from it.[42] And when it is said to them, "Spend also in the way of Allah out of what He has given you," those who disbelieve say to those who believe, "Should we feed those whom Allah Himself could have fed had He so willed? You have utterly gone astray!"[43]

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

مَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنسِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَا مَنۢ بَعَثَنَا مِن مَّرْقَدِنَا ۜ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَصَدَقَ
ٱلْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

إِن كَانَتۡ إِلَّا صَيۡحَةٗ وَٰحِدَةٗ فَإِذَا هُمۡ جَمِيعٞ لَّدَيۡنَا مُحۡضَرُونَ ٥٣

[48-53] They[44] say, "When will the threat of Resurrection be carried out? Tell us if you are truthful."[45] In fact, what they are awaiting is a single blast, which will suddenly seize them while they will be disputing (about their worldly affairs). Then they will neither be able to make a will, nor be able to return to their families.[46] Then a Trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come out of their graves forthwith to present themselves before their Lord.[47] Bewildered they will say, "Ah! who has roused us from our sleeping-place?"[48] "This is the same which the Merciful God had promised and the Messengers had spoken the truth."[49] There shall only be a single loud blast and they shall be presented before Us, all together.

فَٱلۡيَوۡمَ لَا تُظۡلَمُ نَفۡسٞ شَيۡـٔٗا وَلَا تُجۡزَوۡنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ٥٤

إِنَّ أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ فِي شُغُلٖ فَٰكِهُونَ ٥٥

هُمۡ وَأَزۡوَٰجُهُمۡ فِي ظِلَٰلٍ عَلَى ٱلۡأَرَآئِكِ مُتَّكِـُٔونَ ٥٦

لَهُمۡ فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٞ وَلَهُم مَّا يَدَّعُونَ ٥٧

سَلَٰمٞ قَوۡلٗا مِّن رَّبّٖ رَّحِيمٖ ٥٨

وَٱمۡتَٰزُواْ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ أَيُّهَا ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

۞ أَلَمۡ أَعۡهَدۡ إِلَيۡكُمۡ يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ أَن لَّا تَعۡبُدُواْ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمۡ عَدُوّٞ مُّبِينٞ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَأَنِ ٱعۡبُدُونِيۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٞ مُّسۡتَقِيمٞ ﴿٦١﴾

وَلَقَدۡ أَضَلَّ مِنكُمۡ جِبِلّٗا كَثِيرًاۖ أَفَلَمۡ تَكُونُواْ تَعۡقِلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

هَٰذِهِۦ جَهَنَّمُ ٱلَّتِي كُنتُمۡ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

ٱصۡلَوۡهَا ٱلۡيَوۡمَ بِمَا كُنتُمۡ تَكۡفُرُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

[54-64] On this Days[50] no one will be wronged in the least, and you will be rewarded exactly according to what you had been doing. (On this Day) the inmates of Paradise are absorbed in enjoying bliss[51] They and their wives are in thick shades, reclining upon couches: they have all kinds of tasteful foods and whatever they may desire. They have been greeted with `Peace' from the Merciful Lord. And O criminals, get you apart today![52] Children of Adam, did I not enjoin on you not to worship Satan, who is your open enemy, but to worship Me alone? This is the Straight Way.[53] Yet, in spite of this, he led astray a great multitude of you: did you not have common sense?[54] This is the same Hell with which you used to be threatened. Now be its fuel in consequence of your disbelief in the world.

ٱلْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰٓ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَآ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا
كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

[65] On that Day We shall seal their tongues: their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will testify as to what they had been earning in the world.[55]

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَطَمَسْنَا عَلَىٰٓ أَعْيُنِهِمْ فَٱسْتَبَقُوا۟ ٱلصِّرَٰطَ فَأَنَّىٰ يُبْصِرُونَ
﴿٦٦﴾

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَمَسَخْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِهِمْ فَمَا ٱسْتَطَٰعُوا۟ مُضِيًّا وَلَا يَرْجِعُونَ
﴿٦٧﴾

وَمَن نُّعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِى ٱلْخَلْقِ ۖ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

[66-68] If We will, We can put out their eyes: then let them strive to seek the way. From where will they see it? If We please, We can so transform them in their places that they would neither be able to go forward nor turn backward.[56] Whomsoever We grant a long life, We just reverse him in nature and constitution.[57] Do they not understand anything (from this)?

وَمَا عَلَّمْنَٰهُ ٱلشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٩﴾

لِّيُنذِرَ مَن كَانَ حَيًّا وَيَحِقَّ ٱلْقَوْلُ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

[69-70] We have not taught this (Prophet) poetry nor does poetry behoove him.[58] This is only an Admonition and a lucid poetry Book, so that he may warn everyone who is living[59] and the charge is established against the disbelievers.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُم مِّمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَآ أَنْعَٰمًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مَٰلِكُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

وَذَلَّلْنَٰهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَٰفِعُ وَمَشَارِبُ ۖ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

وَٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ءَالِهَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُمْ جُندٌ مُّحْضَرُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

فَلَا يَحْزُنكَ قَوْلُهُمْ ۘ إِنَّا نَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

[71-76] Do they not see that out of what Our hands have fashioned,[60] We have created for them cattle of which they

are masters? We have so subjected these to them that they ride on some and eat the flesh of others, and in them there are different advantages and drinks for them. Then, will they not be grateful?[61] Yet, they have set up other gods, apart from Allah, hoping that they would be helped. They cannot help them at all: yet do these people stand as an ever ready army at their service.[62] Well, let not their words grieve you: We know whatever they hide and whatever they reveal.[63]

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَـٰهُ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِىَ خَلْقَهُۥ ۖ قَالَ مَن يُحْىِ ٱلْعِظَـٰمَ وَهِىَ رَمِيمٌ ﴿٧٨﴾

قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَهَآ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾

ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلشَّجَرِ ٱلْأَخْضَرِ نَارًا فَإِذَآ أَنتُم مِّنْهُ تُوقِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

أَوَلَيْسَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِقَـٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُم ۚ بَلَىٰ وَهُوَ ٱلْخَلَّـٰقُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨١﴾

إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُۥٓ إِذَآ أَرَادَ شَيْـًٔا أَن يَقُولَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٨٢﴾

فَسُبۡحَـٰنَ ٱلَّذِى بِيَدِهِۦ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ وَإِلَيۡهِ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[77-83] Does[64] not man see that We created him from a sperm-drop, and yet he stands forth as a manifest adversary?[65] Now he strikes out likenesses for Us[66] and forgets his own creation.[67] He says, "Who will give life to these bones when they are rotten?" Tell him, "He Who created them in the first instance will give them life again: He is skilled at every kind of creation. He it is Who created fire for you from the green tree, with which you kindle your fuel.[68] Is not He, Who created the heavens and the earth, able to create the like of them ? Why not, when He is the skillful Creator. When He intends anything, He needs only say: 'Be', and it is. Glorified is He in Whose hand is the absolute control of everything, and to Him you shall all be returned.

1Ibn 'Abbas, 'Ikrimah, Dahhak, Hasan Basri and Sufyan bin 'Uyainah have opined that it means, "O man", or "O person"; some other commentators have regarded it as an abbreviation of "Ya Sayyid" as well, which, according to this interpretation, would be an address to the Holy Prophet.

2To begin a discourse like this does not mean that the Holy Prophet, God forbid, had some doubt about his Prophethood, and Allah had to say this in order to reassure him of it. But the reason is that the disbelieving Quraish at that time were most vehemently refusing to believe in his Prophethood; therefore. Allah at the very beginning of the discourse has said: "You are indeed one of the Messengers," which implies that the people who deny your Prophethood, are misled and mistaken. To further confirm the same, an oath has been taken by the Qur'an, and the word "wise" has been used as an epithet of the Qur'an, which means this: "An obvious proof of your being a Prophet is this Qur'an, which is fill of wisdom, This itself testifies that the person who is presenting such wise revelations is most surely a Messenger of God. No man has the power to compose such revelations. The people who know Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) can never be involved in the misunderstanding that he is himself forging these discourses, or reciting them after having learned them from another man." (For further explanation, see Yunus: 16-17, 37-39; Bani Isra'il: 88; An Naml: 75; Al-Qasas: 44-46, 85-87; Al-'Ankabut: 49-51; Ar-Rum: 1-5 and the relevant E.N.'s).

3Here, two of the attributes of the Sender of the Qur'an have been mentioned. First, that He is All-Mighty; second, that He, is All-Merciful. The first attribute is meant to impress the reality that the Qur'an is not the counsel of a powerless preacher, which if you overlook or ignore, will not bring any harm to you; but this is the Edict of that Owner of the Universe, Who is All-Mighty, Whose decrees cannot be withheld from being enforced by any power, and Whose grasp cannot be avoided by anyone. The second attribute is meant to make one realize that it is all due to His kindness and mercy that He has sent His Messenger for your guidance and instruction and sent down this great Book so that you may avoid errors and follow the right path which may lead you to the successes of the world and the Hereafter.

4Another translation can be: "You should warn the people of the same of which their forefathers had been warned, because they live in heedlessness." if the first meaning, as given above in the text, is taken, the forefathers would imply the forefathers of the immediate past, for in the ancient time several Prophets had appeared in Arabia. And if the second meaning is adopted, it would imply this: Revive and refresh the message that had been conveyed to the forefathers of this nation y the Prophets in the past, for these people have forgotten it." Obviously, there s no contradiction between the two translations, and, as to meaning, each is correct in its own place!

A doubt may rise here: How could the forefathers of a nation to whom no warner had been sent at a particular time in the past, be held responsible for their deviation at that time? The answer is: When Allah sends a Prophet in the world, the influence of his message and teaching spreads far and wide, and is handed down by one generation to the other. As long as this influence remains and there continue arising among the followers of the Prophet such people as keep his message of guidance fresh, the period pf time cannot be said to be without the guidance. And when the influence of the Prophet's teaching dies out, or the teaching is tampered with, the appointment of another Prophet becomes inevitable. Before the advent of the Holy Prophet the influence of the teachings of the Prophets Abraham, Ishmael, Shu'aib and Moses and Jesus (peace be upon all of them) could be seen everywhere in Arabia and from time to time there had been arising among the Arabs, or coming from outside, men, who revived their teachings. When the influence was about to die out, and the real teaching was also distorted, Allah raised the Prophet Muhammad, and made such arrangements that his message can neither be wiped out nor tampered with. (For further explanation, see E N. 5 of Surah Saba above).

5This is about those people who were being obstinate and stubborn with regard to the message of the Holy Prophet and had made up their minds not to listen to him at all. This is because: They have already deserved the torment; therefore, they do not believe." It means: "The people who do not heed the admonition, and persist in their denial and hostile attitude to the truth in spite of the final warning from Allah conveyed through the Prophets, are themselves overwhelmed by the evil consequences of their misdeeds and deprived of every opportunity to believe. " The same thing has been expressed more clearly in verse 11 below: "You can only warn him who follows the admonition. and fears the Merciful God though he cannot see Him. "

6"Fetters" in this verse implies their own stubbornness which was preventing them from accepting the truth. "Which reach to their chins" and "their standing with heads upright" implies the stiffness of the neck which is caused by pride and haughtiness. Allah means to impress this: "We have made their obstinacy and stubbornness the fetters of their neck, and their pride and haughtiness has made them so stiff-necked that they will not pay heed to any reality, however clear and evident it may be."

7Set a barrier before them and a barrier behind them" means that the natural result of their stubbornness and pride is that they neither learn any lesson from their past history nor ever consider the consequences of the fixture. Their prejudices have so covered them from every side and their misconceptions have so

blinded them that they cannot see even those glaring realities which are visible to every right-thinking and unbiased person.

8This does not mean that it is fertile to preach, but it means: "Your preaching reaches every kind of people. Some of them are the ones mentioned above, and some others those who are being mentioned in the next verse. When you come across the people of the first kind and you see that they continue to persist in their denial, pride and antagonism, you should leave them alone, but at the same time you should not feel disheartened so as to give up your mission, for you do not know exactly where among the multitudes of the people are those sincere servants of God, who would heed your admonition and fear God and turn to the right path. The real object of your preaching, therefore, should be to search out and collect this second kind of the people. You should ignore the stubborn people and gather this precious element of the society about you.

9This shows that three kinds of the entries are made in the conduct-book of men. First, whatever a person does, good or bad is entered in the Divine Register. Second, whatever impressions a man makes on the objects of his environment and on the limbs of his own body itself, become recorded, and all these impressions will at one time become so conspicuous that man's own voice will become audible and the whole history of his ideas and intentions and aims and objects and the pictures of all of his good and bad acts and deeds will appear before him. Third, whatever influences he has left behind of his good and bad actions on his future generation, on his society and on mankind as a whole, will go on being recorded in his account as far as they reach and as long as they remain active and operative. The full record of the good and bad training given by him to his children, the Bard or evil that he has spread in the society, and its impact on mankind as a whole, will go on being maintained till the time that it goes on producing good or evil results in the world.

10The early commentators, generally, have expressed the opinion that the "habitation" implies the Syrian city of Antioch, and the messengers mentioned here were the ones sent by the Prophet Jesus for the preaching of his message there. Another thing that has been mentioned in this connection is that Antiochus was the king of this land at that time. But historically this story which Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah, 'Ikrimah, Ka'b Ahbar and Wahb bin Munabbih, and others have related on the basis of unauthentic Christian traditions is baseless. There have been 13 kings of the Seleucid dynasty named Antiochus who reigned in Antioch, and the rule of the last king of this name, rather the rule of this dynasty itself, carne to an end in 65 B.C. At the time of the Prophet Jesus, the whole land of Syria and Palestine, including Antioch, was under the Romans. Then, no proof is forthcoming from any authentic tradition of the Christians that the Prophet Jesus might himself have sent any of his disciples to Antioch for preaching his message. On the contrary, the Acts of the Apostles (N.T.) shows that the Christian preachers had reached Antioch for the first time a few years after the event of the crucifixion. Now, evidently, the people who were neither appointed messengers by Allah nor sent by His Messenger cannot be regarded as messengers of Allah by any interpretation even if they might have travelled for the purpose of preaching of their own accord. Moreover, according to the Bible; Antioch was the first city where the non-Israelites

embraced Christianity in large numbers and where the Christian faith met with great success; whereas the habitation mentioned by the Qur'an was some such habitation which rejected the invitation of the messengers, and was consequently punished with a Divine torment. History also does not bear any evidence that Antioch was ever afflicted with a destruction, which might be regarded, as the result of denying the Prophethood.

On account of these reasons it cannot be accepted that the `habitation" implies Antioch. The habitation has neither been clearly determined in the Qur'an nor in any authentic Hadith; the identity of the messengers also is not known through any authentic means nor the time when they were appointed. To understand the purpose for which the Qur'an is narrating this story here, it is not necessary to know the names of the habitation and the messengers. The object is to warn the Quraish, as if to say: `You arc following the same path of stubbornness, prejudice and denial of the truth as had been followed by the people of that habitation, and are preparing yourselves to meet the same doom as was met by them.

11In other words, what they wanted to say was: `Since you are human beings, you cannot be the messengers of God. " The same was the view of the disbelievers of Makkah. They also said; "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) cannot be a messenger because he is a man"

"They say: what sort of a Messenger is he that he eats food and moves about in the streets." (AI-Furqan: 7).

"And the unjust people whisper to one another, saying, 'This man is no more than a human being like yourselves. What! will you then be enticed by this sorcery while you perceive it ?" (Al-Anbiya': 3).

The Qur'an refutes this erroneous notion of the people of Makkah and says that it is not any new kind of ignorance which these people are displaying, but all the ignorant people since the earliest times have been involved in the misunderstanding that a human being cannot be a messenger and a Messenger cannot be a human being. When the chiefs of the people of the Prophet Noah had rejected his Prophethood, they had said the same thing:

"This person is no more than a human being like yourselves. By this he purely intends to obtain superiority over you. Had Allah willed, He would have sent down angels. Since the time of our forefathers we have never heard (that a human being should come as a Messenger)." (AI-Mu'minun: 24).

The people of `Ad had said the same about the Prophet Hud: "This person is no more than a human being like yourselves, for he eats of what you eat and drinks of what you drink. Now if you submit to a human being like yourselves, you will indeed be the losers. " (AI-Mu'minun: 33-34).

The people of Thamud also said the same about the 'Prophet Salih: `Shall we follow a man from among ourselves?" (AI-Qamar: 24). And the same thing happened with almost every Prophet that the

disbelievers said: "You are no more than a human being like ourselves," and the Prophets always replied: It is true that we are no more than human beings like you, but Allah shows His favor to anyone of His servants He pleases." (Ibrahim: 10-11).

Then the Qur'an says that this very notion of ignorance has been preventing the people from accepting guidance in every age, and the same has been the cause of every nation's downfall:

"Has not the news reached you of those who had disbelieved before this, and the tasted the evil results of their deeds ? And in the Hereafter there awaits them a painful torment. They deserved this fate because their Messengers came to them with clear Signs, but they said, `Shall human beings show us guidance ? `So they refused and turned away." (At-Taghabun: 5-6).

"Whenever guidance came before the people, nothing prevented them from believing in it except this (excuse): they said: `Has Allah sent a human being as His messenger?' " (Bani Isra'il: 94).

Then the Qur'an says explicitly that Allah has always sent human beings as the Messengers and a human being alone can be a Messenger for the guidance for mankind. and not an angel, or a supernatural being:

"And We sent before your also human beings as Messengers to whom We revealed (Our Message). If you (O objectors) have no knowledge of this, you may ask those who have the knowledge. We did not give them such bodies as could survive without food nor were they immortal." (AI-Anbiya`; 7-8).

"All the Messengers whom We sent before you also ate food and moved about in the streets. " (AI-Furqan: 20).

"O Prophet, say to them: Had angels settled on the earth and moved about in peace, We would certainly have sent an angel as a messenger to them." (Bani Isra'il: 95).

12This is another notion of ignorance in which the disbelievers of Makkah were involved. In it are also involved the so-called rationalists of today and in it have been involved the deniers of Revelation and Prophethood of every age since the earliest times. These people have held the view that Allah does not send down any Revelation at All for the guidance of man. He is only concerned with the affairs of the heavens: He has left the affairs and problems of man to be resoled by man himself.

13That is, "Our only duty is to convey to you the Message that Allah has entrusted us with. Then it is for you to accept it or reject it. We have not been made responsible to make you accept it forcibly; and if your do not accept it, we shall not be seized in consequence of your disbelief: you will yourselves be answerable for your crimes.

14What they meant was: "You are an evil omen for us. Our gods have become angry with us on account of what you have been saying against them. Now whatever calamity is befalling us is only because of you." Precisely the same thing used to be said by the disbelievers and the hypocrites of Arabia concerning the Holy Prophet: ¦If they suffer a loss, they say: this is because of you." (An Nisa': 77). That is why at several places in the Qur'an these people have been told that in the ancient times also people used to say such things of ignorance in regard to their Prophets. The people of Thamud said to their Prophet: "We regard you and your companions as a sign of bad omen." (An-Naml: 47). And the same was the attitude of the people of Pharaoh: "Whenever a good time came, they would say: This is but our due, and when there was a hard time, they would ascribe their calamities to Moses and his companions. " (Al-A'raf: 130).

15That is, "No one is an evil omen for another. Everyman's augury is hanging around his own neck. If a person sees an evil, it is because of his own self; and if he sees a good, it is also because of his own self. 'We have fastened the augury of every man to his own neck'." (Bani Isra'il: 13).

16That is, "You in fact want to avoid the good and you like the deviation instead of the guidance. Therefore, instead of determining the truth and falsehood by means of an argument, you arc making these false pretenses on account of your superstitious whims.

17That servant of God, in this one sentence, put together all the arguments required for determining the genuineness of Prophethood. The genuineness of a Prophet can be determined by two things. First, his word and deed; second, his being selfless. What the person meant to say was this: 'First, whatever these people are saying is perfectly reasonable, and their own character also is pure; second, no one can prove that they are calling the people to this faith on account of a selfish motive. Therefore, there is no reason why they should not be listened to." By citing this reasoning of the person the Qur'an set a criterion before the people of how to judge and determine the genuineness of the Prophethood of a Prophet, as if to say; "The word and deed of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) bear full evidence that he is on the right path. Then, no one can point out any selfish motive or interest behind his struggle of preaching his message. Therefore, there is no reason why a sensible person should reject what he presents.

18This sentence has two parts. The first part is a masterpiece of reasoning, the second of the wisdom of preaching. In the first part he says: "To worship the Creator is the demand of both reason and nature; it would be highly unreasonable that one should worship those who have not created him and should deny to be the servant of Him Who has created him." In the second part he warns his people to the effect: "All of you ultimately have to die and return to that God adoption of Whose service you object to. Therefore, you should consider for yourselves as to what goodness you could expect by turning away from Him."

19That is, "They are neither such favorites of God that even if I commit grave crimes He will forgive me

on their recommendation, nor are they so powerful that they should be able to rescue me if God may please to punish me."

20"If I do so": "If I make them my gods in spite of knowing All this."

21This sentence again contains a subtle point of the wisdom of preaching. Saying this the man made the people realize: "The Lord in Whom I have believed is not merely my Lord but your Lord, too. I have committed no error by believing in Him, but you, in fact, are certainly committing an error by not believing in Him. "

22That is, immediately following his martyrdom, the man was given the good news of Paradise. As soon as he entered the Next World through the gate of death, there were the angels to receive him, and they gave him the good news that Paradise was awaiting him." The commentators have disputed the meaning of this sentence. Qatadah says, "Allah admitted him into Paradise straightway and he is living in it and receiving his sustenance." And Mujahid says, "This was told him by the angels as a good news; he will enter Paradise on the day of Resurrection along with the other believers. "

23This is a specimen of the high morality of the believer, He had no ill will or feeling of vengeance in his heart against the people who had just then killed him so that he should invoke Allah against them. Instead, he was still wishing them well. After death the only -wish that he cherished was: ¦Would that my people could know the good end that I have met, and could learn a lesson froth my death, if not from my life, and adopt the righteous way." The noble person did not wish Hell for his murderers but wished that they should believe and become worthy of Paradise. The same thing has been commended in the Hadith: "He wished his people well when living as well as when dead."

Allah has narrated this event in order to warn the disbelievers of Makkah to the effect: `Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his believing Companions are also your well-wishers just as the believer was of his people. They do not cherish any ill-will or feeling of vengeance against you in spite of your persecutions of them. They are not your enemies but enemies of your deviation and error. The only object of their struggle against you is that you should adopt the right way."

This verse also is one of those verses which clearly prove the existence of barzakh. This shows that the period of time between death and Resurrection is not a period of non-existence altogether, as some ignorant people think. But in this period the spirit lives without the body, speaks and hears speech, has feelings and desires, feels happy and unhappy, and also continues to be concerned about the people of the world. Had it not been so, the believer would not have been given the good news of Paradise after death, and he could not have wished that his people became aware of his good end.

24These words contain a subtle satire. In their arrogance and pride of power and their strong antagonism

towards the true faith, they thought they would annihilate the three Prophets and their followers, but, contrary to their plot, they were themselves annihilated by only one stroke of the Divine punishment.

25That is, they were annihilated so completely that not a trace of them was left behind them. No one in the world even remembers them today. Their civilization as well as their race has become extinct.

26Until now the disbelieves of Makkah were being warned and reproved for their denial of the truth and their attitude of antagonism which they had adopted towards the Holy Prophet. Now the discourse turns to the basic thing which was the actual cause of the conflict between them and the Holy Prophet, i . c. , the doctrine of Tauhid and the Hereafter, which the Holy Prophet was presenting and the disbelievers were refusing to accept. In this connection, some arguments have been given, one after the other, to make the people ponder over the realities, as if to say, "Observe these phenomena of the universe, which are ever present before you. Do they not point to the same reality, which this Prophet is presenting before you?"

27"A Sign" : A Sign that Tauhid is the Truth and shirk the falsehood.

28Another translation of this sentence can be: ".....so that they may eat fruits thereof and what their own hands make." That is, the artificial kinds of food, which the people prepare from the natural products, e.g. bread, curry, jam, pickles, sauces and countless other things.

29In these brief sentences the vegetable and plant life of the earth has been presented as an argument. Man is eating the products of the earth day and night and regards this as very ordinary. But if he considers it seriously, he will see drat the growth of rich crops and lush green gardens from the dry earth and the flowing in it of the springs and rivers is not a simple thing, which might be happening of itself, but there is a great wisdom and power and providence which is working behind it. Consider the reality of the earth. The substances of which it is composed do not possess any power of their own for growth. All these substances individually as well as after every sort of combination, remain inorganic, and thus do not possess any sign of life. The question is: How did it become possible for plant life to emerge from the lifeless earth? If one looks into it, one will see that there are some important factors without whose provision beforehand life here could not have coma into existence.

First, in particular regions of the earth, on its outer surface, a layer was arranged of many such substances, which could serve as food for vegetation. This layer was kept soft so that the roots of the vegetation could spread in it and suck food.

Secondly, a system of irrigation was arranged on the earth in different ways so that the food elements could get dissolved in water and absorbed by the roots .

Thirdly, the atmosphere was arranged around the earth which protects it against the calamities of the sky, becomes a means of the rainfall, and possesses gases which are necessary for the life and growth of the vegetation.

Fourthly, a relationship was established between the sun and the earth so as to provide proper temperature and suitable seasons for the vegetation.

With the provision of these main factors (which in themselves are combinations of countless other factors), the coming to life of the vegetation becomes possible. After arranging the suitable conditions the seed of each species of the vegetation was so constituted that as soon as it received favorable soil, water, air and season, vegetable life should begin stirring within it. Besides, inside the same seed a system was so arranged that from the seed of every species a plant precisely of the same species should grow with all the characteristics of its own species and heredity. Then, in addition to this, another wonderful thing was done. Vegetation was not created in twenty, or fifty, or a hundred kinds but in countless species, and they were so made that they should fulfill the requirements of food, medicine and clothing and innumerable other needs of the countless kinds of animals and man, who were to be brought into being after the vegetation on the earth.

Anyone who ponders over this wonderful arrangement, if he is not stubborn and prejudiced, will himself testify that all this could not have come about by itself. There is certainly a wise plan underlying it, according to which harmonies and relationships of the soil, water, air and season with respect to the vegetation, and harmonics and relationships of the vegetation with respect to the needs and requirements of animals and human beings have been determined, keeping in view the finest detail. No sensible person can imagine that these universal, all-embracing relationships could be a mere accident. This same subtle arrangement points to the fact that this cannot be the work of many gods. This is, and can only be, the work of One God, Who is the Creator and Lord of the earth, water, air, sun, vegetation, animals and mankind. If each of these had a separate god, it cannot be imagined that such a comprehensive and universal plan with such deep and wise relationship and harmony could be produced, and should have continued to work with such regularity for millions upon millions of years.

After giving these arguments for Tauhid, Allah says: "Do they not then give thanks?" That is: "Are these people so thankless and ungrateful that they do not render thanks to that God Who has provided all this for their survival, but thank others for the blessings and favors done by Him ? Are they so wretched that instead of bowing before Him they bow before the false gods, who have not created even a blade of grass for them ?"

30"Glorified is He": "He is free from every defect and fault, from every error and weakness, and that another one should be His associate and partner in His work." The Qur'an has generally used these words when refuting polytheistic beliefs, because every belief of shirk is, in fact, an imputation of some defect, some weakness and some fault to Allah. When a person says that Allah has an associate, he, in

fact, thinks that either Allah is incapable of running and ruling His Kingdom alone, or He is under compulsion to make another His associate in His work. Or, some other beings are so powerful in themselves that they are interfering in God's administration and God is putting up with their interference. Or, God forbid, Allah has the weaknesses of the worldly kings, due to which He is surrounded by an army of ministers, courtiers, flatterers and beloved princes or princesses, and thus many powers of Godhead have become divided among them. Had there been no such notions of ignorance about Allah in the minds, there could be no question of any idea of shirk in the world. That is why it has been stated again and again in the Qur'an That Allah is free froth and exalted far above those defects and faults and weaknesses which the mushriks ascribe to Him."

31This is still another argument for Tauhid. Here again certain realities of daily experience have been mentioned and it is suggested that man observes these day and night but does not ponder over them seriously, whereas they contain signs and pointers to the reality. The coming together of the man and woman is the cause of man's own birth. Procreation among the animals also is due to the combination between the male and the female. About vegetation also man knows that the law of sex is working in it. Even among the lifeless substances when different things combine with one another, a variety of compounds come into existence. The basic composition of matter itself has become possible due to the close affinity between the positive and the negative electric charges. This law of the pairs which is the basis of the existence of the entire universe, contains in itself such complexities and finenesses of wisdom and workmanship, and there exist such harmonies and mutual relationships between the members of each pair that an objective observer can neither regard it as the result of an accident, nor can he believe that many different gods might have created these countless pairs and matched their members, one with the other, with such great wisdom. The members of each pair's being a perfect match for each other and coming into being of new things with their combination itself is an explicit argument of the Creator's being One and only One.

32The alternation of the night and day also is one of those realities which man does not regard as worthy of much attention only because it is a phenomenon of daily occurrence and experience; whereas if he considers how the day passes and how the night falls, and what is the wisdom in the passing of the day and in the falling of the night, he will himself realize that this is an obvious sign of the existence of an All-Powerful and All-Wise Allah and of His being One and only One. The day cannot pass and the night cannot fall until the sun hides from the earth. The great regularity which is found in the alternation of the day and night, was not possible unless the sun and the earth were bound in one and the same relentless system. Then the deep relationship which exists between the alternation of the day and night and the other creations on the earth clearly points to the fact that this system has been established deliberately by a Being with perfect wisdom. The existence on the earth, of the men and animals and vegetation, and even of water and air and different minerals, is in fact, the result of placing the earth at a particular distance from the sun, with the arrangement that the different parts of the earth should go on successively coming before the sun and hiding from it at definite intervals. If the distance of the earth from the sun had been a little longer, or a little shorter, or there had been a perpetual night on one side of

it and a perpetual day on the other, or the alternation of the day and night had been much faster or much slower, or sometimes the day had appeared suddenly and sometimes the night without any system, no life could be possible on this planet, and even the form and appearance of the inorganic substances would have been much different from what it is now. If the mind's eye is not closed, one can clearly perceive in this system the working of a God, Who willed to bring into being this particular kind of creation on the earth and then established relevances, harmonies and relationships between the earth and the sun precisely in accordance with its needs and requirements. If a person regards the concept of the existence of God and His Unity as far removed from reason, he should think for himself and see how much farther removed should it be from reason to ascribe this wonderful creation to many gods, or to think that All this has happened automatically under some deaf and blind law of nature. When a person who can accept without question these latter unreasonable explanations, only on the baal: of conjecture and speculation, says that the existence of a system and wisdom and purpose is not a sufficient proof of the existence of God, it becomes difficult for us to believe whether such a person really feels the need and necessity of a rational proof, sufficient or insufficient in any degree whatever, for accepting any concept of creed in the world.

33"Place of rest" may either mean the place where the sun will ultimately come to a halt, or the time when it will come to a halt. The true meaning of this verse can be determined only when man has attained the full and exact knowledge of the realities of the universe. But man's knowledge is such that it has boon changing in every age and what he seems to know today might change tomorrow. The people of the ancient times on the basis of their observations of the sun believed that it was moving round the earth. Then after further research and observation the view became that the sun was stationary and all the planets of the solar system were revolving round it. But this theory also did not last long. The later observations revealed that not only the sun but All the stars also are moving in a particular direction, at speeds of 10 to 100 miles per second. About the sun the modern astronomers hold the view that it is moving at a speed of 20 kilometers (about 12 miles) per second along with its whole family of the planets. (See "Star" and "Sun" in Encyclopedia Britannica).

34That is, the phases of the moon go on changing throughout the month. 1t begins as a crescent, then goes on waxing every. day till it becomes the full moon on the 14th of the month. Then it starts waning every day till at last it returns to its original shape of the crescent. The same has been happening for millions of years with perfect regularity, and no change has ever occurred in the phases of the moon. That is why one can always calculate and find out exactly in what phase the moon will be on a particular day. If the movement of the moon had not been bound in a system, estimation of its phases would not have been possible.

35This sentence can have two meanings and both are correct:

(1) The sun does not have the power that it should draw the moon into itself, or enter its orbit and collide with it; and

(2) the sun cannot appear in the times which have been appointed for the rising and appearing of the moon. It is not possible that the sun should suddenly appear on the horizon when the moon is shining at night.

36Nor does this happen either that the night should approach before the appointed period of the day comes to an end, and should start spreading its darkness suddenly during the time when the day is meant to spread its light.

37The word falak in Arabic is used for the orbit of the planets, and it gives a different meaning from the word sama' (sky). The sentence, "Each is gliding in its own orbit," points to four realities:

(1) That not only the sun and the moon but all the stars and planets and celestial bodies are moving;

(2) the falak, or orbit, of each one of them is separate;

(3) that the orbits are not moving with the stars in them, but the stars are moving in the orbits; and

(4) that the movement of the stars in their orbits is similar to the floating of something in a fluid.

These verses are not intended to describe the realities of astronomy, but are meant to make man understand that if he looks around himself, with open eyes, and uses his common sense, he will find countless and limitless proofs of the existence of God and His Unity, and he will not come across a single proof of atheism and shirk. The vastness of the solar system in which our earth is included is such that its parent body, the sun, is 300,000 times bigger than the earth, and its farthest planet Neptune is at least 2,793 million miles distant from the sun. However, if Pluto is taken as the farthest planet, it revolves 4,600 million miles away round it. Notwithstanding this vastness, the solar system occupies a very insignificant part of a huge galaxy. The galaxy which includes our solar system has about 3,000 million suns in it, and its nearest sun is so distant from our earth that its light takes about four years to reach us. Then this galaxy also is not the whole universe. According to the investigations made so far, it has been estimated that it is one of about 2,000,000 spiral nebulae, and the nearest nebula is about a million light years away from the earth. As for the farthest celestial bodies which arc visible through the modern instruments, their light reaches the earth in about 100 million years. Even now it cannot be claimed that man has seen the whole universe. It is a small part of the Kingdom of God which man has yet been able to observe. It cannot be predicted how far and deep man will yet be able to see with greater and more efficient means of observation at his disposal.

All the information that has been gathered so far about the universe proves that this whole world is trade up of the same substance of which our tiny earthly world is made, and the same law is working in the universe which is working in the world of our earth; otherwise it was not at All possible. that man should

have made observations of the very distant worlds from the earth, measured their distances and estimated their movements. Is it not a clear proof of the fact that this whole universe is the creation of One God and the Kingdom of One Ruler? Then from the order and the wisdom and the excellence of workmanship and the deep relationships which are found in the hundreds of thousands of the galaxies and in the millions and billions of the stars and planets revolving in them no sensible person can imagine that all this has come about automatically. Is it possible that there should be no administrator behind this order and system, no sage behind this wisdom, no designer behind this design and work of art, and no planner behind this planning?

38"A laden vessel" : the Ark of the Prophet Noah. As to boarding of the progeny of man in it, it means that although apparently a few companions of the Prophet Noah had boarded it, in reality all human beings who are to be born till Resurrection were boarding it; all the rest of mankind had been drowned in the Flood, all later human beings are the children of those who were rescued in the Ark.

39This indicates that the first vessel ever to be made in the world was the one made by the Prophet Noah. Before that time man did not know any method of crossing the rivers and the seas. This method was first of all taught by Allah to the Prophet Noah, and when some servants, of Allah were rescued in it from the Flood, their future generations started making boats and ships for their sea journeys.

40The signs till now were mentioned as arguments for Tauhid. This sign has been mentioned to make man realize that whatever powers he has been given over the forces of nature, have been given him by Allah and are not of his own acquirement. And whatever methods he has discovered of exploiting these forces; have been discovered also through the guidance of Allah and not solely by himself. Man did not have the power and strength to have subdued these great forces by his own power, nor the capability to have discovered the secrets of nature himself and known the methods of taking service from them. Then he can use and employ the forces over which he has been given control by Allah only till the time that Allah wills them to remain subdued to him. For when Allah wills otherwise the same forces which were serving man turn against him suddenly and he finds himself utterly helpless before them. To call man's attention to this reality Allah has presented the case of the sea journey only as an example. The whole human race would have perished in the Flood had Allah not taught the method of making the vessel to the Prophet Noah and had his followers not boarded it. Then the scattering of the human race over the whole earth became possible only because the people learned the principles of building vessels from Allah and became able to cross the rivers and oceans. But from that humble beginning till today in spite of making great strides in the art of building huge ships and attaining every possible perfection in the science of navigation, man cannot claim that he has brought the rivers and the oceans fully under his control and power. Even today the water of God is still in God's own power alone and whenever He wills He drowns man along with his ships in it.

41"Which you have left behind": Which the peoples before you have seen and experienced.

42"Revelations" : Verses of the Divine Book by which man is admonished, and the Signs which are found in the universe and in man's own self and in his history which serve as object lessons for man, provided he is inclined to learn any lesson.

43This means to show that disbelief has not only blinded their intellect but has destroyed their moral sense, too. They neither have the right thought about Allah nor do they adopt the right attitude towards the people. They react adversely to every admonition, follow a perverse philosophy in respite of every deviation and immorality and have a ready made pretense for escape from every good.

44After Tauhid the other question about which a dispute was raging between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers was the question of the Hereafter. Rational arguments about this have been given in the end of the discourse. Here, before giving the arguments, the Hereafter has been depicted with all its horrors so that the people should know that what they are refusing to believe in cannot be averted by their denial, but they have to meet and experience it one day inevitably.

45The question did not mean that they wanted to know the exact date of the coming of the Hereafter, and if, for instance, they were told that it would take place on such and such a date in such and such a month and year, their doubts would have been removed and they would have believed in it. Such questions, in fact, were put as a challenge only for the sake of argument. What they meant to say was that there would be no Resurrection whatever, as if to say, "You are threatening us with Resurrection without rhyme or reason. " That is why in reply it has not been said that Resurrection will take place on such and such a day, but that it shall come and shall be accompanied by such and such honors."

46That is, "The Resurrection will not take place piecemeal so that the people may leisurely watch its coming, but it will come all of a sudden when the people will be engaged in their daily business and they will have no idea whatever that the end of the world had approached. There will be a terrible blast and everyone will fall dead at the spot. "

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr and Hadrat Abu Hurairah have related a Hadith from the Holy Prophet saying: "The people will be walking on the roads as astral, will be buying and selling in the markets, will be disputing matters in their assemblies, when suddenly the Trumpet shall be sounded. Thereupon the one who was buying cloth would collapse and he would not have the time to put down the cloth from his hand; the one who was filling a cistern to water his animals would not have the time to water; and the one who was going to eat, would not have the time to lift the morsel to his mouth and Resurrection will take place. "

47For the explanation of the blowing of the "Trumpet" , see E. N . 78 of Surah Ta Ha. As for the length of the interval between the first blowing of the Trumpet and its second blowing, we have no information. The interval maybe of hundreds and thousands of years. Hadrat Abu Hurairah has related that the Holy

Prophet said: "Israfil has put the Trumpet to his mouth and is looking up to the Divine Throne, awaiting orders for blowing it. The Trumpet will be blown thrice:

On the first blowing (called nafakhat al-faza) everything in the earth and heavens will be struck with terror. On the second blowing (nafakhat as-Sa'q) everyone will fall down dead. Then, when none shall remain except Allah, the One, the Everlasting, the earth will be changed altogether and will be spread flat and smooth without a crease or wrinkle in it. Then Allah will administer a rebuke to His Creation, whereupon everyone will rise at the spot where he had fallen dead, on the changed earth, and this will happen on the third blowing of the Trumpet (nafakhat al qiyam li-Rabbil- `Alamin). This is supported by several allusions in the Qur'an also.

For example, see Surah Ibrahim: 48; Surah Ta Ha: 105-108, and the E.N.'s thereof.

48That is, "At that time they will not realize that they had been dead and had been raised back to life after a long period, but they will be thinking that they had fallen asleep, and had been woken up suddenly by some terrible catastrophe, and were running away from it." (For further explanation, sec Ta Ha: 103, AI-Hajj: 1-2).

49Here, it is not clear as to who will give this answer. It may be that they themselves would realize after some time to their horror that it was the same thing of which the Messengers of God used to inform them and they used to belie them. It may also be that the believers will remove their misunderstanding and tell them that it was not waking up from sleep but the second life after death. And it may also be that they will understand this from the general conditions prevailing on the Day of Resurrection and the angels might tell them this.

50This is what Allah will tell the disbelievers and the polytheists, the sinners and the culprits, when they will be presented before Him.

51To understand this one should remember that the righteous believers will not be withheld in the Plain of Resurrection, but in the very beginning they will be sent to Paradise without accountability, or after a mild reckoning, because their record will be clean. There will be no need to keep them waiting during the hearing by the Court. Therefore, Allah will tell the culprits, who will be required to render their accounts, in the Plain of Resurrection: "Look! the righteous people whom you used to mock and regard as foolish in the world, are today enjoying the pleasures of Paradise because of their wisdom, and you, who in your own judgment were very prudent and sagacious, are being condemned to accountability for your misdeeds."

52This can have two meanings:

(1) "Get you apart from the righteous believer:, for in the world even if you belonged to the same community and the same clan and the same brotherhood, here you have no connection and relationship left with them;" and

(2) "get you apart from one another: now you can no longer remain a group: all your parties have been disbanded: all your relations and connections have been severed. Now each of you will be held answerable in your personal capacity for your actions and deeds."

53Here again Allah has used `ibadat in the sense of ita'at (obedience). This subject has already been explained above in Al-Baqarah: 172, An-Nisa': 117, Al-An'am: 121, 137, At-Taubah; 31, Ibrahim: 22, Al-Kahf: 52, Maryam: 42, AlQasas: 63 and E.N. 63 of Saba. In this connection, the fine explanation given of it by Imam Razi in his Tafsir Kabir is also noteworthy. He writes: "Do not worship Satan means: Do not obey him, the reason being that only falling prostrate before him is not forbidden, but following him and obeying his commands also is forbidden; therefore, ita et (obedience) is ibadat (worship). " After this, the Imam raises the question: If `ibadat means ita'at, then have the Muslims been commanded to worship the Prophet and the rulers in the verse: Ati `ullaha wa ati '-ur-rasula wa ulil--amr-i min-kum? He himself answers it thus: "If obedience to theta is in accordance with the Commands of Allah, it will be Allah's worship ('ibadat) and His obedience (ita`at. Did not the angels fall prostrate before Adam in obedience to Allah's Command? This was nothing but worship of Allah. Obedience of the rulers will be their worship only in cases where they are obeyed in matters in which Allah has not given leave to obey them." Then he writes: "If a person comes to you and commands you to do something, you should see whether his command is in accordance with the Command of Allah or not. If it is not, Satan is with him; and if you obeyed him in this, you worshiped him and his Satan. Likewise, if your self urges you to do something, you should see whether it is permissible to do it according to the Sahari'ah or not. If it is not permissible, your self is Satan itself, or Satan is with it. If you obeyed him, you in fact became guilty of worshiping him." Further on, he writes: "But there are different degrees of the worship of Satan. Sometimes it so happens that a man does a work and his limbs and his tongue also join him in this, and his heart also cooperates. At another time it so happens that a man uses his limbs to do a work but his heart and tongue do trot cooperate in this. Some people commit a sin while their heart is disagreeable and their tongue is invoking Allah for forgiveness, and they confess that they are committing an evil. This is Satan's worship with external limbs. There are other people who commit a crime with a cool mind and express pleasure and satisfaction with the tongue also. .....Such people are the worshipers of Satan from outside as well as from inside. (Tafsir Kabir, vol. VII, pp. 103-104).

54That is, "If you had been deprived of reason and you had served your enemy instead of your Lord, you could have the reason to offer an excuse. But you, in fact, had been blessed with reason by Allah and you were using it to advantage in all the affairs of the world, and you had been warned by Allah through the Prophets as well, yet, when you were deceived by your enemy and he succeeded in leading you astray, you could not be excused from the responsibility of your folly."

55This command will be given in respect of the stubborn culprits, who will refuse to confess their crimes, will belie the witnesses, and will also not acknowledge the genuineness of their conduct-book. Then will Allah Almighty command: "Well, stop your babbling. Just see what your own limbs say about your misdeeds. " In this connection, here only the evidence to be given by the hands and the feet has been mentioned. But at other places it has been said that their eyes and their ears and their tongues, and the very skins of their body, will tell how they had been employed in the world. "They should not forget the Day when their own tongues and their own hands and feet will bear testimony to their misdeeds.' (An-Nur: 24) "Then, when all will have reached there, their ears and their eyes and their very skins will bear witness against them concerning what they had been doing in the world." (Ha Mim Sajdah: 20). The question arises: On the one hand, Allah says: "We shall seal their mouths," and on the other, in the verse of Surah An-Nur, He says: "Their tongues will bear testimony against them." How can these two things be reconciled ? The answer is: "To seal the mouths means to deprive them of their power of speech. That is, after this they will not be able to say whatever they like with their tongue. The testimony of their tongues mans that their tongues themselves will tell how the wicked people had used them, what blasphemies and lies they had been made to utter, what mischiefs they had invented and what falsehoods they had been made to say on different occasions.

56After depicting the scene of Resurrection, the people are being warned to this effect: "The Resurrection may seem yet far off to you, but even if you consider seriously your life in this world of which you are so proud, you will see how helpless you are in the powerful grip of Allah. Your eyes by virtue of whose sight you are carrying out all your obligations in the world can be blinded at one command of Allah. Your legs on whose strength you are showing All this activity can become paralyzed as and when Allah wills. As long as the powers and capabilities granted by Allah continue to function, you remain lost in the arrogance of your self, but as soon as one of them fails to function, you come to understand how helpless you are!"

57"Reverse him in nature," means that in old age Allah turns him back to the state of childhood. He becomes unable to stand and walk without the help and support of others; he is fed by others; he urinates and defecates in bed; talks childishly and is laughed at by others. In short, towards the end of life he returns to the same state of weakness with which he had started lift in this world."

58This is a rejoinder to the disbelievers, who slighted the Holy Prophet and his message by branding him a poet when he preached Tauhid and talked of the Hereafter, life-after-death, and Hell and Heaven. (For further explanation, see Ash-Shu'ara: 224-227 and the E.N.'s thereof).

59"Every living person" : Every person who is capable of thinking and understanding, who is not like a stone, which neither hears nor understands nor moves from its place* however rationally and sympathetically one may explain the distinction between the truth and falsehood and give admonition before him.

60The word "hands" has been used metaphorically for Allah. This does not mean that, God forbid, Allah has a body and He works with the hands like human beings, but it means to impress that Allah has made these things Himself, and none else has any share in the matter of their creation.

61It is ingratitude to regard a blessing as a gift of someone outer than the donor, to be grateful to another for it, and to cherish the hope of receiving it or to seek it from another than the donor. Likewise, it is also ingratitude that one should use a blessing against the will of the donor. Therefore, a mushrik or a disbeliever or a hypocrite or a sinful person cannot be regarded as a grateful servant of God when he utters words of thankfulness only with the tongue. The disbelievers of Makkah did not deny that the cattle had been created by Allah; none of them said that the other deities had any hand in their creation. Hut despite knowing All this when they paid homage to their deities for the blessings granted by Allah, presented offerings before them and prayed to them for more blessings and offered sacrifices for their sake, their verbal gratitude became meaningless. That is why Allah has regarded them as guilty of ingratitude and thanklessness.

62That is, the poor false gods themselves are dependent upon their worshipers for their survival and their safety and their needs. But for their multitudes they could not survive as gods even for a day. These people are behaving as their humble servants. They are setting up and decorating their shrines; they carry out propaganda for them; they fight and quarrel with others for their sake. Then only arc they recognized as gods. They are not the teal God, Who, whether someone recognizes Him or not, is ruling over the whole universe by His own might and authority.

63The address is to the Holy Prophet. Here the allusion is to the campaign of vilification which the chiefs of the disbelievers of Makkah were carrying on against him. They knew in their hearts and acknowledged in their private assemblies that the charges they brought against him were absolutely baseless. In order to create suspicions against him in the minds of the people, they branded him a poet, sorcerer, magician, madman, etc. But their consciences recognized, and they also acknowledged before one another, that whatever they were uttering Was false, which they were forging only to frustrate his mission. That is why Allah says to His Prophet: "Do not grieve at their absurd and meaningless talk. Those who are opposing and resisting the Truth with falsehood shall ultimately meet with failure in this world and see their evil end in the Hereafter, too."

64Here the disbelievers' question cited in verse 48 above, is being answered by reason and argument. The question, "When will the threat of Resurrection be carried out?" had not been asked with a view to find out the exact date of the coming of the Hereafter. But they asked it because they thought it was impossible, rather irrational, that human beings would be raised back to life after death. That is why, in reply to their question, arguments are being given for the possibility of the Hereafter.

According to the traditions related by Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah and Said bin Jubair, one of the chiefs of

Makkah, on this occasion, came up with a rotten bone of a dead person, from the graveyard. He broke and crushed it into pieces before the Holy Prophet and scattering its particles in the air, said.-"O Muhammad, you say that the dead will be raised back to life. Tell us who will give life to these decayed and rotten bones?" The answer was given immediately in the form of these verses.

65That is, "We caused the sperm-drop which contained nothing but the basic germ of life to develop to an extent that it started moving and eating like the animals. Furthermore, it has developed such powers of intellect and reasoning and disputation and speech, which arc not possessed by any animal; so mu ch so that now he dares stand up as an adversary before his Creator !"

66That is, "He regards Us powerless and weak like the creation, and flunks that just as man cannot raise the dead back to life, so also can't We."

67"Forgets his own creation": "Forgets that We created the basic germ of life from dead matter, which became the means of his creation; then We caused the germ to develop to such an extent that now he stands before Us as a disputant."

68It either means that He has placed the inflammable matter in the green trees due to which people kindle fire from the pieces of wood. Or, it is an allusion to the markh and 'afar trees, whose green branches the Arabs struck against each other to produce the sparks. In ancient times the Bedouins used this method of kindling the fire and might even be using the same today.

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37. Surah As Saaffat (Those who set the ranks)

Name

The name is derived from the word *was saaffat* with which the Surah begins.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter and the style show that this Surah probably was sent down in the middle of the Makkan period, or perhaps in the last stage of the middle Makkan period. The style clearly indicates that antagonism is raging strong in the background and the Holy Prophet and his Companions are passing through very difficult and discouraging circumstances.

Subject Matter and Theme

The disbelievers of Makkah have been severely warned for their attitude of mockery and derision with which they were responding to the Holy Prophet's message of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter and for their utter refusal to accept and acknowledge his claim to Prophethood. In the end, they have been plainly warned that the Prophet whom they are mocking and ridiculing will overwhelm them in spite of their power and self and they will find the army of Allah encamping in the very courtyards of their houses (vv. 171-179. This notice was given at a time when there appeared no chance whatever of the Holy Prophet's success and triumph. The Muslims (who have been called Allah's army in these verses) were being made the target of severe persecution. Three- fourth of their population had already emigrated and hardly 40 to 50 of the Companions were left with the Holy Prophet in Makkah who were experiencing all sorts of the excesses with utter helplessness. Under such circumstances, in view of the apparent conditions, no one could believe that the Holy Prophet and the handful of his ill equipped Companions would ultimately attain dominance. The people rather thought that the new movement would end and be buried in the ravines of Makkah. But hardly 15 to 16 years had passed when on the conquest of Makkah precisely the same thing happened of which the disbelievers had been forewarned.

Along with administering warnings, Allah in this Surah has done full justice also to the theme of inducement and instruction in a balanced way. Brief but impressive arguments have been given about the validity of the doctrines of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter. Criticism has been made of the creed of the *mushrikin* to show the absurdity of their beliefs; they have been informed of the evil consequences of their deviations, which have been contrasted with the splendid results of the faith and righteous acts. Then, in continuation of the same, Precedents from past history have been cited to show how Allah had been treating His Prophets and their followers : how He has been favoring His faithful servants and punishing their deniers and rejectors.

The most instructive of the historical narratives presented in this Surah is the important event of the pious life of the Prophet Abraham, who became ready to sacrifice his only son as soon as he received an inspiration from Allah. In this there was a lesson not only for the disbelieving Quraish, who waxed proud of their blood relationship with him, but also for the Muslims who had believed in Allah and His Messenger. By narrating this event they were told what is the essence and the real spirit of Islam, and how a true believer should be ready to sacrifice his all for the pleasure and approval of Allah after he has adopted it as his Faith and Creed.

The last verses of the Surah were not only a warning for the disbelievers but also a good news for the believers who were passing through highly unfavorable and discouraging conditions on account of their supporting and following the Holy Prophet. In these verses they were given the good news that they should not be disheartened at the hardships and difficulties they had to encounter in the beginning, for in the end they alone would attain dominance, and the standard bearers of falsehood, who appeared to be dominant at the time would be overwhelmed and vanquished at their hands. A few years later the turn the events took, proved that it was not an empty consolation but an inevitable reality of which they had been foretold in order to strengthen their hearts.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلصَّٰٓفَّٰتِ صَفًّا ﴿١﴾

فَٱلزَّٰجِرَٰتِ زَجْرًا ﴿٢﴾

فَٱلتَّٰلِيَٰتِ ذِكۡرًا ٣

إِنَّ إِلَٰهَكُمۡ لَوَٰحِدٞ ٤

رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ ٱلۡمَشَٰرِقِ ٥

[1-5] By those who set themselves in ranks; then by those scold and curse, then by those who recite admonition.[1] Your real Deity is but One.[2] He Who is Lord of the earth and the heavens and of all that is between them, and Lord[3] of all Easts.[4]

إِنَّا زَيَّنَّا ٱلسَّمَآءَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا بِزِينَةٍ ٱلۡكَوَاكِبِ ٦

وَحِفۡظٗا مِّن كُلِّ شَيۡطَٰنٖ مَّارِدٖ ٧

لَّا يَسَّمَّعُونَ إِلَى ٱلۡمَلَإِ ٱلۡأَعۡلَىٰ وَيُقۡذَفُونَ مِن كُلِّ جَانِبٖ ٨

دُحُورٗا وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ وَاصِبٌ ٩

إِلَّا مَنْ خَطِفَ ٱلْخَطْفَةَ فَأَتْبَعَهُۥ شِهَابٌ ثَاقِبٌ ﴿١٠﴾

[6-10] We have adorned the lower heaven with the adornment of the stars[5] and have secured it against every rebel satan.[6] These satans cannot hear the words of the exalted ones; they are darted at and driven off from every side, and for them there is a perpetual torment. However, if some one snatches away something, a flashing flame follows him.[7]

فَٱسْتَفْتِهِمْ أَهُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَم مَّنْ خَلَقْنَآ ۚ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَٰهُم مِّن طِينٍ لَّازِبٍ ﴿١١﴾

بَلْ عَجِبْتَ وَيَسْخَرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَإِذَا ذُكِّرُوا۟ لَا يَذْكُرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا۟ ءَايَةً يَسْتَسْخِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾

أَءِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَٰمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

أَوَءَابَآؤُنَا ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

قُلْ نَعَمْ وَأَنتُمْ دَٰخِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

[11-18] Now ask them: What is more difficult: their own creation or of those things which We have created?[8] Of sticky clay We have created them.[9] You marvel (at the wonders of Allah's power), but they are scoffing at it. When they are warned they do not take the warning. When they see a Sign they mock at it, and say, "This is plain magic.[10] What! When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we be raised up to life? And also our forefathers of ancient times?" Say to them, "Yes, and you are helpless (against God).[11]

فَإِنَّمَا هِىَ زَجْرَةٌ وَٰحِدَةٌ فَإِذَا هُمْ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَا هَٰذَا يَوْمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٢٠﴾

هَٰذَا يَوْمُ ٱلْفَصْلِ ٱلَّذِى كُنتُم بِهِۦ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

۞ٱحْشُرُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ وَأَزْوَٰجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ فَٱهۡدُوهُمۡ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلۡجَحِيمِ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَقِفُوهُمۡۖ إِنَّهُم مَّسۡـُٔولُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

مَا لَكُمۡ لَا تَنَاصَرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

بَلۡ هُمُ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ مُسۡتَسۡلِمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَأَقۡبَلَ بَعۡضُهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّكُمۡ كُنتُمۡ تَأۡتُونَنَا عَنِ ٱلۡيَمِينِ ﴿٢٨﴾

قَالُواْ بَل لَّمۡ تَكُونُواْ مُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا عَلَيۡكُم مِّن سُلۡطَٰنٖۖ بَلۡ كُنتُمۡ قَوۡمٗا طَٰغِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

فَحَقَّ عَلَيْنَا قَوْلُ رَبِّنَآ إِنَّا لَذَآئِقُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

فَأَغْوَيْنَٰكُمْ إِنَّا كُنَّا غَٰوِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[19-32] There will only be a single shout and suddenly they will be seeing (all of which they are being warned) with their own eyes.[12] Then they will say, "Woe to us! This is the Day of Requital." The same Day of Judgment which you used to deny.[13] (It will be commanded): "Gather all the unjust people[14] and their associates[15] together, and those gods whom they used to worship instead of Allah[16] then show them the way to Hell. And stop them for a while: they have to be questioned: “What is the matter? Why don't you help one another? Today, they are surrendering themselves (and others to God)”[17] Then they will turn to each other for mutual reproaches. (The followers) will say (to their guides): "You used to come to us from the right side."[18] They will reply, "Nay but it was yourselves who did not believe: we had no power over you: you yourselves were a rebellious people. Consequently, we have deserved the verdict of our Lord that we should taste the torment. So we led you astray for we ourselves had gone astray."[19]

فَإِنَّهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوٓا۟ إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

وَيَقُولُونَ أَئِنَّا لَتَارِكُوٓا۟ ءَالِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَّجْنُونٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

بَلْ جَآءَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَصَدَّقَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِنَّكُمْ لَذَآئِقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْأَلِيمِ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَمَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[33-39] So, on that Day they shall all share the torment.[20] Thus do We deal with the criminals. These were the people that when it was said to them, "There is no god but Allah," they were puffed up with pride and would say, "Should we give up our gods for the sake of a mad poet?" Whereas he had come with the Truth and had confirmed the Messengers.[21] (Then it will be said to them :) "You shall have to taste the painful scourge, and your retribution will be strictly according to the deeds that you have been performing."

إِلَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ رِزْقٌ مَّعْلُومٌ ﴿٤١﴾

فَوَٰكِهُ ۖ وَهُم مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

فِى جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٤٣﴾

عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَٰبِلِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

بَيْضَآءَ لَذَّةٍ لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[40-46] But the chosen servants of Allah will remain safe (from this evil end). For them there is a known provision:[22] tasteful things of all kinds[23] and gardens of delight wherein they shall be lodged with honor. They will sit face to face on couches: cups filled from fountains[24] of wine[25] will be passed round to them,[26] of crystal white drink, delicious for those who drink it.

لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنزَفُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَعِندَهُمْ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ عِينٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

كَأَنَّهُنَّ بَيْضٌ مَّكْنُونٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

[47-49] Neither will they be harmed physically thereby nor become drunk.[27] And beside them there will be chaste women[28] with beautiful eyes, restraining their looks,[29] delicate as the thin skin hidden under the egg shell.[30]

فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ إِنِّى كَانَ لِى قَرِينٌ ﴿٥١﴾

يَقُولُ أَئِنَّكَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُصَدِّقِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَٰمًا أَئِنَّا لَمَدِينُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

قَالَ هَلْ أَنتُم مُّطَّلِعُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَٱطَّلَعَ فَرَءَاهُ فِى سَوَآءِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾

قَالَ تَٱللَّهِ إِن كِدتَّ لَتُرْدِينِ ﴿٥٦﴾

وَلَوْلَا نِعْمَةُ رَبِّى لَكُنتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

أَفَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَيِّتِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

إِلَّا مَوْتَتَنَا الْأُولَىٰ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

[50-59] Then they will turn to one another to ask questions. One of them will say, "I had a friend in the world, who used to say, 'Are you also of those who affirm?[31] What! when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we really be rewarded and punished?' Now, do you want to see where that man is?" Saying this as he will look down, he will see him in the depth of Hell. He will address him, saying, "By God! you had almost ruined me. But for the favor of my Lord, I also should have been among those who have been seized and brought here.[32] Well! Are we not to die any other than our first death? Are we not to be punished?"[33]

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾

لِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ نُّزُلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ الزَّقُّومِ ﴿٦٢﴾

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهَا فِتْنَةً لِّلظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخۡرُجُ فِيٓ أَصۡلِ ٱلۡجَحِيمِ ٦٤

طَلۡعُهَا كَأَنَّهُۥ رُءُوسُ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ٦٥

فَإِنَّهُمۡ لَأٓكِلُونَ مِنۡهَا فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنۡهَا ٱلۡبُطُونَ ٦٦

ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمۡ عَلَيۡهَا لَشَوۡبٗا مِّنۡ حَمِيمٖ ٦٧

ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرۡجِعَهُمۡ لَإِلَى ٱلۡجَحِيمِ ٦٨

إِنَّهُمۡ أَلۡفَوۡاْ ءَابَآءَهُمۡ ضَآلِّينَ ٦٩

فَهُمۡ عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِمۡ يُهۡرَعُونَ ٧٠

وَلَقَدۡ ضَلَّ قَبۡلَهُمۡ أَكۡثَرُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ٧١

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا فِيهِم مُّنذِرِينَ ٧٢

فَٱنظُرۡ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡمُنذَرِينَ ٧٣

إِلَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلۡمُخۡلَصِينَ ٧٤

[60-74] This indeed is the supreme success. For the like of this, then, should the workers work. Say, "Is this feast better or the zaqqum tree?[34] We have made that tree a trial for the wicked people.[35] It is a tree that grows out from the bottom of Hell. Its buds are like the heads of satans.[36] The dwellers of Hell shall eat it and fill their bellies with it. Then, upon it, they will get boiling water to drink. Then, their return shall be to the same Fire of Hell.[37] These are the people, who found their forefathers astray and they hastened in their footsteps, whereas many people before them had gone astray though We had sent warners among them. Now see what was the end of those who had been warned. Only such servants of Allah were able to avoid this evil end, whom Allah has chosen for Himself.[38]

وَلَقَدۡ نَادَىٰنَا نُوحٞ فَلَنِعۡمَ ٱلۡمُجِيبُونَ ٧٥

وَنَجَّيۡنَٰهُ وَأَهۡلَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلۡكَرۡبِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٧٦

وَجَعَلۡنَا ذُرِّيَّتَهُۥ هُمُ ٱلۡبَاقِينَ ٧٧

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ نُوحٍ فِى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[75-82] (Before this)[39] Noah had called on Us.[40] Just see how excellent Answerers (of the prayers) We were! We saved him and his household from the great distress[41] and made his progeny to be the only survivors[42] and left for him praise among posterity. Peace be upon Noah among the people of the world.[43] Thus do We reward the righteous. He was indeed one of Our believing servants. Then We drowned the others.

۞ وَإِنَّ مِن شِيعَتِهِۦ لَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿٨٣﴾

إِذْ جَآءَ رَبَّهُۥ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٤﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

أَئِفْكًا ءَالِهَةً دُونَ ٱللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

فَمَا ظَنُّكُم بِرَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

[83-87] And Abraham was the one who followed the way of Noah. When he approached his Lord with a sound heart.[44] When he said to his father and his people,[45] "What are these things that you worship? Do you seek false gods instead of Allah? What do you think about the Lord of the worlds?"[46]

فَنَظَرَ نَظْرَةً فِى ٱلنُّجُومِ ﴿٨٨﴾

فَقَالَ إِنِّى سَقِيمٌ ﴿٨٩﴾

فَتَوَلَّوْا۟ عَنْهُ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

فَرَاغَ إِلَىٰٓ ءَالِهَتِهِمْ فَقَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنطِقُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

فَرَاغَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضَرْبًۢا بِٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٩٣﴾

فَأَقْبَلُوٓاْ إِلَيْهِ يَزِفُّونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْحِتُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

قَالُواْ ٱبْنُواْ لَهُۥ بُنْيَٰنًا فَأَلْقُوهُ فِى ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٩٧﴾

فَأَرَادُواْ بِهِۦ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْأَسْفَلِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

[88-98] Then[47] he cast a glance at the stars[48] and said, "I am sick."[49] So they left him behind and went away.[50] In their absence, he stole into the temple of their gods and said, "Why don't you eat?[51] What is the matter that you do not even speak?" Then he fell upon them, smiting them with his right hand. (On their return) the people came to him running.[52] He said, "Do you worship those that you have yourselves carved? whereas Allah has created you as well as those (things) which you make." They said to one another, "Prepare for him a bonfire and throw him into the

blazing flames." They had designed a plan against him, but We defeated them in their plan.[53]

وَقَالَ إِنِّي ذَاهِبٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٩٩﴾

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ ۚ قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ ﴿١٠٣﴾

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَن يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ ٱلرُّءْيَآ ۚ إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ ٱلْبَلَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٠٦﴾

وَفَدَيْنَٰهُ بِذِبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١١٠﴾

إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

وَبَشَّرْنَٰهُ بِإِسْحَٰقَ نَبِيًّا مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

وَبَٰرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ إِسْحَٰقَ ۚ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا مُحْسِنٌ وَظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِۦ مُبِينٌ ﴿١١٣﴾

[99-113] Abraham said,[54] "I shall go to my Lord.[55] He will guide me. O my Lord! grant me a son who should be righteous."[56] (In answer to this prayer) We gave him the good news of a gentle (clement) son.[57] When the boy reached the age to work with him, (one day) Abraham said to him, "My son! I have dreamed that I am sacrificing you.[58] Now tell me what you think of it."[59] He said, "My dear father, do as you are being commanded.[60] You will find me, if Allah so wills, of the patient." At last, when the two had submitted them selves (to Allah) and Abraham had flung his son down on his brow,[61] and We called out,[62] "O Abraham! You have indeed fulfilled your vision.[63] Thus do We reward the righteous.[64] This was indeed a manifest trial."[65] And We ransomed his son for a great sacrifice,[66] and left for him praise among posterity for ever. Peace is upon Abraham. Thus do We reward the righteous. Indeed he was one of Our believing servants; and We gave him the good news of Isaac, a Prophet among the righteous. And we blessed him as well as Isaac.[67] Now among their offspring someone is righteous and someone clearly a sinner against his own self.[68]

وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُمَا وَقَوْمَهُمَا مِنَ ٱلْكَرْبِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿١١٥﴾

وَنَصَرْنَٰهُمْ فَكَانُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾

وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُمَا ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ٱلْمُسْتَبِينَ ﴿١١٧﴾

وَهَدَيْنَٰهُمَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١١٨﴾

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾

إِنَّهُمَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[114-122] And We showed favor to Moses and Aaron: We delivered them and their people from a great distress.[69] We helped them and so they became triumphant: We gave them a clear Book, and guided them to the Right Way, and left good words for them among posterity. Peace is on Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward the righteous. Indeed they were among Our believing servants.

وَإِنَّ إِلْيَاسَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

أَتَدْعُونَ بَعْلًا وَتَذَرُونَ أَحْسَنَ ٱلْخَٰلِقِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

ٱللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ وَرَبَّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

إِلَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

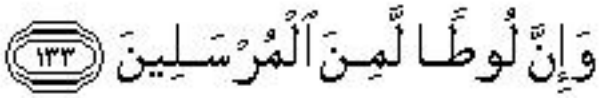
وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

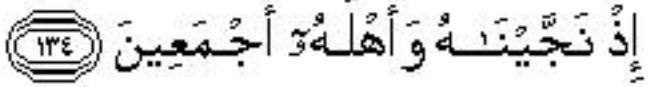
سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰٓ إِلْ يَاسِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

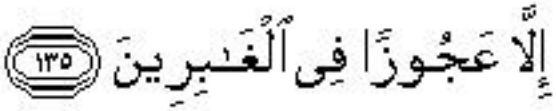
إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

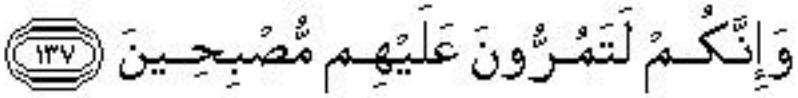
[123-132] And Elias also was one of the Messengers.[70] Remember when he said to his people, "Do you not fear ? Do you invoke Ba'al[71] and leave the Best of Creators, that Allah Who is your Lord and Lord of all your forefathers?" But they treated him as a liar, so they will certainly be presented for punishment, except for the true servants of God,[72] and We left good words for Elias among posterity.[73] Peace is upon Elias![74] Thus do We reward the righteous. Indeed he was one of Our believing servants.

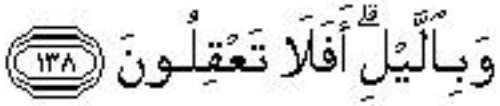

وَإِنَّ لُوطًا لَّمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾


إِذْ نَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥٓ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾


إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِى ٱلْغَٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٣٥﴾


ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا ٱلْءَاخَرِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾


وَإِنَّكُمْ لَتَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهِم مُّصْبِحِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾


وَبِٱلَّيْلِ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

[133-138] And Lot also was one of the Messengers. Remember when We rescued him and all his household, except for an old woman who was among those who remained behind.[75] Then We destroyed the others completely. Now you pass by their ruins by day and by night.[76] Have you then no sense?

وَإِنَّ يُونُسَ لَمِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

إِذْ أَبَقَ إِلَى ٱلْفُلْكِ ٱلْمَشْحُونِ ﴿١٤٠﴾

فَسَاهَمَ فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُدْحَضِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

فَٱلْتَقَمَهُ ٱلْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾

فَلَوْلَآ أَنَّهُۥ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُسَبِّحِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

لَلَبِثَ فِى بَطْنِهِۦٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

۞ فَنَبَذْنَٰهُ بِٱلْعَرَآءِ وَهُوَ سَقِيمٌ ﴿١٤٥﴾

وَأَنۢبَتْنَا عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِّن يَقْطِينٍ ﴿١٤٦﴾

وَأَرۡسَلۡنَٰهُ إِلَىٰ مِاْئَةِ أَلۡفٍ أَوۡ يَزِيدُونَ ١٤٧

فَـَٔامَنُواْ فَمَتَّعۡنَٰهُمۡ إِلَىٰ حِينٖ ١٤٨

[139-148] And indeed Jonah also was one of the Messengers.[77] Remember when he fled to the laden vessel;[78] then he took part in the casting of lots and lost. At last, the fish swallowed him, for he was blameworthy.[79] Had he not been of those who glorify[80] (Us)"he would have remained in the fish's belly till the Day of Resurrection.[81] At last We cast him on a bare shore in a state of sickness,[82] and caused a creeper[83] to grow over him. Then We sent him to a hundred thousand people, or more.[84] They believed in him and We let them live till an appointed time.[85]

فَٱسۡتَفۡتِهِمۡ أَلِرَبِّكَ ٱلۡبَنَٰتُ وَلَهُمُ ٱلۡبَنُونَ ١٤٩

أَمۡ خَلَقۡنَا ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ إِنَٰثٗا وَهُمۡ شَٰهِدُونَ ١٥٠

أَلَآ إِنَّهُم مِّنۡ إِفۡكِهِمۡ لَيَقُولُونَ ١٥١

وَلَدَ ٱللَّهُ وَإِنَّهُمۡ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ١٥٢

أَصۡطَفَى ٱلۡبَنَاتِ عَلَى ٱلۡبَنِينَ ١٥٣

مَا لَكُمۡ كَيۡفَ تَحۡكُمُونَ ١٥٤

أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ١٥٥

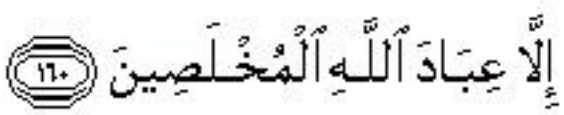
أَمۡ لَكُمۡ سُلۡطَٰنٞ مُّبِينٞ ١٥٦

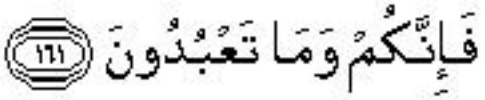
فَأۡتُواْ بِكِتَٰبِكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ١٥٧

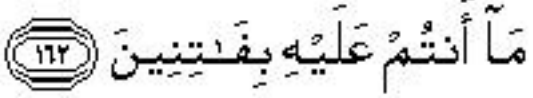
[149-157] Just ask the people[86] (whether it appeals to them) that their Lord should have daughters and they should have sons![87] Have We really created the angels females and they are eye-witnesses of it? Note it well: they, in fact, invent a falsehood when they say, "Allah has children." They are utter liars. Did Allah choose daughters for Himself instead of sons? What is the matter with you? How you judge? Will you not have sense? Or, if you have a clear authority for this, then bring your Book if you are truthful.[88]

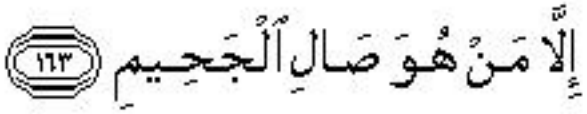
وَجَعَلُواْ بَيۡنَهُۥ وَبَيۡنَ ٱلۡجِنَّةِ نَسَبٗاۚ وَلَقَدۡ عَلِمَتِ ٱلۡجِنَّةُ إِنَّهُمۡ لَمُحۡضَرُونَ ١٥٨

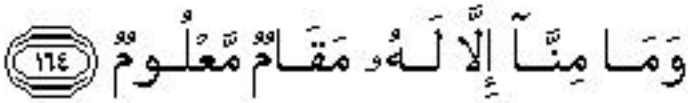
سُبۡحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ١٥٩

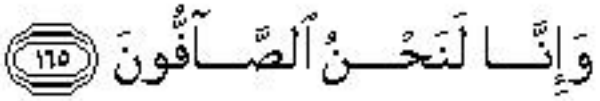


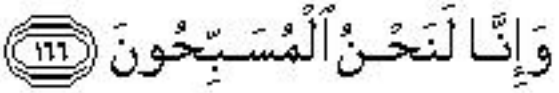












[158-166] They have invented a blood-relationship between Allah and the angels,[89] whereas the angels know full well that these people will be brought up as culprits. (And they say) "Allah is free from the things which the other people than His true servants attribute to Him. Therefore you and your gods cannot turn anyone from Allah, except him who shall burn in the blazing Fire of Hell.[90] As for ourselves, each one of us has an appointed place,[91] and we are the ranged servants and the glorifiers (of Allah)."

وَإِن كَانُوا۟ لَيَقُولُونَ ﴿١٦٧﴾

لَوْ أَنَّ عِندَنَا ذِكْرًا مِّنَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

لَكُنَّا عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

فَكَفَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۖ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾

إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ ٱلْمَنصُورُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

وَإِنَّ جُندَنَا لَهُمُ ٱلْغَٰلِبُونَ ﴿١٧٣﴾

[167-173] Before this they used to say, "If we had the 'Admonition' which the earlier people had received, we would have been the chosen servants of Allah."[92] But (when it did come) they denied it. Now, they will soon come to know (the consequences of this attitude). We have already promised Our servants whom We sent that they would certainly be helped, and Our army alone would be triumphant.[93]

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾

وَأَبْصِرْهُمْ فَسَوْفَ يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

أَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

فَإِذَا نَزَلَ بِسَاحَتِهِمْ فَسَاءَ صَبَاحُ الْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

وَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿١٧٨﴾

وَأَبْصِرْ فَسَوْفَ يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

[174-179] Therefore, O Prophet, leave them for a while to themselves and watch (them); soon they will see it for themselves.[94] Are they clamoring for our torment? The day when it descends in their courtyards, will be a dreadful day for those who have been warned. So leave them alone for a while and watch; soon they will themselves see.

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَى ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾

وَٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٨٢﴾

[180-182] Glorified is your Lord, Lord of Honour, (and free) from all that they attribute to Him., and peace on the Messengers, and all praise is only for Allah, Lord of the Universe.

1The majority of the commentators are agreed that All these three groups imply the groups of the angels, and the same explanation of it has been reported from 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Masruq Said bin Jubair, 'Ikrimah, Mujahid, Suddi, Ibn Zaid and Rabi' bin Anas. Some commentators have given other commentaries also, but this commentary is more in keeping with the context. The words "range themselves in ranks" refer to the fact that all the angels who arc administering the affairs of the universe, are the humble servants of Allah, and are ever ready to carry out any service and implement any command of His. This theme -has been further repeated in verse 165 below, where the angels say with regard to themselves: "We are the ranged servants (of Allah).'

As for "scolding and cursing", some commentators think that it refers to those angels who drive the clouds and arrange the rainfall. Although this meaning is not incorrect either, the meaning which is more relevant to the following context is that among these angels there is also a group of those, who scold and curse the disobedient people and the culprits, and this scolding and cursing is not merely verbal but it rains on human beings in the form of natural disasters and calamities.

"To recite admonition" implies that among these angels there are also those, who perform the service of admonition in order to draw the people's attention .to the Truth. This they do by bringing about natural calamities from which the needful take heed, and by bringing down the teachings to the Prophets, and in the form of revelations with which the pious men are blessed through them.

2This is the Truth to impress which an oath has been taken by the angels bearing the above-mentioned qualities. In other words, what is meant to be said is: "The whole system of the universe which is functioning in the service of Allah, and all those manifestations of this universe which bring the evil consequences of deviation from the service of Allah before men, testify that the "Deity" of men is One and only One."

The word "Ilah" applies to two meanings:

(1) The deity who is actually being served and worshiped; and

(2) the Deity Who, in reality, is worthy of being served and worshiped.

Here, the word "Ilah"has been used in the second meaning, for, as far as the first meaning is concerned, men have adopted many other deities. That is why we have translated "Ilah"as the "real Deity".

3The Truth that has been conveyed in these verses is: "The Master and Ruler of the Universe is the real Deity of men: He alone can be, and should be the Deity. It would be utterly irrational that the Rabb (i.e.. Master, Ruler, Guardian and Sustainer) of the man should be one but his Ilah (deity) another. The basic reason for worship is that man should naturally bow down before and acknowledge the superiority of him who can bring him harm and good, who can fulfill his needs and requirements, who can make or mar his destiny and has power over his life and survival itself. If man understands this he will automatically understand that to worship the one who has no power and not to worship Him Who has All the powers arc both against reason and nature. The One Who alone is worthy of worship is He Who possesses the powers. As far as the powerless beings are concerned, they are neither worthy of worship, nor is it in any way profitable to worship and pray to them, for it is not in their power to take any action whatever on man's petitions and prayers. To bow before them humbly and to petition them would be as foolish and meaningless an act as to bow before and petition another one who has himself gone before a ruler to make obeisance and submit his petitions.

4The sun does not always rise at the same point but at a different point every day. Moreover, it does not rise at one and the same time for the whole world but rises at different times for the different parts of the earth. That is why the plural "Mashariq" (Easts) has been used to indicate the different points at which the sun rises according to the season of the year. The corresponding word “Magharib” (Wests) has not been used because Mashariq itself points to Magharib However, in Surah Al-Ma'arij, the word magharib also has been used along with mashariq: Rabb-al-mashariqi wal-magharib.

5"Lower heaven" : The nearer heaven which can be seen with the naked eye, without the help of a telescope. The worlds beyond which can be seen through the telescopes of different powers, and the worlds which have not so far been observed through any moans, are the distant heavens. In this connection, one should also note that "sama " is not something definite and determined, but man generally has been using this word and its other synonyms for the heavens since the earliest times.

6That is, "Heaven is not merely empty space so that anyone who likes may enter it, but it has been fortified strongly, and its different regions have been bounded by such strong barriers that it is impossible for any rebel satan to exceed them. Every star and planet in the universe has its own circle and sphere escaping from which is as difficult as entering it. With the naked eye one can only see empty space, but,

in reality, there are countless regions in space which have been even more strongly fortified and protected than they could be by steel walls. One can imagine and estimate the strength of these barriers by the difficulties man is experiencing in the way of reaching the moon, which is our nearest neighbor in space. Similar difficulties prevent the other creation of the earth, the jinns, from ascending towards the heavens.

7To understand this one should keep in view the fact that in the time of the Holy Prophet, soothsaying was in great vogue in Arabia. The soothsayers used to make predictions, give news of the unseen, tell the whereabouts of the lost properties and articles, and the people used to visit them to know the events of their past and future lives. These soothsayers claimed that they had some jinns and satans under their control, who brought them all sorts of news. In this environment when the Holy Prophet was appointed to Prophethood, and he began to recite the verses of the Qur'an, which described the past history and contained news of the future, and also stated that an angel brought him these verses, his opponents immediately branded him a soothsayer and started telling others that, like the other soothsayers, he too was associated with a satan, who brought him news from the heavens, which he presented as revelations from Allah. To refute this accusation, Allah says: "The satans have no access to heaven. They have no power to hear the conversations of the angels and bring its news for others; if by chance a little of it enters the ear of a satan, and he tries to bring it down, he is followed by a flashing flame." In other words, it means: "The grand system of the universe, which is functioning under the agency of the angels has been firmly guarded and secured against every interference of the satans. Not to speak of interfering in it, they do not even have the power to obtain any kind of information about it. " (For further explanation, see Al-Hijr: 17-18 and the E.N's thereof).

8This is an answer to the suspicions of the disbelievers of Makkah, which they presented about the Hereafter. They thought that the Hereafter was not possible, for it is impossible that the dead men should be recreated. In answer to it, Allah presents arguments for the possibility of the Hereafter and asks: "If you think that the recreation of the dead men is a very difficult task which We do not have the power to accomplish, do you think it is easy to create the earth and the heavens and the countless things that they contain? Why don't you use your common sense ? Do you think that God for Whom it was not at all difficult to create this great Universe and Who has created you in the first instance, will not have the power to create you once again ?"

9That is, "Man is not a difficult thing to make. He has been created from clay, and can again be created from the same clay." "Created man of sticky clay" means that the first man was created directly from the clay and then his race was perpetuated by means of the sperm-drop. It also means that every man has been 'created from the sticky clay, for the whole substance of man's body is obtained from the earth. The sperm-drop of which he is created, is a product of the food, and all the substances which make up his physical being, from the time he is conceived till his death, are also supplied by the food. The source of the food, whether animal flesh or vegetable, is ultimately the same earth which, in combination with water produces corn and vegetables and fruit to become food for man, and nourish the animals, which supply

milk and flesh for the use of man.

Thus, the basis of the argument is: Man could not be living today if the earth and clay had not become the source of life for him. And if it is possible today to create life in it, as your own existence is a clear and definite pointer to this possibility, why should it be impossible to bring about your re-creation from the same earth tomorrow ?

10That is, "This person is talking of the world of magic in which the dead will rise, and will be produced before a court and sent to Heaven and Hell" or, it may also mean: "This person is talking like a madman. What he talks is a clear proof that somebody has worked magic on him; otherwise a sensible person could not talk such things.

11That is, "Allah can make of you whatever He likes. When He willed, you came into being forthwith; when He wills, you will die at one Command by Him; and then whenever He wills, His one Command will raise you back to lift. "

12That is, "When the time comes for this, it will not be difficult to reestablish the whole world. Just a single shout will be enough to make the people to wake up. Here, the word "shout" or "cry" is very meaningful. It depicts the Resurrection as though the people who had died since the beginning of the creation till the last Day, were lying asleep, and a sudden command to them to "wake up" will cause them to rise up all at once."

13It may be that this is said by the believers, or by the angels; or it may be, as it were, the common expression of the conditions prevailing in the plain of Resurrection or it may as well be another reaction of the people themselves. That is, they may be saying in their hearts. "In the world, you lived in a way as if no Day of Judgment would ever come. Now you have come to your doom! This is the same Day that you used to deny ! "

14"The unjust people" does not only imply those who committed injustices in the world, but as a Qur'anic term Zalim implies every such person, who might have adopted the way of rebellion and disobedience against Allah. "

15The word "azwaj"in the original might also imply their wives, who were their associates in this rebellion, and also all those people who were rebellious and disobedient like them. Moreover it may also mean that the culprits of different categories will be gathered together in separate groups.

16"Gods" here implies two kinds of the gods:

(1) Those men and satans who themselves desired that the people should worship them instead of Allah;

and

(2) those idols and trees and stones, etc., which have actually been worshiped in the world.

The first kind of the gods will be included among the culprits themselves and will be led to Hell for punishment; the other kind of them will be thrown into Hell along with their worshipers so that they constantly feel ashamed of and continue to regret their follies. Besides, there is also a third kind of the gods, who have been worshiped in the world, but without their own consent and knowledge; they rather forbade the people to worship anyone but Allah, e.g. the angels, prophets and saints. Obviously, this kind of the gods will not be included among the gods who will be driven to Hell along with their worshipers.

17The first sentence will be addressed to the culprits, and the second to the common spectators, who will be watching the scene of the culprits' departure for Hell. This sentence itself tells of the general conditions at the time. It tells how the haughty and stubborn culprits of the world will be moving towards Hell meekly and without showing any resistance. Somewhere some kind will be seen being pushed about, and no one from among his courtiers will come forward to rescue "his majesty"; somewhere some conqueror of the world and some dictator will be moving away in humiliation and disgrace, and his brave army itself will deliver him for the punishment; somewhere some saint or some holy father will be seen being thrown into Hell, and no one of his disciples will bother to save him froth disgrace; somewhere some leader will be trudging helplessly towards Hell, and those who used to glorify and applaud him in the world, will turn away their eyes from him. So much so that the (over who was ever prepared to sacrifice everything for the beloved in the world, will feel least concerned to save him from his plight. By depicting this scene Allah wants to impress how the relationships of man with man, which are based on rebellion against Allah in the world, will break in the Hereafter, and how the pride of those who are involved in arrogance and conceit here, will be ruined.

18The word yamin in Arabic is used for several meanings. It may mean use of the force, or well-wishing, or swearing of an oath. Accordingly, the verse would mean:

(1) "You compelled us into following error and deviation"; or

(2) "you deceived us by posing as our well-wishers"; or

(3) "you swore oaths to satisfy us that what you were presenting was the very truth."

19For explanation, see E.N's 51, 52, 53 of Surah Saba.

20That is, the followers as well as the guides, misleaders as well as the misled, All shall suffer the same torment. Neither will the followers' excuse be heeded that they did not go astray but had been led astray,

nor the guides' excuse accepted that the people themselves were not desirous of following the right way.

21Confirmation of the Messengers has three meanings and all the three are implied here:

(1) That he had not opposed any former Messenger so that the believers of that Messenger could have a rational ground of prejudice against him; he had rather confirmed all the former Messengers sent by God;

(2) that he had not brought any new or novel thing, but he had presented the same that the former Messengers of God had been presenting from the very beginning; and

(3) that he truly fulfilled and corresponded to the predictions that the former Messengers had made concerning him.

22"A known provision" : A provision All of whose characteristics have been made known to them, which they are sure to receive, about which they have also the full satisfaction that they will continue to receive it for ever, and about which there is no apprehension that they may or may not get it at some time.

23In this there is a subtle allusion to this also that in Paradise food will be provided not to serve as food but for pleasure and delight. That is, the food there will not be meant to replenish the bodily deficiencies through diet, for no deficiency whatever will occur in the body in that eternal life, nor will man have appetite, for appetite is caused by the process of assimilation in the body, nor will the body demand food for its survival. That is why the word fawakih has been used for the different kinds of food in Paradise, which contains the sense of taste and pleasure more than that of nutrition.

24That is, `It will not be the kind of wine that is extracted from rotten fruit and corn in the world, but it will flow naturally from fountains like canals. In Surah Muhammad, the same thing has been described more clearly, thus: .....and canals will be flowing in it of wine which will be delightful for the drinkers." (v. 15)

25Here the word ka `s (cup) only has been used and there is no mention of the wine. But in Arabic the use of ka's always implies wine. The cup which contains milk or water, instead of wine, or is empty, is not called ka's. The word ka's is used for a cup only when it contains wine.

26Here it has not been mentioned as to who will take these cups of wine round to the dwellers of Paradise. This has been stated at other places: `And there will go round to them young boys, exclusively appointed for their service, who will be as lovely as well-guarded pearls." (At-Tur :24). `They will be attended by brisk-moving boys who will for ever remain boys. If you saw them, you would think they were pearls, scattered." (Ad-Dahr: 19). Then, its further details are found in the traditions related by Hadrat Anas and Hadrat Samurah bin Jundub from the Holy Prophet, according to which: `The children of the mushrikin will be attendants of the dwellers of Paradise." (Abu Da`ud Tayalisi, Tabarani, Bazzar). Though

these traditions are weak as regards their links of transmitters, there are several other Ahadith which mean that children who died young, before attaining maturity, will go to Paradise. Ahadith also show that the children whose parents are blessed with Paradise, will live with them so as to be a comfort of the eyes for them. This leaves behind those children whose parents will not go to Paradise. Thus, with regard to them, it seems reasonable that they will be made the attendants of the dwellers of Paradise. (For a detailed discussion of this, see Fath ul-Bari and 'Umdat ul-Qari: Kitab ul-Jana'iz, Bab; Maqila fi aulad il - mushrikin; Rasa 'il-o-Masa'il, vol. III, pp. 177-187).

27That is, the wide of Paradise will be free from both the evils which are found in the wine of the world. The wine of the world, first of All, afflicts man with its stink; then it embitters his taste, upsets his stomach, affects his mind and causes giddiness; then it affects the liver and spoils the health generally. Then, when the intoxication is gone, it leaves behind other ill-effects on the body. Its other evil is that man gets drunk with it, talks nonsense and brawls. This is how the wine affects man's mind and reason. Man suffers both these evil effects of the wine only for the sake of delight and pleasure. Allah says that the wine of Paradise will certainly afford and give full pleasure and delight, but it will be free from the kinds of the evils that go with the worldly wine.

28Probably these will be the girls who died before attaining the age of discretion in the world, and whose parents did not deserve to enter Paradise. This can be said on the basis of analogy that just as the boys similarly placed will be appointed for the service of the dwellers of Paradise, and they will ever remain hoes, so will the girls be made the houris and they will ever remain young and beautiful. The correct knowledge, however, is with Allah.

29"Restraining their looks": Restraining their looks from everyone except their husbands.

30The words of the Text actually mean this: "As if they were the hidden or well preserved eggs." The commentators have given different interpretations of these words, but the correct commentary is the one which Hadrat Umm Salamah has related from the Holy Prophet. She says that when she asked the meaning of this verse from the Holy Prophet, he said: "Their delicacy and elegance and tenderness will be like the thin skin which is there between the shell of the egg and its fleshy part." (Ibn Jarir).

31That is, "Were you also one of those credulous people who put their faith in an irrational and impossible thing like life-after-death ?"

32This shows how powerful will be man's hearing, seeing and speaking powers in the Hereafter. Sitting in Paradise he bends his head a little and is able to see a person, who is undergoing torment thousands of miles away in Hell, without the agency of a television set. Then, they not only just see each other, but also commune with each other directly without the medium of the telephone or radio and they speak and hear each other over vast distances.

33The style clearly shows that while speaking to his friend in Hell, the dweller of Paradise suddenly starts talking to himself. He speaks these three sentences in a way as if he found himself in a state much better than that he ever expected and imagined for himself, and now being beside himself with wonder and joy he is engaged in a sort of soliloquy. In such a state the speaker does not speak to an addressee, nor the questions he asks are meant to find out something from somebody, but in this state the man's own feelings find expression through his tongue. The dweller of Paradise, while speaking to the dweller of Hell, suddenly starts feeling how he has been favored by good fortune: now there is neither death nor any torment: all troubles and distresses have come to an end and he has been blessed with immortality. Under this very feeling he exclaims: "Well arc we not to die any other than our first death ? Are we not to be punished?"

34Zaqqum is a tree of the cactus species found in Tihamah. It is bitter in taste, obnoxious in smell and sheds a milk like juice when cut or broken.

35That is, "On hearing this the disbelievers get a new opportunity to taunt the Qur'an and mock the Holy Prophet. They ridicule it saying, `Listen another strange thing: a tree will grow in the blazing fire of Hell'!"

36Nobody should have the misunderstanding that since no one has seen the head of Satan, it was no use likening the buds of zaqqum to it. This is, in fact, an imaginative kind of the simile, and is employed in the literature of every language. For example, in order to give an idea of the rare beauty of a woman, it is said she is a fairy, and in order to describe her ugliness, it is said that she is a hag or a demon. Likewise, a pious-looking person is described as an angel and a dreadful-looking person as a devil.

37This shows that when the dwellers of Hell will be in distress due to hunger and thirst, they will be driven to the side where there would be the zaqqum trees and the springs of boiling water. When they will have eaten and drunk, they will be brought back to Hell.

38That is, they never used their own common sense to sec whether the way their forefathers had been following was right or wrong; they just blindly adopted the way that they found others following.

39This theme is related with the preceding sentences. A study of them shows why these stories are being narrated here.

40This refers to the prayer that the Prophet Noah had at last made to Allah Almighty, being disappointed with his people, after having preached the true Faith to them for a very long period of time, without much success. This prayer has been related in Surah All-Qamar, thus: "He called out to his Lord, saying: I am overcome: take now Thy vengeance." (v. 10).

41That is, from the severe distress that was being caused to him on account of the continuous opposition and antagonism of a wicked and cruel people. This also contains a subtle allusion that just as the Prophet Noah and his companions were saved from the great distress, so also shall We ultimately save the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his Companions from the great distress that is being caused to them by the people of Makkah.

42This can have two meanings:

(1) That the progeny of the people who were opposing the Prophet Noah was made extinct and the Prophet Noah's progeny alone was allowed to survive; and

(2) that the whole human race was made extinct, and only the Prophet Noah's progeny was allowed to inhabit the earth after that. The commentators generally have adopted this second meaning, but the words of the Qur'an are not explicit in this regard and no one knows the reality except Allah.

43That is there is none in the world today, who would talk coil of the Prophet Noah. After the Flood till today the world has been praising and speaking well of him for thousands of years.

44"Approached his Lord": Turned to his Lord sincerely and exclusively; "with a sound heart": with a heart that was free from all kinds of moral evils and weaknesses of faith, free from every trace of unbelief and shirk, doubt and suspicion, from every feeling of disobedience and rebellion, from every crookedness, confusion and complexity, and free from every evil inclination and desire, and a heart that neither cherished any malice and jealousy and ill-will against anyone, nor had any evil intention.

45For further details of this story of the Prophet Abraham, please see Surah Al-An'am: 72-90; Maryam: 41-60; Al-Anbiya: 51-75; Ash-Shu'ara; 69-89; Al-'Ankabut: 16-17, and the E.N's thereof.

46That is, "Why have you formed such a wrong view of Allah? Do you think that the gods that you have yourselves carved out from wood and stone can be like Him, or can be His associates in his attributes and rights? And are you involved in the misunderstanding that you will somehow manage to escape His punishment after you have indulged in such blasphemy ?

47The reference is to a particular incident the details of which have been given in Surah Al-Anbiya': 71-73 and Al-`Ankabut: 16-27 above.

48Ibn Abi Hatim has cited a saying of the famous commentator Qatadah, an immediate follower of the Companions, to the effect that the Arabic idiomatic expression, cast a glance at the stars," means that he pondered deeply, or that he started thinking seriously. 'Allama Ibn Kathir has preferred this same view, and this is also supported by the common observation: when a person is confronted by a problem that

needs serious consideration, he looks upward or to the sky for a while, and then makes a reply, after due consideration.

49This is one of those three things concerning which it is said that the Prophet Abraham had told three lies in his life, whereas it should be ascertained before declaring it a lie, or anything contrary to fact, whether the Prophet Abraham at that time was not suffering from any illness, and therefore, he had trade this excuse only as a pretense. If there is no proof, there is no reason why it should be regarded as a lie. For a detailed discussion, please refer to E.N. 60 of Surah Al-Anbiya` and Rasa 'il-o-Masa'il, vol. II, pp. 35 to 39.

50This sentence by itself shows the real state of the affairs. It appears that the people might be going to sane fair of theirs. The family of the Prophet Abraham might have asked him also to accompany them. He might have excused himself, saying that he was indisposed, and therefore, could not go. Had it been something contrary to fact, the people of the house would have said: "You look perfectly normal: you are making a false excuse. But when they accepted his excuse and left him behind, it clearly shows that the Prophet Abraham must at that time be suffering from cough and cold or sane other such visible illness on account of which the people of the house agreed to leave him behind.

51This shows that there were different kinds of food placed before the idols in the temple.

52Here the story has been told in brief. According to the details given in Surah Al-Anbiya`, when they returned and found all their idols broken to pieces in the temple, they started making investigations. Some people said that a young man, called Abraham, had been talking such and such things against idol-worship. At this the multitude demanded that he should be immediately seized and brought before them. Therefore, a group of the people went running to him and brought him before the multitude.

53The words in Surah Al-Anbiya`: 69 are to the effect: "We commanded: O fire, be cool and become safe for Abraham," and in Surah Al'Ankbut: 24, it has been said: "Then Allah saved him from the fire." This proves that those people had actually thrown the Prophet Abraham into the fire, and then Allah had rescued him from it safe and sound. The words of the verse, "They had designed a plan against him, but We defeated them in their plan," cannot be taken to mean that they had only intended to throw the Prophet Abraham into the fire but could not carry their plan into effect; but when these words are read with the verses cited above, the meaning becomes plain that they had wanted to kill him by casting him into the fire but could not do so, and the Prophet Abraham's miraculous escape proved his superiority and the polytheists were humbled by Allah. The real object of relating this incident is to warn the people of the Quraish to this effect: "The way that you have adopted is not the way of the Prophet Abraham, whose descendants you claim yourselves to be, but his way is the one being presented by the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Now, if you plot against him in order to defeat him and frustrate his mission, as the people of the Prophet Abraham had done against him, you alone will

be defeated in the end, because you cannot defeat Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace).

54The Prophet Abraham said these words on his departure after he had been delivered safe from the fire and had decided to leave the country.

55It mean: "I am leaving my home and country for the sake of Allah, for my people have turned hostile to me only because of my turning to Him exclusively; otherwise there was no worldly dispute between them and me because of which I might have had to Leave my country. Moreover. I have no place of refuge in the world, to which I may turn. I am leaving my home with full faith and trust only in Allah: I shall go wherever He leads me. "

56This prayer by itself shows that the Prophet Abraham at that time was childless. From the details given at other places in the Qur'an, it becomes clear that he had left his country with only one wife and one nephew (the Prophet Lot). Therefore, he naturally desired that Allah should bless him with a righteous child, who could be a source of comfort and consolation for him in a foreign land.

57From this one should not understand that this good news was given him immediately following his prayer. In the Qur'an itself, at another place, this saying of the Prophet Abraham has been related: "All praise be to Allah Who has given me sons like Ishmael and Isaac in my old age." (Ibrahim: 39). This proves that there was an interval of many years between the prayer and this good news. The Bible says that at the birth of the Prophet Ishmael, the Prophet Abraham was 86 years old (Gen. 16: 16) and at the birth of the Prophet Isaac a hundred years. (Gen. 21: 5).

58One should note that the Prophet Abraham had dreamed that he was sacrificing his son and not that he had sacrificed him. Although at that time he understood the dream to mean that he should sacrifice his son and on that very basis, he became ready to sacrifice him, with a cool mind, yet the fine point that Allah had in view in making him see the dream has been explained by Himself in verse 105 below.

59The object of asking this of the son was not that he would carry out Allah's Command only if he agreed, otherwise not, but the Prophet Abraham, in fact, wanted to find out how righteous, in actual reality, was his child for whom he had prayed to Allah. If the son himself was found to be ready to lay down his life for the sake of Allah's approval and pleasure, it would mean that the prayer had been fully granted, and the son was not his offspring in the natural way only but was morally and spiritually also a true son.

60The words clearly tell that the son had not taken the dream of his Prophet father to be a mere dream but a Command from Allah. Had it not been a Command actually, it was necessary that Allah should have explicitly or implicitly stated that the son of Abraham had mistaken it for a command. But the whole context is without any such allusion. On this very basis, there is the Islamic belief that the dream of the

Prophets is never a mere dream it is also a kind of Revelation. Obviously, if a thing, which could become such a fundamental principle in the Divine Shari'ah, had not been based on reality, but had been a mere misunderstanding, it was not possible that Allah should not have refuted it. It is impossible for the one who believes the Qur'an to be Allah's Word, to accept That such an error and omission could emanate from Allah also.

61That is, "The Prophet Abraham did not make his son lit flat on his back but made him lie prostrate lest while slaughtering him the sight of his face should arouse compassion and lout and make him shaky. Therefore, he wanted to use the knife from under the throat" .

62One section of the grammarians says that here "and" has been use to mean "then"; thus, the sentence would be: "When the two had submitted themselves (to Allah) and Abraham had flung his son down on his brow, then We called out. . . " But another section of them says that here the answer to the word "when" has been omitted and left for the listener to fill; for it was better w leave such an indescribable thing to the imagination instead of expressing it in words. When Allah might have seen that the old father who had got a son after long earnest prayers, has become ready to sacrifice him only for His pleasure and approval; and the son also had became ready to get slaughtered, His infinite Mercy might have been aroused at the sight, and the Master might have felt great love for the father and son. All this can only be imagined. No words would ever describe the scene adequately.

63That is, "We did not make you see in the dream that you had actually slaughtered your son and he had died, but that you were slaughtering him. That Vision you have fulfilled. Now, it is not Our will to take the life of your child: the actual object of the vision has been fulfilled by your submission and preparation to sacrifice him for Our sake."

64That is, "We do not subject the people who adopt the righteous way to trials in order to involve them in trouble and distress and affliction just for the sake of it, but these trials are meant to bring out their excellencies and to exalt them to high ranks, and then We deliver them also safe and sound from the dilemma in which We place them for the sake of the trial. Thus, your willingness and preparation to sacrifice yow son is enough to entitle you to be exalted to the rank that could be attained only by the one who would actually have slaughtered his son for Our approval and pleasure. Thus, We have saved the life of yow child as well as exalted you to this high rank. "

65That is, "The object was not to get yow son slaughtered through you but to test you to see that you did not hold anything of the world dearer than Us.

66"A great sacrifice" : A ram, as mentioned in the Bible and the Islamic traditions, that Allah's angel presented at the time before the Prophet Abraham, so that he should sacrifice it instead of his son. This has been called "a great sacrifice" because it was to serve as a ransom from a faithful servant like

Abraham for a patient and obedient son like Ishmael, and Allah made it a means of fulfilling the intention of an unprecedented sacrifice. Another reason for calling it "a great" sacrifice is that Allah made it a tradition till the Day of Resurrection that all the believers should offer animal sacrifice on the same date in the entire world so as to keep fresh the memory of the great and unique event signifying faithfulness and devotion."

67Here, the question arises: Who was the son whom the Prophet Abraham had got ready to offer as a sacrifice, and who had willingly offered himself to be slaughtered as a sacrifice? The first answer to this question is given by the Bible; and it is this:

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: . . . Take now thy son thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." (Gen. 22: 1-2).

In this statement, on the one hand, it is being said that Allah had asked for the offering of the Prophet Isaac, and on the other, that he was Abraham's only son, whereas the Bible itself, at other places, conclusively states that the Prophet Isaac was. not the only son of the Prophet Abraham.Consider the following statements of the Bible:

"Now Sarai, Abram's wife bore him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abraham, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abraham hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abraham's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abraham had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived." (Gen .16: 1-4)

"And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael." (16: 11)

"And Abraham was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abraham." (16: 16).

"And God said unto Abraham, `As for Sarai thy wife, ... I will bless her and give thee a son also of her: . . . . . and thou shalt call his name Isaac . . .. . . which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year And Abraham took Ishmael his son and .....every male among the men of Abraham's house; and . .. . . circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. " (Gen. 17: 15-25).

"And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. " (Gen. 21: 5).

This brings out the contradictions of the Bible. It is evident that for 14 years the Prophet Ishmael was the only son of the Prophet Abraham. Now if the offering had been asked of the only son, it was not of Isaac but of Ishmael, for he alone was the only son; and if the offering of Isaac had been asked, it would be wrong to say that the offering of the only son had been asked.

Now let us consider the Islamic traditions, and they contain great differences. According to traditions cited by the commentators from the Companions and their immediate followers, one group of them is of the opinion that the son was the Prophet Isaac, and this group contains the following names:

Hadrat `Umar, `Hadrat `Ali, `Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat `Abbas bin `Abdul Muttalib, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Qatadah, `Ikrimah, Hasan Basri, Said bin Jubair, Mujahid, Sha`bi, Masruq, Makhul, Zuhri, `Ata, Muqatil, Suddi, Ka'b Ahbar, Zaid bin Aslam, and others.

The other group says that it was the Prophet Ishmael, and this group contains the names of the following authorities:

Hadrat Abu Bakr, Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Hadrat Mu'awiyah, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Yusuf bin Mahran, Hasan Basri, Muhammad bin Ka`b al-Qurzi, Sha`bi, Said bin al-Musayyab, Dahhak, Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Husain (Muhammad alBaqir), Rabi` bin Anas, Ahmed bin Hanbal, and others.

When compared, the two lists will be seen to contain several common names: this is due to the reason that from the same person two different views have been reported. For example, from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas, `Ikrimiah has related the saying that the son was the Prophet Isaac, but from him again `Ata' bin Abi Rabah relates: "The Jews claim that it was Isaac, but the Jews tell a tie. " Likewise. from Hadrat Hasan Basri, one tradition is to the effect that the Prophet Isaac was the son meant to be made the offering, but `Umar bin `Ubaid says that Hasan Basri had no doubt regarding that the son whom the Prophet Abraham had been commanded to offer as a sacrifice was the Prophet Ishmael (peace be upon him).

This diversity of tradition has resulted in the diversity of opinion among the scholars of Islam. Some of them e.g. Ibn Jarir and Qadi `Iyad, have expressed the firm opinion that the son was the Prophet Isaac. Others, like Ibn Kathir have given the verdict that it were the Prophet Ishmael. There ware others who are un-certain and wavering, e.g. Jalaluddin Suyuti. However, a deep inquiry into the question establishes the fact that the son intended to be offered as a sacrifice was the Prophet Ishmael. The following are the arguments:

(1) As stated by the Qur'an above, at the time of his emigration from the country, the Prophet Abraham had prayed for a righteous son and in answer to it, Allah had given him the good news of a clement boy.

The context shows that this prayer was made at a time when he was childless, and the boy whose good news was given was his first-born child. Then, this also becomes obvious froth the Qur'anic story that when the child grew up to boyhood, he was inspired to offer him as an offering. Now, it is established beyond any doubt that the Prophet Abraham's first-born son was the Prophet Ishmael and not the Prophet Isaac. The Qur'an itself has stated the order between the two sons, thus: "All praise be to Allah Who has given me sons like Ishmael and Isaac in my old age." (Ibrahim: 39).

(2) The words used in the Qur'an with regard to the Prophet Isaac while giving the good news of his birth are: "And they gave him the good news of the birth of a son, possessing knowledge, ('alim).
" (AdhDhariyat: 28 "Do not be afraid: we give you the good news of a son, possessing knowledge." (AI-Hijr: 53). But the son, the good news of whose birth has been given here; has been called a clement (halim) son. This shows that the two sons had distinctive qualities, and the offering had been asked of the clement son and not of the son possessing knowledge.

(3) Along with giving the good news of the birth of the Prophet Isaac in the Qur'an, the good news of the birth of a grandson like Jacob was also given: 'Then We gave her the good news of Isaac, and after Isaac of Jacob." (Hud: 71). Now obviously, if about the son along with the news of whose birth the news of a worthy son to be born to him had also been given, the Prophet Abraham was shown a vision that he was sacrificing him, he would never have understood that he was being inspired to offer that very son as an offering. 'Allama Ibn Jarir contends that the Prophet Abraham might have been shown this vision at a time when Jacob had already been born to the Prophet Isaac. But this is, in. fact, a very weak reply to the argument. The Qur'an says: 'When the boy became able to work with his father," then he was shown the vision Anyone who reads these words with an unbiased mind will have the image of an 8 to 10 years lad beforc him. No one can imagine that these words had been used about a young man having children.

(4) Allah, at the end of the story, says: "We gave him the good news of Isaac, a Prophet among the righteous." This clearly shows that it was not the same son, whom he had been inspired to offer as a sacrifice; but before this the good news of some other son had been given; then when he grew up and became able to work with his father, it was commanded to sacrifice him. Afterwards, when the Prophet Abraham came through this test successfully, he was given the good news of the birth of another son, the Prophet Isaac (may peace be upon him). This order of the events conclusively proves that the son whom the Prophet Abraham had been commanded to sacrifice was not Isaac but another son who had been born several years beforc him, 'Allama Ibn Jarir rejects this express argument, saying that in the beginning only the good news of the birth of the Prophet Isaac had been given. Then, when he became ready to be scarificed for the sake of Allah's approval and pleasure, it was rewarded in the form of the good news of his Prophethood. But this reply to the argument is weaker still. If it had really been so, Allah would not have said: ¦We gave him the good news of Isaac, a Prophet among the righteous," but "We gave him the good news that this same son of yours would be a Prophet among the righteous."

(5) Authentic traditions confirm that the horns of the ram which was slaughtered as a ransom for the

Prophet Ishmael remained preserved in the Holy Ka'bah till the time of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair. Afterwards when Hajjaj bin Yusuf besieged Ibn Zubair in the Ka'bah and demolished the Kab'bah, the horns also were destroyed. Both Ibn 'Abbas and 'Amir Sha'bi; testify that they had seen the horns in the Ka'bah. (Ibn Kathir). This is a proof of the fact that the event of the sacrifice had taken place in Makkah and not in Syria, and concerned the Prophet Ishmael. That is why a relic of it had been preserved in the Holy Ka'bah built by the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael.

(6) The Arab traditions confirmed that this event of the sacrifice had taken place in Mina (near Makkah), and it was not only a tradition but practically also it had been a part of the Hajj rites for centuries. Even until the time of the Holy Prophet people used to offer the animal sacrifice in Mina at the place where the Prophet Abraham had offered the sacrifice. Afterwards when the Holy Prophet was raised as a Prophet, he also maintained and continued the same tradition; so that even till today sacrifices are offered in Mina on the 10th of Dhil-Hajj. This continual practice of 4,500 years or so is an undeniable proof of the fact that the heirs to the tradition of sacrifice made by the Prophet Abraham have been the descendants of the Prophet Ishmael and not of the Prophet Isaac. There has never been any such tradition among the descendants of the Prophet Isaac according to which the whole community might have offered the sacrifice at one and the same time and regarded it as a continuation of the sacrifice made by the Prophet Abraham.

In the face of such arguments it appears strange how the idea of the Prophet Isaac's being the son offered as the sacrifice spread among the Muslim community itself. If the Jews might have tried to attribute the honor to their ancestor, the Prophet Isaac, by depriving the Prophet Ishmael of it, it would be understandable.

But the question is: How did a large number of the Muslims come to accept this wrong notion? A very satisfactory answer to this question has been given by 'Allama Ibn Kathir in his commentary. He says: "The reality is known to Allah alone but it appears that all the sayings (in which the Prophet Isaac has been mentioned as the son offered as a sacrifice) are related from Ka`b Ahbar. This man, when he became a Muslim in the time of Hadrat 'Umar, used to relate before him the contents of the ancient Jewish and Christian scriptures, and Hadrat 'Umar would hear them. On this basis, the other people also began to listen to him, and started relating every mixture of the truth and falsehood that they heard from him, whereas this Ummah did not stand in need of anything whatever from the store of his knowledge and information.'

This thing is further explained by a tradition from Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Kurzi He says that once during his presence the question whether the son offered as a sacrifice was the Prophet Isaac or the Prophet Ishmael arose before Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul `Aziz. Among them at that time was a person who had been a Jewish scholar but had become a sincere Muslim afterwards. He said, "O Commander of the Faithful! By God it was Ishmael, and the Jews know it, but claim on account of their jealousy of the Arabs that it was the Prophet Isaac." (Ibn Jarir). When the two things are put side by side, it becomes evident

that actually it was the Jewish propaganda that spread among the Muslims who have always been unbiased in scholastic literary matters, a large number of them accepted the statements of the Jews as a historic truth, which they presented as historical traditions with reference to the ancient scriptures, and did not realize that these were based on prejudice instead of knowledge.

68This sentence throws light on the real object for which this event of the Prophet Abraham's sacrifice has been related here. From the race of his two sons arose two great nations in the world. First, the children of Israel, from whose house two major religions (Judaism and Christianity) emerged, which dominated and won over large human populations. Second, the children of Ishmael, who were the religious leaders and guides of All the Arabs at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, and the tribe of Quraish of Makkah at that time held the most important position among them. Whatever eminence these two branches of the offspring of the Prophet Abraham attained became possible only on account of their connection and relation with the Prophet Abraham and his two illustrious sons; otherwise, God alone knows how many such families have arisen in the world and been assigned to oblivion. Now, Allah relates the most glorious event of the history of this family and makes both its branches realize that whatever honor and eminence they have attained in the world, has been due actually to the great traditions of God-worship and sincerity and obedience, which were set by their ancestors, the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac (may peace be upon them all). He tells them: `The great blessings which We bestowed on them, were not bestowed arbitrarily and haphazardly: We did not just pick out a person and his two sons blindly and blessed them, but they gave definite proofs of their loyalty and faithfulness to their real Master and then became deserving of His favors. Now, you cannot become entitled to those favors merely on the basis of your pride of descent, for We shall see who among you is righteous and who is wicked and then deal with him accordingly."

69"A great distress": the distress in which they were involved at the hands of Pharaoh and his people.

70The Prophet Elias was from among the Israelite Prophets. He has been mentioned only twice in the Qur'an, here and in Surah AI-An'am: 85. The present-day scholars have determined his period between 875 and 850 B.C. He was an inhabitant of Gilead, which in ancient days was the territory now under the northern districts of the modern state of Jordan, to the south of the River Yarmuk. In the Bible he has been mentioned as Elijah the Tishbite. Here is briefly his life story:

After the death of the Prophet Solomon the Israelite kingdom was broken up into two parts due mainly to the unworthiness of his son, Rehoboam. One part which consisted of Jerusalem and southern Palestine remained with the descendants of the Prophet David, while in the second, which comprised northern Palestine, an independent state by the name of Israel was established with Samaria as its capital. Although conditions in both the states were very bad, the state of Israel, from the very beginning, followed the path of depravity due to which the evils of polytheism and idol-worship and tyranny and wickedness went on increasing and multiplying in it endlessly; so much so that when Ahab, the king of Israel, married Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Sidon (Lebanon), the mischief reached its extremity. Under the

influence of this polytheistic princess Ahab himself became a polytheist. He built a temple and altar to Baal in Samaria, tried his very best to introduce and popularize Baal-worship instead of the worship of One God. and consequently, offerings began to be made publicly in the name of Baal in the Israelite towns and cities.

This was the time when the Prophet Elijah (peace be upon him) appeared on the scene. He came from Gilead and gave Ahab a notice that in consequence of his sins, the land of Israel would go without rain, even without the dew. This word of the Prophet of Allah proved to be literally true and there fell no rain in Israel for thee and a half years. At last, Ahab came to his senses and he got the Prophet Elijah searched out But Elijah, before praying for the rain, thought it necessary to snake the distinction between Allah, Lord of the worlds, and Baal plain before the people of Israel. For this purpose, he commanded that the priests of Baal would make an offering in the name of their deity, and he also would make an offering in the name of Allah, Lord of the worlds, in front of the assembled people. Then the one whose offering would be consumed by a fire from heaven, without the agency of the human hand, the truth of his deity would be established beyond doubt. Ahab accepted this proposal. Thus, 850 of the priests of Baal assembled on Mt. Carmel to answer the challenge given by the Prophet Elijah. In this encounter the Ba'al worshipers were defeated, and the Prophet Elijah proved that Baal was 'a false god, and the real God is the One God alone who had appointed him as His Prophet. After this, Elijah got the priests of Baal slaughtered in front of the same assembly of the people; then he prayed for the rain, and his prayer was immediately answered and the whole land of Israel was saturated with water

But, despite these miracles, Ahab could not shake off the influence of his polytheistic wife. Jezebel turned hostile to the Prophet Elijah and she hoped that he would be put to death just as the Baal worshipers had been put to death. Under the circumstances the Prophet Elijah was compelled to leave the country and he remained lodged in a cave at the foot of Mt. Sinai for several years. The lamentation that he made to Allah, on this occasion, has been related in the Bible, in these words:

'The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." (I Kings, 19: 10).

About the same time Jehoram, the ruler of the Jewish state of Jerusalem, married the daughter of Ahab, the king of Israel, and under her polytheistic influence the same evils that had spread in Israel also began to spread in Judah. The Prophet Elijah carried out his prophetic duty again and wrote a letter to Jehoram, the following words of which have been reported in the Bible:

"Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah. But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: Behold,with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods: And thou

shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day." (2 Chronicles, 21: 12-15).

Whatever the Prophet Elijah had prophesied in this letter proved true. First, the kingdom of Jehoram was destroyed by the external invaders, and the enemies even carried away his wives, then he himself died of the disease of the bowels.

A few years later the Prophet Elijah again went to Israel and constantly tried hard to bring Ahab, and after him his son, Ahaziah, to the right path, but the evil that had taken root in the house of the royal family of Samaria could not be eradicated. At last, due to the curse of the Prophet the family of Ahab met its doom, and then Allah recalled his Prophet from the world.

For details, see the following books of the Bible: I Kings, chs., 17, 18, 19, 21; 2 Kings, chs.; 1, 2; 2 Chronicles, ch. 21.

71Lexically, ba'al means master, chief and possessor. This word was also used for husband, and has been used in this sense at several places in the Qur'an itself, e.g. in Surah AI-Baqarah: 228, An-Nisa': 127, Hud: 72 and An-Nur: 31. However; in the ancient times the Semetic nations used it in the meaning of deity or lord; they had even given the name of Baal to a special god. The chief male god of the Phoenicians, in particular, was Baal and their chief goddess was Ashtoreth, his wife. The scholars differ as to whether Baal meant the sun or Jupiter, and Ashtoreth the moon or Venus. In any case, historically it is certain that Baal worship was prevalent from Babylon to Egypt throughout the Middle East, and the polytheistic communities of the Lebanon and Syria and Palestine, in particular, had become its devotees. When the Israelites settled in Palestine and Jordan after they came out from Egypt, they started contracting marriage and other social relations with the polytheistic nations round about them, in violation of the strict prohibitive injunctions of the Torah, the disease of idol-worship began to spread among them, too. According to the Bible, this moral and religious decline had started appearing among the Israelites soon after the death of Joshua, son of Nun, who was the first caliph of the Prophet Moses:

'And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim ..... And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtoreth." (Judges, 2: 11-13).

And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites and Hivites, and Jebusites. And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.' (Judges, 3: 5-6).

At that time worship of Baal had so deeply affected the Israelites that, according to the Bible, in one of their habitations a public altar had been built at which offerings were made to Baal. A God-worshiping Israelite could not bear the sight; so he pulled down the altar one night. Next morning a great multitude of the people gathered together and demanded that the man who had cast down the altar he put to death.

(Judges, 6:25-32). This evil, at last, was put to an end by . Samuel, Saul and the Prophets David and Solomon (peace be upon them); they not only reformed the Israelites generally but also eradicated polytheism and idol worship from their kingdom. But after the death of the Prophet Solomon the mischief was again revived and the Israelite state of northern Palestine was swept away in the Hood of Baal-worship.

72That is "Only those people will be made an exception from the punishment, who did not belie the Prophet Elijah, and whom Allah chose from among the nation for His worship. "

73The treatment that the Israelites meted out to the Prophet Elijah in his life has been referred to above, but after his death they became so enamored of him that they held him in the highest esteem and reverence after the Prophet Moses. They formed the belief that Elijah (peace be upon him) had been taken up alive into heaven by a whirlwind (2 Kings, ch. 2), and that he will come back to the world again. Thus, in Malachi (O.T.) it is written:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (4: 5).

At the tune the Prophets John and Jesus (peace be upon them) appeared, the Jews were awaiting the advent of these three men: the Prophet Elias, the Christ and "that Prophet" (i.e. the Holy Prophet Muhammad). When the ministry of the Prophet John began and he slatted baptizing the people, the Jews sent priests to him to ask, "Are you the Christ ?" And he said that he was not the Christ. Then they asked, "Are you Elias?" And he answered that he was not Elias; then they asked, "Are you 'that Prophet'?" And he answered that he was not "that Prophet" either. Thereupon they said, "If you are neither the Christ, nor Elias, nor that Prophet, why do you then baptize ?" (John, 1: 19-26). Afterwards when the name of the Prophet Jesus spread among the people, the Jews thought that perhaps the Prophet Elias had come. (Mark, 6: 14-15). Even among the disciples of Jesus themselves the idea was common that Elias the Prophet would come, but Jesus removed their misunderstanding, saying, 'Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatever they listed." Then the disciples understood that he spoke to them of John the Baptist and not of Elias who had appeared tight hundred years earlier. (Matthew. 11: 14; and 17: 10-131.)

74The words in the original are: Salam-un 'ala El-ya-sin. Some commentators say that El ya-sin is the other name of the Prophet Elias, just as Abraham is the other name of the Prophet Ibrahim; some others say that different versions of the Hebrew names were prevalent among the Arabs, e.g. one and the same angel was called Michal and Micha'il and Micha'in. The same has been the case with the name of the Prophet Elias also. In the Qur'an itself the same mountain has been called Tur Sina' and Tur Sinin.

75This implies the wife of the Prophet Lot, who did not migrate with her illustrious husband, but remained

behind with her people and was punished.

76The reference is to the mined habitations of the people of Lot by which the Quraishite merchants passed day and night during their trade journeys to Syria and Palestine.

77This is the third place where the Prophet Jonah (peace be upon him) has been mentioned in the Qur'an. Before this he has already been mentioned in Surah Yunus and Surah Al-Anbiya`. (For reference, please see yunus: 98 and AI-Anbiya`: 87-88 and the E.N.'s thereof).

78The word ebaqe in Arabic is used for the flight and escape of a slave from his master's house.

79This is what one understands from a study of these sentences:

(1) The vessel which the Prophet Jonah boarded was already overloaded.

(2) Lots were drawn in the vessel probably at a time when during the voyage it was felt that the lives of the passengers had been endangered due to the overloading; therefore, lots were cast to pick oat a person to be thrown overboard.

(3) The lot fell on the Prophet Jonah, and so he was thrown into the sea. and a fish swallowed him.

(4) The Prophet Jonah was so afflicted because he had fled and abandoned the place of his mission without the permission of his Master (Allah Almighty). This meaning is confirmed by the word abaqa as has been explained in E.N. 78 above, and also by the word mulim. Mulim IS a blameworthy person, who becomes worthy of blame by himself because of his sin and error, whether somebody else blames him for it or not. (Ibn Jarir).

80It has two meanings and both are implied: (1) That the Prophet Jonah was not of the people who are heedless of God, but was of those who glorify and adore Allah constantly and perpetually; and (2) that when he went inside the fish, he turned to Allah alone and glorified Him. In Surah AI-Anbiya' it has been said: He invoked Us from the depths of the darkness, saying: `There is no god but You: Glory be to You: I am indeed blameworthy. " (v. 87).

81This does not mean that the fish would have lived till Resurrection and the Prophet Jonah would have remained alive in its belly till then, but that the fish's belly would have become his grave till Resurrection. The famous commentator Qatadah has given this same meaning of this verse. (Ibn Jarir).

82That is, "When the Prophet Jonah confessed his fault, and began to glorify Allah like a true and sincere believer, the fish spat him up on the beach by Allah's Command. The beach was a bare plain, without any

vegetation on it, or anything to provide him shade, or any means of food." .

Here, the rationalists have been heard expressing the misgiving that it is impossible for a man to come out alive from the belly of a fish. But, towards the end of the last century, an event took place near the sea-shores of England (the center of this so-called rationalism), which belies this claim. In August, 1891, some fishermen went to the high sea to hunt whales in a ship called Star of the East. There they injured a great fish which was 20 feet long, 5 feet wide and weighed a hundred tons, but during the struggle the fish swallowed a fisherman, James Bartley, in front of the very eyes of his companions. Next day the same fish was found dead on the sea. The fishermen hauled it up on board and when they cut open its belly, James Bartley came out alive. He had remained in the fish's belly for full 60 hours. (Urdu Digest, February, 1964). Obviously, when such a thing is possible in normal circumstances naturally, wiry should it be impossible under abnormal conditions as a miracle of God?

83The Arabic word yaqtin applies to a tree which does not stand on a stem but grows and spreads like a creeper, e.g. a pumpkin, cucumber, water-melon, etc. In any case, a creeper was produced miraculously, so that its leaves should provide shade to the Prophet Jonah and its fruit should serve him both as food and as shade.

84The mention of "a hundred thousand people or more" does not mean that Allah had any doubt about their number, but it means that a casual observer would have estimated the population to be more than a hundred thousand people in any case. Probably it was the same place which the Prophet Jonah had left and fled. After his departure when the people of the place saw the scourge approaching they believed, but this was only a kind of repentance which was accepted and the scourge averted. Now, the Prophet Jonah was again sent .to them so drat the people should believe in him as a Prophet and become Muslims formally. To understand this, one should keep in view verse 98 of Surah Yunus.

85Some people have taken exception to what we have written concerning this story of the Prophet Jonah in our commentary of Surahs Yunus and AI-Anbiya'. It would therefore be proper that we should reproduce here the explanations given by the other commentators in this regard.

The famous commentator Qatadah in his commentary of verse 98 of Surah Yunus says: There has been no habitation which disbelieved and might have believed after the arrival of the scourge, and then might have been left unpunished. The only exception were the people of the Prophet Jonah. When they searched for their Prophet and did not find him, and felt that the scourge had approached near at hand, Allah put repentance in their hearts. " (Ibn Kathir, vol. II, p. 433).

Commenting on the same verse 'Allama Alusi; says: "The Prophet Jonah (peace be upon him) had been sent to the people of Nineveh in the land of Mosul. They were polytheistic people. The Prophet Jonah invited them to believe in Allah, the One, and to give up idol-worship. They refused to believe and belied him. Jonah gave them the news that they would be visited by a scourge after three days and he left the

place at midnight before the expiry of the three days. Then, in the day time when the scourge approached..... and the people realized that they would all perish, they began to search for the Prophet but did not find him. At last, they took their families and their cattle and came out in the desert and expressed belief and repentance.....So, Allah showed them mercy and accepted their prayer. " (Ruh al-Ma ani, vol. XI, p. 170).

Commenting on v. 87 of Surah Al-Anbiya', `Allama Alusi writes: "The Prophet Jonah's forsaking his people in anger was an act of migration, but he had not been commanded to do so." (Ruh al-Ma'ani, vol. XVII, p. 77). Then he explains the meaning of the sentence, "Inna kun-tu min-az-zalimin ", of Jonah's prayer, thus:`That is, I was blameworthy in that I hastened to migrate, against The way of the Prophets, before receiving the command for it. " This was, in fact, a confession of his sin and expression of repentance so that Allah might remove his affliction. (Ruh al-Ma'ani, vol. :XVII, p. 78).

Maulana Ashraf `Ali Thanwi's note on this verse is: "He became angry with his people when they did not believe, and forsook them, and did not return to them of his own accord when the scourge had been averted, and did not await Our Command for the migration." (Bayan al-QurÆan).

Maulana Shabbir Ahmad 'Uthmani writes in his note on this verse: "Vexed at the misconduct of his people he left the city in anger, did not await the Divine Command and threatened the people that they would be visited by a torment after three days.....lnni kun-tu min az-Zalimin: He confessed his error that he had made haste and left the habitation without awaiting Allah's Command.,

"Explaining these verses of Surah Saaffat, Imam Razi writes: "The Prophet Jonah's fault was that when Allah threatened to destroy the people who had belied him, he thought that the scourge would inevitably befall them. Therefore, he did not show patience and abandoned his mission and left the place, whereas he ought to have continued the work of his mission, for there was a possibility that Allah might not destroy those people." (Tafsir Kabir, vol. VII, p. 158).

Explaining the verse Idh abaqa....., Allama .Alusi writes: `Literally, abaqa means the escape of a slave from his master's house. Since Jonah had run away from his people without Allah's leave, the word has been rightly used about him." Then he writes: "When the third day came, the Prophet Jonah left the place without Allah's permission. Thus, when his people did not find him, they came out along with their young and old people and their cattle, and they implored Allah and begged for His forgiveness and Allah forgave them.' (Ruh al-Ma 'ani, vol. XXII, p. 13).

Maulana Shabbir Ahmad 'Uthmani has explained the words wa huwa mulim thus: `The accusation against him was that he had left the city because of an error of judgment, without awaiting the Divine Command, and even specified the day for the coming of the scourge."

Then Maulana Shabbir Ahmad's note on v. 48 of Surah Al-Qalam is: "Do not be perplexed and agitated

with regard to the deniers like the Man of the Fish (i.e. the Prophet Jonah)." And about the sentence: wa huwa makzum of the same verse, he writes: "That is, he was full of anger against his people, so he prayed for the torment, rather foretold it, in fretful haste."

These explanations by the commentators clearly show that there were three offenses on account of which the Prophet Jonah was made to suffer Allah's displeasure:

(1) That he himself fixed the day of the torment, whereas Allah had not made any declaration in this regard;

(2) that he emigrated from the city even before the day came; whereas a Prophet should not leave the place of his mission until Allah commands him to do so; and

(3) that he did not return to his people after the torment had been averted from them.

86Another theme starts from here. In the preceding theme that started from v. 11, the Quraish had been put this question: "Ask them: what is more difficult: their own creation or of those things that We have created?" Now, they are being asked this second question. The object of the first question was to warn the disbelievers of their deviation because of which they regarded life-after-death and the meting out of rewards and punishments as impossible, and therefore, mocked the Holy Prophet for it. Now they are being asked this second question to warn them of their ignorance due to which they attributed children to Allah and would join anybody with Allah in any relationship they liked on mere conjecture.

87Traditions show that in Arabia the tribes of Quraish, Juhainah, Bani Salimah, Khuza'ah, Bani Mulaih, etc., held the belief that the angels were Allah's daughters. This belief of their ignorance has been referred to at several places in the Qur'an, e.g. in An-Nisa': 117, An-Nahl: 57-58, Bani Isra'il: 40, Az-Zukhruf: 16; 19, An-Najm: 21-27.

88That is, "There can be only two bases for regarding the angels as the daughters of Allah: Either such a thing could be said on the basis of observation, or the one who asserted it should possess a Divine book in which Allah Himself might have stated that the angels were His daughters. Now, if those who held such belief could neither make a claim to have observed such a thing nor did they possess any divine book that might contain such a thing, there could be no greater stupidity than this that one should base one's religious belief on mere conjecture, and attribute to Allah, Lord of the worlds, such things as were patently ridiculous.

89Though the word used is al jinnah instead of al-mala'ikah, some major commentators have opined that here the word jinn has been used for mala ikah in its literal sense (of hidden creation); mala ikah (angels) also are, in reality, a hidden creation, and the following theme also demands that al jinnah here be taken

in the sense of al-mala'ikah

90Another translation of this verse can be: "Therefore, you and your worship: on this you cannot tempt into mischief anyone except him . . . " According to this second translation, the meaning would be: "O you who have gone astray, by this worship that you arc performing before us, and regarding us as the children of Allah, Lord of the worlds, you cannot tempt us into mischief. By this you can only beguile a fool who might be working for his own doom. So, we refuse to fall into the trap that you have set for us."

91That is, "Not to speak of being Allah's children, we do not have the power to exceed in any way or degree the place and position and status appointed for each of us by Allah."

92This same thing has already been mentioned in Surah Fatir: 42 above.

93"Allah's army": implies the believers who obey Allah's Messenger and side with him. This also includes those unseen powers by which Allah helps the followers of the truth.

This help and domination does not necessarily mean that in every age every Prophet of Allah and his followers must attain political dominance, but this dominance has many forms, one of which is political rule as well. Wherever the Prophets of Allah did not attain any such dominance, they did establish their moral superiority even in those places. The nations which did not accept their message and adopted a way contrary to their teachings, were ultimately doomed to destruction. Whatever philosophies of error and misguidance the people invented and whatever corrupt and evil practices of life they, enforced died out ultimately after they had their sway for some time. But the truths preached by the Prophets of Allah for thousands of years have been unalterable before as they are unalterable today. No one has been able to disprove them in any way.

94That is, `It will not take long when they will see their defeat and your victory with their own eyes." This proved to be true as it had been foretold. Hardly 14 to 15 years had passed after the revelation of these vases when the pagans of Makkah witnessed the Holy Prophet enter their city as a conqueror, and then a few years later the same people saw that Islam had overwhelmed not only Arabia but the mighty empires of Rome and Iran as well.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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38. Surah Saad

Name

The Surah takes its name from the alphabetic letter *Suad* with which it begins.

Period of Revelation

As will be explained below, according to some traditions this Surah was sent down in the period when the Holy Prophet had started calling the people openly to Islam in Makkah, and this had caused great alarm among the chiefs of the Quraish. If this be true, its period of revelation would be about the 4th year of the Prophethood. According to some other traditions, it was sent down after Hadrat Umar's embracing Islam, and this happened, as is well known, after the migration to Habash. Another chain of the traditions shows that the event which occasioned the revelation of this Surah took place during the last illness of Abu Talib. If this be correct, the period of its revelation would be the 10th or 11th year of the Prophethood.

Historical Background

Here is a resume of the traditions related by Imam Ahmad, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Ibn Abu Hatim, Muhammad bin Ishaq and others:

When Abu Talib fell ill, and the Quraish chiefs knew that his end was near, they held consultations and decided to approach the old chief with the request that he should solve the dispute between them and his nephew. For they feared that if Abu Talib died and then they subjected Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) to a harsh treatment, after his death, the Arabs would taunt them, saying, "They were afraid of the old chief as long as he lived now that he is dead they have started maltreating his nephew." At least 25 of the Quraish chiefs including Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan, Umayyah bin Khalaf, As bin Wa'il, Aswad bin al-Muttalib, 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait, Utbah and Shaibah went to Abu Talib. First, they put before him their complaints against the Holy Prophet as usual, then said, "We have come to present before you a just request and it is this : let your nephew leave us to our religion, and we shall

leave him to his. He may worship whomever he may please: we shall not stand in his way in this matter; but he should not condemn our gods, and should not try to force us to give them up. Please tell him to make terms with us on this condition". Abu Talib called the Holy Prophet and said, "Dear nephew, these people of your tribe have come to me with a request. They want you to agree with them on a just matter so as to put an end to your dispute with them." Then he told him about the request of the chiefs of the Quraish. The Holy Prophet replied, "Dear uncle: I shall request them to agree upon a thing which, if they accept, will enable them to conquer the whole of Arabia and subject the non-Arab world to their domination. "Hearing this the people were first confounded; they did not know how they should turn down such a proposal. Then, after they had considered the matter, they replied: "You speak of one word: we are prepared to repeat ten others like it, but please tell us what it is." The Holy Prophet said: *La ilaha ill-Allah*. At this they got up all together and left the place saying what Allah has narrated in the initial part of this Surah.

Ibn Sa'd in his *Tabaqat* has related this event just as cited above, but, according to him, this did not happen during Abu Talibs last illness but at the time when the Holy Prophet had started preaching Islam openly, and the news of the conversion of one person or the other was being heard almost daily in Makkah. In those days the Quraish chiefs had led several deputations to Abu Talib and had asked him to stop Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) from preaching his message, and it was with one of those deputations that this conversation had taken place.

Zamakhshari, Razi, Nisaburi ond some other commentators say that this deputation went to Abu Talib at the time then the chiefs of the Quraish had been upset at Hadrat Umar's embracing Islam; but no reference to its basis is available in any book of the traditions, nor have these commentators cited the source of their this information. However, if it be true, it is understand able. For the unbelieving Quraish had already been bewildered to see that the person who had arisen from among themselves with the message of Islam had no parallel in the entire tribe as regarded nobility, purity of character, wisdom and seriousness. Moreover, his right hand man and chief supporter was a man like Abu Bakr, who was well known in and around Makkah as a gentle, righteous and brilliant man. Now when they might have seen that a brave and resolute man like Umar also had joined them, they must have felt that the danger was growing and becoming intolerable.

Subject Matter and Topics

The Surah begins with a review of the aforesaid meeting. Making the dialogue between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers the basis, Allah says that the actual reason with those people for their denial is not any defect in the message of Islam but their own arrogance, jealousy and insistence on following the blind. They are not prepared to believe in a man from their own clan as a Prophet of God and follow him. They want to persist in the ideas of ignorance which they have found their ancestors following. And when a person exposes their this ignorance and presents the truth before them, they are alarmed and regard it as an oddity, rather as a novel and impossible thing. For them the concept of Tauhid and the Hereafter is not only an unacceptable creed but also a concept which only deserves to be ridiculed and mocked.

Then, Allah, both in the initial part of the Surah and in its last sentences, has precisely warned the disbelievers, as if to say, "The man whom you are ridiculing today and whose guidance you reject will soon overpower you,and the

time is not far when in this very city of Makkah, where you are persecuting him, he will overwhelm you completely."

Then describing nine of the Prophets, one after the other, with greater details of the story of the Prophets David and Solomon; Allah has emphasized the point that His Law of Justice is impartial and objective, that only the right attitude of man is acceptable to Him, that He calls to account and punishes every wrongdoer who. ever he be, and that He likes only those people who do not persist in wrongdoing but repent as soon as they are warned of it, and pass their life in the world keeping in mind their accountability in the Hereafter.

After this, the final end that the obedient servants and the disobedient people will meet in the Hereafter, has been depicted, and two things have been especially impressed on the disbelievers:(1) That the leaders and guides whom the ignorant people are following blindly in the world, on the way of deviation, will have reached Hell even before their followers in the Hereafter, and the two groups will be cursing each other there; and (2) that the disbelievers will be amazed to see that there is no trace whatever in Hell of the believers whom they used to regard as contemptible in the world and will themselves be involved in its torment.

In conclusion, mention has been made of the story of Adam and *Iblis* (Satan), which is meant to tell the disbelieving Quraish that the same arrogance and vanity which was preventing them from bowing before Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) had prevented *Iblis* also from bowing before Adam. *Iblis* felt jealous of the high rank God had given to Adam and became accursed when he disobeyed His Command. Likewise, "You, O people of Quraish, are feeling jealous of the high rank God has bestowed on Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and are not prepared to obey him whom God has appointed His messenger. Therefore, you will be doomed ultimately to the same fate as will be met by Satan."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

صٓ ۚ وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ذِى ٱلذِّكْرِ ﴿١﴾

بَلِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فِى عِزَّةٍ وَشِقَاقٍ ﴿٢﴾

كَمۡ أَهۡلَكۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِهِم مِّن قَرۡنٖ فَنَادَواْ وَّلَاتَ حِينَ مَنَاصٖ ٣

[1-3] Suad.[1] By the Qur'an which is full of admonition.[2] But the people who have disbelieved, are themselves involved in sheer arrogance and stubbornness.[3] How many a nation have we destroyed before them! (And when their doom approached) they cried out, but that was not the time of being saved.

وَعَجِبُوٓاْ أَن جَآءَهُم مُّنذِرٞ مِّنۡهُمۡۖ وَقَالَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ هَٰذَا سَٰحِرٞ كَذَّابٌ ٤

أَجَعَلَ ٱلۡأٓلِهَةَ إِلَٰهٗا وَٰحِدًاۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَيۡءٌ عُجَابٞ ٥

وَٱنطَلَقَ ٱلۡمَلَأُ مِنۡهُمۡ أَنِ ٱمۡشُواْ وَٱصۡبِرُواْ عَلَىٰٓ ءَالِهَتِكُمۡۖ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَشَيۡءٞ يُرَادُ ٦

مَا سَمِعۡنَا بِهَٰذَا فِي ٱلۡمِلَّةِ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا ٱخۡتِلَٰقٌ ٧

أَءُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلذِّكْرُ مِنۢ بَيْنِنَا ۖ بَلْ هُمْ فِى شَكٍّ مِّن ذِكْرِى ۖ بَل لَّمَّا يَذُوقُوا۟
عَذَابِ ﴿٨﴾

[4-8] These people wondered that a warner from among themselves has come to them.[4] The disbelievers began to say, "He is a sorcerer,[5] a liar! Has he made just One God in place of all the gods? This is indeed a strange thing!" And their chiefs went away,[6] saying, "Go and stand firm in the service of your gods; for this thing[7] is being said with a purpose.[8] We have not heard such a thing from anyone of the people of latter days.[9] This is nothing but a fabrication. Was he the only (fit) person among us to whom Allah's Admonition should have been sent down?"

أَمْ عِندَهُمْ خَزَآئِنُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْوَهَّابِ ﴿٩﴾

أَمْ لَهُم مُّلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ فَلْيَرْتَقُوا۟
فِى ٱلْأَسْبَٰبِ ﴿١٠﴾

[9-10] The fact of the matter is that they doubt My "Admonition",[10] and they say this because they have not yet tasted My punishment. Do they possess the treasures of the mercy of your Mighty and Bounteous Lord? Do they own the heavens and the earth and all that is between them? If so, let them climb up to the heights of the worldly means![11]

جُندٌ مَّا هُنَالِكَ مَهْزُومٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ ﴿١١﴾

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ ذُو ٱلْأَوْتَادِ ﴿١٢﴾

وَثَمُودُ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ وَأَصْحَٰبُ لْـَٔيْكَةِ ۖ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ ﴿١٣﴾

إِن كُلٌّ إِلَّا كَذَّبَ ٱلرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ عِقَابِ ﴿١٤﴾

وَمَا يَنظُرُ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً مَّا لَهَا مِن فَوَاقٍ ﴿١٥﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا عَجِّل لَّنَا قِطَّنَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿١٦﴾

[11-16] This is a small host from among the hosts, which shall be routed here.[12] Before them did the people of Noah and 'Ad and the Pharaoh of the stakes,[13] and Thamud, and the people of Lot and those of Aiykah reject (the Messengers). Hosts were they. Each one of them treated the Messengers as liars, and justly deserved the decree of My chastisement. These people too await but a single blast after which there will be no other blast![14] And they say; "Our Lord, hasten to us our share even before the Day of Reckoning."[15]

ٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَٱذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُۥدَ ذَا ٱلْأَيْدِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٧﴾

إِنَّا سَخَّرْنَا ٱلْجِبَالَ مَعَهُۥ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِٱلْعَشِىِّ وَٱلْإِشْرَاقِ ﴿١٨﴾

وَٱلطَّيْرَ مَحْشُورَةً ۖ كُلٌّ لَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٩﴾

وَشَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهُۥ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصْلَ ٱلْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٠﴾

۞ وَهَلْ أَتَىٰكَ نَبَؤُا۟ ٱلْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا۟ ٱلْمِحْرَابَ ﴿٢١﴾

إِذْ دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ دَاوُۥدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَا تَخَفْ ۖ خَصْمَانِ بَغَىٰ
بَعْضُنَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَا تُشْطِطْ وَٱهْدِنَآ إِلَىٰ سَوَآءِ
ٱلصِّرَٰطِ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِنَّ هَٰذَآ أَخِى لَهُۥ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَلِىَ نَعْجَةٌ
وَٰحِدَةٌ فَقَالَ أَكْفِلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِى فِى ٱلْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٣﴾

قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعْجَتِكَ إِلَىٰ نِعَاجِهِۦ ۖ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنَ ٱلْخُلَطَآءِ لَيَبْغِى بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ ۗ وَظَنَّ دَاوُۥدُ أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّٰهُ فَٱسْتَغْفَرَ
رَبَّهُۥ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ۩ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَغَفَرْنَا لَهُۥ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَإِنَّ لَهُۥ عِندَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

يَٰدَاوُۥدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَٰكَ خَلِيفَةً فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱحْكُم بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَقِّ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ
ٱللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌۢ بِمَا نَسُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٦﴾

[17-26] O Prophet,have patience at what they utter,[16] and tell them the story of Our servant David,[17] who was a man of great strength.[18] He turned to Allah in every matter. We had subdued for him the mountains, which joined with him in praise morning and evening. The birds would gather together: they all turned to his (hymns of) praise.[19] We had strengthened his kingdom, had given him wisdom and the ability to pronounce sound judgments.[20] Has the story of the litigants, who had entered into his upper chamber by climbing over the wall, reached you?[21] When they came before David, he was alarmed to see them.[22] They said, "Have no fear: we are two parties in a suit, one of which has wronged the other, so decide between us rightly: do not be unjust and guide us to the right way. This is my brother.[23] He has ninety-nine ewes and I have only one ewe. He said to me, `Give this ewe also in my charge, and he has prevailed over me in the dispute'."[24] David replied, "This person has certainly wronged you in demanding your ewe to be added to his ewes.[25] And the fact is that the people who live together often wrong one another; the only exception are those who believe and do good works, and they are few. " (While he said this) David realized that We had, in fact, tried him. So he asked forgiveness of his Lord and fell down prostrate and turned (to Him).[26] Then We forgave him for his error, and certainly he has a place of nearness with Us and an excellent abode![27] (We said:) "O

David, We have made you vicegerent in the earth, so rule among the people with justice and do not follow your lust, for it will lead you astray from Allah's Way." For those who go astray from Allah's Way, there is a severe punishment because they forgot the Day of Reckoning."[28]

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَٰطِلًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٧﴾

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَٱلْمُفْسِدِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ
نَجْعَلُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ كَٱلْفُجَّارِ ﴿٢٨﴾

كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ
﴿٢٩﴾

[27-29] We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in vain.[29] This is the fancy of those who have disbelieved, and woe to such disbelievers from the Fire of Hell. Should We treat those who believe and do good works like those who spread mischief in the earth? Should We treat the pious as the sinners?[30] This is a highly blessed Book,[31] which We have sent down to you (O Muhammad), so that these people may ponder over its verses and the men of understanding may learn lessons from it.

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُۥدَ سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ نِعْمَ ٱلْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

إِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِٱلْعَشِيِّ ٱلصَّٰفِنَٰتُ ٱلْجِيَادُ ﴿٣١﴾

فَقَالَ إِنِّيٓ أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ ٱلْخَيْرِ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّى حَتَّىٰ تَوَارَتْ بِٱلْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾

رُدُّوهَا عَلَىَّ ۖ فَطَفِقَ مَسْحًۢا بِٱلسُّوقِ وَٱلْأَعْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَٰنَ وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَىٰ كُرْسِيِّهِۦ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ ﴿٣٤﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَهَبْ لِى مُلْكًا لَّا يَنۢبَغِى لِأَحَدٍ مِّنۢ بَعْدِىٓ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْوَهَّابُ ﴿٣٥﴾

فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ ٱلرِّيحَ تَجْرِى بِأَمْرِهِۦ رُخَآءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَٱلشَّيَـٰطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّآءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَءَاخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾

هَـٰذَا عَطَآؤُنَا فَٱمْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَإِنَّ لَهُۥ عِندَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

[30-40] And to David We gave (a son like) Solomon,[32] an excellent servant, who turned to his Lord over and over again. Worthy of mention is the occasion when, one evening, well-bred horses were presented before him,[33] and he said, "I have adopted the love of this wealth[34] because of the remembrance of my Lord." So, when the horses disappeared from sight, (he commanded:) "Bring them back to me. " Then he began to stroke their shanks and necks.[35] And (note that) We put Solomon too to the test and placed a mere body on his throne. Then he turned (to Allah), and said, "My Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom as may belong to no one else after me. Indeed, Thou art the real Giver."[36] So, We subdued to him the wind, which blew gently at his bidding wherever he directed it.[37] And We subjected to him the satans: all kinds of builders and divers and others who were bound in chains.[38] (We said to him:) "This is Our gift: you may give to whomsoever you will and withhold from whomsoever you will, without reckoning."[39] Surely, he has a place of nearness to Us and an excellent resort.[40]

وَٱذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَآ أَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَسَّنِىَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ ﴿٤١﴾

ٱرۡكُضۡ بِرِجۡلِكَۖ هَٰذَا مُغۡتَسَلُۢ بَارِدٞ وَشَرَابٞ ٤٢

وَوَهَبۡنَا لَهُۥٓ أَهۡلَهُۥ وَمِثۡلَهُم مَّعَهُمۡ رَحۡمَةٗ مِّنَّا وَذِكۡرَىٰ لِأُوْلِي ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِ ٤٣

وَخُذۡ بِيَدِكَ ضِغۡثٗا فَٱضۡرِب بِّهِۦ وَلَا تَحۡنَثۡۗ إِنَّا وَجَدۡنَٰهُ صَابِرٗاۚ نِّعۡمَ ٱلۡعَبۡدُۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٞ ٤٤

[41-44] And make mention of Our servant Job[41] when he called upon his Lord, (saying), "Satan has afflicted me with great distress and torment."[42] (We commanded him:) "Stamp your foot on the ground: this is cool water for washing and drinking."[43] We restored to him his family and as many more with them,[44] as a mercy from Ourself, and an admonition for the men of understanding.[45] (And We said to him:) "Take a handful of straw and strike therewith: do not break your oath."[46] We found him patient, an excellent servant, who turned to his Lord over and over again.[47]

وَٱذۡكُرۡ عِبَٰدَنَآ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ أُوْلِي ٱلۡأَيۡدِي وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرِ ٤٥

إِنَّآ أَخۡلَصۡنَٰهُم بِخَالِصَةٖ ذِكۡرَى ٱلدَّارِ ٤٦

وَإِنَّهُمۡ عِندَنَا لَمِنَ ٱلۡمُصۡطَفَيۡنَ ٱلۡأَخۡيَارِ ٤٧

وَٱذۡكُرۡ إِسۡمَٰعِيلَ وَٱلۡيَسَعَ وَذَا ٱلۡكِفۡلِۖ وَكُلّٞ مِّنَ ٱلۡأَخۡيَارِ ٤٨

[45-48] And make mention of Our servants, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob: they were men of great power and insight.[48] We had chosen them because of a pure quality the remembrance of the abode of the Hereafter.[49] Indeed, they are, in Our sight, included among the chosen, the righteous. And make mention of Ishmael and Elisha[50] and Dhul-Kifl.[51] they were all of the righteous.

هَٰذَا ذِكۡرٞۚ وَإِنَّ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسۡنَ مَـَٔابٖ ٤٩

جَنَّٰتِ عَدۡنٖ مُّفَتَّحَةٗ لَّهُمُ ٱلۡأَبۡوَٰبُ ٥٠

مُتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا يَدۡعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَٰكِهَةٖ كَثِيرَةٖ وَشَرَابٖ ٥١

۞وَعِندَهُمۡ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرۡفِ أَتۡرَابٌ ٥٢

هَٰذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِيَوۡمِ ٱلۡحِسَابِ ٥٣

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَرِزۡقُنَا مَا لَهُۥ مِن نَّفَادٖ ٥٤

[49-54] This was an admonition. (Now listen:) for the righteous there is indeed an excellent resort: everlasting Gardens whose gates shall remain open to them.[52] Therein they shall be reclining, calling for plentiful of fruit and drink, and beside them there will be modest wives of equal age.[53] These are the things which you are being promised for the Day of Reckoning. This is Our provision. It will never come to an end.

هَٰذَا ۚ وَإِنَّ لِلطَّٰغِينَ لَشَرَّ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿٥٦﴾

هَٰذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَّاقٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَءَاخَرُ مِن شَكْلِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

هَٰذَا فَوْجٌ مُّقْتَحِمٌ مَّعَكُمْ ۖ لَا مَرْحَبًۢا بِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ صَالُوا۟ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٥٩﴾

قَالُوا۟ بَلْ أَنتُمْ لَا مَرْحَبًۢا بِكُمْ ۖ أَنتُمْ قَدَّمْتُمُوهُ لَنَا ۖ فَبِئْسَ ٱلْقَرَارُ ﴿٦٠﴾

[55-60] This is (the recompense) for the righteous. And for the rebellious, there is a most evil home-Hell in which they will burn, the worst abode! This is for them: so let them taste boiling water and pus blood[54] and other things of the same sort. (When they see their followers coming towards Hell, they will say to one another:) "This is a host coming in to you: there is no welcome for them: they will burn in the Fire." They will reply, "Nay, but you yourselves are burning: there is no welcome for you (either): it is you who have brought us to this end. What an evil resting-

place!"

قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا مَن قَدَّمَ لَنَا هَٰذَا فَزِدْهُ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا فِى ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٦١﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ مَا لَنَا لَا نَرَىٰ رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَشْرَارِ ﴿٦٢﴾

أَتَّخَذْنَٰهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا أَمْ زَاغَتْ عَنْهُمُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ ﴿٦٣﴾

إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَحَقٌّ تَخَاصُمُ أَهْلِ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٦٤﴾

[61-64] Then they will say, "Our Lord, give him who has brought this fate on us a double punishment in Hell." And they will say to one another, "How is it that we do not see those whom we regarded as bad people in the world?[55] Did we treat them as such in ridicule, or are they hidden from sight?" Indeed, this is the Truth! Such will be the disputes among the dwellers of Hell.

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ مُنذِرٌ ۖ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ٱلْوَٰحِدُ ٱلْقَهَّارُ ﴿٦٥﴾

رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْغَفَّارُ ﴿٦٦﴾

قُلْ هُوَ نَبَؤٌا عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾

أَنتُمْ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

[65-68] (O Prophet,)[56] say to them, "I am only a warner.[57] There is no real god but Allah, the One, the All-Mighty, Lord of the heavens and the earth and of all that is between them, the Mighty, the Forgiving." Say to them, "This is a great News from which you turn away."[58]

مَا كَانَ لِيَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ بِالْمَلَإِ الْأَعْلَىٰ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

إِن يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ إِلَّا أَنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِّن طِينٍ ﴿٧١﴾

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

إِلَّآ إِبۡلِيسَ ٱسۡتَكۡبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

قَالَ يَٰٓإِبۡلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسۡجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقۡتُ بِيَدَيَّۖ أَسۡتَكۡبَرۡتَ أَمۡ كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلۡعَالِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

قَالَ أَنَا۠ خَيۡرٞ مِّنۡهُۖ خَلَقۡتَنِي مِن نَّارٖ وَخَلَقۡتَهُۥ مِن طِينٖ ﴿٧٦﴾

قَالَ فَٱخۡرُجۡ مِنۡهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٞ ﴿٧٧﴾

وَإِنَّ عَلَيۡكَ لَعۡنَتِيٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٧٨﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنظِرۡنِيٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ يُبۡعَثُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُنظَرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡوَقۡتِ ٱلۡمَعۡلُومِ ﴿٨١﴾

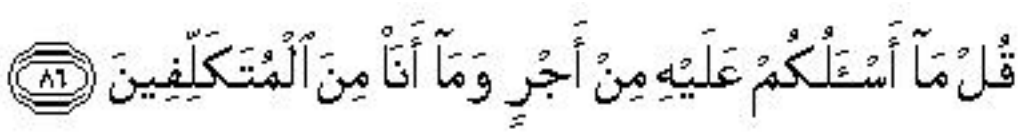
قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغۡوِيَنَّهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

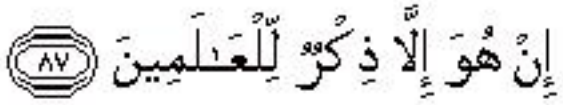
إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنۡهُمُ ٱلۡمُخۡلَصِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

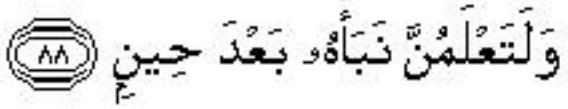
قَالَ فَٱلۡحَقُّ وَٱلۡحَقَّ أَقُولُ ﴿٨٤﴾

لَأَمۡلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنكَ وَمِمَّن تَبِعَكَ مِنۡهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[69-85] (Say to them,) "I had no knowledge of the time when the exalted ones were disputing among themselves. I am informed of all this by revelation because I am an open warner." When your Lord said to the angels,[59] "I am about to create man from clay.[60] Then, when I have fashioned him duly, and have breathed into him of My Spirit,[61] prostrate yourselves before him."[62] Accordingly, the angels prostrated themselves, all in obedience, but Iblis assumed arrogance, and became one of the disbelievers.[63] The Lord said, "O Iblis, what has prevented you from prostrating yourself before him whom I have made with both My hands?[64] Are you assuming arrogance, or are you one of the high ones?" He replied, "I am better than he: You have created me from fire and him from clay." (The Lord) said: "Then get you gone from here.[65] You are accursed,[66] and My curse shall be on you till the Day of Judgment."[67] He said, "My Lord, if so, then give me respite till the time when these people shall be raised (back to life)." (The Lord) said: "Well, you are given respite till the Day of appointed time." He said, "By Thy Honor! I shall certainly lead them astray except those of Thy servants whom Thou hast chosen."[68] (The Lord) said, "The truth is this, and the truth only I speak, that I shall fill Hell with you[69] and with all those who follow you from among mankind."[70]







[86-88] (O Prophet,) say to them, "I do not ask any recompense of you for this message,[71] nor am I an impostor.[72] This is only an admonition for all the people of the world, and after a while you shall yourself come to know all about it."[73]

1Although like all other enigmatic letters (mugatta'at) it is difficult to determine the meaning of the letter Suad also, yet the interpretation of it given by Ibn 'Abbas and Dahhak is quite plausible. According to them, it implies: Sadiq-un fi' qauli-hi, or Sadaqa Muhammad-un: Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is Truthful: whatever he says is the very Truth.

2The words dhi-dh-dhikr of the Text can have two meanings: (1) Dhi sharaf: the noble Qur'an; and (2) Dhi at-tadhkir: the Qur'an which is full of admonition, or the Qur'an which serves as a reminder, or arouses a heedless person.

3If the interpretation given of suad by Ibn 'Abbas and Dahhak is accepted, the sentence would mean this: "By this noble Qur'an, or by this Qur'an which is full of admonition, Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is presenting the Truth, but the people who persist in their denial, are in fact, involved in arrogance and stubbornness." And if suad is taken as one of those enigmatic letters whose meaning cannot be determined, then the answer to the oath is omitted, which is indicated by "but" and the sentence following it. The meaning then would be: "The reason for the denial of these disbelievers is not that the religion which is being presented before them is unsound, or that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) has shown some slackness in the matter of presenting the Truth before them, but their own boasting and bragging, their haughtiness and stubbornness, and this is borne out by this Qur'an itself, which is full of admonition. Every unbiased person who studies it will admit that fill justice has been done in it to the task of making the people understand the Truth.

4That is, "They are so foolish that when a man from their own kind and from their own clan and brotherhood, whom they knew fully well, was appointed to warn them, they wondered at it, whereas it would have been strange if some other kind of creature had been sent down from heaven to warn human beings, or an utter stranger had arisen among them suddenly and started functioning as a prophet. In that case they would have been perfectly justified to say, "What an odd thing! How can this strange creature know our conditions and feelings and requirements that he should guide us? How can we test and find out the truth about the stranger who has suddenly arisen among us and know whether he is trustworthy or not? And how can we decide whether we should or should not believe in him when we have not judged and seen his character and personality?"

5The disbelievers used the word sahir (sorcerer, magician) for the Holy Prophet in the sense that whoever came in contact with him was so influenced by him that he would become his follower like a possessed person; he would least mind severing of his connections with others or incurring material losses; the father would give up the son and the son the father; the wife would separate from the husband and the husband from the wife; he would at once be prepared to leave his country if it was so required; he would even be ready to pass through the severest persecutions for the sake of the faith. (For further details, see Surah Al Anbiya' : 3 and E. N . 5 thereof).

6The allusion is to the chiefs who got up and left Abu Talib when they had heard what the Holy Prophet said.

7"This thing" : the Holy Prophet's asking them to affirm faith in "La ilaha ill-Allah " so as to overpower both Arabia and the adjoining lands.

8What they meant to say was this: "Muhammad has some vested interests: He is extending this invitation to us in order to subjugate us and rule us as his subjects."

9That is, "There have been our own elderly people in the recent past; there arc Christians and Jews also living in our land and in the adjoining lands; and there arc the Zoroastrians abounding in Iran and Iraq and eastern Arabia. None of them has ever preached that man should only believe in One Allah, Lord of the worlds, and in none else beside Him: no one can remain content with one God only: everyone believes in the beloved ones of Allah also: they arc All paying obeisance to them, making offerings at their shrines and praying for fulfillment of their needs and requirements. From one place people get children and from another provisions of life, and from yet another whatever they. pray for. The whole world believes in their powers and capabilities, and those who have benefited from them tell how the needs of the people are being met and their difficulties being removed through their help and grace. Now this man is telling us a queer thing which we had never heard before. He says that none of these holy men has any share in Godhead and that Godhead wholly belongs only to Allah!"

10In other words Allah says: " Muhammad, these people are not belying you but Me. As for your truthfulness, they had never doubted it before; now that they are doubting it, it is because of My Admonition; now that I have entrusted to you the Mission of admonishing them, they have started doubting the truthfulness of the very person whose righteousness and piety they used to swear by " The same theme has also been discussed above in Al-An'am: 33 and E.N. 21 thereof.

11This is an answer to this saying of the disbelievers "Was he the only (fit) person among us to whom Allah's Admonition should have lien sent down?' Allah says: "it is for Us to decide whom We should choose and appoint as a Prophet and whom We should not. These people do not possess any power and authority to exercise choice in this regard. If they wish to attain such an authority they should try to reach the Divine Throne in order to obtain control over the office of sovereignty of the Universe, so that revelation should come down on him whom they regard as deserving their mercy and not on him whom We regard as fit for it. "This theme has occurred at several places in the Qur'an, because the unbelieving Quraish again and again said, `How did Muhammad (upon whom be Allah' peace) become a Prophet? Did Allah find no better man among the principal leaders of the Quraish worthy of this office?"(See Surah Bani Isra'il: . 00; Az-Zukhruf: 31-32).

12"Here" implies the city of Makkah. That is, `The time is coming when these people shall be humbled and routed in the very place where they are opposing and mocking you., Then, they will be standing, with heads hung down, before the same man whom they despise and refuse to recognize as a Prophet of Allah."

13The use of dhil-autad (of the stakes) for Pharaoh is either in the sense that his kingdom was very strong as though a stake were firmly driven into the ground, or for the reason that wherever his large armies camped, pegs of the tents were seen driven into the ground on every side, or because he would torture and punish at the stakes anyone with whom he was angry; and possibly the stakes may imply the pyramids of Egypt which seem to be driven into the earth like the stakes.

14That is, `Only a single blast of the torment will be enough to annihilate them; no other will be needed for the purpose." Another meaning of the sentence can be: "After this they will get no more relief and no more respite. "

15That is, Allah's torment will be so severe and terrible as mentioned above, but just consider the behavior of these foolish people: they are telling the Prophet. mockingly: `Do not put off our affairs till the Day of Reckoning with which you are threatening us, but settle our account just now: whatever punishment is to be inflicted on us should be inflicted immediately.

16The allusion is to the absurd conversation of the disbelievers of Makkah, as narrated above, to the effect that the Holy Prophet was a sorcerer and a liar, and to their objection whether he was the only fit

person in the sight of Allah to be appointed as a Messenger, and to their some accusation that he had vested interest in preaching the doctrine of Tauhid to the people and not any religious mission.

17Another translation of this sentence can be: `Remember Our servant David." According to the first translation, it would mean: "There is a lesson in this story for these people," and according to the second: "The remembrance of this story will help you too, to have patience. " As the narrative is meant to serve both purposes, comprehensive words have been used as contain both meanings. (For the story of the prophet David, see Al-Baqarah :251, Bani Isra'il: 55, Al Anbiya': 78-81, An-Naml: 15 and the E.N.'s thereof; and E.N.'s 14 to 16 of Saba).

18The words in the original are: dhal-ayd (possessor of the hands). The word "hand" is used metaphorically for strength and power not only in Arabic but in other languages also. When as an attribute of the Prophet David it is said that he was a "possessor of the hands", it will necessarily mean that he possessed great powers. These powers may mean the physical strength which he displayed during his combat against Goliath, military and political power by which he crushed the neighboring idolatrous nations and established a strong Islamic empire, moral strength by which he ruled like a poor king and always feared Allah and observed the bounds set by Him, and the power of worship by virtue of which, besides his occupations in connection with rule and government and fighting in the cause of Allah, he fasted every alternate day and spent a third of the night in worship according to a tradition of Bukhari. Imam Bukhari in his History has related, on the authority of Hadrat Abu ad-Darda', that whenever the Prophet David was mentioned, the Holy Prophet used to say: "He was the greatest worshiper of God. "

19For explanation, see Surah Al-Anbiya' :79 and E.N. 71 thereof.

20That is, "He was never ambiguous in speech but clear and forthright. Whatever problem he talked about he would lay bare its basic points, and would clearly and precisely determine the real issue under question, and would pass a decisive judgment. " This quality is not attained by a person unless he is granted wisdom, understanding and mastery of language of the highest degree.

21The object why the Prophet David has been mentioned here is to relate the story that begins from here; the object of mentioning his sterling qualities in the introduction was only to point out the high caliber of the Prophet David with whom this incident took place.

22He was alarmed because the two men had appeared in the private quarters of the ruler of the land suddenly, by climbing over the wall, instead of going before him by the proper entrance.

23"Brother" does not mean a real brother but a brother-in-faith and a member of one's own clan.

24To understand what follows one should note that the complainant did not say that the other person had

taken away his only ewe and added it to his own ewes, but said that he was asking for it, and since he was a powerful person he had prevailed over him in the matter and he could not reject his demand, being a weak and poor man.

25Here, one should not doubt that the Prophet David gave his decision after hearing only what one party had to say. The fact of the matter, is that when the respondent kept quiet at the complaint of the complainant and said nothing in defense it by itself amounted to a confession by him. That is why the Prophet David came to the conclusion that the facts of the case were the same as the complainant had stated.

26There is a difference of opinion as to whether it is obligatory to perform a sajdah (prostration) on this occasion or not. Imam Shafe'i says that it is not obligatory, for this is only a Prophet' tepentance; but Imam Abu Hanifah has opined that prostration here is obligatory. The traditionalists have related three traditions from Ibn- 'Abbas in this regard. According to 'Ikrimah, Ibn 'Abbas said: "this is not one of those verses on the recitation of which prostration is obligatory, but I have seen the Holy Prophet prostrating himself on this occasion. "(Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, NASa'I, Musnad Ahmad). The second tradition which Said bin Jubair has related froth Ibn 'Abbas is to the effect: 'The Holy Prophet prostrated himself in Surah Suad and said: 'The Prophet David (on whom be peace) had prostrated himself in order to express his repentance and we prostrate ourselves as a token of gratitude, because his repentance was accepted. (Nasa'i) In the third tradition that Mujahid has related from him, he says: "Allah has commanded the Holy Prophet, in the Qur'an: "These were the ones whom Allah had shown the Right Way: therefore, you should follow their way'." (AI-An'am: 90). Now, since David was a Prophet and he had prostrated himself on this occasion, the Holy Prophet also prostrated himself here only to follow his way. (Bukhari). These three arc the statements of Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas: and Hadrat Abu Sa' id Khudri says: "The Holy Prophet once recited Surah Suad in his address, and when he came to this verse, he descended from the pulpit and performed a prostration and the audience also did the same along with him. Then, on another occasion, he recited this same Surah and when the people heard this verse, they were ready to perform the prostration. The Holy Prophet said 'This is the repentance of a Prophet, but I see that you have got ready to perform the prostration' --Saying this he descended from the pulpit and prostrated himself and the people also did the same." (Abu Da'ud). Although these traditions do not provide any absolute argument to prove that it is obligatory to perform the prostration here, yet they prove at least that because the Holy Prophet generally performed a prostration on this occasion, it is in any case commendable to prostrate here.

Another thing that one notices in this verse is that Allah has used the words kharra raki'an (fell in ruku') here, but All the commentators arc agreed that this implies kharra sajid-an (fell in sajdah: prostration). On this very basis, Imam Abu Hanifah and his companions have expressed the opinion that one may perform only a ruku' instead of a sajdah, when one recites or hears being recited a verse requiring a sajdah in the Prayer or outside it. For when Allah has used the word ruku' to imply sajdah, it becomes obvious that ruku' can represent sajdah. Imam Khattabi, a Shafe'ite jurist, also holds the same opinion, Though this

opinion in itself is sound and reasonable, we do not find any precedent in the practices of the Holy Prophet and his Companions that they might have been content with performing a ruku' only instead of a sajdah on a verse requiring a sajdah. Therefore, one should act upon the view only when there is an obstruction in performing the sajdah; it would be wrong to make it a practice, Imam Abu Hanifah and his companions themselves also did not intend that it should be made a practice; they only ruled that it was permissible.

27This shows that the Prophet David had certainly committed an error, and it was an error which bore some resemblance with the case of the ewes. Therefore, when he gave a decision on it, he at once realized that he was being put to the test. But the nature of the error was not such as could be forgiven, or if forgiven, it would have deposed him from his high rank. Allah Himself says: "When he fell down prostrate and repented, he was not only forgiven but his high rank in the world and the Hereafter also remained unaffected.

28This is the warning that Allah gave the Prophet David on accepting his repentance along with giving him the good news of exalting his rank. This by itself shows that the error that he had committed contained an clement of the desires of the flesh; it also pertained to the abuse of power and authority; and it was an act which was unworthy of a just and fair-minded ruler.

We are confronted with three questions here:

(1) What was the error that the Prophet David committed?

(2) Why has Allah made only tacit allusions to it instead of mentioning it openly and directly?

(3) What is its relevance to the present context?

The people who have studied the Bible (the Holy Book of the Jews and Christians) are not unaware that in this Book the Prophet David has been accused clearly of committing adultery with the wife of Uriah the Hittite and then marrying her after having Uriah intentionally slain in a battle. It has also been alleged that this same woman, who had surrendered herself to the Prophet David, while being another man's wife, was the mother of the Prophet Solomon. This story is found with all its details in chapters 11 and 12 of the Second Book of Samuel in the Old Testament. It had been included in it centuries before the revelation of the Qur'an. Any Jew or Christian who read his Holy Book anywhere in the world, or heard it read, was not only aware of this story but also believed in it as true. It spread through them, and even in the present time no book is written in the West on the history of the Israelites and the Hebrew religion, in which this charge against the Prophet David is not repeated. This well known story also contains the following:

And the Lord sent Nathan onto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in

one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe Iamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there Came a traveler Unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man' Iamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; And I gavc thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon." (2 Samuel, ch 12: 1-9).

When this story was so well known among the people there was no need that a detailed account of it should have been given in the Qur'an, nor is it the way of Allah to mention such things openly in His Holy Book. That is why only tacit allusions have been made to it here as well as pointed out what the actual event was and what the people of the Book have turned it into. The actual event as one clearly understands from the aforesaid statement of the Qur'an was:

The Prophet David peace be upon him) had only expressed this desire before Uriah (or whatever be the name of the man) that he should divorce his wife; as this desire had been expressed not by a common man but by an illustrious king and a great Prophet before a member of the public, the man was finding himself constrained to yield to it even in the absence of any compulsion. On this occasion, before the man could act as the Prophet David had desired, two righteous men of the nation suddenly made their appearance before David and presented before him this matter in the form of an imaginary case. At first, the Prophet David thought it was a real case, and so gave his decision after hearing it. But as soon as he uttered the words of the decision, his conscience gave the warning that the parable precisely applied to the case between him and the person, and that the act which he was describing as an injustice had issued forth from his own person. As soon as he realized this, he fell down prostrate, repented and reversed his decision. "

The question, as to how this event took the ugly shape as related in the Bible, also becomes obvious after a little consideration. It appears that the Prophet David had come to know of the unique qualities of the woman through some means and had started thinking that she should be the queen of the country instead of being the wife of an ordinary officer, Overwhelmed by the thought he expressed the desire before her husband that he should divorce her. He did not see any harm in it because it was not looked upon as anything improper among the Israelites. It was an ordinary thing among them that if a person

happened to like the wife of another, he would freely request him to give her up for him. Nobody minded such a request, and often it so happened that friends would divorce their wives for each other's sake of their own accord, so that the other may marry her. However, when the Prophet David expressed this desire, he did not realize that the expression of such a desire could be without compulsion and coercion when expressed by a common Man, but it could never be so when expressed by a king. When his attention was drawn to this aspect of the matter through a parable, he gave up his desire immediately, and the thing was forgotten. But afterwards when, without any desire or planning on his part, the woman's husband fell martyr on the battlefield, and he married her, the evil genius of the Jews started concocting stories and this mischievous mentality became even more acute after a section of the Israelites turned hostile to the Prophet . Solomon. (Please see E. N . 56 of An-Naml). Under these motives the story was invented that the Prophet David, God forbid, had seen Uriah's wife washing herself from the roof of his palace. He had her called to his house and committed adultery with her and she had conceived. Then he had sent Uriah on the battle-front to fight the children of Ammon, and had commanded Joab, the army commander, to appoint him in the forefront of the battle where he should be killed. And when he was killed, he married his widow, and from the same woman the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) was born. The wicked people described all these false accusations in their "Holy Book", so that they should go on reading it generation after generation and slandering the two most illustrious men of their community, who were their greatest benefactors after the Prophet Moses.

A section of the commentators of the Qur'an has almost entirely accepted these tales that have reached them through the Israelites. They have dropped only that pan of these traditions in which mention has been made of the accusation of adultery against the Prophet David and the woman's having conceived. The rest of the story. as found in the traditions reproduced by them is the same as it was well known among the Israelites. Another group of the commentators has altogether denied that any such act was ever committed by the Prophet David, which bore any resemblance with the case of the ewes. Instead of this, they have put forward such interpretations of this story as are wholly baseless, unauthentic and without relevance to the context of the Qur'an itself. But among the Muslim commentators themselves there are some who have accepted the truth and the facts of the story through the clear references made to it in the Qur'an. Here are, for instance, some of their views:

Both Masruq and Said bin Jubair have related this saying of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'abbas. "The only thing that the Prophet David did was that he expressed his desire before the woman' husband that he should give up his wife for him. " lbn Jarir).

'Allama Zamakhshari writes in his commentary Al-Kashshaf. 'The way Allah has narrated the story of the Prophet David indicates that he had only expressed his desire before the man that he should leave his wife for him. "

'Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas has expressed the opinion that the woman was not the other man's wedded wife but was only his betrothed. The Prophet David had also asked for the same woman's hand in

marriage. This earned him Allah's displeasure, for he had asked for her hand in spite of the fact that another Muslim had already asked for her hand, and the Prophet David had several wives already with him in his house. (Ahkam al-Qur an). Some other commentators also have expressed the same opinion, but this does not entirely conform to what the Qur'an has said. The words of the suitor as related in the Qur'an are to the effect: "I have only one ewe; he says: Give this ewe also in my charge." The Prophet David also said the same thing in his decision: "This person has certainly wronged you in demanding your ewe to be added to his ewes." This parable could apply to the case between the Prophet David and Uriah only in case the woman was the latter's wife. Had it been the cast of asking for the woman's hand when another Muslim had already asked for her hand, the parable would have been like this: "I desired to have an ewe, ard this man said: Icave this also for me."

Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabi has discussed this question in detail in his Ahkam al-Qur an and concluded: "What actually happened was just that the Prophet David asked one of his men to leave his wife for him and made this demand seriously ...The Qur'an does not say that the man gave up his wife on this demand and the Prophet David then married her and the Prophet Solomon was born of her womb . . . W hat displeased Allah was that he asked the woman's husband to leave her for him. This act, even if otherwise lawful, was unworthy of the office of Prophethood; that is why he earned Allah's displeasure and was admonished. "

This commentary fits in well with the context in which this story has been told. A little consideration of the context shows that it has been related in the Qur'an on this occasion for two objects. The first object is to exhort the Holy Prophet to patience, and for this purpose he has been addressed and told: ¦Have patience on what these people say against you, and remember Our servant David." That is, 'You are being accused only of sorcery and lying, but Our servant David was even accused of adultery and having a person killed willfully, by the wicked people: therefore, bear up against what you may have to hear from these people." The other object is to warn the disbelievers to the effect: ¦You are committing all sorts of excesses in the world with impunity, but the God in Whose Godhead you are committing these misdeeds does not spare anyone from being called to account. Even if a favorite and beloved servant of His happens to commit but a minor error, He calls him to strict accountability. For this very object the Holy Prophet has been asked: 'Tell them the story of Our servant David, who was a man of high character, but when he happened to commit sin, We did not even spare him but condemned him severely' . "

In this regard, there is another misunderstanding which mast also be removed. The suitor in his parable said that his brother had 99 ewes and he had only one ewe, which he was demanding from him. From this one gets the idea that perhaps the Prophet David had 99 wives, and by having another he wanted to make their number 100. But, in fact, it is not necessary that every minor part of the parable should be literally applicable to the case between the Prophet David and Uriah the Hittite. In common idiom the numbers ten, twenty, fifty, etc. are mentioned to express plurality and not to indicate the exact number of something. When a man tells another that he has told him something ten times over, he only means to stress that he has been told that thing over and over again. The same is also true here. By means of the

parable the suitor wanted the Prophet David to realize that he already had several wives with him, and even then he desired to have the only wife of the other man. This same thing has been cited by the commentator Nisaburi from Hadrat Hasan Basri: `The Prophet David did not have 99 wives: this is only a parable." (For a detailed and well-reasoned discussion of this story, see our book Tafhimat, vol. II, pp. 29.44).

29That is, "We have not created anything in the world merely in sport and fun so that it may be without any wisdom and purpose and justice, and there may acme no result from any act, good or bad." This is the conclusion of the preceding discourse as well as an introduction to the following theme. The object of this statement as a conclusion to the discourse is to impress the following truth: ¦Man has not been left to wander about at will in the world, nor is this world a lawless kingdom that one may do here whatever one likes with impunity." As an introduction to the following theme, the sentence is meant to say: "The person who does not believe in the meting out of the rewards and punishments, and thinks that both the good and the evil people will ultimately end up in the dust after death and that nobody will be called to account, nor will anyone be rewarded for good or punished for evil, in fact, regards the world as a plaything and its Creator a senseless player, and thinks that by creating the world and man in it, the Creator of the Universe has committed a useless thing. The same thing has been stated in different ways at several places in the Qur'an, e.g. ¦Did you think that We created you without any purpose, and that you would never be brought back to Us?" (AI-Mu'minun: 115).

"We have not created the heavens and the earth and whatever lies between them merely in sport: We have created them with the truth, but most of them do not know. For the resurrection of them all the appointed time is the Day of Decision." (Ad-Dukhan: 38-40).

30That is, "Do you think it is reasonable and fair that both the pious and the wicked should be treated alike in the end? Do you regard this concept as satisfying that the pious man should not get any reward for his piety and the wrongdoer should not receive any punishment for his sins? Obviously, if there is to be no Hereafter, and there is to be no accountability and no rewards and no punishments for human acts, it negates both Allah's wisdom and His justice, and the entire order of the Universe becomes a blind order. On this assumption there remains no motive for doing good and no deterrent against evil. God forbid, if the Godhead of God should be such a lawless kingdom, the one who leads a pious lift in the face of all kinds of hardships in the world and endeavors to reform the people, would be a foolish person, and the one who gains benefits by committing All kinds of excesses and enjoys sinful pleasures of life, would be a wise man."

31The Qur'an has been called a blessed Book in the sense that it is highly useful for man: it gives him the best guidance to improve and reform his life: by following it he has only to gain and nothing to lose.

32The Prophet Solomon has been mentioned already at the followings places: AI-Baqarah: 102, Bani Isra'il: 5, AI-Anbiya': 78-82, An-Naml: 15-44, Saba: 12-14.

33The words as-sefinat-ul- jiyad in the original imply the horses, which are very calm and quiet when they stand, and very fast-moving when they run.

34The Arabic word khair in the Text is used for abundance of wealth as well as for horses metaphorically. As the Prophet Solomon had kept these horses for fighting in the way of Allah, he called them "khair".

35There is a difference of opinion among the commentators about the translation and commentary of these verses.

One section of them interprets them as follows:

The Prophet Solomon became so absorbed in reviewing the horses and watching their races, that he forgot to offer his 'Asr Prayer, or according to some others, to perform certain devotions that he used to perform before the sunset. Then when the sun went down, he commanded that the horses be brought back, and when they came back, the Prophet Solomon started slashing them with the sword, or in other words, slaughtering them as a sacrifice to Allah, because they had caused him to become heedless of the remembrance of Allah. Accordingly, the verses have been translated thus: "And he :aid: I so preferred the love of this wealth that I became heedless of the remembrance (the 'Asr Prayer, or the special devotions) of my Lord till (the sun) went down (behind the veil of the west). (Then he commanded :) bring them back, (and when the horses came back) he began to stroke their shanks and necks (with the sword)." Although this commentary has been given by some major commentators, it is not plausible for the reason that in this the commentator has to add three things from himself, which have no basis whatever. In the first place, he has to assume that the Prophet Solomon's 'Asr Prayer was lost in the occupation, or some special devotions that he used to perform at that time, whereas the words of the Qur'an are only to the effect: "I so preferred this wealth that I became heedless of the remembrance of my Lord. " In these there is no ground for taking any word for the `Asr Prayer or the special devotions. Secondly, he also assumes that the sun set where as there is no mention of the sun whatever. On the contrary, when one reads the words hatta tawarar bil-hijab (when they disappeared from sight) one's mind automatically turns to as-safinat ul jiyad (well-bred horses) which have been mentioned in the preceding verse. Thirdly, he also has to assume that the Prophet Solomon did not simply stroke the shins and necks of the horses with the hand but stroked them with the sword, whereas the Qur'an does not contain the words mashan-bis-saif or any other pointer from which stroking may be taken to mean stroking with the sword. We have a fundamental difference with this kind of the commentary. In our opinion, only in four cases it would be right to interpret the words of the Qur'an in other than their normally accepted meaning: (1) Either there should be a pointer to it in the words of the Qur'an itself; or (2) there should be an allusion to it at some other place in the Qur'an; or (3) an explanation of it should be afforded by some authentic Hadith; or (4) it should have some other reliable source, e.g., if it pertains to history, there should be an historical evidence to support it; if it pertains to the manifestations of the universe,

there should be authentic scientific knowledge to substantiate it; and if it pertains to the Shari'ah values, the sources of Islamic law should explain it. In the absence of any of these, we do not think it is right to invent a story on the basis of one's own imagination and add it to the words of the Qur'an.

One section of the commentators has differed a little from the about translation and commentary. They say that the pronoun in both hatta tawarat bil-hijab and ruddu-ha 'alayya turns only to the sun. That Is, when the `Asr Prayer was lost and the sun went down behind the veil of the west, the Prophet Solomon said to the workers of destiny: "Turn the sun back so that the `Asr time comes back for me to offer the Prayer." So, the sun retreated and he performed his Prayer. Hut this commentary is even more unacceptable than the previously mentioned one not because Allah is powerless to bring the sun back, but because Allah has made no mention of it anywhere. On the contrary, if such a wonderful miracle had actually been worked for the sake of the Prophet Solomon, it would certainly be worthy of mention. Moreover, if the extraordinary event of the returning of the sun after having set had actually taken place; the history of the would would never be without it. In support of this commentary these commentators _present some Ahadith also in order to prove that the returning of the sun after having set is not a rare event that happened only once, but it has happened several times. There is the mention of bringing the sun back in connection with the Holy Prophet's Ascension (mi'raj); the sun was also brought back on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench for the Holy Prophet, and also for Hadrat `Ali, when the Holy Prophet was sleeping with his head in Hadrat Ali's lap and his 'Asr Prayer was lost: then the Holy Prophet had prayed for the return of the sun and it had returned. But the reasoning from these traditions is even weaker than the commentary in support of which they have been presented. Ibn Taimiyyah has proved as fabricated the tradition about Hadrat `Ali after a detailed discussion of its chains and transmitters. Imam Ahmad says it has no basis, and Ibn Jauzi says that it is without any doubt a forged tradition. The tradition of the sun's being brought back on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench also is weak according to some traditionalists and fabricated according to others. As far as the tradition regarding the event of the Ascension is concerned, the truth about it is that when, the Holy Prophet was describing what had happened in the Night of Ascension, before the disbelievers of Makkah, they asked for a proof of it. The Holy Prophet replied that on the way from Jerusalem he had seen a caravan at such and such a place, which had met with such and such an accident. When asked as to when that caravan would reach Makkah, the Holy Prophet named the day. When the day came, the people of the Quraish waited for the caravan all day till the sun began to set. On this occasion the Holy Prophet prayed that the sun should not set till the caravan had arrived. So, the caravan actually arrived before the sunset. Some reporters even have stated that the day on that occasion had been enhanced by an hour, and the sun had stood still for that long. The question is: Are such traditions sufficient evidence for the proof of such an extraordinary event? As we have said above, the returning of the sun, or its standing still for an hour, is no ordinary event. Had such an event actually taken place, it would have become well known the world over. Its mention and narration could not remain restricted to only a few reporters.

The third section of the commentators interprets these verses as any unbiased person would interpret them from these words. According to this commentary, what actually happened was this: When a

squadron of fine, well bred horses was presented before the Prophet Solomon, he said: "I love this wealth not for the sake of personal glory or desire but for the cause of raising the Word of my Lord." Then he ordered that the horses run a race, and they disappeared from sight. Then he ordered that they be brought back, and when they were brought back, according to Ibn `Abbas: "He started passing his hand on their necks and shanks with love." This same commentary is correct in our opinion, because it corresponds to the words of the Qur'an, and for the sake of the full meaning, nothing needs to be added to it, which may neither be in the Qur'an, nor in any authentic Hadith, nor in the Israelite history.

Besides, one should also note that Allah has narrated this event immediately after using epithets like ni'm al-'abd, inna-hu awwab (an excellent servant, who turned to His Lord over and over again) for the Prophet Solomon. This clearly shows that the object is to relate this message: Behold, what a good servant of Ours he was! He loved the means of kingly pomp and glory not for the sake of the world but for Our sake! After watching - and reviewing his grand cavalry he did not boast of his power and grandeur like the worldly rulers but even at that time he remembered only Us.

36In view of the contest, the real object here is to relate this event; the preceding verses are an introduction to it. Just as above this, first the Prophet David was praised, then the event narrated by which he was put to temptation, then it was said that Allah Almighty does not spare even such a beloved servant from accountability, then about his noble nature it was said that as soon as he was warned of the temptation, he repented and bowed before Allah and withheld himself from the act, so also here the sequence is like this: First, the Prophet Solomon's high rank and his deep sense of devotion has been mentioned, then it is said that he also was put to the test, then it has been stated that when a mere body was placed on his throne, he immediately felt warned on his error, and pleading the forgiveness of his Lord, withdrew from the act, because of which he was involved in the temptation. In other words, Allah by means of these two stories wants to impress two things upon the reader simultaneously: (1) Not to speak of the common men, even high-ranking Prophets were not spared from His strict accountability; and (2) the right attitude for man is not to brag and feel proud after committing an error, but to bow down humbly before his Lord as soon as he realizes his sin. It was the result of this attitude that Allah not only forgave the mistakes of those illustrious men but blessed them with still more favors and kindness.

Here, the question again arises as to what was the temptation in which the Prophet Solomon was involved; what is the meaning of placing a mere body on his throne, and what was the nature of the warning on the occurrence of which he repented? In reply to this the commentators have adopted four different points of view:

One section of them has related a long story whose details are disputed, but their resume is this: The error committed by the Prophet Solomon was either that one of his wives continued to worship the idols in the palace for forty days and he remained unaware of it, or that he remained confined to his residence for a few days and did not attend to redressing of the oppressed people's grievances. For this he was punished as follows: A satan somehow made away with his ring by which he ruled over the jinns, men

and wind. As soon as he lost the ring he was deprived of his powers and he remained wandering from place to place for forty days; in the interval the satan continued to rule in the guise of Solomon. The placing of a mere body on Solomon's throne implied this very satan, who had sat on his -throne. Some people have gone to the extent to say that during that period even the chastity of the women in the royal household did not remain safe from the satan. At last from his conduct the ministers and the chiefs and the scholars of the court began to doubt that he was not Solomon. Therefore, when they opened the Torah before him, he fled. On the way the ring fell from his hand in the sea, or he cast it into the sea himself, and a fish swallowed it. Then, somehow the Prophet Solomon came by the fish. When in order to cook it, he cut open its belly he found his ring in it. Then, no sooner did he get the ring than the jinns and men presented themselves humbly before him.--This whole story, from the beginning to the end, is nonsensical and absurd, which the converts from among the Jews and Christians took from the Talmud and other Israelite traditions and spread it among the Muslims. It is strange that some of our well known scholars took these traditions as authentic and cited them as the explanation of the allusions of the Qur'an, whereas neither is there any truth in Solomon's ring, nor could his glorious works be attributed to any ring, nor had the satans been given the power that they might disguise themselves as Prophets and mislead the people, nor can it be imagined about Allah that He would punish a Prophet for an error in such a manner as to enable a satan to corrupt and destroy a whole community, disguised as a prophet. The Qur'an itself repudiates this commentary. In the verses that follow Allah says: When Solomon met with the trial, and he asked Our forgiveness for it, then We subdued the wind and the satans to him. Hut, on the contrary, according to the above commentary, the satans were already under his control by virtue of the ring. It is strange that the scholars who have made this commentary did not care to consider what the subsequent verses say.

The second section of them says that a son was born to the Prophet Solomon after twenty years. The satans feared that if he became king after Solomon, they would continue to remain slaves as they were under him. Therefore, they plotted to kill him. When Solomon came to know of this plot, he hid the child in the clouds so that he was brought up there. This was the temptation in which he was involved: he placed reliance on the protection of the clouds instead of having trust in Allah. For this he was punished in this way that the child died and fell on his throne as a mere body .... This tale also is baseless and is expressly against the Qur`an, for in this also it has been assumed that the winds and satans were already under the Prophet Solomon's control, whereas the Qur'an in clear words has stated their subjection to be an event that took place after the trial.

The third section says that the Prophet Solomon one day swore that he would go in to his 70 wives that night, and from each a warrior would be born, who would fight in the cause of Allah, but while he said this he did not say: Insha Allah: if Allah so wills. Consequently, only one wife conceived and from her also a defective child was born, whom the midwife brought and placed on his throne. This Hadith has been reported by Hadrat Abu Harairah from the Holy Prophet and it has been related by Bukhari and Muslim and other traditionists in several ways. In Bukhari itself this tradition has been related at different places in different ways. At one place the number of the wives has been stated as 60 and at others 70 or 90 or

99 or 100. As far as the chains of the transmitters are concerned, most of the traditions have strong chains, and their authenticity cannot be disputed from the point of view of the principles of reporting. But the subject-matter of the Hadith is patently against reason, and proclaims aloud that such a thing could not have been said by the Holy Prophet, as reported. But, on the contrary, he might have probably mentioned it as an example of the foolish and nonsensical tale-telling of the Jews, and the hearer might have misunderstood that the Holy Prophet himself had stated it as an event. To force the people to accept such traditions only on the strength of their chains of transmitters would be making religion a matter of mockery and jest. Everyone can calculate for himself that even in the longest night of winter the interval between the `Isha` and the Fajr Prayers cannot be of more than ten to cloven hours. If the minimum number of the wives be 60, it would mean that the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) went on having intercourse with them continuously for 10 to 11 hours that night at the rate of six wives per hour, without having a moment's rest. Is it practically possible? And can it be expected that the Holy Prophet might have related it as an event? Then in the Hadith nowhere has it been said that the body that had been placed on Solomon's throne, as stated in the Qur'an, implied the malformed child. Therefore, it cannot be claimed that the Holy Prophet had narrated this event as a commentary of this verse. Furthermore, though it is understandable why the Prophet Solomon asked for Allah's forgiveness on the birth of the child, one fails to understand why, along with the prayer for forgiveness, he prayed: "My Lord, grant me a kingdom as may belong to no one else after me. "

Another commentary which Imam Razi has preferred is this: The Prophet Solomon was afflicted with a serious disease, or on account of an impending danger his body had been reduced to a mere skeleton. But this commentary also does not conform to the words of the Qur'an. The Qur'an says: "We put Solomon to the test and placed a mere body on his throne. Then he turned (to Allah). " From these words no one can understand that the mere body implied the body of the Prophet Solomon himself. They clearly show that putting to the test implied some error that. he happened to commit. On this, the way he was given the warning was that a mere body was placed on his throne, and when he realized his error he turned to Allah.

As a matter of fact, this is one of the most difficult places of the Qur'an, and we do not find any indisputable ground for giving a definite and absolute commentary of it. But if the words of the Prophet Solomon's prayer: "My Lord, forgive me, and grant me a kingdom as may belong to no one else after me," are read in the light of the Israelite history, it appears that probably he cherished in his heart the desire that his son should succeed him on the throne so that His kingdom and sovereignty should continue in his own race after him. This same thing has been called a "temptation" for him by Allah, and he realized this when his heir Rehoboam grew up into an unworthy young man, whose ugly manners clearly foretold that he would not be able to sustain the mighty kingdom of the Prophets David and Solomon (peace be upon them) even for a few days. ¦Placing a mere body on his throne" probably means that the son whom he wanted to succeed him on the throne, was an unworthy person. Therefore, he restrained his desire, asked for Allah's forgiveness and prayed that the kingdom should end with him, and he would curb his desire to have it continued in his dynasty. The Israelite history also shows the

same thing. The Prophet Solomon did not make any will about his successor, nor made it binding for the people to obey a particular person. After him his ministers put Rehoboam on the throne, but not long afterwards ten tribes of Israel took northern Palestine and broke away, and only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the throne of Jerusalem.

37For explanation, see Surah Al-Anbiya`: 81 and E.N. 74 thereof. However, there is one thing which requires further explanation here. In Surah Al Anbiya` where mention has been made of subjecting the wind for the Prophet Solomon, it has been described as `the strongly blowing wind, but here "which blew gently at his bidding" . This means that the wind in itself was strong and violent as is needed for moving the sailing-ships but it had been made gentle for the Prophet Solomon in the sense that it blew whither-so-ever he wanted it to blow for his commercial fleets.

38For explanation, see Al-Anbiya': 82, An-Naml: 17, 39 and the E.N.'s thereof. "The satans" imply the jinns, and "the satans bound in chains" imply the serving satans, who were fettered and imprisoned as a punishment for making mischief. It is not necessary that the fetters and chains in which those satans were bound might be made of iron and they might appear as bound in them like the human prisoners. In any case, they were imprisoned in a manner that they could neither escape nor were able to commit further mischief.

39This verse can have three meanings: (1) "This is Our unlimited gift: you have the authority to give of it freely w whomsoever you like and keep it from whomsoever you like;" (2) "this is Our gift: you may give of it to whomsoever you like and keep it from whomsoever you like: you will not be called to account for giving it or keeping it from the people;" and (3) Another meaning of it given by some commentators is: The satans have been placed entirely under your control: you may set free whomsoever you like and restrain whomsoever you like: you will not be held accountable for this."

40Here, the object is to tell that just as a servant's arrogance causes Allah's displeasure and wrath, so does his humility earns Allah's pleasure and approval for him. If a servant commits an error and becomes even more arrogant when warned, he is led to the same fate as is being mentioned in connection with the story of Adam and Satan below. Contrary to this, if a servant happens to commit an error and he repents and bows down before his Lord humbly, he is blessed with such bounties as the Prophets David and Solomon were blessed with. The prayer that Solomon had made after seeking Allah's forgiveness, was literally fulfilled and Allah actually granted him a kingdom as had neither been granted to anyone before him nor bestowed on anyone after him. Having control over the winds and the jinns is an extraordinary power, which has been granted only to the Prophet Solomon and to none else in human history.

41This is the fourth place in the Qur'an where the Prophet Job has been mentioned. Before this he has been mentioned in An-Nisa. 163, Al-An'am: 84 and AI-Anbiya': 83-84 above. For the details about him, please see E.N.'s 76 to 79 of Surah Al-Anbiya'

42This does not mean that Satan has afflicted me with illness and brought distress upon me, but it means: "The affliction of the severities of illness, the loss of property and wealth, and the desertion of the near and dear ones, is not so great a torment and trouble for me as the temptation of Satan, who is exploiting my condition to despair me of my Lord and wants that I should turn ungrateful to Him and become desperate and impatient." This meaning of the lamentation of the Prophet Job is preferable for two reasons: (1) According to the Qur'an, Allah has granted Satan only the power of temptation: He has not given him the power to afflict with illness the worshipers of Allah and compel them to deviate from the way of service and obedience by causing them physical ailments. (2) In Surah Al Anbiya' when the Prophet Job puts before Allah his complaint about illness and disease, he does not mention Satan at all, but says only: "I have been afflicted with the disease and You are most Merciful."

43That is, "As soon as he stamped his foot on the ground, a spring gushed forth by Allah's Command, drinking from which and washing with which was the remedy of the Prophet Job's disease." Most probably he was suffering from some skin disease. According to the Bible also: "Satan smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. " (Job, 2: 7).

44Traditions show that during this illness everyone except his wife had deserted the Prophet Job; even his children had turned away. To this Allah has alluded, saying: "When We granted him health, the whole family returned to him, and then We granted him even more children."

45That is, in it there is a lesson for an intelligent man: "Neither should man forget God and become arrogant in good times nor despair of Him in bad times: Good fortune and misfortune are entirely in the Power of Allah, the One. If He wills He can change the best times of man into the worst times and the worst into the best. Therefore, a wise person should trust in Him alone in all sorts of circumstances and should pin all his hopes on Him."

46A careful study of these words shows that the Prophet Job during illness had been annoyed with somebody (according to traditions, his wife) and sworn to beat him or her by giving so many stripes. When Allah restored him to health and the anger of the illness was gone, he became worried as how to fulfill the oath. For if he carried out the oath, he would be inflicting pain on an innocent person, and if he did not, he would be committing the sin of breaking the oath. Allah took him out of the difficult situation by the Command: "Take a broom containing as many sticks of straw as the number of the stripes you had sworn to give;then strike the person just once with the broom so as both to fulfill your oath and to avoid giving undue trouble to the person concerned."

Some jurists hold the view that this concession was specially meant for the Prophet Job, and some others think that other people also can take advantage of it. The first view has been cited by Ibn 'Asakir from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas and by Abu Bakr al-Jassas from Mujahid, and Imam Malik also held the same view. The second view has been adopted by Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam

Muhammad, Imam Zufar and Imam Shafe' i. They say that if a person, for instance, has sworn to give his servant ten stripes, and afterwards combines ten whips and strikes him only once in a way that some part of each whip strikes him, his oath will be fulfilled.

Several Ahadith show that the Holy Prophet, in order to inflict the prescribed punishment on a fornicator who was too ill or too weak to receive a hundred stripes, also adopted the method taught in this verse. 'Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas has related a tradition on the authority of Hadrat Said bin Sa'd bin 'Ubadah to the effect that a person from the tribe of Bani Sa`idah happened to commit fornication, and he was a sick man and a mere skeleton. Thereupon the Holy Prophet commanded: "Take a branch of the palm tree with a hundred twigs on it and strike him therewith once and for all. " (Ahkam al Qur 'an). In Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Tabarani, 'Abdur Razzaq and other collections of Hadith also there are several Ahadith supporting it, which conclusively proves that the Holy Prophet had devised this very method for inflicting the prescribed punishment on a sick or weak person. However, the jurists lay the condition that some part of every twig or piece of straw must strike the culprit, and even if only one stroke, it must also hurt the culprit; that is, it is not enough just to touch him but he must be struck with it.

Here the question also arises that if a person has sworn to do something and afterwards he comes to know that it is improper, then what should he do? Then is a tradition from the Holy Prophet to the effect that in such a case one should do only that which is better, and the same is the atonement for the oath. Another tradition from him says that one should do something good instead of the improper thing and should atone for his oath. This verse supports this second tradition, for if keeping oneself from an improper thing had been the atonement for the oath, Allah would not have told the Prophet Job to strike the broom once and fulfill his oath, but would have said: "Do not do this improper thing, and your restraint itself is the atonement for your oath."

This verse also shows that it is not necessary to carry out immediately what one has sworn to do. The Prophet Job had sworn an oath in the state of illness, and fulfilled it after complete recovery, and not immediately even after the recovery.

Some people have regarded this verse as an argument for practicing pretense under the Shari'ah. No doubt it was a pretense which the Prophet Job had been taught but it had been taught not for evading anything obligatory but for avoiding an evil. Therefore, in the Shari 'ah those pretenses only are lawful, which are adopted to remove injustice and . sin and evil from one's own self or from another person, otherwise practice of pretense is highly sinful if it is employed for the purpose of making the unlawful lawful, or evading the obligatory duties and righteous acts. For a person who practices pretense for such impious objects, in fact, tries to deceive God. For example, a person who transfers his wealth to another before the completion of a year on it, only for the purpose of evading payment of the Zakat on it, not only evades an obligatory duty, but also thinks that Allah will get deceived by this trickery and will consider him as relieved of his duty. The jurists who have mentioned such pretenses in their books, do not mean that one should practice them in order to evade the Shari ah obligations, but they mean to point out that a

judge or ruler cannot take to task a person who escapes the consequences of a sin under a legal cover for his affair is with Allah.

47The Prophet Job has been mentioned in this context to impress the reader that when the righteous servants of Allah are afflicted with hardships and calamities, they do not complain of their distress to Allah but endure the tests and trials set by Him patiently and invoke only Him for help. They do not despair of God and do not turn to others for help if their distress is not removed after making invocations to God for some time, but they believe that whatever they will get, they will get only from Allah. Therefore, they remain hopeful of His mercy, no matter how long they might have to suffer the distress. That is why they arc honored and blessed with the favors and bounties with which the Prophet Job was honored and blessed in his life. So much so that if they get involved in a moral dilemma due to a state of agitation, Allah shows them a way out of it- in order to save them from evil, as He showed a way to the Prophet Job.

48The actual words in the Text mean "Those who possessed the hands and the insights." The hand, as we have explained above, implies power and capability. To describe these Prophets as "men of great power and insight" means that they were practical men: they possessed great power to obey Allah and to abstain from sin, and they had made great efforts for raising the Word of Allah in the world. "Insight" does not mean eye-sight but the vision of the heart and mind. They could sec and recognize the Truth: they did not live like the blind in the world, but they walked the straight path of guidance, in the full light of knowledge, with open eyes. In these words, there is a subtle allusion to this also that the people who commit evil, and have gone astray, arc in fact, deprived of the hands as well as the eyes. He only, who works in the cause of Allah, possesses the hands, and he, who distinguishes between the light of the Truth and the darkness of falsehood, only possesses the eyes.

49That is, "The real cause for their success and eminence was that there was no tinge of-worldliness in their character: all their efforts, mental and physical, were directed towards the Hereafter. They remembered it themselves and urged others also to remember it. That is why Allah exalted them to such high ranks as have never been attained by those who remained absorbed in earning worldly wealth and prosperity. In this regard, one should also keep in view the subtle point that Allah here has only used the word ad-dar (that abode, or the real abode) for the Hereafter. This is meant to impress the truth that this world is no abode for man, but only a passage and a rest house, which man has to leave in any cast. The real abode is the abode of the Hereafter. He who works to adorn that abode is the man of insight and such a one should inevitably be a commendable person in the sight of Allah. As for him who in order to adorn his transitory abode in this rest house behaves in a way as to ruin his real abode in the Hereafter, is foolish, and naturally cannot be liked by Allah.

50The Prophet Al-Yas`a has been mentioned only twice in the Qur'an, in Surah Al-An'am: 86 and here, without any detail about him; only his name appears in the chain of the Prophets. He was one of the major Prophets of Israel, belonged to Abel Meholah, a place on the river Jordan, and is well known as

Elisha among the Jews and Christians. When the Prophet Elijah (peace be upon him) had taken refuge in the Sinai peninsula, he was commanded to return to Syria and Palestine for some important works, one of which was to prepare the Prophet Elisha for his successorship. Accordingly, when the Prophet Elijah came to his town, he found Elisha ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. The Prophet Elijah passed by him and cast his mantle upon him, and he left the oxen and followed him. (I Kings, 19:15-21). He remained under training with him for 10 to 12 years. Then, when Allah recalled Elijah, he was appointed Prophet in his place. (2 Kings, oh.2). The Second Book of the Kings gives a detailed account of the Prophet Elisha (chs., 2 to 13), which shows that when the Israeli state of northern Palestine got lost in polytheism and idol-worship and moral evils, Elisha a pointed Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, king of Israel against the royal dynasty due to whose misdeeds those evils had spread in Israel. Jehu not only put an end to Baal-worship, but also condemned to death every member of the wicked family, including its children. But in spite of this reformist revolution the evils that had taken root in Israel could not be completely eradicated, and after the death of the Prophet Elisha they assumed enormous proportions; so much so that the Assyrians began to invade Samaria whenever they pleased. (For further details, see E.N. 7 of Surah Bani-Isra'il and E. N .'s 70, 71 of Surah As-Saaffat).

51Dhul-Kifi also has been mentioned only twice in the Qur'an, in Al Anbiya': 85 and here. For our research about him see E.N. 81 of Al-Anbiya`.

52The words mufattahat-al-lahum-ul-abwab may have several meanings: (1) They will go about in the Gardens (Paradise) freely without any hesitation; (2) no effort will have to be made to open the gates of Paradise: they will open automatically as soon as they will have the desire to enter them; (3) the angels appointed for keeping Paradise will open the gates for them as soon as they see them. This third meaning has been expressed more clearly at another place in the Qur'an, thus: "When they arrive there, and its gates shall already have been opened, its keepers will say: Peace be upon you: you have fared well: enter here to dwell for ever. " (Az-Zumar: 73)

53"Wives of equal age" may mean that they will be of equal age among themselves, and also that they will be of the same age as their husbands.

54Several meanings of the word ghassaq, as used in the original, have been given by the lexicographers: (1) Any moisture that is discharged by the body in the forth of pus, blood, or mixture of pus and blood, etc. and this includes tears as well; (2) something extremely cold; and (3) something stinking and giving out offensive smell. However, the word is generally used in the first meaning only, though the other two meanings also are correct lexically.

55This implies the believers whom the disbelievers used to look down upon as bad people in the world. It means: They will look around bewildered and will find only themselves and their guides in Hell but will find no trace of those people of whom they used to talk disparagingly in the world, and whom they used

to mock in their meetings for talking about God, the Messenger and the Hereafter.

56Now the discourse turns to the same theme with which it began. One should read it with vv. 1-14 in order to understand the meaning fully.

57In verse 4 it was said: "The people wonder that a warner from among themselves has come to them." Here it is being said: "Tell them: I am only a warner. ' That is, "I do not command an army that I may forcibly pull you from a wrong way and put you on the Right Way: If you do not listen to me and do not accept my message, you will only be causing a loss to yourselves. If you like to remain ignorant, you may continue to be heedless, for you will sec your end yourselves."

58This is the answer to what the disbelievers said in verse 5: "Has he made just One God in place of all the gods? This is indeed a strange thing." It means: "You may frown and scowl as you like, but this is a reality of which I am informing you, and your frowning and scowling cannot change it."

This answer not only contains the statement of the truth, but it also contains the argument for it. The mushriks said: "Deities are many of whom one is Allah also. How is it that you have done away with all other deities and kept only One Allah?" In answer it was said: "The real Deity is One Allah alone, for He is dominant over everything: He is the Owner of the earth and the heavens, and everything in the Universe belongs to Him. Every being other than Him, whom you have set up as other gods in the Universe, is dominated and subdued before Him; therefore, the subservient beings cannot be associates in the Godhead of the Dominant and All-Mighty God. Therefore, there is no ground for which they may be regarded as deities.

59This is the explanation of the dispute referred to about, and the dispute implies Satan's dispute with God, as becomes evident from the verses that follow. In this regard, one should bear in mind the fact that "the exalted ones" implies the angels, and the dialogue between Allah and Satan was not direct but it took place through some angel. Therefore, no one should have the misunderstanding that Allah also was included among the exalted ones. This story has already been narrated at the following places about: Al-Baqarah: 30-39, Al-A'raf: 11-25, Al-Hijr: 26-44, Bani Isra'il: 61-65, Al-Kahf: 50, Ta Ha: 116-126.

60Lexically, bashar means a gross body whose surface is bare and uncovered by anything else. After the creation of man this word has been used for man himself, but mentioning him by the word bashar before his creation and making him from clay clearly means: "I am about to make an image of clay, which will be without any feathers and hair, etc., whose skin will not be covered by wool or hair or feathers like the skin of other animals.

61For explanation, see Al-Hijr: 29-30, and E.N. 16 of Surah As-Sajdah.

62For explanation, sec Al-Baqarah: 34, Al-A'raf :11 and the E.N.'s thereof.

63For explanation, see Al-Baqarah: 34, AI-Kahf: 50 and the E.N.'s." thereof.

64These words have been used to point out the honor, rank and glory bestowed on man by his Creator. In other words, Allah did not get man created through his angels but created him Himself because his creation was a highly noble task. Therefore, what is meant to be said is: "What has prevented you from prostrating yourself before him whom I have made directly Myself?"

The words "both hands" probably are meant to refer to the fact that this new creation combines in itself two important aspects of Allah's power of creation: (1) That man has been given an animal body on account of which he belongs to the animal kingdom; and (2) that on account of the Spirit breathed into him, he has been characterized with qualities which place him in honor and merit above all earthly creations and creatures.

65"From here": from the place where Adam was created and where the angels were commanded to bow down before Adam, and where Iblis committed disobedience of Allah.

66Lexically, the word rajim, as used in the original, means "cast off" or "smitten"; in common usage it is used for the person, who has been thrown down from a place of honor and humiliated. In Surah AI-A`raf, the same thing has been expressed thus: "Get out: you are indeed one of those who wish themselves ignominy." (v. 13).

67This does not mean that there will be no curse on him after the Day of Judgment, but rather it means: "He will remain accessed till the Day of Judgment because of his disobedience, and after the Day of Judgment he will be punished for the sins which he will have committed from . the creation of Adam till Resurrection. "

68This does not mean "I will not lead Your chosen servants astray," but this: "I shall have no power over Your chosen servants."

69"With you" is not only addressed to Iblis but to the whole species of satans; that is, Iblis and his whole army of the satans who will be joining him in misleading mankind till Resurrection.

70This whole story has been related in answer to this saying of the chiefs of the Quraish: "Was he the only (fit) person among us to whom Allah's Admonition should have been sent down?" Its first answer was the one given in vv. 9-10, saying: "Are you the owners of the treasures of the mercy of your Mighty and Bounteous Lord? And does the kingdom of the heavens and the earth belongs to you, and is it for you to decide as to who should be appointed God's Prophet and who should not be appointed?" The

second answer is: In this the chiefs of the Quraish have been told: ¦Your jealousy, your pride and arrogance against Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) arc similar to the jealousy and arrogance of Iblis against Adam (peace be upon him). Iblis also had refused to acknowledge the right of Allah to appoint anyone He pleased His vicegerent, and you also are refusing to acknowledge His right to appoint anyone He pleases as His Messenger: he disobeyed the Command to bow down before Adam, and you are disobeying the Command to follow Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). Your resemblance with him does not end here, but your fate also will be the same as has been pre-ordained for him, i.e.. the curse of God in the world and the fire of Hell in the Hereafter. "

Besides, in connection with this story, two other things also have been stressed: (1) Whoever is disobeying Allah in this world, is in fact, falling a prey to Iblis, his eternal enemy, who has resolved to mislead and misguide mankind since the beginning of creation; and (2) the one who disobeys Allah on account of arrogance and persists in His disobedience is under His wrath: such a one has no forgiveness from Him.

71That is, "I am a selfless person: I have no vested interest in preaching this message."

72That is, "I am not one of those who arise with false claims for the sake of vanity and pose to be what actually they are not. " The Holy Prophet has not been made to say this merely for the information of the disbelievers of Makkah but this is testified by his whole life which he lived among the same people for forty years before his advent as a Prophet. Every child of Makkah was a witness that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) was not an impostor. Never had anybody from among the people of Makkah ever heard anything from him, which might have caused somebody the doubt that he aspired to be a great man and was planning and scheming for that end.

73That is, Those of you who live will see for themselves within a few years that what I am saying is fulfilled; those who die will come to know as soon as they pass through the gate of death that the truth is the same which I am preaching.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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39. Surah Az Zumar (The Troops)

Name

The Surah derives its name from verse 71 and 73 in which the word *zumar* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

In verse 10 (*wa ardullah-i-wasi atun*: and Allah's earth is vast) there is abundant evidence that this Surah was sent down before the migration to Habash. Some traditions provide the explanation that this verse was sent down in respect of Hadrat Ja'far bin Abi Talib and his companions when they made up their mind to emigrate to Habash. (*Ruh al-Maani*, vol. XXII, p. 226).

Theme and Subject matter

The entire Surah is a most eloquent and effective address which was given some time before the emigration to Habash, in an environment filled with tyranny and persecution, ill-will and antagonism, at Makkah. It is a sermon whose addressees mainly are the unbelieving Quraish, although here and there the believers also have been addressed. In it the real aim of the invitation of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had been enunciated, which is this:Man should adopt Allah's servitude sincerely, and should not pollute his God worship with the service of any other. Presenting this cardinal principle in different ways over and over again, the truth of *Tauhid* and the excellent results of accepting it, and the falsehood of *shirk* and the evil consequences of following it, have been explained in a most forceful way, and the people exhorted to give up their wrong way of life and return to the mercy of their Lord. In this very connection, the believers have been instructed, as if to say:"If a place has become narrow for the worship and service of Allah, His earth is vast: you may emigrate to some other place in order to save your faith: Allah will reward you for your patience."On the other hand, the Holy Prophet has been encouraged, so as to say:"Tell the disbelievers plainly that they may do whatever they like, but their persecutions and tyrannies will never deter you from the way of Islam; that they may go on doing their worst to obstruct your way, but you will continue to perform your mission in spite of the adverse conditions and circumstances."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

تَنزِيلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ﴿١﴾

[1] The revelation of this Book is from the All-Mighty, the All-Wise Allah.[1]

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ فَٱعْبُدِ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَّهُ ٱلدِّينَ ﴿٢﴾

أَلَا لِلَّهِ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْخَالِصُ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِى مَا هُمْ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى مَنْ هُوَ كَٰذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣﴾

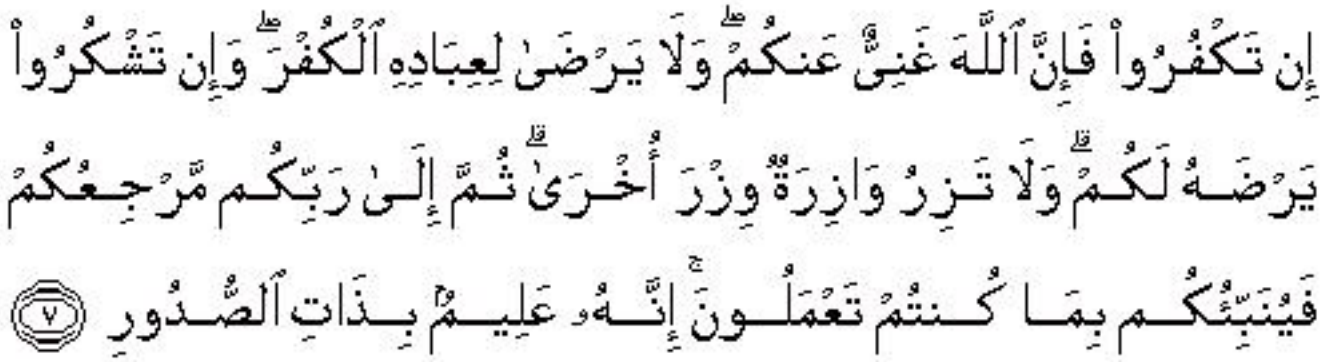
[2-3] (O Muhammad,) We have sent down this Book to you with the truth,[2] so worship Allah alone, making your religion His exclusively.[3] Beware! Religion is exclusively Allah's right.[4] As for those who have taken other guardians besides Him (and justify their conduct, saying): "We worship them only that they may bring us closer to Allah."[5] Allah will surely judge between them concerning all that in which they differ.[6] Allah does not show guidance to any liar and denier of the truth.[7]

لَّوْ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا لَّٱصْطَفَىٰ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ ۖ
هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْوَٰحِدُ ٱلْقَهَّارُ ﴿٤﴾

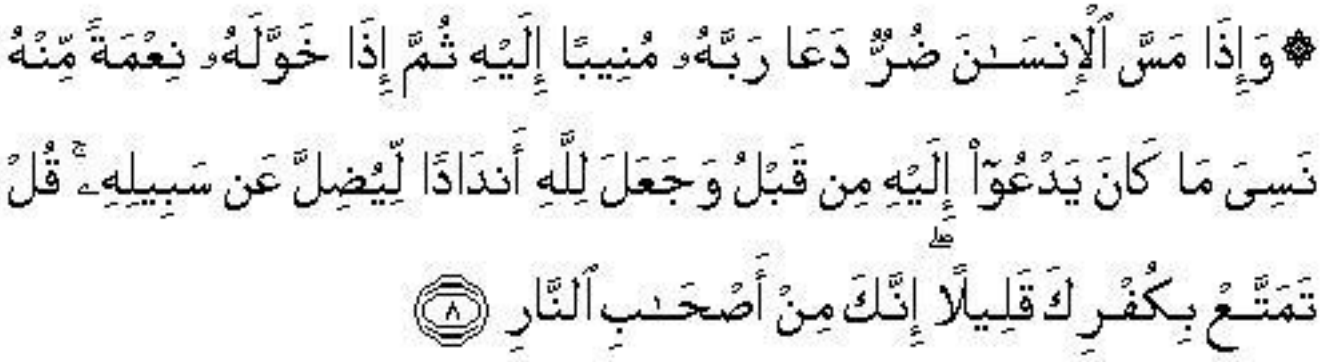
خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ يُكَوِّرُ ٱلَّيْلَ عَلَى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ ٱلنَّهَارَ
عَلَى ٱلَّيْلِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ يَجْرِى لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ أَلَا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْغَفَّٰرُ ﴿٥﴾

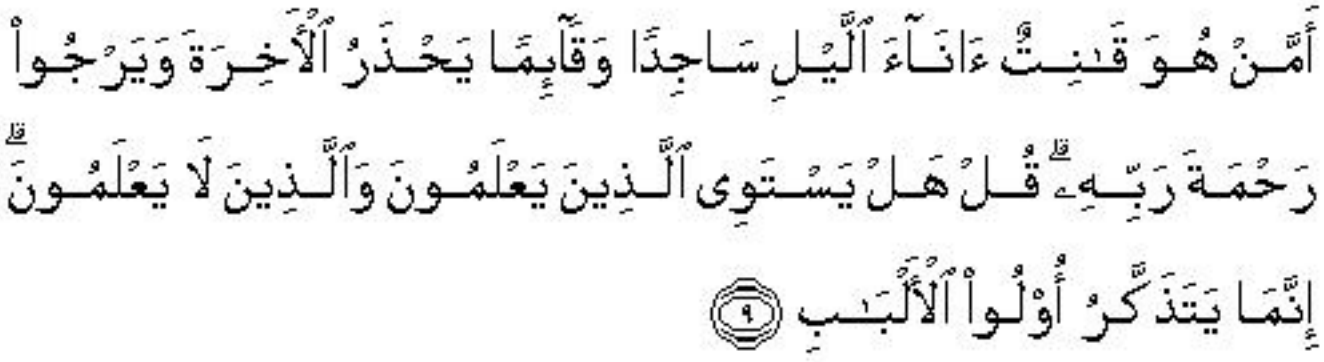
خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَأَنزَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ
ثَمَٰنِيَةَ أَزْوَٰجٍ ۚ يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِى بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّنۢ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِى
ظُلُمَٰتٍ ثَلَٰثٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُصْرَفُونَ
﴿٦﴾

[4-6] Had Allah willed to take a son, He would have chosen anyone He pleased out of His creation.[8] Glorified is He (that He should have a son)! He is Allah, the One, the Omnipotent.[9] He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth.[10] He it is Who wraps the night about the day and the day about the night . He has so subjected the sun and the moon that each is moving till an appointed time. Note it well: He is the All-Mighty, the All-Forgiving.[11] It is He Who created you from a single being, then from that being He created its mate,[12] and it is He Who created for you eight heads of cattle, male and female.[13] He shapes you in your mothers' wombs, giving you one form after the other, under three dark veils.[14] This same Allah (Whose works are these) is your Lord[15] Sovereignty is His.[16] There is no god but He.[17] Whence are you, then, being turned away?[18]



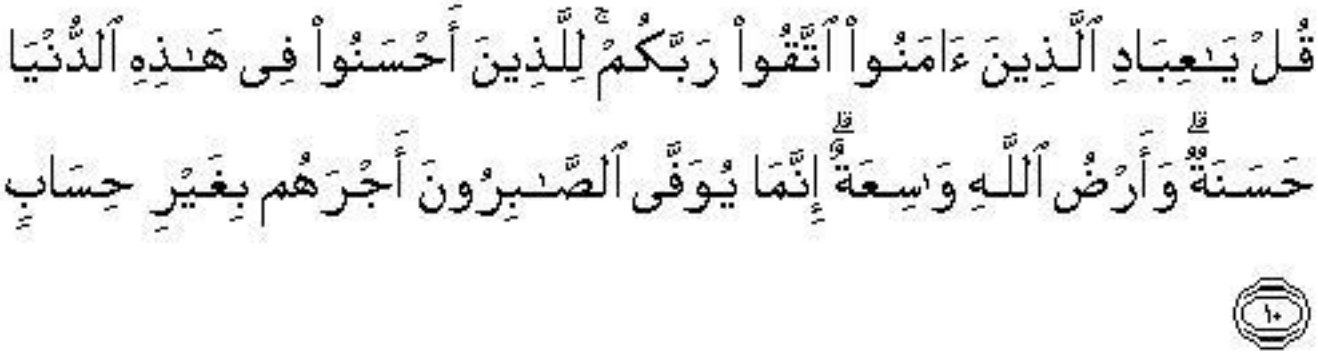
[7] If you disbelieve, Allah is independent of you.[19] Yet He does not approve of disbelief for His servants.[20] And if you are thankful, He approves it for you.[21] No bearer will bear the burden of another.[22] Ultimately, all of you have to return to your Lord. Then He will tell you what You have been doing. He knows even the secrets of the hearts.



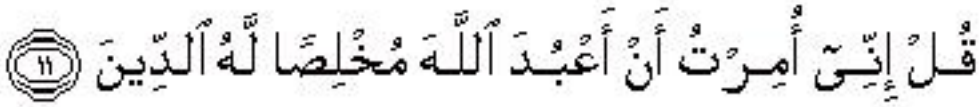


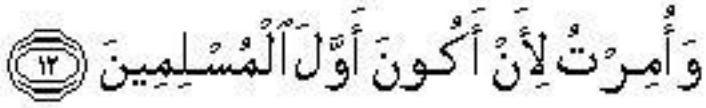
[8-9] When an affliction befalls man,[23] he calls upon his Lord, turning to Him (in penitence).[24] Then, when his Lord blesses him with his favor, he forgets the affliction for which he was calling upon Him before,[25] and sets up others as equals with Allah,[26] to lead astray from His way.[27] (O Prophet,) Tell him; "Enjoy your disbelief for a while: you shall certainly go to Hell." (Whose conduct is better, this man or the man) who is obedient, who passes the hours of night standing and prostrating (in worship), and who dreads the Hereafter and hopes for the mercy of his Lord? Ask them, "Can those who know and those who do not know ever be equal?"[28] Only men of understanding do accept the

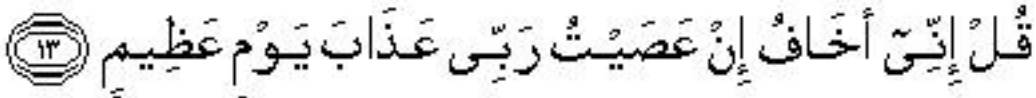
admonition.

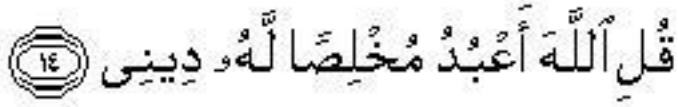

قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا
حَسَنَةٌ ۗ وَأَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةٌ ۗ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ
١٠

[10] (O Prophet:) Say, "O My servants, who have believed, fear your Lord.[29] There is good for those who have adopted the righteous attitude in this world,[30] and God's earth is vast.[31] Those who endure with patience shall be rewarded without measure."[32]


قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَّهُ ٱلدِّينَ ١١


وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ١٢


قُلْ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّى عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ١٣


قُلِ ٱللَّهَ أَعْبُدُ مُخْلِصًا لَّهُۥ دِينِى ١٤

فَٱعۡبُدُواْ مَا شِئۡتُم مِّن دُونِهِۦۗ قُلۡ إِنَّ ٱلۡخَٰسِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُواْ أَنفُسَهُمۡ
وَأَهۡلِيهِمۡ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۗ أَلَا ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡخُسۡرَانُ ٱلۡمُبِينُ ١٥

لَهُم مِّن فَوۡقِهِمۡ ظُلَلٞ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ وَمِن تَحۡتِهِمۡ ظُلَلٞۚ ذَٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ
عِبَادَهُۥۚ يَٰعِبَادِ فَٱتَّقُونِ ١٦

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱجۡتَنَبُواْ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ أَن يَعۡبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ لَهُمُ
ٱلۡبُشۡرَىٰۚ فَبَشِّرۡ عِبَادِ ١٧

ٱلَّذِينَ يَسۡتَمِعُونَ ٱلۡقَوۡلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحۡسَنَهُۥٓۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَدَىٰهُمُ
ٱللَّهُۖ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمۡ أُوْلُواْ ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِ ١٨

[11-18] (O Prophet,) say to them, "I have been commanded to serve Allah, making religion sincerely His, and I have been commanded to be a Muslim myself first of all."[33] Say, "If I disobey my Lord, I fear the torment of a dreadful Day." Say, "I shall serve Allah alone, making my religion sincerely His. As for you, you may serve whomever you please besides Him." Say, "The real losers are those who would risk loss for themselves and for their families on the Day of Resurrection." Note it well: this is the real bankruptcy.[34] They shall have the canopies of fire covering them from above them and also from beneath them. This is the doom of which Allah frightens His servants. So, O My servants, avoid My wrath. Contrary to this, those who refrained from serving taghut[35] and turned to Allah, for them there is good news. So (O Prophet,) give good news to those of My servants who listen to the word carefully and follow what is best in it.[36] These are they whom Allah has shown guidance and these are the ones who possess understanding.

أَفَمَنْ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ كَلِمَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ أَفَأَنتَ تُنقِذُ مَن فِى ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٩﴾

لَـٰكِنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ مِّن فَوْقِهَا غُرَفٌ مَّبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ۖ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[19-20] (O Prophet,) who can protect the person for whom the torment has already been decreed?[37] Can you rescue him who has already fallen into the fire? Of course, those who truly feared their Lord, for them there are high mansions, built with story upon story, beneath which there will be canals flowing. This is Allah's promise: Allah never fails in His promise.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَسَلَكَهُۥ يَنَـٰبِيعَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُ بِهِۦ زَرْعًا مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُۥ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَىٰهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُۥ حُطَـٰمًا ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَـٰبِ ﴿٢١﴾

أَفَمَن شَرَحَ ٱللَّهُ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَـٰمِ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْقَـٰسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مِّن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ فِى ضَلَـٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

[21-22] Do you not see that Allah sent down rainwater from the sky, then made it to flow in the earth in the form of

springs and fountains and rivers,[38] then He brings forth thereby a variety of crops of different kinds; then they ripen and wither and you see them turn yellow, and then, finally, He reduces them to straw? Indeed, there is a lesson in this for the men of understanding.[39] Now, can the person whose breast Allah has opened for Islam[40] and he is walking in the light shown by his Lord(be like the one who has learned no lesson from these things)?[41] Woe to those whose hearts became even more hardened[42] from Allah's admonition! They are in manifest error.

ٱللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحۡسَنَ ٱلۡحَدِيثِ كِتَٰبٗا مُّتَشَٰبِهٗا مَّثَانِيَ تَقۡشَعِرُّ مِنۡهُ جُلُودُ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَخۡشَوۡنَ رَبَّهُمۡ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمۡ وَقُلُوبُهُمۡ إِلَىٰ ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى
ٱللَّهِ يَهۡدِي بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَمَن يُضۡلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنۡ هَادٖ ٢٣

[23] Allah has sent down the best of discourses, a Book all whose parts are uniform in style[43] and whose themes have been repeated over and over again. Those who fear their Lord are filled with awe when they hear it, and then their bodies and their hearts soften and turn to the remembrance of Allah. This is Allah's guidance, whereby He guides to the Right Way whomever He wills; and the one whom Allah does not guide has no guide whatever.

أَفَمَن يَتَّقِي بِوَجۡهِهِۦ سُوٓءَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۚ وَقِيلَ
لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ ذُوقُواْ مَا كُنتُمۡ تَكۡسِبُونَ ٢٤

كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ فَأَتَىٰهُمُ ٱلۡعَذَابُ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ لَا يَشۡعُرُونَ
٢٥

فَأَذَاقَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخِزْيَ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[24-26] Now, how can you imagine the plight of the one who will receive the severe punishment of the Day of Resurrection on his face?[44] To such wrongdoers it will be said, "Taste now (the fruit of) what you had been earning."[45] Many a people before them also denied likewise. Consequently, the scourge overtook them from whence they least expected. Then Allah made them to taste disgrace even in their worldly life, but the punishment of the Hereafter is far more terrible. Would that they knew it!

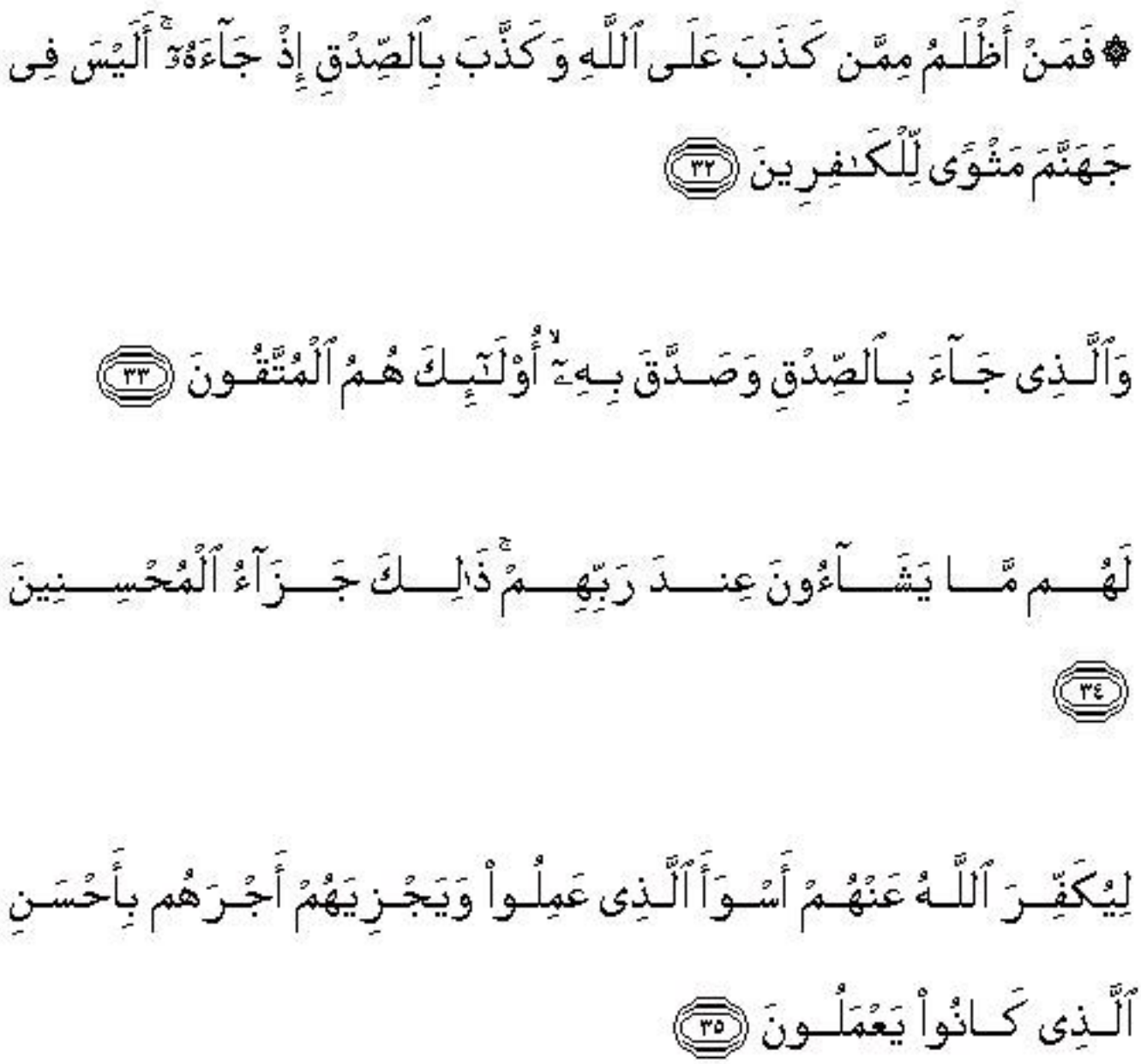
وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِى هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِى عِوَجٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلًا فِيهِ شُرَكَآءُ مُتَشَٰكِسُونَ وَرَجُلًا سَلَمًا لِّرَجُلٍ هَلْ
يَسْتَوِيَانِ مَثَلًا ۚ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عِندَ رَبِّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٣١﴾



[27-35] We have cited for the people in this Qur'an every kind of parable, so that they may take heed. It is a Qur'an in Arabic[46] without any crookedness in it,[47] so that they may guard against the evil end. Allah cites a parable: There is a man who is shared by many harsh masters, each pulling him to himself, and there is the other man who entirely belongs to one master. Can the two be alike in comparison?[48] Praise be to Allah![49] But most of the people have no knowledge.[50] (O Prophet,) you shall die, and they, too, shall die.[51] Then on the Day of Resurrection, you all will present your disputes before your Lord. Then, who could be more wicked than the one who invented a falsehood against Allah, and denied the Truth when it came before him? Is not there in Hell a place for such disbelievers? And the one who came with the Truth, and those who confirmed it, they indeed shall remain secure from the torment.[52] They shall get from their Lord whatever they will desire.[53] This is the compensation of those who do right, so that Allah may wipe off from their account their worst deeds and reward them according to their best deeds.[54]

أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُۥ ۖ وَيُخَوِّفُونَكَ بِٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦ ۚ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ
فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَمَن يَهْدِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّضِلٍّ ۗ أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِعَزِيزٍ ذِى ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قُلْ أَفَرَءَيْتُم
مَّا تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِىَ ٱللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كَٰشِفَٰتُ ضُرِّهِۦٓ
أَوْ أَرَادَنِى بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكَٰتُ رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ قُلْ حَسْبِىَ ٱللَّهُ ۖ عَلَيْهِ
يَتَوَكَّلُ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

قُلْ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّى عَٰمِلٌ ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ لِلنَّاسِ بِٱلۡحَقِّۖ فَمَنِ ٱهۡتَدَىٰ فَلِنَفۡسِهِۦۖ وَمَن ضَلَّ
فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيۡهَاۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ عَلَيۡهِم بِوَكِيلٍ ٤١

[36-41] (O Prophet:) Is not Allah enough for His servant? These people frighten you with others besides Him,[55] whereas there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray, and there is none to misguide him whom He guides aright. Is not Allah Mighty and capable of revenge?[56] If you ask them, "Who created the heavens and the earth?" they will say, "Allah." Ask them, "When the fact is this, do you think that if Allah wills harm for me, these goddesses, whom you invoke instead of Allah, will avert His harm from me? Or, if Allah wills to show me mercy, will they be able to withhold His mercy?" Therefore, tell them, "Allah is enough for me. In Him do those who trust place their trust."[57] Tell them plainly, "O my people: Do whatever you can,[58] so shall I. Soon you shall come to know as to whom comes the disgraceful torment and who gets the enduring punishment." (O Prophet:) We have sent down to you for all mankind this Book with the truth. Now whosoever adopts the right way, will do so for his own sake, and whosoever goes astray, will himself bear the burden of his deviation: you are not responsible for them.[59]

ٱللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلۡأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوۡتِهَا وَٱلَّتِي لَمۡ تَمُتۡ فِي مَنَامِهَاۖ
فَيُمۡسِكُ ٱلَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيۡهَا ٱلۡمَوۡتَ وَيُرۡسِلُ ٱلۡأُخۡرَىٰٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمًّىۚ
إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَٰتٖ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٤٢

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُواْ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ شُفَعَآءَۚ قُلۡ أَوَلَوۡ كَانُواْ لَا يَمۡلِكُونَ شَيۡـٔٗا
وَلَا يَعۡقِلُونَ ٤٣

قُل لِّلَّهِ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ جَمِيعًا ۖ لَّهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

٤٤

[42-44] It is Allah Who takes the souls at death and the soul of the one, who has not yet died, during sleep.[60] Then He withholds that for whom He decrees death and restores the souls of others till an appointed time. In this there are many signs for the people who reflect.[61] What! Have they taken besides Allah others as intercessors?[62] Say to them, "Will they intercede even if they have no power whatever nor understanding?" Say, "Intercession is wholly in the power of Allah.[63] His is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. Then, to Him you will be returned."

وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ ٱشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوبُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ
ٱلَّذِينَ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

٤٥

قُلِ ٱللَّهُمَّ فَاطِرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ عَٰلِمَ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ أَنتَ تَحْكُمُ
بَيْنَ عِبَادِكَ فِى مَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ

٤٦

وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُۥ مَعَهُۥ لَٱفْتَدَوْا۟ بِهِۦ مِن
سُوٓءِ ٱلْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ وَبَدَا لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا۟ يَحْتَسِبُونَ

٤٧

وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[45-48] When Allah alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter, are filled with anguish; but when others beside Him are mentioned, they are at once filled with joy.[64] Say, "O God! Creator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the unseen and the seen! You alone shall judge between Your servants concerning that in which they have been differing." Even if the wicked people possessed all the wealth of the earth, and as much more, they would be prepared to offer it all as ransom to escape the terrible punishment of the Day of Resurrection; yet from Allah there would appear before them that which they would never have imagined. There, all the evil results of their deeds shall become manifest to them, and the same which they had been mocking shall encompass them completely.

فَإِذَا مَسَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ ضُرٌّ دَعَانَا ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلْنَـٰهُ نِعْمَةً مِّنَّا قَالَ إِنَّمَآ
أُوتِيتُهُۥ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍۭ ۚ بَلْ هِىَ فِتْنَةٌ وَلَـٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

قَدْ قَالَهَا ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ
﴿٥٠﴾

فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْ هَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ سَيُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ
مَا كَسَبُوا۟ وَمَا هُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَأٓيَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

[49-52] Man[65] is such that when a little affliction touches him, he calls upon Us, and when We bestow Our favor on him, he says, "I have been given this because of my knowledge!"[66] Nay, it is a trial, but most of them do not know.[67] The same was said also by those who went before them, but whatever they earned did not avail them anything.[68] So, they met the evil consequences of their deeds, and the wicked ones among these people, too, shall soon meet the evil consequences of their deeds. They cannot frustrate Us. And do they not know that Allah provides abundantly for whom He wills and sparingly for whom He wills?[69] In this there are signs for those who believe.

۞ قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُواْ مِن رَّحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ ٱلذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًاۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥٣﴾

وَأَنِيبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُواْ لَهُۥ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ
لَا تُنصَرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

وَٱتَّبِعُوٓاْ أَحْسَنَ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ
بَغْتَةً وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

أَنْ تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ يَٰحَسْرَتَىٰ عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطتُ فِى جَنۢبِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِن كُنتُ لَمِنَ ٱلسَّٰخِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هَدَىٰنِى لَكُنتُ مِنَ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ تَرَى ٱلْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِى كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَآءَتْكَ ءَايَٰتِى فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَٱسْتَكْبَرْتَ وَكُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ تَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وُجُوهُهُم مُّسْوَدَّةٌ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَيُنَجِّى ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ بِمَفَازَتِهِمْ لَا يَمَسُّهُمُ ٱلسُّوٓءُ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

[53-61] (O Prophet,) say, "O My servants,[70] who have wronged their own souls: Do not despair of Allah's mercy: surely Allah forgives all sins: He is the All-Forgiving, the All-Merciful.[71] Return to your Lord and submit to Him before the scourge overtakes you, and then you may get no help from anywhere. And follow the best aspect[72] of the Book sent down by your Lord, before the scourge comes down upon you suddenly while you are unaware, lest afterwards someone should say, "Alas for the negligence (in duty) I showed towards Allah! Indeed, I was among those who mocked." Or: "Would that Allah had shown me guidance so that I too would have been among the righteous!" Or, when he sees the torment: "Would that I could get another chance so that I also should be among the doers of good!" (And then he should get this answer:) "Why not! My Revelations did come to you; then you denied them, and showed arrogance, and you were among the disbelievers." You will see that on the Day of Resurrection the faces of those who have invented falsehoods against Allah, will be blackened. Is not there in Hell enough room for the arrogant? On the contrary, those who have adopted righteousness here, Allah will rescue them because of their means of success. No evil shall touch them nor will they grieve.

ٱللَّهُ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

لَّهُۥ مَقَالِيدُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

قُلْ أَفَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ تَأْمُرُوٓنِّىٓ أَعْبُدُ أَيُّهَا ٱلْجَٰهِلُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ
وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

بَلِ ٱللَّهَ فَٱعْبُدْ وَكُن مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰكِرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[62-66] Allah is the Creator of everything and over every thing He is the Guardian.[73] To Him belong the keys of the treasures of the heavens and the earth; and the losers are only those who disbelieve His Revelations. (O Prophet,) say to them, "Ignorant people! Do you bid me worship others than Allah?" (Tell them plainly this because) the Revelation sent to you and to all the Prophets before you has been this: `If you commit shirk, all your works will be rendered vain[74] and you will be among the losers." Therefore, (O Prophet), you should worship only Allah and be among His grateful servants.

وَمَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ
وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ مَطْوِيَّٰتٌۢ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَآءَ
ٱللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

وَأَشۡرَقَتِ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ بِنُورِ رَبِّهَا وَوُضِعَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ وَجِاْيٓءَ بِٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ
وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَقُضِيَ بَيۡنَهُم بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَهُمۡ لَا يُظۡلَمُونَ ٦٩

وَوُفِّيَتۡ كُلُّ نَفۡسٖ مَّا عَمِلَتۡ وَهُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا يَفۡعَلُونَ ٧٠

[67-70] These people have not recognized the true worth of Allah as His worth should truly be recognized.[75] (As for His Omnipotence) the entire earth on the Day of Resurrection shall be in His grasp and the heavens shall be rolled up in His right hand.[76] Glorified is He and Exalted above what they associate with Him.[77] And the Trumpet shall be blown on that Day[78] and all those who are in the heavens and the earth shall fall down dead except those whom Allah may allow to live. Then the Trumpet shall be blown again and they will all stand up, looking around.[79]

وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًاۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا فُتِحَتۡ أَبۡوَٰبُهَا
وَقَالَ لَهُمۡ خَزَنَتُهَآ أَلَمۡ يَأۡتِكُمۡ رُسُلٞ مِّنكُمۡ يَتۡلُونَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّكُمۡ
وَيُنذِرُونَكُمۡ لِقَآءَ يَوۡمِكُمۡ هَٰذَاۚ قَالُواْ بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِنۡ حَقَّتۡ كَلِمَةُ ٱلۡعَذَابِ
عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ٧١

قِيلَ ٱدۡخُلُوٓاْ أَبۡوَٰبَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۖ فَبِئۡسَ مَثۡوَى ٱلۡمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ٧٢

وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ
أَبْوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَٱدْخُلُوهَا خَٰلِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُۥ وَأَوْرَثَنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ
حَيْثُ نَشَآءُ ۖ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

وَتَرَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ حَآفِّينَ مِنْ حَوْلِ ٱلْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَقُضِىَ
بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَقِيلَ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

[71-75] The earth will shine forth with the light of her Lord and the conduct book will be laid open, and the Prophets and the witnesses[80] shall be brought in, and the people shall be judged with full justice, and none shall be wronged. And every living being shall be recompensed fully for whatever it had done. Allah knows full well what the people do. (After this Judgment) those who had disbelieved, shall be driven towards Hell, in groups, till, when they have reached there, its gates will be opened,[81] and its keepers will say to them, "Did not Messengers come to you from among yourselves, who recited to you the Revelations of your Lord, and warned you that you shall have to encounter this Day?" They will reply, "Yes, they did come, but the sentence of punishment proved true against the disbelievers." It will be said, "Enter the gates of Hell, to dwell therein for ever. What an evil abode for the arrogant! " And those who had refrained from the disobedience of their Lord shall be led towards Paradise, in groups, till, when they arrive there, and its gates shall already have been opened, its keepers will say, Peace be upon you: you have fared well. Enter herein to dwell for every" And they will say, "Praise is for Allah, Who has proved true to us His promise and made us heirs of the earth.[82] Now we can dwell in Paradise wherever we like.[83] How excellent a reward for the virtuous![84] And you will see the angels circling around the Throne, glorifying their Lord with His praises; and the people shall be judged with full justice, and it will be proclaimed: "Praise is for Allah; Lord of the worlds!"[85]

1This is a brief introduction to the Surah which only stresses the point that the Qur'an is not Muhammad's word, as the disbelievers assert, but it is Allah's Word, which He Himself has sent down. Along with this, two of Allah's attributes have been mentioned to warn the listeners of two realities so that they do not

underestimate this Word but understand its full importance: (1) That Allah Who has sent it down, is All-Mighty; that is, He is so powerful that no power can prevent His will and decisions from being enforced and none can dare resist Him in any way; (2) that He is All-wise; that is, the guidance He is giving in this Book, is wholly based on wisdom, and only an ignorant and foolish person can turn away from it. (For further explanation, sec E.N. 1 of Surah As-Sajdah).

2That is, it contains nothing but the truth, and there is no element of falsehood in it.

3This is a very important verse, which stasis the real objective of the message of Islam. Therefore, one should not pass over it superficially, but should try to understand its meaning and intention well. It has two basic points without grasping which one cannot understand the verse: (1) That the demand is to worship Allah; and (2) that the demand is of such worship as may be performed by making religion exclusively Allah's.

Ibadat is derived from 'abd, and this word is used as an antonym of freeman" for the "slave" and `bondsman" in Arabic. Accordingly, 'ibadat contains two meanings: (1) Worship and devotion; and (2) humble and willing obedience, as is borne out by the well-known and authoritative Arabic Lexicon. Lisan al-'Arab. Thus, according to the authentic lexical explanation, the demand is not only of Allah's worship but also of willing and sincere obedience to His Commands and His Law.

The Arabic word diin contains several meanings:

(1) Domination and sovereignty, rulership and political power and authority to enforce one's decisions on others.

(2) Obedience, compliance with commands and servitude.

(3) The practice and the way that a man follows.

In view of these three meanings, diin in this verse means: "The way of life and attitude which a man adopts after acknowledging the supremacy and accepting the obedience of another; " and `to worship Allah making one's religion exclusively His" means that one should refrain from combining another's worship with the worship of Allah, but should worship Allah alone, should follow His Guidance alone, and should comply with His Commands and injunctions only.

4This is an actual fact and reality, which has been presented as an argument for the above demand. It means: "You should worship Allah, making din exclusively His, for it is only Allah's right that He should be obeyed and worshiped sincerely and exclusively." In other words, there is no one else who may deserve to be worshiped so that he also should be served and worshiped besides Allah and his commands and

laws also obeyed. If a person serves another, apart from Allah, sincerely and exclusively, he does wrong. Likewise, if he combines the worship of another with his worship of Allah, this also is against the truth. The best commentary of this verse is the Hadith which Ibn Marduyah has related from Yazid ar-Raqashi. He says: A person asked the Holy Prophet: "We give away our wealth so that we become well-known. Shall we get a reward for this?" The Holy Prophet replied: No. He asked: "What, if one has the intention both of Allah's reward and of reputation in the world?" The Holy Prophet replied: `Allah does not accept any deed unless it is performed exclusively for His sake." After this he recited this same verse.

5The disbelievers of Makkah said, and the polytheists the world over generally say the same, "We do not worship other beings regarding them as our creators: the Creator is only Allah, and He alone is the real Deity; but He is too high for us to have access to Him. Therefore, we make these saintly beings a means to convey our prayers and our petitions to Allah. "

6One should understand it well that unity and concord is possible only through Tauhid: there can be no unity through shirk. The polytheists the world over have never agreed as to which beings are the definite means of access to Allah. Some people have taken some particular gods and goddesses as the means, but even among them there is no agreement on all the gods and goddesses; some others have taken the moon, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, etc. as the means, and they also are not agreed as to which of them holds what rank and which is the real means of approach to Allah; some others have taken the dead saints as the means, but they also differ widely about them: one believes in one saint and another in another. The reason is that the belief about these different beings is neither based on any knowledge, nor has Allah ever sent down a list telling that such and such persons are His special favorites; therefore, they only should be made the means to have access to Him. This is a creed which has spread among the people only on account of superstitions and whims and blind imitation of the elders. Hence the differences.

7Here, Allah has used two words for these people, kazib (liar) and kaffar (denier). They have been called kazib because they have falsely invented this creed by themselves, and then they spread falsehood among others. As for kaffar. it has two meanings: (1) A stubborn disbeliever, i.e.. the people who insist on their false creed even after the doctrine of Tauhid has come before them; and (2) ungrateful for blessings, i.e. they arc receiving all kinds of blessings from Allah, but are thanking those other beings about whom they have assumed that these blessings are reaching them through their agency and influence.

8That is, "It is just impossible that Allah should have begotten a son. The only possibility is that Allah should choose someone for Himself; and whomever He chooses will inevitably be from among the creatures, for everything in the world, apart from Allah, is His creation. Now, evidently, however exalted and chosen a creature might be, it cannot have the position of the offspring. For between the Creator and the created there exists a great disparity of nature and essence and character, and parenthood necessarily demands that there should be the unity of nature and essence between a father and his offspring."

Besides, one should also bear in mind the point that the words: "Had Allah willed to take a son, He would....." themselves give the meaning that Allah has never willed so. Here the object is to impress that not to speak of taking a son, Allah has never even willed so.

9The following are the arguments by which the doctrine of parenthood has been refuted:

First, that Allah is free from every defect and fault and weakness. Obviously, children are needed by the one who is defective and weak; the one who is mortal stands in need of them, so that his progeny should continue to live after him in the world. Likewise, he who adopts a son does so either because he feels the need of having an heir, being childless himself, or he adopts a son being overpowered by love of somebody. Attributing such human weaknesses to Allah and forming religious creeds on their basis is nothing but ignorance and shortsightedness.

The second argument is that Allah in His essence and Being is unique: He is not a member of a species, whereas, evidently, offspring must necessarily belong to a species. Furthermore, there can be no concept of offspring without marriage, and marriage can take place only between homogeneous individuals. Therefore, the one who proposes offspring for the Unique and Matchless Being like Allah, is ignorant and foolish:

The third argument is that Allah is Omnipotent, i.e. whatever is there in the world is subdued to Him and is held in His powerful grasp. No one in this Universe has any resemblance with Him in any way or degree on account of which it may be imagined that he has some relation with Allah.

10For explanation, sec Ibrahim: 19, An-Nahl: 3, Al-'Ankabut: 44, and the E.N.'s thereof.

11That is, "He is All-Mighty: if He wills to punish you, no power can resist Him. But it is His kindness that He does not seize you forthwith in spite of your arrogant and insolent behaviour, but He goes on giving you respite after respite." Here, Allah's making no haste in seizing people in punishment and His giving them respite has been called forgiveness.

12This does not mean that first He created the human beings from Adam and then created his wife, Eve. But here, instead of the chronological order, there is the order of presentation, examples of which arc found in every language. For instance, we say, "Whatever you did today is known to me, and whatever you did yesterday is also in my knowledge." This cannot mean that what happened yesterday has happened after today.

13That is, the camel, cow, sheep and goat whose four males and four females together make eight heads of cattle.

14The three dark veils are: the belly, the womb and the caul or membrane enclosing the fetus.

15"Your Lord" : your Master, Ruler and Providence.

16That is, "All powers and authority rest with Him and it is He Who is ruling over the whole Universe. "

17In other words, the reasoning is this: "When Allah alone is your Lord and His is the sovereignty, then inevitably your Deity also is He. How can another be your deity when he has neither any share in providence nor any role in sovereignty? After all, how can it be reasonable for you to take others as your deities when Allah alone is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, when Allah alone has subjected the sun and the moon for you, when He alone brings the day after the night and the night after the day, and when He alone is your own Creator and Lord as well as of all animals and cattle?"

18These words need deep consideration. It has not been said: "Where are you turning away?" but ¦where are you being turned away?" That is, "There is someone else who is misleading you, and being thus deceived you do not understand such a simple and reasonable thing. " The other thing which by itself becomes evident from the style is: The word "you" is not addressed to the agents but to those who were turning away under their influence. Their is a subtle point in this which can be understood easily after a little thought. Those who were working to turn away others (from the Right Way) were present in the same society and were doing whatever they could openly and publicly. Therefore, there was no need to mention them by name. It was also useless to address them, for they were trying to turn away the people from the service of Allah, the One, and entrapping them for the service of others, and keeping them entrapped for selfish motives. Obviously, such people could not be made to see reason by argument, for it lay in their own interest not' to understand and see reason, and even after understanding they could hardly be inclined to sacrifice their interests. However, the condition of the common people who were being deceived and cheated, was certainly pitiable. They had no interest involved in the business; therefore, they could be convinced by reasoning and argument, and after a little understanding they could also see what advantages were being gained by those who were showing them the way to other deities, after turning them away from Allah. That is why the address has been directed to the common people, who were being misguided rather than those few who were misguiding them.

19That is, "Your disbelief cannot cause any decrease or deficiency in His Kingdom. He will be God if you believe in Him, and He will still be God if you deny Him. He is ruling over His Kingdom by His own power; your believing or denying Him does not affect His Sovereignty in any way." According to a Hadith. Allah says: "O My servants, if all of you, the former and the latter, the men and the jinns, become like the heart of a most sinful person among you, it will cause no deficiency whatever in My Kingdom. " (Muslim).

20That is, "He does not approve, not for any interest of His own but for the interest and benefit of the servants themselves, that they should disbelieve, for disbelief is harmful for them." Here, one should bear

in mind the fact that Allah's will is one thing and His approval and pleasure another. Nothing in the world can happen against Allah's will, but many things can happen against His approval, and arc happening day and night. For example, the dominance of the tyrants and the wicked in the world, the existence of thieves and robbers, the presence of murderers and adulterers, are possible only because Allah has made room for the occurrence of these evils and the existence of these criminals in the scheme of things ordained by Him. Then He provides opportunities also of committing evil just as He provides opportunities to the good of doing good. Had He made no room for these evils and had provided no opportunities of committing wrongs to the evildoers, no evil would have ever occurred in the world. All this is based on Allah's Will. But the occurrence of an act under Divine Will does not mean that Allah's approval also goes with it. This may be explained by an example. If a person tries to obtain his living only by lawful means, Allah provides him his living through those means. This is His will. But providing for the thief or the robber or the corrupt person under the will does not mean that Allah also likes stealing and robbery and taking of bribes. Allah says the same thing here, as if to say: "If you want to disbelieve, you may do so: We will not stop you from this nor make you believe forcibly. But We do not approve that you should deny your Creator and Providence, being His servants, for it is harmful for yourselves: Our Godhead is not harmed and affected by it in any way."

21The word shukr (gratitude) has been used here as against kufr (disbelief) instead of Iman (belief). This by itself shows that kufr is, in fact, ingratitude and disloyalty, and faith is the necessary requirement of gratitude. The person who has any feeling of the favors of Allah Almighty, cannot adopt any other way than that of belief and faith. Therefore, gratitude and faith are correlatives: wherever there is gratitude there will be faith also. On the contrary, wherever there is disbelief, there will be no question of gratitude at all, for gratitude along with disbelief is meaningless.

22It means this: "Each one of you is himself responsible for his deeds, If a person adopts disbelief in order to please others, or to avoid their displeasure, those others will never bear the burden of his disbelief, but will leave him to bear his own burden. Therefore, anyone who comes to know that disbelief is wrong and belief is right, should give up the wrong attitude. and adopt the right attitude, and avoid making himself liable for Allah's punishment by associating himself with his family or brotherhood or nation.

23"The man": the disbeliever who adopted the way of ingratitude.

24That is, "At that time he does not remember those other deities whom he used to invoke in good times; but he despairs of them all and turns only to Allah, Lord of the worlds." This is a clear proof of the fact that in the depths of his heart he has the feeling that all other deities are helpless, and the realization that Allah alone is the Possessor of all powers and authority, lies buried and hidden deep in his mind. "

25That is, "He again forgets the bad times when abandoning all other deities he was invoking only Allah,

the One."

26That is, "He again starts serving others: he obeys them, prays to them and makes offerings before them."

27That is, "He is not content with his own self having gone astray, but also leads others astray, telling them that the affliction which had befallen him, had been averted by the help of such and such a pious man or saint, or god and goddess." Thus, many other people also put their faith in these deities besides Allah, and are further misled as the ignorant and foolish people describe their experiences before them.

28It should be noted that two kinds of the men are being contrasted here. First, those who turn to Allah when a calamity befalls them, but worship others than Allah normally. Second, those who have made it their permanent way of life to obey Allah and worship and serve Him, and their worshiping Him in solitude during the night is a proof of their sincerity. The first kind of the men have been called ignorant by Allah, even if they might have devoured whole libraries. And the second kind of the men have been called the learned, even if they might be illiterate. For the real supremely important thing is the knowledge of the Truth and man's action according to it, and on this depends his true success. Allah asks: How can these two be equal? How can they possibly follow the same way together in the world, and meet with the same end in the Hereafter?

29That is, Do not rest content with belief but follow it up with piety and fear of God. Act according to what Allah has enjoined and avoid what He has forbidden and live in the world fearing His accountability.

30Good and well-being both of this world and of the Hereafter.

31That is, "If one city, territory or land has become difficult for the worshipers of Allah, they may emigrate to another place where they may not have to face any such hardship. "

32"Those . . . measure" : Those who brave all kinds of hardships and persecutions in following the way of God-worship and piety but do not abandon the way of the Truth. This also includes those people who emigrate to other countries and experience hardships in the foreign land for the sake of religion and faith, and those also who continue to face every kind of temptation and calamity firmly and patiently in the land where they are being persecuted."

33That is, "My mission is not only to exhort others but also to practice what I preach myself: I first myself follow the way which I call others to follow."

34Bankruptcy is loss of a person's capital and failure of his business so that he is unable to pay his debts in full. This same metaphor Allah has used here for the disbelievers and polytheists, The sum total of

whatever man has got in this world-his life, his intellect, body, powers, capabilities, means and opportunities-is in fact, the capital, which he invests in the business of the worldly life. If a person invested this whole capital on the hypothesis that there is no God, or that there are many gods, whose servant he is, and that he is not accountable to anyone, or that someone else will rescue him on Judgment Day, it would mean that he made a losing bargain and lost all his capital. This is his first loss. His second loss is that in everything that he did, on the basis of the wrong hypothesis, he went on wronging himself and many other men, and the coming generations and many other creatures of Allah, throughout his life. Thus, he got into countless debts, but has no money with which he may fully pay his debts. Over and above this, he has not only himself incurred this loss, but has caused the same loss to his children and near and dear once and friends and fellow countrymen by his wrong education and training and wrong example. It is these three losses together which Allah has called khusran-i-mubin (utter bankruptcy) in this verse.

35Taghut is from tughyan and means rebellion. If someone is called taghut (rebellion) instead of taghi (rebel), it would mean that he is a rebel incarnate. For example, if a person is called husn (beauty) instead of hasin (beautiful), it would mean that he has reached perfection in beauty. The other deities than Allah have been called taghut because it is rebellion to worship others besides Allah, but the one who has others worship him, is a rebel of the worst kind. (For further explanation, see AI-Baqarah: 256, Al-Nisa: 60, 76, An-Naml: 36 and the E.N.'s thereof).

36This verse can have two meanings:

(1) That they do not follow every voice but ponder over what every man says and accept only what is right and true; and

(2) that they do not try to give a false meaning to what they hear but adopt its good and righteous aspects.

37That is, the person who has made himself worthy of Allah's punishment and about whom Allah has already decided that he will be punished.

38The word yanabi` in the Text is comprehensive and applies to all the three sources of water.

39That is, "A man of understanding learns this lesson from it that the life of this world and its adornments are all transitory: the end of every spring is autumn; the fate of every youth is weakness and death; and every rise has a fall. Therefore, this world is not something of which one should be charmed and enamored so as to forget God and the Hereafter and should conduct himself here in a manner as to nun his Hereafter, only for the sake of enjoying the short lived pleasures of this world. Then a man of understanding also learns this lesson from these phenomena that the spring and autumn of this world are

only under Allah's control: Allah allows to grow and prosper whomever He wills and ruins and lays waste whomever He wills. Neither it is in anybody's power to stop the growth of someone whom Allah wills to grow, nor has anyone the power to save him from destruction whom Allah wills to destroy.

40"Whose breast... Islam": Whom Allah helps to learn a lesson from these realities and to be satisfied with Islam as based on the Truth. Opening of a man's breast for something is, in fact, a state in which there remains no anxiety or ambiguity or suspicion and doubt in his mind about the thing, nor has he the feeling of any danger and loss in accepting and adopting it, but he decides with full satisfaction of the heart that it is the Truth; therefore, he must follow it whatever be the consequences. Having made such a decision when a person adopts the way of Islam, he obeys whatever Command he receives from Allah and His Messenger willingly and with pleasure, without any hesitation. He accepts whatever beliefs and ideas, rules and regulations, he comes across in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet as if they were the voice of his own heart. He does not feel any compunction on giving up an unlawful gain, because he believes that it was no gain for him at all; it was rather a loss from which Allah saved him by His grace. Likewise, even if he incurs a loss while following the way of righteousness, he does not feel sad about this but bears it with patience and regards it as an ordinary loss as compared to the loss of turning away from the Way of Allah. The same is his behavior on confronting dangers. He believes that there is no other way for him, which he may follow in order to avoid the danger. The Straight Way of Allah is only one, which he has to follow in any case: if there is a danger in following it, let it be.

41"In the light shown by his Lord" : In the light of the knowledge of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet, by the help of which he sees clearly at every step which is the straight path of the Truth among the countless by-paths of life.

42As against the opening of the breast there can be two other states of man's heart: (1) The state of narrowing of the breast and squeezing of the heart; and in this state there still remains some room for the truth to permeate it; and (2) the state of hardening or petrifying of the heart; in this there is left no room whatever for the truth to permeate. About this second state Allah says that the person who reaches such a stage is totally ruined. This means that if a person becomes inclined to accept the truth, even though with an unveiling and squeezed heart, there remains some possibility for him to be redeemed. This second theme becomes obvious from the style and tenor of the verse itself, though Allah has not stated it directly. For the real intention of the verse was to warn those who were bent upon stubbornness in their antagonism towards the Holy Prophet, and had made up their mind not to listen to him at all. For this they have been warned, as if to say: "You take pride in this stubbornness of yours, but, as a matter of fact, there cannot be a greater misfortune and unworthiness of man than that his heart should become even more hardened, instead of becoming soft, when he hears Allah being mentioned and the admonition sent by Him.

43That is, there is no contradiction and disagreement between them. The whole Book, from the beginning to the end, projects one and the same aim, one and the same belief, and one and the same

system of thought and action. Each of its parts confirms and supports and explains the other themes; and there is perfect consistency in it both in meaning and in style.

44One takes a blow on one's face only when one is absolutely helpless and powerless, otherwise until one has some power to resist, one goes on receiving the blows on the other parts of one's body but saves one's face. Therefore, here the extreme state of helplessness of a person has been depicted, saying that he will receive the severe punishment on his face.

45The word kasab, in the Qur'anic terminology, implies one's descrying and earning a reward and punishment in consequence of one's actions and deeds. The real earning of a doer of good is that he becomes worthy of Allah's reward, and the earning of the evil-doer is the punishment that he will receive in the Hereafter.

46That is, "It has not been sent down in a foreign language so that the people of Makkah and Arabia should stand in need of a translator or interpreter, but it is in their own language, which they can understand directly."

47That is, "There is nothing of double-dealing in it so that a common man should find it difficult to understand, but everything has been presented in it in a straightforward manner, from which everyone can know what this Book states as wrong and why, what it states as right and on what ground, what it wants the people to accept and what it wants them to reject, and what it enjoins and what it forbids."

48Allah in this parable has explained the difference between shirk and Tauhid and the impact each has on human life so clearly that it is not possible to put across such a vast theme so concisely and effectively in other words. Everyone will admit that the person who has many masters, each one pulling hire to himself, and the masters also so ill-tempered that no one spares him time in his service to obey the other, and no one rests content only with threatening and cursing him if he fails to carry out his command from among the contradictory commands of the other masters, but is bent upon punishing him, his life would certainly be in great anguish. On the contrary, the person who is the slave or servant of only one master, would be living a life of ease and comfort because he will not have to serve and seek the pleasure of another master. This is such a straightforward thing which does not need deep consideration for its understanding. After this it remains no longer difficult for a person to understand that the peace of mind and satisfaction that accrue to him from the service of One God, can never accrue from the service of many gods.

Here, it should be understood well that the parable of many ill-tempered and contesting masters cannot apply to the images of stone, but it only applies to living masters, who practically give contradictory commands to man and keep pulling him to themselves in actual reality. One such master sits in one's own self, which presents before him desires of every kind and compels him to fulfill them. Other countless

masters are there in the house, in the family, in the brotherhood, in the society, among the religious guides and the rulers and legislators, in the business and economic circles and among the dominant powers of civilization whose contradictory demands and requirements keep on pulling man to themselves at All times; then any god whose demand he fails to fulfill in any way, does not let him go unpunished in his own circle. However, each one's instrument of punishment is different. Someone causes a heart-break, another takes offense, another humiliates, another boycotts, another bankrupts, another makes a religious or a legal attack. Man has no other way of being saved from this anguish and agony but to adopt the Way of Tauhid and become the slave of One God, and throw off the yoke of servitude of every other god.

Adoption of the Way of Tauhid also has two forms, which lead to different results:

First, that an individual should decide to become the servant of One God individually but his environment is hostile. In this case the external conflict and his anguish and agony might increase, but if he has adopted the Way sincerely, internal peace and satisfaction will necessarily accrue. He will turn down every such desire of the self as goes against the Divine Commands, or whose fulfillment may clash with the demands of God-worship. He will also reject every such demand of the family, society, nation, government, religious guides and economic powers that conflicts with the Divine Law. Consequently, he might have to face extreme hardships, rather he will surely face, but his heart will have full satisfaction that he is fulfilling the demand of the servitude of that God Whose servant he actually is, and that those whose servant he is not, have no right on him, because of which he may have to serve them against the Command of his God. No power of the world can deprive him of this satisfaction of the heart and peace of mind; so much so that even if he has to go to the gallows for its sake, he will go to it with a clear conscience, and he will have no compunction as to why he did not save his life by bowing before the false gods.

The second form is that the whole society be established on the basis of the Tauhid imbibing the principles of morality, civilization, culture, education, religion, law, social custom, politics, economics in every sphere of life as a creed, which the Master of the Universe has given through His Book and His Messenger. The law should declare as a crime everything which God's religion has declared sinful and the government administration should try to eradicate the same; the system of education and training should prepare the minds and character to avoid the same; the same should be condemned from the religious pulpit, and regarded as vicious and forbidden in every economic enterprise. Likewise, everything that Allah's religion has declared as good and virtuous should be protected and defended by the law, developed by the administrative forces, impressed in the minds and instilled in character by the entire system of education and training, infused from the religious pulpit, admired by the society and followed by it practically and enforced in every economic enterprise. This is how man can attain to perfect internal and external peace and satisfaction, and all the doors to material and spiritual progress are thrown open, for the conflict in it between God-worship and the worship of others would be reduced to the minimum.

Although Islam invites every single individual to adopt Tauhid as his creed and to worship Allah alone, braving every danger and hardship, even in the absence of the established order, it cannot be denied that Islam's ultimate aim and object is to establish this second order, and the same has been the objective of the endeavors of all the Prophets: to bring into existence a community of the Muslims, who should follow Allah's religion collectively, free from the domination and influence of unbelief and the unbelievers, No one. unless he is unaware of the Qur'an and the Sunnah and senseless, can say that the objective of the Prophets' struggle has been only the faith and obedience of the individual, and that it has never been their aim to enforce and establish Islam in the society and state.

49Here, in order to understand the real significance of al-hamdu-lillah (praise be to Allah), one should visualize this scene: after presenting the above question before the people the speaker observed a pause so that the opponents of Tauhid could give an answer to it if they had any. Then, when they could not give any answer, and from nowhere it was said that both were equal, the speaker said: "AI-hamdu-lillah: Thank God that you too appreciate the difference between the two situations and none among you can dare say that slavery to many masters is better than slavery to one master, or that both are equal.

50That is, "You fully understand and appreciate the difference between to many masters, but when you are made to God-worship and the worship of many gods, slavery to one master and slavery understand the difference between you show lack of understanding.

51There is a subtle gap between the preceding sentence and this, which can be filled by every intelligent person himself by a little consideration of the context. It contains this theme: "You are making every effort to make the people understand a simple thing in a simple way, but they are not only showing stubbornness with regard to what you say and rejecting it but are also bent upon harming you in order to suppress the manifest truth. Well, neither you are immortal nor they : both you and they have to die one day: then, each of you will experience his own end.

52It means this: "As to who will receive punishment in the trial before Allah on the day of Resurrection, you should note it well that the punishment inevitably will be inflicted on those wicked people who invented a false creed that there were other associates also with Allah, who had a share in His Being, authority, powers and rights, and worse than that, when the truth was presented before them, they not only paid no heed to it, but, on the contrary, treated the one who presented it as an impostor. As far as the person who came with the truth, and those who affirmed faith in him, are concerned there can obviously be no question of their receiving any punishment from the Court of Allah.

53One should note that the words used here are inch Rabbi-him (with their Lord) and not fil-jannah (in Paradise), and obviously man reaches in the presence of his Lord just after death. Therefore, the intention of the verse seems to be: Not only after entering Paradise but right from the time of death till his entry into Paradise also Allah will treat the righteous believer in the same kind manner. The believer will

certainly desire to be saved from the torment of barzakh. from the severities of the Day of Resurrection and Judgment, from the humiliation of the Plain of Gathering and from the punishment of his errors and shortcomings, and Allah Almighty will fulfill all his desires.

54The people who believed in the Holy Prophet had happened to commit most heinous sins, both ideological and moral, in the days of ignorance, and after affirmation of the faith the good that they did was not only that they gave up the falsehood they had been professing and accepted the Truth that the Holy Prophet had presented, but in addition, they had performed the best righteous acts in morality. devotion and in their dealing's with others, Allah says: The worst deeds that they had committed in the days of ignorance will be wiped off from their account, and they will be rewarded for the best of their deeds found in their conduct book.

55The disbelievers of Makkah used to say to the Holy Prophet, "You behave insolently in respect of our deities and utter rude words against them : you do not know how powerful they are and what miraculous powers they possess. Anybody who dishonored them was ruined. If you also do not desist from what you say against them, you too will be annihilated.

56That is, "This also is a result of their lack of guidance that the foolish people esteem highly the power and honor of their deities but they never think that Allah also is Almighty and they can also be punished for insulting Him by the shirk they are committing against Him. "

57Ibn Abi Hatim has related from Ibn `Abbas that the Holy Prophet said: 'The person who desires that he should become most powerful among men should repose his trust in Allah; and the person who desires that he should become the wealthiest among men should have more trust in that which is with Allah than that which is in his own hand; and the person who desires that he should become most honorable among men should fear Allah Almighty."

58That is, You may go on doing what you can in order to harm me and do not give me any respite.

59That is, It is not for you to bring them to the Right Path. Your only duty is to present the Right Path before them. If they prefer to remain astray after that, you are not responsible for it.

60"Taking the souls during sleep" implies the suspension of the powers of feeling and consciousness, understanding and will.

61By this Allah wants every man to realize how life and death are entirely in His own hand. No one has the guarantee that he will certainly get up alive in the morning when he goes to sleep at night. No one knows what disaster could befall him within a moment, and whether the next moment would be a moment of life for him or of death. At any time, while asleep or awake, in the house or outside it, some unforeseen

calamity, from inside his body or from outside, can, suddenly cause his death: Thus, man who is so helpless in the hand of God, .would be foolish if he turned away from the same God or became heedless of Him.

62That is, "In the first place, these people have foolishly presumed that there are some beings who wield great influence with Allah, and whose intercession is never turned down, whereas there is no proof of their being intercessors at all, nor has Allah ever said that they hold such a position with Him, nor did these beings themselves ever claim that they would use their influence with Allah and help them out in every case. Another folly of these people is that they have ignored the real Master and have believed the imaginary beings to be all powerful, who deserve to receive all their devotion and dedication.

63That is, "Not to speak of getting his intercession granted, no one has the power to stand before Allah as an intercessor. The right to grant or not to grant anyone the permission to intercede with Him exclusively rests with Allah. Then He may allow intercession for whomever He may please and forbid for whomever He may please. " (For understanding the difference between the Islamic concept of intercession and the polytheistic concept, see Al-Baqarah: 255, Al-An`am: 51, Yunus: 3, 18, Hud: 105, Ar-Ra`d 11, An-Naml: 73, 84, Ta Ha: 109-110, Al-Anbiya': 23, Al-Hijr: 76, and the E.N.'s thereof and E.N. 40 of Saba.

64This evil is common to almost all polytheistic people of the world, and even some unfortunate Muslims also suffer from it, They profess with the tongue that they believe in Allah, but when One Allah alone is mentioned before them, their faces arc distorted, and they say, "This man certainly does not believe in the saints and holy men; that is why he talks of Allah and Allah alone. " And if others besides Allah arc mentioned, they are delighted, and their faces brighten up with joy. Their this attitude shows as to who is the actual object of their love and esteem. 'Allama Alusi, in his commentary Ruh al-Ma ani, has related his own experience here. He says: "One day I saw that a man was invoking the help of a dead saint in his affliction. I said; O bondsman of Allah, invoke Allah, for He Himself says: 'If My servants ask you, O Prophet, concerning Me, tell them I am quite near to them. I hear and answer the prayer of the supplicant when he calls to Me," (Al-Baqarah: 186), Hearing this the man became angry, the people told me afterwards that he said: This man is a denier of the saints; and some others heard him also say: The saints answer the prayers more promptly than does Allah.

65"The man" : the one who has aversion to Allah and whose face is distorted on hearing Allah alone being mentioned.

66This sentence can have two meanings:

(1) "That Allah knows that I am worthy of this blessing; that is why He has given me All this, otherwise He would not have blessed me if I had been an evil and wicked person in His sight;" and

(2) `that I have attained to this by virtue of my ability."

67People ignorantly think that whoever is being blessed by Allah in some way is being so blessed necessarily on account of his worth and ability and that the same is a sign or proof of his being a favorite in His sight; whereas the fact is that whoever is being given something here, is being given it for the sake of a trial by Allah. This is a means of the test, and not any reward for ability, otherwise many able and worthy people would not be living in poverty and many unworthy people would not be rolling in prosperity. Likewise, these worldly blessings arc not a sign of one's being a favorite with Allah either. Everyone can see that many good people whose goodness is unquestionable arc living in hardships in the world, and many wicked people whose evil-doing is well known are enjoying the pleasures of life, Now, can a sensible man take the affliction of the one and the life of ease and comfort of the other as an argument to say that Allah hates the good man and prefers the bad man?

68That is, "When they were seized for evil-doing, the ability of which they were so proud, did not avail them anything, and this also became known that they were not Allah's favorites. Evidently, if their earning had been due to their capability and their being favorites with Allah, they would not have been seized for evil-doing at all."

69That is, "The Abundance or restriction of the provisions is based on another law of Allah, which has some other wisdom. The distribution of the provisions does not at all depend on man's worthiness and ability, or on his being a favorite of Allah, or for being under His wrath. " (For details, see At-Taubah: 55, 69, 85; Yunus: 17; Hud: 3, 27; Ar-Ra`d: 26; Al-Kahf: 34-36; Ta Ha: 131-132; AI-Anbiya': 105; Al-Mu`min: Introduction and vv. 55-56; Ash-Shu'ara`: 111; AI-Qasas: 78, 89 and the E N. thereof. and E.N.'s 54 to 60 of Saba).

70Some commentators have given a strange interpretation to these words. They say that Allah Himself has commanded the Holy Prophet to address the people as "My servants" therefore, all men are the servants of the Holy Prophet. This interpretation is no interpretation at all but a worst distortion of the meaning of the Qur'an and indeed tampering with the Word of Allah. If this interpretation were correct, it would falsify and negate the whole Qur'an.

For the Qur'an, from the beginning to the end, establishes the concept that men are the servants of Allah alone, and its whole message revolves around the point that they should serve none but One Allah alone. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself was Allah's servant. Allah had sent him not as rabb (sustainer, providence) but as a Messenger so that he should himself serve Him and teach the other people also to serve Him alone. After all, how can a sensible person believe that the Holy Prophet might have one day stood up before the disbelieving Quraish of Makkah and made the sudden proclamation: "You are in fact the slaves of Muhammad and not of al- `Uzzah and ash-Shams." (We seek Allah's refuge from this)

71The address here is to all mankind. There is no weighty argument to regard only the believers as the addressees. As has been observed by 'Allama Ibn Kathir, to address such a thing to the common men does not mean that Allah forgives all sins without repentance, but Allah Himself has explained in the following verses that sins are forgiven only when the sinner turns to Allah's worship and service and adopts obedience to the message sent down by Him. As a matter of fact, this verse brought a message of hope for those people who had committed mortal sins like murder, adultery, theft, robbery, etc. in the days of ignorance, and had despaired whether they would ever be forgiven. To them it has been said: "Do not despair of Allah's mercy: whatever you might have done in the past, if you sincerely turn to your Lord's obedience, you will be forgiven every sin." The same interpretation of this verse has been given by Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Mujahid and Ibn Zaid. (Ibn Jarir, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi). For further explanation, see Al-Furqan: 70-71 and the E.N.'s thereof.

72"To follow the best aspect of the Book of Allah" means that one should carry out the Commands Allah has given and refrain from what He has forbidden, and learn lessons from what He has brought out in the parables and narratives. As against this, the one who turns away from Allah's Commands, indulges in the forbidden things, and does not heed His admonitions, follows the worst aspect of the Book of Allah, i.e. that aspect which the Divine Book has declared as the most evil.

73That is, "He did not just create the world and then left it alone, but He is constantly guarding and watching over everything. Just as everything in the world came into being by His act of creation so everything is living and surviving by His leave, and flourishing and functioning only under His protection and care."

74That is, "No act which is performed along with shirk will be adjudged as a righteous act, and no one who, being a mushrik, performs many acts as good acts in his personal judgment, will deserve any reward for them, and his whole life work will be deemed to have gone waste."

75That is, "They have no conception of the greatness and glory of Allah; they have never tried to understand how high is the position of the Lord of the Universe and how insignificant arc the beings whom these foolish people have made associates in Godhead and worthy of their worship."

76This is a figurative way of describing the complete control and authority of Allah over the earth and heavens. Just as a man encloses a small ball in the hollow of his hand with perfect ease, or a person rolls up an handkerchief in his hand without any difficulty, so will All men (who fail to conceive the greatness and glory of Allah) sec with their own eyes, on the Day of Resurrection, that the earth and the heavens arc like an ordinary ball and a small scroll in the hand of Allah. Traditions have been related in Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Jarir and others, on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and Hadrat Abu Hurairah, that once during a sermon the Holy Prophet recited this verse and then said: "Allah will hold the heavens and the earths (i.e. the planets) in His grasp and will roll them about in

such a way as a child rolls a ball, and will say: 'I am God, the One: I am the King: I am the All-Mighty, Owner of glory: Where arc the kings of the world? Where are the tyrants? Where are the arrogant?" - Saying these words he started so shaking that we feared that he might topple over along with the pulpit."

77That is, there is no comparison whatever between Allah's greatness and glory and the insignificance of those who are associated with Him in Godhead.

78For the explanation of Sur (Trumpet), see Al-An`am: 73, Ibrahim: 48, Al-Kahf: 99, Ta Ha: 102-103, Al-Hajj: 1, Al-Mu'minun: 101. An-Naml: 87 and the E,N.'s thereof.

79Here, mention has been made of the Turmpet's being blown only twice. Besides, in Surah An-Naml there is the mention of another blowing of the Trumpet before these two, on hearing which everything in the earth and the heavens will be struck with terror (v. 87). On this very basis, the Ahadith mention that the Trumpet will be blown thrice:

(1) Nafakhat al-Faza`on hearing which everything will be struck with terror,

(2) nafakhat as-Sa `q, on which everyone will fall down dead, and

(3) nafakhat al-qiyam li-Rabbit- alamin, i.e. the Trumpet on the blowing of which all dead men will return to life and arise from their graves to present themselves before their Lord.

80"The witnesses" : those who will bear witness to the effect that the Message of Allah had been conveyed to the people as well as those who will bear witness to the acts and deeds of the people. It is not necessary that these witnesses will be only human beings. The angels, the jinns, the beasts, men's own limbs, their dwelling places and the trees and stones, will all be included among the witnesses.

81That is, the gates of Hell will not have already been opened but will be opened on their arrival there just as the gate of a prison is opened on the arrival of the culprits and is closed as soon as they have entered it.

82For explanation, sec Ta Ha: 106-107, 124; Al-Anbiya': 106-107 and the E.N.'s thereof.

83That is, "The Paradise which has been granted to each of us, is now our property and we possess full rights over it."

84Maybe this is said by the dwellers of Paradise, or maybe this sentence is added by Allah to what the dwellers of Paradise will say.

85That is, the entire Universe will proclaim the praises of Allah Almighty.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

40. Surah Al Mu'min (The Believer), also known as Surah Al Ghafir (The Forgiver)

Name

The Surah takes its name *Al Mu'min* from verse 28, implying thereby, that it is a Surah in which *Al Mu'min* (the Believer of Pharaoh's people) has been mentioned.

Period of Revelation

According to Ibn 'Abbas and Jabir bin Zaid, this Surah was sent down consecutively after Surah Az-Zumar, and its present position in the order of the Surahs in the Quran is the same as its chronological order.

Background of Revelation

There are clear indications in the subject matter of this Surah to the conditions in which it was revealed. The disbelievers of Makkah at that time were engaged in two kinds of the activities against the Holy Prophet. First, they were creating every kind of suspicion and misgiving in the minds of the people about the teaching of the Quran and the message of Islam and about the Holy Prophet himself by starting many disputes and discussions, raising irrelevant objections and bringing ever new accusations so that the Holy Prophet and the believers were sick of trying to answer them. Second, they were preparing the ground for putting an end to the Holy Prophet himself. They were devising one plot after the other, and on one occasion had even taken the practical steps to execute a plot. Bukhari has related a tradition on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Amr bin 'As saying that one day when the Holy Prophet was offering his Prayer in the precinct's of the Kabbah, suddenly 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait, rushed forward and putting a piece of cloth round his neck started twisting it so as to strangle him to death. Hadrat Abu Bakr, who happened to go there in time, pushed him away. Hadrat Abdullah says that when Abu Bakr was struggling with the cruel man, he was saying words to the effect: "Would you kill a man only because he says: Allah is my Lord?" With a little variation this event has also been mentioned in Ibn Hisham, Nasa'i and Ibn Abi Hatim .

Theme and Topics

Both aspects of this have been clear]y stated at the very outset, and then the whole following discourse is a most effective and instructive review of them.

As an answer to the conspiracies of murder, the story of the Believer of the people of Pharaoh has been narrated (vv. 23 - 55) and through this story three different lessons have been taught to the three groups:

1. The disbelievers have been admonished: "Whatever you intend to do against Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), the same did the Pharaoh with his might intend against the Prophet Moses. Now, would you like to meet with the same fate with which he met by plotting such conspiracies ?"

2. The Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his followers have been taught the lesson: "These wicked people may apparently be very strong and powerful and you very weak and helpless against them, yet you should rest assured that the might of that God Whose Word you are trying to raise high is superior to every other power. Therefore, you should only seek Allah's refuge in response to every and any dreadful threat that they utter against you, and then busy yourself after this in fearlessly performing your mission. The God-worshiper has only one answer to every threat of the tyrant: `I have taken refuge in my Lord and your Lord against every arrogant person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning.' (v. 27) Thus, if you go on performing your mission fearless of every danger and with full trust in God, His succor will ultimately reach you, and the Pharaohs of today shall be doomed just as the Pharaohs of yesterday. Till that time you will have to face and bear patiently every wave of persecution and tyranny that may be directed against you."

3. Besides these two, there was a third group of the people also in the society, who had been convinced in their hearts that the Truth was only on the side of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), and that the disbelieving Quraish were being unjust and cruel. But in spite of the conviction they were watching quietly and unconcerned the conflict between the Truth and falsehood. Allah here has aroused their conscience as if to say: "When the enemies of the Truth have openly plotted, in front of your very eyes, it would be a sad reflection on you if you still remained indifferent. Under such conditions, unless a person's conscience has wholly become dead, he should rise and perform the duty, which a righteous man from among the courtiers of Pharaoh himself had performed at a time when the Pharaoh had made up his mind to kill the Prophet Moses. The circumstances that prevent you from raising your voice had also obstructed the way of the Believer, but he had full faith in Allah and disregarded all expediency; then note that the Pharaoh was not able to do him any harm."

Now as for the conspiracies, which were continuing in Makkah day and night to defeat the Truth, on the one hand, arguments have been given to prove the doctrines of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter as true, which were the real basis of the dispute between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers, and it has been stated plainly and openly that the disbelievers are wrangling over those truths without any knowledge. On the other, the motives which were the real cause of the Quraishite chiefs' conflict against the Holy Prophet, have been exposed. Apparently they were trying to have the common people believe that they had some genuine objections against the teaching of the Prophet and

his claim to prophethood; that is why they were not prepared to listen to him. But, in fact, this was their struggle for power. In verse 56, they have been openly warned, so as to say" "The real cause of your denial is your arrogance and vanity. You think that if you acknowledge the prophethood of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), your power and authority will come to an end. That is why you are straining every nerve to frustrate and defeat him."

In the same connection, the disbelievers have been warned again and again to the effect:"If you do not desist from wrangling against the Revelations of Allah, you will be doomed to the same fate as the nations of the past. Much worse torment awaits you in the Hereafter. Then you will repent, but it will be too late.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

حمٓ ﴿١﴾

تَنزِيلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْعَلِيمِ ﴿٢﴾

غَافِرِ ٱلذَّنۢبِ وَقَابِلِ ٱلتَّوْبِ شَدِيدِ ٱلْعِقَابِ ذِى ٱلطَّوْلِ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ إِلَيْهِ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] Ha-Mim. The revelation of this Book is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing, the Forgiver of sin and Acceptor of repentance. He is stern in punishment and is highly Bountiful. There is no deity beside Him. To Him shall all return.[1]

مَا يُجَٰدِلُ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَلَا يَغُرُرْكَ تَقَلُّبُهُمْ فِى ٱلْبِلَٰدِ ﴿٤﴾

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَٱلْأَحْزَابُ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ۖ وَهَمَّتْ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍۭ بِرَسُولِهِمْ لِيَأْخُذُوهُ ۖ وَجَٰدَلُوا۟ بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُوا۟ بِهِ ٱلْحَقَّ فَأَخَذْتُهُمْ ۖ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ ﴿٥﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٦﴾

[4-6] None dispute about the Revelations of Allah[2] but those who have disbelieved.[3] So let not their strutting about in the lands deceive you.[4] Before them the people of Noah also denied, and so did many a host after them. Every nation fell upon its Messenger to seize him: they all tried to defeat the Truth by means of falsehood, but, at last, I seized them. Then, just see, how severe was My punishment! Likewise has this judgment of your Lord also proved true against those people who have denied that they would go to Hell.[5]

ٱلَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ ٱلْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُۥ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَٱغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا۟ وَٱتَّبَعُوا۟ سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٧﴾

رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ٱلَّتِى وَعَدتَّهُمْ وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ
وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨﴾

وَقِهِمُ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ۚ وَمَن تَقِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمْتَهُۥ ۚ
وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

[7-9] The angels who bear the Divine Throne and those who stand around it, all are glorifying their Lord with His praises. They affirm faith in Him, and ask forgiveness for the believers.[6] They say, "Our Lord, You embrace everything in Your mercy and knowledge,[7] so forgive and save from the torment of Hell[8] those who have repented and followed Your Way.[9] Admit them, Our Lord, to the eternal Gardens which You have promised them,[10] and (admit therein also) of their parents and wives and children who are righteous.[11] You are surely All-Mighty, All-Wise. And deliver them from evils,[12] for whomever You delivered from evils on the Day of Resurrection,[13] to him You showed great mercy. This is indeed the supreme success."

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُنَادَوْنَ لَمَقْتُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ مِن مَّقْتِكُمْ
أَنفُسَكُمْ إِذْ تُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى ٱلْإِيمَٰنِ فَتَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ أَمَتَّنَا ٱثْنَتَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا ٱثْنَتَيْنِ فَٱعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا
فَهَلْ إِلَىٰ خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿١١﴾

ذَٰلِكُم بِأَنَّهُۥ إِذَا دُعِىَ ٱللَّهُ وَحۡدَهُۥ كَفَرۡتُمۡۖ وَإِن يُشۡرَكۡ بِهِۦ تُؤۡمِنُواْۚ
فَٱلۡحُكۡمُ لِلَّهِ ٱلۡعَلِىِّ ٱلۡكَبِيرِ ﴿١٢﴾

[10-12] To those who have disbelieved, it will be proclaimed, on the Day of Resurrection: "Allah's wrath against you was greater than is your own anger against yourselves today, when you were called to belief and you disbelieved."[14] They will answer, "Our Lord, You indeed gave us death twice and life twice.[15] Now we confess our sins.[16] Is there any way out from here?[17] (They will be answered:) "You have incurred this fate because when you were called towards Allah, the One, you refused to believe, and when others were associated with Allah, you readily believed. Now the Judgment rests with Allah, the High, the Great!"[18]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُرِيكُمۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَيُنَزِّلُ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزۡقٗاۚ وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ
إِلَّا مَن يُنِيبُ ﴿١٣﴾

فَٱدۡعُواْ ٱللَّهَ مُخۡلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ وَلَوۡ كَرِهَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

[13-14] It is He Who shows you His Signs[19] and sends down for you sustenance from heaven,[20] but only such a one learns lesson (from the observation of these Signs) who turns to Allah again and again.[21] (Therefore, O you who turn to Him: "Invoke Allah alone, making your religion sincerely His,[22] although the disbelievers may dislike your conduct."

رَفِيعُ ٱلدَّرَجَٰتِ ذُو ٱلۡعَرۡشِ يُلۡقِى ٱلرُّوحَ مِنۡ أَمۡرِهِۦ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ
عِبَادِهِۦ لِيُنذِرَ يَوۡمَ ٱلتَّلَاقِ ﴿١٥﴾

يَوْمَ هُم بَٰرِزُونَ ۖ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مِنْهُمْ شَىْءٌ ۚ لِّمَنِ ٱلْمُلْكُ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۖ لِلَّهِ
ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾

ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۚ لَا ظُلْمَ ٱلْيَوْمَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ
﴿١٧﴾

وَأَنذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْءَازِفَةِ إِذِ ٱلْقُلُوبُ لَدَى ٱلْحَنَاجِرِ كَٰظِمِينَ ۚ مَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ
مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ يُطَاعُ ﴿١٨﴾

يَعْلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ ٱلْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِى ٱلصُّدُورُ ﴿١٩﴾

وَٱللَّهُ يَقْضِى بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ لَا يَقْضُونَ بِشَىْءٍ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿٢٠﴾

[15-20] Exalted in ranks[23] and Master of the Throne,[24] He sends down the Spirit by His Command upon whomsoever of His servants He pleases,[25] to give warning of the Day of Meeting,[26] the Day when all people shall be naked, and nothing of them will be hidden from Allah. (On that Day it will be asked:) "Whose is the Kingdom today?"[27] (The whole universe will cry out:) Of Allah, the One, the Omnipotent (It will be said): "Today every living being shall be

recompensed for what it has earned: none shall be wronged today[28] And Allah is swift at reckoning."[29] O Prophet, warn them of the Day that has approached near,[30] when the hearts will leap up to the throats and the people will he standing mute, grief stricken: the wrongdoers will neither have any kindly friend[31] nor any intercessor who may be listened to.[32] Allah is aware of the treachery of the eyes and even of the secrets that the breasts keep hidden, and Allah shall judge with full justice. As for those whom they (the mushriks) invoke instead of Allah, they shall judge nothing. Indeed, Allah alone hears everything and sees everything.[33]

۞ أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوا۟ هُمْ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَءَاثَارًا فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَاقٍ ﴿٢١﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانَت تَّأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَكَفَرُوا۟ فَأَخَذَهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ قَوِىٌّ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٢﴾

[21-22] Have they never traveled in the land that they could see the end of those who have gone before them? They were stronger than they in power and have left mightier traces in the land, but Allah seized them because of their sins and there was none to save them from Allah. They met this doom because their Messengers came to them with clear Signs[34] and they refused to believe in them. Consequently, Allah seized them. Indeed, He is Mighty and very stern in punishment.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ وَقَٰرُونَ فَقَالُوا۟ سَٰحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوا۟ ٱقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَبْنَآءَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ
وَٱسْتَحْيُوا۟ نِسَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا كَيْدُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

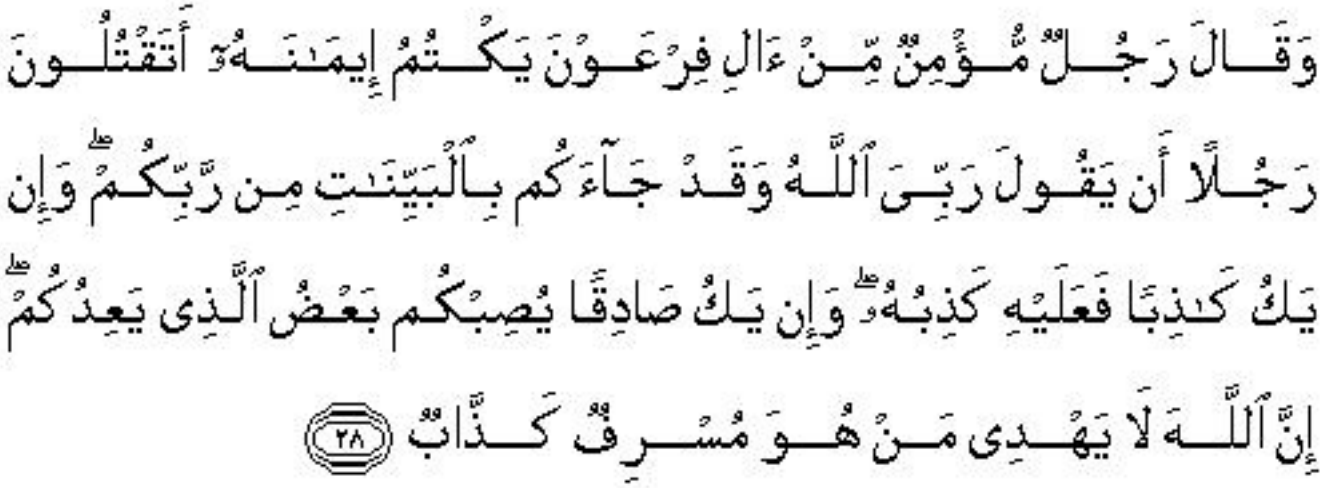
[23-25] We sent Moses[35] to Pharaoh and Haman[36] and Korah with Our Signs and a clear authority of appointment,[37] but they said, "He is a sorcerer, a liar." Then, when he brought them the truth[38] from Ourself, they said, "Kill the sons of those who have believed and joined him and spare their daughters."[39] But the disbelievers plot ended in vain.[40]

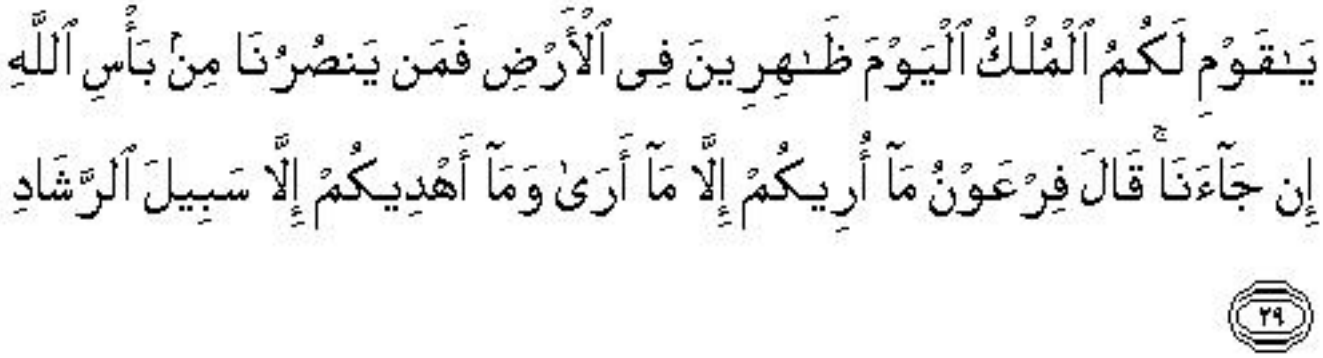
وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُونِىٓ أَقْتُلْ مُوسَىٰ وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهُۥٓ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ
أَن يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ أَوْ أَن يُظْهِرَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[26] One day[41] Pharaoh said to his courtiers, "Let me alone that I may kill this Moses[42] and let him call to his Lord. I fear. he will change your religion, or cause mischief to appear in the land."[43]

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰٓ إِنِّى عُذْتُ بِرَبِّى وَرَبِّكُم مِّن كُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِيَوْمِ
ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٧﴾

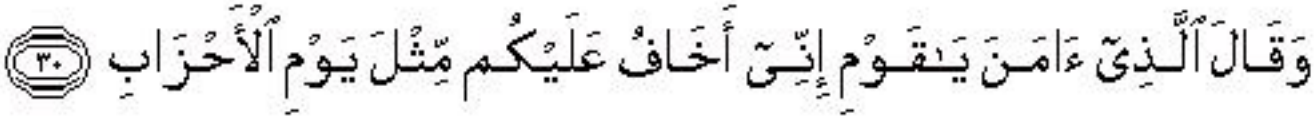
[27] Moses said, "I have taken refuge in my Lord and your Lord against every arrogant person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning."[44]





[28-29] At this, a believing man from among the kinsfolk of Pharaoh, who had kept his faith hidden, spoke out, "Would you kill a man merely because he says: My Lord is Allah? Whereas he has brought clear Signs to you from your Lord.[45] If he is a liar, his lie will recoil on him,[46] but if he is truthful, some of the dreadful things with which he threatens you, will certainly befall you. Allah does not guide the one who is a transgressor and a liar.[47] O my people, today you possess the kingdom and are dominant in the land, but who will help us if we are visited by Allah's scourge?[48]

Pharaoh said, "I am telling you the same which I think is proper, and I am only guiding you to the way which is right."[49]



مِثْلَ دَأْبِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ۚ وَمَا
ٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعِبَادِ ﴿٣١﴾

وَيَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلتَّنَادِ ﴿٣٢﴾

يَوْمَ تُوَلُّونَ مُدْبِرِينَ مَا لَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ
مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

[30-33] The man who had believed, said, "O my people! I fear that you also may be overtaken by the day that has already overtaken many hosts, a day that overtook the people of Noah and `Ad and Thamud and the peoples after them. And the fact is that Allah does not seek to wrong His servants.[50] O my people! I fear for you the day of wailing, when you will cry out to one another and run about, but there will be bone to protect you from Allah; the truth is that there is none to guide the one whom Allah lets go astray.

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ يُوسُفُ مِن قَبْلُ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِى شَكٍّ
مِّمَّا جَآءَكُم بِهِۦ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا هَلَكَ قُلْتُمْ لَن يَبْعَثَ ٱللَّهُ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ
رَسُولًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ مُّرْتَابٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُجَـٰدِلُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ سُلْطَـٰنٍ أَتَىٰهُمْ ۖ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ
وَعِندَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ قَلْبِ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

[34-35] Before this Joseph had brought to you clear Signs, but you continued to be in doubt concerning his teachings. Then, when he died, you said, "Allah will never send another Messenger after him."[51] Likewise,[52] Allah lets go astray the transgressors and doubters who dispute concerning the Revelations of Allah even without any authority having come to them.[53] Such an attitude is abhorred by Allah and the believers. Thus does Allah set a seal on the heart of every arrogant, self-exalting person.[54]

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَـٰهَـٰمَـٰنُ ٱبْنِ لِى صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّىٓ أَبْلُغُ ٱلْأَسْبَـٰبَ
﴿٣٦﴾

أَسْبَـٰبَ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَـٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّى لَأَظُنُّهُۥ كَـٰذِبًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ
زُيِّنَ لِفِرْعَوْنَ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِۦ وَصُدَّ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۚ وَمَا كَيْدُ فِرْعَوْنَ إِلَّا فِى
تَبَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

[36-37] Pharaoh said, "O Haman, build for me a tower that I may reach the paths, the paths of the heavens, and peep at the God of Moses, for I drink that Moses is a liar."[55] Thus the misdeeds of Pharaoh were trade seem fair to him and he was barred from the Right Way: all his scheming only led to (his own) ruin.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِىٓ ءَامَنَ يَـٰقَوْمِ ٱتَّبِعُونِ أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ ٱلرَّشَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾

يَٰقَوۡمِ إِنَّمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا مَتَٰعٞ وَإِنَّ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةَ هِيَ
دَارُ ٱلۡقَرَارِ ﴿٣٩﴾

مَنۡ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةٗ فَلَا يُجۡزَىٰٓ إِلَّا مِثۡلَهَاۖ وَمَنۡ عَمِلَ
صَٰلِحٗا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوۡ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤۡمِنٞ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَدۡخُلُونَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ
يُرۡزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيۡرِ حِسَابٖ ﴿٤٠﴾

۞وَيَٰقَوۡمِ مَا لِيٓ أَدۡعُوكُمۡ إِلَى ٱلنَّجَوٰةِ وَتَدۡعُونَنِيٓ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤١﴾

تَدۡعُونَنِي لِأَكۡفُرَ بِٱللَّهِ وَأُشۡرِكَ بِهِۦ مَا لَيۡسَ لِي بِهِۦ عِلۡمٞ وَأَنَا۠ أَدۡعُوكُمۡ
إِلَى ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡغَفَّٰرِ ﴿٤٢﴾

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّمَا تَدْعُونَنِيٓ إِلَيْهِ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ دَعْوَةٌ فِى
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَلَا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ مَرَدَّنَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَأَنَّ ٱلْمُسْرِفِينَ
هُمْ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤٣﴾

فَسَتَذْكُرُونَ مَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ
﴿٤٤﴾

[38-44] The man who had believed, said, "O my people! Follow me: I shall show you the right way. O my people! the life of this world is temporary.[56] Only the abode of the Hereafter is everlasting. Whoever does evil shall be recompensed to the extent of the evil done; and whoever does good, whether man or woman,provided that he is a believer, all such people shall enter Paradise wherein they shall be provided without measure. O my people! How it is that I call you to salvation and you call me to the Fire! You call me to deny Allah and associate with Him those whom I do not know,[57] while I am calling you to the All-Mighty, the All-Forgiving God. Nay, the truth is, and it cannot be otherwise, that those to whom you call me, can neither he called to in this world nor in the Hereafter,[58] and to Allah have we all to return, and the transgressors[59] shall go to Hell. Soon you will remember what I am telling you today. To Allah I entrust my affairs. He is ever Watchful over His servants."[60]

فَوَقَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِـَٔالِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوٓءُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٥﴾

ٱلنَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا ۚ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوٓا۟ ءَالَ
فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَإِذْ يَتَحَآجُّونَ فِى ٱلنَّارِ فَيَقُولُ ٱلضُّعَفَٰٓؤُا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟
إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٤٧﴾

[45-47] At last, Allah saved the Believer from all those evil plots that the people devised against him,[61] and the companions of Pharaoh themselves were encompassed by the horrible scourge.[62] It is the fire of Hell before which they are presented morning and evening. And when the Hour of Resurrection comes, it will be commanded: "Admit the people of Pharaoh to the severest torment."[63] Then imagine the time when these people will be disputing with one another in Hell. The weak ones will say to the haughty one, "We were your followers: now, can you save us from some part of our punishment in Hell?"[64]

قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كُلٌّ فِيهَآ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَدْ حَكَمَ بَيْنَ ٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى ٱلنَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ جَهَنَّمَ ٱدْعُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا
مِّنَ ٱلْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٩﴾

قَالُوٓا۟ أَوَ لَمْ تَكُ تَأْتِيكُمْ رُسُلُكُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ ۖ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ ۚ قَالُوا۟ فَٱدْعُوا۟ ۗ وَمَا
دُعَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

[48-50] The haughty ones will say, "We are all in the same state here, and Allah already has passed judgment between His servants."[65] Then these dwellers of Hell will say to its keepers, "Pray to your Lord to relieve us of the, torment for only one day." They will ask, "Did not your Messengers come to you with clear Signs?" They will say, "Yes." The keepers of Hell will say, "Then pray (for help) yourselves. But the prayer of the disbelievers only ends in vain."[66]

إِنَّا لَنَنصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ فِى ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَيَوۡمَ يَقُومُ ٱلۡأَشۡهَٰدُ ﴿٥١﴾

يَوۡمَ لَا يَنفَعُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ مَعۡذِرَتُهُمۡ ۖ وَلَهُمُ ٱللَّعۡنَةُ وَلَهُمۡ سُوٓءُ ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَلَقَدۡ ءَاتَيۡنَا مُوسَى ٱلۡهُدَىٰ وَأَوۡرَثۡنَا بَنِىٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ ﴿٥٣﴾

هُدًى وَذِكۡرَىٰ لِأُوْلِى ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَٱصۡبِرۡ إِنَّ وَعۡدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقّٞ وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرۡ لِذَنۢبِكَ وَسَبِّحۡ بِحَمۡدِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلۡعَشِىِّ وَٱلۡإِبۡكَٰرِ ﴿٥٥﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ بِغَيۡرِ سُلۡطَٰنٍ أَتَىٰهُمۡ إِن فِى صُدُورِهِمۡ
إِلَّا كِبۡرٞ مَّا هُم بِبَٰلِغِيهِۚ فَٱسۡتَعِذۡ بِٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡبَصِيرُ
٥٦

[51-56] Believe it that We do help Our Messengers and the Believers in the life of this world,[67] and so shall We help them on that Day also when the witnesses shall stand up,[68] and the excuses of the wrongdoers shall not avail them anything. They shall have the curse on them and the worst abode. Just consider this: We showed Moses guidance[69] and trade the children of Israel to inherit the Book, which was guidance and admonition for the men of understanding.[70] So, be patient,[71] O Prophet: Allah's promise is true.[72] Ask forgiveness of your errors,[73] and glorify your Lord morning and evening with His praise.[74] The fact is that the hearts of those who are disputing concerning the Revelations of Allah without any authority having come to them, are filled with pride,[75] but they shall never attain to their ambitions.[76] So, seek Allah's refuge.[77] He hears everything and sees everything.

لَخَلۡقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَكۡبَرُ مِنۡ خَلۡقِ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يَعۡلَمُونَ ٥٧

وَمَا يَسۡتَوِى ٱلۡأَعۡمَىٰ وَٱلۡبَصِيرُ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَلَا
ٱلۡمُسِيٓءُۚ قَلِيلٗا مَّا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ٥٨

إِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَأٓتِيَةٞ لَّا رَيۡبَ فِيهَا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٥٩

[57-59] Surely[78] the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater thing than the creation of man, but most

people do not know.[79] And the blind and the seeing cannot be equal, nor are the believing and righteous men equal to the wicked, but you people understand only a little.[80] The Hour of Resurrection is sure to come; there is no doubt about it, but most people do not believe.[81]

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ٱدْعُونِىٓ أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِى
سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[60] Your[82] Lord says: "Call upon Me. I will answer your prayers.[83] Those who disdain My worship on account of pride, shall certainly enter Hell, disgraced."[84]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا۟ فِيهِ وَٱلنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ يُؤْفَكُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

[61-63] It is Allah Who made the night for you to rest in it, and made the day bright. The fact is that Allah is highly Bounteous to the people, yet most people are not thankful.[85] The same Allah (Who has done all this for you) is your Lord, the Creator of everything. There is no god but He.[86] Whence then are you being deluded?[87] Likewise were all those people deluded, who denied the Revelations of Allah.[88]

ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ
صُوَرَكُمْ وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَـٰتِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ فَتَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ
ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

هُوَ ٱلْحَىُّ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَٱدْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ۗ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

[64-65] It is Allah Who made the earth a resting-place for you[89] and the sky a canopy over it,[90] Who shaped you, and shaped you so well, and Who provided you with pure things.[91] The same Allah (Who did all this) is your Lord. Highly blessed is Allah, Lord of the Universe. He is the Living One.[92] There is no god but He. Call upon Him alone, making your religion sincerely His.[93] All praise is only due to Allah, Lord of the Universe.[94]

۞ قُلْ إِنِّى نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَمَّا جَآءَنِىَ ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتُ
مِن رَّبِّى وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

[66] O Prophet, tell the people, "I have been forbidden to worship those whom you invoke instead of Allah.[95] (How can I do this) when clear Signs have come to me from my Lord? I have been commanded to submit to the Lord of all creation. "

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطۡفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنۡ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخۡرِجُكُمۡ
طِفۡلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبۡلُغُوٓاْ أَشُدَّكُمۡ ثُمَّ لِتَكُونُواْ شُيُوخٗاۚ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ مِن
قَبۡلُۖ وَلِتَبۡلُغُوٓاْ أَجَلٗا مُّسَمّٗى وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تَعۡقِلُونَ ٦٧

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُحۡىِۦ وَيُمِيتُۖ فَإِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمۡرٗا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ
٦٨

[67-68] He it is Who created you from dust, then from a sperm, then from a clot of blood, then He delivers you as an infant, then He makes you to grow up to attain to full strength,then makes you to grow further to reach old age, though some one of you are recalled earlier.[96] This is done so that you may reach an appointed time[97] and may understand the reality.[98] He it is Who gives life and ordains death. Whatever He decrees, He only commands it to be and it is.

أَلَمۡ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
أَنَّىٰ يُصۡرَفُونَ ٦٩

ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُواْ بِٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَبِمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا بِهِۦ رُسُلَنَاۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَعۡلَمُونَ ٧٠

إِذِ ٱلۡأَغۡلَٰلُ فِىٓ أَعۡنَٰقِهِمۡ وَٱلسَّلَٰسِلُ يُسۡحَبُونَ ٧١

فِى ٱلْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِى ٱلنَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

ثُمَّ قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا۟ ضَلُّوا۟ عَنَّا بَل لَّمْ نَكُن نَّدْعُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

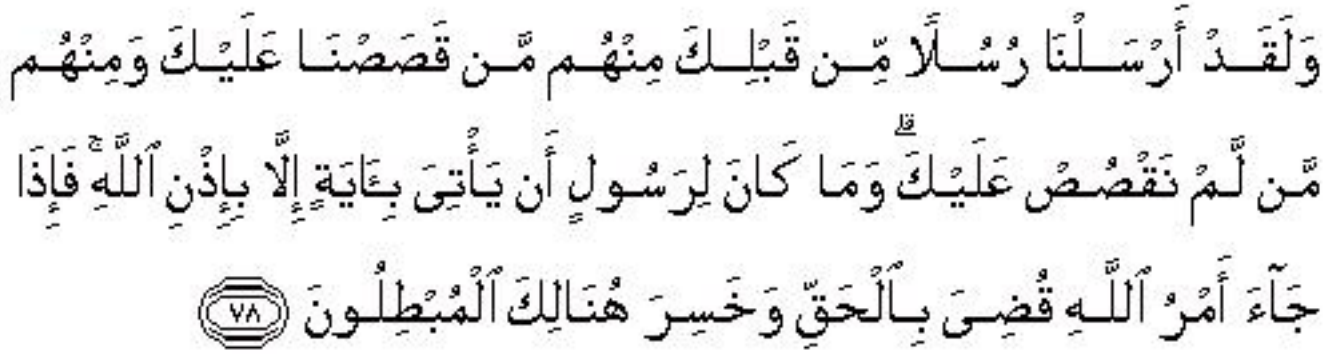
ذَٰلِكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَمْرَحُونَ
﴿٧٥﴾

ٱدْخُلُوٓا۟ أَبْوَٰبَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ فَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

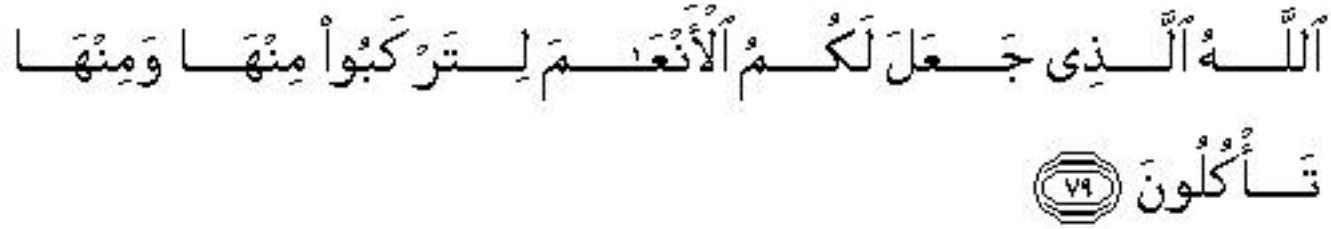
فَٱصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۚ فَإِمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ
فَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

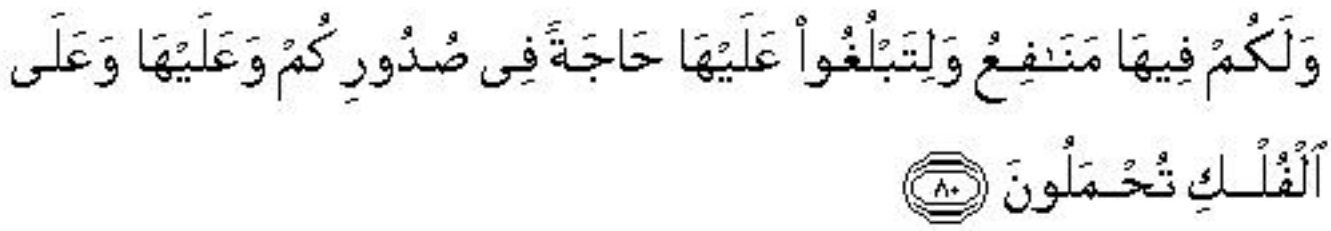
[69-77] Have you seen how those who dispute concerning Allah's Revelations are being turned about?[99] Those who

deny this Book and those Books which We sent with Our Messengers,[100] shall soon know when, with fetters round their necks and chains, they shall be dragged towards boiling water and then cast into the fire of Hell.[101] Then they will be asked, "Where are those other gods than Allah, whom you associated?"[102] They will answer, "They have been lost to us; nay, we did not call upon anything before this."[103] Thus will Allah establish the deviation of the disbelievers. It will be said to them, "You have met this fate because you rejoiced on the earth in things other than the Truth, and then exulted in it.[104] Enter now the gates of Hell to live therein for ever. What an evil abode for the arrogant! So, be patient,[105] O Prophet, Allah's promise is true. Whether We let you witness a part of the evil consequences with which We are threatening them, or recall you from the world (before this), they have to return to Us.[106]



[78] O Prophet, We have sent many a Messenger before you. Of them there are some whose stories We have related to you, and of others We have not related.[107] Yet it was not in the power of any Messenger to have himself brought a Sign,[108] without Allah's leave. Then, when Allah's Command came, the judgment was passed with justice, and the wrongdoers then incurred loss.[109]





وَيُرِيكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ فَأَىَّ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ تُنكِرُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

[79-81] It is Allah Who has provided the cattle that you may ride on some and eat the flesh of others. Then you have many other uses also in them. You ride on them to places that you desire in your hearts to reach, and you are carried on them as well as on ships. Allah shows you these Signs of His. Then, which Signs of His will you still deny?[110]

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوٓا۟ أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ قُوَّةً وَءَاثَارًا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَرِحُوا۟ بِمَا عِندَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا۟ بَأْسَنَا قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥ وَكَفَرْنَا بِمَا كُنَّا بِهِۦ مُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

فَلَمۡ يَكُ يَنفَعُهُمۡ إِيمَٰنُهُمۡ لَمَّا رَأَوۡاْ بَأۡسَنَاۖ سُنَّتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِي قَدۡ خَلَتۡ فِي
عِبَادِهِۦۖ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ ٨٥

[82-85] Well,[111] have they not traveled in the earth that they could see the fate of those who have gone before them? They were more in number and stronger-in might and have left behind greater traces of their power in the land; yet what they earned did not avail them anything. When their Messengers came to them with clear Signs, they remained stuck to the knowledge that they already had,[112] and then were encompassed by the same thing that they mocked. When they saw Our scourge, they cried out, "We now believe in Allah, the One, and we reject all those gods whom we used to associate with Him." But after having seen Our scourge, their belief could be of no avail to them, because the same has been the standing law of Allah to deal with His servants, in the past,[113] and then the disbelievers only incurred loss.

1This is the introduction to the discourse. By this the listener has been forewarned to the effect: ¦What is being presented before you, is not the word of an ordinary being but of that God Who has infinite power." After this, some of Allah's attributes have been mentioned, one after the other, which bear a deep relevance to the following theme:

First, that He is "All-Mighty", i.e. He is Dominant over everything. His every decree concerning anybody is always enforced; none can fight Him and win; none can escape His grasp. Therefore, a person who expects to be successful after turning away from His Command and expects to frustrate His Message after having a dispute with Him is himself foolish. Such notions are only deceptions.

Second, that He is "All-Knowing", i.e. He does not say anything on mere conjecture, but has the direct knowledge of everything. Therefore, whatever information He gives about the supernatural realities, is lure, and the one who does not accept it, is following nothing but ignorance. Likewise, He knows in what lies the true success of man and what rules and laws and commands are necessary for his well-being. His every teaching is based on wisdom and correct knowledge, which does not admit of any error. Therefore, if a person does not accept His guidance, he only wants to follow the path of his own ruin. Then, nothing from the acts and deeds of man can remain hidden from Him; so much so that He even knows the intentions of man, which arc the real motives of his deeds. Therefore, man can never escape His punishment.

The third attribute is that He is "Forgiver of sin and Acceptor of repentance. " This attribute brings hope and causes inducement, which has been mentioned so that the people who have led lives of sin, should not despair but should reform themselves with the hope that if they refrained from their behavior even now, they could still be redeemed by Allah's mercy. Here, one should understand well that forgiving of

sins and accepting of repentance are not necessarily one and the same thing, but in most cases Allah forgives sins even without the repentance. For example, a person commits errors as well as does good, and his good acts become the means of forgiveness for his mistakes, whether or not he had opportunity to show repentance for the errors, but might even have forgotten them. Likewise, all the troubles and hardships and diseases and calamities that afflict man and cause him grief in the world, serve as penance for his mistakes. That is why mention of forgiveness of sins has been made separately from the acceptance of repentance. But one should remember that the concession of forgiveness of errors without repentance only refers to those believers, who are free from defiance and who committed sins due to human weakness and not persistence in pride and sin.

The fourth attribute is that "He is stern in punishment." By this the people have been warned that just as Allah is Merciful for those who adopt the way of His service, so He is stern for those who adopt an attitude of rebellion against Him. When a person (or persons) transgresses the limits where he can still deserve pardon and forgiveness from Allah, then he becomes worthy of His punishment, and His punishment is so dreadful that only a fool would persist in his wrongdoing.

The fifth attribute is that "He is Bountiful", i.e. He is Generous and Beneficent: all creatures are being showered with His blessings and favors every moment: whatever the servants are getting, they are getting only through His bounty and beneficence.

After these five attributes, two realities have been stated expressly:

(1) That none but Allah is the Deity no matter how many false gods the people might have set up; and

(2) that to Him everyone must return: there is no other deity which can call the people to account and reward or punish them.

Therefore, if somebody makes another his deity, apart from Him, he will himself face the consequences of his folly.

2"To dispute" means using crooked arguments in reasoning, raising irrelevant objections, isolating a word or a sentence from its context, subjecting it to hair-splitting and making it the basis of doubts and accusations, misconstruing words from their true sense and intention so that neither should one understand the meaning oneself nor let others understand it. Such a way of dispute is adopted only by those whose difference of opinion is based on ill-will and malice. If a well-intentioned opponent disputes a point, he does so for the sake of arriving at the truth, and wants to be satisfied through discussion whether his own point of view is correct. Such a discussion is engaged in quest of truth and not for refutation. Contrary to this, the real purpose of the malicious opponent is not to understand anything nor to help others to understand, but to degrade and humiliate the other man; he joins a discussion only with the intention that he would not let the other man carry his point. That is why he never faces the real

problems but launches his attacks only on the irrelevant issues.

3Here, the word kufr" has been used in two meanings: for ingratitude and for denial of the truth. According to the first meaning, the sentence would mean: As against the Revelations of Allah this sort of behavior is adopted only by those who have forgotten His bounties and who have even lost the feeling that it is by His bounty that they are flourishing. According to the second, it would mean: "This sort of behavior is adopted only by those who have turned away from the truth and are determined not to accept it. " From the context it becomes obvious that here the disbeliever does not imply every non-Muslim, for a non-Muslim who disputes a point in good faith for the sake of understanding Islam, and who tries to grasp thoroughly those things which he fends hard to follow, although a non Muslim technically, yet that which has been condemned in this verse does not apply to him.

4There is a gap between the previous sentence and this, which has been left for the listener to fill. From the context and style it becomes evident that those who adopt the attitude of disputation as against the Revelations of Allah Almighty, can never escape the punishment. Therefore, they shall inevitably meet their doom. Now, if one sees that those people, even after adopting such an attitude, arc strutting about, their business is flourishing, their governments functioning in a grand style. and they are enjoying the good things of life, one should not be misled into thinking that they have escaped Allah's punishment, or that war against Allah's Revelations is a sport which can be adopted as a pastime and its evil consequences warded off easily. This, in fact, is a respite which they have been granted by Allah. Those who abuse this respite for doing more mischief arc indeed preparing for an ignominious end.

5That is, `The torment that seized them in the world was not their final punishment, but Allah has also decreed that they shall go to Hell.' Another meaning can be: "Just as the nations of the past have gone to their doom, so will those people also who arc committing disbelief go to Hell, according to the fixed decree of Allah."

6This thing has been said for the consolation of the Holy Prophet's Companions, who were feeling greatly discouraged at the impudence and rebellious attitude of the disbelievers of Makkah as against their own helplessness, as if to say: Why do you feel grieved at what these mean and worthless people say? You have the support of the angels who bear the Divine Throne and of those who stand around it; they are interceding with Allah for you." The mention of the angels who bear the Divine Throne and of those who stand around it, has been made, instead of the common angels, to impress the fact that not to speak of the common angels of Divine Kingdom, even the angels who are the pillars of this Kingdom, being nearest in rank and station to Allah, bear deep sympathy and regard for you. Then the words: ¦They affirm faith in Him and ask forgiveness for the believers", show that the relationship of the faith is the real relationship, which has joined the heavenly creatures and the earthly creatures together, and which has induced sympathy and esteem in the angels stationed around the Throne for the mortal humans inhabiting the earth, who affirm faith in Allah just like them. The angels' affirming the faith in Allah does not mean that they could disbelieve, and they adopted belief instead of disbelief, but it means that they

believe in the sovereignty of Allah, the One, alone there is no other being that may be commanding them and they submit before it in utter obedience. When the same attitude and behavior was adopted by the human believers, a strong relationship of cherishing a common creed and faith was established between them and the angels in spite of the great disparity in species and remoteness in rank and station.

7That is, `The weakness, lapses and errors of Your servants are not hidden from You: You indeed know everything, but like Your knowledge Your Mercy also is infinite; therefore, forgive the poor creatures in spite of knowing their errors." Another meaning can be: "Forgive by Your Mercy all those about whom by Knowledge You know that they have repented sincerely and have, in reality, adopted Your Way."

8To forgive and to save from the torment of Hell are although not related, and there seems to be no need to mention the other when one has been mentioned, this style, in fact, reflects the deep interest the angels have in the believers. It is customary that when a person who is deeply involved in a matter. finds an opportunity to make submissions before a judge, he presents the same petition humbly over and over again, in different ways, and does not rest content with making the petition just once.

9"Who ... way": 'Who have given up disobedience and rebellion, adopted obedience and followed the way which You Yourself have shown."

10Here again there is the same state of solicitude as referred to in E.N. H above. Obviously. forgiving and saving from Hell by itself amounts to admitting to Paradise. And then soliciting Allah for granting the believers the same Paradise which He Himself has promised theta, seems to be unnecessary, but the angels are so earnest in their desire of well-being for the believers that they go on repeating their good wishes for them although they know that Allah will certainly bless them with these favors in the Hereafter.

11That is. "Join with them their parents and their wives and children for the comfort of their eyes." This same thing Allah Himself has stated as among the blessings which the believers will be granted in Paradise. For this see Ar-Ra'd: 23 and At-Tur: 21. In the verse of Surah Tur, there is also the explanation that if a person. will deserve a higher rank in Paradise, which his parents will not deserve, he will not be lowered in rank to be joined with them but Allah will raise them to join him in the higher station.

12The word sayyi'at (evils) is used in three different meanings and all three arc implied here: (I) False beliefs, perverted morals and evil deeds; (2) consequences of deviation and evil deeds; and (3) calamities, disasters and suffering in this world, or in barzakh, or on the Day of Resurrection. The object of the angels' prayer is that they be saved from everything which may be evil for them.

13"Evils on the Day of Resurrection" implies the dread and terror of the Day. deprivation of the shade and every other comfort, severity of accountability, the ignominy of exposing every secret of life before all mankind, and other humiliations and hardships which the guilty ones will experience in the Hereafter.

14That is, "When the disbelievers will see on the Day of Resurrection that they had committed a grave folly by founding their entire life-work on polytheism and atheism, denial of the Hereafter and opposition to the Messenger, and due to the folly they were now doomed to that evil end, they will bite at their fingers and will curse themselves fretfully. At that time the angels will proclaim to them: "Today you are being angry with yourselves, but in the world when the Prophets of Allah and the other good people invited you to the right path to save you from this evil end, you turned down their invitation, Allah's wrath against you then was even greater. "

15This same thing has already been mentioned in Al-Baqarah: 28 above. It implies this: "How can you disbelieve in Allah? He granted you life when you were lifeless; then He will give you death. and then will again raise you back to life." The disbelievers do not deny the first three of these conditions, because they are perceptible and therefore un-deniable. But they refuse to accept the occurrence of the fourth condition, for they have not yet experienced it, and only the Prophets have foretold it. On the Day of Resurrection when the fourth condition also will be practically experienced by them, then they will acknowledge that the same which the Prophets had foretold had actually happened.

16That is, "We confess that we made a grave mistake when we denied this after-life; our life was filled with sins when we followed falsehood."

17That is, "Is there any possibility now that our confession of sins be accepted and we be rescued from this state of torment in which we have been seized?"

18That is, "The Judgment now rests entirely with that God alone, Whose Godhead you did not acknowledge, and those others whom you persistently regarded as associates and partners in the powers of Godhead, have no share whatever in the judgment. " (For a fuller understanding of this point, please see verse 45 of Az-Zumar and its E.N. 64). This sentence by itself gives the meaning that there would be no possibility of any way out for the disbelievers from the state of torment, for they did not only deny the Hereafter but they had aversion to their Creator and Sustainer, and they were not satisfied until they had associated Others with Him.

19"Signs" imply those Signs which point to the great truth that the Fashioner, Ruler and Administrator of the Universe is One and only One God.

20"Sustenance" here implies the rain, for every kind of the sustenance that man gets in the world, depends ultimately on the rainfall. Allah presents this one single Sign out of His countless Signs, as if to draw the people's attention to the fact: "If you only consider and ponder over the arrangement of this one thing, you will understand that the concept being presented in the Qur'an of the administration of the Universe, is true. This arrangement could exist only it' the Creator of the earth and its creatures and of

water and air and the sun and the heat and cold was only One God, and this arrangement could continue to exist for millions and millions of Years with perfect regularity only if the same Eternal God caused it to exist continually. And the One Who brought this arrangement into existence could only be an all-Wise and All-Merciful Lord, Who along with creating men, animals and vegetables in the earth, also created water precisely according to their needs and requirements, and then made these wonderful arrangements for transporting and spreading that water to different parts of the earth with perfect regularity. Now, who can be more unjust than the one who sees all this and yet denies God, or associates some other beings also with Him in Godhead?"

21That is, "A person who has turned away from God and whose intellect has been clouded and corrupted by heedlessness or prejudice, cannot learn any lesson from any Sign. He will see with his animal eyes that the winds Blew, the clouds gathered, the lightning thundered and flashed and the rain fell; but his human eyes will never perceive why all this happened, who caused it, and what rights He has on him. "

22For the explanation of "making one's religion sincerely Allah's", see E.N. 3 of Az-Zumar.

23That is, "He is exalted far above all the creations of the world. Anything that exists in the Universe, whether an angel or a prophet or a saint, or Borne other creation, may be very exalted and superior to other creations, but it cannot be imagined to have a station anywhere near the highest rank and position of Allah, not to speak of its being an associate in His attributes and powers and authority. "

24That is, He is King and Ruler of the whole Universe, and Master of the Throne of the Kingdom of the Universe. (For explanation, see Al-A'raf: 54 and E.N. 41 thereof; Yunus: 3, Ar-Ra'd: 2, Ta Ha: 5 and the E. N.'s thereof).

25"The Spirit" implies Revelation and Prophethood. (For explanation, see An-Nahl 2, Bani Isra'il: 85 and the E.N.'s thereof). And the words: 'Allah sends down the Spirit by His Command upon whomsoever of His servants He pleases" mean this: "Nobody has a monopoly over the bounties of Allah. Just as no one has a right to object as to why was so and so given beauty, and so-and-so extraordinary powers of memory or intelligence, so also no one has the right to abject as to why so-and-so only was chosen to be a prophet and why a person of some one's own choice was not made a prophet. "

26The Day of Meeting": the Day when all mankind, jinn and satans will be gathered together before their Lord simultaneously and the witnesses of their acts and deeds also will be present to bear the witness.

27That is, "Though in the world many vain and self-conceited people publicly proclaimed to be the kings and sovereigns, whose, in fact, is the Kingdom today? Who is the Owner of the powers and authority and Whose is the Command?" If a person hears these words in his right senses, he will be filled with terror, no matter how mighty a king or dictator he might be posing himself to be, and will immediately come to

his senses. Here the mention of an historical event will not be out of place. When the Samanid ruler, Nasr bin Ahmad (301-331 A.H.), entered Nishapur, he held a court and after ascending the throne desired that the proceedings be started with recitation from the Holy Qur'an. At this an elderly pious man came forward and recited this very section of this Surah. When he came to this verse, Nasr was struck with awe; he descended the throne trembling, took off the crown and fell down in prostration, saying: "O my Lord, Kingdom is Thine, not mine!"

28That is, "None shall be wronged in any way whatever today." It should be noted that in respect of recompense, injustice can have several forms; (1) A person may deserve a reward but he is not given it; (2) he is given a lesser reward than what was due to him; (3) he is given a punishment although he is not liable to any punishment; (4) the one who is liable to punishment is not given any punishment; (5) the one who is liable to a lesser punishment is given a greater punishment; (6) the oppressor goes Scot-free; and (7) one is seized for the sin committed by another. What Allah means to say is that none of these different kinds of injustices will be allowed to take place in His Court.

29It means: "It will take Allah no time to do the reckoning. Just as He is providing for every creature of the universe simultaneously and He is not so occupied in providing for one that He may have no time to provide for others, and just as He is seeing everything in the universe simultaneously, and hearing everything simultaneously, is managing every small and big affair simultaneously, and nothing absorbs His attention so completely that He may be unable to give . attention to others, at the same time, so He will subject to reckoning every single individual simultaneously and the hearing of one case will not make Him so occupied as to render Him unable to hear other countless cases at the same time. Then in His Court no delay also will be allowed to take place due to any difficulty in the investigation of the facts of the case and the availability of the witnesses. The Judge of the Court will Himself be aware of all the facts directly. Each party in every case will stand completely exposed before Him, and clear. undeniable evidence of the events and deeds, with each minor detail, will come forward without any delay. Therefore, each case will be settled and decided instantaneously.

30In the Qur'an the people have been made to realize again and again that Resurrection is not far off but has approached near at hand, and can take place any moment. In An-Nahl: 1, it has been said: "Allah's Judgment has come, so do not clamor for hastening it;" in Al-Anbiya':1: "The time of the reckoning of the people has drawn near, and yet they arc turning away in heedlessness;" in AI-Qamar: 1: "The Hour of Resurrection has drawn near and the moon has split asunder; " and in An-Najm: 57: "That which is coming is near at hand: none but Allah can avert it." All this is meant to warn the people to the effect that they should not become fearless of Resurrection thinking it to be yet far away, but should mend their ways and reform themselves at once.

31The word hamim as used in the original implies such a friend of a person as is aroused to action when he sees hire being beaten, and rushes forward to protect and save Him.

32This thing has been said to refute the concept of intercession held by the disbelievers. As a matter of fact, the wicked people will have no intercessor at all, for permission to intercede, if at all granted, can be granted only to the righteous servants of Allah, and Allah's righteous servants can never make friends with the disbelievers, polytheists and sinners so that they should even think of intruding on their behalf to save them. But as the disbelievers have generally held, and still hold, the belief that the saints, whose disciples they are, will not allow that they go to Hell, but will see that they are forgiven. Therefore, it has been said: There will be no such intercessor there. who may have to be listened to, and whose recommendation Allah may have to accept necessarily."

33That is, "He is not a blind and deaf god like your deities that He may be unaware of the misdeeds of a person about whom He is passing judgment. "

34Bayyinat means three things:

(1) The clear signs which pointed to the Messengers' being appointed by Allah;

(2) the convincing arguments which were a clear proof of their teachings being based on the Truth; and

(3) the clear guidance and instructions about the problems and affairs of life which could enable every reasonable person to see that such pure teachings could not be given by an impostor.

35For the other details of the story of the Prophet Moses, see AlBaqarah: 49-61; An-Nisa: 164; Al-Ma'idah: 20-26; Al-A'raf: 103-162; Yunus: 7,5-92: Hud 17, 96-97, 110; Introduction to Surah Yusuf; Ibrahim: 5-8; Bani Isra'il: 101-104; Al-Kahf: 60-82; Maryam: 51-53; Ta Ha: 9-98; Al-Mu'minun: 45-49; Ash Shu'ara': 10-68; An-Naml: 7-14; Introduction to Surah Al-Qasas and Al-Qasas: 3-44; Al Ahzab; 69; As-Saff: 114-122 and the E.N.'s thereof.

36For a reply to the critics' objections about Haman, see E.N. 8 of Al Qasas above.

37"A clear authority of appointment": With such clear Signs as left no doubt that he had been sent by Allah, and he had Allah. Lord of the worlds' power at his back. Front a careful study of the details of the Prophet Moses' story, as given in the Qur'an, it becomes obvious as to what were those Signs which are being described here as 'a clear authority of his appointment" as a Prophet by .Allah. In the first place, even this was strange that a person who, a few years earlier, had fled the country after killing a man of Pharaoh's nation and whose warrants of arrest had been issued, should make a sudden appearance directly in the fill-packed coup of Pharaoh, with a staff in hand, and should boldly and fearlessly address the king and his nobles and demand that they should acknowledge him as the representative of Allah, Lord of the worlds, and should act according to what he says, and none dares to lay iris hands on him. whereas the nation to which Moses belonged, had been so suppressed under slavery that if he had been

apprehended immediately on the charge of murder, no one would have voiced even a protest, not to speak of rising in rebellion. This shows that Pharaoh and his courtiers had been awe-inspired just at the appearance of the Prophet Moses, even before they witnessed the miracles of the staff and the shining hand, and they had realized in the very beginning that he had some greater power behind him, Then each of the wonderful miracles that he performed, one after the other, was enough to bring about the conviction that it was not a manifestation of magic but of Divine Power. After all, what power of magic could cause a staff to change into a serpent? or cause a whole country to suffer from famine? or cause different sorts of disasters to strike vast areas of the land on a sudden notice by Moses and be removed on a notice by him? That is why. according to the Qur'an, Pharaoh and all the responsible people of his kingdom had been convinced in their hearts, whether they might be refusing to profess with the tongue, that Moses had indeed been appointed a Prophet by Allah. (For details, see Al-A'raf: 106-117; Ta Ha: 56 78; Ash-Shu'ara': 30-51; An-Naml: 10-13).

38The truth": the miracles and signs by which the Prophet Moses proved that he was a Messenger sent by Allah and the strong arguments by which he showed that he was wholly in the right.

39As already mentioned in AI-A'raf: 127 above, Pharaoh's courtiers had said to him: `Will you leave Moses and his people free to spread disorder in the land?" And he himself had said: `I will have their sons slain and let their daughters live." This verse states that this order was at last issued from Pharaoh's court. It was, in fact, meant to so terrify the Prophet Moses himself and his supporters and followers that they should abandon him out of fear.

40Another meaning of this sentence can be: "Whatever the disbelievers had plotted, was aimed at deviation, tyranny and antagonism to the truth. That is, even after being convinced of the truth in their heaps, they continued to show stubbornness and did not hesitate to adopt any mean device whatever in order to defeat and frustrate the Truth.

41The event which is being related here is a very important event of the Israelite history, which the Israelites themselves have totally forgotten. Both the Bible and the Talmud are without it, and no mention of it is found in the other Israelite traditions either. Only through the Qur'an has the world come to know that during the conflict between Pharaoh and the Prophet Moses this event had taken place at some time. Anybody who reads this story, provided that he has not been blinded by prejudice against Islam and the Qur'an, cannot but realize that from the viewpoint of the invitation to the Truth this story is very valuable, and this thing by itself also is in no way against reason that a person from among the nobles of the kingdom of Pharaoh himself might have quietly believed in his heart, having been influenced by the personality of the Prophet Moses, his preaching and the wonderful miracles shown by him, and might not have been able to restrain himself when he saw that Pharaoh was planning to kill him. But the way the Western orientalists, in spite of their tall claims to knowledge and research, try to repudiate the self-evident truths of the Qur'an, on account of prejudice, can be judged from this that the author of the article "Musa" in the Encyclopaedia of Islam writes in respect of this story:

"The Kuranic story of a believer at the court of Pharaoh who wants to save Musa is not quite clear (xl, 28). Ought we to compare Jethro in the Haggada who advises clemency at Pharaoh's court?"

In other words, these so-called researchers have one thing settled with them: they must find fault with everything that the Qur'an presents. Now, if they do not find any ground for criticising a statement of it, they should at least say this much out of mischief that the story is not entirely clear, and also should incidentally create this doubt in the reader's mind that the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) might have heard from somewhere the story of Jethro mentioned in the Haggada taking place even before the birth of Prophet Moses, and inserted it here in this form. This is the type of literary research" which these people have adopted with regard to Islam and the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace).

42In this sentence Pharaoh tries to give the impression as if some people were restraining him .from killing the Prophet Moses. Had they not stood in his way. he would have killed him long ago, whereas in fact there was no external power to restrain him; it was the fear of his own heart which was preventing him from laying his hands on the Messenger of Allah.

43That is, "I fear a revolution from him, and even if he is unable to bring it about, there is at least the danger that he will cause mischief to appear in the country by his activities. Therefore, even if he doesn't commit a crime punishable with death, he should be put to death only for the sake of the maintenance of public order. As for this whether there is a real danger to the public order from him, the king's satisfaction in this regard is enough. If his majesty is convinced that he is dangerous, it should be declared that he is really dangerous and punishable with death."

Here, the meaning of "changing the religion" also should be understood well. on account of which Pharaoh wanted to put the Prophet Moses to death. Din here implies the system of government, and what Pharaoh meant to say was this: "I fear that he will change your king." (Ruh al-Ma'ani, vol. XXIV, p. 56). In other words, the din of the land was the religious, political, cultural and economic system that was prevalent in Egypt on the basis of Pharaoh's and his family's sovereignty, and Pharaoh was afraid that Moses' message would change that very din. But like the cunning and deceitful rulers of every age he also did not say that he feared being deposed from his position of authority and, therefore, he wanted to kill Moses, but he presented the case like this: "O people, the danger is for you, not for me; for if Moses' movement succeeded your din would change. I am not worried for myself: I am worried for your sake as to what would become of you when you have been deprived of the protection of my authority. Therefore, the wicked man who poses such a danger should be put to death, for he is an enemy of the state. "

44Here, there are two equal probabilities and there is no ground for preferring one to the other. The first probability is that the Prophet Moses might himself be present in the court at the time and Pharaoh might

have expressed his intention to kill him in his presence, and the Prophet might have given this direct answer there and then, addressing him and his courtiers. The other probability is that Pharaoh might have expressed this intention in the absence of Moses in a meeting with the responsible people of his government and a report of this conversation might have been conveyed to the Prophet by some of the believers, whereupon he might have said these words in some gathering of his followers. Whatever be the case, it is apparent from the words that the threat of Pharaoh could not cause any state of fear in Moses' heart and with trust in Allah he flung his threat back at Pharaoh. The context in which this event has been related in the Qur'an by itself shows that the same also was the reply from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) to those wicked people who, being fearless of the Day of Reckoning, were devising plots to kill him.

45That is, "He has shown such manifest Signs to you as have made it absolutely clear that he is a Messenger sent by your Lord." The Believer, from among the people of Pharaoh, was obviously referring to the Signs the details of which have already been given in AI-A'raf: 107-117,130-133; Bani Isra'il: 101-102; Ta Ha: 56-73; Ash-Shu'ara': 30-51; An-Naml :10-13).

46That is, "If in spite of such manifest Signs as he has shown you, you regard him as a liar, you should leave him alone, for the alternative probability, and a very strong probability too, is that he is truthful, and therefore you may involve yourselves in God's torment by laying your hands on him. Therefore, even if you think that he is a liar, you should leave him to himself. For if he is lying, in the name of Allah, Allah Himself will take him to task." Similar words had the Prophet Moses himself said to Pharaoh before this: "If you do not believe in me, do not harm me." (Ad-Dukhan: 21)

Here one should keep in mind that the Believer of the people of Pharaoh had not openly disclosed in the beginning that he had affirmed faith in the Prophet Moses, but he spoke as if he also belonged to Pharaoh's side, and was only wishing his people well. But when Pharaoh and his courtiers did not seem to see reason and continued to behave stubbornly, he at last disclosed the secret of his faith, as becomes obvious from his speech in vv. 38-44.

47This sentence can have two meanings and probably the Believer had intentionally employed it, because he did not yet want to express his belief openly. Its one meaning is: "One and the same person cannot combine righteousness and lying and falsehood. You can clearly see that Moses is a man of very sublime and pure character. Therefore, how can you believe that, on the one hand, he should be such a liar as to lay a baseless claim to prophethood in the name of Allah, and on the other, Allah should bless him with such high morals?" The other meaning is: "If you arc bent upon taking the life of Moses (peace be upon him) by transgressing all limits and will execute your evil designs by bringing false accusations against him, you should remember that Allah will never show you the way to success."

48That is, "Why are you being ungrateful to Allah for His blessing of granting you domination in the land and are inviting His scourge to visit you?"

49From this answer of Pharaoh it appears that he had not yet found out that the noble of his court had become a Believer in his heart. That is why he did not show any displeasure at what he said, but made clear that he was not inclined to change his opinion even after hearing what he had to say.

50That is, "Allah has no enmity with His servants that He should destroy them without any reason: He sends calamities upon them only when they have transgressed all limits, and sending the torment then is the very demand of justice. "

51That is, "Your deviation, and then your stubbornness, is such that before Moses (peace be upon him) there came in your land the Prophet Joseph about whom you yourselves admit that he was a man of the highest morals, and you also admit that by giving the right interpretation of the king's dream he saved you from the dreadful effects of the seven-year-long famine, which had struck Egypt in his time; and your entire nation also acknowledges that Egypt has never witnessed a period of greater justice and prosperity than the period of his rule. But in spite of knowing and recognizing all his merits and high qualities you did not believe in him during his life time, and when he died, you said: "Never will the like of him came again!" That is, you recognized his excellences only for an excuse to deny every prophet who came after him. This means that you would not accept guidance in any case."

52It so appears that the next few sentences are an addition by Allah and an explanation of the words of the Believer of the people of Pharaoh.

53That is, "Allah allows only those people to go astray who possess the following three qualities:

(1) They transgress all limits in their evildoing. and then develop such a taste for it that they do not feel inclined to accept any invitation to reform their morals

(2) their permanent attitude in respect of the Prophets is characterized by doubt and suspicion. The Prophets of God may bring any clear Signs before them, yet they doubt their Prophethood as well as view with suspicion those truths which they present with regard to Tauhid and the Hereafter; and

(3) they try to resist the Revelations of the Book of Allah with crooked arguments instead of considering them rationally, and these objections are neither based on any sound reason nor on the authority of a revealed Book, but from the beginning to the end their only basis is obstinacy and stubbornness.

When a group of the people develops these three evils, Allah hurls it into the deep pit of Hell-fire where from no power can then rescue them.

54That is, 'The seal is not set on the heart of anybody without a reason. This seal of curse is set only on

the heart of the one who is filled with arrogance and spirit of violence and tyranny."

55Pharaoh addresses these words to Hamim, his minister, interposing in the speech of the Believer in a way as though he has no regard for what he was saying. Therefore, he turns away from him arrogantly and says to Haman, "Build me a high tower so that I may climb it to see where the God of whom this Moses speaks, lives." (For explanation, see Al-Qasas: 38 and E.N.'s thereof).

56That is, 'You are being forgetful of Allah on account of your pride in the transient wealth and prosperity of this world: this is your folly."

57That is, "About whom I have no scientific proof that they are God's associates. why should I then accept such a stupendous thing blindly that they also have a share in Godhead and that I have to serve them too along with Allah?"

58This sentence can have several meanings:

(1) That they neither possess here nor in the Hereafter any right that the people should be invited to . acknowledge their godhead;

(2) that they have been made gods by the people themselves without any reason, for they have neither claimed godhead for themselves in this world nor will they put forward any such claim in the Hereafter that they also were gods and should have been acknowledged as such; and

(3) that it is no use invoking them here nor in the Hereafter, for they are absolutely powerless and invoking them is of no avail at all.

59A "transgressor" is every such person who recognizes the godhead of others than Allah, or assumes godhead for himself, or rebels against God and adopts an attitude of independence in the world, and then commits excesses against himself, against other creatures of God and against everything else with-which he has to deal. Such a person, in fact, transgresses all limits of reason and justice.

60This sentence clearly shows that while saying all this the Believer was certain that he would have to bear the brunt of the wrath of the entire kingdom of Pharaoh in consequence of his speaking the Truth, and that he would have to lose all Iris honors and privileges, even his life. But in spite of knowing all this he performed his duty only with his trust in Allah, according to the call of his conscience, on this critical occasion.

61This shows that the Believer was such an important man in the kingdom of Pharaoh that although he spoke out the truth in the face of Pharaoh, in the full-packed court, yet none could have the courage to

punish him publicly. That is why, Pharaoh and his supporters had to make secret plans to kill him, but these plans also were frustrated by Allah.

62It so appears from the style that this event of the Believer's speaking out the truth had taken place in the last stage of the conflict between the Prophet Moses and Pharaoh. Probably being fed up and disgusted with the long drawn out conflict, Pharaoh might have at last made up his mind to kill the Prophet Moses. But he might have felt from the truthfulness of that influential person of his kingdom that the Prophet Moses' influence had even reached the higher circles of his government. Therefore, he might have decided that before taking the extreme step against Moses he should find out who among the chiefs and nobles and higher officials of the kingdom had been influenced by the movement, and should seize Moses after having punished them. But while he was still busy devising his plans, Allah commanded the Prophet Moses and his companions to migrate, and it was while pursuing them that Pharaoh was drowned in the sea along with his hosts.

63This verse is an express proof of the torment of barzakh, which has often been mentioned in the Traditions as the torment of the grave. Allah here has in clear words mentioned two stages of the torment; a lesser torment, which is being given now to Pharaoh and his people before the coming of Resurrection, and it is; this that they are presented before the fire of Hell morning and evening, which strikes terror in their hearts and they see the Hell which they will have to enter ultimately. After this when Resurrection comes, they will be given the real and greater punishment which is destined for them, i.e. they will be hurled into the same Hell, which they are being made to witness since the time they were drowned till today, and will continue to witness it till the Hour of Resurrection. And such a treatment is not especially meant for Pharaoh and his people: all the culprits continue to witness the evil end, from the hour of death till Resurrection, which is awaiting them. On the other hand, the righteous people are made to see continually the pleasant picture of the good end, which Allah has got ready for them. A Tradition has been related in Bukhari, Muslim, and Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Umar, saying that the Holy Prophet said: Whoever from among you dies is shown his final resting place morning and evening continually, whether he be a dweller of Paradise or of Hell. It is said to him: This is the place which you will enter when Allah will raise you back to life on the Day of Resurrection and will call you into His presence. " (For further details, see Al Anfal: 50-51; An-Nalal: 28-32; Al-Mu'minun: 99-100 and the E. N.'s thereof, and E.N.'s 22, 23 of Surah Ya Sin).

64This they will not say in any hope that their previous guides or rulers or leaders would actually be able to save them from the torment, or would have it reduced. At that time they will have fully realized that those people could not avail them anything there. But they will say this in order to humiliate them, as if to say: "In the world you ruled over us with great show of power and authority: now save us also from this disaster which has befallen us only because of you."

65That is, Both you and we have already been sentenced and Allah has passed His judgment regarding each of us. Now it does not lie in anyone's power to change the sentence of Allah, or to make any

increase or decrease in the punishment awarded by Him."

66That is, 'When the fact is this that the Messengers had come to you with the clear Signs, and you have already been sentenced to suffer punishment here, because you had refused to believe in them, it is not possible for us to pray for you to Allah. For obviously there should be some plea for such a prayer, and you have exhausted every plea by your misconduct. So, you pray for yourselves if you so like: but we would tell you beforehand that the prayers of the people who had disbelieved in the world like you have been of no avail.

67For explanation, see E.N. 93 of As-Saaffat.

68That is, when Allah's Court will be established and the witnesses will be produced before Him.

69That is, "We did not just leave Moses alone when We sent him against Pharaoh, but We gave him guidance at every step till success." This contains a subtle allusion to the effect: "O Muhammad, We shall help you too in the same manner. We have neither left you alone after raising you as a Prophet in the city of Makkah and the tribe of Quraish so that these wicked people may treat you as they like, but We Ourselves are at your back and are giving you guidance at every step."

70That is "Just as those who disbelieved Moses were deprived of this blessing and the Israelites who believed in bite were made heirs to the Book, so will also those who deny you be deprived and only those who believe in you will have the good fortune to inherit the Qur'an and rise in the world as the standard bearers of guidance."

71"Be patient"; "Bear up with a cool mind against these hardships through which you are passing."

72The allusion is to the promise made above in the sentence: "We do help Our Messengers and the Believers in the life of this world."

73A study of the context shows that here "error" implies the state of impatience that was being caused to the Holy Prophet on account of the severe antagonism, especially the persecution of his followers. He earnestly desired that either some miracle should be shown, which should convince the disbelievers, or something else should soon come down from Allah, which should quell the storm of opposition. Though this desire in itself was not a sin, which should have called for repentance, the high rank with which Allah had blessed the Holy Prophet demanded great grit and will power; so the little impatience shown by him was regarded as inconsistent with his high rank. Therefore, he was required to ask Allah's forgiveness for showing the weakness and was told to stand his ground like a rock as a man of a high rank like him should.

74That is, `Glorification of Allah with His praises is the only means by which those who work for the sake of Allah can get the strength to resist and overcome the hardships faced in the way of Allah. ¦ Glorifying the Lord morning and evening can have two meanings:

(1) `Remembering Allah constantly and perpetually:" and

(2) `performing the Prayers at the specific times."

And in this second case, the allusion is to the five times of the Prayers, which were enjoined on all the believers as a duty some time after the revelation of this Surah. For the word 'ashiyy in Arabic is used for the time from the declining of the sun till the early part of nigh, which covers the times of the four Prayers from Zuhr to 'Isha': and ibkar is the time from dawn to the rising of the sun, which is the time of the Fajar Prayer. (For further details, see Al-Baqarah: 3, 43, 45, 238; Hud: 114; Al-Hijr: 98-99; Introduction to Bani Isra'il and vv. 78-79; Ta Ha: 130; AnNur: 56-58; Al-'Ankabut: 45; Ar-Rum: 17-18, 31 and the E.N.'s thereof).

75That is, `The real cause for their opposition without any argument and Their irrational, crooked argumentation is not that they do not understand the myths and the themes of goodness and reform being presented before there in the form of the Revelations of Allah; therefore, they dispute about them in good faith in order to understand them; but the actual reason for their wrong attitude is that Their self-conceit does not permit them tolerate that while they are living in Arabia the guidance and leadership of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) be accepted and acknowledged and ultimately one day they themselves should have to accept the leadership of the person as against whom they think they have a greater right to be the chiefs and leaders. That is why they are straining every nerve not to let Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) have his way, and they do not hesitate to use any mean device whatever for the purpose.

76In other words it means: `He whom Allah has made great, will remain great, and the efforts of the small people who are trying to establish their superiority, will ultimately end in failure."

77That is, `Just as Moses had become free from fear and anxiety after invoking Allah Almighty's help and refuge against Pharaoh's threats, so should you also seek His help and refuge against the threats and conspiracies of the chiefs of the Quraish, and then should busy yourself in raising His word being free from every anxiety."

78After reviewing the conspiracies and plots of the chiefs of the Quraish in vv. 21-56, the address is now being directed towards the common people, and they are being made to understand that the truths to which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is inviting them, are absolutely rational, as if to say: "Your own good and well-being lies in accepting them and rejecting them is ruinous for your own selves."

In this connection, first of all arguments have been given for the doctrine of the Hereafter, for the disbelievers regarded this very doctrine as most bewildering and incomprehensible.

79This is an argument for the possibility of the Hereafter. The disbelievers thought it was impossible for man to be resurrected after death. In answer to this, it is being said: "Those who talk like this are, in fact, ignorant. If they use their common sense, they will easily understand that for that God Who has created this wonderful Universe it cannot at all be difficult to create men once again."

80This is an argument for the necessity of 'the Hereafter. In the preceding sentence it was said that the Hereafter can take place, and its .occurrence is not impossible; in this it is being said that the Hereafter should take place; it is the demand of both reason and justice that it should occur, and its nonoccurence is against reason and justice, not its occurrence. After all, how can a reasonable man believe it to be right that those who live like the blind in the world and fill God's earth with mischief by their immoral and wicked deeds, should not see the evil end of their misdeeds and wrong conduct; likewise, those people who pass their lives in the world with open eyes, and believe and do good works, should be deprived of seeing a good result of their righteousness? If this is expressly against reason and justice, then the belief of denying the Hereafter also should be against reason and justice, for the non-occurrence of the Hereafter means that the good and the bad should both become dust after death and meet with one and the same end. For in this case, not only are reason and justice destroyed but morality also is proved to be meaningless and absurd. For if good and evil have one and the same end and destiny, then the evildoer would be highly wise, because he gratified all his desires before his death, and the good man highly foolish because he kept himself subjected to every sort of moral restoration without any reason.

81This is the absolute assertion about the occurrence of the Hereafter, which can be made only on the basis of knowledge and not on the basis of reasoning, and in no other discourse than of Revelation this assertion can be made with. such absoluteness. That which can be said without Revelation only on the basis of intellectual reasoning is that Resurrection can take place and it should take place. Beyond this, to assert that Resurrection will certainly take place, can be said only by that Being Who knows that Resurrection will occur, and that Being is none but Allah. It is here that it becomes explicit and evident that if Religion can be based on pure knowledge, instead of speculation and reasoning, it can only be on the knowledge obtained through Divine Revelation.

82After the Hereafter the discourse now turns to Tauhid which was the second point of dispute between the Holy Prophet and the disbelievers.

83That is, "all the powers to answer our prayers vest in Me only; so you should not pray to others but pray to Me." To understand the spirit of this verse well, three points should be comprehended properly:

First, man prays only to that being whom he regards as all-Hearing and all-Seeing and Possessor of

supernatural powers. And the real motive of prayer for man is the internal feeling that the natural means and resources of the material world are not enough to remove any of his troubles and to fulfill any of his needs, or are not proving to be enough, Therefore, it is inevitable that he should turn to a being who is possessor of supernatural powers and authority. Man invokes that Being even without having seen Him; he invokes Him at all tithes, at all places, and under all circumstances; he invokes Him in solitude, aloud as well as in a low voice, and even in the depths of his heart. He does so inevitably on the basis of the belief that that Being is watching him everywhere, is also hearing whatever he has in his heart, and possesses such absolute powers that, it can come to the help of the supplicant wherever he is, and can help him out of every trouble and difficulty. After having known this truth about the prayer, it remains no longer difficult for man to understand that the one who invokes another than Allah for help, commits shirk absolutely and purely and clearly, for he believes those attributes to be belonging to the other being, which only belong to Allah. Had he not believed the other being to be an associate of Allah in the Divine attributes, he would never have even thought of invoking it for help.

Second, one should. fully understand that man's merely thinking about a being that it is the possessor of powers and authority, does not necessitate that it should actually become possessor of the powers and authority. Being possessor of powers and authority is a factual matter, which is not dependent on somebody's understanding or not understanding it. The one who is actually the Possessor of the powers will in any case remain the Possessor whether man regards Him so or not. And the one who is not in reality the possessor, will not be able to have any share whatever in the powers only because man has believed it to be possessing the powers Now, the fact of the matter is that the Being Who is all-Powerful, all-Hearing, All-Seeing, and Who is actually controlling the whole Universe is only Allah, and He alone is Possessor of all powers and authority. There is none else in this Universe, who may have any power to hear the prayers and to answer them or reject them. As against this factual matter if some people of themselves start entertaining the belief that some prophets, saints, angels, jinns, planets or imaginary gods also are share-holders in the powers, the reality will not change in any way whatever. The Owner will remain the Owner and the helpless servants the servants.

Thirdly, the one who invokes others than Allah behaves like the supplicant who takes his petition to a government office, but leaving aside the real officer who has authority, presents it before one of the other supplicants who may be present there with his petition, and then starts imploring him humbly, saying Sir, you possess all the powers, and yours is the only authority here; so, you alone can fulfill my needs. " Such a conduct, in the first place, is in itself highly foolish, but in a case like this it also amounts to high insolence, because the real officer who has the authority, is present and before his very eyes applications and petitions are being made before another, apart from him. Then this ignorance and folly reaches its height when the person before whom the petition is being presented makes the petitioner understand over and over again that he himself is a petitioner like him and possesses no power at all, and that the real officer who has the powers is present, and he should make his petition before him. But in spite of this counsel and warning, , the foolish person goes on saying: `Sir, you are my lord: you alone can fulfill my need."

Keeping these three things in view, one should try to understand what Allah has said here:`Call upon Me: I shall answer your prayers: it is for Me to accept them. "

84Two things deserve special attention in this verse:

(1) Du'a (prayer) and 'ibadat (worship) have been used as synonyms here. The "prayer" of the first sentence has been called `worship" in the second. This makes it explicit that prayer itself is worship, rather the essence of worship; and

(2) the words they disdain My worship on account of pride" have been used for those who do not pray to Allah. This shows that praying to Allah is the very requirement of one's servitude to Him, and turning away from Him amounts to being vain and arrogant.

According to Hadrat Nu'man bin Bashir, the Holy Prophet said: The prayer is the very essence of worship. Then he recited this verse." (Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Abu Hatim, Ibn Jarir). According to Hadrat Anas, the Holy Prophet said. "Prayer is the marrow of worship." (Trimidhi) Hadrat Abu Hurairah says that the HolyProphet said: 'Allah becomes angry with him who does not ask Him for anything." (Tirmidhi)

In the light of the above, the enigma that often causes confusion in the minds is also resolved. In connection with prayer, people say that when the evil or the good destiny is in the control of Allah, and whatever He has already decreed in accordance with His dominant wisdom and expedience has to take place inevitably. what is then the use of the prayer? This is a serious misunderstanding which destroys the importance of prayer from the heart of man, and with this false notion even if man prays, his prayer would be soulless. The above verse of the Qur'an removes this misunderstanding in two ways:

In the first place, Allah says in clear words: ¦Call upon Me: I will answer your prayers." This proves that fate or destiny is not something which. God forbid, might have tied the hands of Allah Himself also, and the powers to answer the prayer might have been withdrawn froth Him. The creatures have no doubt no bower to avert or change the decrees of Allah: but Allah Himself certainly has the power to change His decrees and decisions on hearing a servant's prayer and petition. The other thing that has been stated in this verse is that whether a prayer is accepted or not, it is never without an advantage. The servant by presenting his petition before his Lord and by praying to Him acknowledges His Lordship and Supremacy and admits his own servitude and helplessness before Him. This expression of servitude is in itself "worship", rather the essence of worship of whose reward the servant will in no cast be deprived, irrespective of whether he is grained the particular thing for which he had prayed or not.

We get a full explanation of these two themes in the Sayings of the Holy Prophet. The following Traditions throw light on the first theme: Hadrat Salman Farsi (relates that the Holy Prophet said: 'Nothing

can avert destiny but the prayer." (Tirmidhi) that is, no one has the power to change the decisions of Allah but Allah Himself can change His decisions, and this happens when the servant prays to Him.

Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah says that the Holy Prophet said: "Whenever man prays to Allah, Allah either gives him the same which he prayed for, or prevents a calamity of the same degree from befalling him provided that he does not pray for a sin or for severing relations with the kindred." (Tirmidhi) Another Hadith on the same subject has been reported by Hadrat Abu Said Khudri in which the Holy Prophet said: "Whenever a Muslim prays, unless it be a prayer far .r sin or for severing relations with a kindred, Allah grants it in one of the three ways: Either his prayer is granted in this very world, or it is preserved for rewarding him in the Hereafter, or a disaster of the same degree is prevented from befalling him." (Musnad Ahmad)

Hadrat Abu Hurairah says that the Holy Prophet said: "When-ever one of you prays,, he should not say: O God, forgive me if You so please, show me mercy if You so please, grant me provisions if You so please, but he should say definitely: O God, fulfill my such and such need." (Bukhari). According to another Tradition from Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said: `Pray to Allah with the certainty that He will answer it." (Tirmidhi). In still another Tradition Hadrat Abu Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "The servant's prayer is granted provided that he does not pray for a sin or for severing connections with the kindred, and is not hasty. It was asked: What is being hasty, 0 Messenger of Allah? He replied: Being hasty is that man should say: I have prayed much, too much, but I see that my prayer is nor being answered. Then he should be tired of it and give up praying." (Muslim). The other theme is explained by the following Traditions:

Hadrat Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Nothing is as praiseworthy in the sight of Allah as the prayer." (Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah).

Hadrat Ibn Mas'ud says that the Holy Prophet said: "Ask of Allah His bounty, because Allah likes that He should be asked." (Tirmidhi)

Hadrat Ibn 'Umar and Hadrat Mu'adh bin Jabal state that the Holy Prophet said: "The prayer is in any case beneficial, both with respect to those calamities which have descended and with respect to those which have not yet descended. So, O servants of Allah, you must always pray." (Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad).

Hadrat Anas says that the Holy Prophet said: `Each one of you should ask his every need of Allah; so much so that even if his shoe-lace breaks, he should pray for it to Allah." (Tirmidhi). That is, even in matters which man feels are in his own power, he should invoke Allah's help for it before planning his own devices for it, for in no matter can man succeed only on the basis of his own devices without the help and succor of Allah, and praying before devising plans means that the servant is at all times acknowledging the supremacy of Allah and admitting his own helplessness.

85This verse comprises two important themes: First, the night and the day have been presented in it as an argument for Tauhid, because their alternating regularly means that One God alone is ruling over the earth and the sun, and their alternation's being beneficial for man and other earthly creatures is an express proof of the fact that the same One God is also the Creator of all these things and has devised this system with such great wisdom that it should be beneficial and useful for all His creatures. Secondly, in this verse the atheists and the polytheists have been to realize how great a blessing has Allah bestowed on them in the shape of the night and the day and what ungrateful wretches they are that while they are benefiting from this blessing of His they are being disloyal and rebellious to Him day and night (For father explanation see Yunus 87,Alfurqan 62, E.N.'s thereof).

86That is, "The alternation of the night and day has proved that Allah alone is your Creator as well as of everything else, and the great advantage and benefits that accrue from this alternation for your life, prove that He is your highly Beneficent Lord. After this, it automatically follows that He is your real Deity too. For it would be wholly against reason and justice that your Creator and Providence should be Allah and your deities others."

87That is, "Who is misleading you to think that those who are neither the creators nor providers should deserve to be worshiped by you?"

88That is, "In every age the common people have been deluded by the misguides only because the people did not believe in the Revelations that Allah sent down through His Messengers to make them understand the Truth. Consequently; they were trapped by the selfish, dishonest people, who had set up shrines of false gods as a business. "

89For explanation, see An-Naml: 61 and E.N. 74 on it.

90That is, "You have not been exposed to outer space so that heavenly calamities should rain on you and annihilate you completely, but We have built over the earth a fully fortified celestial system (which appears like a dome to the eye), which does not allow any destructive element to reach you; so much so that even the destructive cosmic rays cannot reach you and that is. how you are living peacefully on the earth. "

91That is, "We had provided for you such a safe and peaceful place of rest even before your creation. Then We created you and gave you a fine body with most appropriate limbs and physical and mental powers of a high caliber. You did not create this erect stature, these hands and feet, these eyes and nose and ears, this talking tongue and this brain, which is a treasure-house of great capabilities, nor were these created by your mother and father, nor had a prophet . or a saint or a god the power to create them. Their Maker and Creator was the All-Wise, All-Merciful, All-Mighty Sovereign, Who created Man

with this wonderful body to function in the world, when He decided to bring him into being. Then as soon as you were created, you found by His beneficence a vast table laid out with pure provisions containing items of pure food which is not poisonous but health-giving, which is not bitter and tasteless but tasty, which u not , rotten and stale and stinking but good smelling, which is not lifeless dregs but rich in vitamins and useful organic substances, so essential for the proper development and nourishment of yew body. Who has provided in such abundance this water, and corn, vegetables, fruits, milk, honey, meat and condiments, which not only add relish to your food but also provide you vitality and pleasures of life? And who has made the arrangements that these measureless granaries of food should go on coming out from the earth endlessly and their supply should never fail? Just consider this: What would have become of life if there had been no arrangement of food and man had been brought into existence suddenly? Is this not a clear proof that Your Creator is not merely a Creator but is an All-Wist Creator and All-Merciful Lord? (For further explanation, see Hud: 6, An-Naml 60-66 and the E.N.'s thereof):

92That is, "His is the real and true life. He only is living by virtue of His own power. No one else has the eternal and everlasting lift but He. All others have borrowed and temporary life, which is destined to death and perishable. "

93For explanation, see E.N.'s :3, 4 of Az-Zumar.

94That is, "There is none else the hymns of whose praise may be sung and who may be thanked. "

95Here again `ibadat (worship) and du 'a (prayer) have ban used as synonyms .

96That is, "Someone dies before birth, and someone before attaining youth, and someone before reaching old age. "

97"An appropriate time" may either imply the time of death, or the time when all human beings will be resurrected and presented before their Lord. In the first case, the meaning would be: Allah passes every man through different stages of life and takes him to the specific time which He has appointed for everyone's return. Before that time even if the whole world joins to kill him, it cannot kill him; and when that time has arrived, none can keep him alive even if all the powers of the world join together to do so. In the second case, it would mean: This gamut of life has not been brought about so that man may end up in the dust and be completely annihilated, but Allah passes him through different stages of life so that all human beings may present themselves before Him at the time which He has appointed for the purpose.

98That is, "You are not being passed through these different stages of lift so that you may live as the animals live and die as they die, but for the purpose that you may use yew common sense which Allah has granted you and thay understand the system in which you are living. The creation of a wonderful thing like life from the lifeless substances of the earth, then the coming into being of a marvelous creation

like man from the microscopic germ of the sperm, then its developing inside the mother's womb, from the time of conception till delivery, in such a manner that its sex, its form and appearance, its bodily structure, its mental qualifies and characteristics, and its faculties and capabilities should be determined therein, un-influenced by any external factor or agency. Then the one who is to be eliminated by abortion does fall a prey to abortion, the one who is to die in infancy, does die in infancy, whether he be the child of a king, and the one who is to reach maturity or old age, does reach that age, even through highly dangerous conditions, in which death should be certain, and the one who is to die in a particular stage of life, does die in that stage even if he is given the best medical attention and treatment in the best hospitals by the best doctors. Are not all these things pointing to the truth that the ultimate control of life and death is in the hand of an all-Mighty Sovereign? And when the reality is this that an all-Powerful Being is controlling ow life and death, then how did a prophet or a saint or an angel or a star or planet become worthy of ow worship and service? When did a creature attain the rank that we should pray to it, and accept it as the maker and un-maker of our destiny? And how did a human power have the status that we should obey its commands and prohibitions and its self-made law about the lawful and the unlawful, without question? (For further explanation, see Al-Hay: 5-7 and the E.N.'s on it).

99That is, "Have you not understood even after the above discourse what is the real source of these people's misunderstanding and misconduct, and what has caused them to go astray? "(One should note that the addressee hire is not the Holy Prophet but every such person who reads these verses or hears them read).

100This is the real cause of their going astray Their denial of the Qur'an and the teachings brought by the Messenger of Allah and their resisting by disputation the Revelations of Allah instead of pondering over them seriously, was the basic cause, which has led them astray and exhausted all possibilities of their adopting the Right Way .

101That is, "When compelled by the intensity of thirst they will ask for water, the keepers of Hell will drag them by the chains towards the springs of boiling water, and when they will have drunk from them, they will drag them back to be cast into the fire of Hell. "

102That is, "If they really were gods or associates in Godhead, and you worshiped them in the hope that they would help you in the evil time, then why don't they come to rescue you now?"

103They do not mean to say, "We did not associate them with God in the world," but they mean: "Now we have understood well that those whom we invoked in the world, were nothing and mere nonentities."

104That is, "You not only followed that which was untrue and false, but you became so enamored of the untruth that when the Truth was presented before you, you paid no heed to it, but continued to exult in yow worship of the falsehood.

105That is, "You should have patience at what those people say and do, who arc opposing you by disputation and wrangling and want to defeat you by mean devices."

106That is, "It is not necessary that We should punish every such person who has tried to harm you, in this world and during yow lifetime. Whether a person receives his punishment here or not, he cannot in any case escape Ow grasp: he has to return to Us after death. Then he will receive full punishment of his misdeeds."

107A new theme starts from here. The disbelievers of Makkah said to the Holy Prophet, "We would not believe you to be Allah's Messenger unless you showed us the miracle that we ask you to show us." In the following verses an answer is being given to this very demand without mentioning it. (For the type of the miracles they demanded, see Hud: 12, Al-Hijr 7, Bani Isra'il: 90-93, Al-Furqan: 21 and the E.N.'s thereof).

108That is, "No Prophet ever showed a miracle by his own will and desire, nor had any Prophet the power to show a miracle by himself. Whenever a miracle was shown through a Prophet, it was shown when Allah willed it to be shown through him to the disbelievers." This is the first answer to the disbelievers' demand.

109That is, "A miracle has never been shown for the mere fun of it. It is a decisive thing. If a nation does not believe even after a miracle has been shown, it is destroyed. You are demanding a miracle only for the sake of fun, but you have no idea that by making such a demand you arc, in fact, inviting yow own doom. " This is the second answer to their demand. (For details, please sec Al Hijr: 8, 58-60, Bani Isra'il 59, AI-Anbiya': 5-9, Al-Furqan: 22-23, Ash-Shua`ra': 66-67 and the E.N.'s thereof).

110It means this: "If you are not demanding a miracle only for the sake of fun and amusement but want to have the satisfaction whether that to which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is inviting you(i.e. Tauhid and the Hereafter) is true or not,then God's those Signs which you are observing and experiencing at all times, are quite enough. For there remains no need for other signs when there are these Signs to help you understand the Truth." This is the third answer to their demand of the miracles. This answer also has been given at several places in the Qur'an and we have given detailed commentary on it. (Please see Al-An'am: 37-39; Yunus: 101; Ar-R'ad: 7-13;.Ash-Shua'ra': 4-9 and the E.N.'s thereof).

The animals which serve man on the earth, especially the cow, ox, buffalo, sheep, goat, camel and horse, have been created with such nature by the Creator that they easily become man's domestic pet servants and he uses them to fulfill countless of his needs. He rides on them, employs them for carrying loads and in agriculture, get: milk from them, which he drinks and also uses it for making curd, butter; ghee, condensed milk, cheese and different sorts of confectioneries; eats their flesh, uses their fat, and puts to good uses their wool and hair and skin and intestines and bones, even their blood and dung. Is it

not a manifest proof that the Creator of man had created these animals even before creating him in view of his countless needs, on a special pattern so that he may use them to advantage?

The three-fourths of the earth's surface is under water and only one-fourth is dry land. In the dry parts also there are small and wide tracts of land which are separated by water. The spreading of human populations on the dry lands and the establishment of commercial and other relations between them could not be possible unless water and oceans and winds were made subject to such laws as would make navigation possible, and such materials were made available on the earth, which man could employ for building ships. Is it not an express sign that there is One God and only One All-Powerful, All-Merciful and All-Wise Lord, Who has trade man and earth and water and oceans and winds .and everything on the earth according to His own special scheme? Rather, if man only considers from the viewpoint of navigation how the positions of the stars and regular movements of the planets are helpful in it, he will have the testimony that not only of the earth but of the heavens too the Creator is the same One Bountiful Lord.

Then, consider also this: Can you in your right senses imagine that the all-Wise God, Who has given His countless things in the control of man and has granted him all these provisions for his well-being, will be, God forbid, so blind of the eye and so thoughtless as would never call man to account after giving him all this?

111This is the conclusion to the discourse. While studying this please also keep in view vv. 4-5 and v. 21 of this Surah.

112That is, "They took their philosophy and their science, their law, their secular sciences and their mythology and theology invented by their religious guides as the real knowledge, and regarded the Knowledge brought by the Prophets of Allah as worthless and therefore paid no heed to it. "

113"The standing Law of Allah" : the Law that repentance and faith are beneficial only till the time man is not seized by the torment of Allah or death. Believing or repenting after the torment has arrived or the signs of death have appeared, is not acceptable to Allah.

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41. Surah Ha Mim As Sajdah, also known as Surah Fussilat (Explained in Detail)

Name

The name of this Surah is composed of two words, *Ha-Mim* and *As-Sajdah*, which implies that it is a Surah which begins with *Ha-Mim* and in which a verse requiring the performance of *sajdah* (prostration) has occurred.

Period of Revelation

According to authentic Traditions, it was sent down after the affirmation of the Faith by Hadrat Hamzah and before the affirmation of the Faith by Hadrat Umar. Muhammad bin Ishaq, the earliest biographer of the Holy Prophet, has related on the authority of Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurzi, the famous follower of the Companions, that one day some of the Quraish chiefs were sitting in their assembly in the Masjid al-Haram, while in another corner of the Mosque there was the Holy Prophet sitting by himself. This was the time when Hadrat Hamzah had already embraced Islam and the people of the Quraish were feeling upset at the growing numbers of the Muslims. On this occasion, Utbah bin Rabi'ah (the father-in-law of Abu Sufyan) said to the Quraish chiefs: "Gentlemen, if you like I would go and speak to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and put before him some proposals; maybe that he accepts one of them, to which we may also agree, and so he stops opposing us." They all agreed to this, and Utbah went and sat by the Holy Prophet. When the Holy Prophet turned to him, he said: "Nephew, you know the high status that you enjoy in the community by virtue of your ancestry and family relations, but you have put your people to great trouble: you have created divisions among them and you consider them to be fools: you talk ill of their religion and gods, and say things as though all our forefathers were pagans. Now listen to me and I shall make some suggestions. Consider them well: maybe that you accept one of them." The Holy Prophet said: "Abul Walid, say what you want to say and I shall listen to you." He said, "Nephew, if by what you are doing, you want wealth, we will give you enough of it so that you will be the richest man among us; if you want to became an important man, we will make you our chief and will never decide a matter without you; if you want to be a king, we will accept you as our king; and if you are visited by a jinn, whom you cannot get rid of by your own power, we will arrange the best physicians and have you treated at our own expense." 'Utbah went on speaking in this strain and the Holy Prophet

went on listening to him quietly. Then he said, "Have you said, O Abul Walid, what you had to say?" He replied that he had. The Holy Prophet said: "Well, now listen to me."Then pronouncing *Bismilah ir Rehman-ir-Raihm* he began to recite this very Surah, and Utbah kept on listening to it, putting his hands behind his back and leaning on them as he listened. Coming to the verse of prostration (v. 38) the Holy Prophet prostrated himself; then raising his head, said, "This was my reply, O Abul Walid, now you may act as you please." then Utbah arose and walked back towards the chiefs, the people saw him from afar, and said: "By God! Utbab's face is changed. He does not look the same man that he was when he went from here." Then, when he came back and sat down, the people asked, "What have you heard?" He replied, "By God! I have heard something the like of which I had never heard before. By God, it's neither poetry, nor sorcery, nor magic. O chiefs of the Quraish, listen to what I say and leave this man to himself. I think what he recites is going to have its effect. If the other Arabs overcome him, you will be saved from raising your band against your brother, and the others will deal with him. But if he overcame Arabia, his sovereignty would be your sovereignty and his honor your honor." Hearing this the chiefs spoke out:"You too, O father of Walid, have been bewitched by his tongue." Utbah replied, "I have given you my opinion; now you may act as you please." (Ibn Hisham, vol. I, pp. 313-314).

This story has been narrated by several other traditionists also on the authority of Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah in different ways, with a little variation in wording. In some traditions it has also been related that when during the recitation the Holy Prophet had come to verse 13, viz."If they turn away, say to them: I warn you of a thunderbolt the like of which had visited the Ad and the Thamud,"Utbah had spontaneously placed his hand on the Holy Prophet's mouth, and said: "For God's sake, have mercy on your people." Afterwards he justified his action before the Quraish chiefs, saying: "You know that whatever Muhammad says is always fulfilled; therefore, I feared lest a torment should descend on us." (For details, see *Tafsir* Ibn Kathir, vol. IV, pp. 90- 91; *Al Bidayah wan-Nihayah*, vol. III, p. 62).

Theme and Subject Matter

In the discourse that Allah sent down in response to what Utbah said, no attention whatever was paid to the absurd proposals that he had made to the Holy Prophet. For what he had said was, in fact, an attack on the Holy Prophet's intention and his intellect. His assumption was that as there was no possibility of his being a Prophet and the Quran being Allah's Revelation, inevitably the motive of his invitation must either be the desire to obtain wealth and political power, or, God forbid, he had lost his reason. In the first case, he wanted to make a bargain with the Holy Prophet; in the second, he was insulting him when he said that the Quraish chiefs would have been cured of his madness at their own expense. Obviously, when the opponents come down to such absurd things, no gentleman would like to answer them, but would ignore them and say what he himself had to say.

Therefore, ignoring what Utbah said, this Surah makes antagonism its subject of discussion, which the unbelieving Quraish were showing stubbornly and wickedly in order to defeat the message of the Qur'an. They would say to tho Holy Prophet, "You may try however hard you try: we would not listen to you. We have put coverings on our hearts and we have closed our ears. There is a wall between you and us, which would never let us meet together."

They had given a clear notice to the Holy Prophet to the effect: "You may continue your mission of inviting the people to yourself, but we would go on opposing you as hard as we can to frustrate your mission."

For this object they had devised the following plan: Whenever the Holy Prophet or a follower of his would try to recite the Qur'an before the people, they would at once raise such a hue and cry that no one could bear anything.

They were desperately trying to misconstrue the verses of the Qur'an and spread every kind of misunderstanding among the people. They misconstrued everything and found fault even with the straightforward things. They would isolate words and sentences from their right context, from here and there, and would add their own words in order to put new meanings on them so as to mislead the people about the Quran and the Messenger who presented it.

They would raise strange objections a specimen of which has been presented in this Surah. They said, "If an Arab presents a discourse in Arabic, what could be the miracle in it? Arabic is his mother tongue. Anyone could compose anything that he pleased in his mother tongue and then make the claim that he had received it from God. It would be a miracle if the person would suddenly arise and make an eloquent speech in a foreign tongue which he did not know. Then only could one say that the discourse was not of his own composition but a revelation from God."

Here is a resume of what has been said in answer to this deaf and blind opposition:

1. The Qur'an is most certainly the Word of God, which He has sent down in Arabic. The ignorant people do not find any light of knowledge in the truths that have been presented in it plainly and clearly, but the people of understanding are seeing this light as well as benefiting by it. It is surely Allah's mercy that He has sent down this Word for the guidance of man. If a person regarded it as an affliction, it would be his own misfortune. Good news is for those who benefit by it and warning for those who turn away from it.

2. If you have put coverings on your hearts and have made yourselves deaf, it is none of the Prophet's job to make the one hear who does not want to hear, and the one who does not want to understand understand forcibly. He is a man like you; he can make only those to hear and understand, who are inclined to hear and understand.

3. Whether you close down your eyes and ears and put coverings on your hearts, the fact, however, is that your God is only One God, and you are not the servant of any one else. Your stubbornness cannot change this reality in any way. If you accept this truth and correct your behavior accordingly you will do good only to yourselves, and if you reject it, you will only be preparing your own doom.

4. Do you have any understanding as to whom you disbelieve and with whom you associate others in divinity? It is with regard to that God Who has created this limitless universe, Who is the Creator of the earth and heavens, from Whose blessings you are benefiting on the earth, and on Whose provisions you are being fed and sustained. You set up His mean creatures as His associates and then you are made to understand the truth you turn away in stubbornness.

5. If you still do not believe, then be aware that a sudden torment is about to visit you, the like of which had visited the Ad and the Thamud, and this torment also will not be the final punishment of your crimes, but there is in addition the accountability and the fire of Hell in the Hereafter.

6. Wretched is the man who gets as company such satans from among men and jinn, who show him nothing but green and pleasant, who make his follies seem fair to him, who neither let him think aright himself nor let him hear right from others. But on the Day of Reckoning when their doom overtakes them, each one of them will say that if he happened to get hold of those who had misled and deceived him in the world, he would trample them under his foot.

7. This Quran is an unchangeable Book. You can not defeat it by your machinations and falsehoods. Whether falsehood comes from the front or makes a secret and indirect attack from behind, it cannot succeed in refuting it.

8. Today when this Quran is being Presented in your own language so that you may understand it, you say that it should have been sent down in some foreign tongue. But had We sent it in a foreign tongue for your guidance, you would yourselves have called it a joke, as if to say, "What a strange thing! The Arabs are being given guidance in a non- Arabic language, which nobody understands." This means that you, in fact, have no desire to obtain guidance. You are only inventing ever new excuses for not affirming the faith.

9. Have you ever considered that if it became established that the Qur'an was really from Allah, then what fate you would meet by denying it and opposing it so vehemently as you do?

10. Today you do not believe but soon you will see with your own eyes that the message of this Qur'an had pervaded the whole world and you have yourselves been overwhelmed by it. Then you will come to know that what you were being told was the very truth.

Besides giving these answers to the opponents, attention has been paid to the problems which the believers and the Holy Prophet himself were facing in that environment of active resistance. Not to speak of preaching the message to others, the believers were even finding it difficult to follow the way of the Faith. Any one about whom it became known that he had become a Muslim, life would become an agony. As against the dreadful combination of the enemy and its all pervading power, they were feeling utterly helpless and powerless. In this state, in the first place, they were consoled and encouraged, as if to say: "You are not, in fact, helpless and powerless, for any person who believes in God as his Lord and adheres to this belief and way of life resolutely, God's angels descend on him and help and support him at every stage, from the life of this world till the Hereafter." Then they were encouraged with the consolation: "The best man is be who does good, invites others to God and proclaims firmly that he is a Muslim."

The question that was vexing the Holy Prophet at that time was as to how be should carve out a way of preaching his message when he had to face such heavy odds on every side. The solution he was given to this question was: "Although apparently the obstacles seem to be insurmountable, the weapon of good morals and character can smash and melt them away. Use this weapon patiently, and whenever Satan provokes you and incites you to use some other device, seek refuge in Allah."

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

حمٓ ﴿١﴾

تَنزِيلٌ مِّنَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢﴾

كِتَٰبٌ فُصِّلَتۡ ءَايَٰتُهُۥ قُرۡءَانًا عَرَبِيّٗا لِّقَوۡمٖ يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٣﴾

بَشِيرٗا وَنَذِيرٗا فَأَعۡرَضَ أَكۡثَرُهُمۡ فَهُمۡ لَا يَسۡمَعُونَ ﴿٤﴾

وَقَالُواْ قُلُوبُنَا فِيٓ أَكِنَّةٖ مِّمَّا تَدۡعُونَآ إِلَيۡهِ وَفِيٓ ءَاذَانِنَا وَقۡرٞ وَمِنۢ بَيۡنِنَا وَبَيۡنِكَ حِجَابٞ فَٱعۡمَلۡ إِنَّنَا عَٰمِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾

[1-5] Ha-Mim. This is a Revelation from the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful God, a Book whose verses are well-expounded, an Arabic Qur'an for those who have knowledge, a giver of good news and a warner.[1] Yet most of these people have turned away from it, and they pay no heed. They say, "Our hearts are covered with veils from that to which you are calling us.[2] Our ears have become deaf, and between. us and you there is a curtain.[3] So do as you please; we shall do as we will."[4]

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ فَٱسْتَقِيمُوٓا۟
إِلَيْهِ وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوهُ ۗ وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ ٦

ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ ٧

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ
مَمْنُونٍ ٨

[6-8] O Prophet, say to them I am only a man, like you.[5] I am told by revelation that your God is only One God.[6] Therefore, turn straight to Him alone[7] and ask for His forgiveness.[8] Woe to the mushriks who do not pay the Zakat[9] and deny the Hereafter. As for those who have believed and done right, for them there is surely an unfailing reward.[10]

۞ قُلْ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلْأَرْضَ فِى يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ
لَهُۥٓ أَندَادًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ٩

وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ مِن فَوْقِهَا وَبَٰرَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَآ أَقْوَٰتَهَا فِىٓ أَرْبَعَةِ
أَيَّامٍ سَوَآءً لِّلسَّآئِلِينَ ١٠

ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَوَىٰٓ إِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٞ فَقَالَ لَهَا
وَلِلۡأَرۡضِ ٱئۡتِيَا طَوۡعًا أَوۡ كَرۡهٗا قَالَتَآ أَتَيۡنَا طَآئِعِينَ ١١

فَقَضَىٰهُنَّ سَبۡعَ سَمَٰوَاتٖ فِي يَوۡمَيۡنِ وَأَوۡحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَآءٍ أَمۡرَهَاۚ وَزَيَّنَّا
ٱلسَّمَآءَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا بِمَصَٰبِيحَ وَحِفۡظٗاۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقۡدِيرُ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡعَلِيمِ ١٢

[9-12] O Prophet, say to them, “Do you deny that God, and set up others as equals with Him, Who created the earth in two days? He indeed is the Lord of all creation. He set mountains over the earth (after its creation) and bestowed blessings on it,[11] and provided in it means of sustenance adequately according to the needs and demands of all those who ask.[12] This was done in four days.[13] Then He turned to the heaven, which was only smoke at that time.[14] He said to the heaven and the earth "Come into being, whether you like it or not." They both said, "We do come in submission."[15] Then in two days He made the seven heavens, and in each heaven He ordained its law, and We adorned the lower heaven with lights and made it fully secure.[16] Such is the design of the One, Who is the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.”

فَإِنۡ أَعۡرَضُواْ فَقُلۡ أَنذَرۡتُكُمۡ صَٰعِقَةٗ مِّثۡلَ صَٰعِقَةِ عَادٖ وَثَمُودَ ١٣

إِذۡ جَآءَتۡهُمُ ٱلرُّسُلُ مِنۢ بَيۡنِ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَمِنۡ خَلۡفِهِمۡ أَلَّا تَعۡبُدُوٓاْ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَۖ قَالُواْ
لَوۡ شَآءَ رَبُّنَا لَأَنزَلَ مَلَٰٓئِكَةٗ فَإِنَّا بِمَآ أُرۡسِلۡتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ١٤

[13-14] Now if they turn away,[17] say to them, "I warn you of a thunderbolt of punishment the like of which had descended upon the 'Ad and the Thamud. When the Messengers of God came to them from every side, from front and from behind,[18] saying, "Worship none but Allah" , they said, "Had our Lord so willed, He would have sent down

angels; therefore, we deny what you have been sent with."[19]

فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا۟ مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً ۖ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ نَّحِسَاتٍ لِّنُذِيقَهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْخِزْىِ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ أَخْزَىٰ ۖ وَهُمْ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

[15-16] As for the 'Ad, they became arrogant with pride in the land without any right, and said, "Who is stronger than us in might?" Did they not see that God, Who had created them, is stronger than they in might? Yet they continued to deny Our Revelations. Consequently, We sent upon them a stormy wind over a few ill-omened days[20] so that We might make them taste a disgraceful scourge in the life of this world,[21] but the scourge of the Hereafter is even more disgraceful; there they shall have none to help them.

وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَـٰهُمْ فَٱسْتَحَبُّوا۟ ٱلْعَمَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰ فَأَخَذَتْهُمْ صَـٰعِقَةُ ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَنَجَّيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

[17-18] As for the Thamud, We presented before them the right way, but they preferred to remain blind rather than

see the way. Consequently, a humiliating scourge overtook them all of a sudden on account of their misdeeds, and We saved those, who had believed and refrained from error and wrongdoing.[22]

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَآءُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا مَا جَآءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَـٰرُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدتُّمْ عَلَيْنَا ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنطَقَنَا ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنطَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَسْتَتِرُونَ أَن يَشْهَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ سَمْعُكُمْ وَلَآ أَبْصَـٰرُكُمْ وَلَا جُلُودُكُمْ وَلَـٰكِن ظَنَنتُمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَعْلَمُ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

وَذَٰلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَىٰكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْخَـٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[19-23] And imagine the time when the enemies of Allah will be gathered together to be driven to Hell.[23] Their former generations will be withheld till their later generations also will join them.[24] Then, when all will have reached there,

their ears and their eyes and their very skins will bear witness against them concerning what they had been doing in this world.[25] They will say to their skins. "Why have you borne witness against us?" They will reply, "The same God Who has given speech to everything has given us speech.[26] He it is, Who created you in the first instance, and now to Him you are being brought back. When in the world you hid yourselves while committing crime, you never thought that your ears and your own eyes and your own skins would ever bear witness against you. Rather you thought that even Allah had no knowledge of many of your deeds. This same thought that you had concerning your Lord, has ruined you, and on the same count you have incurred loss."[27]

فَإِن يَصْبِرُوا۟ فَٱلنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَسْتَعْتِبُوا۟ فَمَا هُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُعْتَبِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

۞ وَقَيَّضْنَا لَهُمْ قُرَنَآءَ فَزَيَّنُوا۟ لَهُم مَّا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَوْلُ فِىٓ أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

[24-25] As such, whether they are patient (or not), the Fire will still be their abode, and if they want to make amends, they will not be allowed to do so.[28] We had set upon them companions who made everything, in front of them and behind them, seem fair to them.[29] At last, the sane Decree of punishment proved true against them, which had proved true against the jinn and the men who had gone before them. Certainly they were the losers.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَا تَسْمَعُوا۟ لِهَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَٱلْغَوْا۟ فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَغْلِبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

فَلَنُذِيقَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا وَلَنَجۡزِيَنَّهُمۡ أَسۡوَأَ ٱلَّذِي كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ أَعۡدَآءِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّارُۖ لَهُمۡ فِيهَا دَارُ ٱلۡخُلۡدِۖ جَزَآءَۢ بِمَا كَانُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يَجۡحَدُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ رَبَّنَآ أَرِنَا ٱلَّذَيۡنِ أَضَلَّانَا مِنَ ٱلۡجِنِّ وَٱلۡإِنسِ نَجۡعَلۡهُمَا تَحۡتَ أَقۡدَامِنَا لِيَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلۡأَسۡفَلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

[26-29] The disbelievers say, "Do not listen to this Qur'an, and when it is recited, cause interruption in it, so that you might attain the upper hand."[30] We shall certainly make these disbelievers to taste a severe chastisement, and shall fully requite them for the worst of their misdeeds. That is Hell, the requital of the enemies of Allah, wherein they shall live for ever. This is the punishment of the crime that they denied Our Revelations. There the disbelievers will say, "Our Lord, show us the jinn and the men,who led us astray. We shall trample them under our feet so that they are utterly disgraced."[31]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُواْ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَقَٰمُواْ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُواْ وَلَا تَحۡزَنُواْ وَأَبۡشِرُواْ بِٱلۡجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِي كُنتُمۡ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

نَحۡنُ أَوۡلِيَآؤُكُمۡ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَفِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۖ وَلَكُمۡ فِيهَا
مَا تَشۡتَهِيٓ أَنفُسُكُمۡ وَلَكُمۡ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

نُزُلٗا مِّنۡ غَفُورٖ رَّحِيمٖ ﴿٣٢﴾

[30-32] Those[32] who said, "Allah is our Lord," and then stood steadfast,[33] angels descend on them[34] and say, "Fear not nor grieve,[35] and rejoice in the good news of Paradise that has been promised to you: we are your companions in the life of this world, and in the Hereafter, too. There you will have whatever you desire, and whatever you ask for will be yours---an entertainment from the One, Who is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful."

وَمَنۡ أَحۡسَنُ قَوۡلٗا مِّمَّن دَعَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا
وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

[33] And who could be better of speech than the one who called to Allah and did right and said, "I am a Muslim."[36]

وَلَا تَسۡتَوِي ٱلۡحَسَنَةُ وَلَا ٱلسَّيِّئَةُۚ ٱدۡفَعۡ بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحۡسَنُ
فَإِذَا ٱلَّذِي بَيۡنَكَ وَبَيۡنَهُۥ عَدَٰوَةٞ كَأَنَّهُۥ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٞ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَمَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ وَمَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٖ ﴿٣٥﴾

وَإِمَّا يَنزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِ نَزۡغٞ فَٱسۡتَعِذۡ بِٱللَّهِۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ٣٦

[34-36] And O Prophet, goodness and evil are not equal. Repel evil with what is best. You will see that he with whom you had enmity, has become your closest friend.[37] But none can attain to this quality except those who endure with patience,[38] and none can attain to this rank except those who are men of great good fortune.[39] And if you feel an incitement from Satan, seek refuge in Allah.[40] He hears everything and knows everything.[41]

وَمِنۡ ءَايَٰتِهِ ٱلَّيۡلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ وَٱلشَّمۡسُ وَٱلۡقَمَرُۚ لَا تَسۡجُدُواْ لِلشَّمۡسِ وَلَا لِلۡقَمَرِ وَٱسۡجُدُواْ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَهُنَّ إِن كُنتُمۡ إِيَّاهُ تَعۡبُدُونَ ٣٧

فَإِنِ ٱسۡتَكۡبَرُواْ فَٱلَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ يُسَبِّحُونَ لَهُۥ بِٱلَّيۡلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَهُمۡ لَا يَسۡـَٔمُونَ ٣٨ ۩

[37-38] Among[42] the signs of Allah are the night and the day and the sun and the moon.[43] Do not prostrate yourselves before the sun and the moon, but prostrate yourselves before that God, Who created them, if You really are His worshipers.[44] But it does not matter if these people show arrogance and still persist in their way,[45] for the angels who are nearest to your Lord, glorify Him day and night and never feel wearied.[46]

وَمِنۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦٓ أَنَّكَ تَرَى ٱلۡأَرۡضَ خَٰشِعَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهَا ٱلۡمَآءَ ٱهۡتَزَّتۡ وَرَبَتۡۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَحۡيَاهَا لَمُحۡيِ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٌ ٣٩

[39] And among the Signs of Allah is this that you see the earth dry and desolate; then as soon as We send down rain on it, it stirs (to life) and swells. Surely the God Who gives the dead earth life will raise the dead men also to life.[47] Indeed, He has power over everything.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُلۡحِدُونَ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا لَا يَخۡفَوۡنَ عَلَيۡنَآۗ أَفَمَن يُلۡقَىٰ فِي ٱلنَّارِ خَيۡرٌ
أَم مَّن يَأۡتِيٓ ءَامِنٗا يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِۚ ٱعۡمَلُواْ مَا شِئۡتُمۡۖ إِنَّهُۥ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ٤٠

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِٱلذِّكۡرِ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمۡۖ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَكِتَٰبٌ عَزِيزٞ ٤١

لَّا يَأۡتِيهِ ٱلۡبَٰطِلُ مِنۢ بَيۡنِ يَدَيۡهِ وَلَا مِنۡ خَلۡفِهِۦۖ تَنزِيلٞ مِّنۡ
حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٖ ٤٢

[40-42] Those[48] who misconstrue Our Revelations[49] are not in any way hidden from Us.[50] Just consider who is better: he who will be cast into the Hell-Fire, or he who will appear on the Day of Resurrection in full security? Do as you please; Allah is watching over everything you do. These are the people who refused to believe in the Admonition when it came to them. But the fact is that this is a mighty Book.[51] Falsehood can neither come at it from before it nor from behind it.[52] It is a Revelation from the All-Wise, All-Praiseworthy One.

مَّا يُقَالُ لَكَ إِلَّا مَا قَدۡ قِيلَ لِلرُّسُلِ مِن قَبۡلِكَۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغۡفِرَةٖ وَذُو
عِقَابٍ أَلِيمٖ ٤٣

[43] (O Prophet,) Nothing is being said to you that has not already been said to the Messengers before you. Surely your Lord is highly forgiving,[53] yet stern in inflicting a painful punishment.

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَٰهُ قُرْءَانًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَّقَالُوا۟ لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ ءَايَٰتُهُۥٓ ۖ ءَا۬عْجَمِىٌّ وَعَرَبِىٌّ ۗ
قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ هُدًى وَشِفَآءٌ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ
وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُنَادَوْنَ مِن مَّكَانٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ فَٱخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ ۗ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ
لَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيبٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

[44-45] Had We sent this Qur'an in a foreign tongue, the people would have said, "Why have not its verses been well expounded? What! The scripture in a foreign language and the listeners are Arabs?[54] Say to them, 'This Qur'an is a guidance and a healing for the believers, but to those who do not believe, it is a plug in their ears and a covering over their eyes. It is as though they are being summoned from afar.[55] Before this We had given to Moses the Book, and it was similarly disputed.[56] If your Lord had not already decreed a thing, the judgment would have been passed between the disputants.[57] And the fact is that they are involved in an anxious doubt about it.[58]

مَّنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَآءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۗ وَمَا
رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٤٦﴾

[46] Whoever does good will do so for his own self, and whoever does evil will himself bear its consequences: your Lord is never unjust to His servants.[59]

۞ إِلَيۡهِ يُرَدُّ عِلۡمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِۚ وَمَا تَخۡرُجُ مِن ثَمَرَٰتٖ
مِّنۡ أَكۡمَامِهَا وَمَا تَحۡمِلُ مِنۡ أُنثَىٰ وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلۡمِهِۦۚ وَيَوۡمَ
يُنَادِيهِمۡ أَيۡنَ شُرَكَآءِي قَالُوٓاْ ءَاذَنَّٰكَ مَا مِنَّا مِن شَهِيدٖ ٤٧

وَضَلَّ عَنۡهُم مَّا كَانُواْ يَدۡعُونَ مِن قَبۡلُۖ وَظَنُّواْ مَا لَهُم مِّن مَّحِيصٖ ٤٨

[47-48] To Allah is remitted[60] the knowledge of the Hour.[61] He alone knows all the fruits that come out from their sheaths: He alone knows which female has conceived and which has given birth.[62] Then on the Day when He will call out to the people, asking, "Where are those associates of Mine"? they will say, "We have submitted: there is none of us to bear witness to that."[63] At that time, all those gods whom they used to invoke before this, shall be lost to them,[64] and they will realize that they have no refuge.

لَّا يَسۡـَٔمُ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ مِن دُعَآءِ ٱلۡخَيۡرِ وَإِن مَّسَّهُ
ٱلشَّرُّ فَيَـُٔوسٞ قَنُوطٞ ٤٩

وَلَئِنْ أَذَقْنَٰهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ ضَرَّآءَ مَسَّتْهُ
لَيَقُولَنَّ هَٰذَا لِى وَمَآ أَظُنُّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةً وَلَئِن رُّجِعْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّىٓ
إِنَّ لِى عِندَهُۥ لَلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ فَلَنُنَبِّئَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟
وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

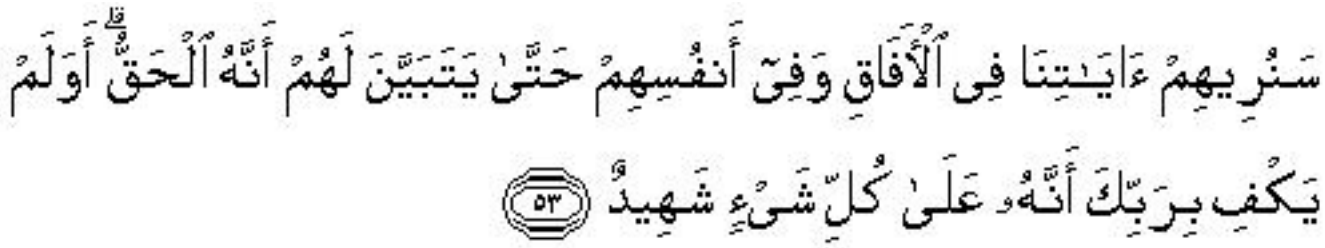
[49-50] Man is never wearied of praying for good,[65] and when an evil befalls him, he loses hope and becomes desperate. But when We let him taste Our mercy after the hardship, he says, "I deserve this,[66] and I do not think that the Hour (of Resurrection) will ever come. But if I am really brought back to my Lord, I shall have good reward with Him, too. " The fact, however, is that We shall certainly tell the disbelievers what they had done, and We shall make them taste a most degrading Chastisement.

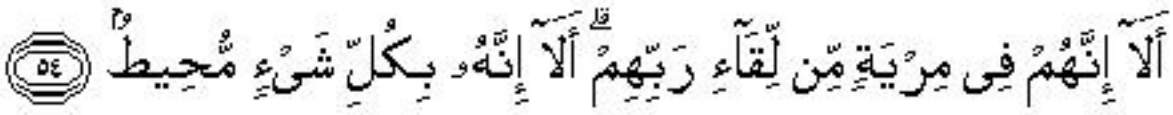
وَإِذَآ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَـَٔا بِجَانِبِهِۦ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ ٱلشَّرُّ فَذُو دُعَآءٍ
عَرِيضٍ ﴿٥١﴾

[51] When We bless man, he turns away and grows stiff necked;[67] but when an evil touches him, he comes with lengthy supplications.[68]

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ كَفَرْتُم بِهِۦ مَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ هُوَ فِى
شِقَاقٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

[52] O Prophet, say to them, "Did you ever consider this: If this Qur'an were really from Allah, And you went on denying it, who could be more astray than the one who had gone far off in antagonism towards it?"[69]





[53-54] Soon shall We show them Our Signs in the World around them, as well as in themselves, till it becomes clear to them, that this Qur'an is indeed the Truth.[70] Is it not enough that your Lord watches everything?[71] Look! These people are in doubt about the meeting with their Lord.[72] Listen! He encompasses everything![73]

1This is a brief introduction to the Surah. A study of the following discourse can show what relevance the things mentioned in it have with the theme that follows. The first thing said is that this Word is being sent down by God, as if to say: "You, O people, may go on saying again and again that this Word is being composed by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) but the fact is that its revelation is from God, Lord of the worlds. " Furthermore, the addressees have also been warned, so as to say: "If you express your displeasure on hearing this discourse. this displeasure is not against Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) tart against God. If you reject it, you reject Allah's Word, not of a man, and if you turn away from it, you do not turn away from a mart but from Allah."

Secondly, that the one sending it down is that God, Who is extremely Merciful (Rehman and Rahim) to His creatures. The mention of the attribute of mercy of the Sender of Revelation, instead of any other attributes, points to the truth that He has sent down this Word under the requirement of His mercifulness. By this the addressees have been warned, so as to say: ¦If someone spurns this Word, or rejects it. or expresses displeasure at it, he in fact is his own enemy "That is indeed a supreme blessing. which God has sent down, out of this infinite mercy, for the guidance and well-being and happiness of man. if God were merciless to mankind, He would have left them to wander about in darkness and would have least cared what pit they fell into. But this is His bounty and beneficence that along with bringing men into existence and providing for them He has taken on Himself the responsibility to show them the light of knowledge also in order to adorn their lives, and is sending down this Word to a servant of His for the same purpose. Now, who could be more ungrateful and a greater enemy of himself than the one who instead of benefiting from this mercy made up his mind to fight it?"

Thirdly that the verses of this Book are well-expounded. That is, there is nothing confusing and

ambiguous in it so that somebody might excuse himself from accepting it on the ground that he was unable to understand the contents of the Book. It has been plainly told m it what is the truth and what is the falsehood, what arc the right beliefs and what are the wrong beliefs, what is good and what is evil, what is high morality and what is vice, in what way lies the good of man and in what he incurs loss for himself. If a person rejects such clear and manifest guidance, or pays no heed to it, he cannot offer any excuse for it. His attitude clearly implies that he wants to remain in the wrong willfully.

Fourthly, that this is an Arabic Qur'an, which implies this: "If this Qur'an had been sent down in some other language, the Arabs would have presented the excuse that they were ignorant of the language in which God had sent His Book. But this is their own language. They cannot put forward the excuse that they cannot understand it. (Here, one should keep in view verse 44 also, in which the same theme has been expressed in a different way, and the suspicion that in that case there is a reasonable excuse for the non-Arabs not to accept the message of the Qur'an, we have already removed in our commentary of Surah Yusuf: 2 and E.N. 2 on it. Please also see Rasa'il-o-Masa'il. Vol. I, pp. 19-23).

Fifthly, that this Book is for those who possess knowledge. That is, only the people of understanding can draw any benefit from this Book. For the ignorant it is as useless as a precious diamond for the one who cannot distinguish it from a mere stone.

Sixthly, that this Book gives good news and administers warning. That is, it does not consist of mere fantasy, or a philosophy, or a specimen of good literary composition, which one may accept or reject without entailing any consequence, but it is openly administering a warning to the whole world that the results of accepting and believing in it are marvelous and of rejecting it very dreadful. Thus only a fool could reject it with scant attention.

2That is, "It has no way open to reach our hearts."

3That is "This invitation has divided us: it has cut us off from you it leas become a hindrance for us to join you."

4It has two meanings:

(1) "That we have nothing to do with you ;" and

(2) "that if you do not desist from your preaching, you may go on doing your mission, we also will not stop our opposition to you, and we will do whatever we can to defeat and frustrate your mission. "

5That is, "It is not in my power to remove the covering that envelops your hearts, open your ears, and tear away the curtain which you have drawn between me and yourselves, I am only a man: I can make

only him understand who is inclined to listen, and can only meet him who is ready to meet me."

6That is. "You may if you so like put coverings on your hearts and make your ears deaf, but the fact is that you don't have many gods: then is only One God, whose servants you are. And this is no philosophy, which I might have thought out myself, and which might have equal probability of being true or false, but this reality has been made known to me through revelation, which cannot admit of any likelihood of error. "

7That is, "Do not make any other your God: do not serve and worship any other deity: do not invoke and bow to any other for help: and do not obey and follow the customs and laws and codes made and set by others. "

8"Ask for His forgiveness": Ask for His forgiveness for the unfaithfulness that you have been showing so far towards Him, for the shirk and disbelief and disobedience that you have been committing till now, and for the sins that you happened to comfit due to forgetfulness of God.

9Here, the meaning of the word zakat has been disputed by the commentators. Ibn `Abbas and his illustrious pupils, `Ikrimah and Mujahid, say that zakat here implies the purity of the soul and self which accrues from belief in Tauhid and obedience to Allah. According to this explanation, the translation of the verse would be: "Woe to the mushriks, who do not adopt purity." The other group which includes commentators like Qatadah, Suddi, Hasan Basri, Dahhak, Muqatil and Ibn as-Sa'ib take this word here also in the meaning of the zakat on property and wealth. According to this explanation, the verse means: "Woe to those who do not fulfil the right of Allah by committing shirk and the right of the men by withholding the zakat.

10The words ajrun ghaira mamnun in the original have two other meanings also:

(1) That it will be a reward which will never decrease and diminish; and

(2) that this reward will not be given with reminders of good done, like the gift made by a miserly person, who keeps on reminding the beneficiary of his favor if at all he gives away anything.

11"Blessings of the earth" imply those measureless and countless things which have been continuously coming out of it since millions and millions of years, and are fulfilling the ever increasing needs and requirements of all the creatures from the microscopic germs to the highly civilized man. Among these the principal blessings are the air and the water by which alone vegetable, animal and then human life became possible on the earth.

12This sentence has been interpreted by the commentators in different ways:

Some of them interpret it to mean: "The provisions of the earth were placed in it precisely according to the needs and requirements of those who ask, in exactly four days." That is, it took exactly four days, neither more nor less.

Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah and Suddi interpret it to mean: "The provisions of the earth were placed in it in four days. The answer to those who ask is completed. " That is, whoever asks as to how long it took, his complete answer is that it took four days.

According to Ibn Zaid it means: "The provisions of the earth were placed in it for those who ask within four days, precisely in accordance with the demand and need of everyone. "

As far as the rules of the language are concerned, the words of the verse admit of all these three meanings, but in our opinion the first two meanings have no merit. In view of the context, it is immaterial whether the work was completed in exactly four days and not in more or less four days. There is no need whatever for such an addition to make up for any deficiency in supporting the description of Allah's perfect power, perfect providence and perfect wisdom. Likewise, the commentary: "The answer to those who ask is completed," is a very weak commentary. There is no indication in the theme preceding the verse and following it, to show that at that time somebody had asked the question as to how long it had taken for those works to be completed, and this verse was sent down as an answer to it. That is why we have adopted the third meaning in our translation. In our opinion the correct meaning of the verse is this: "Allah placed within the earth the full provisions of food precisely and exactly in accordance with the demands and needs of every kind of creature that Allah had to create in the earth from the beginning of the creation till Resurrection. There are countless kinds of vegetation found on land and in water and the food requirements of each kind are different from those of other kinds. Allah has created countless species of living creatures in the air and on land and in water, and every species demands a different kind of food. Then unique among all these is the species of man, who requires different kinds of food not only for the development and nourishment of his body but also for the satisfaction of his taste. Who beside Allah could know how many members of the different kinds of creatures would be born on this globe, from the beginning of life till its end, and when and where they would be born and how much and what kind of food would be required for their nourishment? Just as He had made the plan of creating those creatures who stood in need of food in His scheme of creation, so He made full arrangements of food also to meet their requirements and demands.

In the modern age, the people who have brought out the Islamic edition of the Marxist conception of Socialism in the name of "the Qur'anic order of providence", translate the words sawa-al-lis-sa'-ilin as `equal for all those who ask", and raise the edifice of reasoning on it, saying that Allah has kept equal provisions for All the people in the earth; therefore, in order to fulfil the intention of the verse a system of the state is needed which may provide equal rations of food to everybody. For in the system of individual ownership the equality which the ¦Qur'anic law" demands cannot be established. But these people, in

their enthusiasm to press the Qur'an in the service of their theories, forget that ¦those who ask", who have been mentioned in this verse, are not only human beings but All those different species of animals and plants who need food for survival. Has Allah really established equality among all of them, or even among all the members of each different species of the creatures, in the matter of the provision of food? Do you find anywhere in this entire system of nature the arrangement of the distribution of equal rations of food? If that is not the case, it means that in the vegetable and animal kingdom, where the distribution of the provisions is directly being arranged by the State of Allah, and not by the human state, Allah Himself is violating His own this "Qur'anic law", rather, God forbid, is practicing injustice! Then, they also forgo that "those who ask" also include those animals which man domesticates and arranging provisions for which is also his responsibility, e.g. sheep, goats, cows, buffaloes, horses, asses, mules, camels, etc: If the Qur'anic law is that equal food be given to all those who ask, and to enforce the same law a state is needed, which may administer the order of providence, will that state establish economic equality between men and animals also?

13Here, the commentators generally have been confronted with this question: If it is admitted that the creation of the earth took two days and the setting up of the mountains and placing of the provisions and blessings in it took four days, and the creation of the heavens, as mentioned below, took another two days, the total number of the days would be eight, whereas at several places in the Qur'an Allah has said that the creation of the earth and heavens took six days in all. (For example, see AI-A `raf: 54, Yunus: 3, Hud: 7, AI-Furqan: 59). On this very basis, almost all the commentators agree that these four days include the two days of the creation of the earth. That is, two days were taken for the creation of the earth and two days for the creation of the rest of the things within the earth, as mentioned below. Thus, the earth along with its provisions became complete in four days in all. But this not only is against the apparent words of the Qur'an, but the difficulty also is, in fact, an imaginary difficulty, to avoid which need for this interpretation has been felt. The two days of the creation of the earth arc, in fact, not separate from the two days in which this universe as a whole was created. If we consider the following verses, we see that in them the creation of both the earth and the heavens has been mentioned together, and then it has been stated that Allah made the seven heavens in two days. These seven heavens imply the whole universe, one part of which is also our earth. Then, when like the other countless stars and planets of the universe this earth also took the shape of a unique globe within two days, Allah began to prepare it for animate creatures, and in four days created in it all those provisions which have been mentioned in the above verse. What development works were carried out in the other stars and planets in these four days have not been mentioned by Allah, for not to speak of the man of the period of the revelation of the Qur'an, even the man of the present age does not have the capability to digest and assimilate this information.

14Three things need to be explained here:

First, by "heaven" is meant the whole universe, as becomes obvious from the following sentences. In other words, "turning to the heaven" means that Allah turned to the creation of the universe.

Second, by "smoke" is implied the initial and primary stage of matter, in which it lay diffused in space in a shapeless, dust like condition before the formation of the universe. Scientists of the modern age describe the same thing as nebulae, and the same also is their view about the beginning of the universe: that is, before creation the matter of which the universe was built lay diffused in smoke-like nebulous form.

Third, it would be wrong to interpret "then He turned to the heaven" to mean that first He created the earth, then set mountains in it, then arranged blessings and provisions of food in it, and then, at the end, He turned towards the creation of the universe. This misunderstanding is removed by the following sentence: "He said to the heavens and the earth: Come into being; and they said: we come in submission. " This makes it clear that in this verse and in the following verses, mention is being made of the time when there was neither the earth nor the heaven, but the creation of the universe was being started. Only the word thumma (then) cannot be made the argument to say that the earth had been created before the heavens. There are several instances of this in the Qur'an that the word thumma is not necessarily used w show the chronological order but it is also used for the order of Presentation. (Please see E.N. 12 of Surah Az-Zumar).

Among the earliest commentators the dispute has been going on for ages as to what was created first according to the Qur'an, the earth or the heavens. One group of them argues on the basis of this verse and verse 29 of Al-Baqarah that the earth was created first. The other group argues from verses 27-33 of An Nazi'at that the heavens were created first, because there it has been clearly stated that the earth was created after the heavens. But the fact is that nowhere in the Qur'an has the mention of the creation of the universe been made to teach Physics or Astronomy, but while inviting towards belief in the doctrines to Tauhid and the Hereafter, like countless other Signs, the creation of the heavens and the earth also has been presented as food for thought. For this purpose it was not at All necessary that the chronological order of the creation of the heavens and the earth should have been presented, and it should have been told whether the heavens were created first or the earth. No matter whether this was created first or that, in any case both are an evidence of Allah Almighty's being the One and only Deity, and are a testimony that their Creator has not created this whole universe as a plaything for a care-fret person. That is why the Qur'an sometimes mentions the creation of the earth first and sometimes the creation of the heavens first. Where the object is to make man realize the blessings of God, there generally it has mentioned the earth first, for it is closer to man; and where the object is to give man the concept of God's greatness and His omnipotence there it has generally mentioned the heavens first, for the scene of the revolving heavens has always been awe-inspiring for man.

15In these words Allah has described the nature of His method of creation in a manner as to differentiate between Divine creation and human workmanship. When man wants to make something, he prepares a plan for it in his mind: then gathers together the necessary material; then works persistently hard to mold the material according to his plan, and in the process of his effort the material which he wants to mold according to his mental plan constantly resists lute; so much so that sometimes the resistance of the

material succeeds and the thing is not made precisely according to the desired plan, and sometimes man's effort overcomes the resistance and he succeeds in giving it the desired form and shape. For example, when a tailor wants to make a shirt, he first conceives in his mind the shape of the shirt, then arranging the cloth he tries to cut and sew it according to his concept of the shirt, and during this effort, he has constantly to face the resistance of the cloth, for it does not easily yield to be molded according to the tailor's concept; so much so that sometimes the resistance of the cloth dominates and the shirt doesn't take the desired shape, and sometimes the tailor's effort dominates and he is able to shape it precisely according to his concept. Now, consider Allah's mode of creation. The matter of the universe lay scattered and diffused in the form of smoke. Allah willed to give it the shape of the universe as it is now. For this purpose, He did not have to sit down, like a human artisan, and chisel and mold the earth and the moon and the sun and the other stars and planets, but He only commanded the scheme of the universe that was in His Mind to cane into being, i.e. the smoke like diffused matter to take the shape of the galaxies and stars and planets, which He wanted to create. This . matter did not have the power to resist the Command of Allah. Allah did not have to make any effort to give it the shape of the universe. No sooner was the Command given than the matter started contracting and condensing and taking shape obediently according to the scheme of its Master, so that the whole universe including the earth became ready in 48 hours.

This same scheme of Allah's method of creation has been described at several other places in the Qur'an like this: When Allah decides to do something He only commands it to be and it is done. (See Al-Baqarah: 117, Al-'Imran: 47, 59: An-Nahl: 40. Maryam: 35, Ya Sin: 82, Al-Mu'min: 68).

16To understand these verses well, it would be useful to study the following portions of the Tafhim al-Qur'an: Al-Baqarah: 29, Ar-Ra'd: 2, Al-Hijr: 1G-18, Al-Anbiya': 30-33, Al-Hajj: 65. Al-Mu'minun: 17, Ya Sin: E.N. 37, and E.N.'s 5, G of As-Saaffat. "

17That is, "If they do not believe that God and Deity is One and only One, who has created this earth and the whole universe, and still persist in their ignorance that they would make others also, who are in fact His creatures and slaves, deities beside Him, and regard them as His associates in His Being and rights and powers.

18This sentence can have several meanings:

(1) That the Messengers continued to come to them one after the other;

(2) that the Messengers tried in every way to make them understand the truth and did not leave any stone unturned to bring them to the Right Path; and

(3) that the Messengers came to them in their own country as well as in the adjoining countries.

19That is "If Allah had disapproved of our religion, and had willed to send a messenger to us to keep us away from it, He would have sent the angels. As you are not an angel but a man like us, we do not believe that you have been sent by God, and sent for the purpose that we give up our religion and adopt the way of life that you are presenting." The disbelievers' saying that they deny "what you have been sent with", was only sarcastic. It does not mean that they believed him to have been sent by God and then denied what he said. But this is a sarcastic expression of the type that Pharaoh had uttered before his courtiers about the Prophet Moses: "This messenger of yowl, who has been sent to you, seems to be utterly mad." (Ash-Shua'ra' 27). For further explanation, see E.N. 11 of Surah Ya Sin.

20"Ill-omened days" does not mean that the days in themselves were ill omened, and the torrent came because the people of Ad met with those ill omened days. If this were the meaning and there were some ill omen in the days themselves, the torment would have visited all the nations of the world. The cornet meaning, therefore, is that since in those days God's torment descended on this nation, the days were ill-omened for the people of 'Ad. It is not cornet to argue on the basis of the verse that some days are ill-omened and some auspicious.

The lexicographers have disputed the meaning of the words rih-an sarsaran, which have been used for the stormy wind. Some say that they imply an intensely hot wind; others say that they imply an extremely cold wind; and some others say that they imply a wind which produces a great noise when it blows. In any cast, they All agree that the words are used for a severe storm.

The details of this torment given at other places in the Qur'an show that this wind continued to rage for seven nights and eight days consecutively. It swept the people off the ground and they fell down dead and lay scattered here and there like hollow trunks of the palm-tree. (AI-Haaqqah: 7). It left rotting everything on which it blew. (Adh-Dhariyat 42). When the people of 'Ad saw it advancing, they rejoiced with the hope that the dense clouds would bring much rain, which would water their withering crops. But when it came it laid waste the entire land." (Al-Ahqaf: 24-25).

21This ignominious torment was an answer to their arrogance and vanity because of which they had assumed greatness in the land without any right, and would boast that there was none more powerful than they on the entire earth. Allah disgraced them and destroyed the major part of their population along with their civilization. The remnant of their population was humbled and debased before those very nations whom they used to overawe by their show of power and might (for the details of the story of 'Ad see AI-A'raf : 65-72; Hud: 50-60; Al Mu'minun: 32-41; Ash-Shua'ra' : 123-140; AI-'Ankabut; 40 and the relevant E.N.'s).

22For the details of the story of Thamud see AI-A'raf: 73-79; Hud: 61.68; AI-ZHjr: 80-84; Bani Isra'il: 59; Ash-Shua`ara' :141.159; An-Naml: 45-53 and the E.N.'s.

23What is meant to be said have is: "When they will be rounded up to be presented in the Court of Allah," though the words used are to the effect: "When they will be gathered to be driven to Hell," for Hell in any case will be their final destination.

24That is, All the former and latter generations and races will be gathered together at a time and called to account together, For whatever a person does in his lifetime, whether good yr evil, its influence and impact does not end with his life; but continues to operate even after his death for long periods of time, for which he is totally responsible. Likewise, whatever a generation does in its own time, its influence continues to affect the later generations for. centuries, and it is responsible for its heritage. It is inevitable to examine All these influences and their results and to collect their evidences. For that very reason, generation after generation of the people will go on arriving and will be withheld. The Court will start its work when All the former and latter generations will have assembled together in the Plain of Resurrection. (For further explanation, see AI-A'raf: 3839 and E.N. 30 on it).

25The explanation of this given in the Hadith is that when a stubborn culprit will go on denying his crimes, and will even belie All the witnesses, then the limbs of his body will bear the witness, one after the other, by the Command of Allah, and will tell what offenses he had committed through them. This thing has been reported by Hadrat Anas, Hadrat Abu Musa Ash'ari, Hadrat Abu Said Khudri and Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas from the Holy Prophet, and traditionists like Muslim, Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Bazzar and others have related these in their books. (For further explanation, see E.N. 55 of Surah Ya Sin).

This verse is one of those many verses which prove that the Hereafter will nor only be a spiritual world but human beings will be resurrected with the body and soul as they are now in this world. Not only this: they will be given the same body in which they live now. The same particles and atoms which composed their bodies in the world, will be collected on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be resurrected with the same previous bodies in which they had lived and worked in the world. Evidently, the limbs of man can bear the witness in the Hereafter only in case they are the same limbs with which he committed a crime in his previous lift. This subject is borne out decisively and absolutely by the following verses of the Qur'an: Bani Isra'il: 49 51, 98; AI-Mu'minun: 35-38, 82-83; An-Nur: 24; AsSajdah: 10; Ya Sin: 65, 78, 79; As-Saafat: 16-18; AI-Waqi'ah: 47-50; AnNazi'at: 10-14.

26This shows that not only man's own limbs will bear witness on the Day of Resurrection, but every such thing before which man would have committed any crime will also speak out. The same thing has been said in Surah AI-Zilzal, thus: "The earth will cast out all the burdens, which lie within her, and man will say: what has befallen her? On that Day shall she relate whatever had happened (on her), because your Lord will have commanded her (to do so)." (vv. 2-5).

27Hadrat Hasan Basri (may Allah bless him) has explained this verse thus "Every. man's. attitude and conduct is determined by the thought and conjecture that he has about his God. The conduct of a

righteous believer is right because his thought and conjecture about his Lord is right, and the conduct of a disbeliever and a hypocrite and a sinful person is wrong because his thought and conjecture about his Lord is wrong. " This same theme has the Holy Prophet expressed in a comprehensive and brief Hadith, thus: "Your Lord says: I am with the thought and conjecture that My servant holds about Me." (Bukhari, Muslim).

28It can also mean this: "If they would want to return to the world, they would not be able to return," and this: "If they would want to come out from Hell, they would not be able to come out of it," and this: "If they would want to offer an excuse or repentance, it would not be accepted."

29This is the permanent and eternal way of Allah that He dots not let the men with evil intentions and desires have good companions, but lets them have bad companions according to their own inclinations. Then, as they go on descending into the depths of vice, more and more evil and wicked men and devils go on joining them as their associates and advisers and companions. Some people's saying that so-and-so is himself a very good man but happens to have bad companions is, in fact, contrary to fact. The law of nature is that every man gets the same sort of friends as he himself is. If bad people happen to be associated with a good man, they cannot remain associated with him for long. Likewise, if good and noble men happen to be associated with evil intentioned and immoral men by chance, their association cannot last long. An evil man naturally attracts only evil men to himself and only evil men become attracted towards him just as filth attracts flits and flits are attracted by the filth.

The meaning of: "They made every thing, in front of them and behind them, seem fair to them," is this: They assured them that their past had been glorious and their future would also be bright; they made them see everything attractive and pleasant on every side; they told them that those who criticized them were foolish, because they were not doing anything novel or strange: those who had made any progress in the world before them had been doing the same that they were doing; ahead of them there was no Hereafter at all in which they might have to be called to account for their deeds, but if at all the Hereafter did take place, as some foolish people assert it would, the God who was blessing them in the world, would bless them there too. Hell had not been made for them but for those whom God had deprived of His blessings here.

30This was one of those plans of the disbelievers of Makkah with which they wanted to frustrate the Holy Prophet's mission of preaching his message. They knew fully well haw impressive was the Qur'an, how high was the character of the man presenting it, and how effective and inspiring the style of his preaching. They knew that anyone who heard such matchless discourses in such an attractive style from such a noble person could not help being hued and charmed. Therefore, they planned that they should neither hear it themselves nor let anyone else hear it; whenever Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) should start reciting it, they should create noise, clap hands, pass taunting remarks and raise All sorts of objections and such a hue and cry as to drown his voice. By this plan they hoped they would be able to defeat the Prophet of Allah.

31That is, "In the world these people were at the beck and call of their leaders and religious guides and deceitful devils, but when on the Day of Resurrection they will come to know where their leaders had led them, they will curse them and would wish that they should somehow get hold of them so that they may trample them under their foot."

32After warning the disbelievers of the consequences of their opposition to the truth and their stubbornness, the address now turns to the believers and the Holy Prophet.

33That is, they did not call Allah their Lord merely incidentally, nor were they involved in the error to regard Allah as their Lord and at the same time others 'as well as their lords, but they embraced the Faith sincerely and stood by it steadfastly: neither adopted a creed contrary to it later nor mixed it up with a false creed, but they fulfilled the demands of the doctrine of Tauhid in their practical lives as well.

"Standing steadfast on Tauhid" has been explained by the Holy Prophet and the eminent Companions thus:

Hadrat Anas has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Many people called Allah their Lord, but most of them became disbelievers. Firm and steadfast is he who remained firm on this creed till his death." (Ibn Jarir, Nasa'i, Ibn Abi Hatim).

Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) has explained it thus: "Then he did not associate another with Allah: did not attend to any other deity beside Him. " (Ibn Jarir).

Hadrat `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) once recited this verse on the pulpit and said: "By God, the steadfast are those who remained firm on obedience to Allah: did not run about from place to place like foxes." (Ibn Jarir).

Hadrat 'Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) says "Performed his deeds sincerely for the sake of Allah only." (Kashsaf)

Hadrat `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) says: "Performed the duties enjoined by Allah faithfully and obediently." (Kashshaf)

34It is not necessary that the coming down of the angels may be perceptible, and the believers may see them with the eyes, or hear their voices with the ears. Although Allah also sends the angels openly for whomever He wills, generally their coming down for the believers, especially in hard times when they are being persecuted by the enemies of the Truth, takes place in imperceptible ways and their voices penetrate into the depths of the heart as peace and tranquility instead of just striking the ear-drums.

Some commentators have regarded this coming down of the angels as restricted to the time of death or grave, or the Plain of Resurrection. But if the conditions in which these verses were sent ' down arc kept in view there remains no doubt that the real object of stating this thing here is to mention the coming down of the angels on those who struggle with their lives in this world in the cause of the Truth, so that they are consoled and encouraged and they rest assured that they are not helpless but the angels of Allah are at their back. Although the angels also come to receive the believers at the time of death and they also welcome them in the grave (in the state of bearzakh), and They will also accompany them constantly on the Day of Resurrection, from the time Resurrection takes place till their entry into Paradise, yet their company is not particularly restricted to the Hereafter but remains available in this world also. The context clearly shows that in the conflict between the Truth and falsehood just as the worshipers of falsehood are accompanied by the devils and mischievous people, so arc the believers accompanied by the angels. On the one hand, the companions of the worshipers of falsehood show their misdeeds seem fair to them and assure them that the tyrannical and dishonest acts that they are committing arc the very means of their success and through them only will their leadership and dominance remain safe in the world. On the other, the angels come down to the worshipers of the Truth and give them the message that is being mentioned in the following sentences.

35These are very comprehensive words, which contain a new theme of consolation and peace for the believers, in every stage of life, from the world till the Hereafter. This counsel of the angels in this world means: "No matter' how strong and powerful be the forces of falsehood, you should not be afraid of them, and whatever hardships and deprivations you may have to experience on account of your love of the Truth, you should not grieve on account of them, for ahead there lie in store for you such things against which every blessing of the world is insignificant." When the angels say the same words at the time of death, they mean this: "There is no cause of fear for you in the destination you are heading for, for Paradise awaits you there, and you have no cause of grief for those whom you are leaving behind in the world, for we are your guardians and companions here." When the angels will say these very words in the intermediary state between death and Resurrection and in the Plain of Resurrection, they will mean: `Here, there is nothing but peace for you. Do not grieve for the hardships you had to suffer in the world, and do not fear what you are going to face in the Hereafter, for we are giving you the good news of Paradise, which used to be promised to you in the world.

36After consoling and encouraging the believers, now they are being exhorted towards their real duty. In the preceding verse they were told: "Being firm in the service to Allah and standing steadfast on this way after adopting it is by itself the basic good, which makes man a friend of the angels and worthy of Paradise." Now they are being told: "The next thing which wins man the highest place of honor is that he should do good deeds himself and should invite others to the service of Allah, and even in the environment of severe antagonism where to proclaim Islam is tantamount to inviting hardships for oneself, one should firmly say that one is a Muslim." To understand the full significance of these words, one should keep in view the conditions in which they were said. The conditions were that anyone who proclaimed to be a Muslim, would feel as if he had stepped into a jungle of beasts, where everyone was

rushing at him to tear him into pieces. More than that: if anyone opened his mouth to preach Islam he would feel as if he had called on the beasts to come and devour him. Such were the conditions when it was said: "A person's believing in Allah as his Lord and adopting the Right Way and standing steadfast on it is indeed a great and fundamental good, but the greatest good is that man should boldly say that he is a Muslim and should invite others towards Allah's service, fearless of the consequences, and while performing this duty should remain so pure and pious in conduct and character that no one should have a cause to find fault with Islam and with those who uphold it.

37To understand the full significance of these words also, one should keep in view the conditions in which the Holy Prophet and, through him, his followers were given this instruction. The conditions were that the invitation to the Truth was being resisted and opposed with extreme stubbornness and severe antagonism, in which All bounds of morality, humanity and decency were being transgressed. Every sort of lie was being uttered against the Holy Prophet and his Companions; every kind of evil device was being employed to defame him and to create suspicions against him in the minds of the people; every kind of accusation was being leveled against him and a host of the propagandists were busy creating doubts against him in the hearts; in short, he and his Companions were being persecuted in every possible way because of which a substantial number of the Muslims had been compelled to emigrate from the country. Then the program that had been prepared to stop him from preaching was that a hand of the mischievous people was set behind him, who would raise such a hue and cry that no one should be able to hear anything as soon as he opened his mouth to preach his message. In such discouraging conditions when apparently every way of extending invitation to Islam seemed to be blocked, the Holy Prophet was taught this recipe for breaking the opposition.

First, it was said that goodness and evil are not equal, as if to say: "Although apparently your opponents might have raised a dreadful storm of mischief and evil, as against which goodness might seem absolutely helpless and powerless, yet evil in itself has a weakness which ultimately causes its own destruction. For as long as man is man, his nature cannot help hating evil. Not only the companions of evil, even its own upholders know in their hearts that they are liars and wicked people and arc being stubborn for selfish motives. Not to speak of creating dignity and honor for them in the hearts of others, it lowers them in their own esteem, and causes their morale to be weakened and destroyed in the event of every conflict. As against this evil, the good which appears to be utterly helpless and powerless, goes on operating and working and it becomes dominant in the long run. For, in the first place, the good has a power of its own which wins the hearts and no man however perverted and corrupted, can help esteeming it in his own heart. Then, when the good and evil are engaged in a face to face conflict and their nature and merits become apparent and known, after a long drawn out struggle, not many people would be left, who would not start hating the evil and admiring the good.

Second, it was said that evil should be resisted not by the mere good but' by a superior good, as if to say: "If a person treats you unjustly and you forgive him, it is the mere good. The superior good is that you treat the one who ill-treats you which kindness and lout. "

The result would be that "your worst enemy would become your closest friend," for that is human nature itself. If you remain quiet in response to an abuse, it will be mere goodness but it will not silence the abuser. But if you express good wishes for him in response to his abuses, even the most shameless opponent will feel ashamed, and then would hardly ever be able to employ invectives against you. If a person doesn't miss any opportunity to harm you, and you go on tolerating his excesses, it may well make him even bolder in his mischiefs. But if on an occasion he gets into trouble and you come to his rescue, he will fall down at your feet, for no mischief can hold out against goodness. However, it would be wrong to take this general principle in the meaning that every enemy will necessarily become a close friend when you have treated him with the superior good. There are such wicked people also in the world, whose inimical nature will never change for the better no matter how tolerantly you may overlook their excesses and how benevolently you may react and respond to every evil committed by them. But such devil-incarnates are as few in the world as the embodiments of goodness are.

38Although a very efficacious recipe, it is not easy to use. It requires a great will power, resolution, courage, power of endurance and full control over one's own self. A man may act benevolently in response to an evil done, on an impulse, and there is nothing extraordinary in it. But when a person has to fight for years and years, for the sake of the Truth, those mischievous worshipers of falsehood, who do not feel any hesitation in violating any bond of morality, and are also intoxicated with power, it requires extraordinary grit to go on resisting the evil with good, and that too with the superior good, without ever showing any lack of restraint and self-control. Such a work can be accomplished only by him who has resolved with a cool mind to work for the cause of upholding the Truth, who has subdued his self to intellect and sense and in whom good and righteousness have taken such deep roots that no malice and mischief of the opponents can succeed in deposing him from his high position.

39This is a law of nature. Only a man of very high rank is characterized by. these qualities; and the one who possesses these qualities cannot be prevented by any power of the world from attaining to his goal of success. It is in no way possible that the depraved people may defeat him with their mean machinations and shameless devices.

40Satan feels grieved when he sees that in the conflict between the Truth and falsehood meanness is being resisted with nobility and evil with goodness. He wants that he should somehow incite the fighters for the sake of the Truth and their prominent men in particular, and especially their leaders, to commit such a mistake, even if once, on the basis of which he may tell the common people that evil is not being committed by one side only: if mean acts are being committed by one side, the people of the other side also are not morally any better: they too have committed such and such a shameless act. The common people do not have the capability that they may assess and counterbalance fairly the excesses being committed by one party by the reactions of the other. As long as they sec that while the opponents ate adopting every mean act yet these people do not swerve at All from the path of decency and nobility, goodness and righteousness, they continue to regard and esteem them highly. But if at some time they

happen to commit an unworthy act, even if it is in retaliation against a grave injustice, both the sides become equal in their esteem, and the opponents also get an excuse to counter one blamable act with a thousand abuses. That is why it has been said: 'Be on your guard against the deceptions of Satan. He will incite you as a well wisher to take note of every abuse and every insult and attack and urge you to pay the opponent in the same coin, otherwise you would be regarded as a coward and weaken your image of strength. " On every such occasion whenever you feel any undue provocation, you should take care that this is an incitement of Satan who is arousing you to anger and wants you to commit a mistake. And after having been warned do not be involved in the misunderstanding that you have full control over yourself, and Satan cannot make you commit any mistake. This high opinion of ones own power of judgment and will is another and more dangerous deception of Satan. Instead of it you should seek Allah's refuge, for man can save himself from mistakes only if Allah helps and grants him protection.

The beat commentary of this subject is the event which Imam Ahmad has related in his Musnad on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah. He says that once a man started uttering invectives against Hadrat Abu Bakr, in the presence of the Holy Prophet. Hadrat Abu Bakr kept on hearing the invectives quietly and the Holy Prophet kept on smiling at it. At last, when Hadrat Abu Bakr could restrain himself no longer, he also uttered a harsh word for the person in response. No sooner did he utter the word than the Holy Prophet was seized by restraint, which appeared on his face, and he rose and left the place immediately. Hadrat Abu Bakr also rose and went behind him. On the way he asked, 'How is it that as long as the person went on abusing me, you kept quiet and smiling, but when I also said a word in retaliation, you were annoyed" The Holy Prophet replied, "Until you were quiet an angel remained with you, who went on replying to him on your behalf, but when you spoke out Satan came in place of the angel: I could not sit with Satan. "

41After seeking Allah's refuge against the storm of opposition, the thing that brings patience and peace and tranquility to the heart of the believer is this conviction: "Allah is not unaware: He knows whatever we arc doing as well as that which is being done against us. He is hearing whatever we and our opponents utter and watches the conduct of both of us." On the basis of this very conviction the believer entrusts his own and the opponents of the truth's affair to Allah and remains satisfied. '

This is the fifth place where the Holy Prophet and, through him, the believers have been taught this wisdom of preaching and reforming the people. For the other four places, see Al-A'raf: 199-204, An-Nahl: 125-128, Al Mu'minun: 96-98, Al-'Ankabut: 46-47 and the E.N.'s.

42Now the discourse turns to the common people and they are made to understand the truth in a few sentences.

43That is, "They are not the objects of Divine power that you may start worshiping them, thinking that Allah is manifesting Himself in their form, but they are the Signs of Allah by pondering over which you can understand the reality of the universe and its system, and can know that the doctrine of the Oneness of God which the Prophets arc teaching is the actual Reality. The mention of the night and day before the

sun and moon has been made to give the warning that the hiding of the sun and appearing of the moon at night, and the hiding of the moon and appearing of the sun in the day clearly point to the fact that neither of them is God or object of Divine power, but both are helpless and powerless objects, and are moving subject to the law of God.

44This is an answer to the philosophy that the intelligent among the polytheists generally used to propound to prove that polytheism was rational. They said that they did not bow to these objects but bowed to God through them. An answer to this has been given, so as to say: "If you really are Allah's worshipers, there is no need of these intermediaries: why don't you bow down to Him directly?'

45"If they show arrogance": If they think it is beneath them to listen to you and persist still in the ignorance in which they are involved.

46It means this: "The system of this whole universe, whose agents these' angels are, is running on the basis of Allah's Oneness and His servitude. The angels who are its agents are testifying every moment that their Lord is pure and exalted far above that another should be His associate in His Divinity and worship. Now, if a few foolish persons do not believe even after admonition, and turn away from the way that is being followed by the whole universe and persist in following the way of shirk only, let them remain involved in their folly."

The consensus is that it is obligatory to perform sajdah (prostration) here, but the jurists differ as to which of the two preceding verses requires the performance of sajdah. Hadrat 'Ali and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud performed the sajdah at the end of v. 37, while Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn 'Umar, Said bin Musayyab, Masruq, Qatadah, Hasan Basri, Abu 'Abdur Rahman as-Sulami, Ibn Sirin, Ibrahim Nakha'i and several other prominent jurists have expressed the opinion that it should be performed at the end of v. 38. The same also is the opinion of Imam Abu Hanifah, and the Shafe'ites also have held the same view as preferable.

47For explanation, see An--Nahl: 65, Ai-Hijr: 5-7, Ar-Rum:19 and E.N. 19 of Al-Fatir.

48After telling the common people in a few sentences that the doctrine of Tauhid and the Hereafter to which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is inviting them, is rational and the signs of the universe testify to its being right and true, the discourse again tunes to the opponents who were determined to oppose it stubbornly.

49The word yulhidun in the original is derived from ilhad which means to deviate, to turn away from the right to the wrong path, to adopt crookedness. Thus, ilhad in the Revelations of Allah would mean that instead of understanding them in their clear and straightforward meaning one should misconstrue them and go astray and also lead others astray. One of the devices being adopted by the disbelievers of

Makkah to defeat the message of the Qur'an was that they would hear the verses of the Qur'an and then would isolate one verse from its context, tamper with another, misconstrue a word or a sentence and thus raise every sort of objection and would mislead the people, saying that the Prophet had said such and such a thing that day.

50These words imply a severe threat. The All-Powerful Ruler's saying that the acts of such and such a person are not hidden from Him by itself contains the meaning that he cannot escape their consequences.

51"A mighty Book": An unchanging Book, which cannot be defeated by tricks and cunning devices, which the worshipers of falsehood are employing against it. It has the force of the Truth in it, the force of true knowledge, the force of argument and reason, the force of eloquence and style, the force of Divinity of God Who sent it, and the force of the personality of the Messenger who presented it. No one, therefore, can defeat it by falsehood and hollow propaganda .

52"Falsehood . . . . from before it" means that none can succeed in proving anything wrong or any teaching false in the Qur'an by making a frontal attack on it; . . . . nor from behind it" means that nothing can be discovered till Resurrection which may be opposed to the truths and realities presented by the Qur'an; no new science, if it is really a "science", can be propounded, which may contradict the knowledge contained in the Qur'an; no new experiment or observation can be made to prove that the guidance given to man by the Qur'an in respect of the beliefs, morality, law, civilization or culture, and economic, social and political lift is wrong. That which this Book has declared as the Truth can never be proved to be falsehood and that which it has declared as falsehood can never be proved to be the truth. Furthermore, it also means that whether falsehood makes a frontal attack, or makes a surprise attack by deception, it cannot defeat the message which the Qur'an has brought. In spite of all sorts of open and secret machinations of the opponents the message will spread and none shall be able to defeat and frustrate it.

53That is, "It is all due to His clemency and forgiveness that although His Messengers were opposed, abused and persecuted yet He went on giving respite to their opponents for years and years on end. "

54This is the kind of the stubbornness that the Holy Prophet was confronting. The disbelievers said, "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is an Arab. Arabic is his mother tongue. How can one believe that the Arabic Qur'an that he presents has not been forged by himself but has been revealed to him by God? The Qur'an could be believed to be the Revelation of God if he had started speaking fluently in a foreign language unknown to him, like Persian, Latin, or Greek. " This argument of theirs has been refuted by Allah, saying, "Now when the Qur'an has been sent down in their own tongue so that they may understand it, they raise the objection: Why has it been sent down to an Arab in Arabic? But if it had been sent down in a foreign tongue, these very people would have said, `How strange! An Arab Messenger

has been sent to the Arabs, but the Revelations being sent to him are in a tongue which is neither understood by him nor by his people. "

55When a person is summoned from afar, he hears a voice but dces not understand what is being said to him. This is a wonderful simile which filly depicts the psychology of the stubborn opponents. Naturally when you talk to a person who is free from prejudice, he will listen to you, will try to understand what you say, will accept it if it is reasonable, with an open mind. On the contrary, the person who is not only prejudiced against you but is also malicious and spiteful, will not at all listen to you however hard you may try to make him understand your viewpoint. In spite of hearing you all the time he will not understand at all what you had been saying.

56That is, some people had believed in it and some others had made up their minds to oppose it.

57It has two meanings

(1) If Allah had not already decreed that the people would be given enough respite for consideration the disputants would have long been destroyed;

(2) if Allah had not already decreed that the disputes would finally be decided on the Day of Judgment, the reality would have been made plain as to who is in the right and who is in the wrong.

58In this brief sentence the spiritual disease of the disbelievers of Makkah has been clearly diagnosed. It says that they are involved in doubt about the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), and this doubt has caused them great anguish and confusion. That is, although apparently they deny the Qur'an's being Allah's Word and the Holy Prophet's being His Messenger very vehemently, yet this denial is not based on any conviction, but their minds arc afflicted with great vacillation, and doubt. On the one hand, their selfish motives, their interests and their prejudices demand that they should belie the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and oppose them strongly; on the other, their hearts are convened from within, that the Qur'an is, in fact, a unique and un-paralleled Word the like of which has never been heard from any literary man or poet. Neither can the insane utter such things in their madness, nor can devils come to teach God-worship, piety and righteousness to the people. Likewise, when they say that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is a liar, their heaps from within put them to shame, and ask: Can such a person ever be a liar? When they brand him a madman, their hearts cry out from within and ask: Do you really think that he is mad? When they accuse that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is not interested in the truth but is working for selfish motives, their hearts from within curse them and ask: Do you call this virtuous man selfish, whom you have never seen striving for the sake of wealth and power and fame, whose life has been free from every tract of self-interest, who has always been working to bring about goodness and piety, but has never acted from any selfish motives.

59That is, "Your Lord can never be so unjust as to let go to waste the good deeds of a good man and fail to punish the evil-doers for their evil."

60That is, "None but Allah knows when the Hour would occur. " This is the answer to the disbelievers' question as to when the threat being given them of meeting with the consequences of their evil deeds will be carried out. Allah has answered their question without citing it.

61"The Hour": the Hour of Resurrection, i.e. the Hour when the evildoers will be punished for their evil and the grievances of the oppressed good people will be redressed.

62By this the listeners have been made to realize two things:

(1) That not only of Resurrection but the knowledge of all unseen things is reserved for Allah alone; there is no other knower of the unseen; and

(2) that God Who possesses the detailed knowledge of the most minor things cannot remain unaware of the acts and deeds of anybody.

Therefore, no one in His Kingdom should act fearlessly, with impunity. Only according to this second meaning the sentence becomes relevant to what follows. If one studies the following sentences the theme that immediately becomes obvious is: "Don't concern your selves about finding our the date of the coming of Resurrection; you should, however, be anxious about the consequences of your deviations you will have to bear when it comes. "This same thing had the Holy Prophet once said to a person, who asked him the date of the coming of Resurrection. All the major collections of Hadith contain a commonly reported Tradition to the effect: "Once when the Holy Prophet was on a journey, a man on the way shouted his name from a distance. The Holy Prophet asked what he wanted to say. He said: When will Resurrection come? The Holy Prophet replied: It must come in any case! What preparations have you made for it?"

63That is, "Now we have realized that what we had in our minds was absolutely wrong. Now none among us is of the view that there is another one also who is Your associate in Godhead." The words "we have submitted" show that on the Day of Resurrection the disbelievers will be asked again and again, on every occasion, "In the world you went on refusing to believe what the Messengers of God said: now say who was in the right: they or you? And the disbelievers will every time confess that the truth indeed was that which the Messengers preached and they themselves were in the wrong because they forsook the knowledge and persisted in their own ignorance.

64That is, "In their utter hopelessness they will look around to see if they could find any one of those whom they used to serve and worship in the world, who could come to their rescue and save them from

God's torment, or at least have their punishment reduced, but they will find no helper on any side."

65"For good": For prosperity, abundance of provisions, good health, well-being of children, etc. And "man" here does not imply every human being for it also includes the prophet and the righteous people , who are free from this weakness as is being mentioned below But here it implies the mean and shallow person who stars imploring God humbly when touched by harm and is beside himself with joy when he receives the good things of life As most human beings are involved in this weakness ,it has been called a weakness of man.

66That is "I have got all this because of my being worthy of it :it is my right that I should receive all this."

67That is, "He turns away from Our obedience and worship, and thinks it is below his dignity to bow to Us. "

68For other verses on this subject, see Yunus: 12, Bani Isra'il: 83, ArRum: 33-36, Az.Zumar: 8-9, 49 and the E.N.'s.

69It does not mean that they should believe in it only owing to the danger that if it were really from Allah they would be inviting their own doom by denying it, but it means this "It is not wisdom that you should be bent upon opposing it stubbornly without seriously trying to understand what it says. You cannot assert that you have come to know that this Qur'an is not from God, and you have known with certainty that God has not sent it. Obviously, your refusal to believe in it as Divine Word is not based on knowledge, but on conjecture, which may possibly be right as well as wrong. Now consider both the possibilities. If your conjecture were right, then, according to your own thinking, both the believers and the unbelievers would be equal, because both will became dust after death, and there is no life hereafter where belief and unbelief might be distinguished. But, if their Qur'an were really from God, and that of which it is forewarning did really take place, then think what doom you would invite for yourselves by denying it and opposing it like that. Therefore, your own interest demands that you should give up stubbornness and consider this Qur'an seriously; if even after due consideration, you decide not to believe in it, you may not, but you should not oppose it to the extent that you start employing falsehood and deception and persecution to bar the way of its message and prevent others from believing in it, not being content with your own unbelief.

70This verse has two meanings and both have been given by the major commentators:

First, that they will soon see wit their own eyes that the message of the Qur'an has spread in all the adjoining lands, and they themselves have yielded to it. Then they will realize that what they are being told today, which they are denying, was absolutely true. Some people have objected to this meaning, saying that a message's being dominant and overwhelming vast areas is no argument to prove that it is

the truth. False messages also become dominant and their adherents also go on subduing one country after the other. But this is a superficial objection which has been raised without a thorough study of the matter. The wonderful conquests that Islam achieved in the period of the Holy Prophet and the rightly guided Caliphs, were not the Signs of Allah only in the sense that the believers conquered one country after the other, but in the sense that this conquest of the countries was not like other conquests of the world, which make one man or one family or one nation master of the life and property of others and God's earth is filled with tyranny and injustice. Contrary to this, this conquest brought with it a great religious, . moral, intellectual, cultural, political, economic and social revolution; whose influence, wherever it reached, elicited what was best in man and suppressed what was worst in him. This revolution developed and nurtured the moral excellences which the world could hope to see only in the hermits and the meditating recluses and could never imagine that they could also be found among the people responsible for running the worldly affairs-in the politics of the rulers, in the chambers of justice, in the wars and conquests of the commanders of forces, in the work of the tax collectors and in the commerce of the big businessmen. This revolution so raised the common people in the society created by it in respect of the sense of morality, character, cleanliness and purity that even the select people of other societies seemed to be much inferior to them. It took man out of the labyrinths of superstition and whim and put him on the broad highway of scientific research and rational thought and action. It treated and cured these diseases of the collective life of whose treatment no idea existed in the other systems, or if at all they tried to treat them, they did not succeed in it. For example, separation between men on the basis of color, race, country and language, classification of men in the same society and discrimination among them, non existence of legal rights and equality in practical life, degeneration of women and their deprivation of the basic rights, prevalence of crime, liquor drinking and use of all intoxicating drugs, the governments being above criticism and accountability, deprivation of the fundamental human rights the masses', disrespect of agreements in international relations, barbarism in wars, and such other diseases. In Arabia itself this revolution brought about order in place of chaos, peace in place of bloodshed and anarchy, piety in place of wickedness, justice in place of tyranny and injustice, purity and culture in place of filth and indecency, knowledge in place of ignorance, brotherhood and love in place of long-standing feuds, and it made a nation whose people could not dream of anything beyond chiefship of their tribe, leaders of the world. These were the Signs which the very generation before whom the Holy Prophet had recited this verse for the first time, saw with their own eyes, and after that till today Allah has been constantly showing those Signs. The Muslims, even during their downfall, displayed such high morals as could never be attained by those people who represent as the leaders of civilization and culture No precedent can be found from any period of the history of the Muslims of the tyrannical treatment that has been meted out by the European nations to the subdued nations of Africa, America, Asia and of Europe itself. This is the blessing of the Qur'an which has so humanized Muslims that they could not become so tyrannical even when they had attained domination as the non-Muslims have been in all periods of history and are even today. A person who has eyes can himself see how the Muslims treated the Christians in Spain when they ruled it for centuries, and how the Christians treated the Muslims when they gained power there; how the Muslims behaved towards Hindus during their eight hundred year long rule in India and how the Hindus are now treating them after they have attained power; how the Muslims treated the

Jews during the past 1300 years and how the Jews are treating the Muslims in Palestine.

The other meaning of this verse is that Allah will show the people in the external world around them as well as in their own selves such signs as will make manifest that the teaching the Qur'an is giving is the very truth. Some people have raised the objection that the people even at that time were observing the world around them and also their own selves; therefore, it would be meaningless to show them any such Signs in the future. But this objection also is as superficial as the objection against the first meaning. No doubt, the external world is the same as man has been seeing in the past and his own self also is of the same nature as has been seen in every age, yet in these the Signs of God are so numerous that man has never comprehended them fully nor will ever be able to do so. In every age man has met with many new Signs and this will go on happening till the Resurrection Day.

71That is, "Is it not enough to warn the people of their evil end that Allah is watching whatever they are doing to belie and defeat the Message of the truth?"

72That is, "The basic cause of their attitude and conduct is that they are not sure that they will ever have to appear before their Lord and be held accountable for their deeds and actions."

73That is, "They cannot escape His grasp nor can anything of their deeds be prevented from being recorded by Him. "

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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42. Surah Ash Shura (The Consultation)

Name

It is derived frog the sentence, *wa amru-hum shura baina hum*, of verse 38, implying thereby that it is a Surah in which the word *shura* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

Although it could not be known from any authentic traditions, yet one feels after a study of its subject matter that this Surah might have been sent down consecutively after Ha-Miim As Sajdah, for it seems to be, in a way, a supplement to it. This will become clear to every person who first studies Surah Ha-Mim As Sajdah carefully and then goes through this Surah. He will see that in that Surah the Quraish chiefs had been taken to tack for their deaf and blind opposition so that anyone in Makkah and in its out-skirts, who had any sense of morality and nobility left in him, should know how unreasonably the chiefs of the people were opposing Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), and as against them, how serious he was in everything he said, how rational was his standpoint and how noble his character and conduct. Immediately after that warning this Surah was sent down, which did full justice to teaching and instruction, and made the truth of the Holy Prophet's message plain in such an impressive way that anyone who had any element of the love of the truth in him and who had not been blinded by the errors of ignorance, could not help being influenced by it.

Theme and Subject Matter

The discourse begins in a way as if to say:"Why are you expressing surprise and amazement at what Our Prophet is presenting before you?What he says is not new or strange, nor anything novel, which might have been presented for the first time in history: that Revelation should come down to a man from God and he should be given instructions for the guidance of mankind. Allah has been sending similar Revelations with similar instructions to the former Prophets before this. It is not surprising that the Owner of the Universe should be acknowledged as Deity and Ruler, but what is strange is that one should accept another as divine and deity in spite of being His subject and

slave. You are being angry with him who is presenting Tauhid before you, where as the shirk that you are practicing with regard to the Master of the Universe is such a grave crime as may cause the heavens to break asunder. The angels are amazed at this boldness of yours and fear that the wrath of Allah might descend on you any moment."

After this the people have been told that a person's being appointed to Prophethood and his presenting himself as a Prophet does not mean that he has been made master of the people's destinies and he has come to the world with that very claim. Allah has kept the destinies in His own hand. The Prophet has come only to arouse the heedless and guide the strayed ones to the Right Path. To call to account those who do not listen to him and to punish or not to punish them is Allah's own responsibility. and not part of the Prophet's work. Therefore, they should take it out of their head that the Prophet has come with a claim similar to those that are made by their so called religious guides and saints to the effect that he who would not listen to them, or would behave insolently towards them, would be burnt to death: In this very connection, the people have also been told that the Prophet has not come to condemn them but he is their well wisher; he is warning them that the way they are following will only lead to their own destruction.

Then, an answer has been given to the question: Why didn't Allah make all human beings righteous by birth, and why did He allow the difference of viewpoint owing to which the people start following each and every way of thought and action?The answer given is this: Owing to this very fact has it become possible for man to attain to the special mercy of Allah, which is not meant for other dumb creatures, but is only meant for those endowed with power and authority, who should take Allah as Patron and Guardian not instinctively but consciously by willing choice. Allah supports the man who adopts this way and guides and helps him to do good and right and admits him into His special mercy. On the contrary, the man who misuses his option and makes his patron those who are not, in fact, the guardians, and cannot be, are deprived of divine mercy. In this connection, it has also been made clear that only Allah is the Patron of man and of all other creatures. Others are neither the patron nor have the power to do full justice to patronage. Man's success depends only on this that he should make no mistake in choosing a patron for himself by the use of his free choice, and should take only Him his Guide Who, in reality, is the real Patron.

After this, it has been explained what the *Din* being presented by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) really is:

Its primary basis that as Allah Almighty is the Creator, Master and real Patron of the Universe and Man, He alone is Man's Ruler, He alone has the right to give Man Faith (*Din*) and Law (system of belief and practice) and judge the disputes of man and tell what is Truth and what is falsehood. No other being has any right whatever to be man's lawgiver. In other words, like the natural sovereignty, the sovereignty with regard to lawmaking also is vested only in Allah. No man or creature, apart from Allah, can be the bearer of this sovereignty. And if a person does not recognize and accept this Divine rule of Allah, it is merely futile for him to recognize the natural sovereignty of Allah.

On this very basis has Allah ordained a *Din* (True Religion) for Man from the very beginning. It was one and the same Religion that was vouchsafed in every age to all the Prophets. No Prophet ever founded any separate religion of his own. The same one Religion has been enjoined by Allah for all Mankind since the beginning of creation, and all the Prophets have been following it and inviting others to follow it.

This Religion and Creed was not sent so that man may rest content only with believing in it, but it was sent with the purpose and intention that it alone should be introduced, established and enforced in the world, and no man made religion be made to prevail in Allah's earth apart from His Religion. The Prophets had not been appointed only to preach this Religion but to establish it particularly in the world.

This same was the original Religion of mankind, but after the death of the Prophets, selfish people created new creeds by creating schisms for vested interests due to self conceit, vanity and ostentation. All the different religions and creeds found in the world today have resulted from corruption of the original Divine Truth.

Now, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace,) has been sent so that he may present before the people the same and original Religion in place of the various practices and artificial creeds and man made religions, and may try to establish the same. On this, if instead of being grateful, you feel angry and come out to fight him, it is your folly; the Prophet will not abandon his mission only because of your foolishness. He has been enjoined to adhere to his faith at all costs and to carry out the mission to which he has been appointed. Therefore, the people should not cherish any false hope that in order to please thee he would cater to the same whims and superstitions of ignorance which has corrupted Allah's Religion before.

You do not understand how great an impudence it is against Allah to adopt a man made religion and law instead of the Religion and Law enjoined by Allah. You think it is an ordinary thing and there is nothing wrong with it. But in the sight of Allah it is the worst kind of *shirk* and a grave crime whose punishment will be imposed on all those who enforced their own religion on Allah's earth and those who adopted and followed their religion.

Thus, after presenting a clear and visible concept of Religion it is said:"The best possible method that could be employed for your instruction and for bringing you to the Right Path has already been employed. On the one hand, Allah has sent down His Book, which is teaching you the truth in a most impressive way in your own language; and on the other, the lives of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his Companions are present before you by which you can see for yourselves what kind of men are prepared by the guidance given in this Book. Even then if you do not accept this guidance, nothing else in the world can bring you to the Right Path. The only alternative, therefore, is that you should be allowed to persist in the same error in which you have remained involved for centuries, and made to meet with the same doom which has been destined by Allah for such wrongdoers."

While stating these truths, brief arguments have been given, here and there, for *Tauhid* and the Hereafter, the world worshipers have been warned of the evil consequences and their punishment in the life hereafter, and the disbelievers have been criticized for the moral weaknesses, which were the real cause of their deviation from the truth. The Surah has been concluded with two important themes.

First, that the Holy Prophet was wholly unaware of this concept of the "Book" or the True Faith during the first forty years of his life and then his sudden appearance before the people with those two things, is a manifest proof of his being a Prophet.

Secondly, his presenting his own teaching as the teaching of God does not mean that he claims to have spoken to

God, face to face, but God has conveyed to him this Guidance, as in the case of all other Prophets, in three ways: He speaks to His Prophets either through Revelation, or from behind a veil, or He sends an angel with the message. This thing was clarified so that the opponents did not have an opportunity of accusing the Holy Prophet of claiming to have spoken to God, face to face, and the lovers of the truth should know by what methods Allah gave instruction to the man whom He had appointed to the mission of Prophethood.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

حٰمٓ ﴿١﴾

عٓسٓقٓ ﴿٢﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ يُوحِيٓ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣﴾

لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٤﴾

تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِن فَوْقِهِنَّ ۚ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱللَّهُ حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَآ أَنتَ عَلَيْهِم
بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿٦﴾

[1-6] Ha Mim Ain Sin Qaf. Likewise has Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise, been inspiring you and those (Messengers) before you.[1] Whatever is in the heavens and the earth is His. He is the High, the Great![2] Near it is that the heavens should break asunder from above.[3] The angels are glorifying their Lord with His praise and begging forgiveness for those on the earth.[4] Listen! Allah is indeed All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.[5] Those who have taken some others than Him as guardians,[6] Allah is watching them; you are not responsible for their conduct.[7]

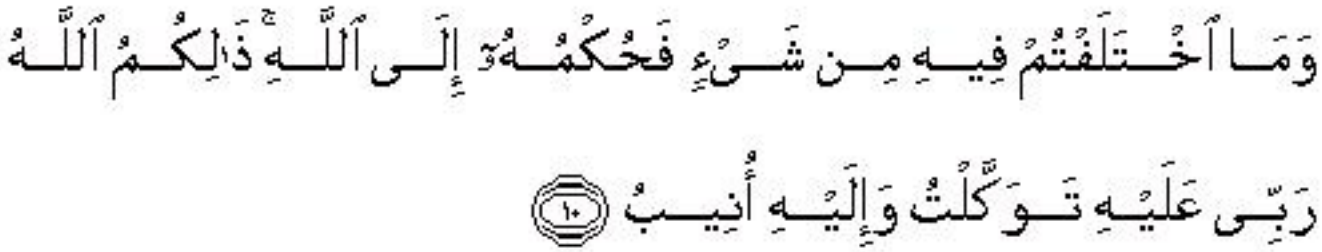
وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّتُنذِرَ أُمَّ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَتُنذِرَ
يَوْمَ ٱلْجَمْعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ فَرِيقٌ فِى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِى ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿٧﴾

[7] Yes, thus have We revealed to you, O Prophet, this Arabic Qur'an[8] so that you may warn those who dwell in the center of habitations (i.e. Makkah) and around it,[9] and warn them of the Day of Gathering[10] that which is sure to come. One group shall go to Paradise and the other to Hell.

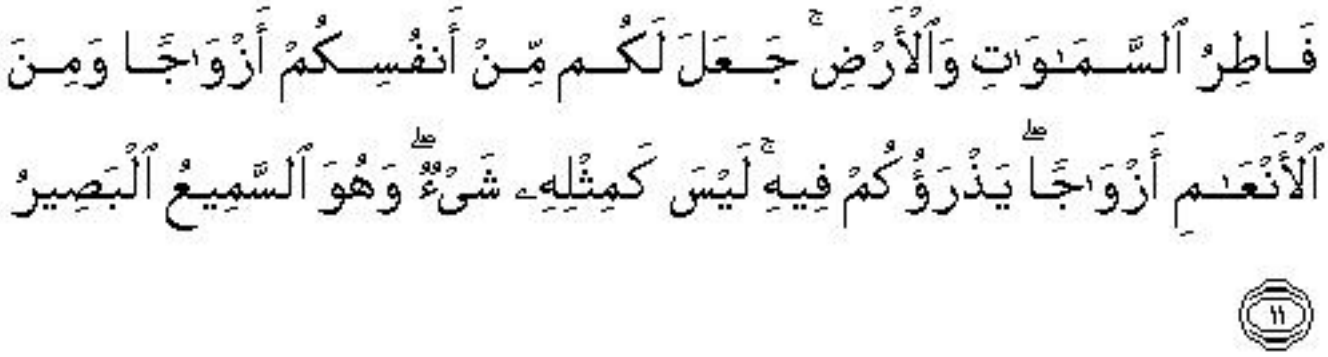
وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَهُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن يُدْخِلُ مَن يَشَآءُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ
وَٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ مَا لَهُم مِّن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٨﴾

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۖ فَٱللَّهُ هُوَ ٱلْوَلِىُّ وَهُوَ يُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ
كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٩﴾

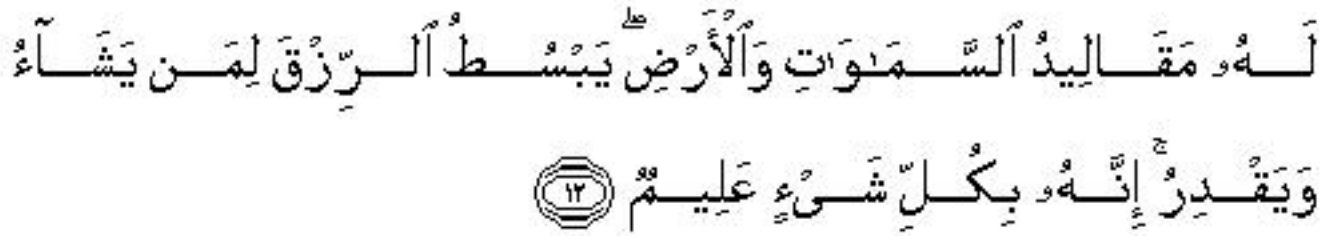
[8-9] Had Allah so willed, He would have made all of them a single nation, but He admits into His mercy whomever He wills; and the wrongdoers have neither any protector nor helper.[11] What! Have (the foolish people) taken other guardians besides Him? Guardian is Allah alone: He alone gives life to the dead, and He has power over everything.[12]



وَمَا ٱخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِن شَىْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبِّى عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿١٠﴾

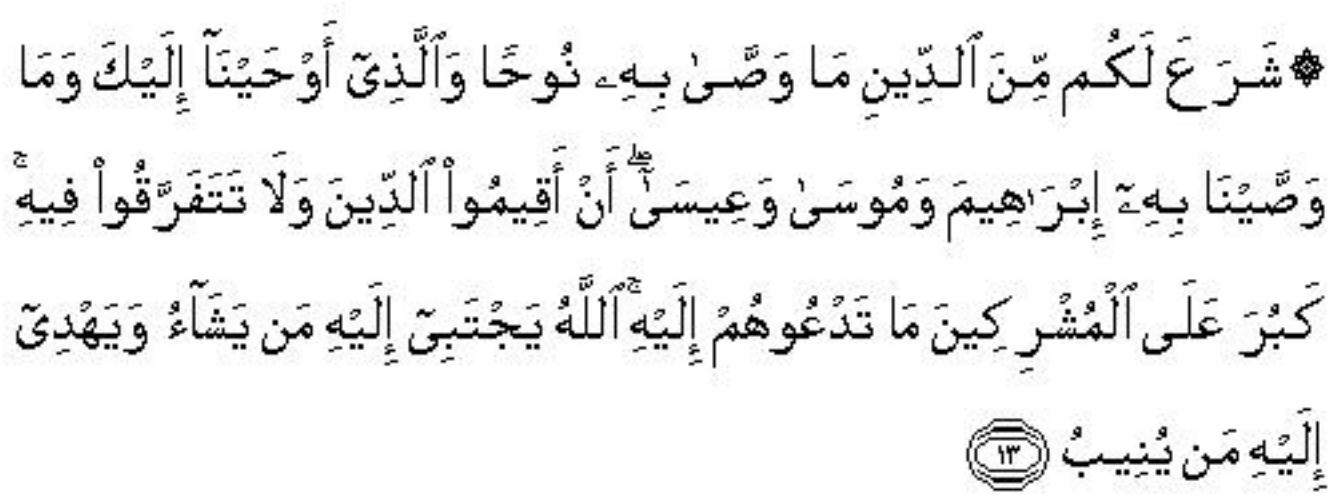


فَاطِرُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا وَمِنَ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ أَزْوَٰجًا ۖ يَذْرَؤُكُمْ فِيهِ ۚ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِۦ شَىْءٌ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

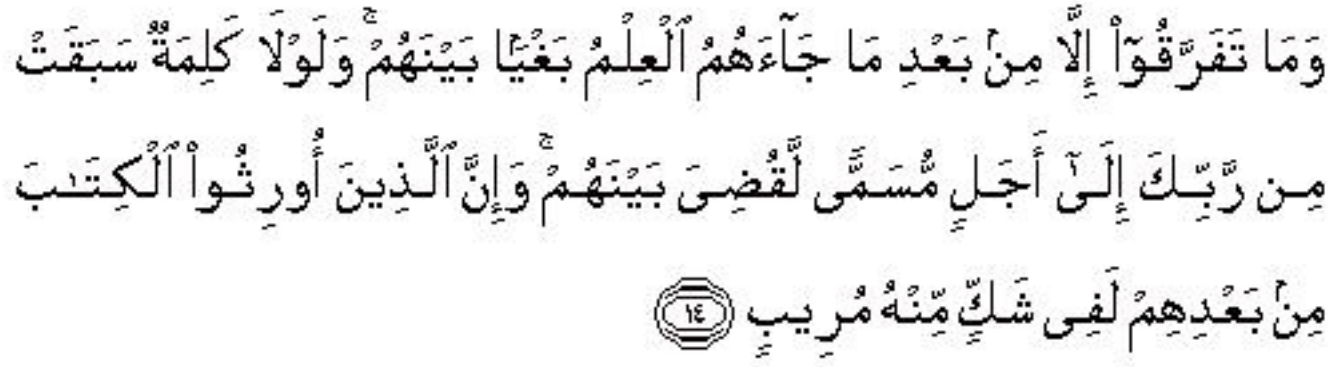


لَهُۥ مَقَالِيدُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

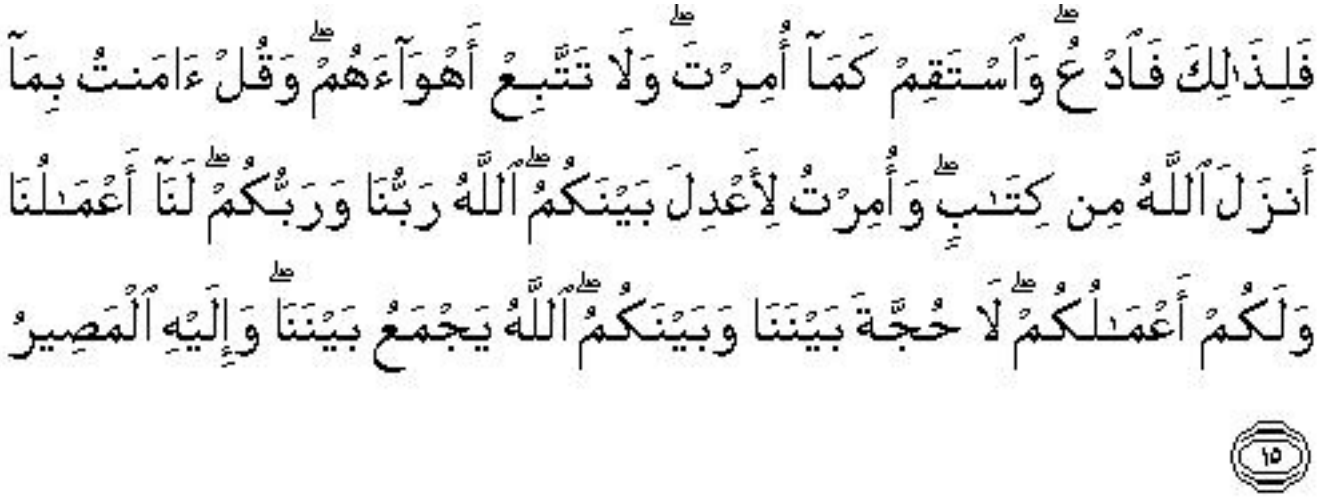
[10-12] It[13] is for Allah to give judgment in whatever you may differ.[14] The same Allah[15] is my Lord: in Him did I put my trust, and to Him I turn.[16] He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who made for you pairs from your own kind, and pairs also of the cattle (from their own kind) so as to multiply you. There is nothing like Him in the universe.[17] He hears everything and sees everything.[18] To Him belong the keys of the treasures of the heavens and the earth. He gives abundantly to whomsoever He wills and sparingly to whomsoever He wills: He has knowledge of everything.[19]



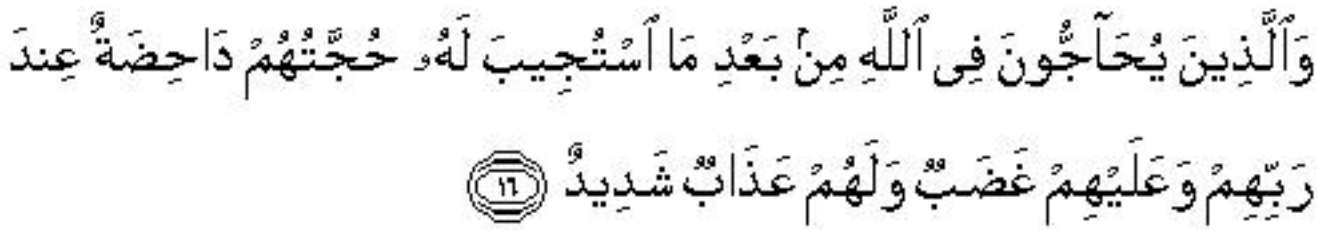
[13] He has appointed for you the same Way of life which He had ordained for Noah and which (O Muhammad) We have now revealed to you; and which We had already enjoined on Abraham and Moses and Jesus, stressing: "Establish this Way and be not divided in it."[20] The same thing to which you (O Muhammad) are calling the mushriks has set them ill at ease. Allah chooses for Himself whomever He wills, and He guides to His Way only him who turns to Him (in penitence).[21]



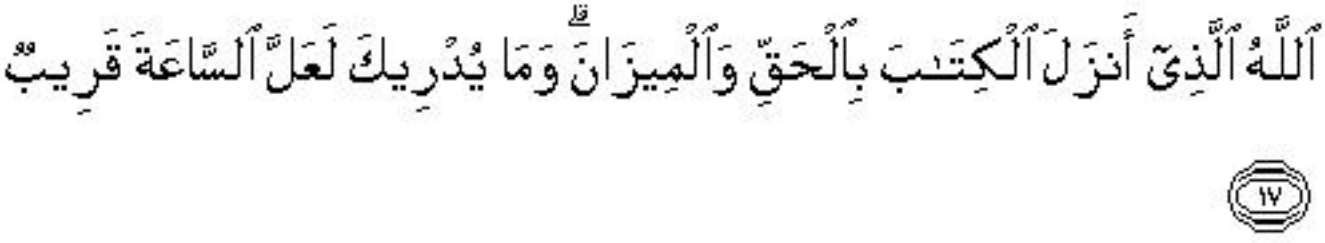
[14] The people became divided only after the Knowledge had come to them[22] just because they wanted to wrong one another.[23] Had your Lord not already issued the Word to defer their punishment till an appointed time, the matter would surely have been settled between them.[24] And the fact is that those who were made to inherit the Book after them, are involved in a disquieting doubt concerning it.[25]



[15] Because of this, therefore, O Muhammad, you should call them to the same Way, and hold fast to it yourself as you have been commanded, and do not follow their whims.[26] Say to them, "I have believed in whatever Book Allah has sent down,[27] and I have been commanded to do justice between you.[28] Allah is our Lord as well as your Lord. For us are our deeds and for you your deeds.[29] There is no dispute between us.[30] Allah shall gather us all together one day and to Him we shall all return."



[16] After Allah's invitation has been accepted, those who dispute (with those who have accepted it) concerning Allah's religion,[31] their argument is absurd in the sight of their Lord, and on them is His wrath and for them there is a severe punishment.



يَسْتَعْجِلُ بِهَا ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهَا ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مُشْفِقُونَ
مِنْهَا وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهَا ٱلْحَقُّ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُمَارُونَ فِى ٱلسَّاعَةِ لَفِى
ضَلَٰلٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٨﴾

[17-18] It is Allah Who has sent down this Book with the truth and the Balance.[32] And what will make you understand that the Hour of Judgment might well have drawn near at hand?[33] Those who do not believe in its coming, seek to hasten it, but those who believe in it, dread it, and know that it is sure to come. Note it well that those who dispute concerning the coming of the Hour, in order to create doubts about it, have gone far astray.

ٱللَّهُ لَطِيفٌۢ بِعِبَادِهِۦ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْقَوِىُّ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ﴿١٩﴾

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُۥ فِى حَرْثِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ
ٱلدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِۦ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مِن نَّصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

[19-20] Allah is very Kind to His servants.[34] He gives whatever He pleases to whom He wills.[35] He is the All-Powerful, the All-Mighty.[36] Whoever seeks the harvest of the Hereafter; We do increase his harvest; and whoever seeks the harvest of this world, We do give kiln of it here, but in the Hereafter he will have no share whatever.[37]

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَٰٓؤُا۟ شَرَعُوا۟ لَهُم مِّنَ ٱلدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنۢ بِهِ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْلَا
كَلِمَةُ ٱلْفَصْلِ لَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

تَرَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ وَهُوَ وَاقِعٌۢ بِهِمْ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟
وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فِى رَوْضَاتِ ٱلْجَنَّٰتِ ۖ لَهُم مَّا يَشَآءُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
هُوَ ٱلْفَضْلُ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٢٢﴾

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلَّذِى يُبَشِّرُ ٱللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ ۗ
قُل لَّآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا ٱلْمَوَدَّةَ فِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ ۗ وَمَن يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً
نَّزِدْ لَهُۥ فِيهَا حُسْنًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

[21-23] Have they set up such associates of God, who have laid down for them a (religious) way of life, which Allah has not permitted?[38] Had the word of judgment not already been issued, their case would long have been settled.[39] Surely for these wrongdoers there is a painful torment. You will see that at that time these wicked people will be fearing the consequence of their deeds, and it will certainly befall them. Contrary to this, those who have believed and done righteous deeds, shall be in the Gardens of Paradise: they shall have with their Lord whatever they will desire. This is the greatest bounty. This is that of which Allah gives good news to His servants, who believed and did good works. O Prophet, say to them: "I do not ask of you any reward for this work.[40] However, I do seek the love of the kindred."[41] Whoever earns a good deed, We shall increase its good for him. Indeed, Allah is All-Forgiving and Appreciative.[42]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۖ فَإِن يَشَإِ ٱللَّهُ يَخْتِمْ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ ۗ وَيَمْحُ
ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ وَيُحِقُّ ٱلْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَٰتِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَنِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ
مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَيَسْتَجِيبُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦ ۚ
وَٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

[24-26] Do they say, "He has forged a lie against Allah?"[43] If Allah so wills, He may seal up your heart.[44] He blots out falsehood and proves the truth to be true by His Words.[45] He even knows the secrets hidden in the breasts.[46] It is He Who accepts repentance from His servants and overlooks sins although He knows whatever you do.[47] He answers the prayers of those who believe and do good works and gives them even more out of His bounty. As for the disbelievers, there is a severe punishment for them.

۞ وَلَوْ بَسَطَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ لَبَغَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن يُنَزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ
مَّا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِعِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُنَزِّلُ ٱلْغَيْثَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا۟ وَيَنشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُۥ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْوَلِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ خَلْقُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَآءُ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَمَآ أَصَٰبَكُم مِّن مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَن كَثِيرٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٣١﴾

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِ ٱلْجَوَارِ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ كَٱلْأَعْلَٰمِ ﴿٣٢﴾

إِن يَشَأْ يُسْكِنِ ٱلرِّيحَ فَيَظْلَلْنَ رَوَاكِدَ عَلَىٰ ظَهْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

أَوْ يُوبِقْهُنَّ بِمَا كَسَبُوا۟ وَيَعْفُ عَن كَثِيرٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مَا لَهُم مِّن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

[27-35] If Allah had given His provisions abundantly to all His servants, they would have rebelled in the earth, but He sends down in due measure what He wills. He is well informed of His servants and watches over them.[48] He it is Who sends down the rain when the people have lost all hope, and spreads His mercy, and He alone is the Praiseworthy Guardian.[49] Among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the living things, which He has scattered in both.[50] He can gather them all together whenever He wills.[51] Whatever affliction has befallen you, it is for what your own hands have earned, and there is many a sin that He pardons.[52] You cannot frustrate your God in the earth, and you do not have any protector and helper against Allah. Among His signs are the ships which look like mountains in the sea. If Allah so wills He can still the wind and leave them motionless on its back. -In this there arc many signs for every such person who patiently endures and is grateful.[53] Or, forgiving many of the sins (of the voyagers), He may drown them in consequence of a few of their misdeeds, and then those who dispute about Our Revelations, may realize that they have no refuge.[54]

فَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ
لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا۟
هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ
وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَصَابَهُمُ ٱلْبَغْىُ هُمْ يَنتَصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَجَزَٰٓؤُا۟ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا ۖ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُۥ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا
يُحِبُّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

وَلَمَنِ ٱنتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِم مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤١﴾

إِنَّمَا ٱلسَّبِيلُ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ وَيَبْغُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ
أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَلَمَن صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

[36-43] Whatever you have been given, is merely a provision for the transitory life of this world,[55] and that which is with Allah is better as well as more lasting.[56] That is for those who have believed and put their trust in their Lord.[57] Who refrain from gross sins and indecencies.[58] Who, when they are angry, forgive.[59] Who obey their Lord,[60] establish the Salat, and conduct their affairs by mutual consultation.[61] Who spend out of what We have given them as sustenance.[62] Who, when they are oppressed, help and defend themselves.[63] The recompense[64] of evil is a like evil,[65] then whoever pardons and seeks reconcilement, his reward is with Allah.[66] Allah does not like the wrongdoers.[67] And those who avenge themselves after they have been wronged, cannot be held blameworthy, for blameworthy indeed are those who oppress others and commit excesses in the land without any right. For such people there is a painful torment. However, the one who practices patience and is forgiving. these indeed are works of great courage and resolution.[68]

وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن وَلِيٍّ مِّنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ ۗ وَتَرَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا۟
ٱلْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَىٰ مَرَدٍّ مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَتَرَىٰهُمْ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا خَٰشِعِينَ مِنَ ٱلذُّلِّ يَنظُرُونَ مِن
طَرْفٍ خَفِىٍّ ۗ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟
أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ فِى عَذَابٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَمَا كَانَ لَهُم مِّنْ أَوْلِيَآءَ يَنصُرُونَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ
مِن سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤٦﴾

[44-46] The one whom Allah lets go astray, has no protector after Him.[69] You will see that when the wrongdoers see the torment, they will say. "Is there any way back?"[70] And you will see that when they are brought before Hell, they shall be downcast with disgrace and shall look at it with stealthy glances.[71] At that time those who had believed, will say, "The real losers indeed are those who have lost themselves and their followers on this Resurrection Day." Beware! The wrongdoers shall suffer an everlasting torment, and they will have no protectors and guardians, who could come to their help against Allah. The one whom Allah lets go astray has no way of escape.

ٱسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِرَبِّكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ مَا لَكُم مِّن
مَّلْجَإٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّكِيرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا۟ فَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ۖ إِنْ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ۗ وَإِنَّآ إِذَآ
أَذَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً فَرِحَ بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ
فَإِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ كَفُورٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

[47-48] Answer your Lord before there comes the Day of which there is no chance of being averted by Allah.[72] On that Day you will have no place of refuge, nor will there be any who could change your condition.[73] Now if they turn away. We have not sent you, O Prophet, to be a keeper over them.[74] Your only responsibility is to convey the Message. Man is such that when We let him taste Our mercy, he exults at it, and if an evil befalls him in consequence of what his own hands have done before, he turns utterly ungrateful.[75]

لِّلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ يَهَبُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ إِنَٰثًا وَيَهَبُ
لِمَن يَشَآءُ ٱلذُّكُورَ ﴿٤٩﴾

أَوۡ يُزَوِّجُهُمۡ ذُكۡرَانٗا وَإِنَٰثٗاۖ وَيَجۡعَلُ مَن يَشَآءُ عَقِيمًاۚ
إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمٞ قَدِيرٞ ٥٠

[49-50] To Allah belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth.[76] He creates whatever He wills: He gives daughters to whom He wills, and sons to whom He wills; or He gives both sons and daughters to whom He wills and makes barren whom He wills. Indeed. He knows everything and has power over everything.[77]

۞وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحۡيًا أَوۡ مِن وَرَآيِٕ حِجَابٍ أَوۡ يُرۡسِلَ
رَسُولٗا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذۡنِهِۦ مَا يَشَآءُۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٞ ٥١

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ رُوحٗا مِّنۡ أَمۡرِنَاۚ مَا كُنتَ تَدۡرِي مَا ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ وَلَا
ٱلۡإِيمَٰنُ وَلَٰكِن جَعَلۡنَٰهُ نُورٗا نَّهۡدِي بِهِۦ مَن نَّشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِنَاۚ وَإِنَّكَ
لَتَهۡدِيٓ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ٥٢

صِرَٰطِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِي لَهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۗ أَلَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تَصِيرُ
ٱلۡأُمُورُ ٥٣

[51-53] It[78] is not given to any mortal that Allah should speak to him, face to face. He speaks either through revelation (secret instruction),[79] or from behind a veil,[80] or He sends a messenger (an angel), who by His Command, reveals whatever He wills.[81] He is the Exalted, the All-Wise.[82] Even so We have, (O Muhammad), revealed a Spirit to

you by Our Command.[83] You did not know at all what was the Book and what Was the Faith,[84] but We made that Spirit a light by which We show the way to any of Our servants We will. You are indeed guiding to the Right Way, the Way of God, to Whom belongs everything in the heavens and the earth. Beware! All affairs tend to Allah alone![85]

1The style of the opening verses by itself shows that in the background there are the misgivings, wonder and amazement which were being expressed at that time in every assembly, every meeting place, every street and every house and shop of Makkah at the message of the Holy Prophet and the themes of the Qur'an. The people said, "Where from is this man bringing us new revelations everyday? The like of these we had never heard nor seen before. How strange that he rejects as false the religion that our forefathers have been following in the past, the religion that is still being followed by all of us, and the traditions and ways that have been prevalent in the country for so many centuries; and he says that the religion that he presents only is right and true." They said: `Had he presented even this new religion in a way as to substitute some of the falsehood he found in the ancestral paganism and prevalent customs with certain others which might be the result of his own thought, there could be a dialogue with him. But he says that what he recites is Divine Word. How can we accept this? Does God visit him, or does he visit God? Or does some dialogue take place between him and God?" It is in the background of such expression of wonder and doubt that although the address is apparently directed to the Holy Prophet, the disbelievers have in fact been told: "Yes: these very things are being revealed by the Almighty, All-Wise Allah, and with the same themes has its Revelation been coming down to all the former Prophets."

Lexically, wahi means "swift and secret instruction", i.e. an inspiration which is made with such haste and speed that none may know it except the inspirer and the one being inspired. As a term this word has been used for the guidance and instruction that is put in the mind of a man by Allah like a flash of lightning. What is meant to be said here is this: `There is no question of Allah's visiting somebody or somebody's visiting Allah and speaking face to face with Him. He is All-Mighty and All-Wise. Whenever He pleases to have a contact with a servant for the guidance and instruction of mankind, nothing can obstruct His will and intention, for He adopts the method of revelation for the purpose by His wisdom. " This very theme has been repeated in the last verses of the Surah with greater clarity and detail.

As to the people's objection that the Holy Prophet was presenting strange and novel things, it has been said: There is nothing strange and novel in what Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) presents; Allah has been giving the same guidance and instruction to the Prophets who came before him in the world. "

2These introductory sentences are not meant to be said merely in praise of Allah Almighty, but their each word has a deep link with the background in which these verses were sent down. The foremost basis of the objections of the people who were expressing wonder and doubts against the Holy Prophet and the Qur'an was that he was inviting them to Tauhid and they were being alarmed at this and saying that if Allah alone is the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler, what would be the position of their saints and holy men? At this it has been said: "This whole Universe belongs to Allah. How can therefore the godhead of

another work and operate in the kingdom of the real Sovereign, particularly when those others whose godhead is acknowledged, are themselves also His subjects?" Then, it has been said: `He is the High, the Great!" That is, He is far above that somebody else should be equal to Him in rank and should became His associate in His Being, attributes, powers or rights."

3That is, "It is not a trivial matter that a creature should be joined in lineage with Allah and regarded as His son or daughter; another regarded as fulfiller of the needs and the answerer of the petitions so that the people should start invoking him for help; another taken as the maintainer of the entire world, and his devotees should start proclaiming that their holy saint heard the prayer of everyone at all places at all times and Games to his help and answers his petition; another invested with the authority to enjoin and prohibit things and declare them as lawful and unlawful, and the people should start obeying his commands, instead of the Commands of God, as if he alone was their God. These boldnesses against God arc such that they may well cause the heavens to break asunder. " (This same theme has also been presented in Surah Maryam: 88-91 above).

4It means: `The angels shudder with disgust when they hear such nonsense being uttered by the people in respect of their Lord, and they regard it as a rebellion against Him." They say: `Glorified be Allah! No one can have the position that he should become an associate with Allah, Lord of the worlds, in Divinity and Command; there is none beside Him who may be our and all other servants' benefactor so that hymns be sung in his praise and he be thanked. " So, they feel that it is a grave crime being committed in the world, and it may provoke Allah Almighty's wrath any moment. Therefore, they implore Allah for mercy again and again for the dwellers of the earth, who have forgotten themselves and their God, and pray that they may yet be spared from the torment and given more respite to mend their ways.

5That is , "It is only Allah's clemency, mercifulness and forgiveness that the people who have touched the extreme limits in disbelief, polytheism, atheism, sinfulness and tyranny, have been receiving respite after respite for years and years, even for centuries; yet they not only go on receiving their sustenance but arc also acclaimed as the great people of the world and they are provided with such adornments of the worldly life as cause the ignorant people the misunderstanding that this world perhaps has no God. "

6The word auliya (sing. wall) as used in the Text is very comprehensive in meaning. The different beliefs and all sorts of diverse practices with regard to the false deities held and worshiped by the polytheistic people, have been described as "taking others as auliya' (guardians) instead of Allah" in the Qur'an. According to the Qur'an, a person takes such a one his wali:

(1) whom he obeys in all matters, whose instructions he carries out and Whose ways and customs and rules he follows in all affairs of life (An-Nisa: 118-120; Al A'raf: 3, 27-30);

(2) in whose guidance he has full faith, and who he thinks will lead him aright and save him from error

and deviation (Al-Baqarah: 257, Bani Isra'il: 97, Al-Kahf: 17-50, AI-Jathiah: 19);

(3) about whom he trusts he will protect him from the torment of God in the Hereafter if it really existed (An Nisa: 123, 173; Al-An'am: 51, Ar-Ra'd: 37, AI-'Ankabut: 22, AI-Ahzab: 65, Az-Zumar: 3);

(4) about whom he has the belief that he helps him in the world in supernatural ways, protects him from disaster and afflictions, gets him jobs, blesses him with children, and fulfills his desires and all other needs. (Hud: 20, Ar-Ra'd: 16, Al-`Ankabut: 4l).

At some places in the Qur'an the word wali has been used in one of these senses and at others in all its meanings. The verse being commented upon is one of such verses. In it, taking others as guardians instead of Allah implies regarding them as one's patron and supporter and helper in all the four about-mentioned meanings.

7"Allah is watching them": Allah sees whatever they arc doing and is recording their conduct. It is His responsibility to call them to account and punish them. As for the words "You are not responsible for their conduct", these have been addressed to the Holy Prophet. They mean: "Their destiny has not been placed under yow control so that you may burn to ashes anyone who does not listen to you, or depose him from power, or annihilate him." This, however, does not mean that, God forbid, the Holy Prophet regarded himself as such, and this was said in order to remove his misunderstanding or self-conceit, but this was meant for the disbelievers. Although apparently the Holy Prophet himself is the addressee, the real object is to tell the disbelievers that the Prophet of Allah has made no such claims as were usually made by their so-called saints who posed to possess great spiritual powers. Among the ignorant people it is generally thought that the so-called "holy men" have the power to ruin the destiny of anyone who behaves insolently towards them in any way; so much so that even after their death if somebody happened to dishonor their grave, or if nothing else, only nursed an evil thought about them in his mind, they destroyed him completely. Such a thought is in most casts spread by the "holy men" themselves. As for the good men who do not themselves say any such thing, their names are exploited by some other clever people, who spread such thoughts about them in order to promote their business. In any case this is regarded as a necessary corollary of spirituality and piety among the common people that one should possess the powers of making and marring destinies. To destroy the spell of this same fraud, Allah is addressing His Holy Messenger, as if to tell the disbelievers: "You are no doubt Our Messenger and We have blessed you with Our Revelations, but yow duty is only to guide the people to the Right Path. Their destinies have not boon placed under yow control; they arc in Our hand; therefore, to watch over the deeds and acts of the servants and to punish or not to punish them is Our own responsibility."

8The same thing which had been said in the beginning of the discourse has been said again with greater emphasis, and by making mention of the "Arabic Qur'an", the listeners have been warned to the effect: "The Qur'an is not in any foreign language but in your own language: you can understand it yourself directly; study its themes and see for yourself that the pure and selfless guidance that is being given in it

can be from none other than the Lord of the Universe."

9That is, "Arouse them from slumber and warn them that there is nothing but destruction in store for them in consequence of the errors of morality and conduct in which they are involved and of the perverse principle on which they have ordered their individual and collective lives."

10That is, "Tell them also that this destruction is not confined only to this world but the Day has to come when Allah will gather together all mankind and subject them to accountability. Even if a person escaped the evil consequences of his deviation and wickedness in the world, there will be no chance of his escape on that Day, and highly unfortunate is he, who is doomed to a tragic fate both in this world and in the Hereafter."

11This theme has three objects in this context:

First, it is meant to instruct and console the Holy Prophet, as if to say: "Do not grieve so much at the ignorance and deviation of the disbelievers of Makkah and their stubbornness and obduracy. It is Allah's will that man should be granted the freedom of choice and action: then whoever desires to have guidance should be given guidance, and whoever wants to remain. astray should be allowed to go astray. Had this not been Allah's will, there was no need whatever of sending the Prophets and the Book; for this only a creative hint of Allah Almighty's was enough: all human beings would have become as obedient as the rivers, mountains, trees, stones, and all other creatures. " (In this connection, please also see Al-An'am: 35-36, 107).

Secondly, its addressees arc all those people who were involved in the confusion, and even now are, that if Allah really had wanted to show guidance to human beings and He did not like the differences of creed and practice that were prevalent among the people, and wanted to have the people adopt the way of the Faith and Islam, there was no need of the Revelation and the Book and the Prophethood. He could have easily achieved this object by creating everyone a believer and Muslim by birth. Another result of this confusion was also this reasoning: "When Allah has not done so, the different ways that we are following, are approved by Him, and whatever we are doing, is according to His wilt. Therefore, nobody has any right to object to it. " (To remove this misunderstanding also this theme has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'an. Please see Al-An'am: 112, 137, 148-149; Yunus : 99; Hud: 118-119; An-Nahl: 9, 35 and the relevant E.N.'s).

Thirdly, its object is to make the believers realize the truth about the difficulties that one generally faces in the way of preaching religion and reforming the people. Those people who do not understand the reality of the God, given freedom of choice and will and of the resulting differences of temperament and methods, sometimes become despondent at the slow progress of the reformatory work and wish that some supernatural things should appear from Allah, which should change the hearts of the people, and are sometimes inclined to adopt unsound methods of bringing about reformation, owing to excessive

enthusiasm. (For this object also this theme has occurred at some places in the Qur'an, for which see Ar-Ra'd: 31, An-Nahl: 91-93).

To highlight these objects a very important theme has been expressed in these brief sentences. Allah's real vicegerency in the world and His Paradise in the Hereafter is not an ordinary blessing, which may be distributed over creatures of the rank of the earth and stones and donkeys and horses as a common blessing. This is indeed a special blessing and a blessing of a very high order for which even the angels were not considered fit. That in why Allah created man as a creature endowed with power and authority and placed vast means of His earth under his control and blessed him with these special powers so that he may pass through the test, success in which alone can entitle a servant to His blessings. This blessing, is Allah's own; no one has a monopoly over it, nor can anyone claim to have it on the basis of a personal right, nor has anyone the power to take it by force. He who presents service before Allah, who takes Him as his Guardian and comes under His protection, alone can have it. Then Allah blesses him with help, guidance and grace to pass this test, so that he may enter His Mercy. As for the unjust Man who turns away from Allah Himself and instead takes others as his patrons, Allah-Has no need that he should become his guardian by force. And the others whom He takes as his guardians do not possess any knowledge and power and authority that they may enable him to achieve success by dint of their guardianship of him.

12That is, "Guardianship is not a thing of one's personal choice and satisfaction that one may take anyone one may please as one's guardian, and the other may also become ones real and true guardian and may do full justice to the function of guardianship. This is an actual reality, which does not change with the whims of the people; the Guardian is He Who is really the Guardian, whether someone regards and acknowledges Him as his Guardian or not, and the one who is not in reality the ,guardian is not the guardian, no matter whether someone continues to regard and acknowledge him as his guardian till the last moment. Now, as for the question: What is the proof of only Allah's being the real Guardian and of no one else's being the guardian? the answer is: Man's real Guardian can be the one who changes death into life, who has created a living man by breathing life into inorganic substances, and who also possesses the powers and authority to do full justice to the function of Guardianship. If there is such a one, apart from Allah, he may be made the guardian, and if He is Allah alone, then taking another beside Him as one's guardian is nothing but ignorance and folly and self-destruction.

13From here to the end of verse 12, though the whole discourse is a Revelation from Allah, the speaker is not Allah but the Holy Messenger of Allah. In other words, Allah Almighty is telling His Prophet to make this proclamation to the people. Such themes in the Qur'an sometimes begin with qul (say, O Prophet) and sometimes without it. only the style indicates that the speaker at a place is not Allah but Allah's Messenger. Even at some places though the words are Allah's, the speaker arc the believers, as for example in Surah AI-Fatihah; or, the speaker are the angels as in Surah Maryam: 64-65.

14This is the natural and logical demand of Allah Almighty's being the Master of the Universe and His

being the real Guardian. When Sovereignty and Guardianship belong to Him only inevitably He alone is also the Ruler, and it is for Him to judge human beings' mutual disputes and differences. Those who restrict it only to the Hereafter make a mistake. There is no argument to prove that Allah's position as a Ruler has no effect in this world but is meant only for the life hereafter. Likewise, those who restrict it only to beliefs and a few questions of "religious nature" are also in the wrong. The words arc general and they clearly proclaim Allah as having the sole right to judge all disputes and differences. According to them, just as Allah is the Master of the Day of Judgment in the Hereafter; so He is the best of Judges in this world too; and just as He is the Settler of the differences pertaining to beliefs as to what is the Truth and what is falsehood, so also in legal matters He is the Settler of differences as to what is pure for man and what is impure. what is lawful and desirable for him and what is forbidden and undesirable, what is evil and vicious in morals and what is good and virtuous, what arc the rights of the people in their mutual dealings and what are the right practices in social political and economic life and what arc wrong. On this very basis the Qur'an has declared this principle as the fundamental of law:

"If there arises any dispute between you about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger. " (An-Nisa: 59). And: "It does not behoove a believing man and a believing woman that when Allah and His Messenger have given their verdict in a matter, they should exercise an option in that matter of theirs." (AI-Ahzab: 36). And: “O people, follow what has been sent down to you from your Lord and do not follow other patrons beside Him." (AI-A'raf: 3).

Then, in the context in which this verse has occurred, it gives another meaning also and it is: 'To decide differences is not only Allah's legal right on accepting or rejecting which depends man's being a believer or an unbeliever, but Allah, in fact, practically also is deciding between the truth and falsehood due to which falsehood and its worshipers are ultimately being destroyed and the truth and the faithful are being honored and exalted, no matter how delayed the enforcement of this decision may seem to be. This theme occurs in verse 24 below, and has been expressed at several places above in the Qur'an. For this please see Ar-Ra'd: 17, 41; Ibrahim: 24-27; Bani Isra'il 81; AI-Anbiya': 18, 44; and the E N.'s.

15"The same Allah", Who is the real Settler of disputes.

16These arc two verbs one of which is in the past tense and the other in the present which contains the sense of perpetuity. In the past verb it was said: "In Him did I put my trust," i.e.. "I decided once and for all that as long as I live I have to rely on His help, on His guidance, on His support and protection, and on His decision." Then in the present verb it was said: "To Him I turn," i.e. "Whatever situation I face in lift, I turn only to Allah in it. I do not look towards others in an affliction or trouble or difficulty but invoke only Him for help; I Beck only His refuge when I face a danger and depend on His protection; I turn to Him' for guidance whenever I am confronted by a problem and seek its solution in His teaching and guidance; and I look up only to Him when I have a dispute with somebody with the belief that He alone will give the final decision, and have the faith that whatever decision He gives will be the right one. "

17Literally, "Nothing is like His likeness," which implies this: Even if there were a likeness of Allah, nothing would be like it not to speak of being like unto Allah Himself.

18That is, "At one and the same time He is hearing everybody and seeing everything in the Universe. "

19These are the arguments to prove why Allah alone is the true Guardian and why putting trust in Him alone is right and correct and why He alone should be turned to in all matters. (For explanation, see An-Naml: 60-66, Ar-Rum: 20-22 and the E.N.'s).

20Here the same thing as already mentioned in the first verse has been further elaborated. It clearly states that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is not the founder of any new religion, nor was any of the Prophets a founder of a separate religion, but it has been one and the same Religion which all the Prophets have been presenting from Allah from the very beginning, and the same is being presented by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). In this regard, the first name mentioned is of the Prophet Noah, who was the first Prophet after the Flood. After him the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) has been mentioned, who is the last of the Prophets; then the Prophet Abraham has been mentioned, whom the Arabs acknowledged as their guide, and last of all, the Prophets Moses and Jesus have been mentioned to whom the Jews and the Christians attribute their religions. This does not mean that only these five Prophets had been enjoined this Religion, but what is meant to be said is that all the Prophets who came to this world, brought one and the same Religion and the names of the five illustrious Prophets have been mentioned only as examples through whom the world received the most well known codes of Divine Law.

As this verse throws important light on Din (Religion) and its aim, it is necessary that we should study it to understand it well.

Lexically, the word shara'a in shara'a !a kum (ordained for you) means to make the way. As a term it implies appointing a way, a code and a rule. Accordingly , in Arabic the words tashri' ` and shari'at and shari' arc understood as the synonyms of legislation and law and law giver respectively. This Divine legislation, in fact, is the natural and logical result of the fundamental truths which have been stated in verses l, 9 and 10 above: that Allah alone is the Owner of everything in the Universe, and He alone is man's real Guardian and it is for Him to judge the disputes that arise between human beings. Now, when Allah alone is the Owner and Guardian and Ruler, inevitably He alone is entitled to make the code of law for man and it is His responsibility that He should give this code of law to man. So, He has carried out His responsibility like this.

Then the words min-ad-din (of the nature of din) denote that the way appointed by Allah is legislation pertaining to din. If the explanation of the word din that we have given in E.N. 3 of Surah Zumar above, is kept in view, there can be no difficulty in understanding that din means nothing but acknowledging the

sovereignty and leadership of someone and obeying his commands. And when this word is used in the meaning of the way, it implies the way which man must regard as obligatory for himself to follow and the one appointing it as the one whom he ought to obey. On this basis, calling God-appointed Way as legislation pertaining to din clearly means that it is not merely recommendatory in nature or a mere counsel, but it is a law enjoined by the Master, which must necessarily be obeyed by the servants and disobedience of which is tantamount to rebellion, and the one who does not obey it, in fact, denies Allah's being the Sovereign and Ruler and his own position of a servant.

Then, it has been said that this legislation which pertains to din is the same as was enjoined on Noah. Abraham and Moses (peace be upon them all) and the same now has been enjoined on Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). This contains several points:

(1) That Allah did not send this legislation of His directly to every man, but appointed Whenever He deemed proper and necessary a person as His Messenger and consigned the legislation w him;

(2) that this legislation has been the same from the beginning: it did not so happen that in one age one particular din was appointed for a nation, and in another age another and contradictory din was sent for another nation. Allah did not send many dins but on every occasion He sent one and the same din;

(3) that it is an essential part of this din to acknowledge the apostleship of those men through whom the legislation has been sent and the Revelation in which the legislation has been couched, besides acknowledging the Sovereignty of Allah; and it is the demand of reason and logic too, that it should be a necessary part of it, for a man cannot obey this legislation at all unless he is satisfied that it is authentically from Allah.

Then it has been said that the Prophets were given this legislation pertaining to din ", with the express instruction: "Aqim-ud-din "; "Establish this din", or "Keep this din established," as variously translated by Shah Waliullah, Shah Rafi'uddin and Shah `Abdul Qadir. Both these translations are correct, for iqamat means both to establish and to keep established, and the Prophets were appointed to perform both the functions. Their first duty was to establish this din wherever it was not established, and the second that they should keep it established after they had established it, or had found it already established in a place. Obviously, a thing can be kept established only when it has already been established, otherwise the primary requirement would be to establish it first, and then make continuous effort to keep it established.

Here, two questions arise : First, what is the meaning of establishing the din? Second, what is din itself, which we have been enjoined to establish and then keep it established? Let us try to understand these questions well.

The word iqamat (to establish) when used in respect of a material or physical object implies causing it to

rise from the sitting or lying positions or assembling the scattered parts of a thing and raising it up high. But when iqamat is used in respect of a thing which is not material but spiritual in nature it does not merely imply preaching it, but also acting according to it as best as one can, introducing it and enforcing it practically. For example, when we say that so and-so established his rule, it does not mean that he invited others to his government but that he subdued the people of the land and organized the different departments of the government in a way that the administration of the country began to function according to his orders. Similarly, when we say that courts have been established in the country, it means that judges have been appointed to do justice and they ate hearing the cases and giving judgments, and not that hymns in praise of justice arc being sung and the people being impressed. Likewise, when the Qur'an enjoins the establishment of the Prayer (Salat), it does not imply that one should merely preach and exhort others to the Prayer but that one should not only perform it oneself, observing all its conditions, but should also strive to make arrangement so that it becomes a' regular practice among the believers. There should be mosques, there should be arrangements for offering the Prayer collectively and for the Friday congregational Prayer, and for making calls to the Prayer punctually; there should be the Imams to lead the Prayers and the scholars to give sermons, and the people should visit the mosques regularly and punctually and make offering the Prayer an essential part of their daily routine. After this explanation, there should remain no difficulty in understanding that when the Prophets were enjoined to establish the din and to keep it established, it did not simply mean that they. should practice it themselves and not even this that they should preach it to others so that the people may accept its truth, but also that when the people have accepted it, steps should be taken to introduce and enforce the entire din practically among them so that they may start living according to it for ever afterwards. No doubt preaching is the primary necessary stage of this work without which there can be no second stage, but every intelligent person can himself see that in this Command preaching has not been made the object, but the real object is to establish the din and keep it established. Preaching is certainly a means to the end but not the end in itself, but nobody can say that it was the only and foremost object of the mission of the Prophets.

Now, Iet us take the second question. When some people saw that the din which has been enjoined to be established is common among all the Prophets, and their shari'ahs have been different, as Allah Himself says: "We appointed for each community among you a law and a way of life", they formed the view that inevitably this din did not imply the shari' ah commandments, rules and regulations but only the acceptance of Tauhid, the Hereafter and the Book and the Prophethood and performance of certain acts of devotion to Allah, or at the most, it included some of the major moral principles which have been common to all the shari ahs. But this is a superficial view, which has been formed after having a cursory glance over the unity of religion and the difference of the shari'ahs. This is, however, a dangerous view, which if not corrected in time, may well lead to the separation between din (religion) and shari'ahs (law). It was this very view in, which St. Paul was involved, who presented the doctrine of the din (religion) without shari'ah (law), and corrupted the community of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him). For, if shari'ah (law) is something separate from din (religion) and the command is only for establishing the din and not the shari'ah, inevitably the Muslims also, like the Christians, would regard the shari ah as unimportant

and overlook its establishment as not being the real object by itself, and would remain content with only beliefs and a few important moral principles. Instead of determining the meaning of din from such speculations, Iet us turn to the Qur'an itself and see whether the din which we have . been enjoined here to establish unplies the beliefs and a few important moral principles only, or the shari'ah values and commandments as well. When we explore the Qur'an we find that what it regards as din includes the following things as well:

(1) "And the only Command they were given was to worship Allah, making their din sincerely His, turning all their attention towards Him, and to establish the ,salat and to pay the Zakat.' this alone is the true and right din. " (Al-Bayyinah: 5). This shows that the Salat and the Zakat are included in this din. whereas the commandments .pertaining to both have been different in the different shari ahs. No one can say that in all the previous shari ahs the Salat has had the same form, the same elements, the same mumber of the rak ahs, the same direction of the giblah, the same times and the same other commands concerning it. Likewise, no one can claim also about the Zakat that in all the shari ahs the same has been the exemption limit, the same rates and the same injunctions concerning its collection and distribution. But in spite of the difference of the shari'ahs, Allah has regarded both these as part of din.

(2) 'You are forbidden carrion and blood, the flesh of swine and of that animal which has been slaughtered in any other name than of Allah, and of the strangled animal, and of that beaten to death or killed by a fall or gored to death or mangled by a beast of prey---save of that you duly slaughtered while it was still alive - and of that which is slaughtered at (ungodly) shrines. It is also unlawful for you to try to find your fortune by means of divining devices, for all these things are sinful acts. Today the disbelievers have despaired of (vanquishing) your religion; therefore do not fear them but fear Me. Today I have perfected your din for you and completed My blessing on you and approved Islam as the din (way of life) for you." (Al-Ma'idah: 3). This shows that all these shariah commandments are also din.

(3) Fight with those from among the people of the Book, who do not believe in Allah nor in the Last Day; who do not make unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful, and do not adopt the right din as their din. " (At-Taubah: 29). This shows that besides belief in Allah and the Hereafter it . is also din to accept and follow the Commands about the lawful and the unlawful, which have been given by Allah and His Messenger.

(4) "The woman and the man guilty of fornication, flog each one of them with a hundred stripes, and let not any pity for them restrain you in regard to a matter prescribed in the din of Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day." (An-Nur: 2). "It did not behoove Joseph to seize his brother by the king's din. " (Yusuf: 76). This shows that the criminal law is also din. If a man follows the criminal law prescribed by God, he is a follower of God's din and if he follows a king's law, he is a follower of the king's din.

These are the four specimens in which the shari'ah commandments have been described as din in clear words. But, besides these, a careful study shows that the eradication of the sins for which Allah has held

out the threat of Hell (e.g. adultery, taking of interest, killing of a believer, consuming the property of the orphan, taking possession of the other peoples properties in unlawful ways etc.), and the crimes which become the cause of God's torment, e.g. sodomy (the act of Lot's people) and dishonesty in business dealings (as practiced by the Prophet Shu'aib's people) should necessarily be included in din, for if din cannot save one from Hell and Allah's torment, what use could it be ? Likewise, those shari'ah commandments also should be part of the din violation of which has been regarded as cause of entry into the Fire, e.g. injunctions relating to inheritance, after stating which it has been said: "And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses the limits prescribed by Him, Allah will cast him into the Fire wherein he will have a disgraceful torment." (An-Nisa: 14,). Likewise, the prohibition of those things whose prohibition Allah has mentioned with great emphasis and absoluteness, e.g. prohibition of the mother, sister and daughter and prohibition of wine, theft, gambling, false evidence, etc. if not included in the establishment of the din, it would mean that Allah has given some unnecessary Commands also, which are not meant to be introduced and enforced. Similarly, establishing those things which Allah has made obligatory, e g. fasting and pilgrimage; cannot be excluded from the establishment of din only on the pretext that the 30 fasts of Ramadan had not been enjoined in the previous shariah, and pilgrimage to the Ka'bah was enjoined only in the Shariah which was inherited by the Ishmaelite branch of the Prophet Abraham's progeny.

As a matter of fact, the misunderstanding was caused only because the verse: "We appointed for each community among you a law and a way of life", has been misconstrued to mean that since the shari'ah appointed for every community was separate. and the command given was only to establish the din (way of life) which was common to all the Prophets, the establishment of the shari ah was not included in the establishment of the din, whereas the real meaning of this verse is just the opposite of it. If the context (vv. 41-50) in which this verse has occurred in Surah AI-Ma'idah is studied carefully, it will be seen that the correct meaning of this verse is: Whatever shari 'ah was given by Allah to the community of a Prophet, was the din for that community, and the establishment of the same din was the object during his Prophethood. And since now is the period of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's Prophethood, the shariah which has been given to the Ummah of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is the din of this time, and to establish the same is to establish the din. As for the difference of the shariah, it does not mean that the shari 'ahs sent by God were mutually contradictory, but it means that in their details there have been some differences owing to the different environments, take, for instance, the Prayer and the Fast. The Prayer has been obligatory in all the shari'ahs, but the qiblah of all the shariahs was not the same, and there was a difference in its times and rakahs and elements as well. Likewise, the Fast was obligatory in every shari'ah, but the 30 fasts of Ramadan were not there in the other shariahs. From this it is not correct to conclude that the Prayer and the Fast as such are included in the establishment of din but performing the Prayer in a particular way and observing the Fast at a particular time is excluded from it. However, the correct conclusion that one can draw is: To perform the Prayer and observe the Fast according to the rules and procedures that had been appointed for the people in the shari'ah of every Prophet amounted to establishment of din in his time. In the present age the establishment of the din is that these acts of worship be performed according to the procedures enjoined in the Shari 'ah of the

Prophet Muhammad. The same is true about all other Shari'ah commandments as well.

Whoever studies the Qur'an carefully will see that this Book does not envisage that its adherents will live as subjects of the disbelievers and will pass a religious lift under them, but it openly proclaims that it will have its own rule established; it demands from its followers that they should struggle with their lives for the intellectual, cultural, legal and political supremacy of the true Faith; and it gives them a program for the reformation of human life, the major part of which can be acted upon only when political power and authority is in the believers' hand. As stated by itself, the object of this Book's being sent down is: "We have sent down this Book to you with the Truth so that you may judge between the people in accordance with the light that Allah has shown you. " (An-Nisa: 105). The Commandments given in this Book about the collection and distribution of the Zakat expressly envisage a government who should be responsible for collecting the Zakat and distributing it among the deserving people according to a laid down procedure. (At-Taubah;60,103). The prohibition of interest that has been enjoined in this Book aad the declaration of war that has been made against those who do not abstain from taking interest (Al-Baqarah: 27_5-279) can be enforced only when the political and economic system of the country is entirely in the believers' hand. The Law of Retribution for murder (Al-Baqarah: 178), cutting off of the hand for theft (Al-Ma'idah 38) and carrying out of the prescribed punishment for adultery and calumny (An-Nur: 2-4) have not been enjoined on the assumption that the believers will remain subject to the police and courts of the disbelievers. The Command to fight the disbelievers (AlBaqarah: 190, 216) has not been given with the idea that the followers of this din will carry out this Command by getting enlisted in the army of disbelief. The command to take Jizyah from the followers of the former Books (At-Taubah: 29) has not been given on the assumption that the Muslims will take Jizyah from them while being their subjects and will be responsible for their protection. And this thing is not true only about the Madinite Surahs; in the Makkan Surahs as well a discerning eye can clearly see that the scheme envisaged from the very beginning was of Islam's supremacy and dominance and not of Islam's and the Muslims' subjugation under an un-Islamic rule. See, for instance, Bani Isra`il: 76-89; AlQasas: 85-86; Ar-Rum: 1-6; As-Saaffat: 171-179; Suad: Introduction, v. 11 and E.N. 12 on it.

Above all, this misinterpretation clashes with the great work that the Holy Prophet himself accomplished during the 23 years of his Prophethood. Who can deny the fact that he subdued entire Arabia by means of both preaching and the sword and established in it a full fledged system of government with a detailed law, covering all aspects of life, from beliefs and rites of worship to personal conduct, collective morality, culture and civilization, economic and social life, politics and judiciary, peace and war. If this entire work of the Holy Prophet is not accepted as a commentary of the Command of "iqamat din " (establishment of din) which, according to this verse, he had been enjoined to undertake like all other Prophets, then it could have one of the two meanings: That earlier, God forbid, the Holy Prophet should be blamed that he had been appointed only to preach and teach beliefs and a few important moral rules but he exceeded his mandate and established a government of his own whim and laid down a code of law, which was different from the common law of the Prophets as well as in excess of it; or that Allah should be blamed that after having made the above mentioned declaration in Surah Ash-Shura. He went back on His own

word, and made His Last Prophet do something which was not only much over and about and different from the objective of "iqamat din " as stated in this Surah but on the completion of this mission He also made this declaration, contrary to His first declaration: "Today I have perfected your din for you." (Al-Ma'idah:3). May Allah keep us safe from this! Apart from these two, if there is any third alternative,, which makes this-interpretation of "iqamat din" plausible and also does not lay any blame on Allah or His Messenger, we would like to know it.

After giving the Command for "iqamat din ", the last thing that Allah has stated in this verse is this: La tatafarraqu fi-hi: "Do not create schisms in the din: Be not divided in it" Creating schisms in din implies that one should introduce something new in religion for which there exists no sound basis, and then should insist that belief and unbelief depend on the acceptance of the innovation, and should separate along with those who have accepted it from those who have not accepted it. This new thing can be of several kinds:

(1) To introduce something entirely new into din;

(2) to exclude from din something which actually belonged to it;

(3) to tamper with the fundamentals of din by misinterpretations and introduce new beliefs and novel practices; and

(4) to distort the din by making changes of fundamental nature in it, for example, by reducing what was important in it to un-important, by raising what was at most permissible to the position of imperative and obligatory, even to the position of the most fundamental pillar of Islam. Owing to such innovations, divisions first appeared in the communities of the Prophets; then gradually the creeds of the sects developed into wholly separate and mutually exclusive religious systems whose followers now do not have any idea that once they all belonged to one and the same origin. These divisions have nothing to do with the permissible and reasonable difference of opinion which naturally takes place among the scholars when they are engaged in understanding and studying the injunctions and fundamentals of the din for the purpose of deriving and extracting points of law, and for which there is room in the words of the Book of Allah itself owing to the considerations of lexicon, idiom and rules of grammar. (For a detAlled discussion of this subject, see Al-Baqarah: 213, Al'Imran: 19, 50; An-Nisa: 171, Al-Ma'idah: 77; Al-An'am; 159; An-Nahl: 118124; Al-Anbiya': 9293; Al-Hajj: 67; Al-Mu'minun: 53-54; Al-Qasas: 53; ArRum: 32 and the E.N.'s) 2).

21Here the same thing as stated in vv. 8-9 above, has been reiterated, and we have explAlned it in E.N. 11 above. The object of repeating it here is as if to say: ¦You are presenting the clear highway of religion before them but the foolish people, instead of appreciating the blessing, are becoming annoyed over it. But even among them there are the people of their own tribe, who are turning to Allah. and Allah also is drawing them closer to Himself. But one should understand that Allah's bestowal of His blessings is not

blind: He draws only him towards Himself who is inclined to be drawn and not him who urns away from Him. "

22That is, "The divisions were created not because Allah had failed to send the Prophets and the Books, and therefore, the people could not know the Right Way and so invented their own separate religions, sects, schools of thought and systems of life, but divisions appeared after knowledge had come to them from Allah. Therefore, Allah is not responsible for it, but the people who abandoned the clear principles of religion and commands of the Shari'ah and created their own creeds and religions arc themselves responsible for it."

23That is, "The motive for creating the divisions was not good, but they resulted from the desire for ostentation, love of an independent entity, mutual rivalry and stubbornness, the urge to humiliate and defeat one another, and greed for worldly wealth and position. When the clever and ambitious saw that if the godly people followed the true religion honestly, there would only be One God before whom the people would bow, there would be one Messenger whom they would acknowledge as. their guide and leader, there would be one Book which they would turn to and there would be a clearly defined creed and code of life which they would be following. In such a system there could be no place of distinction for themselves, on the strength of which they could have their own leadership flourish so that the people should rally round them, and bow to them and also make rich offerings to them. This was the real cause which became the motive of the invention of new creeds and philosophies, new ways and rites of worship and new systems of life, and diverted a large part of humanity from the highway of Divine Religion and misled them into blind alleys. Then the mutual disputes of the factions and their religious, economic and political conflicts gave rise to intense bitterness, which in turn led to bloodshed and violence among humanity. "

24That is, all such people who were guilty of inventing false systems and followed them would have been annihilated in the world itself by a torment, and only the righteous ones allowed to survive, which should have indicated as to who was a follower of the Truth and who of falsehood in the sight of Allah. But Allah has deferred this plain decisions till Resurrection, for after such a decision in the world, the trial of mankind becomes meaningless.

25It means: After the passage of the time of every Prophet and his closest followers when the Divine Book reached the later generations, they did not receive it with faith and conviction but were involved in doubts and suspicions and confusions about it. There were many causes for this state of affairs, which can be easily understood by a study of the case of the Torah and the Gospel. The earlier generations have not conveyed both these Books to the later generations well preserved in their original state and in their original words and language. They mixed up the Divine Word in them with the human word in the form of their commentary, history, verbal traditions and juristic hair-splitting. They made their translations prevail until the original was lost and only the translations remained. Their historical authenticity also was ruined; so much so that nobody now can say with certainty that the Book in his hand is the same that the

world had once received through the Prophet Moses or the Prophet Jesus. Then their elders in the different periods of history initiated such discussions on religion, divinity, philosophy, law, physics, psychology and sociology and invented such systems of thought that the people were lost in them and it became impossible for them to decide as to which was the straight highway of the Truth among the countless crooked ways. And since the Divine Book did not exist in its original, reliable state. they could neither turn to any authority that could help them to distinguish the truth from falsehood.

26That is, "Do not make any change nor effect any increase or decrease in this religion only to please them. Do not resort to any compromises with the misguided people on the principle of "give and take": Do not make any room in the Religion for their whims, prejudices and practices of ignorance in the hope that they would embrace Islam. Let the one who wants to accept, accept the original, pure Religion of God, as sent down by Him, straight forwardly; otherwise let him go and enter any hell that he chooses for himself. The Religion of God cannot be changed for the sake of the people; if the people are desirous of their own wellbeing and true success, let them change their ways and mold themselves according to it. "

27In other words, "I am not like those schismatic people who believe in some Books sent down by God and disbelieve in others; I believe in every Book sent down by Him. "

28This pithy sentence has several meanings:

(1) "I have been appointed to discard the schisms and adopt true impartiality: I do not like to harbor prejudice in favor of one and against the other schism: I have one and the same kind of relationship with all human beings, and it is the relationship of justice and equity. I am a companion and supporter of everyone who follows the truth, whether he is an utter stranger for me, and an opponent of everyone who follows falsehood, whether he is a neighbor or a close kinsman.

(2) `There is no place of distinction for anybody in the system of truth, which I have, been appointed to present before you. It honors everyone equally. It does not contain separate sets of the rights for the kindred and the stranger, the big and the small, the poor and the rich, the noble and the humble. Whatever is good in it is good for everyone; and whatever is sinful and unlawful and criminal in it is sinful, unlawful and criminal for everybody. In its just system, there is no exception oven for my own self. "

(3) "I have been appointed to establish justice in the world. I have been entrusted with the mission of doing justice between the people and should put an end to their excesses and injustice, which are prevalent in your society."

Besides, there is a fourth meaning also of this sentence, which remained hidden in Makkah life but became clear after emigration to Madinah, and it was: "I am a judge appointed by God: I am responsible to do justice between you. "

29That is, "Each one of us is himself responsible and accountable for his deeds. If you do good, you will yourself profit by its good results, and not we. If we do evil, we ourself shall bear all its evil consequences and not you. The same thing has been stated in Al-Baqarah: 139, Yunus: 41, Hud: 35, and Al-Qasas: 55 above.

30That is, "We have done our best in conveying to you the message in a rational way. Now there is no use wrangling and disputing; therefore, even if you try to have a dispute with us, we have no desire to join in."

31This is an allusion to the state of affairs that was being experienced in Makkah at that time almost daily. Whenever it became known about somebody that he had become a Muslim, the people would start treating him mercilessly: they would worry and vex him, would neither let him have peace in the house nor in the street nor in society; wherever he went, they would start an endless discussion with the object to somehow make him abandon Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and return to the same creed of ignorance which he had rejected.

32Mizan (Balance): the Shari ah of Allah, which, like a balance, brings out clearly the distinction between the right and the wrong, the Truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, and righteousness and wickedness. In verse 15 above, the Holy Prophet has been made to say: "I have been commanded to do justice between you." Here, it has been told that with this Holy Book the "Balance" has come by which justice will be established.

33That is, "The one who is inclined to mend his ways, must mend his ways forthwith: he should not lose. time under the delusion that the Hour of Judgment is yet far off. Man cannot be sure whether he will be able to take another breath or not: his present breath may be his last.

34The word "Kind" cannot fully convey the meaning of the word "Latif" as used in the original. This word contains two meanings: First, that Allah is very Kind and Compassionate to His servants; second, that He is a subtle observer and keeps in view even their minutest and most ordinary needs, which none else can see, and He fulfills them in such ways that they themselves do not perceive as to which need of theirs has been fulfilled at what time and by whom. Then the "servants" here does not imply only the believers but all servants. That is, Allah is Kind and Compassionate to all His servants. "

35It means: The demand of His general kindness and compassion is not this that all the servants should be given everything equally. For although He is providing for each and every one from His treasures, there is no equality and uniformity in the measure of His provisions. He has given one thing to one and another to another: He has provided someone with something in a greater measure and another with another thing more generously.

36That is, "His system of providence is functioning undo His own might. No one .has the power to change it or take away something forcibly from Him, or prevent Him from providing for somebody."

37Two of the truths have been mentioned in the previous verse, which we are observing everywhere at all times:

(1) That Allah is Kind and Compassionate to all His servants; and

(2) that the measure of His provisions is not the same for everybody, but it varies from man to man. Now, in this verse it is being told that although the partial differences in kindness and measures of Provisions are countless, there is also a difference of fundamental nature, which is: there is one kind of the provision for the seeker of the Hereafter and of another kind for the seeker of the world.

This is a very important truth which has been stated here briefly. Let us understand it fully, for it helps every man to determine his attitude to life.

Both the seeker of the Hereafter and the seeker of the world have been likened to the farmer in this verse, who labors persistently hard right from the time he prepares the soil till the time his crop is ready for harvesting. He puts in all his labor so that he may reap and gather the crop of the seeds he sowed. But because of the difference of the intention and objective and also the difference of the attitude and conduct, to a large extent, a vast difference takes place between the farmer who sows for the Hereafter and the farmer who sows for this world. Therefore, Allah has ordained different results and consequences of the labors of each, although the place of activity of both is this very earth.

As to the farmer who is sowing for the Hereafter, Allah has not said that he will get no share from the world. The world, in a more or less measure, he will get in any case. for he also has a share in the common provisions being bestowed by Allah, and every person, good or bad, is getting his sustenance here. But Allah has not given him the good news of the harvest of this world but that his harvest of the Hereafter will be increased, for he is a seeker of the same, and is concerned about his end there There are several ways in which this harvest can be increased; for example, as he will go on doing righteous deeds with sincere mentions, he will be blessed with the grace to do more and more righteous deeds and his breast will be opened out for more and more good works. When he will make up his mind to adopt pure means for thieving pure aims, he will be blessed with pure means only and Allah will not let it so happen that all doors to goodness he closed and only doors to evil to remain open for him. Above all, his each good work, however small and insignificant, will at least be increased ten times over in the Hereafter, and there is no limit to this increase. Allah will increase it hundreds of thousands of tithes for whomever He may please

As for the one who is only sowing for this world, and is not at all concerned about the Hereafter, Allah has plainly told him of two of the results of his labors:

(1) That, however hard he may struggle and strive. he will not get the whole of what he is trying for, but only a fraction of it, which Allah has ordained for him; and

(2) that whatever he has to get, he will get only in this world: there is no share for him in the good things of the Hereafter.

38In this verse the word shuraka (associates) obviously does not mean those beings whom the people invoke, or those in whose names they make offerings, or those before whom they carry out rites of worship, but inevitably it refers to those men whom the people regard as associates in the authority and sovereignty of Allah, whose thoughts, creeds, ideologies and philosophies they believe in, whose values they adroit, whose moral precepts and norms of civilization and culture they accept, and whose laws and rules and regulations they adopt to their rituals and rites of worship, in their personal and collective lives, in their trade and business dealings, in their politics and governments, as if they constituted the shari'ah that they had to follow faithfully. This is a complete code of life which the inventors invented against the legislation of Allah, Lord of the worlds, without His sanction and followed by the followers. This is the same sort of shirk as prostrating oneself before another and invoking another than Allah. (For further explanation, see An Nisa: 60; AI-Ma'idah: 87; AI.An'am: 121, 136. 137; At-Taubah: 31; Yunus: 59; IbrahIm: 22; An-Nahl: 115-116; AI.Kahf: 52: AI-Qasas: 62.64 : Saba : 41; Ya Sin: GO and the relevant E N.'s)

39That is, 'This is such a boldness against Allah that had not judgement been deferred till Resurrection, the torment would have been sent down on every such person, who in spite of being Allah'. servant, enforced his own religion and way of life on Allah's earth, and those people also would have been visited by it, who forsook Allah's Religion and accepted the religion invented by others."

40"This work": Every effort that the Holy prophet was making to save the people from Allah's punishment and to enable them to become worthy of the promise of Paradise.

41The word qurba in the original has been interpreted differently by the different commentators. One section of them takes it in the meaning of kinship and has given this meaning to the verse "I do not ask of you any reward for this service, but I do desire that you (O people of Quraish) should show some regard tar the kinship that there is between me and you. You should have accepted my invitation. but if you do not accept it, you should not be so hard-hearted as to Become my bitterest enemies in the entire land of Arabia. " This is the interpretation given by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, which has been cited by lmam Ahmad, Bukhari. Muslim. Tirmidhi, Ibn Jarir, Tabarani, Baihaqi. Ibn Said and others on the authority of many reporters and the same commentary has been given by Mujahid. 'Ikrimah, Qatadah, Suddi, Abu Malik, 'Abdur Rehman bin Zaid bin Aslam, Dahhak. 'Ata bin Dinar and the other major commentators.

The other section takes qurba in the meaning of nearness and interprets the verse to mean: "I do not seek from you any other reward than this that you should develop in yourselves a desire for attaining nearness to Allah. That is; you should be reformed. That is my only reward. " This commentary has been reported from Hasan Basri and a saying of Qatadah also has been cited in support of this: so much so that in a tradition by Tabarani this saying has also been attributed to Ibn 'Abbas. In the Qur'an itself, at another place, this same subject has been treated, thus: "Tell them: I do not seek of you any reward for this work: I only ask of the one who will. to adopt the way of his Lord.' (Al-Furqan: 57).

The third group takes qurba in the meaning of the kindred, and interprets the verse to mean this: "I do not seek from you any other reward than this that you should love my near and dear ones." Then, some of the commentators of this group interpret 'the kindred" to mean alt the children of 'Abdul Muttalib, and some others restrict it to Hadrat 'Ali and Fatimah and their children. This commentary has been reported from Said bin Jubair and 'Amr bin Shu'aib, and in some traditions it has been attributed to Ibn 'Abbas and Hadrat 'Ali bin Husain (Zam al-'Abedin), but this interpretation cannot be accepted for several reasons. Firstly. when Surah Ash-Shura was sent down at Makkah, Hadrat 'Ali and Fatimah had not yet been married and, therefore, there could be no question of their children. As for the children of 'Abdul Muttalib, they were not all following the Holy Prophet but some of them had openly joined with his enemies, and the enmity of Abu Lahab is too well known. Second, "the kindred" of the Holy Prophet were not only the children of 'Abdul Muttalib but he had his kindred among all the families of the Quraish through his mother and his father and his wife. Hadrat Khadijah. In all these clans he had his best supporters as well as his staunch enemies 'Third, and this is the most important paint, in view of the high position of a Prophet from which he starts his mission of inviting the people towards Allah, it does not seem fitting that he would ask the people to love his kindred in return for his services in connection with his great Mission. No person of fine taste could imagine that Allah would have taught His Prophet such a mean thing, and the Prophet would havc uttered the same before the Quraish. In the stones that have been narrated of the Prophets in the Qur'an, we find that a Prophet after a Prophet stands up before his people sad says: "I do not ask of you any reward: my reward is with Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Yunus: 72; Hud: 29, 51; Ash-Shu'ara': 109, 127, 145, 164, l80). In Surah Ya Sin the criterion given of a Prophet's truthfulness is that he gives his invitation without any selfish motive. (v. 21). In the Qur'an the Holy Prophet himself has been made to say again and again words to the effect: "I demand no reward from you for this message. " (Al An'am: 90, Yusuf: 104, Al-Mu'minun: 72, Al-Furqan: 57, Saba: 47, Suad: 86, At-Tur; 40, Al Qalam: 46). After this, what could be the occasion for the Holy Prophet to tell the people that in return for his service of inviting them to Allah, they should lout his relatives. Then it seems all the more irrelevant when we state that the addressees here are the disbelievers and not the believers. The whole discourse, from the beginning w the end, is directed to them. Therefore, there could be no question in this regard of asking the opponents for any reward, for a reward is asked of those who show some appreciation for the services that a person has rendered for them. The disbelievers were not at all appreciative of the Holy Prophet's services: on the contrary, they regarded them as a crime and had turned bitterly hostile to him.

42That is, "Contrary to the culprits who commit disobedience knowingly, Allah's affair with the servants

who strive to do good, is like this:

(1) He makes them even more righteous than they could be solely by their own efforts;

(2) He overlooks the weaknesses that remain in their work, and the sins that are committed by them inadvertently, in spite of striving to become good; and

(3) Allah appreciates whatever little provision of the good deeds they bring and rewards them richly and generously for it. "

43In this interrogative sentence the style is of severe reproach. It means: "O Prophet: Have these people become so bold and fearless that they do not feel any shame in accusing you of inventing a lie, and that too of a heinous sin against Allah? They calumniate you that you are forging the Qur'an yourself and then falsely attributing to Allah. "

44That is, "Such big lies are only uttered by those whose hearts have been sealed up. If Allah wills, He may include you also among them, but it is His mercy that He has kept you away from them. This answer contains a seven satire against the people who were so accusing the Holy Prophet. It means this: "O Prophet, they think that you are a man like them. Just as they are in the habit of uttering any big lie only for the sake of a selfish motive, so they thought you also must have forged a lie for selfish ends. But it is Allah's mercy that He has not sealed up your heart as He has sealed up theirs."

45That is, "It is Allah's way that He does not grant stability to falsehood, and in the long run proves the truth to be true. Therefore, O Prophet, you should go on doing your mission, without paying any attention to their false accusations. A time will come when this whole falsehood will vanish like dust, and the truth of that which you are presenting will become visible and manifest."

46That is, "He knows why you are being thus falsely accused and what are the actual motives that are working behind all this struggle that is being made to frustrate and defeat you. "

47Calling the people's attention to repentance immediately after the preceding verse by itself gives the meaning, as if to say: "O wicked people: Why are you making yourselves still more worthy of God's punishment by falsely accusing the true Prophet? If you desist from your misdeeds even now, and offer true repentance Allah will forgive you." Repentance means that one should feel remorse for the evil one has done, and should refrain and desist from it in the future. Moreover, it is also an inevitable demand of true repentance that one should try one's utmost to compensate for the evil one has done in the past, and wherever compensation is not possible, one should seek Allah's forgiveness and should do more and more good to wipe off the blot from oneself. But no repentance can be true repentance unless it is offered with the intention of pleasing Allah. Giving up an evil for some other reason or intention is no repentance

at All.”

48If the context in which this thing has been said is kept in view, it appears that Allah here is alluding to the basic factor that was working in the rebellion of the disbelievers of Makkah. Although they were insignificant as against the mighty Roman and Iranian Empires and their position among the nations of the neighboring countries was no more than of a commercial tribe of a backward people, the relative prosperity and glory that they enjoyed among the other Arabs had made them so proud and arrogant that they were not inclined even to listen to the Prophet of Allah, and their chiefs of the tribes regarded it below their dignity that Muhammad bin `Abdullah (upon whom be Allah's peace) should be their guide and they his followers. On this it is being said "If We had actually opened up the gates of provisions for these mean people, they would have burst with pride. But We are watching over them, and are providing for them only sparingly so as to keep them within limits. " According to this meaning this verse, in other words, is touching on the same subject which has already been treated in At-Taubah: 68-70, Al-Kahf: 32-42, Al-Qasas: 75-82, Ar-Rum: 9, Saba: 34-36 and Al-Mu'min: 82-85 above.

49Here, the word wali implies the Being who is the Governor of the affairs of all His creations, Who has taken the responsibility of fulfilling all the needs and requirements of His servants.

50"In both": In both the earth and the heavens. This is a clear pointer to the fact that life does not only exist on the earth but on other planets as well.

51That is, "Just as He has the power to scatter them, so He has also the power to gather them all together. Therefore, it is wrong to think that Resurrection cannot take place, and all the former and the latter generations cannot be raised up and gathered all together. "

52One should note that here the cause of all human afflictions is not being stated but the address is directed to the people who were at that time committing disbelief and disobedience at Makkah. They are being told: `Had Allah seized you for all your sins and crimes, He would not have even allowed you to live, but the calamities (probably the allusion is to the famine of Makkah) that have descended on you, are only a warning so that you may take heed and examine your actions and deeds to see as to what attitude and conduct you have adopted as against your Lord, and try to understand how helpless you actually arc against God against Whom you are rebelling, and know that those whom you have taken as your patrons and supporters, or the powers that you have relied upon, cannot avail you anything against the punishment of Allah."

For further explanation it is necessary to state that as regards the sincere believer, Allah's law for him is different. All the calamities and hardships that befall him go on becoming an atonement for his sins, errors and deficiencies. There is an authentic Hadith to the effect: `Whatever sorrow and suffering, distress and grief, and affliction and worry that a Muslim experiences, even if it be a thorn prick, it is made

an atonement by Allah for one or the other of his errors. " (Bukhari, Muslim). As for the hardships that a believer faces in the way of raising Allah's Word, they do not merely become an atonement for his deficiencies but also a means of the exaltation of ranks with Allah. In this connection, it cannot even be imagined that they descend as a punishment for sins."

53"Who patiently endures": who keeps himself fully under control and remains steadfast on the path of servitude under all circumstances, good or bad; who does not forget himself so as to become rebellious against God and cruel to the people, when favored with good times, and loses heart and stoops to anything when visited by evil times. A "grateful person" is every such person who regards it as a bounty of Allah and not the result of any merit or excellence in himself when he is exalted to any high place of honor in life by a Divine decree, and keeps his mind concentrated on the blessings which remain available to man even under the worst circumstances instead of his deprivations when deposed to the lowest of the low position. Thus, he continues to thank his Lord in both prosperity and adversity with his tongue and heart.

54The Quraish, in connection with their business and trade, had also to visit Habash and the coastal lands of Africa, and in these journeys they used sailing ships and boats for crossing the Red Sea, which is a very dangerous sea. It is generally stormy and abounds in submerged rocks which are a serious hazard for navigation especially during the storms. Therefore, the state that has been depicted here by Allah could be fully realized by the people of the Quraish in the light of their personal experiences.

55That is, "It is not a thing at which man should exult Whatever worldly wealth a person has in his possession, he has it only for a short time. He uses it for a few years and then leaves the world empty-handed. Then, although the amount of the wealth may be very high in the ledgers, practically only a fraction of it is used by the man himself. To exult at such wealth does not behoove a man who understands the truth about himself, about his wealth and this world itself."

56That is, that wealth is far more superior as regards its nature and quality; and is also eternal and everlasting.

57Here, trust (tawakkul) in Allah has been regarded as an inevitable demand of the faith and a necessary characteristic for success in the Hereafter. Tawakkul means:

(1) That man should have full confidence in the guidance of Allah, and should understand that the knowledge of the truth, the principles of morality, the bounds of the lawful and the unlawful, and the rules and regulations of passing lift in the world, that Allah had enjoined, are based on the truth and in following them alone lies man's good and well being; and

(2) that man should not place reliance on his own powers and abilities, means and resources, plans and

schemes and the help of others than Allah, but he should keep deeply impressed in his mind the fact that his success in every thing, here and in the Hereafter, actually depends on the help and succor of Allah, and that he can become worthy of Allah's help and succor only if he works with the object of winning His approval, within the bounds prescribed by Him;

(3) that man should have complete faith in the promises that Allah has made with those who would adopt the way of faith and righteousness and work in the cause of the truth instead of falsehood, and having faith in the same promises would discard all those benefits, gains and pleasures that may seem to accrue from following the way of falsehood, and endure all those losses, hardships and deprivations that may become his lot on account of following the truth steadfastly. From this explanation of the meaning of tawakkul it becomes obvious how deeply it is related with the faith, and why those wonderful results that have been promised to the believers who practice tawakkul. cannot be obtained from the mere empty affirmation of the faith.

58For explanation, sec An-Nisa: 31. AI-An'am: 151, An-Naml: 90, AnNajm: 32 and the E.N.'s.

59That is, they are not wrathful and crazy but arc temperate and cool minded: they are not revengeful but forbearing and forgiving by nature. If ever they feel angry at something they control their rage. This characteristic is the best of man's qualities. which has been highly commended in the Qur'an (AI-'Imran: 134) and regarded as a major factor of the Holy Prophet's success (AI-'Imran: 159) According to Hadrat 'A'ishah, 'The Holy Messenger of Allah never avenged himself on anybody, however, when a thing enjoined to be held sacred by Allah was desecrated, he would award the punishment." (Bukhari, Muslim)

60Literally: "Who answer the call of their Lord" That is they hasten to do whatever Allah enjoins them to do, and accept whatever Allah invites them to accept.

61This thing has been counted here as the best quality of the believers. and has been enjoined in Surah AI-'Imran: 159 On this basis. consultation. is an important pillar of the Islamic way of life. and to conduct the affairs of collective life without consultation is not only the way of ignorance but also an express violation of the law prescribed by Allah. When we consider why consultation has been given such importance in Islam, three things become obvious:

First, that it is injustice that a person should decide a matter by his personal opinion and ignore others when it involves the interests of two or more persons No one has a right to do , as he likes in matters of common interest Justice demands that all those whose interests arc involved in a matter be consulted, and if it concerns a large number of the people, their reliable representatives should be made a party in consultation.

Second, that a man tries to do what he likes in matters of common interest richer because he wants to

usurp the rights of others for selfish ends, or because he looks down upon others and regards himself as a superior person. Morally both These qualities are equally detestable, and a believer cannot have even a tinge of either of these in himself. A believer is neither selfish so that he should get undue benefits by usurping the rights of others, nor he is arrogant and self-conceited that he should regard himself as all-wist and all-knowing.

Third, that it is a grave responsibility to give decisions in matters chat involve the tights and interests of others. No one who fears God and knows what severe accountability for it he will be subjected to by his Lord, can dare take the heavy burden of it solely on himself. Such a boldness is shown only by those who arc fearless of God and heedless of the Hereafter. The one who fears God and has the feeling of the accountability of the Hereafter, will certainly try that in a matter of common interest he should consult all the concerned people or their authorized representatives so as to reach, as far as possible, an objective and right and equitable decision, and if there occurs a mistake one man alone should not be held responsible for it.

A deep consideration of these three things can enable one to fully understand that consultation is a necessary demand of the morality that Islam has taught to man, and departure from it is a grave immorality which Islam does not permit The Islamic way of life requires that the principle of consultation should be used in every collective affair, big or small. If it is a domestic affair, the husband and the wife should act by mutual consultation, and when the children have grown up, they also should be consulted. If it is a matter concerning the whole family, the opinion of every adult member be solicited. If it concerns a tribe or a fraternity or the population of a city, and it is not possible to consult all the people, the decision should be taken by a local council or committee, which should comprise the trustworthy representatives of the concerned people according to an agreed method. If the matter concerns a whole nation, the head of government should be appointed by the common consent of the people, and he should conduct the national affairs in consultation with the leaders of opinion. whom the people regard as reliable, and he should remain at the helm of affair only as long as the people themselves want him to remain in that position. No honest man can try to assume the headship of a nation by force, or desire to continue in that position indefinitely, nor can think of corning into power by deception and then seek the people's consent by coercion, nor can he devise schemes so that the people may elect representatives to act as his advisers not by their own free choice but according to his will. Such a thing can be desired only by the one who cherishes evil intentions, and such a fraud against the Islamic principle of consultation can be practiced only by him who dces not feel any hesitation in deceiving both God and the people whereas the fact is that neither can God be deceived nor the people be so blind as to regard the robber, who is committing robbery in the bright day light openly, as their well. wisher and servant.

The principle of consultation as enshrined in amru-hum shura baina-hum by itself demands five things:

(1) The people whose rights and interests relate to collective matters, should have full freedom to express their opinion and they should be kept duly informed of how their affairs are being conducted; they should

also have the full right that if in the conduct of the affairs they see an error, a weakness or a deficiency, they can check it and voice a protest, and if they do not see any change for the better, they can change their rulers. To conduct the people's affairs by keeping them silent and un-informed is sheer dishonesty which no one can regard as adherence to the principle of consultation in Islam.

(2) The person who is to be entrusted with the responsibility of conducting the collective affairs, should be appointed by the people's consent, and this consent should be their free consent, which is not obtained through coercion, temptation, deception, and fraud, because in that case it would be no consent at all. A nation's true head is not he who becomes its head by trying every possible method, but he whom the people make their head by their own free choice and approval.

(3) The people who are appointed as advisers to the head of the state should be such as enjoy the confidence of the nation, and obviously the people who win representative positions by suppression or by expending wealth, or by practicing falsehood and fraud, or by misleading the people cannot be regarded as enjoying the confidence in the real sense.

(4) The advisers should give opinion according to their knowledge and faith and conscience and they should have full freedom of such expression of opinion. Wherever this is not the case, wherever the advisers give advice against their own knowledge and conscience, under duress or temptation, or under party discipline. it will be treachery and dishonesty and not adherence to the Islamic principle of consultation.

(5) The advice that is given by a consensus of the advisers, or which has the support of the majority of the people, should be accepted, for if a person (or a group of persons) behaves independently and acts on his own whims, even after hearing the advice of others, consultation becomes meaningless. Allah does not say: "They are consulted in their affairs", but says: "They conduct their affairs by mutual consultations" . This instruction is not implemented by mere consultation, but for its sake it is necessary that the affairs be conducted according to what is settled by consensus or by majority opinion in consultation.

Along with this explanation of the Islamic principle of consultation, this basic thing also should be kept in view that this consultation is not independent and autocratic in conducting the affairs of the Muslims, but necessarily subject to the bounds that Allah Himself has set by His legislation, and is subject to the fundamental principle: "It is for Allah to give a decision in whatever you may differ," and "if there arises any dispute among you about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger. " According to this general principle, the Muslims can hold consultations in Shari 'ah matters with a view to determining the correct meaning of a text or verse and w find out the ways of implementing it so as to fulfill its requirements rightly but they cannot hold consultations in order to give an independent judgment in a matter which has already been decided and settled by Allah and His Messenger.

62It has three meanings:

(1) "They spend only out of what lawful provisions We have given them: they do not touch unlawful things for supplementing their expenditure. "

(2) "They do not set aside the provisions granted by us, but spend them. "

(3) "They spend out of what they have been given in the cause of Allah also: they do not reserve everything for personal use only."

The first meaning is based on this that Allah calls the lawful and pure provisions only as "the provisions granted by Him"; He does not call the provisions earned in impure and unlawful ways His provisions. The second meaning is based on that whatever Allah provides for man is provided so that he may spend it and not that he may set it aside and hoard it up like a miser. The third meaning is based on that according to the Qur'an, spending does not mean spending merely on one's own self and for one's personal needs, but it also contains the meaning of spending for the sake of Allah in His way. On account of these three reasons Allah here is counting spending of wealth among the best qualities of the believers because of which the blessings of the Hereafter have been reserved only for them.

63This also is one of the best characteristics of the believers: they do not fall a prey to the tyrants. Their tender heartedness and forgiving nature is not the result of any weakness. They have not been taught to live humbly and meekly like the hermits and ascetics. Their nobility demands that when they are victors they should forgive the errors of the vanquished; when they possess the power, they should avoid vengefulness and when a weak or subdued person happens to commit a mistake they should overlook it; but when a powerful person, drunk with authority, commits violence against them, they should resist and fight him with all their might. A believer is never cowed by a wicked person nor bows to an arrogant man. For such people he proves to be a hard nut which breaks the teeth of those who try to break it.

64The passage from here to the end of verse 43 is an explanation of verse 39.

65This is the first fundamental principle which must be borne in mind in retaliation. The right limit of retaliation is that one should return the same sort of ill treatment that one has received; one has no right to return a greater ill treatment.

66This is the second principle. It means: Although it is permissible to retaliate against the one who has committed a violence, wherever pardoning can be conducive to reconcilement, pardoning is better for the sake of reconcilement than retaliation. And since man pardons the other by suppressing his own feelings, Allah says that the reward of such a one is with Him, for he has suppressed his own self for the sake of reforming the evil-doers.

67In this warning allusion has been made to a third principle about retaliation, and it is this: One should not become a wrongdoer oneself in the process of avenging a wrong done by the other. It is not permissible to do a greater wrong in retaliation for the wrong done. For example, if a person gives another a slap, the other can return only one slap; he cannot shower blows and kicks. Likewise, it is not right to commit a sin in retaliation for a sin. For example, if a wicked man has killed the son of someone, it is not right to go and kill the son of the former. Or, if a mean person has violated the chastity of a person's sister or daughter, it is not lawful for him to commit rape on the former's sister or daughter.

68One should note that the qualities of the believers that have been mentioned in these verses, practically existed in the lives of the Holy Prophet and his Companions, and the disbelievers of Makkah were their eye-witnesses. Thus, Allah has, in fact, told the disbelievers: "The real wealth is not the provisions that you have received for passing the transitory life of the world, and are bursting with pride of it, but the real wealth are the morals and characteristics which the believers from your own society have developed by accepting the guidance given by the Qur'an."

69That is, "Allah sent the best Book like the Qur'an for the guidance of the people, which is giving them the knowledge of the reality in a rational and effective way and guiding them to the right way of life. He sent a Prophet like Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) for their guidance, a man of better character than whom they had never seen before. And then Allah also showed them the results of the teaching and training of this Book and this .Messenger in the lives of the Believers. Now, if after witnessing all this, a person turns away from the guidance, Allah casts him into the same deviation from which he has no desire to come out. And when Allah Himself has driven him away, who else can take the responsibility of bringing him to the Right Way."

70That is, "Today when there is a chance of coming back, they are refusing to come back. Tomorrow when the judgment will have been passed and the sentence enforced, then seeing their fate they will wish to come back. "

71By nature man is such that when a dreadful scene comes before him and he knows that soon he is going to fall a prey to it, he closes his eyes forthwith in fear. Then, when he cannot hold himself any longer, he tries to see what kind of the calamity it is and how far away it is from him. But he does not find the courage to lift up his head and have a full view of it. Therefore, he opens his eyes a little again and again and sees it from the corner of the eye, and then again closes his eyes from fear. The same state of those who will be driven to Hell has been depicted here.

72That is, neither will Allah Himself avert it, nor has anyone else the power to avert it.

73This sentence has several other meanings also:

(1) "You will not be able to deny any of your misdeeds";

(2) "you will not be able to hide yourself even in disguise ; "

(3) "you will not be able to protest or show any displeasure against any treatment that is meted out to you; "

(4) "it will not be in your power to change the condition in which you are placed. "

74That is, "You have not been made responsible that you must bring them to the right path anyhow, nor will you be held accountable as to why these people did not come to the right path."

75"Man" here implies the mean and shallow people who are the subject of the discourse here, who have got a measure of the worldly provisions and are exulting in this, and who do not pay any attention when they are admonished to come to the right path. But when they are visited by a disaster in consequence of their own misdeeds, they start cursing their fate, and forget all those blessings which Allah has blessed them with, and do not try to understand how far they themselves are to be blamed for the condition in which they are placed. Thus, neither does prosperity become conducive to their reformation nor can adversity teach them a lesson and bring them to the right path. A study of the context shows that this is, in fact, a satire on the attitude of the people who were the addressees of the above discourse, but they have not been addressed to tell them of their weakness directly, but the weakness of man has been mentioned in a general way and pointed out that what is the real cause of his sad plight. This gives an important point of the wisdom of preaching: the weaknesses of the addressee should not be made the target directly, but they should be mentioned in a general way so that he is not provoked, and if his conscience has still some life in it, he may try to understand his shortcoming with a cool mind.

76That is, 'If the people who are involved in disbelief and polytheism do not believe even after the admonition, they may not, for the truth is the truth. The kingdom of the earth and heavens has not been entrusted to the so-called kings and despots and chiefs of the world nor has any prophet, saint, god or goddess any share in it, but its Master is One Allah alone. His rebel can neither succeed by his own power, nor can any of the beings whom the people look upon as owners of divine powers by their own folly, come to their rescue and aid."

77This is a manifest proof of Allah's Sovereignty being absolute. No man, whether he be posing as owner of the highest worldly authority, or regarded as owner of great spiritual powers, has ever been able to produce children for himself according to his own choice and desire, not to speak of providing children for others. The one whom Allah made barren could not have children through any medicine, any treatment, any amulet or charm. The one whom Allah gave only daughters could not get a single son by any device, and the one whom Allah gave only sons could not have a single daughter by any means. In this matter

everyone is absolutely helpless. So much so that before the birth of a child no one could know whether a son was taking shape in the mother's womb or a daughter. Even after seeing all this if some one posed to be all-powerful in God's Kingdom, or regarded another as a possessor of the powers, it would be his own shortsightedness for which he himself will suffer, the truth will not change at all.

78In conclusion, the same theme with which the discourse began has been reiterated. To understand it fully, please see the first verse of this Surah and the E.N. on it.

79Here, wahi means to inspire somebody with something, or to show something to somebody in a vision as were the Prophets Abraham and Joseph shown, (Yusuf: 4, 100; As-Saaffat: 102).

80That is, "One may hear a voice without seeing the speaker, just as it happened in the case of the Prophet Moses when he suddenly began to hear a voice from a tree on Mount Tur, while the Speaker was hidden from him." (Ta Ha: 11-48, An-Naml: 8-12, Al-Qasas: 30 35).

81This is the form of wahi by which all Divine Scriptures have actually reached the Prophets of Allah. Some people have misinterpreted this sentence and given it this meaning Allah sends a messenger who by His Command conveys His message to the common people." But the words of the Qur'an fa-yuhiya biidhni-hi ma yasha'u (then He reveals by His Command whatever He wills) show that this interpretation is absolutely wrong. The Prophets' preaching before the common people has neither been called wahi anywhere in the Qur'an, nor is there any room in Arabic for describing a man's speaking to another man openly by the word wahi'. Lexically, wahi means secret and swift instruction. Only an ignorant person will apply this word to the common preaching by the Prophets.

82That is, He is far above that He should speak to a man face to face, and His wisdom is not helpless that He may adopt another method of conveying His instructions to a servant of His than of speaking to him face to face.

83"Even so" does not refer only to the last method of wahi, but to all the three methods as mentioned in the preceding verses, and a "Spirit" implies wahi (Revelation), or the teaching given to the Holy Prophet by revelation. Both the Qur'an and the Hadih confirm that the Holy Prophet was given instruction by all these three methods:

(1) Ina Hadith Hadrat 'A'ishah has stated that Revelation in the beginning came to the Holy Prophet in the form of true visions. (Bukhari, Muslim) This continued in later life also. Traditions mention many visions in which he was given some teaching or informed of something and in the Qur'an also a vision of his has been clearly mentioned (Al Fath: 27). Besides, several Traditions also mention that the Holy Prophet said, "I have been inspired with such and such a thing. or I have been informed of this and this or I have been enjoined this, or I have been forbidden this." All such things relate to the first kind of the wahi and

the Divinely inspired Traditions (Ahadith Qudsi) mostly belong to this category of the Traditions.

(2) On the occasion of the Mi'raj (Ascension) the Holy Prophet was honored with the second kind of the wahi also. In several authentic Traditions the way mention has been made of the Commandment of the Salat five times a day and the Holy Prophet's making submissions in that regard again and again clearly shows that at that time a similar dialogue took place between Allah Almighty and His servant Muhammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings) as had taken place between Allah and the Prophet Moses at the foot of Mount Tur. As for the third kind, the Qur'an itself testifies that it was conveyed to the Holy Prophet through Angel Gabriel, the Trustworthy. (Al-Baqarah: 97, Ash-Shu'ara' :192-195).

84That is, "Before his appointment to Prophet hood, the Holy Prophet had never had any idea that he was going to receive a Book, or that he should receive one, but he was wholly unaware of the heavenly Books and the subjects they treated. Likewise, although he believed in Allah, intellectually he was not. aware of the requirements of the Faith in Allah, nor did he know that along with that belief it was also necessary that he should believe in other things-the angels, the Prophet hood, the Divine Books and the Hereafter. Both these things---were such as were not hidden even from the disbelievers of Makkah. No one belonging to Makkah could bear witness that he had ever heard anything pertaining to a Divine Book from the Holy Prophet before his sudden proclamation of the Prophet hood, or any such thing that the people should believe in such and such things. Obviously if a, person had already been looking forward to becoming a prophet, it could not be that the people who remained socially associated with him day and night for 40 years should not have even so much as heard the word Book and the Faith from him, and after 40 years he should suddenly have started making fiery speeches on the same themes.

85This is the final warning that has been given to the disbelievers. It means: "The Prophet said something and you heard and rejected it. The matter would not end there. Whatever is happening in the world, will be presented before Allah, and ultimately He Himself will decide what should be the end of each and every person."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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43. Surah Az Zukhruf (The Ornaments of Gold)

Name

It is derived from the word *zukhruf-an* which occurs in verse 33 of this Surah.

Period of Revelation

It could not be known from any authentic tradition, but a study of its subject matter shows that this Surah also was sent down in the same period in which the Surahs Al-Mumin, As-Sajdah and Ash-Shura, were sent down. It appears that the revelation of this series of the Surahs began when the disbelievers of Makkah were planning to put an end to the Holy Prophet's life. Day and night they were holding consultations in their assemblies as how to eliminate him, and even an attack on his life also had been made as has been clearly referred to in vv. 79-80.

Theme and Topics

In this Surah a forceful and severe criticism has been made of the Quraish and the common Arabs creeds and superstitions of ignorance in which they persisted, and their stubbornness has been exposed in a firm and effective way, so that every member of the society, who was reasonable in some degree, should be made to consider the evils in which the community was involved and its tyrannical treatment of the person who was trying to redeem it.

The discourse starts in a way as if to say: "You, by means of your mischiefs, want that the revelation of this Book should be stopped, but Allah has never withheld the appointment of His Prophets and the revelation of His Books because of the mischief of the people, but has destroyed the wicked people, who obstructed the way of His guidance. The same He will do again. A little further in vv. 41-43 and 79-80 the same thing has been reiterated. Though the people who were plotting against his life are meant, the Holy Prophet has been addressed to the effect: "whether you remain alive or not, We will certainly punish the wicked," and the people themselves have been plainly warned to the effect: "If you have decided to take an action against Our Prophet, We too will take a decisive action."

Then, it has been told what is the reality of the religion that the people are following so devotedly and what are the arguments on whose strength they are resisting Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and Blessings).

They themselves admit that the Creator of the earth and heavens and of themselves and their deities is only Allah. They also know and admit that the blessings they are benefiting from, have been bestowed by Allah; yet they insist on making others associates of Allah in His Godhead.

They regard the servants as the children of Allah, and that too daughters, whom they regard as disgraceful for themselves.

They believe that the angels are goddesses; they have carved their images as females; they adorn them with female dresses and ornaments, and call them daughters of Allah: they worship them and invoke them for the fulfillment of their needs. How did they know that the angels were female?

When they are rebuked for these superstitions, they present the pretense of destiny and say :"Had Allah disapproved of these our practices, we could not have worshiped these images, whereas the means of finding out whether Allah had approved of something or not, are His Books and not those things which are happening in the world according to His Will. For under His Will not only idol worship but crimes like theft and adultery, robbery. murder, etc. also are being committed. Can this argument be used to justify as right and proper this commission of every crime and evil is the world?

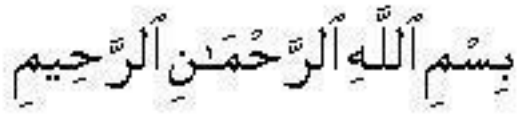
When it is asked: Have you any other authority, apart from this wrong argument, for the polytheism of yours? They reply, "The same has been the practice since the time of our forefathers." In other words, this in their opinion is a strong enough argument for a creed's being right and true, whereas the Prophet Abraham, descent from whom is the only basis of their pride and distinction, had rejected the religion of his elders and left his home, and he had discarded every such blind imitation of his forefathers, which did not have the support of any rational argument. Then, if these people had to follow their elders only, for this also they selected their most ignorant elders and abandoned their most illustrious elders like the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (on whom be peace).

When they are asked: "Has ever a Prophet or a Book sent down by God also given this teaching that others beside Allah too are worthy of worship? they present this practice of the Christians as an argument that they took Jesus son of Mary as son of God and worshiped him; whereas the question was not this whether the community of a Prophet had committed *shirk* or not, but this whether a Prophet had himself taught *shirk*. Jesus son of Mary had never said that he was son of God and that the people should worship him. His own was the same teaching which every other Prophet had given "My Lord as well as your Lord is Allah: so worship Him alone."

They were disinclined to believe in the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet because he was neither a rich man nor a person of high worldly position and rank. They said "Had Allah willed to appoint a prophet among us, He would have appointed one of the great men of' our two cities (Makkah and Taif). On that very basis, Pharaoh also had looked down upon the Prophet Moses and said: "If Allah, the King of the heavens, had to send a messenger to me, the king of the earth, He would have sent him with bracelets of gold and a company of angels in attendance. Where from has this mendicant appeared I am superior to him, for the kingdom of Egypt belongs to me, and the canals of

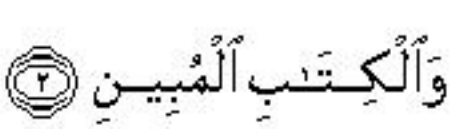
the River Nile are flowing under my control. What is the status of this man as against me? He has neither wealth nor authority."

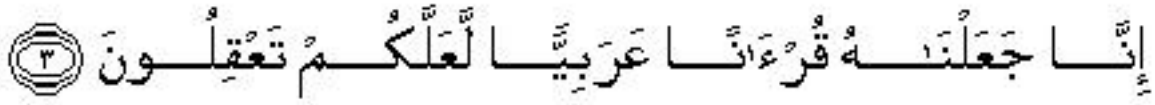
Thus, after criticizing each practice of ignorance of the disbelievers and rejecting it with rational arguments, it has been pointed out: "Neither has God any offspring, nor are there separate gods of the earth and heavens, nor is there any intercessor who may be able to protect from His punishment those who adopt deviation knowingly. Allah is far above this that He should have children. He alone is the God of the whole Universe: all others are His servants and not associates in His attributes and powers, and only such men can intercede with Him, who are themselves followers of the Truth and they also can intercede only for those who may have adopted obedience of the Truth in the world."

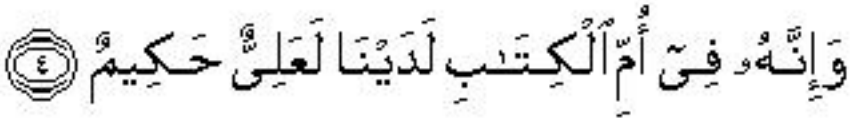


In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.









[1-4] Ha-Mim. By this lucid Book, We have made it an Arabic Qur'an so that you (O people) may understand it.[1] And, in fact, it is inscribed in Umm al-Kitab,[2] a Book truly sublime and full of wisdom with Us.[3]

أَفَنَضۡرِبُ عَنكُمُ ٱلذِّكۡرَ صَفۡحًا أَن كُنتُمۡ قَوۡمًا مُّسۡرِفِينَ ﴿٥﴾

وَكَمۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن نَّبِيٍّ فِي ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٦﴾

وَمَا يَأۡتِيهِم مِّن نَّبِيٍّ إِلَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ يَسۡتَهۡزِءُونَ ﴿٧﴾

فَأَهۡلَكۡنَآ أَشَدَّ مِنۡهُم بَطۡشٗا وَمَضَىٰ مَثَلُ ٱلۡأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨﴾

[5-8] Now, should We despair and stop sending this Admonition to you only because you are a people who have transgressed (all limits)?[4] Many a Prophet have We sent among the ancient peoples, too. Never did it so happen that a Prophet came to his people and they did not mock him.[5] So, We destroyed them though they were much stronger than these in might; there have gone before the examples of the ancient peoples.[6]

وَلَئِن سَأَلۡتَهُم مَّنۡ خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

ٱلَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ مَهۡدٗا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمۡ فِيهَا سُبُلٗا لَّعَلَّكُمۡ تَهۡتَدُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

وَٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءًۢ بِقَدَرٍ فَأَنشَرْنَا بِهِۦ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿١١﴾

وَٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلْأَزْوَٰجَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْفُلْكِ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

لِتَسْتَوُۥا۟ عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِۦ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا ٱسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُۥ مُقْرِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَإِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

[9-14] If you ask them, "Who has created the heavens and the earth?" they will surely say, "The Almighty, the All-Knowing One has created them. " He it is Who made this earth a cradle for you[7] and made in it paths[8] for you so that you may be guided to your destinations.[9] Who sent down water from heaven in due measure[10] and revived thereby the dead earth-even so shall you be brought out from the earth.[11] Who created all these pairs[12] and Who made ships and animals as conveyance for you to ride on their back, so that when you sit on them, you may remember your Lord's favor, and say, "Glorified is He Who has subjected them to us, otherwise we could not have brought them under control,[13] and one day we have to return to our Lord."[14]

وَجَعَلُوا۟ لَهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ جُزْءًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَكَفُورٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾

[15] (In spite of knowing and recognizing all this) these people have made some of His servants to be part of Him.[15] The fact is that man is manifestly ungrateful.

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذَ مِمَّا يَخۡلُقُ بَنَاتٖ وَأَصۡفَىٰكُم بِٱلۡبَنِينَ ١٦

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِمَا ضَرَبَ لِلرَّحۡمَٰنِ مَثَلٗا ظَلَّ وَجۡهُهُۥ مُسۡوَدّٗا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ١٧

أَوَمَن يُنَشَّؤُاْ فِي ٱلۡحِلۡيَةِ وَهُوَ فِي ٱلۡخِصَامِ غَيۡرُ مُبِينٖ ١٨

[16-18] Did Allah choose from His creation daughters for Himself and blessed you with sons? whereas when the birth of the offspring whom they ascribe to the Merciful God, is announced to any of them, his face grows black and he is filled with grief.[16] Would they assign to Allah the offspring who is brought up among ornaments and is even unable to make itself clear in disputation?[17]

وَجَعَلُواْ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةَ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ عِبَٰدُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ إِنَٰثًا أَشَهِدُواْ خَلۡقَهُمۡۚ سَتُكۡتَبُ شَهَٰدَتُهُمۡ وَيُسۡـَٔلُونَ ١٩

[19] They have regarded the angels, who are themselves servants of the Merciful God,[18] as females. Have they seen them in person?[19] Their evidence will be recorded and they will be called to account for it.

وَقَالُواْ لَوۡ شَآءَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ مَا عَبَدۡنَٰهُمۗ مَّا لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ عِلۡمٍۖ إِنۡ هُمۡ إِلَّا
يَخۡرُصُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

أَمۡ ءَاتَيۡنَٰهُمۡ كِتَٰبٗا مِّن قَبۡلِهِۦ فَهُم بِهِۦ مُسۡتَمۡسِكُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

بَلۡ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا وَجَدۡنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٖ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم مُّهۡتَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ فِي قَرۡيَةٖ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ
مُتۡرَفُوهَآ إِنَّا وَجَدۡنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٖ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم مُّقۡتَدُونَ
﴿٢٣﴾

۞قَٰلَ أَوَلَوۡ جِئۡتُكُم بِأَهۡدَىٰ مِمَّا وَجَدتُّمۡ عَلَيۡهِ ءَابَآءَكُمۡۖ
قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرۡسِلۡتُم بِهِۦ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَٱنتَقَمۡنَا مِنۡهُمۡۖ فَٱنظُرۡ كَيۡفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

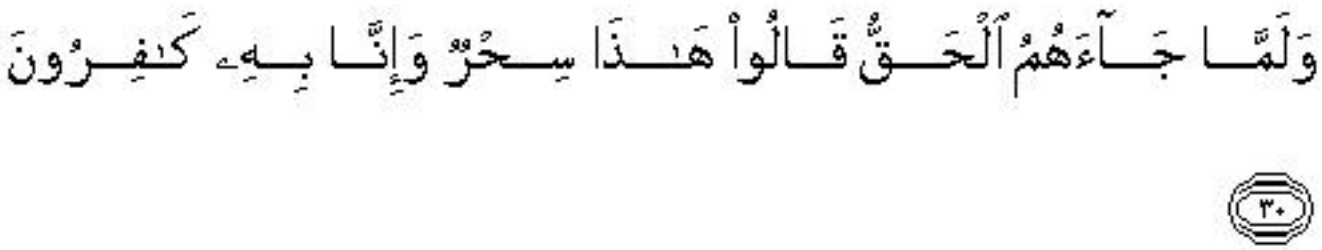
[20-25] They say, "Had the Merciful God willed (that we should not worship them), We would never have worshiped them."[20] They do not at all know the fact of the matter: they only conjecture. Did We give them a Book before this of which they hold an authority (for their angel-worship)?[21] Nay! but they say, "We found our forefathers on a way and we are only walking in their footsteps."[22] Even so, whenever before you We sent a Warner to a habitation, its people of means said, "We have found our forefathers on a way and we are only following in their footsteps."[23] Every Prophet asked them," Will you still go on following the same old way even if I guide you to a more right way than that you found your forefathers following?" They replied, "We disbelieve the religion with which you have been sent." Consequently, We took vengeance on them. Just consider what was the end of those who denied (the Truth)!

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّنِى بَرَآءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

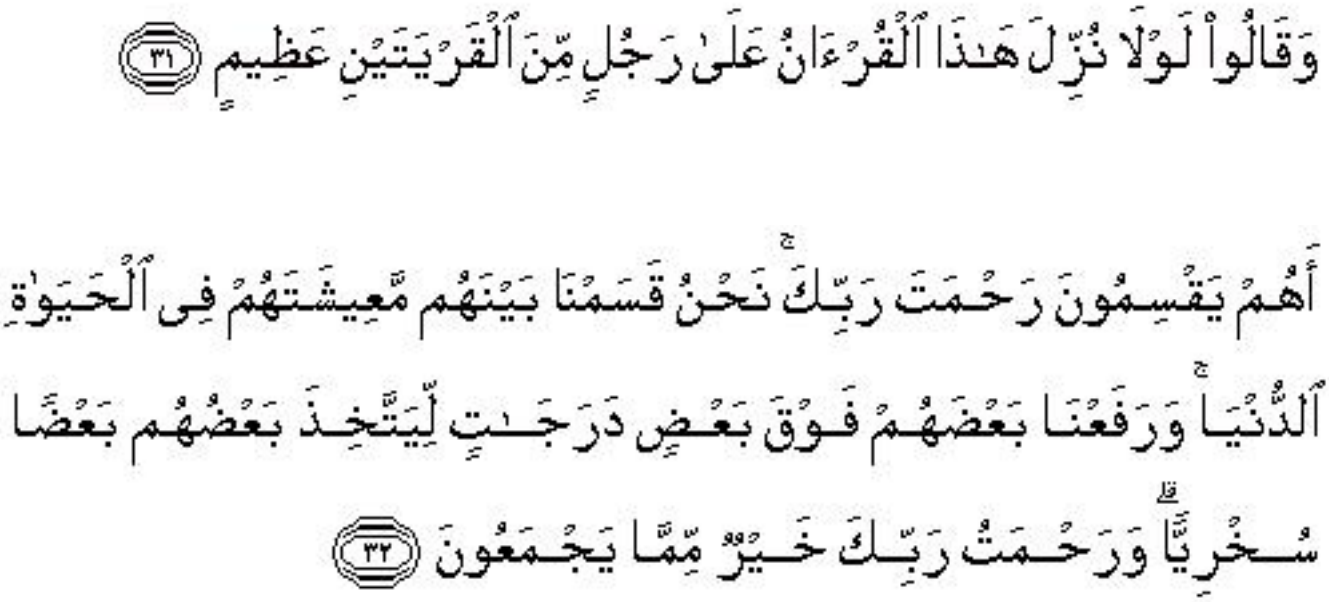
إِلَّا ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةًۢ بَاقِيَةً فِى عَقِبِهِۦ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

بَلْ مَتَّعْتُ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَءَابَآءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ وَرَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٩﴾



[26-30] Recall the time when Abraham had said to his father and his people,[24] "I have nothing to do with those whom you worship. I worship only Him Who created me: He alone will guide me."[25] And Abraham left behind the same Word[26] among his descendants so that they should turn to it.[27] (In spite of that when the people started worshiping others, I did not annihilate them), but I went on providing sustenance of life to them and to their forefathers until the Truth came to them and a Messenger who expounded everything clearly[28] But when the Truth came to them, they said, "This is a sorcery[29] and we refuse to believe in it."



[31-32] They say, "Why was not this Qur'an sent down to one of the great men from the two cities?"[30] Is it they who distribute the mercy of your Lord? It is We Who have distributed the means of their sustenance in the life of this world and raised some of them above others in ranks so that they may take one another in service.[31] And your Lord's Mercy is far greater in worth than the wealth which (their chiefs) are amassing.[32]

وَلَوْلَآ أَن يَكُونَ ٱلنَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَن يَكْفُرُ بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقُفًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَٰبًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِـُٔونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَزُخْرُفًا ۚ وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[33-35] But for the fear that all mankind would follow the same way, We would have made for those who disbelieve in the Merciful God, houses with roofs of silver and gold, and stairways by which they go to upper chambers, and their doors and their couches on which they recline (all of silver and gold).[33] But all this is merely a provision of this worldly life; and the Hereafter with your Lord is only for the righteous.

وَمَن يَعْشُ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُۥ شَيْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ لَهُۥ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَنَا قَالَ يَٰلَيۡتَ بَيۡنِي وَبَيۡنَكَ بُعۡدَ ٱلۡمَشۡرِقَيۡنِ فَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡقَرِينُ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَلَن يَنفَعَكُمُ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ إِذ ظَّلَمۡتُمۡ أَنَّكُمۡ فِي ٱلۡعَذَابِ مُشۡتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[36-39] He who does not heed the admonition of the Merciful,[34] We set a satan upon him, and he becomes his companion. These satans hinder such people from the right way while they think that they are guided aright. Ultimately, when he comes to Us, he will say to his satan companion, "would that between me and you there were the distance of the East and the West: you turned out to be a most evil companion." Then it will be said to them, "When you have done wrong, it will avail you nothing today as you and your satans are partners in the same torment."[35]

أَفَأَنتَ تُسۡمِعُ ٱلصُّمَّ أَوۡ تَهۡدِي ٱلۡعُمۡيَ وَمَن كَانَ فِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿٤٠﴾

فَإِمَّا نَذۡهَبَنَّ بِكَ فَإِنَّا مِنۡهُم مُّنتَقِمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

أَوۡ نُرِيَنَّكَ ٱلَّذِي وَعَدۡنَٰهُمۡ فَإِنَّا عَلَيۡهِم مُّقۡتَدِرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

فَٱسۡتَمۡسِكۡ بِٱلَّذِيٓ أُوحِيَ إِلَيۡكَۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٖ مُّسۡتَقِيمٖ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَذِكۡرٞ لَّكَ وَلِقَوۡمِكَۖ وَسَوۡفَ تُسۡـَٔلُونَ ٤٤

وَسۡـَٔلۡ مَنۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن قَبۡلِكَ مِن رُّسُلِنَآ أَجَعَلۡنَا مِن دُونِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ءَالِهَةٗ يُعۡبَدُونَ ٤٥

[40-45] Now, O Prophet, will you make the deaf to hear you, or show the way to the blind and those who are involved in manifest deviation?[36] Now We have to punish them,whether We take you away from the world, or let you see their end, which We have promised them: We have full power over them.[37] So, hold fast to the Book that has been revealed to you: you are surely on the Straight Way.[38] The fact is that this Book is a great honor for yon and your people, and soon you shall be called to account for it.[39] You may ask all other Messengers whom We sent before you if We ever had appointed any other gods to be worshiped besides the Merciful God.[40]

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مُوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ فَقَالَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٤٦

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِذَا هُم مِّنۡهَا يَضۡحَكُونَ ٤٧

وَمَا نُرِيهِم مِّنۡ ءَايَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ أَكۡبَرُ مِنۡ أُخۡتِهَاۖ وَأَخَذۡنَٰهُم بِٱلۡعَذَابِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡجِعُونَ ٤٨

وَقَالُوا۟ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَ ٱلسَّاحِرُ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِندَكَ إِنَّنَا لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابَ إِذَا هُمْ يَنكُثُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَنَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِى قَوْمِهِۦ قَالَ يَـٰقَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِى مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَـٰذِهِ ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِىٓ ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

أَمْ أَنَا۠ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَـٰذَا ٱلَّذِى هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ ﴿٥٢﴾

فَلَوْلَآ أُلْقِىَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوِرَةٌ مِّن ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جَآءَ مَعَهُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ مُقْتَرِنِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

[46-53] We[41] sent Moses with Our Signs[42] to Pharaoh and his chiefs, and he said to them, "I am a Messenger of the Lord of the worlds." Then? when he showed Our Signs to them, they laughed at him. We showed them Sign after Sign, each greater than the one preceding it, and We seized them with the torment that they might give up their attitude.[43] Whenever a torment visited them, they said, "O sorcerer, pray to your Lord for us by virtue of the appointment you hold from Him: we shall surely take the right way." But whenever We removed the torment from them, they would go back on their word.[44] One day Pharaoh proclaimed among his people,[45] "O my people: Is not the kingdom of Egypt mine? And are not these canals flowing beneath me? Can you not see who is better:[46] I or this contemptible, wretched person,[47] who can hardly express himself clearly?[48] Why were not bracelets of gold sent down on him, or a company of angels as attendants?"[49]

فَٱسۡتَخَفَّ قَوۡمَهُۥ فَأَطَاعُوهُۚ إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ قَوۡمٗا فَٰسِقِينَ ٥٤

فَلَمَّآ ءَاسَفُونَا ٱنتَقَمۡنَا مِنۡهُمۡ فَأَغۡرَقۡنَٰهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ٥٥

فَجَعَلۡنَٰهُمۡ سَلَفٗا وَمَثَلٗا لِّلۡأٓخِرِينَ ٥٦

[54-56] He took his people to be light, and they obeyed him, for they were indeed a sinful people.[50] At last, when they had annoyed Us, We took vengeance on them and drowned them all together, and made them a precedent and an object lesson for the later generations.[51]

۞ وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوۡمُكَ مِنۡهُ يَصِدُّونَ ٥٧

وَقَالُوٓاْ ءَأَٰلِهَتُنَا خَيۡرٌ أَمۡ هُوَۚ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلَۢاۚ بَلۡ هُمۡ قَوۡمٌ خَصِمُونَ ٥٨

إِنۡ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبۡدٌ أَنۡعَمۡنَا عَلَيۡهِ وَجَعَلۡنَٰهُ مَثَلٗا لِّبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٥٩

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنكُم مَّلَٰٓئِكَةً فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَخْلُفُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَٱتَّبِعُونِ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾

وَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ عِيسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُم بَعْضَ ٱلَّذِى تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿٦٣﴾

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّى وَرَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦٤﴾

فَٱخْتَلَفَ ٱلْأَحْزَابُ مِنۢ بَيْنِهِمْ ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٦٥﴾

[57-65] And when the son of Mary was cited as an example, your people raised a clamor at it, saying, "Are our gods better, or is he?"[52] They have cited this example to you only in the spirit of dispute. The fact is that they are a

quarrelsome people. The son of Mary was no more than a servant whom We favored and made an example of Our power for the children of Israel.[53] If We please We can create angels from you[54] to succeed you in the earth. And he is, in fact, a Sign of the Hour;[55] therefore, do not have any doubt about it, and follow Me: this is the Straight Way. Let not Satan hinder you from this.[56] He is your open enemy. And when Jesus had come with clear Signs, he had said, "I have brought wisdom to you, and have come to make plain to you the reality of those things in which you differ: so fear Allah and follow me. The fact is that Allah is my Lord and your Lord, too. Worship Hun alone: this is the Straight Way."[57] But (in spite of his clear teachings) the sects disagreed among themselves.[58] So, woe to those who committed evil from the punishment of a painful Day.

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا ٱلسَّاعَةَ أَن تَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ٦٦

ٱلْأَخِلَّآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ٦٧

يَٰعِبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ وَلَآ أَنتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ٦٨

ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا۟ مُسْلِمِينَ ٦٩

ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْجَنَّةَ أَنتُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ ٧٠

يُطَافُ عَلَيۡهِم بِصِحَافٖ مِّن ذَهَبٖ وَأَكۡوَابٖۖ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشۡتَهِيهِ ٱلۡأَنفُسُ
وَتَلَذُّ ٱلۡأَعۡيُنُۖ وَأَنتُمۡ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ٧١

وَتِلۡكَ ٱلۡجَنَّةُ ٱلَّتِيٓ أُورِثۡتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ٧٢

لَكُمۡ فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٞ كَثِيرَةٞ مِّنۡهَا تَأۡكُلُونَ ٧٣

إِنَّ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدُونَ ٧٤

لَا يُفَتَّرُ عَنۡهُمۡ وَهُمۡ فِيهِ مُبۡلِسُونَ ٧٥

وَمَا ظَلَمۡنَٰهُمۡ وَلَٰكِن كَانُواْ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٧٦

وَنَادَوۡاْ يَٰمَٰلِكُ لِيَقۡضِ عَلَيۡنَا رَبُّكَۖ قَالَ إِنَّكُم مَّٰكِثُونَ
٧٧

لَقَدْ جِئْنَٰكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَٰرِهُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

[66-78] Do these people now only await the Hour (of Resurrection) that it should come upon them suddenly while they are unaware? When the Day comes all friends shall become enemies of one another except the righteous.[59] On that Day it will be said to those who had believed in Our Revelations and surrendered themselves, "O My servants ! Today you have nothing to fear, nor will there be any cause for you to grieve. Enter Paradise, you and your wives.[60] You will be made happy!" There they shall have platters and cups of gold passed round to them and there they shall have everything that the souls can desire and the eyes can delight in. It will be said to them, "You shall live here for ever. You have inherited this Paradise by virtue of the deeds you did in the world. You have abundance of fruit here, which you will eat." As for the criminals, they shall endure for ever the torment of Hell; their punishment will never be lightened for them, and there they shall remain, despairing. We did not wrong them, but they themselves were the wrongdoers. They will call out, "O Malik,[61] let your Lord put an end to us!" He will answer, "Here you must remain! We had brought the Truth to you, but most of you abhor the Truth."[62]

أَمْ أَبْرَمُوٓا۟ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

أَمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَىٰهُم ۚ بَلَىٰ وَرُسُلُنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[79-80] Have they decided to contrive a plan?[63] Well, we too, shall contrive. Do they think that We do not hear their secret talk and their whisperings? We hear everything and Our angels at their sides are recording it.

قُلْ إِن كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلْعَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

سُبۡحَٰنَ رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَرۡشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

فَذَرۡهُمۡ يَخُوضُواْ وَيَلۡعَبُواْ حَتَّىٰ يُلَٰقُواْ يَوۡمَهُمُ ٱلَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

[81-83] Say to them, "If the Merciful really had a son, I would be the first to worship him."[64] Exalted is the Ruler of the heavens and the earth, Lord. of the Throne, above what they ascribe to Him! Well, let them remain absorbed in their falsehoods and sport, till they see that Day of theirs with which they are being threatened.

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِي فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ إِلَٰهٞ وَفِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ إِلَٰهٞۚ وَهُوَ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَتَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِي لَهُۥ مُلۡكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا وَعِندَهُۥ عِلۡمُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ وَإِلَيۡهِ تُرۡجَعُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

[84-85] He alone is God in heavens anal God on earth: He is the All- Wise, the All-Knowing.[65] Highly blessed is He to Whom belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth and of all that lies between them.[66] He alone has the knowledge of the Hour of Resurrection, and to Him you shall all be returned.[67]

وَلَا يَمۡلِكُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةَ إِلَّا مَن شَهِدَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَهُمۡ يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[86] Those whom they call upon beside Him have no power of intercession except that one may testify to the Truth by virtue of knowledge.[68]

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

وَقِيلِهِۦ يَٰرَبِّ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوْمٌ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

[87-88] And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say, "Allah."[69] Whence then are they being deluded? By this word of the Messenger: "O my Lord, these are a people who would not believe."[70]

فَٱصْفَحْ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلَٰمٌ ۚ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

[89] Well, O Prophet, bear with them and say, "Peace to you!"[71] Soon they shall know.

1The object of taking an oath by the Qur'an is to impress this fact: "We are the Author of this Book and not Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace)," and the attribute of the Qur'an chosen for the oath is that it is a "lucid Book". To swear by the Qur'an itself with its this attribute in order to impress that the Qur'an is Divine Word by itself implies this: "O people, this is an open Book before you. Read it intelligently. Its clear and un-ambiguous themes, its language and literary style, its teaching which distinguishes the truth from falsehood, all arc testifying to the fact that none but the Lord of the Universe could be its Author. " Then the sentence: ""We have made it an Arabic Qur'an so that you may understand it." has two meanings:

(1) "It is not in any foreign tongue but in your own language; therefore, you can have no difficulty in assessing its value and worth. Had it been in a non-Arabic language, you could have offered the excuse that you could not determine its being Divine, or otherwise, for you did not understand it. But you cannot offer this excuse about this Arabic Qur'an. Its each word is clear to you: its each passage and discourse, both in language and in theme, is plain for you. Now you may see it for yourself whether this could be the word of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) or of some other Arab."

(2) "We have sent this Book in Arabic because We are addressing the Arabs, who can only understand an Arabic Qur'an. The person who disregards this expressly rational ground for sending down the Qur'an in Arabic and regards it as the word of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) instead of Divine Word

only because Muhammad's mother tongue is also Arabic, commits a grave injustice. " (To understand this second meaning, please see Surah Ha-Mim As-Sajdah: 44 and its E.N.'s).

2"Umm al-Kitab": the "Original Book": the Book from which all the Books sent down to the Prophets have been derived. In Surah Al-Waqi`ah the same thing has been described as Kitab-um-Maknun (the hidden and preserved Book) and in Surah Al-Buruj 22 as Lauh-i Mahfuz (the Preserved Tablet), that is, the Tablet whose writing cannot be effaced, which is secure from every kind of interference. By saying that the Qur'an is inscribed in Umm al-Kitab, attention has been drawn to an important truth. Different Books had been revealed by Allah in different ages to different Prophets for the guidance of different nations in different languages, but all these Books invited mankind to one and the same Faith: they regarded one and the same thing as the Truth; they presented one and the same criterion of good and evil; they propounded the same principles of morality and civilization; in short, they brought one and the same Din (Religion). The reason was that their source and origin was the same, only words were different; they had the same meaning and theme which is inscribed in a Source Book with Allah, and whenever there was a need, He raised a Prophet and sent down the same meaning and subject-matter clothed in a particular diction according to the environment and occasion. Had Allah willed to raise the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be His peace) in another nation instead of the Arabs, He would have sent down the same Qur'an in the language of that nation. In it the meaning and content would have been expressed according to the environments and conditions of the people and land; the words would have been different and the language also different but the teaching and guidance the same basically, and it would be the same Qur'an though not the Arabic Qur'an. This same thing has been expressed in Surah Ash-Shu`ara, thus: "This (Book) has been revealed by the Lord of the worlds. The trustworthy Spirit has come down with it upon your heart so that you may become one of those who are (appointed by God) to warn (the people) in plain Arabic language; and this is also contained in the scriptures of the former peoples." (vv. 192-196). (For explanation, see Ash-Shu`ara: 192196 and the E.N.'s on it).

3This sentence is related both to Kitab-i mubin and to Umm al-Kitab. Thus, it is in praise of both the Qur'an and the Original Book from which the Qur'an has been derived. This praise is meant to impress the fact that if a person does not recognize the true worth of this Book and does not benefit from its wise teachings because of his own folly, it would be his own misfortune. If someone tried to degrade it and found fault with it, it would be his own meanness. It cannot become worthless on account of someone's lack of appreciation of it, and its wisdom cannot be eclipsed by anyone's throwing dust at it. This is by itself a glorious Book, which stands exalted by its matchless teaching, miraculous eloquence, faultless wisdom and the sublime personality of its great Author. Therefore, none can succeed in minimizing its value and worth. In verse 44 below the Quraish in particular and the Arabs in general have been told that the revelation of the Book for which they are showing such lack of appreciation had provided them a unique opportunity of honor, which if they lost, would subject them to a severe accountability before God. (Please see E.N. 39 below).

4In this one sentence the whole history that had taken place since the time the Holy Prophet Muhammad

(upon whom be Allah's peace) had proclaimed to be a Prophet till the revelation of these verses during the past few years has been compressed. This sentence depicts the following picture: A nation has been involved in ignorance, backwardness and depravity for centuries. Suddenly, Allah looks at it with favor. He raises in it an illustrious guide and sends down His own Word to take it out of the darkness of ignorance so that it is aroused from slumber, it gives up superstitions of ignorance and it becomes aware of the truth and adopts the right way of life. But the ignorant people of the nation and the tribal chiefs turn hostile to the guide, and try their utmost to defeat him and his mission. With the passage of time their hostility and mischief go on increasing; so much so that they make up their mind to kill him. At this, it is being said: "Should We stop making any efforts to reform you because you are proving to be un-worthy people? Should We withhold sending down this Admonition, and leave you lying in the same wretched state in which you have been lying since centuries ? Do you really think that should be the demand of Our Mercy ? Have you ever considered what doom you would meet when you have turned down the bounty of Allah and persisted in falsehood after the truth has come before you?"

5That is, if such absurdity and senselessness had barred the sending of a Prophet or a Book, no Prophet would ever have come to any nation nor a Book sent to it.

6That is, the result of the senselessness of some particular people could not be that the entire mankind should be deprived of the guidance of the Prophethood and the Book, but its result always has been that the worshippers of falsehood who, being drunk with the pride of power, did not desist from mocking the Prophets, were ultimately destroyed. When Allah's wrath descended even the people, who possessed thousands of times greater power than that possessed by the puny chiefs of the Quraish, were crushed to annihilation like mosquitoes and fleas.

7At other places the earth has been described as a bed, but here as a cradle. That is, just as a child lies resting in its cradle, so is this great globe meant to be a place of rest for you, which is suspended in space, which is spinning on its axis at a speed of 1,000 miles an hour, which is revolving around the sun at a speed of 66,000 miles an hour. Its interior is so intensely hot that it can melt the stones and it manifests its power sometimes in the form of volcano eruptions. But, in spite of that, the Creator has made it so tranquil that one sleeps on it. in fill peace and there is no jerk whatever. One lives on it and does not at all feel that this globe is suspended and one is hanging from it with one's head pointing downward. One moves about on it with satisfaction and never thinks that one is riding on a vehicle moving faster than a bullet. You dig it at will and turn it inside out and beat it as you like to obtain your sustenance, whereas a little shaking of it in an earthquake makes you feel what a terrible giant it is, which Allah has subdued for you. (For further explanation, sec AI-Naml: 61 and E.N. 74 on it).

8The passes in the mountains and the rivers in the hill and plain regions are the natural paths, which Allah has provided on the surface of the earth. Man has spread on, the earth by means of these. If the mountainous ranges had been created erect, without a crevice, and there had been no rivers and streams, man would have been confined to the same areas where he was born. Then, Allah through

another grace has not made the whole surface of the earth uniform in nature, but has created different marks of distinction by means of which man recognizes different lands and feels the difference between one land and another. This is the second important means by which man became able to move about on the earth. This blessing can be appreciated by the one who has had a chance of going on a vast desert, where for thousands of milts the earth is without any landmarks and one does not know where one has reached and where one has to go.

9This sentence gives two meanings simultaneously:

(1) "That by means of these natural paths and land-marks you may find your way and reach the place you want to reach: " and

(2) "that you may obtain guidance from the observation of this craftsmanship of Allah Almighty: may reach the underlying reality and understand that this system of the earth is not functioning haphazardly, nor has been devised by many gods jointly, but there is one All-Wise Creator, Who has made these paths in the hills and on the plains in view of the needs and requirements of His creatures, and has given each region of the earth a different form in countless different ways by means of which man can distinguish one region from the other.

10That is, "For each region He has ordained an average measure of the rain, which falls year after year for long ages regularly. It does not happen that an area may have two inches of the rainfall one year and 200 inches of it the next year. Then He spreads the rainfall over different places in different times in such a way that it becomes beneficial on the whole for the products of the earth. And this is also His wisdom that He has deprived some parts of the earth of the rainfall almost wholly and turned them into dry, barren deserts, and in some other parts, He sometimes causes famines w occur and sometimes sends torrential rains so that man may know what a great blessing the rain and its general regularity is for the populated areas, and he may also remember that this system is under the control of another power, whose decrees cannot be changed by anyone. No one has the power that he may change the general average of the rainfall of a country, or effect a variation in its distribution over vast areas of the earth, or avert an impending storm, or attract the displeased clouds towards one's own land and compel them to rain." (For further explanation, see Al Hijr: 21-22, Al-Mu'minun: 18-20).

11Here, the birth of vegetation in the earth by means of water has been presented as an argument for two things simultaneously:

(1) That these things are happening by the power and wisdom of One God; no one else is His associate in these works; and

(2) that there can be life after death, and it will be. (For further explanation. see An-Nahl: 65-67, Al-Hajj: 5-

7, An-Naml: 60, Ar-Rum: 19, 24; Fatir: E.N. 19 and Ya Sin: E.N. 29).

12Pairs here does not imply only pairs of men and women among human beings and of males and females among animals and vegetation, but there are countless other things which the Creator has made as matching partners of each other and by whose coming together and combination new and ever new things come into being in the world. For example, among the elements, some can be combined with others and some cannot be. The combination of these which can combine is resulting into various compositions, e.g. the negative and positive charges in electricity are the matching partners of each other and their mutual attraction is causing wonderful things to happen in the world. If man considers the structure and the mutual relationships and the different forms of cooperation and the results of the combination of this and other countless pairs which Allah has created among countless of His creations. He cannot help testifying to the truth that this great workshop of the world is the creation of one and only one Almighty, All-Wise Designer, and is functioning only under His care and control, Only a man of mean intelligence could suppose that all this happened, and is happening, without a Wise Being, or there is the possibility in it of the agency and interference of more gods than one.

13That is, "Only man from among all the creatures of the earth was not given this power by Allah to use boats and ships and animals as conveyance so that he may be loaded on them like bags of grain and should never think as to who it is who created possibilities for him to run boats in the mighty oceans, and who created some animals of the countless kinds of animals, with a nature that they become his servants in spite of being far stronger than him in power, and he rides on them and drives them wherever he likes. To benefit by these blessings and to forget the Benefactor is a sign of the heart's becoming dead and the conscience's being insensitive. For when a man endowed with a living heart and a sensitive conscience will sit on these conveyances, he will be filled with the feelings of the blessings and with the gratitude for it, and will cry out: "Glorified is the Being Who subjected these things to me: Glorified is He from that another should be His associate in His Being and attributes and powers: Glorified is He and free from the weakness that He should become helpless of performing the functions of His Godhead by Himself and should stand in need of other associate gods: Glorified is He that I should make another an associate with Him in rendering thanks for these blessings."

The best practical commentary of the intention and meaning of this verse are the words that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) used to pronounce at the time he sat on the conveyance. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar says that whenever the Holy Prophet sat on a conveyance for a journey, he would pronounce Allah-u Akbar thrice, then would recite this verse, and then pray: "O God, I implore You to grant me in this journey the grace of goodness and piety and such acts as may please You. O God, make the journey easy and roll up the long distance for us; O God, You alone are the Companion during the journey and Guardian of the family in ow absence. O God, take care of us during, the journey and our household in ow absence. " (Musnad Ahmed, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Darimi, Tirmidhi).

Hadrat 'Ali says: Once the Holy Prophet put his foot in the stirrup with bismillah, and then, after riding,

said: Al-,hamd-u lillah, subhan-alladhi sakhkhara lana hadha . . . . , then pronounced al-,hamd-u-lillah thrice, and Allah-u Akbar thrice; then said: Subhana-ka, la-ilaha ills anta, qad zalamtu nafsi fagh fir-li. Then he laughed. I asked: What made you laugh. O Messenger of Allah? He replied: When a servant says: Rabb-ighfir-li, Allah Almighty is very pleased with this. He says: My servant knows that there is none beside Me who can forgive sins." (Ahmed, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, and others)

Abu Mijlaz says: "Once I rode on my animal and recited this verse: Subhan-alladhi sakhkhara lane hadha . . . ; Hadrat Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) said: Have you been commanded to say so? I said: What should I say then? He replied: Say, thank God, Who guided us to Islam: Thanks to Him, Who did us a favor by sending Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace): Thanks to Him, Who admitted us into the best community that has been raised for the people; then recite this verse." (Ibn Jarir, Ahkam al-Qur'an by Jassas)

14That is, "While embarking on every journey one should remember that there is ahead a longer and final journey also. Besides there is the possibility in the use of every conveyance that an accident may turn that very journey into one's last journey; therefore, every time one should remember one's return to one's Lord so that if something untoward happens, one does not die unawares.

Let us pause here for a while and consider the moral results of this teaching. Can one imagine that a person who while sitting on a conveyance starts his journey consciously with Rill remembrance of Allah and his return and accountability before Him, would commit sins and injustices and tyrannies on the way? Can a person think or utter these words from his mouth when he intends to go to meet a prostitute, or to visit a club for the purpose of drinking and gambling? Can a ruler, or a government official, or a merchant who has stepped out of his house with such thoughts and such words at his lips, usurp the rights of others when he reaches his destination? Can a soldier utter these words while boarding his aircraft or tank when he goes out to shed blood of the innocent and deprive the weak of their freedom? If not, then this one thing alone is enough to bar every movement undertaken for the commission of a sin.

15"To make part of Allah" implies declaring a servant of Allah His offspring, for an offspring inevitably is homogeneous with and a part of the father's body, and regarding somebody as Allah's son or daughter means that he or she is being made a partner in Allah's Being. Besides, another form of making a creature a part of Allah is that it should be regarded as possessor of the attributes and powers as are specifically Allah's own, and it should be invoked under the same concept, or rites of worship performed before it, or its sanctities observed and regarded as imperative and binding, for in that case man divides divinity and providence between Allah and His servants and hands over a part of it to the servants.

16Here, the folly of the polytheists of Arabia has been fully exposed. They said that the angels were the daughters of Allah. They had carved out their images as females, and these were their goddesses whom they worshiped. About this Allah says: In the first place, in spite of knowing and recognizing that the Creator of the earth and heavens is Allah and it is He Who has made this earth a cradle for you and it is

He Who sends down the rain from the sky. and it is He Who has created these animals for your service, yet you have taken others as gods beside Him, whereas those whom you serve as deities are not God but creatures of God. Then, further more, you have made some of the servants associates of Allah not only in His attributes but in His Being as well, and invented the creed that they were Allah's offspring. Then, not resting content with this, you assigned to Allah that kind of the offspring which you regard as disgraceful for your own selves: When a daughter is born in your house, your face grows dark, you feel distressed, and sometimes you bury her alive. This offspring you assign to Allah and reserve for yourselves the sons, whom you regard as a source of joy and pride. Even then you claim that you believe in Allah.

17In other words, You have assigned to Allah the offspring that is by nature delicate, weak and frail, and adopted for yourselves the offspring that is bold, courageous and fearless.

This verse shows permissibility of the ornaments for the women, for Allah has mentioned the ornaments as a natural thing for them. The same is also confirmed by the Hadith. Imam Ahmad, Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i have related on the authority of Hadrat `Ali that the Holy Prophet took silk in one hand and gold in the other and said that both were forbidden to be used in dress by the men of his Ummah. Tirmidhi and Nasa'i have related from Hadrat Abu Musa Ash`ari a tradition, saying that the Holy Prophet said: "Silk and gold have been forbidden for the men but made lawful for the women of my Ummah." `Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas has discussed this question in his Ahkam ai-Qur'an and related the following traditions:

Hadrat 'A'ishah says: Once Usamah, son of Zaid bin Harithah, was hurt and started bleeding. The Holy Prophet loved him like his own children. He sucked his blood and spat it out, and cheered him saying, "Had Usamah been a daughter we would have adorned him with ornaments! Had Usamah been a daughter, we would have dressed him in fine clothes !"

Hadrat Abu Musa Ash'ari has related that the Holy Prophet said: 'Wearing of silken clothes and ornaments of gold is unlawful for the men of my Unmah but lawful for the women. " .

Hadrat 'Amr bin `As has related: `Once two women came before the Holy Prophet, and they were wearing bracelets of gold. He said: Would you like that Allah should make you wear bracelets of the fire instead of these? They replied that they would not. Thereupon he said: Pay their dues, i.e. the zakat due on them. "

Hadrat `A'isha has stated that there is no harm in wearing the ornaments if the zakat due on them is paid.

Hadrat 'Umar wrote to Hadrat Abu Musa Ash'ari: Order the Muslim women who live in the areas under your administrative control that they should pay the zakat dues on their ornaments.

Imam Abu Hanifah has related the following traditions on the authority of 'Amr bn Dinar: Hadrat 'A'ishah

had arranged ornaments of gold for her sisters and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar for his daughters.

After citing all these traditions 'Allama Jassas writes: "The traditions that have been related from the Holy Prophet and the Companions about the permissibility and lawfulness of gold and silk for the women are better known and more common than those that are there about their unlawfulness, and the above . verse also points to their lawfulness. Then the practice of the Muslims also from the time of the Holy Prophet and his Companions till our time (i.e. till the latter part of the 4th century of hijrah) has been the same, and no one ever objected to it. In such matters, no objection can be admitted on the basis of the isolate reports (Akhbar ahab)."

18That is, who are fret from this that they should be males or females.

19Another translation can be: "were they present at the time of their creation?"

20This was their reasoning from destiny to cover up their deviation and error, and this has been the argument of the wrong-doers in every age. They argued that their worshiping the angels became possible only because Allah allowed them to do so. Had He not willed so they could not have done it; and then it had been a practice with them for centuries and no torment from Allah had descended on them, which meant that Allah did not disapprove of their this practice.

21It means this: "These ignorant people think that whatever is happening in the world has the approval of Allah for it, because it is happening according to His will. This argument, however, is wrong. For it is not only shirk which is being committed in the world, but countless other crimes like stealing, robbery, murder, bribery, etc. also are taking place, which nobody likes. Then, can it be said by the same reasoning that all such acts are lawful and good only because Allah is letting them happen in His world, and when He allows them to happen, He must have approved of them also? The means of knowing what Allah likes and what He hates are not the events that are happening in the world, but the Book of Allah, which comes through His Messenger and in which Allah Himself states as to what beliefs, what deeds and what morals He likes and what He dislikes. If these people have a Book, which came before the Qur'an, and which tells that Allah has appointed the angels also as deities beside himself and that they should worship them also, they should cite it." (For further explanation, see Al-An'am: 107 112, 137, 148-149; AI-A'raf: 28; Yunus: 99; Hud: 118-119; Ar-Ra'd: 31; An-Nahl: 9, 35-36, 93; and E.N. 20 of Az-Zumar and E.N. 11 of Ash-Shura).

22That is, "They have no authority of any divine book; the only authority they have is that it has been the practice since the time of their forefathers: therefore, they have taken the angels as goddesses in imitation of them."

23Here, the point worth consideration is why the well-to-do people of every community only have resisted

the Prophets and upheld the imitation of their forefathers in every age. Why have they alone been in the forefront to oppose the Truth and to endeavor to maintain the established falsehood and to beguile and incite the common people against them ? Its basic causes were two:

(1) The well to-do and affluent people are so absorbed in making and enjoying the world of their own that they are not inclined to bother themselves about the useless debate (as they assume it to be) between the Truth and falsehood. Their love of ease and mental lethargy renders them so heedless of religion and conservative that they want the established order, no matter whether it is based on truth or falsehood, to retrain in force so that they do not have to take the trouble of thinking about the new order at all for themselves.

(2) Their interests become so dependent on the established order that when they get the first glimpse of the order presented by the Prophets they start feeling that if it came, it would not only put an end to their leadership but also would deprive them of the freedom to consume the lawful and commit the unlawful. (For further details, sec Al-An`am: 103; Al-A'raf: 66-70. 75, 88 109, 127; Hud: 27-28; Bani Isra`il : 16; Al-Mu'minun: 24-33, 46; Saba: 34 and the corresponding E.N.'s).

24For details, sec Al-Baqarah 124-133, Al-An'am 74-84, Ibrahim: 3541, Maryam: 41-50, Al-Anbiya': 51-73, Ash-Shu'ara: 69-89, Al-'Ankabut: 1627, As-Saaffat: 83-100 and the corresponding E.N `s.

25In these words not only did the Prophet Abraham state his creed but also gave the argument for it. The reason for not having any connection with the other deities is that they neither have created nor they give right guidance in any matter, nor they can; and the reason for having a connection only with Allah Almighty is that He alone is the Creator and He alone gives, and can give, the right guidance to mankind.

26"The same word" : the word that none but the Creator is worthy of worship in the world.

27That is, "Whenever they swerve from the right path, this word should be there to guide them so that they return to it again. " This event has been mentioned here in order to expose the foolishness of the disbelieving Quraish and to put them to shame, as if to say: "When you have adopted obedience of your ancestors, ,you have selected the most depraved of them for the purpose instead of the most righteous and illustrious, who were the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them). " The basis of the leadership of the Quraish in Arabia was that they were the descendants of the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael and were the attendants of the Ka'bah built by them. Therefore, they should have followed them and not their ignorant forefathers who had given up the way of the Prophets and adopted polytheism from the neighboring idol-worshipers. Furthermore, by mentioning this event another error of those people has been pointed out. That is, if the blind imitation of the fore-fathers, without the distinction of good and evil, had been the right thing, the Prophet Abraham should have done so in the first instance. But he had plainly told his father and his people that he could not follow their creed of ignorance in which they had

abandoned the Creator and made those imaginary beings their deities, who were not the creator. This shows that the Prophet Abraham did not believe in following the forefathers, but his creed was that before one followed the forefathers one should see whether they were following the right way or not, and if it became known by reason that they were following the wrong way, one should give up their way and adopt the way that was proved right.

28Another meaning of the word "rasulum-mubin can be: "A Messenger whose being a Messenger was obvious and apparent: whose lift before and after the Prophet hood clearly testified that he was certainly Allah's Messenger."

29For explanation, see Surah. Al-Anbiya' : 3 and E.N. 5 on it, and E.N. 5 of Surah Suad.

30"The two cities": Makkah and Ta`if. What the disbelievers meant was: "Had Allah really willed to send a messenger and intended to send down a book to him, He would have selected a great man from our these central, cities for the purpose. For Allah could not have selected for this great mission a person who was born an orphan, who did not inherit much property, who passed his youth by tending goats, who even at present earned his living through business with his wife's money, and who was neither the chief of a tribe nor the head of a family. Were not there well known chiefs like Walid bin Mughirah and 'Utbah bin Rabi'ah in Makkah, and nobles like `Urwah bin Mas'ud, Habib bin 'Amr, Kinanah bin 'Abd-i -'Amr and Ibn 'Abd Yalil in Ta'if? This was their reasoning. in the first instance, they were also not inclined to believe that a man could be a Messenger. But when the Qur'an refuted this misconception by argument and reason and they were told that in the past only men had come as Messengers and a man only could be a Messenger for the guidance of the people, and not another kind of being and the Messenger who came did not descend, suddenly from heavens, but were born in the same ordinary dwellings, walked about in the streets, had children and families and stood in need of food and drink (see AnNahl: 43, Bani Isra'il: 94-95, Yusuf: 109, Al-Furqan: 7, 20; Al-Anbiya: 7-8; Ar-Ra'd: 38), they took this stand, saying: "Well, even if a human being, he should be a big man, who should be wealthy, influential and awe-inspiring and having a large following. How could Muhammad bin `Abdullah (upon whom be Allah's peace) be fit for this appointment?"

31This is the answer to their objection, which briefly mentions many important things:

First, it asks: "Since when do these people become responsible for distributing the mercy of your Lord ? Is it for them to decide whom Allah should favor with His mercy and whom He should not ? (Here, by Allah's mercy is implied His general mercy from which everyone has a share).

Second, Allah says: Prophethood is a great blessing: We have even kept the distribution of the common means of life in the world in Our own hand, and have not entrusted it to anyone else. We create someone beautiful and another ugly, someone with a sweet voice and another with a harsh voice, someone robust

and strong and another weak and frail, someone intelligent and another dull, someone with a strong memory and another forgetful, some with healthy limbs and another a cripple, or blind or deaf and dumb, someone in a rich family and another among the poor, someone in an advanced country and another in a backward community. No one can do anything about this destiny concerning birth. One is compelled to be what We have made him. And it is in no one's power to avert the impact one's circumstances of birth have on one's destiny. Then it is We our self Who arc distributing provisions, power, honor, fame, wealth, government, etc. among men. No one can degrade the one whom We have blessed with good fortune, and no one can save from ruin the one whom We have afflicted with misfortune. All plans and schemes of man become ineffective against Our decrees. In this universal Divine System, therefore, how can these people decide as to whom should the Master of the universe make His Prophet and whom He should not?

Thirdly, "An abiding principle that We have kept in view in this Divine System is that everything should not be given to one and the same person, or everything should not be given to everybody. If you look around carefully, you will see that great differences exist between the people in every respect. We have given one thing to one person but deprived him of another, and given the same to another one. This is based on the wisdom that no human being should become independent of others, but everyone should remain dependent on the other in one way or the other. Now if would be foolish on your part to think that We should have given the Prophet hood also to the same person whom We had blessed with wealth and nobility. Likewise, will you also say that wisdom, knowledge, wealth, beauty, power, authority and all other excellences should be assembled in one and the same person, and the one who has not been given one thing, should not be given anything else?"

32"Your Lord's mercy": the Prophet hood. It means: "Your leaders and chiefs whom you regard as big people because of their wealth and dignity and chief ship, arc not worthy of this wealth, which has been given to Muhammad bin 'Abdullah (upon whom be Allah's peace). This wealth is far superior to that and for this the criterion is different. If you think that every noble and rich man is worthy of becoming a prophet, it would only show your own thinking. Why do you expect Allah to be so ignorant and simple?"

33That is, "This silver and gold whose possession by somebody is the highest blessing and the very climax of good fortune in your sight, is so base and contemptible a thing in the sight of Allah that had there been no danger of all human beings being inclined towards unbelief, He would have made every disbeliever's house of gold and silver. Since when has the abundance of this worthless commodity become proof of man's nobility and his piety and his spiritual purity? This kind of wealth is even found in the possession of those foul and wicked people whose filthy characters make the whole society stink. And this you have made the criterion of man's greatness of character. "

34"Dhikr of the Merciful" : His remembrance as well as His admonition and the Qur'an.

35That is, "In this there is no aspect of consolation for you that the one who misguided you is being

punished, for you also are receiving the same punishment for accepting and following the deviation. "

36It means to say: "Pay attention to those who are inclined to listen and have not closed their eyes to the realities, and do not consume yourself in showing the way to the blind and making the deaf to hear, nor consume yourself with the grief as to why your near and dear ones are not coming to the right path, and why they are making themselves worthy of Allah's torment."

37This thing can be understood fully only by keeping in view the background in which it was said. The disbelievers of Makkah thought that the person of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's Peace) had become a source of trouble for them. If they could somehow get rid of him, matters would become normal. On the basis of this evil thought they were holding consultations day and night and planning to kill him. At this, Allah addresses His Prophet so as to tell them indirectly: "It doesn't make any difference whether you remain among them or not: if you live, you will see them meet their doom with your own eyes; if you are recalled from the world, they will be sent to their doom in your absence, because they cannot in any case escape the consequences of their misdeeds. "

38That is, "You should not worry as to what punishment do those who are resisting and opposing the truth with injustice and dishonesty receive and when, nor should you worry whether Islam flourishes during your lifetime or not. For you this satisfaction is quite enough that you are on the Right Path. Therefore, you should go on fulfilling your mission unconcerned about the results, and leave it to Allah whether He defeats falsehood in front of you or after you. "

39That is, "There can be no greater good fortune for a person than that Allah should choose him from among all men to become the recipient of His Book, and there can be no greater good fortune also for a nation than that Allah should raise His Prophet in it, apart from all other nations of the world, and should send down His Book in its tongue, and give it the opportunity to rise as the standard-bearer of Divine Message in the world. If the Quraish and the people of Arabia have no sense of this great honor, and spurn it, a time will come when they will be called upon to account for it."

40"Ask the Messengers": Find out from the Books brought by them. Just as the meaning of: "If there arises any dispute among you about anything, refer it to Allah and His Prophet," is not that the dispute should be taken before Allah and His Messenger, but that one should turn to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger for a decision, so "asking the Messengers" also does not mean that one should approach all the Messengers who have left the world and ask them, but the right meaning is: "Discover what teachings the Messengers of Allah have left in the world as to which of them taught that another than Allah also is worthy of worship and service."

41This story has been narrated here for three objects:

(1) That when Allah sends His Prophet to a country and nation and affords it the opportunity which He has now given to the Arabs by appointing the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) to Prophet hood, and it, instead of taking advantage of it, commits the folly of Pharaoh and his people, it meets the same. fate which has become an object lesson in history.

(2) That just as Pharaoh also on account of his arrogance and pride of kingdom and grandeur and wealth and possessions had belittled the Prophet Moses as mean and contemptible, so the unbelieving Quraish now are regarding Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) as insignificant as against their chiefs. But God's judgment was different which ultimately proved who was really great.

(3) That to mock Allah's Revelations and show stubbornness against His warnings is not a mere joke, but a very serious sin. If you do not learn a lesson from the fate of those who have been doomed on account of this, you also would go to your doom on account of the same."

42This implies the signs with which the Prophet Moses had gone to the court of Pharaoh, i.e. the Signs of the staff and the shining hand. (For explanation, see AI-A'raf: 107-108, Ta Ha: 20-22, Ash-Shu'ara: 32-33, An Naml: 10-12, Al-Qasas: 31-32).

43This implies the Signs which Allah showed them through the Prophet Moses afterwards, and these were the following:

(1) A public encounter of Allah's Prophet with the magicians, who believed after their defeat. For details, see Al-A'raf: 112-126, Ta Ha: 68-73. Ash Shu'ara: 37-51.

(2) A severe famine which hit the land of Egypt according to the Prophet Moses' announcement and which left the country only on his prayer.

(3) Dreadful rain and hail-storms accompanied by lightning and thunder struck the country even as the Prophet had announced, which destroyed the crops and dwellings and which also was removed only on his prayer.

(4) The sudden appearance of locusts in the land. This calamity also was not removed till the Prophet prayed to Allah.

(5) Lice and weavils spread throughout the country according to the announcement made by Moses, which afflicted men and animals on the one hand, and destroyed granaries on the other. This torment also was averted when the Prophet Moses was requested to pray for its removal.

(6) Frogs appeared everywhere in the country according to the warning given by Moses, which put the

whole population to great distress; this calamity also did not retreat till the Prophet prayed for it.

(7) The torment of blood appeared precisely as foretold by Moses, which turned the water of all canals, wells, springs, pools and cisterns into blood. The fish died and the water smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink from it for a full week. This evil also was averted when the Prophet Moses was asked to pray for its removal. For details, see Al A'raf: 130-136. An-Naml: 12 and E.N. 37 of Al-Mu'min.

Chapters 7 to 10 of Exodus also contain the details of these calamities, but it is a combination of gossip and truth. It says that when the calamity of blood appeared, the magicians also worked a similar miracle, but when the calamity of the lice came, the magicians could not produce lice in response, and they said that it was God's work. Even more strange than this is that when the storm of the frogs came, the magicians also brought about frogs, but in spite of that Pharaoh requested only the Prophet Moses to pray to God to take away the frogs. The question is when the magicians could produce frogs, why didn't Pharaoh get the frogs taken away through them? And how did it become known which of the frogs were Allah's work and which of the magicians'? The same question arises about the blood. When according to the warning of Moses water became blood everywhere, which water did the magicians turn into blood? And how was it known that the water of a particular place had turned blood by the power of the magicians? Such are the things which show that the Bible does not consist of purely Divine revelation, but the people who wrote it mixed up many things in it from their own imagination. The pity, however, is that the authors also were people of ordinary intelligence, who did not even know how to invent a story.

44The stubbornness of Pharaoh and the chiefs of his people can be judged from the fact that when distressed by the torment they wanted the Prophet Moses to pray for its removal, even then they did not recognize him as a Prophet but addressed him as a magician, whereas they were not unaware of the truth about magic, and they also knew that those miraculous things could not be brought about by the power of magic. The most that a magician can do is that in a limited area he can so influence the people present in front of him as to make them feel that water has become blood, or frogs are coming out in large numbers or swarms of locusts are advancing. And within this limited place also no water will actually become blood, but water will remain water as soon as it comes outside it; no frog will be produced in actual fact, but will prove to be an imaginary thing as soon as brought outside the circle; locusts also would be imaginary: they would not be able to destroy any crop. As for this that a famine appears throughout a country, or that the canals and springs and wells of the country are filled with blood, or that swarms of locusts spread over thousands of square miles and eat up crops growing over lakhs of acres, this has neither been accomplished by a magician so far, nor can it ever happen by the power of magic. Should such magicians be there in the service of a king, he need not keep forces and fight wars; he could conquer the whole world by the power of magic. Even if the magicians possessed such power, they would not seek service under the kings, but would assume kingship themselves.

The commentators in general have been perplexed as to why Pharaoh and his courtiers addressed the Prophet Moses as "O sorcerer," when they requested him to pray for the removal of the calamity, for the

one who seeks another's help in a hard time flatters him and does not condemn him. They have given the interpretation that sorcery in the Egypt of those days was held as a very respectable art, and when they addressed Moses as "O sorcerer" they did not condemn him, but honored him because it amounted w calling him as "O Learned man" But this interpretation is absolutely wrong on the ground that wherever at other places in the Qur'an Pharaoh's sayings have been cited in which he had called the Prophet Moses a sorcerer and the miracles presented by him sorcery, the sense of condemnation and contempt becomes apparent, and it becomes manifestly clear that sorcery was false in his sight, which he imputed to the Prophet Moses so as to prove his claim to the Prophet hood to be false !Therefore, it cannot be acceptable that suddenly at this time "sorcerer" became the title of an honorable and Learned man in his sight. As for the question: Why did the Prophet Moses accede to his request at all when even while requesting him for the prayer, Pharaoh insulted him publicly, the answer is that the object before the Prophet Moses was to strengthen the case against those people by Allah's command. Their request to him to pray for the removal of the torment by itself proved that in their heart of hearts they had come to know why the torments were occurring, who was sending them and who could avert them. In spite of that, when they called him a "sorcerer" stubbornly, and went back on their word of following the right way as soon as the torment was averted, they in fact, did not do any harm to Allah's Prophet, but only caused the case and argument to be strengthened against themselves, which Allah at last decided against them with their total destruction. When they called him a sorcerer, this did not mean that they believed in their hearts as well that the torments against them were coming by the power of sorcery, but they realized it fully well that those were Allah's Signs and yet they denied them deliberately. The same thing has been said in Surah An-Naml: 14: "They rejected those Signs out of sheer injustice and vanity, whereas in their heart of hearts they were convinced. "

45Pharaoh probably sent heralds to the cities and towns throughout the country to proclaim what he said in his address to his ministers and courtiers in the capital. Pharaoh could not have availed of the services of a sycophantic press, controlled news agencies and official radio.

46The words of the proclamation clearly show that ground was slipping from under the Pharaoh's feet. The miracles performed one after the other by the Prophet Moses had caused the common people's beliefs in their gods to waver and the Pharaoh's spell under which their dynasty was ruling over Egypt as representatives of the gods, was shattered. Thereupon, Pharaoh cried out: "O wretched people, can't you see who is ruling over this land and under whose control are the canals which have been dug out from the Nile, upon which depends your whole economy ? All these developments in this country have been brought about by me and my predecessors, but you arc being devoted, charmed and fascinated by this pauper! "

47"Wretched person" : the person who has neither wealth, power nor authority. This same objection had been raised by the disbelieving Quraish against the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace).

48Some commentators have expressed the opinion that Pharaoh referred to the impediment of speech from which the Prophet Moses suffered since childhood. But this is not a correct opinion. As has been mentioned in Surah Ta Ha above, when the Prophet Moses was being appointed to Prophet hood, he had implored Allah Almighty to remove the defect from his tongue so that the people might understand his speech, and at that very time his request had also been granted along with his other requests (vv. 27-36). Moreover, orations of the Prophet Moses that have been cited at different places in the Qur'an, point to his perfect eloquence and fluency. Therefore, the basis of Pharaoh's objection was not any impediment of speech from which Moses might be suffering but what he meant was: "This person talks confusedly at least I have never been able to understand what he says."

49In the ancient times when a person was appointed to be governor of a land or sent as an ambassador to a foreign country, a robe of honor was conferred on him by the king, which also included bracelets of gold, and he was also accompanied by a contingent of soldiers and servants for over-awing the people and for showing the glory and grandeur of the king who had appointed him. What Pharaoh meant to say was: "If the King of the heavens had really sent Moses (peace be upon him) as His ambassador to His counterpart on the earth, he should have been dressed in a robe of honor and come with several contingents of angels in attendance. How strange that a poor man should appear with a staff in his hand and say that he was the messenger of the Lord of the worlds!"

50A tremendous reality has been expressed in this brief sentence. When a person wishes to become autocratic in a country, and contrives every plan openly to achieve his object-practices every deception and trick, buys and sells consciences, and persecutes and crushes ruthlessly those who cannot be purchased-he, in fact, shows by his actions, whatever he may say to the contrary, that he takes the people of the country to be light as regards their intellect, morals and manliness, and has formed the impression that he can drive the foolish, unscrupulous and cowardly people wherever he likes. Then, when he has succeeded in his designs and the people have become his obedient servants, they prove by their conduct and behavior that they are actually what the wicked man had taken them to be, and the main cause of their depravity is that they arc basically a "sinful people." They are not in the least concerned as to what is the truth and what is falsehood, what is justice and what is injustice, whether the noble traits of character are truthfulness and honesty or falsehood and dishonesty and meanness. Instead of this, only their personal interests are of real importance to them, for the sake of which they remain ever ready to cooperate with every wicked person, to yield to every tyrant, to accept every falsehood and to suppress every protest that is voiced in favor of the truth.

51That is, "They are a precedent for those who do not learn any lesson from their example, and an object lesson for those who are keen to learn a lesson. "

52In verse 45 above, it was said: "You may ask all other Messengers whom We sent before you whether We had appointed any other gods to be worshiped beside the Merciful God." When this discourse was

being presented before the people of Makkah, a person called `Abdullah ibn az-Ziba'ra in the traditions, put forward the objection: "Well, is it not a fact that the Christians regard the son of Mary as the son of God and worship him ? What is then wrong with our gods?" This caused much laughter among the crowd of the disbelievers and they started clamoring for an answer to this objection. But at this foolish behavior, the continuity of the revelation was not broken, but was first completed and then the objection of the questioner was taken up. (It should be borne in mind that this incident has been reported in the books of commentaries in different ways which contain great variations, but after a study of the context and the traditions the real incident in our view is the same as we have mentioned above).

53"Making an example of Our power" implies causing the Prophet Jesus to be born without a father, and then granting him such miracles as had not been granted to anyone before him nor to anyone after him. He would make a bird of clay and then breathe into it and it would become a living bird; he would give sight to those born blind; he would cure the lepers; so much so that he would raise the dead back to life. What Allah means to say is: "It is wrong to worship him as son of God and regard him as above servitude only because of his extraordinary birth and the great miracles granted to him. He was no more than a mere servant, whom We had blessed and made an example of Our power." (For details, see Al`Imran: 42-49, 59; An-Nisa: 156; Al-Ma`idah: 17, 110; Maryam: 17-35; AlAnbiya`: 91, Al-Mu'minun: 50).

54Another translation can be: ".....make some of you angels.

55Another translation of this sentence can be: "He is a means of the knowledge of Resurrection." Here the question arises: What is implied by "he¦? According to Hadrat Hasan Basri and Said bin Jubair it implies the Quran. That is, one can learn from the Qur'an that Resurrection will come. But this commentary is irrelevant to the context. There is nothing in the context on the basis of which it may be said that it refers to the Qur'an. Other commentators almost unanimous]y have expressed the opinion that it implies the prophet Jesus Christ, and this is suitable to the context. Now the question is: In what sense has Jesus Christ been called a Sign or a means of the knowledge of Resurrection? Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Qatadah, Suddi, Dahhak, Abul `Aliyah and Abu Malik say that this refers to the second coming of the Prophet Jesus as has been foretold in a large number of the Traditions, and the verse means that when he comes the second time to the world, it wilt become known that Resurrection is not far behind. But in spite of the great authority that these scholars hold it is difficult to believe that in this verse the second advent of the Prophet Jesus has been called a Sign of Resurrection, or a means of its knowledge. For it is contradicted by the next verse. His second advent, indeed, can be a means of the knowledge of Resurrection only for those people who will be living in that future period or will be born after that. How could he be regarded as a means of the knowledge for the pagans of Makkah, who are being asked "not to have any doubt about it"? Therefore, the correct interpretation in our opinion is the one that has been given by some other commentators, according to which the Prophet Jesus' birth without a father and his making a bird out of clay and his raising the dead back to life has been presented as a proof of the possibility of Resurrection. So, the Divine Words would mean: why do you think it is impossible for God to raise you and all mankind from death when He can create a child without a father

and a servant of His can breathe life into an image of clay and raise the dead back to life?"

56" ..... hinder you from this" : hinder you from believing in Resurrection.

57That is, "The Prophet Jesus himself had never claimed that he was God or son of God, and that the people should worship him, but, on the contrary, his message was the same as of all other Prophets, the same as was now being conveyed to you through Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace)." (For explanation, see Al-`Imran: 50-51, An-Nisa: 171-172, Al-Ma'idah: 72, 116-117, Maryam: 30-36).

58That is, one group of the people denied him and in their antagonism went to the extent of accusing him of illegitimate birth and got him crucified as they thought; the other group believed in him but owing to exaggerated reverence made him son of God, and then the question of man's being God became such a riddle for it that every effort to resolve it caused it to be divided into countless sects. (For explanation, see An-Nisa: 171, AI-Ma'idah 17, 77,116-117 and the corresponding E.N.'s),

59In other words, only those friendships will remain unaffected which are based on righteousness and piety in the world; all other friendships will turn into enmities, and those who are cooperating with one another in deviation, tyranny and wickedness today, will on the Day of Resurrection, put the blame on others and try to escape. This subject has been treated repeatedly at many places in the Qur'an so that every person in this very world may fully realize with whom it would be beneficial for him to cooperate and with whom it is harmful.

60The word azwaj as used in the original can be used both for the wives and for those people who are a person's close associates, friends and peers. This comprehensive word has been used so as to cover both the meanings. The believers will be accompanied both by their believing wives and by their believing friends in Paradise.

61"Malik" : a keeper of Hell as is evident from the context.

62That is, "We made the reality plain to you, but you were fond of the imaginary, and you had an aversion to the truth. Now, why do you lament at the fate of your foolish choice?" It may be a part of the Hell-keeper's answer, and it may also be that his answer ended with: "Here you must remain ! " and this second sentence an addition by Allah. In the first case, the keeper's saying: "We had brought the Truth to you," is just like an official's using the word "we" on behalf of his government, when he wants to say, "Our government did this or gave such and such an order. "

63The allusion is to the plans that the chiefs of the Quraish were devising in their secret assemblies in order to take a decisive action against the Holy Prophet.

64It means: "My rejection of somebody's being God's offspring and my refusal to worship those whom you regard as His offspring is not due to any stubbornness and obduracy. My reason for the refusal is only this that God has no son or daughter, and your such beliefs are against the reality; otherwise I am such a faithful servant of my Lord that if at all the reality had been the same as you state I would have submitted myself in worship before you. "

65That is, "The gods of the heavens and the earth are not separate, but there is only One God of the entire universe. It is His wisdom that is working in the whole system of the universe and only He has the knowledge of all realities."

66That is, "He is far above it that another should be His associate in Godhead and may have any share whatever in ruling this great universe. Whatever is there in the earth and the heavens, whether the Prophets, the saints, the angels, jinn, spirits, stars or planets, they are His servants and slaves and subjects.. It is impossible for them to be characterized with a Divine attribute or be possessed with a Divine power."

67That is, "You may have taken anyone as your helper and patron in the world, but after death you will have to face only One God and render an account of your deeds before Him alone."

68This sentence has several meanings:

(1) Those whom the people have made their deities in the world, will not at all be their intercessors before Allah. Those of them who were wicked, will themselves be presented as culprits there. However, those who had borne witness to the Truth by virtue of knowledge (and not unconsciously) will certainly be able to intercede for others.

(2) Those who will be permitted to intercede, will be able to do so only for those who had testified to the Truth consciously (and not heedlessly). They will neither intercede of their own will, nor will have the permission to intercede for anyone who had gone and been led astray from the Truth in the world, or had been affirming the faith in Allah as the only Deity unconsciously as well as serving other deities at the same time

(3) If a person says that those whom he has made gods necessarily possess the powers of intercession, and they wield such an influence with Allah that they can have anyone they like forgiven, irrespective of his beliefs and deeds, is totally wrong. No one enjoys such a position with Allah. If the one who claims that another has such powers of intercession, can testify to the truth of this matter by virtue of knowledge, one should have the courage to say so. But if one is not in a position to bear such a testimony, and one is certainly not, it would be sheer folly to invent such a creed on the basis of mere hearsay, or conjecture, and risk one's life hereafter relying only on an imaginary support.

Incidentally, this verse also gives two important principles: First, it shows that bearing a testimony to the truth without knowledge may be reliable in the world, but it is not so before Allah. In the world, whoever affirms the Faith verbally will be regarded as a Muslim and treated as such unless he openly commits an act expressly contradictory to belief. But as before Allah only such a one will be counted as a Muslim, who has uttered Lailaha ill-Allah consciously, with full understanding of what he is denying and what he is affirming according to his best knowledge.

Secondly, it gives this principle of the law of evidence that knowledge is a pre-requisite of bearing the evidence. If the bearer of an evidence has no knowledge of the event to which he is bearing evidence, his evidence is meaningless. The same is borne out by a decision given by the Holy Prophet. He said to a witness: "If you saw what happened with your own eyes as you are seeing the sun, then you may bear the witness, otherwise not." (Ahkam al-Qur an by al Jassas). "

69This verse has two meanings:

(1) "If you ask them who has created them, they will say: Allah"; and

(2) "If you ask them who is the Creator of their gods, they will say: Allah."

70This is one of the most difficult verses of the Qur'an as it involves the complicated syntactic question of the kind of waw that has been used in wa qil-i-hi. From the translation of Shah 'Abdul Qadir it appears that the waw here is not conjunctive but for taking oath, and is related to fa-anna yu'fakun, and the pronoun in gili-hi turns to the Holy Prophet of Allah. Therefore, the verse means this: "By this saying of the Messenger: `O my Lord, these are a people who would not believe'": they are so utterly deluded that although they themselves admit that Allah alone is their Creator and Creator of their gods, yet they abandon the Creator and persist in worshiping His creatures."

The object of swearing by this saying of the Messenger is that the conduct of the people clearly shows that they are, in fact, stubborn, for the foolishness of their attitude is apparent from their own admission, and such an irrational attitude can be adopted only by such a person, who is resolved not to believe. In other words, the oath implies: `The Messenger has rightly said so: indeed these people world not believe,"

71That is, "You should neither curse them for their scornful words and attitude of mockery and derision, nor respond with harsh words: just wish them well and take your leave."

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44. Surah Ad Dukhan (The Smoke)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *dukhan* which occurs in verse 10.

Period of Revelation

Its period of revelation also could not be determined from any authentic tradition, but the internal evidence of the subject matter shows that this Surah too was sent down in the same period in which Surah Zukhruf and a few other earlier Surahs had been revealed. However, this Surah was sent down somewhat later. Its historical background is this: When the disbelievers of Makkah became more and more antagonistic in their attitude and conduct, the Holy Prophet prayed: O God, help me with a famine like the famine of Joseph. He thought that when the people would be afflicted with a calamity, they would remember God, their hearts would soften and they would accept the admonition. Allah granted his prayer, and the whole land was overtaken by such a terrible famine that the people were sorely distressed. At last, some of the Quraish chiefs among whom Hadrat Abdullah bin Masud has particularly mentioned the name of Abu Sufyan came to the Holy Prophet and requested him to pray to Allah to deliver his people from the calamity. On this occasion Allah sent down this Surah.

Subject Matter and Topics

The introduction to the address revealed on this occasion for the admonition and warning of the people of Makkah contained some important points, which are as follows:

1. "You, O People of Makkah, are wrong in thinking that the Quran is being composed by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). This Book by itself bears the clear testimony that it is not the composition of a man but of Allah, Lord of the worlds."

2. "You are making a wrong estimate of the worth of this Book. You think it is a calamity that has descended

on you, whereas the Hour when Allah, out of sheer mercy, decided to send His Messenger and His Book to you was highly blessed."

3. "You are foolishly involved in the misunderstanding that you will fight this Messenger and this Book and will win, whereas the fact is that the Messenger has been raised and the Book sent down in that particular Hour when Allah decides the destinies, and Allah's decisions are not so weak that they may be changed to a person's liking, nor are they based on ignorance and folly that there may be the likelihood of a mistake or error or weakness in them. They are rather the firm and unalterable decisions of the Ruler of the Universe, Who is All Hearing, All Knowing and All Wise. Therefore, they cannot be treated lightly.

4. "You yourselves acknowledge that Allah alone is the Master and Lord of the earth and heavens and of everything in the Universe and also admit that life and death are only in His power, yet you insist on making others your deities, for which the only argument you offer is that that had been the practice since the time of your forefathers, whereas if a person has the conviction that Allah alone is the Master, Sustainer and Giver of life and death, he can never entertain the doubt that there can be other gods also beside Him, who can be worthy of worship. If your forefathers had committed this folly, there is no reason why you also should continue committing it blindly. As a matter of fact, their Lord too was only One God, Who is your Lord, and they also should have worshiped only Him, Whom you should worship."

5. "The only demand of Allah's Providence and Mercifulness is not this that He should feed you, but also this that He should arrange guidance for you. For this very guidance He has sent His Messenger and His Book."

After this introduction, the question of the famine that was raging in Makkah has been discussed. As already mentioned, this famine had occurred on the Holy Prophet's prayer, and he had prayed for it so that when the calamity befell it would break the stubbornness of the disbelievers and then they would listen to the rebuke. It looked as if this expectation was being fulfilled to some extent, for some of the most stubborn enemies of the Truth, on account of the severities of the famine, had cried out: "O Lord, avert this torment from us and we will believe." At this, on the one hand, the Holy Prophet has been foretold :"These people will not learn any lesson from such calamities. When they have turned away from the Messenger, whose life, character, works and speech clearly show that he is Allah's true Messenger, how will a mere famine help remove their disbelief?" On the other, the unbelievers have been addressed, so as to say : "You lie when you say that you will believe as soon as the torment is removed from you. We shall just remove it to see how sincere you are in your promise. There is a graver disaster about to fall upon you. You need a much more crushing blow :minor misfortunes cannot set you right."

In this very connection, a reference has been made a little below to Pharaoh and his people, implying that those people also had met with precisely the same trial as the chiefs of the disbelieving Quraish are now afflicted. To them also a similar noble and honorable Messenger had come; they also had seen those express pointers and signs which clearly showed that he had been appointed by Allah; they also had gone on witnessing one sign after the other but they did not give up their stubbornness, till at last they made up their mind to put an end to the Messenger's life, and they met their doom, which has since become an object lesson for the people for ever.

After this the theme of the Hereafter has been taken up, which the disbelievers of Makkah vehemently denied. They

said: "We have never seen anyone rising back to life after death. Raise our forefathers back to life if you are true in your claim about the life hereafter." In response to this, two arguments for the Hereafter have been presented briefly (1) That the denial of this creed has always proved destructive for the morals; and (2) that the universe is not a plaything of a thoughtless deity, but it is a wise system and no work of wisdom is ever vain or useless. Then the disbelievers demand to bring their forefathers back to life has been answered, thus : "This cannot be done every day to meet the demand of the individuals, but Allah has appointed a time when He will resurrect all mankind simultaneously and will subject them to accountability in His Court. If one has to protect oneself there, one should think about it here. For no one will be able to save himself there by his own power, nor by the power of any one else."

In connection with this Court of Allah, mention has been made of the fate of those who will be declared as culprits and of the rewards of those who will be declared as successful. The discourse has been concluded with this warning: "This Quran has been revealed in simple language in your own tongue so that you may understand it; yet if you do not understand it and insist on seeing your evil end, you may wait; Our Prophet too is waiting. Whatever is to happen, will happen at its own appointed time."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

حٰمٓ ﴿١﴾

وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ فِى لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَٰرَكَةٍ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ ﴿٣﴾

فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

أَمْرًا مِّنْ عِندِنَآ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾

رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦﴾

رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُم مُّوقِنِينَ ﴿٧﴾

لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۖ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨﴾

بَلْ هُمْ فِى شَكٍّ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[1-9] Ha-Mim. By this lucid Book. We have sent it down in a highly blessed night, for We intended to warn the people.[1] This was a night in which every matter is decided wisely[2] by Our Command.[3] We had to send a Messenger, as a mercy from your Lord.[4] Indeed, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing,[5] Lord of the heavens and the earth, and Lord of all that lies between them, if you would really believe.[6] There is no god but He.[7] It is He Who gives life and death.[8] He is your Lord and Lord of your ancestors who have gone before.[9] (But, in fact, they have no faith) Nay, they play about in doubt.[10]

فَٱرۡتَقِبۡ يَوۡمَ تَأۡتِي ٱلسَّمَآءُ بِدُخَانٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿١٠﴾

يَغۡشَى ٱلنَّاسَۖ هَٰذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ﴿١١﴾

رَّبَّنَا ٱكۡشِفۡ عَنَّا ٱلۡعَذَابَ إِنَّا مُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

أَنَّىٰ لَهُمُ ٱلذِّكۡرَىٰ وَقَدۡ جَآءَهُمۡ رَسُولٞ مُّبِينٞ ﴿١٣﴾

ثُمَّ تَوَلَّوۡاْ عَنۡهُ وَقَالُواْ مُعَلَّمٞ مَّجۡنُونٌ ﴿١٤﴾

إِنَّا كَاشِفُواْ ٱلۡعَذَابِ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمۡ عَآئِدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

يَوۡمَ نَبۡطِشُ ٱلۡبَطۡشَةَ ٱلۡكُبۡرَىٰٓ إِنَّا مُنتَقِمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

[10-16] Well, wait for the Day when the sky shall appear with a visible smoke, which shall envelope mankind: this is a painful punishment. (Now they say:) "Our Lord, remove this torment from us: we do now believe." How can they rid themselves of their heedlessness? Even when a manifest Messenger[11] came to them, they paid no heed to him, and said, "He is a madman taught by others."[12] Were We to remove the torment a little, you would revert to the same that you were doing before. The Day We inflict the severest stroke shall be the Day when We shall take Our

vengeance.[13]

۞ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَجَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

أَنْ أَدُّوٓاْ إِلَيَّ عِبَادَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾

وَأَن لَّا تَعْلُواْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّيٓ ءَاتِيكُم بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٩﴾

وَإِنِّي عُذْتُ بِرَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ أَن تَرْجُمُونِ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَإِن لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُواْ لِي فَٱعْتَزِلُونِ ﴿٢١﴾

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوْمٌ مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَأَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي لَيْلًا إِنَّكُم مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَٱتۡرُكِ ٱلۡبَحۡرَ رَهۡوًاۖ إِنَّهُمۡ جُندٞ مُّغۡرَقُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

كَمۡ تَرَكُواْ مِن جَنَّٰتٖ وَعُيُونٖ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَزُرُوعٖ وَمَقَامٖ كَرِيمٖ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَنَعۡمَةٖ كَانُواْ فِيهَا فَٰكِهِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

كَذَٰلِكَۖ وَأَوۡرَثۡنَٰهَا قَوۡمًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

فَمَا بَكَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ وَمَا كَانُواْ مُنظَرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَلَقَدۡ نَجَّيۡنَا بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ مِنَ ٱلۡعَذَابِ ٱلۡمُهِينِ ﴿٣٠﴾

مِن فِرۡعَوۡنَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَالِيٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡمُسۡرِفِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

وَلَقَدِ ٱخۡتَرۡنَٰهُمۡ عَلَىٰ عِلۡمٍ عَلَى ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٣٢

وَءَاتَيۡنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِ مَا فِيهِ بَلَٰٓؤٌاْ مُّبِينٌ ٣٣

[17-33] Before them We put the people of Pharaoh to the same test. A noble Messenger[14] came to them, and said,[15] "Deliver to me the servants of Allah.[16] I am a trustworthy Messenger to you.[17] Do not rebel against Allah: I present before you a clear authority[18] (of my appointment), and I have taken refuge in my Lord and your Lord lest you should assault me. If you do not believe in me, do not harm me."[19] At last, he called to his Lord, saying, "These are criminals."[20] (The reply came:) "Set forth with My servants by night[21] for you will be pursued.[22] Leave the sea as it is. The whole host shall be drowned."[23] How many were the gardens and fountains and cornfields and grand palaces that they left behind, and how many means of luxury and comfort, which they used to enjoy! This was their end, and We made others to inherit those things.[24] Then neither did the heaven weep on them nor the earth,[25] and they were not given the least respite. Even so We delivered the children of Israel from an abasing scourge, from Pharaoh,[26] who was indeed a most prominent man among the transgressors,[27] and We exalted them, knowing them to be so, above the other nations of the world,[28] and showed them such Signs as were clearly a trial (for them).[29]

إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَيَقُولُونَ ٣٤

إِنۡ هِيَ إِلَّا مَوۡتَتُنَا ٱلۡأُولَىٰ وَمَا نَحۡنُ بِمُنشَرِينَ ٣٥

فَأۡتُواْ بِـَٔابَآئِنَآ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ٣٦

أَهُمۡ خَيۡرٌ أَمۡ قَوۡمُ تُبَّعٖ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡۚ أَهۡلَكۡنَٰهُمۡۖ إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ مُجۡرِمِينَ ٣٧

وَمَا خَلَقۡنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا لَٰعِبِينَ ٣٨

مَا خَلَقۡنَٰهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَهُمۡ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ٣٩

إِنَّ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡفَصۡلِ مِيقَٰتُهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ٤٠

يَوۡمَ لَا يُغۡنِي مَوۡلًى عَن مَّوۡلٗى شَيۡـٔٗا وَلَا هُمۡ يُنصَرُونَ ٤١

إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ ٱللَّهُۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ٤٢

[34-42] These people say, "There is nothing beyond our first death, and we are not going to be raised back to life.[30] Bring back our forefathers if you are truthful."[31] Are they better or the people of Tubba'[32] and those before them? We destroyed them only because they had become wicked.[33] We have not created the heavens and the earth and whatever lies between them merely in sport: We have created them with the truth, but most of them do not know.[34] For the resurrection of them all, the appointed time is the Day of Decision,[35] the Day when a kinsman shall not avail his kinsman[36] anything at all, nor shall they receive any help from anywhere except that Allah Himself may show His mercy to some one: He is the All-Mighty, the All-Merciful.[37]

إِنَّ شَجَرَتَ ٱلزَّقُّومِ ﴿٤٣﴾

طَعَامُ ٱلْأَثِيمِ ﴿٤٤﴾

كَٱلْمُهْلِ يَغْلِى فِى ٱلْبُطُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾

كَغَلْىِ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾

خُذُوهُ فَٱعْتِلُوهُ إِلَىٰ سَوَآءِ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٤٧﴾

ثُمَّ صُبُّوا۟ فَوْقَ رَأْسِهِۦ مِنْ عَذَابِ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٨﴾

ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْكَرِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾

إِنَّ هَٰذَا مَا كُنتُم بِهِۦ تَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

[43-50] The zaqqum-tree[38] shall be the sinner's food, like the dregs of oil.[39] It will boil in the belly like the boiling of hot water. "Seize him and drag him into the midst of Hell, and pour over his head the chastisement of boiling water. Taste this: a mighty and honorable man that you are! This is the same thing about which you entertained doubts."

إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى مَقَامٍ أَمِينٍ ﴿٥١﴾

فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

يَلْبَسُونَ مِن سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَقَٰبِلِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

كَذَٰلِكَ وَزَوَّجْنَٰهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِكُلِّ فَٰكِهَةٍ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

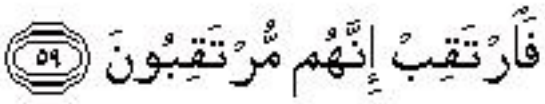
لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا ٱلْمَوْتَ إِلَّا ٱلْمَوْتَةَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ۖ وَوَقَىٰهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾

فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٥٧﴾

[51-57] The God-fearing shall be in a secure place,[40] in the gardens and springs, dressed in silk and brocade,[41]

sitting face to face. Such will be their station! And We shall wed to them fair-complexioned, gazelle-eyed women.[42] There, in full peace, they shall ask for all kinds of tasty things.[43] There they shall never taste death, after their fast death in the world, and Allah by His grace will protect them from the torment of Hell.[44] This is the supreme success!





[58-59] O Prophet. We have made this Book easy in your own tongue so that they may take counsel. Wait then, as they too are waiting.[45]

1The meaning of taking an oath by "the lucid Book" has been explained in E.N. 1 of Surah Zukhruf. Here also what has been sworn by is that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is not the author of this Book but "We", and this Book by itself is enough to provide a proof of this. Furthermore, it has been said chat the night in which it was sent down was full of blessings. That is, the foolish and ignorant people, who have no idea of their own well-being or otherwise, regard the revelation of this Book as a disaster for themselves and are deeply anxious as how to get rid of it. But, as a matter of fact, the Hour when "We" decided to send down this Book to arouse the heedless, was highly blessed for them and for all mankind

Some commentators have expressed the opinion that the meaning of sending down the Qur'an in that night is that its revelation began during that night, and some others think that the whole of the Qur'an was transferred from Umm alKitab and entrusted to the bearers of Revelation (angels), and then revealed to the Holy Prophet as and when required and demanded by the occasion and circumstances during 23 years. As to what actully happened Allah alone has the best knowledge.

The night implies the same night which has been called lailat-ul-qadr in Surah Al-Qadr (97), There it has been said: `We sent it down in a Night of Glory," and here: `We sent it down in a blessed Night." Then the Qur'an itself has told that it was a night of the month of Ramadan (Al-Baqarah).

2The word amr-in-,hakim as used in the Text has two meanings:

(1) That the Command is wholly based on wisdom: there is no likelihood of any error or weakness in it; and

(2) that it is a firm and stable decision: it lies in no one's power to change it.

3In Surah AI-Qadr, this same thing has been expressed thus: `The angels and the Spirit (Angel Gabriel) descend in it with every decree, by the leave of their Lord." This shows that it is such a Night in the Divine administration of Allah in which He decides the destinies of the individuals and nations and countries and entrusts His decisions to His angels, who then implement them accordingly. Some commentators among whom Hadrat `Ikrimah is most prominent, have been involved in the misunderstanding that this is the 15th night of Sha'ban, for in some traditions it has been said that the destinies of people are decided during that night. But Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn `Umar, Mujahid, Qatadah, Hasan Basri, Sa' id bin Jubair, Ibn Zaid, Abu Malik, Dahhak and many other commentators are agreed that this is the same night of Ramadan, which has been called lailat-ul-qadr, for the Qur'an itself has stated this, and where any Qur'anic statement exists, no other view can be formed on the basis of random reports. Ibn Kathir says, "The traditions that Imam Zuhri has related from 'Uthman bin Muhammad that destinies are decided from one Sha`ban to the next Sha`ban is an indirect tradition and such traditions cannot be cited as against the clear texts of the Qur'an. " Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-`Arabi says: "No Hadith in respect of the 15th of Sha'ban is reliable, either in respect of its merit, or about this that decisions with regard to the destinies are taken in it; therefore, they do not merit attention, (Ahkam ul-Qur'an).

4That is, "It was not only a demand of wisdom to send a Messenger with. this Book but also of Allah's mercy, for He is the Providence, and Providence requires that not only should arrangements be made for nourishing the servants' bodies but they should also be afforded right guidance by knowledge, that they should be made aware of the distinction between right and wrong and that they should not be left wandering in darkness."

5The object of mentioning these two attributes of Allah in this context is to warn the people of the truth that He alone can give correct knowledge for He alone knows all the realities. Not to speak of one man, even if all men join to determine a way of lift for themselves, there can be no guaranty of its being the right way, for even the whole of mankind together cannot become all-hearing and all-knowing. It does not lie in its power to comprehend all those realities whose knowledge is essential for determining a correct way of life. This knowledge is only with Allah: He alone is All-Hearing and AII-Knowing. Therefore, He alone can tell what is guidance for Man and what is falsehood, what is the Truth and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil.

6The Arabs themselves admitted that Allah alone is the Lord (Master and Providence) of the Universe and of everything in it. Therefore, it has been said to them: "If you arc not admitting only verbally but are really conscious of His being the Providence and are convinced of His being the Master, you should admit that: (1) It is the very demand of His Mercifulness and Providence that He should send a Hook and a Messenger for the guidance of man; and (2) it is His right as the Master and your duty as His servants that you should obey every Guidance and submit to every Command that comes from Him. "

7The real God Who alone has the right that He should be worshiped and served.

8That is, "There is no god other than Allah, nor can there be. Therefore, it is against reason that you should disdain the worship of Him Who breathed life into dead matter and made you a living man, and Who possesses full powers to keep you alive as long as He likes and bring your life to an end whenever He likes, or you serve any other than Him, or start worshiping others besides Him."

9There is a subtle allusion in it to this: "He was also Lord of those of your ancestors who took other gods besides Allah; they had not done the right thing by giving up their real Lord and serving others that you should be justified in imitating them and regard their conduct as an argument for the soundness of your creed. They ought to have served only Him, because He alone was their Lord.

10In this brief sentence an allusion has been made to an important truth. Even atheists or polytheists do come across occasions when their bean from within says; There is somewhere some weakness in the creed that you have adopted. The atheist may apparently be very firm in his denial of God, his heart at one or the other time does bear the testimony that this wonderful and wise system which extends from the particle of dust to the galaxies and from a blade of grass to the creation of man, could not come into existence without an All-Wise Designer. Likewise, a polytheist may be deeply submerged in his polytheism, his heart also sometimes cries out: Those whom you have adopted as deities cannot be God. But this testimony of the heart neither leads the atheist and the polytheist to the conviction about, the existence and Oneness of God, nor to conviction and satisfaction about their creed of atheism and polytheism itself. Instead, their religion, in fact, is based on doubt, no matter how convinced they might appear to be of its truth. As for the question: Why doesn't this doubt make them restless, and why don't, they seek the truth seriously so as to obtain a satisfactory ground for their convictions? the answer is: they lack seriousness in religious matters. W hat they really regard as important are the worldly earnings and acquisitions and their enjoyment, in search of which they expend all their powers and abilities of the heart and mind and body. As for the religious matters, they are in fact no more than fun, a mere pastime, amusement, or a mental diversion for them, for which they cannot spare even a few moments of serious study. Religious rites are being performed as an entertainment; discussions about denial and atheism are being engaged in as an amusement; no one can spare a few moments from his worldly pursuits to consider whether he has turned away from the Truth, and if so, what would be its consequences.

11Rasul-i-mubin has two meanings:

(1) His being a Messenger is quite evident from his character, his morals and his works; and

(2) he has made every effort to make the truth plain and clear.

12What they meant was: "This was a simple man, some others have incited and deceived him: they

secretly forge and teach him verses of the Qur'an, and he comes and recites them before the people: they sit back in peace and leave him alone to receive the abuses and be pelted with stones." They would make a mockery of all the arguments, the admonitions and the serious teachings which the Holy Prophet had been presenting since several years and was growing weary. Neither they paid any attention to the rational things being expressed in the Qur'an .nor recognized the extraordinary character of the man who was presenting them, nor took any trouble to think what nonsense they were uttering when they imputed such things to the Holy prophet. Obviously, if there had been another person who gave .secret instruction to the Holy Prophet, he could not have remained hidden from Hadrat Khadijah and Abu Bakr, 'Ali and Zaid bin Harithah and other early Muslims, who were the closest and constant Companions of the Holy Prophet. Then, how it is that these very people only became his most devoted and dedicated followers, whereas if the business of prophethood had depended on the secret instruction of sonic other person, these very people would have been in the forefront to oppose him (For further explanation, see An-Nahl: 103, Al-Furqan: 4-6 and the corresponding E.N.'s).

13The commentators have seriously disputed the meaning of these verses, and the difference of opinion existed even in the time of the Companions. Masruq, the well-known pupil of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, states: One day when we entered the mosque of Kufah, we saw a preacher addressing the people. He recited the verse: Yauma ta'tis-sama-u bidukhan-im-mubin, then asked: "Do you know what kind of smoke it is ? This smoke will appear on the Day of Resurrection and will make the disbelievers and the hypocrites blind and deaf, but the believers will be affected only to the extent as if they had caught cold.' Hearing this commentary we went to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud and reported to him what the preacher had said. Hadrat 'Abdullah at that time was lying down. On hearing this commentary he sat up startled and said: "When a person does not have the knowledge he should ask those who have it. The fact is that when the people of the Quraish went on refusing to accept Islam and continued to oppose the Holy Prophet, the Holy Prophet prayed: O God, help me with a famine like the famine of Joseph (peace be upon him); consequently, a very severe famine overtook Makkah and the people were forced to eat bones, skins and carrion. The conditions became so bad that whoever looked up to the sky would see nothing but smoke due to intensity of hunger. At last, Abu Sufyan came to the Holy Prophet and said: "You tell the people to treat their kindred kindly: your own people are starving: kindly pray to God to remove this calamity." This was the time when the people of the Quraish had started saying: "O God, if You remove this torment from us, we will believe." This same event has been referred to in these verses; and the severest blow implies the calamity that was inflicted on the Quraish in the Battle of Badr. " This tradition has been related by Imam Ahmad, Bukhari Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim from Masruq with several chains of authorities. Besides Masruq, Ibrahim Nakha'i Qatadah. `Asim and 'Amir also have related that Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud had given the same commentary of this verse. Therefore there cannot be any doubt that Ibn Mas'ud actually held this same opinion. Among the immediate followers of the Companions, Mujahid, Qatadah. Abul 'Aliyah, Muqatil, Ibrahim Nakha'i, Dahhak and 'Atiyyah al-'Aufi and others havc also concurred with Ibn Mas'ud in this commentary.

On the contrary, scholars like Hadrat 'Ali, Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Said Khudri, Zaid bin 'Ali, and

Hasan Basri say that in these verses mention has been made of the time just before Resurrection, and the smoke that has been foretold will envelop the earth at that time. This commentary is further strengthened by the Traditions that have been reported from the Holy Prophet. Hudhaifah bin Asid al-Ghifari says: One day when we were talking about Resurrection, the Holy Prophet came out to us and said: "Resurrection will not be established till ten Signs have appeared one after the other: Rising of the sun in the west, smoke, the beast, emergence of God and Magog, descent of Jesus son of Mary, sinking of the earth in the East, in the West and in the Arabian Peninsula, and the appearance of a fire from Yemen, which will drive the people away." (Muslim) This is confirmed by Abu Malik Ash`ari's tradition which has been related by Ibn Jarir and Tabarani, and Abu Said Khudri's tradition which has been related by Ibn Abi Hatim. Both these traditions show that the Holy Prophet regarded the smoke as one of the Signs of Resurrection and also said that when that smoke will spread, it will affect the believer only like a cold, but will infuse every nerve of the disbeliever and come out from every part of his body.

A study of the verses under consideration can remove the disparity between the two commentaries. As for the commentary of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, it is a fact that a severe famine had hit Makkah resulting from the Holy Prophet's prayer and it had unnerved the disbelievers considerably and they had requested the Holy Prophet to pray for its removal, as referred to at several places in the Qur'an. (See Al-An'am: 43, Al-A'raf: 94-95, Yunus: 21, Al-Mu'minun: 75-77 and the corresponding E.N.'s). In these verses also there is a clear pointer to the same conditions. The disbelievers' saying: "Our Lord, remove this torment from us: we will believe," Allah's saying: "How can they rid themselves of their heedlessness? Even when a manifest Messenger came to them, they paid no heed to hira, and said: He is a madman taught by others,"- then saying: "Were We to remove the torment a little, you would revert to the same that you were doing before." all this can be relevant only if it refers to the conditions of the Holy Prophet's time. To apply them to what will happen near the time of Resurrection, is not correct. Therefore, in view of this, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud's commentary seems to be correct, but its this part that "the smoke" also had appeared in that very time, in that when the people in their extreme state of hunger looked up to the sky, they could see nothing but smoke, does not seem to be correct. It also does not conform to the apparent words of the Qur'an and is against the Traditions as well. The Qur'an does not say: the sky brought forth the smoke and it spread over the people; but it says: "Wait for the Day when the sky will appear with a visible smoke, and it will envelop mankind. " A study of the subsequent verses clearly points to this meaning: "When you do not believe even after the Messenger's admonition, nor take heed from the warning given in the shape of the famine, then you should wait for Resurrection. At that time when you sec your doom confronting you, you will fully realize what was the truth and what was falsehood." Therefore, as for the smoke, the correct view is that it has nothing to do with the time of the famine, but it is a Sign of Resurrection and the same is also confirmed by the Hadith. It is surprising that those commentators who confirmed what Hadrat Ibn Mas`ud said confirmed him wholly and those who refined what he said refined him wholly, whereas a study of the verses and the Hadith clearly shows how far he was correct and how far he was wrong.

14The words rasul-un karim in the original imply a man who is characterized with most noble traits of

character and highly praiseworthy qualities.

15One should note that the sayings of the Prophet Moses being cited here, are not parts of a continuous address delivered by him at any one time, but they are a summary in a few sentences of what he said to Pharaoh and his courtiers on different occasions during many years. For the details, sec Al-A'raf: 103-136, Yunus: 75-92, Ta Ha : 45-76, Ash-Shua'ra: 10-68, An-Naml: 7-14, AlQasas: 32-42, Al-Mu'min: 23-46, Az-Zukhruf: 46-56 and the corresponding E.N.'s.

16That is. "Leave the children of Israel to go with me." This demand is synonymous with the demand made in Al-A`raf: 105, Ta Ha: 47 and Ash-Shur'ra: 17. Another translation that has been reported from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas is: "Servants of Allah, fulfill my right," i.e.. "Accept what I say : believe in me: follow my guidance. This is my right on you from Allah. " The following sentence: `I am a trustworthy Messenger to you," is more in keeping with the second meaning.

17That is, "I am a reliable Messenger: I do not forge anything from myself, nor am I the one who would present something based on personal interest or desire, or forge a command or law, in the name of Allah. Rest assured that I shall convey to you intact only that which my Sender has commanded. " (It should be noted that these two sentences belong to the time when the Prophet Moses first started preaching His Message).

18In other words, it means: "Your rebellion against me is in fact rebellion against Allah, for what annoys you is not what I say but what Allah says, and I only present those things as His Messenger. If you doubt whether I have really ban sent by Hun or not, I present before you a clear authority of my appointment from Allah. " This authority does not imply any one miracle but a long series of the miracles which the Prophet Moses continued to show to Pharaoh and his people for years since the time he $roved in the court of Pharaoh till his last days in Egypt. Whatever Sign they denied, was followed up by a greater Sign of authority by him. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 42, 43 of Az-Zukhruf).

19This was said at the time when, as against all the Signs presented by the Prophet Moses, Pharaoh was still showing stubbornness, but was feeling upset and confounded at the realization that all classes of the Egyptian society were rapidly being influenced by those Signs. In that period first of all he made the speech before his full packed court as mentioned in vv. 51-53 of Surah Zukhruf above (see E,N.'s 45 to 49). Then, when he felt the ground slipping from under his feet, he made up his mind to kill Allah's Messenger. At that time the Prophet said the words as mentioned in Surah Al-Mu'min: 27 ; to the effect: "I have taken refuge in my Lord and your Lord against every arrogant person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning." Here, the Prophet Moses is referring to that same thing and telling Pharaoh and his chiefs: "Look, I have sought Allah's refuge against all sorts of violence from you : now you cannot harm me: but if you wish yourselves well, do not harm me. If you do not want to believe what I say, you may not, but you should never lay your hands on me, otherwise you will meet with catastrophic

consequences."

20This is the final report that the Prophet Moses presented before his Lord, saying: "These are criminals." That is, their being the criminals has been confirmed finally and absolutely. They have exhausted every chance of concession and respite for reformation. It is time that the final fatal decision be passed against them.

21"With my servants": with all those people who have believed, including both the Israelites and the Egyptian Copts who had become Muslims since the time of the Prophet Joseph till that of the Prophet Moses, and those also who had been influenced by the Signs shown by Moses and His preaching and accepted Islam from among the Egyptians. (For explanation, see Surah Yusuf: E.N. 68).

22This was the initial command given to the prophet Moses for the migration. (For explanation, see Ta-Hit: 77, Ash-Shu'ara': 52-68 arid the corresponding E.N.'s).

23This command was given when the Prophet Moses had crossed the sea along with his caravan and wanted that he should restore the sea to its former state by smiting it with the staff so that Pharaoh and his hosts should not pursue them on the dry path created by the miracle. At that times it was said: "Leave the sea divided as it is, so that Pharaoh and his armies should descend into it; then the sea will be restored and they will be drowned all together."

24Hadrat Hasan Basri says that "others" here implies the children of Israel, whom Allah made heirs of the land of Egypt after Pharaoh's people, and Qatadah says it implies the other people who inherited Egypt after the people of Pharaoh, for the Histories do not make any mention that the Israelites ever returned to Egypt after the exodus and inherited it. This same point has been disputed by the later commentators also. (For a detailed discussion, see Ash Shua'ra: 57-59 and the E.N.'s on it).

25That is, "When they were the rulers, they were known for their glory and grandeur: hymns were sung of their praise, flatterers flattered them to such an extent as if the whole world was devoted to them for their excellences and indebted to them for their favors and there was none more popular in the world than they. But when they fell there was none to shed a tear on their fall; rather the world felt relieved that a cause of distress had been removed. Obviously, they had neither done any good to the people that the dwellers of the earth might weep on them, nor anything for the sake of Allah's pleasure that the dwellers of the heavens might grieve over their ruin. As long as Allah continued to give them rope by His will, they enjoyed life as they pleased; but when they transgressed all limits in their crimes, they were cast aside like so much rubbish.

26That is, Pharaoh by himself was an abasing torment for them and all other torments wen indeed offshoots of the same great torment.

27There is a subtle satire in it on the chiefs of the disbelieving Quraish. It means to say this: "You do not enjoy any place of distinction among the transgressors against Allah. Pharaoh indeed was a rebel of the highest order who was ruling on the throne of the largest kingdom of the time as a god. When he was swept away like straw, how can you prevent the Divine wrath?"

28That is, 'Allah was well aware both of the qualities and of the weaknesses of the children of Israel. He had not chosen them blindly. For when he chose them from among the contemporary nations to become the standard-bearers of His message and His Tauhid, they were the most suitable people in His knowledge for the purpose."

29For explanation, sec Al-Baqarah :49-74, An-Nisa: 153-160, Al Ma'idah: 20-26, Al-A'raf: 138-171, Ta-Ha: 80-97 and the corresponding E.N.'s

30That is, "When we die the first time, we shall be annihilated: there will be no other lift after that".

31This was their reasoning: We have never seen a dead person resurrected to life. Therefore, we believe that there will be no other life after death. If you claim that there will be another life, then resurrect our forefathers from their graves, so that we are convinced of the life-after-death. If you do not do this, we would think that your claim is false. This was, as they thought, a very strong argument for the refutation of life-after-death, whereas it was absurd. Nobody had told them that the dead would return to this very world after being raised back to life, nor the Holy Prophet, nor any Muslim, had ever claimed that he could raise the dead back to life.

32Tubba was the title of the kings of the Himyarites, like the titles of Khosroes, Caesar, Pharaoh etc. which have been associated with the kings of different countries. They were a branch of the Sabaeans, who attained domination over Saba in 115 B.C. and puled it till 300 A.D. They have been a well known people of Arabia for centuries. (For details, see E.N. 37 of Surah Saba).

33This is the first answer to the disbelievers' objection; it means: No individual group or nation which denies the Hereafter can help becoming criminal. Perversion of the morals is its inevitable result, and human history bears evidence that whichever nation adopted this view of life ultimately perished. As for the question: Are they better or the people of Tubba' or the people before them? ii means this: The disbelievers of Makkah have not been able to attain to the prosperity and splendor that became the lot of the people of Tubba' and of the people of Saba and of the people of Pharaoh and others before them. But this material prosperity and worldly splendor could not save them from the consequences of their moral degeneration. How will then the chiefs of the Quraish be saved from destruction on the strength of their puny resources and wealth? (For details, see E.N.'s 25 to 36 of Surah Saba).

34This is the second answer to their objection; it means: "Whoever denies life-after-death and the rewards and punishments of the hereafter, in fact, regards this world as a plaything and its Creator as a foolish child. This is why he has formed the view that tnan, after raising all sorts of the storms in the world, will end up in the dust one day and none of his good or bad acts will bear any fruit. The fact, however, is that this universe is the creation of an All-Wise Creator and not of a frivolous being, and it cannot be expected from an AII-Wise Creator that he would perform a useless and vain act." (For a detailed explanation, see AI-An'am: 73, Yunus: 5-6, Al-Anbiya: 16-18, AI-Mu'minun: 115, Ar-Rum: 8-9 and the corresponding E.N.'s).

35This is the answer to their demand: "Bring back our forefathers if you are truthful." It means: 'Life-after-death is not a trivial matter; it cannot be that whenever somebody denies it, a dead person may he raised immediately from the graveyard and presented before him. For it a time has been fixed by the Lord of the worlds, when He will resurrect to life all the former and the latter generations, gather them together in His Court and will decide their cases. You may believe in it or may not, but this will in any case happen on its own pre ordained time. If you believe in it, it will be to your own advantage, for, being forewarned, you will make preparations to fare well in that Court. If you do not believe in it, you will incur loss for yourselves, for you will expend your whole life in the misunderstanding that good and evil are confined only to this worldly lift; after death there is going to be no court where our good or bad deeds might have to be judged for any permanent results."

36The Arabic word "maula " is used for a person who supports another person either because of kinship, or friendship, or some other relationship.

37These sentences portray the nature of the Court that will be established on the Day of Decision. It will be a Court where nobody's help or support will help rescue any culprit nor have his sentence reduced. All powers will rest with the real Sovereign Whose decisions cannot be withheld from being enforced nor influenced by any power. It will entirely depend on His own discretion whether He forgives somebody mercifully, or awards him a lesser punishment; it indeed behooves Him to exercise justice mercifully and not mercilessly, but whatever decision He gives in any case, will be enforced entirely and completely. After this portrayal of the nature of the Divine Court, in the following few sentences it has been stated what will be the fate of those who will be found guilty in that Court, and what will be conferred on those about whom it will be established that they had been refraining from Allah's disobedience in the world out of fear of Him.

38For the explanation of zaqqum, see E.N. 34 of Surah As-Saaffat.

39The word al--muhl in the original has several meanings: molten metal, pus-blood, molten tar, lava, dregs of oil. These are the different meanings given by the lexicographers and commentators, but if this word is understood with reference to zaqqum (cactus), it may mean its juice which will probably be like

the dregs of oil.

40"A secure place" : A place safe from every kind of fear, grief, worry and danger, hardship and trouble. According to a Hadith, the Holy Prophet said: "It will be proclaimed to the dwellers of Paradise: You will remain in good health, will never fall ill; will live for ever: will never die; will ever remain happy and prosperous and will never meet with a misfortune; will ever remain youthful, will never become old. " (Muslim, on the authority of Abu Hurairah and Abu Sa id Khudri).

41Sundus and istabraq in the original are fine silk cloth and thick silk cloth respectively.

42In the original, hur-un 'in : fair complexioned, large-eyed women. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 26,29 of As-Saaffat).

43That is, they will order the attendants in Paradise to bring anything they would like in any measure they would demand, and it will be presented before them. In this world, a man cannot ask for a thing in a hotel, or even his own things in his own house, with the freedom and satisfaction as he will ask for these in Paradise, for in the world nothing is found anywhere in un-limited measure; whatever man uses here, he has to pay for it. In Paradise, things will belong to Allah, and the servants will enjoy full freedom to use them. Neither will there be the danger of the failure of the supply, nor the necessity of a bill to pay.

44Two things are worthy of notice in this verse.

First, after mentioning the blessings of Paradise special mention has been made of being secure from Hell separately whereas a person's entry into Paradise by itself amounts to his being safe from Hell. This is because man can feel the worth of the reward of obedience fully only when he is informed what end the disobedient people have met and from what evil end he himself has ban saved.

Secondly, Allah is mentioning those people's safety from Hell and their entry into Paradise as a result of His own grace. This is meant to warn man of the truth that this success cannot be achieved by any person unless he is blessed by Allah's grace. Although man will be rewarded for his own good deeds, in the first place he cannot do good unless favored by Allah's succor; then even the best deed that man is able to perform, cannot be absolutely perfect and none can claim that it is flawless and faultless. It is only Allah's bounty that He should overlook the servant's weaknesses and defects in his actions and accept his services and bless him with rewards; otherwise if He resorts to minute accountability no one can dare claim to win Paradise only on the strength of his own deeds. The same thing has been said by the Holy Prophet in a Hadith to the effect: "Act and try to act as righteously as you possibly can, but know that the action of a person alone will not make him enter Paradise. It was asked: What about your own action, O Messenger of Allah? He replied: Yes, even I won't enter Paradise on the strength of my actions, unless of course, my Lord covers me up in His mercy."

45That is, "If they do not accept the admonition even now, you should wait to see how they are visited by their doom; and they also are waiting to see what becomes of the message that you are giving them. "

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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45. Surah At Jathiya (The Kneeling)

Name

It is derived from the sentence *wa tartt kullu ummat- in jathiyat-un* of verse 28, implying thereby that it is the Surah in which the word *jathiyah* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

The period of the revelation of this Surah also has not been mentioned in any authentic tradition, but its subject matter clearly shows that it was revealed consecutively after Surah Ad Dukhan. The close resemblance between the contents of the two Surahs makes them look like the twin Surahs.

Subject Matter and Topics

It answers the doubts and objections of the disbelievers of Makkah about *Tauhid* and the Hereafter and warns them for their attitude that they had adopted against the message of the Qur'an.

The discourse begins with the arguments for *Tauhid*. In this connection, reference has been made to the count-less Signs that are found in the world, from man's own body to the earth and heavens, and it is pointed out that everywhere around him man finds things which testify to *Tauhid* which he refuses to acknowledge. If man sees carefully the variety of animals, the day and night, the rainfall and the vegetation thereby, the winds and his own creation, and ponders over them intelligently, without prejudice, he will find these Signs sufficiently convincing of the truth that this universe is not Godless, nor under the control of many gods, but it has been created by One God, and He alone is its Controller and Ruler. However, the case of the person who is determined not to acknowledge and wants to remain involved in doubts and suspicions is different. He cannot be blessed with the faith and conviction from anywhere in the world.

A little below, in the beginning of the second section, it has been reiterated that the things man is exploiting in the

world, and the countless forces and agencies that are serving his interests in the universe, did not come into being just accidentally, nor have they been provided by the gods and goddesses, but it is One God alone, Who has supplied and subjected these to him from Himself. If only a person uses his mind properly and rightly, his own intellect will proclaim that God alone is man's real Benefactor and He alone deserves that man should pay obeisance to Him.

After this, the disbelievers of Makkah have been taken to task and reproved for their stubbornness, arrogance, mockery and insistence on disbelief with which they were resisting the invitation of the Qur'an they have been warned that this Qur'an has brought the same blessing which had been granted to the children of Israel before, by virtue of which they became distinguished above all the people of the world. Then, when they failed to recognize the true worth of this blessing and disputed their religion and lost it, this blessing now has been sent to them. This is such a code of guidance which shows the clear highway of Religion to man. The people who would turn it down by their own folly, would only prepare for their own doom, and only such people would become worthy of God's succour and mercy who would adopt obedience to it and lead a life of piety and righteousness.

In this connection, the followers of the Holy Prophet have been instructed that they should forbear and pardon the absurd and foolish behavior towards them of the people fearless of God, for if they showed patience God Himself would deal with their opponents and would reward them for their fortitude.

Then, there is a criticism of the erroneous ideas that the disbelievers hold about the Hereafter. They said that life was only this worldly life there was no life hereafter. Man dies in the course of time just as a watch stops functioning suddenly. The body is not survived by any soul, which might be seized and then breathed again into the human body some time in the future. In this regard, they challenged the Holy Prophet, saying: "If you lay a claim to this, then raise our dead forefathers back to life." In answer to this, Allah has given the following arguments:

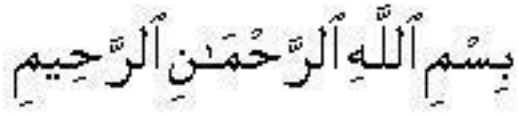
1. "You do not say this on the basis of any knowledge but are uttering this grave thing on the basis of conjecture. Do you really have the knowledge that there is no other life after death, and the souls are not seized but are annihilated?"

2. "Your this claim rests mainly on this that you have not seen any dead person rising back to life and returning to the world. Is this basis strong enough for a person to make a claim that the dead people will never rise to life?When you do not experience and observe a thing, does it mean that you have the knowledge that it does not exist at all?

3. It is utterly against reason and justice that the good and the bad, the obedient and the disobedient, the oppressor and the oppressed, should be made equal ultimately. Neither a good act should bear a good result nor an evil act an evil result; neither the grievances of the oppressed be redressed nor the oppressor be punished, but everyone should meet with the same fate ultimately. Whoever has formed this view about the universe of God, has formed a patently wrong view. The unjust and wicked people adopt this view because they do not want to face the evil results of their deeds, but this world of God is not a lawless kingdom; it is rather a system based on the Truth, in which there can be no question of the injustice of regarding the good and the bad as equal.

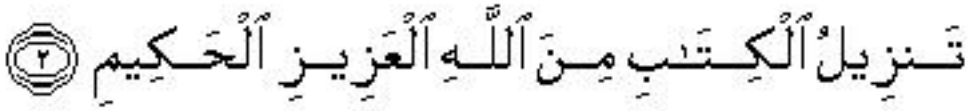
4. That the creed of the denial of the Hereafter is highly destructive of morals. This is adopted only by such people as are the slaves of their lusts, and for the reason that they should have full freedom to serve their lusts. Then, when they have adopted this creed, it goes on making them more and more perverse till at last their moral sense becomes dead and all avenues of guidance are closed against them.

After giving these arguments Allah says most emphatically: "Just as you did not become living of your own accord, but became living by Our power, so you do not die of your own accord, but die when We send death on you. And a time is certainly coming when you will all be gathered together. If you do not believe in this because of your ignorance and folly today, you may not; when the time arrives, you will see for yourself that you are present before your God and your whole book of conduct is ready accurately, which bears evidence against each of your misdeeds. Then you will come to know how dearly has your denial of the Hereafter and your mockery of it cost you."

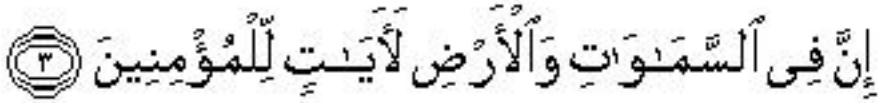


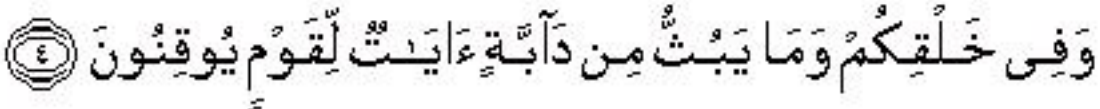
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.





[1-2] Ha-Mim. The revelation of this Book is from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[1]





وَٱخۡتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيۡلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مِن رِّزۡقٖ فَأَحۡيَا بِهِ
ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَا وَتَصۡرِيفِ ٱلرِّيَٰحِ ءَايَٰتٞ لِّقَوۡمٖ يَعۡقِلُونَ ٥

تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱللَّهِ نَتۡلُوهَا عَلَيۡكَ بِٱلۡحَقِّۖ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثِۭ بَعۡدَ
ٱللَّهِ وَءَايَٰتِهِۦ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٦

[3-6] The fact is that there are countless Signs in the heavens and the earth for those who believe.[2] And in your own creation and in the animals, whom Allah is scattering (all over the earth), there are signs for those who affirm faith.[3] And in the difference of the night and day,[4] and in the provisions[5] that Allah sends down from the heaven, whereby He revives the earth after its death,[6] and in the circulation of the winds,[7] there are many signs for those who use their common sense. These are the Revelations of Allah, which We are rehearsing to you accurately. Then, what is there after Allah and His Revelations in which they will believe.[8]

وَيۡلٞ لِّكُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٖ ٧

يَسۡمَعُ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِ ثُمَّ يُصِرُّ مُسۡتَكۡبِرٗا كَأَن لَّمۡ يَسۡمَعۡهَاۖ فَبَشِّرۡهُ
بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٖ ٨

وَإِذَا عَلِمَ مِنۡ ءَايَٰتِنَا شَيۡـًٔا ٱتَّخَذَهَا هُزُوًاۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ مُّهِينٞ ٩

مِّن وَرَآئِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَلَا يُغْنِى عَنْهُم مَّا كَسَبُوا۟ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا مَا
ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

[7-10] Woe to every lying, sinful person before whom the Revelations of Allah are recited and he hears them, yet he persists in his disbelief arrogantly as if he never heard them.[9] Give such a one the good news of a painful torment. When something of Our Revelations comes to his knowledge, he takes it in jest.[10] For all such people there is an abasing torment. They have Hell in front of them.[11] Nothing of what they have earned in the world will avail them anything, nor those whom they have taken for guardians instead of Allah.[12] There is a great punishment for them.

هَٰذَا هُدًى ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّن رِّجْزٍ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

[11] This Qur'an is true Guidance, and for those who have refused to believe in the Revelations of their Lord, there is the torment of a terrible scourge.

۞ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلْبَحْرَ لِتَجْرِىَ ٱلْفُلْكُ فِيهِ
بِأَمْرِهِۦ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ
لَـَٔايَـٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

[12-13] Allah it is Who subjected to you the ocean so that ships may sail in it by His Command,[13] and you may seek His bounty[14] and be grateful to Him. He subjected to you everything that the heavens and the earth contain,[15] all from Himself.[16] There are many signs in this for those who think.[17]

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يَغْفِرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ
ٱللَّهِ لِيَجْزِىَ قَوْمًۢا بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَآءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

[14-15] O Prophet, tell the believers to pardon the errors of those who do not tear the coming of the evil days from Allah,[18] so that Allah may Himself recompense a group for what they have earned.[19] Whoever does good will do so for himself, and whoever does evil will himself bear its burden. To your Lord you have all to return!

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحُكْمَ وَٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ
ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَفَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُم بَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ فَمَا ٱخْتَلَفُوٓا۟ إِلَّا مِنۢ
بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْعِلْمُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِى بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ
فِيمَا كَانُوا۟ فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَٰكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ فَٱتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَآءَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

إِنَّهُمْ لَن يُغْنُوا۟ عَنكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۖ
وَٱللَّهُ وَلِىُّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

هَٰذَا بَصَآئِرُ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[16-20] Before this We had bestowed on the children of Israel the Book and the Judgment[20] and the Prophethood. We blessed them with good[21] things of life; We exalted them above all the people of the world, and gave them clear instructions with regard to religion. Then they differed among themselves (not because of ignorance but) after the Knowledge had come to them, only because they wanted to wrong one another.[22] Your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning the matters in which they have been differing. After this We have set you,O Prophet, upon a clear highway (of the Shari `ah) concerning religion.[23] So follow it, and do not follow the lusts of those who have no knowledge. They cannot avail you at all against Allah.[24] The wrongdoers are companions of one another and the Companion of the righteous is Allah. These are the lights of discernment for all mankind and guidance and mercy for those who affirm the faith.[25]

أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱجْتَرَحُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ سَوَآءً مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ ۚ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ

﴿٢١﴾

وَخَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلِتُجۡزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفۡسِۭ
بِمَا كَسَبَتۡ وَهُمۡ لَا يُظۡلَمُونَ ٢٢

[21-22] Do[26] those who have committed evil, think that We shall hold them and those who have believed and done right as equal, so that their life and their death should be alike? Evil indeed are the judgments they pass![27] Allah has created the heavens and the earth with the truth[28] in order that each living being be rewarded for what it has earned. The people shall not be wronged at all.[29]

أَفَرَءَيۡتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
عِلۡمٖ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمۡعِهِۦ وَقَلۡبِهِۦ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِۦ
غِشَٰوَةٗ فَمَن يَهۡدِيهِ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ ٱللَّهِۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ٢٣

[23] Then, have you ever considered the case of the person who made his lust his god,[30] and Allah, in spite of knowledge,[31] let him go astray and set a seal upon his heart and cars and laid a covering on his eyes?[32] Who is there after Allah Who can guide him? Do you learn no lesson?[33]

وَقَالُواْ مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا ٱلدُّنۡيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحۡيَا وَمَا يُهۡلِكُنَآ إِلَّا ٱلدَّهۡرُۚ وَمَا
لَهُم بِذَٰلِكَ مِنۡ عِلۡمٍۖ إِنۡ هُمۡ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ٢٤

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتُنَا بَيِّنَـٰتٍ مَّا كَانَ حُجَّتَهُمْ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوا۟ ٱئْتُوا۟
بِـَٔابَآئِنَآ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

قُلِ ٱللَّهُ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يَجْمَعُكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ
وَلَـٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَخْسَرُ
ٱلْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

[24-27] They say, "Life is only this worldly life of ours. Here we shall die and live and nothing but the change of time destroys us." In fact, they have no knowledge concerning this. They merely guess.[34] And when Our clear Revelations are recited to them,[35] their only argument is that they say, "Bring back our forefathers if you are truthful."[36] O Prophet, say to them, "It is Allah Who gives you life, then He it is Who causes your death,[37] then He it is Who will gather you together on the Day of Resurrection, which is sure to come,[38] but most people do not know.[39] To Allah belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth,[40] and the Day the Hour of Resurrection arrives, the worshipers of falsehood on that Day shall be doomed to loss."

وَتَرَىٰ كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً ۚ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ كِتَـٰبِهَا ٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

هَـٰذَا كِتَـٰبُنَا يَنطِقُ عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنسِخُ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ أَفَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءَايَـٰتِى تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَٱلسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُم مَّا نَدْرِى مَا ٱلسَّاعَةُ إِن نَّظُنُّ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُسْتَيْقِنِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَقِيلَ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ نَنسَىٰكُمۡ كَمَا نَسِيتُمۡ لِقَآءَ يَوۡمِكُمۡ هَٰذَا وَمَأۡوَىٰكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ٣٤

ذَٰلِكُم بِأَنَّكُمُ ٱتَّخَذۡتُمۡ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ هُزُوٗا وَغَرَّتۡكُمُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَاۚ فَٱلۡيَوۡمَ لَا يُخۡرَجُونَ مِنۡهَا وَلَا هُمۡ يُسۡتَعۡتَبُونَ ٣٥

[28-35] At that time you will see every nation on their knees.[41] Each nation will be summoned to see its record. It will be said to them, "Today you shall be rewarded for what you have done. This is a record which We have prepared: it gives true evidence against you. We were recording all your deeds."[42] Then, those who had believed and done righteous deeds, their Lord shall admit them to His mercy; this is the manifest success! And to those who had disbelieved, it will be said: '`Were not My Revelations recited to you? But you showed arrogance[43] and became criminals. And when it was said, “Allah's promise is true and there is no doubt about the coming of Resurrection,” you used to say, “We do not know what Resurrection is: we do only guess: we are not certain.”[44] The evils of their deeds then will become manifest to them[45] and they will be encompassed by the same that they used to mock. It will be said to them, "We will today forget you even as you yourselves had forgotten the meeting of this Day. Your abode now is Hell and there is none to help you. You have met this fate because you took Allah's Revelations in jest, and the life of the world deluded you. Therefore, neither shall they be taken out of Hell today, nor shall they be asked to snake amends and please their Lord."[46]

فَلِلَّهِ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَرَبِّ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٣٦

وَلَهُ ٱلۡكِبۡرِيَآءُ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۖ وَهُوَ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٣٧

[36-37] So, praise is for Allah alone, Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth and the Lord of all the worlds. To Him belongs Greatness in the heavens and the earth, and He alone is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

1In this brief introduction to the Surah, the listeners have been warned of two things:

(1) That this Book is not the composition of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself, but it is being sent down to him by Allah; and

(2) that it is being sent down by that Allah Who is All-Mighty as well as All-Wise. His being the Almighty demands that man should not dare disobey His Commands, for if he disobeys Him, he cannot escape His punishment; and His being the All-Wise demands that man should obey and follow His Guidance and His Commands with full satisfaction and willingness of the heart, for there can be no possibility of His teachings being wrong or inadequate or harmful in any way.

2To begin the discourse like this after the introduction, indicates that in the background there are the objections of the people of Makkah, which they were raising against the teachings of the Holy Prophet. They said: 'After all, how can we believe this one man when he says that all those great beings to whose shrines we have been dedicated and devoted so far, are nothing and that Godhead belongs to only One God?" About this it is being said that the world is replete with the signs of the Reality to which they are being invited. If on]y they saw with open eves, they would find those signs in themselves and outside them everywhere, which testify that this whole universe is the creation of One and only One God, and He alone is its Master and Ruler and Controller. It didn't need to be pointed out what was the nature of the signs in the earth and heavens, for the dispute at that time centered around the point that the polytheists were insisting on believing in other gods and deities also besides Allah and the Qur'an gave the message that there was neither a god nor a deity beside One God. Therefore, it was apparent by itself from the content that the signs were of the truth of Tauhid and of the refutation of shirk.

As for the sentence: "The signs are for those who believe," it means that although the signs arc meant for all human beings, only those people can reach the right conclusion from their observation, who are inclined to believe; as for the heedless people, who live like animals and the stubborn people who are resolved not to believe, the existence and the non-existence of the signs is equal. The splendor and beauty of the garden is for those who can see; a blind man cannot perceive any splendor and beauty; for him even the existence of the garden is meaningless.

3That is, "The case of those who have made up their minds not to believe, or of those who have chosen for themselves to remain lost in the blind alleys of doubt, is different, but when those who have not locked up their hearts against belief and conviction, will consider seriously their own creation, the structure of their own body, and the variety of animals found on the earth, they will see countless such signs as will leave no doubt in their minds that all this did not come into being without a God, or that it stood in need of more than one Cod for its creation. (For explanation, see A1 An`am: 37-38, An-Nahl: 5.8, AI-Hajj: 57, AI-Mu'minun: 12-14, AI-Furqan: 54, Ash-Shu'ara': 78-81, An-Naml: 64, Ar-Rum: 20-21, 54, E.N.'s 14 to 18 of As-Sajdah, Ya Sin: 71-73, Az-Zumar: 6, and E.N.'s 97, 98,110 of Al-Mu'min).

4The difference of the night and day is a sign because one follows the other with full regularity, because one is bright and the other dark, because over a certain period the day goes on shortening and the night lengthening gradually till the two become equal in duration, then again the day goes on lengthening and the night shortening till the two again become equal in duration. These different kinds of variations found in the night and the day and the great aspects of wisdom that accrue from these, arc a clear pointer to the fact that the Creator of the sun and the earth and of every thing on the earth is one and that one AII-Powerful Being is keeping both these spheres under His control; that that Being is not deaf and blind and unwise but All-Wise, Who has established this unalterable system and made His earth a suitable place for the countless species of life, which He has created here in the form of vegetables, animals and men. (For explanation, see Yunus: 67, An Naml: 86, Al-Qasas: 71-73, Luqman: 29 and E.N. S0, Ya Sin: 37 and E.N. 32)

5"Provisions": rainfall as becomes evident from the following sentence.

6For explanation, see Al-Mu'minun: 18-20, Al-Furqan: 48-49, AshShu'ara': 7, An-Naml: 61, Ar-Ruth: 24, 48, Ya Sin: E.N.'s 26 to 31.

7The circulation of the winds implies the circulation of the different kinds of winds at different times, on different parts of the earth and at different heights, which cause change of the seasons. What deserves attention is not only that above the surface of the earth there is a thick atmosphere, which contains all those elements needed by living beings for breathing, and this thick covering has kept the earth's population safe from many of the heavenly calamities. Besides, another noteworthy thing is that the air is not just filled inertly in the atmosphere, but it blows occasionally in different ways. Sometimes a cool wind blows and sometimes a hot wind; sometimes it stops blowing and sometimes it starts blowing; sometimes it blows soft and sometimes strong, and sometimes it assumes the proportions of a storm, sometimes a dry wind blows and sometimes a moist wind; sometimes it brings the rain and sometimes it drives away the clouds. These different kinds of the winds do not blow without a purpose, but under a law and a system, which testifies that this arrangement is based on perfect wisdom, and it is serving great objectives. Then it is deeply related with coolness and heat, which go on increasing and decreasing according to the changing conditions and relationships between the earth and the sun. Furthermore, it has a deep relation with the seasonal changes and the distribution of the rain. All these facts proclaim that these arrangements have not been made haphazardly by some blind nature, nor have the sun and the earth and the air and water and vegetation and animals separate controllers, but inevitably One God alone is the Creator of them all, and it is His Wisdom that has established this system for a great objective, and it is His power that it is functioning regularly according to a pre-ordained law.

8That is, "When these people have not believed even after Allah's own arguments have been presented for His Existence and His Unity, what else can be there by which they will gain the faith ? For Allah's Word is the final thing by which a person can attain to this blessing, and the maximum of the rational

arguments that could possibly be given to convince someone of an unseen reality have been presented in this Divine Word. In spite of this if a person is bent upon denial, he may persist in his denial, for his denial cannot change the reality."

9In other words, there is a marked difference between the person who listens to Allah's Revelations sincerely with an open mind and ponders over them seriously and the person who listens to them resolved that he would deny them, and then persists in the resolve already made without any serious thought. If the first person does not believe in the Revelations immediately, it does not mean that he wants to remain an unbeliever, but because he wants to have greater satisfaction. Therefore, even if he is taking time to believe, it is just possible that another Revelation might enter his heart and he might believe sincerely with full satisfaction. As for the other person, he would never believe in any Revelation whatever, for he has already locked his heart up to every Revelation of Allah. In this state such people generally arc involved as arc characterized by the following three qualities:

(1) They are liars; therefore, the truth does not appeal to them;

(2) they are wrongdoers; therefore, it is very hard for them to believe in a teaching or guidance that may impose moral restrictions on them; and

(3) they are involved in the conceit that they know everything, and that none can teach them anything; therefore, they do not regard as worthy of attention and consideration Allah's Revelations that are recited to them, and it is all the same for them whether they listen to there or not.

10That is, "He dons not rest content with mocking any one particular Revelation, but mocks all the Revelations. For example, when he hears that a particular thing has been mentioned in the Qur'an, he does not take it in its straight-forward meaning, but first puts a crooked meaning on it in order to make it a subject of ridicule and mockery, then after making fun of it, says: "These arc strange things: one daily hears one or the other funny thing from them. "

11The word wara' is used for every such thing as is hidden from man, whether it is before. him or behind him. Therefore, another translation can be: "They have Hell behind them." In the first case, the meaning would be: "They are unconsciously running on this way and have no idea that there is Hell in front of them in which they would fall ; " in the second case, it would mean: "They are engaged in this mischief of theirs, thoughtless of the Hereafter, and they have no idea that Hell is in pursuit of them."

12Here, the word wali (guardian) has been used in two meanings;

(1) For those gods and goddesses and living and dead guides about whom the polytheists thought that anybody who was devoted to them, would escape Allah's punishment, whatever he might have done in

the world, for their intercession will save them from Allah's wrath; and

(2) for those chiefs and leaders and rulers whom the people took as their guides and patrons independent of God and followed them blindly and tried to please them even if they had to displease God.

This verse warns all such people that when they will face Hell in consequence of this way of lift, neither of the two kinds of the guardians will come forward to save them from it. (For further explanation, see E. N . 6 of Surah Ash- Shura).

13For explanation, see Bani Isra'il: 66-67, Ar-Rum: 46 and the corresponding E.N.'s, and E.N. 55 of Luqman, E.N. 110 of Al Mu'min, and E.N. 54 of Ash-Shura.

14"Seek His bounty": Seek lawful provisions by trade, fishing, diving, navigation and other means in the sea.

15For explanation, see Ibrahim: 32 and E.N. 44 on it, and E.N. 35 of Luqman.

16This sentence has two meanings:

(1) `This gift and favor of Allah is not like the gift of the worldly kings, who favor their favorites with the wealth that they have collected from the people themselves, but, on the contrary, all the good things, in the universe have been created by Allah Himself, and He has granted these to man from Himself ; " and

(2) `neither is anyone a partner of Allah in the creation of these good things, nor has anyone anything to do in making them subservient to man. Allah alone is their Creator and He alone has granted these to man from Himself. "

17That is, `In their subjection and in making them beneficial for man there are many signs for those who think and reflect. These signs clearly point to the truth that the Creator and Master and Administrator of everything and of every power in the universe, from the earth to the heavens, is One God alone Who has subjected them to a law; and that God alone is Lord of man Who has made all these things and powers favorable and helpful for man's life his sustenance, his convenience, his development and his civilization and social life by His power and wisdom and mercy, and that God alone is worthy of man's service and gratitude and devotion and not some other beings, who have neither any share in creating the things and powers nor anything to do with subjecting them to man and making them beneficial for him. "

18Literally: `Who do not except the days of Allah." But in Arabic usage on such occasions ayyam does not merely mean days but those memorable days in which important historical events may have taken

place. For example, the word ayyam-ul 'Arab is used for the important events of the history of the Arabs and the major battles of the Arab tribes, which the later generations remember for centuries. Here, ayyam-Allah implies the evil days of a nation when the wrath of Allah may descend on it and ruin it in consequence of its misdeeds. That is who we have translated it: "Those who do not fear the coming of evil days from Allah," i.e. those who do not fear that a day will come when they will be called to account for their actions and deeds, and this same fearlessness has made them bold and stubborn in acts of wickedness.

19The commentators have given two meanings of this verse and the words of the verse admit of both:

(1) "That the believers should pardon the excesses of this wicked group so that Allah may reward them for their patience and forbearance and nobility from Himself and recompense them for the persecutions they have suffered for His sake."

(2) "That the believers should pardon these people so that Allah may Himself punish them for their persecutions of them."

Some other commentators have regarded this verse as repealed. They say that this command was applicable only till the Muslims had not been permitted to fight. Then, when they were permitted to fight, this command became abrogated. But a careful study of the words of the verse shows that the claim about abrogation is not correct. The word "pardon" is never used in the sense that when a person is not able to retaliate upon another for the latter's excesses, he should pardon him, but on such an occasion the usual words are patience and forbearance. Instead of them, when the word "pardon" has been used here, it by itself gives the meaning that the believers, in spite of their ability for retaliation, should refrain from retaliating upon the people for their excesses, whom fearlessness of God has made to transgress all limits of morality and humanity. This command does not contradict those verses in which the Muslims have been permitted to fight. Permission to fight pertains to the condition when the Muslim government has a reasonable ground for taking military action against an unbelieving people, and the command concerning forgiveness and pardon pertains to the common conditions in which the believers have to live in contact with a people who are fearless of God and have to suffer persecutions by them in different ways. The object of this command is that the Muslims should keep their moral superiority and should not stoop to the Level of the morally inferior people by indulging in disputes and wrangling with them and resort to retaliation for every frivolity. As long as it is possible to respond to an accusation or objection gently and rationally, or to defend oneself against an excess, one should not refrain from this, but when things seem to be crossing these limits, one should hold one's peace and entrust the matter to Allah. If the Muslims themselves become involved in a fight or quarrel with them, Allah will leave them alone to deal with them; but if they pardon and forbear, Allah will Himself deal with the wicked people and reward the oppressed ones for their patience.

20Hukm (judgment) implies three things:

(1) Knowledge and understanding of the Book and Religion;

(2) wisdom to act according to the intention of the Book; and

(3) capability to give right decisions in disputes.

21It does not mean that they were given preference over all the people of the world for ever, rather it means: Allah had chosen the children of Israel from among all the contemporary nations of the world for the service that they should hold fast to the Divine Book and should rise as the standard-bearers of God-worship in the world.

22For explanation, see Al-Baqarah: 213, Al-'Imran: 19 and E.N.'s 22, 23 of Ash-Shura.

23It means: "The mission that had been entrusted to the children of Israel before you has now been entrusted to you. They, in spite of receiving knowledge, created such differences in religion out of selfish motives and stirred up such divisions among themselves that they became disqualified to call the people to God's way. Now you have been set upon the clear highway of Religion so that you may perform the service which the children of Israel have failed to perform and become disqualified to perform it. " (For further explanation, see Ash-Shura: 13-15 and E.N.'s 20 to 26).

24That is, "If you make any changes in Allah's Religion only to please them, they will not be able to save you from Allah's accountability and punishment. "

25That is, "This Book and this Shari`ah present such a light for all the people of the world, which distinguishes the truth from falsehood, but only such people receive any guidance from it who believe in its truth; for them only it is a mercy."

26After the invitation to Tauhid, the discourse now turns to the theme of the Hereafter.

27This is the moral reasoning for the truth of the Hereafter. The difference of good and evil in morals and of goodness and wickedness in deeds necessarily demands that the good and the evil people should not meet with one and the same end, but the good should be rewarded for their good and the wicked punished for their evil deeds. Otherwise, if the good and the evil end up similarly, the distinction of virtue and vice in morals becomes meaningless and God becomes unjust. The people who follow evil ways in the world do want that there should be no accountability and no rewards and punishments, for this concept goes against their enjoyment of life, but it is against the justice and wisdom of the Lord of the worlds that He should treat the good and the evil alike, and should not care to see how the righteous believer has lived his life in the world and how the sinful unbeliever has been enjoying it. One of them

kept himself subjected to moral restrictions all his life, rendered the rights of those to whorl they were due, restrained himself from the unlawful benefits and pleasures, and continued to incur losses for the sake of the truth; the other fulfilled his desires in every possible wary: neither recognized the rights of God nor hesitated froth violating the rights of the people, but watt un collecting benefits and good things of life in every possible way. Can it be expected of God that He would overlook the difference between the lives of the two kinds of men? If the end of both be the same, no greater injustice could be conceived. (For further explanation, sec Yunus: 4, Hud: 106 An-Nahl: 38 39, Al-Hajj: E N. 9, An-Naml: E,N. 86, Ar-Rum: 7-8, Suad: 28 and E.N. 30 on it).

28That is, 'Allah has not created the earth and the heavens for mere sport, but it is a wise system with a purpose. In this system it is absolutely unimaginable that the people who may have accomplished good deeds by the right use of the powers and means and resources granted by Allah and the people who may have spread mischief and wickedness by their wrong use, should end up ultimately in the dust after death, and there should be no life hereafter in which their good and bad deeds should lead to good or bad results according to justice. If this were so, this universe would be the plaything of a thoughtless being, and not a purposeful system devised by a Wise Being." (For further explanation, sec Al An'am: 73, Yunus: 5-6, Ibrahim: 19, An-Nahl: 3, Al-'Ankabut: 44 and E.N.'s 75, 76; Ar-Rum: 8 and E.N. 6 on it).

29In this context the sentence clearly means: 'If the good people are not rewarded for their goodness, and the wicked are not punished for their wickedness, and the grievances of the oppressed are not redressed, it would be injustice. There cannot be such an injustice in the Kingdom of God. Likewise, there cannot also be the other kind of injustice that a good man be given a lesser reward Matt what is due to him, or a bad man given a greater punishment than what he deserves."

30"To make one's lust one's god" implies that one should become a slave of one's lusts and desires: one should do whatever one likes whether God has forbidden it, and should not do what one dislikes, whether God has made it obligatory. When a man starts obeying somebody like this, it means that his deity is not God but the one whom he is obeying without question, no matter whether he calls him his lord (with the tongue) or not, and carves out an image of him and worship: him or not. For when he has worshiped him directly without question, it is enough to make him a deity and after this practical shirk one cannot be absolved from the guilt of shirk only because one did not call the object of one's worship one's deity with the tongue, nor prostrated oneself before it. The other major commentators also have given the same commentary of this verse. Ibn Jarir says: the forbidden things by Allah as forbidden, nor regarded the things made lawful by Him as lawful." Abu Bakr al-Jassas gives this meaning: "He obeys his lusts as one should obey one's God." Zamakhshari explains it, thus: "He is obedient to the lusts of his self: He follows his self wherever it beckons him, as if he serves him as one should serve one's God. " (For further explanation, scc E.N. 56 of Al Furqan, E.N. 63 of Saba, E N. 53 of Ya Sin, and E.N. 38 of Ash-Shura).

31The words adalla hulla-hu 'ala 'ilm-in may either mean: "The person in spite of being knowledgeable was driven astray by Allah, for he had become a slave of his lusts ;" or "Allah, by virtue of His knowledge

that he had made his lusts his god, drove him astray."

32For the commentary of letting a person go astray and setting a seal upon his heart and ears and a coveting on his eyes, scc AI-Baqarah: 7, 18, AIAn'am:25 and E.N. 28, Al-A'raf: 100, At-Taubah: 87, 93, Yunus: 74 and E.N. 73, Ar-Ra'd: 27, Ibrahim: 4, 27, An-Nahl: 108, Bani Isra'il: 46, Ar-Rum; 59, Fatir: 8 and E.N.'s 16, 17, and E.N. 54 of Al-Mu'minun).

33From the context in which this verse occurs, it becomes obvious that only those people deny the Hereafter, who want to serve their lusts and who regard belief in the Hereafter as an obstacle to their freedom. Then, once they. have denied the Hereafter, their servitude of the self goes on increasing and they go on wandering further into deviation. They commit every kind of evil without feeling any qualms; they do not hesitate to usurp the rights of others; they cannot be expected to restrain themselves when there is an opportunity for them to commit an excess or injustice only because of a regard for justice and truth in their hearts. The events and incidents that can serve as a warning for a man, are witnessed by them too, but they draw the wrong conclusion that whatever they are doing is right and they should do the same. No word of advice moves them; no argument, which can stop a man from evil, appeals to them; but they go on devising and furnishing more and more arguments to justify their unbridled freedom, and their minds remain day and night engaged only in devising ways and means of fulfilling their own interests and desires in every possible way instead of engaging in a good thought. This is an express proof of the fact that the denial of the Hereafter is destructive for human morals. The only thing that can restrain man within the bounds of humanity is the feeling that man is not irresponsible but has to render an account of his deeds before God. Being devoid of this feeling even if a person is highly learned, he cannot help adopting an attitude and behavior worse than that of the animals.

34This is, "There is no means of knowledge by which they might have known with certainty that after this life there is no other life for Man, and that man's soul is not seized by the Command of God, but he dies and perishes merely in the course of time. The deniers of the Hereafter say these things not on the basis of any knowledge but on mere conjecture. The maximum that they could say scientifically is: "We do not know whether there is any life after death or not;" but they cannot say: "We know that there is no other life after this life." Likewise, they cannot make the claim of knowing scientifically that man's soul is not seized by God's Command but he perishes after death just like a watch which suddenly stops functioning. The most they can say is just this: "We do not know what exactly happens in either cast." Now the question is: When to the extent of the means of human knowledge there is an equal possibility of there being life after death or there being no life after death, and the soul's being seized by Allah's Command, or man's dying of himself in the course of time, what is the reason that these people abandon the probability of the possibility of the Hereafter and give their judgment in favor of its denial? Do they have any other reason than this that they, in fact, decide this question on the basis of their desire and not by any argument? As they do not like that there should be any life after death and death should mean total annihilation and not seizure of the soul by Allah's Command, they make their heart's desire their creed and deny the other probability."

35"Our clear Revelations": the Revelations in which strong arguments have been given for the possibility of the Hereafter and in which it has been stated that its occurrence is the demand of both wisdom and justice, and its nonoccurence renders the whole system of the universe meaningless and absurd.

36In other words, what they meant to say was: When somebody tells them that there is life after death, he must raise a dead person from the grave and present him before them. And if this is not done, they cannot believe that the dead would ever be raised to life once again at same time in the future, whereas nobody ever told them that the dead would be raised to life in this world as and when required separately, but what was said was: On the Day of Resurrection Allah will raise . all human beings to life simultaneously and will subject them to accountability and punish and reward them accordingly.

37This is the answer to their saying that death comes to man automatically in the course of time. It means: "Neither you get life accidentally nor your death occurs automatically. It is God Who gives you life and it is He Who takes it away."

38This is the answer to their demand: "Bring back our forefathers if you are truthful." To this it has been said: "This will not happen now separately for individuals, but a Day has been fixed for gathering all mankind together. "

39That is, "It is lack of knowledge and right understanding which is the real cause of the people's denying the Hereafter; otherwise it is not its coming but its not coming which is against reason. If a person reflects rightly on the system of the universe and on his own self, he will himself realize that there can be no doubt about the coming of the Hereafter."

40In view of the context, this sentence by itself gives the meaning that it is not at all beyond the power of God Who is ruling over this great and marvelous universe that He should bring the human beings whom He has created in the first instance back into existence once again.

41That is, the dread and terror of the Plain of Resurrection and the awe of the Divine Court will be etch that it will break the stubbornness of the most arrogant and boastful people, and everyone will be found fallen on his knees humbly.

42The only possible way of getting a thing recorded is not by means of the pen and paper only. Man himself has discovered in this world several other forms of recording human words and actions and reproducing them exactly and accurately; and we cannot even imagine what other possibilities of it lie yet undiscovered, which man himself will discover and exploit in the future. Now, who can know how and by what means is Allah getting recorded man's every word, his every movement and action, even his hidden intentions and motives and desires and ideas, and how He will place before every man and every group

and every nation his or its whole lifework accurately and exactly?

43That is, "You thought it was below your dignity to believe in Allah's Revelations and submit to them, and considered yourselves to be above subjection and servitude."

44The people mentioned in verse 24 above were those who denied the Hereafter openly and absolutely, here those who are not sure of it although they do not deny its possibility because of conjecture. Apparently there is a vast difference between the two groups in that one of them denies the Hereafter absolutely and the other regards it as possible on the basis of conjecture. But as for the result and final end, there is no difference between them, for the moral consequences of the denial of the Hereafter and of lack of the faith in it are the same. A person whether he disbelieves in the Hereafter or lacks faith in it, will in either case be inevitably devoid of the feeling of accountability before God, and this lack of feeling will necessarily involve him in the error and deviation of thought and action. Only faith and belief in the Hereafter can keep a man on the right track in the world. In the absence of it, both doubt and denial give him a similar attitude of irresponsibility, and since this same attitude of irresponsibility is the real cause of man's being doomed in the Hereafter, therefore neither the denier of it can escape Hell nor the one who lacks faith in it.

45That is, "There they will come to know that their ways of behavior, their practices and manners, and their actions and pastimes, which they regarded as very good in the world were, in fact, very bad: they had committed a basic mistake in thinking that they were not answerable to anyone, and this had rendered their whale lifework fruitless and vain."

46This last sentence depicts the manner of a master who after rebuking some of his servants turns to others and says: "Well, these wretched people now deserve such and such punishment!"

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

46. Surah Al Ahqaf (The Wind Curved Sand Dunes)

Name

It is derived from the sentence *idh andhara qauma-hu bil Ahqaf-i* of verse 21.

Period of Revelation

It is determined by an historical event that has been mentioned in vv. 29-32. This incident of the visit of the jinn and their going back after listening to the Qur'an had occurred, according to agreed traditions of the *Hadith* and biographical literature, at the time when the Holy Prophet had halted at Makkah during his return journey from Ta'if to Makkah. And according to all authentic historical traditions he had gone to Ta'if three years before the *Hijrah*; therefore it is determined that this Surah was sent down towards the end of the 10th year or in the early part of the 11th year of the Prophethood.

Historical Background

The 10th year of the Prophethood was a year of extreme persecution and distress in the Holy prophet's life. The Quraish and the other tribes had continued their boycott of the Bani Hashim and the Muslims for three years and the Holy Prophet and the people of his family and Companions lay besieged in Shi'b Abi Talib. The Quraish had blocked up this locality from every side so that no supplies of any kind could reach the besieged people. Only during the Hajj season they were allowed to come out and buy some articles of necessity. But even at that time whenever Abu Lahab noticed any of them approaching the market place or a trading caravan he would call out to the merchants exhorting them to announce forbidding rates of their articles for them, and would pledge that he himself would buy those articles so that they did not suffer any loss. This boycott which continued uninterrupted for three years had broken the back of the Muslims and the Bani Hashim; so much so that at times they were even forced to eat grass and the leaves of trees.

At last, when the siege was lifted this year, Abu Talib, the Holy Prophet's uncle, who had been shielding him for ten

long years, died, and hardly a month later his wife, Hadrat Khadijah, who had been a source of peace and consolation for him ever since the beginning of the call, also passed away. Because of these tragic incidents, which closely followed each other, the Holy Prophet used to refer to this year as the year of sorrow and grief.

After the death of Hadart Khadijah and Abu Talib the disbelievers of Makkah became even bolder against the Holy Prophet. They started treating him even more harshly. So much so that it became difficult for him to step out of his house. Of these days Ibn Hisham has related the incident that a Quraish scoundrel one day threw dust at him openly in the street.

At last, the Holy Prophet left for Ta'if with the intention that he should invite the Bani Thaqif to Islam, for even if they did not accept Islam, they might at least be persuaded to allow him to work for his mission peacefully. He did not have the facility of any conveyance at that time, and traveled all the way to Ta'if on foot. According to some traditions, he had gone there alone, but according to others, he was accompanied by Zaid bin Harithah. He stayed at Ta'if for a few days, and approached each of the chiefs and nobles of the Bani Thaqif and talked to him about his mission. But not only they refused to listen to him, but plainly gave him the notice that he should leave their city, for they feared that his preaching might "spoil" their younger generation. Thus, he was compelled to leave Ta'if. When he was leaving the city, the chiefs of Thaqif set their slaves and scoundrels behind him, who went on crying at him, abusing him and petting him with stones for a long way from either side of the road till he became broken down with wounds and his shoes were filled with blood. Wearied and exhausted he took shelter in the shade of the wall of a garden outside Ta'if, and prayed:

"O God, to Thee I complain of my weakness, little resource, and lowliness before men. O Most Merciful, Thou art the Lord of the weak, and Thou art my Lord. To whom wilt Thou confide me? To one afar who will misuse me?Or to an enemy to whom Thou hast given power over me?If Thou art not angry with me I care not. Thy favor is more wide for me. I take refuge in the light of Thy countenance by which the darkness is illumined, and the things of this world and the next are rightly ordered, lest Thy anger descend upon me or Thy wrath light upon me. It is for Thee to be satisfied until Thou art well pleased. There is no power and no might save in Thee." (Ibn Hisham:A. Guillaume's Translation, p. 193).

Grieved and heart broken when he returned and reached near Qarn al-Manazil, he felt as though the sky was overcast by clouds. He looked up and saw Gabriel in front of him, who called out:"Allah has heard the way your people have responded. He has, therefore, sent this angel in charge of the mountains. You may command him as you please." Then the angel of the mountains greeted him and submitted :"If you like I would overturn the mountains from either side upon these people." The Holy Prophet replied : "No, but I expect that Allah will create from their seed those who will worship none but Allah, the One." (Bukhari, *Dhikr al Mala'ikah*; Muslim: *Kitab al-Maghazi*; Nasa'i :*Al-Bauth*).

After this he went to stay for a few days at Makkah, perplexed as to how he would face the people of Makkah, who, he thought, would be still further emboldened against him after hearing what had happened at Ta'if. It was here that one night when he was reciting the Qur'an in the Prayer, a group of the jinn happened to pass by and listened to the Qur'an, believed in it, and returned to their people to preach Islam. Thus, Allah gave His Prophet the good news that if the men were running away from his invitation, there were many of the jinn, who had become its believers, and

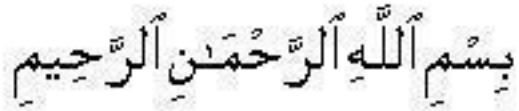
they were spreading his message among their own kind.

Subject Matter and Topics

Such were the conditions when this Surah was sent down. Anyone who keeps this background in view, on the one hand, and studies this Surah, on the other, will have no doubt left in his mind that this is not at all the composition of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), but "a Revelation from the All Mighty, All Wise Allah." For nowhere in this Surah, from the beginning to the end, does one find even a tinge of the human feelings and reactions, which are naturally produced in a man who is passing through such hard conditions. Had it been the word of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) whom the occurrence of personal griefs one after the other and the countless and the recent bitter experience at Ta'if had caused extreme anguish and distress, it would have reflected in some degree the state of the mind of the man who was the subject of these afflictions and griefs. Consider the prayer that we have cited above: it contains his own language its every word is saturated with the feelings that he had at the time. But this Surah which was sent down precisely in the same period and was recited even by him under the same conditions, is absolutely free from every sign or trace of the time.

The subject matter of the Surah is to warn the disbelievers of the errors in which they were involved, and also resisted arrogantly, and were condemning the man who was trying to redeem them. They regarded the world as a useless and purposeless place where they were not answerable to anyone. They thought that invitation to *Tauhid* was false and stuck to the belief that their own deities were actually the associates of Allah. They were not inclined to believe that the Qur'an was the Word of the Lord of the worlds. They had a strange erroneous concept of apostleship on the basis of which they were proposing strange criteria of judging the Holy Prophet's claim to it. In their estimation one great proof of Islam's not being based on the truth was that their elders and important chiefs of the tribes and so called leaders of their nation were not accepting it and only a few young men, and some poor folks and some slaves had affirmed faith in it. They thought that Resurrection and life after death and the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter were fabrications whose occurrence was absolutely out of the question.

In this Surah each of these misconceptions has been refuted in a brief but rational way, and the disbelievers have been warned that if they would reject the invitation of the Qur'an and the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) by prejudice and stubbornness instead of trying to understand its truth rationally, they would only be preparing for their own doom.



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

حٰمٓ ﴿١﴾

تَنزِيلُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ﴿٢﴾

[1-2] Ha-Mim.[1] The revelation of this Book is from the All-Mighty, All-Wise Allah.

مَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ
وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ عَمَّآ أُنذِرُوا۟ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾

[3] We have created the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them with the truth and to last for an appointed term,[2] but the disbelievers are turning away from the reality of which they have been warned.[3]

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَرُونِى مَاذَا خَلَقُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ
لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ۖ ٱئْتُونِى بِكِتَٰبٍ مِّن قَبْلِ هَٰذَآ أَوْ أَثَٰرَةٍ مِّنْ
عِلْمٍ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤﴾

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّن يَدْعُواْ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَن لَّا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُۥٓ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ
وَهُمْ عَن دُعَآئِهِمْ غَـٰفِلُونَ ﴿٥﴾

وَإِذَا حُشِرَ ٱلنَّاسُ كَانُواْ لَهُمْ أَعْدَآءً وَكَانُواْ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦﴾

[4-6] O Prophet, say to them, "Have you ever seen with open eyes those whom you invoke instead of Allah? Show me what they have created in the world, or, have they any share in the creation and control of the heavens? Bring me a Book revealed before this, or produce some remnant of knowledge (in support of your beliefs) if you are truthful."[4] And who could be further astray than the one who invokes, instead of Allah, those who cannot answer him till the Day of Resurrection?[5] Nay, they are even unaware that they are being invoked.[6] And when all mankind shall be gathered together, they will become enemies of those who invoked them and will disown their worship.[7]

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتُنَا بَيِّنَـٰتٍ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ
لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ هَـٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ قُلْ إِنِ ٱفْتَرَيْتُهُۥ فَلَا تَمْلِكُونَ لِى مِنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۖ هُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ ۖ كَفَىٰ بِهِۦ شَهِيدًۢا بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ
ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٨﴾

[7-8] Whenever Our clear Revelations are recited to them and the Truth comes before them, the disbelievers say, "This is plain magic."[8] Do they mean to say that the Messenger himself has fabricated it?[9] Say to them, "If I have fabricated it myself, you will not be able to do anything to save me from Allah's punishment. Allah knows full well

whatever you utter. He is enough as a witness between me and you,[10] and He is the All-Forgiving. the All-Merciful."[11]

قُلْ مَا كُنتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ وَمَآ أَدْرِى مَا يُفْعَلُ بِى وَلَا بِكُمْ ۖ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا
مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٩﴾

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ وَكَفَرْتُم بِهِۦ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ
مِّنۢ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِۦ فَـَٔامَنَ وَٱسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى
ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

[9-10] Say to them, "I am not a novel Messenger, I do not know what shall befall you tomorrow nor what shall befall me. I only follow that which is revealed to me, and I am no more than a warner."[12] O Prophet, say to them, "Have you ever considered that if this (Qur'an) were really from Allah, and yet you denied it, (what would be your end)?[13] And a witness from among the children of Israel has already borne witness to the like of it; he believed while you showed arrogance.[14] Allah does not show guidance to such wrongdoers."

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَوْ كَانَ خَيْرًا مَّا سَبَقُونَآ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَإِذْ لَمْ
يَهْتَدُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَسَيَقُولُونَ هَٰذَآ إِفْكٌ قَدِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

وَمِن قَبْلِهِۦ كِتَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً ۚ وَهَٰذَا كِتَٰبٌ
مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّيُنذِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

[11-12] Those who have refused to believe say with regard to those who have believed, "If it had been any good to believe in this Book, they would not have believed in it before us."[15] As they have not received any guidance from it, they will surely say, "This is an ancient falsehood."[16] Yet before it there has come the Book of Moses as a guide and a mercy, and this Book has been revealed to confirm it in the Arabic tongue so as to warn the wrongdoers[17] and to give good news to those who have adopted the righteous conduct.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَٰمُوا۟ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

[13-14] Indeed, those who said, "Allah alone is our Lord," then remained steadfast, they shall neither neither have anything to fear nor shall they grieve.[18] They all shall go to Paradise wherein they shall live for ever, a reward for the deeds they did in the world.

وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ إِحْسَٰنًا ۖ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُۥ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۖ وَحَمْلُهُۥ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ ثَلَٰثُونَ شَهْرًا ۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِىٓ أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَىَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَٰلِحًا تَرْضَىٰهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِى فِى ذُرِّيَّتِىٓ ۖ إِنِّى تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنَّنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُواْ وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَن سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ
فِىٓ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَعْدَ ٱلصِّدْقِ ٱلَّذِى كَانُواْ يُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِى قَالَ لِوَٰلِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَّكُمَآ أَتَعِدَانِنِىٓ أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ ٱلْقُرُونُ مِن
قَبْلِى وَهُمَا يَسْتَغِيثَانِ ٱللَّهَ وَيْلَكَ ءَامِنْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَيَقُولُ مَا هَٰذَآ
إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَوْلُ فِىٓ أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ
مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُواْ خَٰسِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُواْ ۖ وَلِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ أَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَٰتِكُمْ فِى حَيَاتِكُمُ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهَا فَٱلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ ٱلْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[15-20] We have enjoined man to treat his parents with kindness. His mother bore him with hardship and she gave him birth with hardship, and his bearing and his weaning took thirty months,[19] until when he attained to his full strength and became forty years old, he said, "O my Lord, grant me the grace that I may thank You for the favors You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I should do such good works as may please You,[20] and make my children also good to comfort me. I turn to You in penitence and I am of those who have surrendered to You (as Muslims). " From such people We accept the best of their deeds and overlook their evils.[21] They will be among the dwellers of Paradise according to the true promise that has been made to them (here). But the one who said to his parents, "Fie upon you! what, do you frighten me with this that I shall be taken out of the grave after death? whereas many a generation has passed away before me (and none has risen from among them). The mother and father cry for Allah's help and say, "Believe, O wretch! Allah's promise is true." But he says, "These are nothing but tales of the ancient times." Such are the people against whom the decision of torment has already been decreed. They will also join those hosts of the jinns and men (of their own kind) who have passed away before them. Indeed, they are the losers.[22] Each one of the two groups will have their ranks according to their deeds so that Allah may reward them fully for what they have done, and they shall not be wronged at all.[23] When the disbelievers are mustered at the Fire, it will be said to them, "You have exhausted your share of the good things in your life of the world and you enjoyed them fully. Today you shall be punished with a torment of disgrace in consequence of the arrogance that you showed on the earth, without any right, and the transgressions that you committed."[24]

۞ وَٱذْكُرْ أَخَا عَادٍ إِذْ أَنذَرَ قَوْمَهُۥ بِٱلْأَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ ٱلنُّذُرُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ
يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِۦٓ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ
عَظِيمٍ ﴿٢١﴾

قَالُوٓاْ أَجِئۡتَنَا لِتَأۡفِكَنَا عَنۡ ءَالِهَتِنَا فَأۡتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ٢٢

قَالَ إِنَّمَا ٱلۡعِلۡمُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَأُبَلِّغُكُم مَّآ أُرۡسِلۡتُ بِهِۦ وَلَٰكِنِّيٓ أَرَىٰكُمۡ قَوۡمٗا تَجۡهَلُونَ ٢٣

[21-23] And relate to them the story of the brother of 'Ad (Hud), when he warned his people in Ahqaf[25] -and such warners had preceded as well as followed him-saying, "Worship none but Allah. I fear for you the torment of a dreadful day." They said, "Have you come to seduce us away from our own gods ? Well, bring down your torment with which you threaten us, if you are really truthful." He said, "The knowledge of this is with Allah.[26] I am only conveying to you the message with which I have been sent. But I see that you are a people Sunk in ignorance."[27]

فَلَمَّا رَأَوۡهُ عَارِضٗا مُّسۡتَقۡبِلَ أَوۡدِيَتِهِمۡ قَالُواْ هَٰذَا عَارِضٞ مُّمۡطِرُنَاۚ بَلۡ هُوَ مَا ٱسۡتَعۡجَلۡتُم بِهِۦۖ رِيحٞ فِيهَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ٢٤

تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ شَيۡءِۭ بِأَمۡرِ رَبِّهَا فَأَصۡبَحُواْ لَا يُرَىٰٓ إِلَّا مَسَٰكِنُهُمۡۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجۡزِي ٱلۡقَوۡمَ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ٢٥

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِيمَآ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰكُمْ فِيهِ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ سَمْعًا وَأَبْصَٰرًا وَأَفْـِٔدَةً
فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَلَآ أَبْصَٰرُهُمْ وَلَآ أَفْـِٔدَتُهُم مِّن شَىْءٍ إِذْ
كَانُوا۟ يَجْحَدُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ
٢٦

[24-26] Then, when they saw the torment coming towards their valleys, they said, "This is a cloud that will give us much rain."Nay,[28] but this is the same thing which you asked to be hastened. This is a storm of wind bringing a painful torment. It will destroy everything by the Command of its Lord. Consequently, there remained nothing to be seen except their (empty) dwelling places. Thus do We recompense the culprits.[29] We had given them that which We have not given you.[30] We had given them ears and eyes and hearts, but nothing did their ears and their eyes and their hearts avail them, because they denied the Revelations of Allah,[31] and they were encompassed by the same thing that they mocked.

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَصَرَّفْنَا ٱلْـَٔايَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ
٢٧

فَلَوْلَا نَصَرَهُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا ءَالِهَةً ۖ بَلْ ضَلُّوا۟ عَنْهُمْ ۚ
وَذَٰلِكَ إِفْكُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ٢٨

[27-28] We have destroyed many habitations around you. We sent Our Revelations to them over and over again in various ways that they might desist (from wrongdoing). Then, why did not those beings help them whom they had made their gods instead of Allah, and regarded them as a means of attaining nearness to Him?[32] Nay, they were lost from them: and this was the end of their lies and their false beliefs that they had invented.

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَآ إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوٓا۟
أَنصِتُوا۟ ۖ فَلَمَّا قُضِىَ وَلَّوْا۟ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِم مُّنذِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

قَالُوا۟ يَٰقَوْمَنَآ إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَٰبًا أُنزِلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ
يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

يَٰقَوْمَنَآ أَجِيبُوا۟ دَاعِىَ ٱللَّهِ وَءَامِنُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَغْفِرْ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ
وَيُجِرْكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾

وَمَن لَّا يُجِبْ دَاعِىَ ٱللَّهِ فَلَيْسَ بِمُعْجِزٍ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهُۥ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوْلِيَآءُ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

[29-32] (And recall the event) when We brought to you a group of jinns so that they might listen to the Qur'an.[33] When they reached the place (where you were reciting it), they said to one another, "Be silent." When the recitation was over, they returned to their people as warners. They said to them, "O our people! We have just listened to a Book that has been sent down after Moses. It contains the Books that came before it and it guides to the Truth and to a Straight Way.[34] O our people! Accept the invitation of the one calling to Allah and believe in him. Allah will forgive you your sins and will save you from a painful torment."[35] And[36] he who does not answer the one calling to Allah neither possesses any power in the earth to make Allah helpless nor has any protector and guardian to save him from Allah. Such people are involved in manifest error.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَلَمْ يَعْىَ بِخَلْقِهِنَّ
بِقَٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يُحْۦِىَ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۚ بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ أَلَيْسَ هَٰذَا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا ۚ
قَالَ فَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[33-34] Do they not see that God Who created the heavens and the earth and was not wearied by their creation, has surely the power to raise the dead to life! Why not! Surely He has power over everything. The Day the disbelievers are mustered at the Fire, they will be asked, "Is not this the Truth ?" They will say, "Yes, by our Lord (this is the very Truth!)." Allah will say, "Well, then taste the torment in consequence of your denying the Truth (in the world)."

فَٱصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعَزْمِ مِنَ ٱلرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِل لَّهُمْ ۚ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ
يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا۟ إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍ ۚ بَلَٰغٌ ۚ فَهَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلَّا ٱلْقَوْمُ
ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[35] Therefore, endure with patience, O Prophet, as did the Messengers endowed with the firmness of purpose,[37] and do not be in haste concerning them. The day these people see that with which they are being threatened, it will so appear to them that they did not stay in the world for more than an hour of a day. The Message has been conveyed. Now, shall any other than the disobedient people be destroyed?

1For explanation, sec E. N. 1 of Surah Az-Zumar, E. N. 1 of Al-Jathiyah and also E. N. 1 of As-Sajdah for understanding the true spirit of this introduction.

2For explanation, ace Al-An'am: 73, Yunus: 5-6, Ibrahim: 19, Al-Hijr: 85, An-Nahl: 3, Al-Anbiya,: 16-18. Al-

Mu'minun: 115, Al-`Ankabut: 44, Ar Rum: 8 and the corresponding E.N.'s.

3That is, "The actual fact is that this universe is not a purposeless plaything but a purposeful, wise system in which the decisions regarding the good and the bad, the oppressor and the oppressed, will necessarily be based on justice; and the present system of the universe is not permanent and eternal, but it has a fixed term appointed for it on the expiry of which it will inevitably come to an end. For the Court of Allah also there is a settled time and it will certainly be established when the time for it reaches its term. But the people who have refused to believe in Allah's Prophet and His Book, have an aversion to these truths. They are least mindful of this that a time has to come when they will have to render an account of their deeds. They think that the Messenger of Allah has done them a great wrong by warning them of these truths, whereas he has done them a great good by fore-warning them not only of the time when they will be subjected to accountability but also of what they will be questioned at that time so that they may prepare themselves accordingly."

To understand the following discourse it should be borne in mind that man's basic error is the one that he commits with regard to determining his belief about God. In this regard, the adoption of a creed carelessly on the basis of mere hearsay, without any serious and deep thought and investigation, is a stupendous folly, which vitiates man's whole attitude to life in the world and ruins his destiny for ever afterwards. But the reason why man becomes involved in this dangerous kind of heedlessness is that he regards himself as irresponsible and un-answerable and develops the misunderstanding that whatever creed he may adopt about God, it would make no difference, because either there is no life after death in which he might have to face accountability, or if there is any such life and he is also called to account, the beings of whom he is a devotee, will save him from any evil fate. This same lack of the sense of responsibility renders him frivolous in the selection of a religious creed, and on the basis of the same he fabricates all sorts of absurd creeds, from atheism to every form of polytheism, or adopts the creeds fabricated by others. "

4As the addresses are a polytheistic people they are being told the reality of the irrational crced in which they persisted carelessly due to lack of the sense of responsibility. Along with acknowledging Allah as the Creator of the universe they had made many other beings their deities: they invoked them, regarded them as fulfillers of their needs and removers of hardships: prostrated themselves and made offerings before them, and thought they had the powers of making and unmaking of heir destinies. About the same beings, they are being asked: "On what basis have you made them your deities ?" Obviously, there can be only two bases for regarding someone as an associate in worship along with Allah: either man himself should know through some means of knowledge that his deity too has a share in making the earth and heavens, or Allah Himself may have stated that so and-so also is His associate in the functions of Godhead. Now, if a polytheist can neither make the claim that he possesses direct knowledge of his deity's being an associate of God, nor he can show in a Book sent by God that God Himself has appointed somebody as His associate, his creed would inevitably be baseless.

In this verse, "a Book revealed before this" implies a Book sent by Allah before the Qur'an, and "some remnant" of knowledge implies some part of the teachings of the Prophets and righteous men of the ancient times, which may have reached the later generations reliably. There is no tinge of shirk in whatever man has received through these two means. All the heavenly Books unanimously present the same Tauhid to which the Qur'an invites the people, and no existing remnant of the ancient lore bears evidence to this that some Prophet or saint or righteous man might have taught the people to serve and worship any other than God. Even if we do not take a Book to mean a Divine Book and remnant of knowledge the knowledge bequeathed by the Prophets and righteous men, no authentic book or the research made by a scholar of religious or secular lore has pointed out that such and such a thing in the earth or the heavens has been created by such and such a saint or god, or a certain blessing of the-blessings of life which man 'is benefiting from in the universe has been created by such and such a deity instead of God.

5"Cannot answer him": Cannot answer the supplications of any one. That is, these gods do not possess the powers by virtue of which they could give decisions on the prayers and petitions of their devotees. (For further explanation, see E.N. 33 of Az-Zumar).

"Till the Day of Resurrection" means that as long as the world lasts they will get no answer to their supplications and prayers from their deities, but when Resurrection will have taken place, the deities will turn hostile to their worshipers themselves, as becomes explicit from the next verse.

6That is, "they do not even hear the supplications of the supplicants, neither through their own ears nor through any other means. " This thing can be elaborated like this: The being whom the polytheists the world over have been invoking are divided into three categories:

(1) Lifeless and inanimate creation;

(2) the pious men who have passed away; and

(3) the wicked men who had themselves gone astray, and who misled others and passed away.

As for the first category of the deities they will naturally remain unaware of the supplications of their worshipers. As for the deities of the second kind, who were favorites with their God, there are two reasons of their remaining unaware: (a) They are in the presence of Allah in a state where human voices cannot reach them directly; and (b) even Allah and His angels do not inform them that the people whom they had been teaching to invoke Allah alone in the world, were invoking them instead, for no information could cause them a greater shock than this, and Allah does not at all like to vex the souls of His righteous servants.

Now if we consider the case of the third kind of the deities, we shall sec that there are two reasons also of

their remaining unaware: (a) That they have been placed in confinement as the accused, and no voice from the world can reach them; and (b) that even Allah and His angels do not convey to them the news that their mission is flourishing in the world, and the people have set them up as deities, for this news would be a happy news for them, and Allah does not like to make the wicked people happy.

In this connection, one should also understand that Allah conveys to His righteous servants the greetings of peace and prayers of mercy from the people of the world, for these things arc a source of joy and pleasure for them; likewise, He informs the culprits of the curses, censures and condemnations of the people of the world, as the disbelievers killed in the Battle of Badr were made to hear the curse of the Holy Prophet according to a Hadith, for it is a cause of anguish for them. But anything which might cause distress to the righteous people and joy to the culprits is not conveyed to them. This explanation makes the truth about the,. question of hearing by the dead plain and easy to understand.

7That is, they will say: 'We had neither told the people to invoke us for help, nor are we aware that they used to invoke us. They themselves had presumed that we could fulfill their needs and so had started invoking us."

8It means: When the Revelations of the Qur'an were recited before the disbelievers of Makkah, they realized that the Qur'an was far superior to human speech. The compositions of their greatest poets, orators and literary men were no match with the un-paralleled eloquence, enchanting oratory, sublime themes and heart-moving style of the Qur'an. Above all, even the Holy Prophet's own words and speech were not comparable with the discourses that were being sent down to him by God. Those who had known him since childhood knew full well the vast difference that was there between his language and words and the words of the Qur'an, and it was not possible for them to believe that a man who had been living day and night among them for forty years would suddenly one day forge a speech .whose diction and style would bear no resemblance with his familiar and known manner of speech and style. This thing trade the truth plain before them, but since they were bent upon denial, they would say: "This is plain magic," instead of acknowledging it as Divine Word after witnessing this manifest Sign. (They regarded the Qur'an as magic from another aspect also, which we have explained in our commentary of Al-Anbiya' :3 and E:.N. 5 of Surah Suad).

9This interrogative tone expresses great surprise and amazement. It means to say: "Are these people so shameless that they accuse Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) of fabricating the Qur'an himself? Whereas they know that it cannot be his word; and their calling it magic is by itself an express proof that they regard it as an extraordinary word, which cannot be of human composition even according to themselves."

10As it was quite evident that their accusation was baseless and motivated by stubbornness, there was no need to present arguments to refute it. Therefore, only this much was regarded as a sufficient

response: ¦If I have really fabricated something and committed a grave crime by imputing it to Allah, as you accuse me of, you will not be able to rescue me from Allah's punishment. But if it is really Allah's Word, and you are rejecting it by bringing false accusations, Allah Himself will deal with you. For the reality is not hidden from Allah, and He is sufficient to decide between the truth and falsehood. If the whole world calls some one a liar, although he is truthful in Allah's knowledge, the final decision will be in his favor. On the country: if the whole world regards some one as truthful though he is a liar in the knowledge of Allah, he will be regarded as a liar in the final judgment. Therefore, do not confuse things but pay heed to your final end."

11Here, this sentence gives two meanings:

(1) "It is in fact Allah's mercy and His forbearance that these people arc surviving in the world, although they have no hesitation in declaring Allah's Word as falsehood; otherwise if a merciless and cruel god had been the master of this universe, he would not have allowed such insolent people to live even for a moment in the world. "

(2) "O unjust people, if you give up your stubbornness even now, the door of God's mercy is still open for you, and whatever misdeeds you may have committed heretofore can be forgiven."

12Its background is this: When the Holy Prophet presented himself as Allah's Messenger, the people of Makkah raised different kinds of objections against it. They said: "what kind of a Messenger he is who has a family, who moves about in the streets, eats and drinks and lives a common man's life. There is nothing special about him, which might distinguish him above the other people and therefore we may know that Allah has specially made this man His Messenger. " Then they said: "Had he ban appointed a Messenger by God, He would have sent an angel as an attendant with him who would have announced that he was God's Messenger, and would have punished with a scourge every such person who had behaved insolently Towards him. How strange that God should appoint a person as His Messenger and then should leave him alone to roam the streets of Makkah and suffer every kind of humiliation. If nothing else Allah should at least have created a magnificent palace and a blooming garden for His Messenger. He should not have been left to depend on his wife's resources so that 'when they exhausted the Messenger should be forced to go without food and should not even afford a conveyance to Ta'if." Besides, these people demanded different kinds of miracles from him and asked news of the unseen. They thought that a person's being God's Messenger meant that he should possess supernatural powers so that mountains should move at his bidding and deserts at once turn into green fields; he should have the knowledge of the past and the future events and of everything hidden from others.

An answer to the same has been given in these sentences, and each sentence contains a world of meaning.

First, it is said: 'Tell them: I am not a novel Messenger. " That is, "My being appointed as a Messenger is

not a novel event of its kind in the world so that you may have some confusion about the characteristics of a Messenger. Many Messengers have come to the world before me, and I am not any different from them. Never has a Messenger come, who did not have a family, who did not eat and drink, or who did not live a common man's life. Never has an angel descended as an attendant with a Messenger, heralding his prophethood and carrying a whip before him. Never have gardens and palaces been created for a Messenger and never has a Messenger ban spared of the hardships which I am suffering. Never has a Messenger shown a miracle by his own power, or known everything by his own knowledge. Then, how is it that you are bringing forth these strange criteria only to judge my Prophethood?"

Then it is said: Tell them also : "I do not know what shall befall you tomorrow nor what shall befall me. I only follow that which is revealed to me." That is, "I am not a knower of the unseen so that everything of the past and present and future should be known to me, and I should have the knowledge of everything in the world. Not to speak of your future, I do not even know my own future. I only know that of which I am given knowledge by revelation. More than that I have never claimed to know, nor has there ever been a Messenger in the world, who made that claim. It is not a Messenger's job to tell the whereabouts of the lost articles, or tell whether a pregnant woman will deliver a boy or a girl, or whether a sick patient will live or die."

In conclusion, it is said: "Say to them: I am no more than a plain warner." That is, "I do not possess Divine powers so that I may show you the wonderful miracles that you demand from me every next day. My only mission is that I should present the right way before the people, and should warn of an evil end those who do not accept it. "

13This same theme has been expressed in another way in Surah Ha-Mim As-Sajdah: 62 above. For explanation, see E.N. 69 of the said Surah.

14A large number of the commentators have taken this "witness" to imply Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Salam, who was a famous Jewish scholar of Madinah, and who believed in the Holy Prophet after the migration. As this thing happened in Madinah, these commentators say that this verse was revealed at Madinah. This commentary is based on a statement of Hadrat Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas according to which this verse was sent down in respect of Hadrat `Abdullah bin Salam (Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i Ibn Jarir); and on the same basis have several major commentators like Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, Dahhak, Ibn Sirin, Hasan Basri, Ibn Zaid and `Auf bin Malik al-Ashja`i accepted this commentary. But, on the other hand, 'Ikrimah and Sha`bi and Masruq say that this verse cannot be about `Abdullah bin Salam (may Allah be pleased with him) for this entire Surah was sent down at Makkah. Ibn Jarir Tabari also has preferred this view. He says: The whole previous discourse is an address directed to the pagans of Makkah and the following discourse also is directed to them. In this context it is not conceivable that a verse revealed at Madinah was inserted here. The later commentators who have accepted this second version, do not reject the tradition of Hadrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas, but have opined that as this verse also applies to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Salam's affirmation of the faith, Hadrat Sa`d expressed the opinion, in the tradition of

the ancients, that it was sent down with regard to him. This does not, however, mean that when he believed, it was revealed then about him only, but that this verse precisely applied to him and his acceptance of Islam.

Apparently, this second view seems to be more correct and reasonable. Now. the question that remains to be answered is: Who is implied by this witness?" Some of the commentators who have accepted the second view say that it implies the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), but the following sentence: 'He believed white you showed arrogance", bears no relevance to this explanation. What seems to be nearer the truth is that which the commentator Nisaburi and Ibn Kathir have stated. They say: Here, by "a witness" is not meant any particular person but a common Israelite.. The meaning is this; "The teachings that the Qur'an is presenting before you are not new so that you could deny them by offering the excuse that they were novel teachings which had never been presented before man in the past. Before this these very teachings have been similarly revealed and exist with the Israelites in the form of the Torah and other scriptures, and a common Israelite has already believed in them, and also admitted that Allah's Revelation is a means of the coming down of these teachings. Therefore, you cannot make the claim that Revelation and these teachings are incomprehensible. The only thing that hinders you from believing is your arrogance and baseless conceit. "

15This is one of those arguments that the chiefs of the Quraish employed to beguile and mislead the common people against the Holy Prophet. They said: If the Qur'an were really based on the truth and Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) were inviting towards a right thing, the chiefs and the elders and the noblemen of the community would have been in the forefront to accept it. How could it be that a few young boys and mean slaves only should accept a reasonable thing but the distinguished men of the nation, who are wise and experienced, and who have been held as reliable by others, would reject it? This was the deceptive reasoning by which they tried to make the common people believe that there was something wrong with the new message; that is why the ciders of the people were not believing it; therefore, they also should avoid it.

16That is, "They regard themselves as a criterion of the truth and falsehood. They think that whatever (guidance) they reject must be falsehood. But accepting them since thousands of years also were devoid of wisdom and knowledge, and the whole wisdom has now become these people's monopoly."

17"To warn the wrongdoers :" To warn of the evil end those who are being unjust to themselves and to the truth itself by disbelieving in Allah and serving others than Allah, and are involved because of this deviation of theirs in the evils of morals and deeds, which have filled human society with every kind of wickedness and injustice.

18For explanation, see E.N.'s 33 to 35 of Ha-Mim As-Sajdah.

19This verse tells that although the children should serve both the mother and the father, the mother's right is greater in importance, on the ground that she undergoes greater hardships for the sake of the children. The same is borne out by a Hadith, which has been related with a little variation in wording in Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Musnad Ahmad, and in Adab al-Mufrad of Imam Bukhari, to the effect that a person asked the Holy Prophet: "Who has got a greater right to my service? The Holy Prophet replied: Your mother. He asked: Who after her? He replied: Your mother. He asked: Who after her? He replied: Your mother. He asked: Who after her? He replied: Your father; " This Hadith precisely explains this verse, for in it also allusion has been made to the triple right of the mother: (1) His mother bore him with hardship; (2) she gave him birth with hardship; and (3) his bearing and his weaning took thirty months.

Another legal point also is derived from this verse and verse 14 of Surah Luqman and verse 233 of Al-Baqarah, which was pointed out by Hadrat `Ali and Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas in a law case and made Hadrat `Uthman change his decision. The story goes that during the caliphate of Hadrat `Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) a person married a woman from the Juhainah tribe, and just six months after the marriage she gave birth to a healthy and sound child. The man took the case before Hadrat `Uthman, who declared the woman to be an adultress and ordered that she be stoned to death. On hearing this Hadrat `Ali immediately came to Hadrat `Uthman and asked: What sort of a decision have you given ? He replied: She has given birth to a sound child six months after marriage. Is it not a clear .proof of her being an adultress? Hadrat `Ali did not agree, and recited the three above mentioned verses in their sequence. In Surah Al-Baqarah Allah says: 'The mothers shall suckle their children for two whole in years, if the fathers desire the suckling to be completed." In Surah Luqman it is said: "And his weaning took two years," and in Surah AI-Ahqaf: "And his bearing and his weaning took thirty months." Now, if two years of suckling are taken away from 30 months, six months of bearing remain. This shows that the minimum period of pregnancy in which a sound child can be born is six months. Therefore, the woman who has given birth to a child six months after the marriage cannot be declared an adulteress . On hearing this reasoning of Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat 'Uthman admitted that he had not considered that thing at all. Then he recalled the woman and changed his decision. According to another tradition, Ibn 'Abbas also supported the reasoning of Hadrat 'Ali and then Hadrat 'Uthman changed his decision. (Ibn Jarir, Ahkam al-Qur an by al-Jassas Ibn Kathir).

The following legal injunctions are derived from the three verses when they are read together: The woman who gives birth to a sound and complete child in less than six months after marriage (i.e. in a proper delivery and not abortion) will be declared an adulteress and her child's lineage from her husband will not be established.

(2) The woman who delivers a sound and complete child six months or more after marriage, cannot be accused of adultery only on the basis of the child birth, nor can her husband have the right to slander her, nor can he refuse to acknowledge fatherhood of the child; the child will certainly be recognized as his, and the woman will not be punished.

(3) The maximum period for fosterage is two years. If a woman has suckled a child after this age, she will not be regarded as his foster mother, nor will the injunctions pertaining to fosterage (An-Nisa: 23) be applicable to her. In this regard, Imam Abu Hanifah has out of caution proposed the period of two and a half years instead of two years so that there remains no chance of error in a delicate matter like the prohibition of the foster relations. (For explanation, see E N. 23 of Surah Luqman).

Here, it would be useful to know that according to the latest medical research a child needs at least 28 weeks to remain in the mother's womb to be developed and delivered as a living baby. This period amounts to a little more than 6 months. The Islamic law has allowed a concession of about half a month, because a woman's being declared an adulteress and a child's being deprived of lineage is a grave matter, and its gravity demands that maximum period be allowed to save both the mother and the child from its legal consequences. Furthermore, no physician and no judge, not even the pregnant woman herself and the man impregnating her, can know as to when exactly did the conception take place. This thing also demands that a few more days be allowed in determining the minimum Legal period of pregnancy.

20That is, "O Lord, grant me the grace of such righteous deeds as may conform to Your Law in the apparent form as well as be acceptable to You in their actual worth." If an action, however good in the sight of the people, does not conform to obedience to Allah's Law, it cannot have any value in the sight of Allah, no matter how highly it is praised by the people. On the contrary, another action which conforms to the Shari 'ah exactly and has no flaw or deficiency in its apparent form, becomes hollow from within, on account of an evil intention, conceit, arrogance and greed of the world, and so worthless in the sight of Allah.

21That is, "Their ranks in the Hereafter will be determined by the best deeds they would have done in the world, and their lapses and weaknesses and errors will be overlooked. It is just like a generous and appreciative master who determines the worth of his loyal and obedient servant not by the petty services that he renders but by some work of merit that he might accomplish or a feat of devotion and dedication that he might perform. He will not call his servant to account for his minor shortcomings and overlook his major services."

22Here, two types of the character have been placed side by side and the listeners asked the silent question as to which of them is better. At that time both these types of character practically existed in the society, and it was not at all difficult for the people to know where they could find the first type of the character and where the second. This is the answer to this saying of the chiefs of the Quraish: "If it had been any good to believe in this Book, these few youngsters and slaves would not have believed in it before they did." In the light of this answer everyone could see for himself as to what was the character of the believers and what of the unbelievers.

23That is, "Neither will the good deeds and sacrifices of the good people be lost, nor the evildoers awarded a greater punishment than what they will actually deserve. If a good man is deprived of his reward and receives a lesser reward than what is actually his due, it is injustice. Likewise, if an evildoer is not punished appropriately for his evil deeds, or receives a greater punishment than deserved, it is also injustice. "

24"A torment of disgrace", because of the arrogance that they showed. They thought they were big people and it was below their dignity to believe in the Messenger and join the group of the poor and indigent believers. They were involved in the false pride that if the big people like them would believe in a thing which a few slaves and poor men had believed in, they would incur infamy. That is why Allah will disgrace them in the Hereafter and will destroy their pride."

25As the chiefs of the Quraish had a false pride of their superiority and exulted in their wealth and prosperity, the story of `Ad is being related to them about whom it was well known that they had been the mightiest people in Arabia.

Literally, Ahqaf (pl. of hiqf) are long dunes of sand less in height than mountains, but technically it is a name given to the southern-western part of the Arabian desert (Ar-Rub'ul-khali) which is wholly un-inhabited. Please see the map on page 672.

Ibn Ishaq says that the territory of 'Ad extended from 'Oman to Yaman, and the Qur'an tells us that they actually belonged to Al-Ahqaf from where they spread to the adjoining lands and subdued weak nations. 125 miles to the north of the present-day city of Makkah there is a place in Hadramaut, where the people have built a tomb to the Prophet Hud, and the place is well known as the Grave of Hud. A religious festival is held there on the 15th of Sha'ban and thousands of people from different parts of Arabia gather there annually. Although it is not historically established, the grave's being built there and the southern Arabs' visiting it in large numbers is at least a proof that local tradition regards this very territory as the land of `Ad. Besides, there are several nuns in Hadramaut which the natives still call by the name of Dar-'Ad (Abode of 'Ad).

From the present condition of Al-Ahqaf no one can even imagine that this land might have been the home of a mighty people boasting of magnificent civilization. Probably it was a green and fertile land thousands of years ago, and then the change of climate might have turned it into a sandy desert. Today it is a vast, wind-swept desert, and no one can dare go into its interior. In 1843 A.D. a Bavarian soldier was able to reach its southern edge. He says that if one looks down from the northern plateau of Hadramaut one can see this desert about a thousand feet in the depression. Here and there in it there are white areas where if a thing falls it goes on sinking into the sand and decays. The Arab Beduins fear this land and arc never willing to step into it at any cost. Once when the Bedouins were not ready to take him there, he went by himself. He says that the sand there is very fine powder, and when he threw a plummet into it from a distance, it sank into it within five minutes and the end of the line to which it was attached, also decayed.

For detailed information, sec:

Arabia and The Isles, Harold Ingrams, London, 1946.

The Unveiling of Arabia, R H. Kirnan, London, 1937.

The Empty Quarter. Philby. London, 1933.

26That is, "Allah alone knows as to when the torment will descend on you and for how long you will be granted respite."

27That is, "You are taking my warning as a joke in your ignorance and are demanding the torment for fun. You have no idea of how dreadful is God's torment and how near at hand it might have approached because of your misdeeds. "

28Here, there is no indication as to who gave them this answer. However, the style shows explicitly that this was the answer they were given by the existing conditions. They thought it was a cloud which was coming to give rain to their valleys, but in reality it was a windstorm that was coming on to completely exterminate them.

29For the details of the story of 'Ad, see AI-A'raf: 65-72, Hud: 50-60, AI-Mu'minun: 31-41. Ash-Shu'ara: 123-140, AI-'Ankabut: 40, Iii-Mim AsSajdah: 15-16 and the corresponding E.N.'s.

30That is, "You are no match for them as far as wealth, power, authority and other things are concerned: your sphere of authority is restricted to the bounds of the city of Makkah, but they had dominated a large part of the earth. "

31An important truth has been stated in this brief sentence. It is only the Revelations of Allah which give the right knowledge and understanding of the truth and reality to man. If man has this understanding and knowledge he sees the right thing with his eyes, hears the right thing with his ears, thinks the right thing with his mind and intellect and takes the right decisions. But when he refuses to believe in the Revelations of Allah, he fails to see the truth in spite of the eyes, becomes deaf to every word of admonition in spite of the ears, and misuses the blessings of the mind and intellect that God has granted him, and goes on drawing wrong conclusions one after the other; so much so that he starts using all his capabilities for his own destruction.

32That is, "They had put faith in those things in the beginning with the idea that they were favorite servants of God and through them they would attain nearness to Him, but then gradually they made them

their gods. They started invoking them for help; they formed the belief that they had the powers to change their destinies and could answer their prayers and remove their hardships." To deliver them from this error Allah sent His Revelations through His Messengers over and over again in different ways to bring them to the right path, but they persisted m the worship of their gods, and continued to insist that they would still invoke them instead of Allah. Now consider this: When the torment of Allah visited these polytheists because of their deviation, where had their redressers of grievances and removers of hardships disappeared? Why didn't they come to their rescue at the time of affliction?

33The traditions that have been related from Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat Zubair, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, Hasan Basri, Said bin Jubair, Zarr bin Hubaish, Mujahid, 'ikrimah and others in connection with the commentary of this verse concur that this incident of the first visit of the jinns, which has been mentioned in this verse, had occurred in the valley of Nakhlah. And according to Ibn Ishaq, Abu Nu`aim Isfahaini and Waqidi, this incident occurred during the Holy Prophet's return journey from Ta'if to Makkah. On the way, when he halted at Nakhlah, and was reciting the Qur'an in the 'Isha' or the Fajr or the Tahajjud Prayer, a group of the jinns happened to pass by and stopped to listen to him. In this connection, all the traditions agree that on this occasion the jinns did not appear before the Holy Prophet, nor did he feel their presence, but Allah informed him afterwards by revelation that they had come and listened to the Qur'anic recitation.

The place where this incident took place was either Az-Zaimah or AsSayl-ul-Kabir, for both these places are situated in the valley of Nakhlah and at both water is available and are green; if the travelers from Ta'if have to halt in this valley, they can halt at either of the places. Please see the map for the location of these places.

34This shows that these jinns had already had faith in the Prophet Moses and in the Divine Books. After hearing the Qur'an they felt that it gave the same teachings as the former Prophets had been preaching. Therefore, they believed in this Book forthwith and also in the Holy prophet who had brought it.

35Authentic traditions show that after this several deputations of the jinns visited the Holy Prophet, one after the other, and met him face to face. When all the traditions related in the collections of Hadith on this subject are read together, it appears that at least six deputations had visited him in Makkah before the Hijrah.

About one of these deputations Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud relates: 'One day the Holy Prophet remained missing from Makkah for the whole night. We could not know his whereabouts and feared he might have been attacked by somebody. Early in the morning we saw him coming from the direction of Hira'. On inquiring he said that a jinn had come to invite him and he had accompanied him and recited the Qur'an to a gathering of them there." (Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud).

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud has related another tradition, saying: "Once the Holy Prophet asked his

Companions in Makkah as to which of them would accompany him that night to meet the jinns. I became ready to go with him. At a place in the upper quarters of Makkah the Holy Prophet drew a line and told me not to cross it. Then he went forward and stood and began to recite the Qur'an. I saw that a number of the people had gathered around him and they stood between me and him.'" (Ibn Jarir, Baihaqi: Dala`il an-Nubuwwat, Abu Nu`aim Isfahani: Dale Il an-Nubuwuat).

On another occasion also during the night Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud was with the Holy Prophet and he decided a case of the jinns at Hajun in Makkah. Many years later Ibn Mas'ud saw a group of the villagers at Kufa and said that the group of the jinns he had seen at Hajun closely resembled those people. (Ibn Jarir).

36This sentence might also be a part of the saying of the jinns, or it might be an addition by Allah to their saying. In view of the context the second view seems to be more reasonable.

37That is, "Just as the Prophets before you went on enduring with patience and ceaseless struggle the indifference, opposition, resistance and persecutions of their people for years on end, so should you also do the same, and do not entertain the idea that either the people should believe in you immediately or. if they do not believe, Allah should visit them with His torment "

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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47. Surah Muhammad (The Praised One)

Name

The Surah derives its name from the sentence *wa amanu bi-ma nuzzila ala Muhammad-in* of verse 2, thereby implying that it is the Surah in which the holy name of Muhammad (upon wham be Allah's peace and blessings) has occurred. Besides, it has another well known name "*al-Qital*" also, which is derived from the sentence *wa dhukira fi-hal-qital* of verse 20.

Period of Revelation

The contents of this Surah testify that it was sent down after the hijrah at Madinah at the time when the fighting had been enjoined, though active fighting had not yet been undertaken. Detailed arguments in support of this view have been given in E. N. 8 below.

Historical Background

The conditions at the time when this Surah was sent down were such that the Muslims were being made the target of persecution and tyranny in Makkah in particular and in Arabia in general, and life had become miserable for them. Although the Muslims had emigrated to the haven of Madinah from every side, the disbelieving Quraish were not prepared to leave them alone and let them live in peace even there. Thus, the small settlement of Madinah was hemmed in by the enemy, who was bent upon exterminating it completely. The only alternative left with the Muslims were that either they should surrender to the forces of ignorance, giving up their mission of preaching the true Faith, or even following it in their private lives, or should rise to wage a war at the cost of their lives to settle finally and for ever whether Islam would stay in Arabia or the creed of ignorance. On this occasion Allah showed the Muslims the same way of resolution and will, which is the only way for the true believers. He first permitted them to fight in Surah Al Hajj 39 and then enjoined fighting in Al Baqarah 190. But at that time everyone knew fully well what it meant to wage a war in those conditions. There were only a handful of Muslims in Madinah, who could not muster even a thousand soldiers; yet they were being urged to take up the sword and clash against the pagan forces of the whole of Arabia. Then the kind of the weapons needed to equip its soldiers for war could hardly be afforded by the town in

which hundreds of emigrants were still homeless and unsettled even by resort to starving its members at a time when it had been boycotted economically by the Arabs on all sides.

Theme and Subject Matter

Such were the conditions when this Surah was revealed. Its theme is to prepare the believers for war and to give them preliminary instructions in this regard. That is why it has also been entitled *al-Qital*. It deals with the following topics:

At the outset it is said that of the two groups confronting each other at this time, one has refused to accept the Truth and has become an obstruction for others on the way of Allah, while the other group has accepted the Truth which had been sent down by Allah to His servant, Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Now, Allah's final decision is that He has rendered fruitless and vain all the works of the former group and set right the condition and affairs of the latter group.

After this, the Muslims have been given the initial war instructions they have been reassured of Allah's help and guidance: they have been given hope for the best rewards on offering sacrifices in the cause of Allah and they have been assured that their struggle in the cause of the Truth will not go to waste, but they will be abundantly rewarded both in this world and in the Hereafter.

Furthermore, about the disbelievers it has been said that they are deprived of Allah's support and guidance: none of their designs will succeed in their conflict with the believers, and they will meet a most evil fate both in this world and in the Hereafter. They thought they had achieved a great success by driving the Prophet of Allah out of Makkah, but in fact by this they had hastened their own doom.

After this, the discourse turns to the hypocrites, who were posing to be sincere Muslims before the command to fight was sent down, but were confounded when this command actually came down, and began to conspire with the disbelievers in order to save themselves from the hazards of war. They have been plainly warned to the effect that no act and deed is acceptable to Allah of those who adopt hypocrisy with regard to Him and His Prophet. There, the basic issue against which all those who profess the Faith are being tried is whether one is on the side of the Truth or Falsehood, whether one's sympathies are with Islam and the Muslims or with disbelief and the disbelievers, whether one keeps one's own self and interests dearer or the Truth which one professes to believe in and follow. One who fails in this test is not at all a believer; his Prayer and his Fasting and his discharging of the *zakat* deserve no reward from Allah.

Then the Muslims have been exhorted not to lose heart for being small in numbers and ill equipped as against the great strength of the disbelievers: they should not show weakness by offering peace to them, which might still further embolden them against Islam and the Muslims, but they should come out with trust in Allah and clash with the mighty forces of disbelief. Allah is with the Muslims: they alone shall triumph; and the might of disbelief will be humbled and vanquished.

In conclusion, the Muslims have been invited to spend their wealth in the cause of Allah. Although at that time they

were economically very weak, the problem that they confronted was the very survival of Islam and the Muslims. The importance and delicacy of the problem demanded that the Muslims should not only risk their lives for safeguarding themselves and their Faith from the dominance of disbelief and for exalting Allah's Religion but should also expend their economic resources as far as possible in the preparations for war. Therefore, they were clearly warned to the effect. Anyone who adopted a niggardly attitude at the time, would not, in fact, harm Allah at all, but would result in his own destruction, for Allah does not stand in need of help from men. If one group of men shirked offering sacrifices in the cause of His Religion, Allah would remove it and bring another group in its place.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

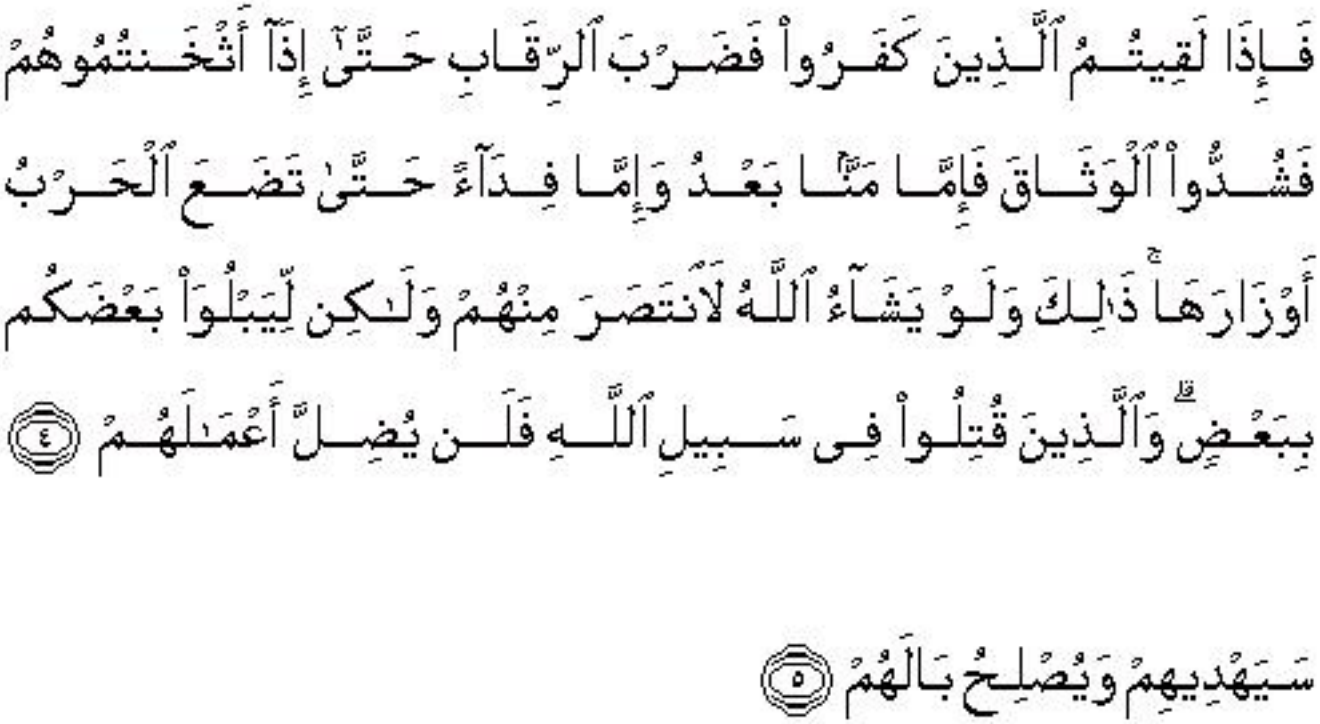
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿١﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَءَامَنُوا۟ بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَىٰ مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ ۙ كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ ﴿٢﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ وَأَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّبَعُوا۟ ٱلْحَقَّ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٣﴾

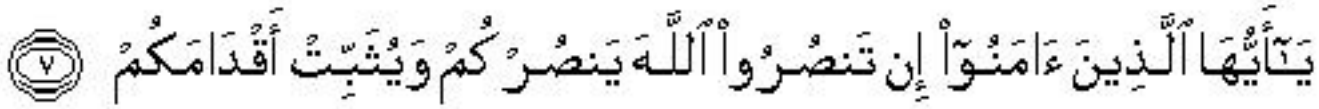
[1-3] Those who disbelieved[1] and debarred (others) from Allah's Way.[2] Allah rendered their works fruitless.[3] As for those who believed, and did' good works, and accepted that which has been sent down to Muhammad[4] and it is the very Truth from their Lord-Allah removed their evils from them[5] and set their condition right.[6] This is because the disbelievers followed falsehood and the believers followed the Truth which has come from their Lord. Thus does Allah make the people aware of their true state.[7]


فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَضَرْبَ ٱلرِّقَابِ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَثْخَنتُمُوهُمْ
فَشُدُّوا۟ ٱلْوَثَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَنًّۢا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَآءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ ٱلْحَرْبُ
أَوْزَارَهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ لَٱنتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَا۟ بَعْضَكُم
بِبَعْضٍ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَلَن يُضِلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٤﴾

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ﴿٥﴾


وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾

[4-6] Therefore, when you meet the disbelievers in the battle-field, first smite their necks. Then, when you have crushed them completely, bind the prisoners tight. After that (you have the choice) whether you show them favor or accept ransom, until the war lays down its arms.[8] So shall you do. Had Allah willed, He would Himself have dealt with them. But (He has adopted this way so that) He may test some of you by means of others.[9] And those who are killed in the way of Allah, Allah will never let their deeds go waste.[10] He will guide them, set their condition right, and will admit them to the Paradise with which He has acquainted them.[11]


يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تَنصُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَتَعْسًا لَّهُمْ وَأَضَلَّ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٨﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا۟ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٩﴾

۞ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ
دَمَّرَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَلِلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَمْثَٰلُهَا ﴿١٠﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَوْلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَأَنَّ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿١١﴾

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ
تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا
تَأْكُلُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ وَٱلنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ﴿١٢﴾

[7-12] O you who have believed, if you help Allah, Allah will help you[12] and make your footsteps firm. As for those who have disbelieved, for them is destruction[13] and Allah has rendered their deeds astray, because . they : disapproved of what Allah has sent down.[14] Therefore, Allah rendered their deeds fruitless. Have they not traveled in the earth that they could see the end of those who had gone before them? Allah destroyed them utterly and the disbelievers are destined for a similar end.[15] This is because Allah is the Protector and Helper of the believers and the disbelievers have no protector and helper.[16] Allah shall admit those who have believed and done good works into Gardens underneath which rivers flow. As for the disbelievers, they are only enjoying the temporary life of this

world, and eating as the animals eat,[17] and their final abode is Hell.

وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِّن قَرْيَتِكَ
ٱلَّتِيٓ أَخْرَجَتْكَ أَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ ﴿١٣﴾

أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ كَمَن زُيِّنَ لَهُۥ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِۦ وَٱتَّبَعُوٓاْ
أَهْوَآءَهُم ﴿١٤﴾

مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَآ أَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن مَّآءٍ غَيْرِ ءَاسِنٍ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن
لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُۥ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ
مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَٰلِدٌ
فِى ٱلنَّارِ وَسُقُواْ مَآءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَآءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

[13-15] O Prophet, how many habitations have there been that were much stronger in power than this habitation of yours that has expelled you. We destroyed them so utterly that there was none to save them.[18] Can it ever be that he who is on a clear guidance from his Lord, be like those whose evil deed has been made seem fair to them, and who are following their lusts?[19] The Paradise that has been promised to the righteous is such that canals will be flowing in it of pure water,[20] and canals will be flowing in it of milk of unchanged flavor,[21] and canals will be flowing in it of wine which will be delightful to the drinkers,[22] and canals will be flowing in it of honey, clear and pure.[23] In it there will be fruits of every kind for them and forgiveness from their Lord.[24] (Can the person who will be admitted to this Paradise) be like those who will dwell in Hell for ever and who will be given to drink boiling water that will cut their bowels into pieces?

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا خَرَجُوا۟ مِنْ عِندِكَ قَالُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟
ٱلْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ ءَانِفًا ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ طَبَعَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَٱتَّبَعُوٓا۟
أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ﴿١٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱهْتَدَوْا۟ زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَءَاتَىٰهُمْ تَقْوَىٰهُمْ ﴿١٧﴾

فَهَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا ٱلسَّاعَةَ أَن تَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً ۖ فَقَدْ جَآءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا ۚ فَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمْ إِذَا
جَآءَتْهُمْ ذِكْرَىٰهُمْ ﴿١٨﴾

[16-18] There are some among them who give ear to what you say, and then when they leave you, they ask those who have been blessed with knowledge, "What did he say just now?"[25] These are they upon whose hearts Allah has set a seal, and who are following their lusts.[26] As for those who have received guidance, Allah increases their guidance[27] and grants them their due share of piety.[28] Do they now only await Resurrection that it should come upon them suddenly?[29] Its portents indeed have already come.[30] But when it does overtake them, what chance will be there for them to accept admonition?

فَٱعْلَمْ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنۢبِكَ
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَىٰكُمْ ﴿١٩﴾

[19] Therefore, O Prophet, know it well that there is none worthy of worship but Allah, and ask forgiveness for your fault and for the believing men and women, too,[31] for Allah is aware of your busy movements and also of your resting places.

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ ۖ فَإِذَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ
مُّحْكَمَةٌ وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا ٱلْقِتَالُ ۙ رَأَيْتَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يَنظُرُونَ
إِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ ٱلْمَغْشِىِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۖ فَأَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾

طَاعَةٌ وَقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ ٱلْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ صَدَقُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَن تُفْسِدُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوٓا۟
أَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴿٢٢﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعْمَىٰٓ أَبْصَٰرَهُمْ ﴿٢٣﴾

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَآ ﴿٢٤﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱرۡتَدُّواْ عَلَىٰٓ أَدۡبَٰرِهِم مِّنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلۡهُدَى ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ
سَوَّلَ لَهُمۡ وَأَمۡلَىٰ لَهُمۡ ﴿٢٥﴾

[20-25] Those who have believed, were saying, "Why is not a Surah sent sent down (to enjoin fighting)?" But when a decisive Surah was sent down in which fighting had been mentioned, you saw those in whose hearts was a disease, looking towards you like the one under the shadow of death.[32] Alas for them! (On their tongue is) the promise of obedience and good works, but if they had proved true in their compact with Allah when the final Command was given, it would have been better for them. Now, what else can be expected of you than this that if you turned about,[33] you would again spread mischief in the land and break asunder the ties of blood?[34] These are they whom Allah has cursed and made them deaf and blind. Have they not pondered over the Qur'an, or are there locks upon their hearts?[35] The fact is that those who turned back, after guidance had become clear to them, for them Satan has made this way easy and prolonged for them the prospects of false hopes.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ قَالُواْ لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُواْ مَا نَزَّلَ ٱللَّهُ سَنُطِيعُكُمۡ فِي بَعۡضِ ٱلۡأَمۡرِ
وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُ إِسۡرَارَهُمۡ ﴿٢٦﴾

فَكَيۡفَ إِذَا تَوَفَّتۡهُمُ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَضۡرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمۡ وَأَدۡبَٰرَهُمۡ ﴿٢٧﴾

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ ٱتَّبَعُواْ مَآ أَسۡخَطَ ٱللَّهَ وَكَرِهُواْ رِضۡوَٰنَهُۥ فَأَحۡبَطَ أَعۡمَٰلَهُمۡ
﴿٢٨﴾

[26-28] That is why they said to those who showed aversion to what Allah had revealed, "We shall obey you in some matters."[36] Allah knows their secret affairs too well. Then, how shall it be when the angels take their souls, and

take them away, smiting their faces and their backs?[37] that made Allah angry, and hated to adopt the way of His pleasure. So, He rendered all their works fruitless.[38]

أَمْ حَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَن لَّن يُخْرِجَ ٱللَّهُ أَضْغَٰنَهُمْ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَأَرَيْنَٰكَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُم بِسِيمَٰهُمْ ۚ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِى لَحْنِ ٱلْقَوْلِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَٰلَكُمْ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ مِنكُمْ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ وَنَبْلُوَا۟ أَخْبَارَكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾

[29-31] Do those in whose hearts is a disease think that Allah will not expose the impurity of their hearts? If We will, We can show them to you and then you may recognize them by their faces. But you will certainly know them from the manner of their speech. Allah is fully aware of all your actions. We shall certainly put you to the test in order to appraise your state and to see who among you are struggling strenuously and enduring patiently.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَشَآقُّوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ لَن يَضُرُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا وَسَيُحْبِطُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾

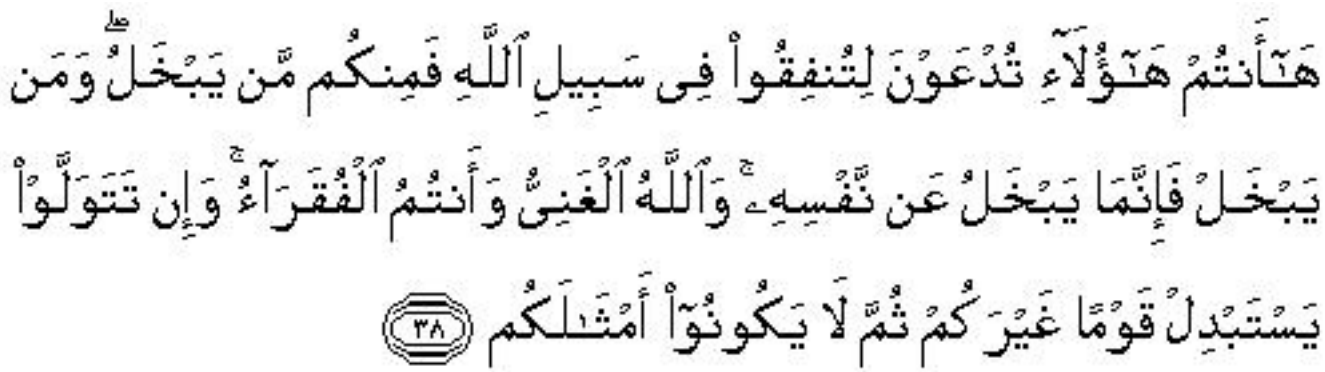
۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَلَا تُبۡطِلُوٓاْ أَعۡمَٰلَكُمۡ ﴿٣٣﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَصَدُّواْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُواْ وَهُمۡ كُفَّارٞ فَلَن يَغۡفِرَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمۡ ﴿٣٤﴾

فَلَا تَهِنُواْ وَتَدۡعُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱلسَّلۡمِ وَأَنتُمُ ٱلۡأَعۡلَوۡنَ وَٱللَّهُ مَعَكُمۡ وَلَن يَتِرَكُمۡ أَعۡمَٰلَكُمۡ ﴿٣٥﴾

إِنَّمَا ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا لَعِبٞ وَلَهۡوٞۚ وَإِن تُؤۡمِنُواْ وَتَتَّقُواْ يُؤۡتِكُمۡ أُجُورَكُمۡ وَلَا يَسۡـَٔلۡكُمۡ أَمۡوَٰلَكُمۡ ﴿٣٦﴾

إِن يَسۡـَٔلۡكُمُوهَا فَيُحۡفِكُمۡ تَبۡخَلُواْ وَيُخۡرِجۡ أَضۡغَٰنَكُمۡ ﴿٣٧﴾



[32-38] Those who disbelieved and hindered (others) from Allah's way and disputed with the Messenger, after the Right Way had become clear to them, can in no way harm Allah, but Allah indeed will render all their works vain.[39] O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and let not your works end in futility.[40] As for those who have disbelieved, and hindered (others) from Allah's Way and have died disbelieving, Allah will never pardon them. Therefore, do not be faint-hearted, and do not beg for peace,[41] for you will surely gain the upper hand. Allah is with you and will never let your works be wasted. The life of this world is only a sport and a pastime.[42] If you believe and follow the way of piety, Allah will give you your rewards, and will not ask of you your possessions.[43] If ever He asks of you your possessions, and demands all of them, you would be niggardly, and He would bring your malice out.[44] Look, you are being called upon to expend in Allah's Way. Yet some of you are being stingy, whereas the one who is stingy is, in fact, being stingy only to himself. Allah is Self-Sufficient. It is you who are the needy. If you turn away, Allah will replace you by another people, and they will not be like you.

1"Those who disbelieved": Those who refused to accept the teachings and guidance presented 'by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

2The verb sadd (from which saddu of the original is derived) is used both as a transitive and as an intransitive verb in Arabic. Therefore, the sentence would mean "they themselves refrained from adopting Allah's Way" as well as they prevented others from adopting this way."

There are several ways of preventing others from adopting Allah's Way:

(1) That one should forcibly prevent another from believing;

(2) that one should so persecute the believers that it should become difficult for them to remain steadfast on the Faith and for others to embrace the Faith in view of the dreadful conditions;

(3) that one should mislead the people against the Religion and its followers in different ways and create doubts in the hearts so that the people may become suspicious of the Religion itself. Besides, every disbeliever prevents others from the way of Allah in the sense that he brings up his children on the way of disbelief, and then it becomes difficult for his future generation to give up the ancestral faith and accept

Islam. Likewise, every unbelieving society is an obstruction to the Way of Allah, for it creates obstacles in the way of the progress of the Faith by its system of education and training, its government and its customs and prejudices.

3The words adalla a 'mala-hum (led their deeds astray, let them go to waste) are very comprehensive in meaning. Their one meaning is: Allah deprived them of the grace that their efforts and their labors should be spent in the right way: now, whatever they do, they will do that for wrong aims and objects in wrong ways: all their endeavors will be directed to the way of error and deviation - instead of guidance. Their second meaning is: The works that they have been performing as pious deeds, e.g. guardianship of the Ka'bah, entertaining the guests, treating the kindred well, and such other works, which are counted among religious services and noble actions morally, were rendered fruitless by Allah; they will get no reward for them, for when they refuse to accept Tauhid and to adopt the way of Allah's service and worship and stop others also from adopting Islam none of their works can be acceptable to Allah. The third meaning is Allah rendered fruitless an$ vain the efforts they were making to obstruct the way of the Truth and to keep their creed of disbelief alive in Arabia as against the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings): all their designs and endeavors now are aimless: they will never attain their goals by these designs.

4Although after saying alladhina amanu (those who believed) there was no need to say wa amanu bi-ma nuzzila 'ala Muhammad-in (and accepted that which has been sent down to Muhammad), for belief by itself implies believing in the Holy Prophet Muhammad and in the teachings sent down to him, yet making a separate mention of it is particularly meant to assert this: After the appointment of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) to Prophethood, a person's belief in Allah and the Hereafter and the former Messengers and the Books cannot be beneficial until he also believes in him and the teachings brought by him. This explanation was necessary because after the emigration, the Muslims had also to deal with those people, who recognized and accepted all the requirements of the Faith but refused to acknowledge and accept the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

5This has two meanings:

(1) That Allah wiped off from their record all those sins which they had happened to commit in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance: now, they will not at all be held accountable for them; and

(2) that Allah removed from them the evils of creed, thought, morals and action in which they were involved. Now their minds were changed; their creed and ideas were changed; now there was faith in their hearts instead of ignorance and righteous acts instead of the immoral evil.

6This also has two meanings:

(1) That Allah changed their previous condition and put them on the right path and improved and bettered their lives for them; and

(2) that Allah has taken them out of the condition of weakness and helplessness and oppression in which they were placed till then; now He has created for them such conditions in which instead of being persecuted they will defend themselves against the oppressors; instead of living as subjects, they will now live and order their lives as free people, and will have the upper hand instead of being subdued and suppressed.

7That is, "He makes both the parties aware of their positions. One party insists on following falsehood; therefore, Allah has brought all its endeavors to naught: and the other party has adopted obedience of the Truth; therefore, Allah has purified it of its evils and corrected its condition."

8The words of this verse as well as the context in which it occurs clearly show that it was sent down after the revelation of the command for fighting and before the actual fighting began. The words, "When you meet the disbelievers in the battlefield ...", indicate that the fighting has not yet taken place and the Muslims are being instructed that when it does take place, what they should do.

The words of verse 20 below testify that this Surah was sent down at a time when the command for fighting had already been given in Surah Al-Hajj: 39 and Al-Baqarah: 190, and the hypocrites of Madinah and the people of the weak faith had been so upset that it seemed as if they were actually facing death.

Besides, vv. 67-69 of the Surah Al-Anfal also testify that this verse had been sent down before the Battle of Badr. There it has been said:

"lt does not behoove a Prophet to have captives until he has crushed down the enemies in the land. You desire the gains of this world, but Allah desires the Hereafter, and Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. Had not a decree already been issued by Allah, you would have incurred a severe chastisement in consequence of what you have done. So eat of what you have taken as spoils because it is lawful and pure. "

A careful study of this passage, especially of its italicized portions, shows that what had displeased Allah on this occasion was that before crushing down the enemy completely in the Battle of Badr, the Muslims had started taking the enemy soldiers as captives, whereas the instruction given them in Surah Muhammad before the actual fighting was this: "When you have crushed them completely, then bind the captives tight. " However, as the Muslims had been permitted, among other things in Surah Muhammad, to accept ransom from the prisoners, Allah declared the money taken from the captives of Badr as lawful and did not punish them for that. The words "Had not the decree already been issued by Allah." are clearly pointing to the fact that the command for permission to accept ransom had already been given in the Qur'an before this event, and obviously, there is no other verse in the Qur'an beside this verse of

Surah Muhammad, which contains this command. Therefore, it will have to be admitted that this verse had been sent down before the above-cited verse of the Surah AI-Anfal. (For explanation, see E. N 49 on AI-Anfal).

This is the first verse of the Qur'an in which preliminary instructions have been given about the laws of war. Below is given a resume of the injunctions that are derived from this verse and the Holy Prophet's and his Companions' practice according to it and the juristic inferences as based on this verse and the Sunnah:

(1) The real aim of the Muslim army in war is to break the fighting power of the enemy till it is crushed and the war lays down its arms. Under no circumstances, should the Muslim's lose sight of this aim and start taking the enemy soldiers as captives. Captives should be taken after the enemy has been completely crushed and its numbers thinned down. The Arabs have been so instructed at the outset lest in the greed for ransom and taking slaves they should forget and overlook the real aim of the war.

(2) About the prisoners taken in war it has been said: "You have the option whether you show them favor or accept ransom from them. " This gives the general law that the prisoners of war should not be put to death. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar, Hasan Basri, `Ata' and Hammad bin Abi Sulaiman favour this view, which is quite valid. They say that a man can be killed only during the war. When the war is over and one has been made a prisoner, it is not lawful to kill him, Ibn Jarir and Abu Bakr alJassas have related that Hajjaj; bin Yusuf handed over one of the prisoners of war to Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar and commanded him to put him to death. He refused to obey and cited this verse and said: "We are not allowed to kill a man when he is a prisoner." Imam Muhammad in As-SiyaT al-Kabir also has related that `Abdullah bin 'Amir had commanded Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar to kill a prisoner of war, and he had refused to obey the command for this reason.

(3) But since in this verse it has neither been clearly forbidden to kill the prisoner the -Holy Prophet understood this intention of Allah's Command, and also acted accordingly, that if there was a special reason for which the ruler of an Islamic government regarded it as necessary to kill a particular prisoner (or prisoners), he could do so. This is not the general law, but an exception to it, which would be applied only when necessary. Thus, the Holy Prophet put to death only `Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait and Nadr bin al-Harith from among the 70 prisoners taken at Badr, and only the poet Abu `Azzah from the prisoners taken at Uhud. Since the Bani Quraizah had surrendered on the condition that they would accept whatever decision Hadrat Sa`d bin Mu'adh would give in their regard, and he had decreed that all the males of the Quraizah should be killed, the Holy Prophet had them executed. From among the prisoners taken at Khaiber only Kinanah bin Abi al-Huqaiq was put to death because of his violating the agreement. At the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet commanded in respect of only a few particular persons from among all the inhabitants of Makkah that any one of them who was captured should be put to death. Apart from these exceptions, the Holy Prophet never killed prisoners of war, and the same also continued to be the practice of the righteous Caliphs. During their times also killing of prisoners of war was rare,

which was resorted to only for a special reason. Hadrat, `Umar bin `Abdul `Aziz also during his caliphate put to death only one prisoner of war for the reason that he had persecuted the Muslims very cruelly. On this very basis the majority of the jurists have held the view that the Islamic government can put a prisoner to death if necessary. But it is for the government to take such a decision; every soldier is not permitted to kill any prisoner he likes. However, if there is the danger of a prisoner's running away or of his committing a dangerous mischief, the guard can kill him. In this connection, the jurists of Islam have also made three other points: (a) That if a prisoner accepts Islam, he cannot be killed; (b) that the prisoner can be killed only as long as he is in the government's custody; if he has been allotted to, or given in somebody else's possession by sale, he cannot be killed; and (c) that if the prisoner has to be killed, he should be killed in a straightforward way; he should not be tortured to death

(4) The general command that has been given about the prisoners of war is: "Show them favor, or accept ransom from them. " Favor includes four things: (a) That they should be treated well as prisoners; (b) that instead of killing them or keeping them in captivity for lifetime, they should be handed over to the individual Muslims as slaves; (c) that they should be put under jizyah and trade dhimmis; and (d) that they should be set free without ransom.

There are three ways of ransoming them: (a) That they should be set free on payment of a ransom; (b) that they should be set free after taking some special service from them; and (c) that they should be exchanged for the Muslim prisoners of war who are in the possession of the enemy. The Holy Prophet and the Companions at different times acted in one or the other way as the occasion demanded. The Divine Law has not bound the Islamic government to act in only one particular way. The government can take any action it deems appropriate on a particular occasion.

(5) The practice of the Holy Prophet and the Companions confirms that as long as a prisoner of war is in the government's custody, the government will be responsible for his food and clothing, . and his treatment if he is ill or wounded. Islamic Law does not permit prisoners to be kept without food or clothing, or be subjected to torture. On the contrary, instructions also have been given to treat them well and generously, and precedents of this very practice are found in the Sunnah. The Holy Prophet distributed the prisoners of Badr in the houses of different Companions and gave the instruction: "Teat these prisoners well." One of those prisoners, Abu 'Aziz, has reported: "The Ansar Muslims, in whose house I was kept, gave me bread morning and evening, but as for themselves they had only dates to eat. " About another prisoner; Suhail bin 'Amr, the Holy Prophet was told: "He is a fiery speaker, and has been making speeches against you: please have his teeth broken. " The Holy Prophet replied: "If I have his teeth broken, Allah will break my teeth, although I am a Prophet." (Ibn Hisham). When Thumamah bin Uthal, the chief of Yamamah, was brought as a prisoner, he was provided with good food and milk on the Holy Prophet's orders as long as he remained a captive. (Ibn Hisham). The same was the practice in the time of the Companions. No precedent is found when a prisoner might have been mistreated in their time.

(6) Islam has not permitted that the prisoners be kept in captivity for ever so that the government may

subject them to forced labor as long as it likes. If they are not exchanged for other prisoners of war, or ransomed, the method enjoined of doing them favor is that they should be made slaves and given in possession of individuals, and their masters instructed to treat them well This method was acted upon during the time of the Holy Prophet as well as of the Companions, and the jurists of Islam have unanimously upheld it as permissible. In this regard, it should be borne in mind that a person who might have accepted Islam before being taken as prisoner, and then is somehow made a prisoner, will be set free, but the acceptance of Islam by a person who accepts it after being taken prisoner, or after being given in possession of somebody, will not gain him freedom automatically. A tradition has been related in Musnad Ahmad. Muslim and Tirmidhi on the authority of Hadrat `Imran bin Husain that a person from among the Bani 'Uqail was brought as a prisoner and he said: "I have accepted Islam. " Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "If you had said this when you were free, you would certainly have attained to success. The same thing was said by Hadrat `Umar: "When a prisoner becomes a Muslim after falling into the hands of the Muslims as a captive, he will not be killed, but will remain a slave." Oh this very point. the jurists of Islam have unanimously ruled that the prisoner who becomes a Muslim after being taken captive cannot escape slavery. (Imam Muhammad, As-Siyar al-Kabir). And this also is quite reasonable. If our law had been that anyone who embraced Islam after being taken a captive, would be set free, no prisoner would be so foolish as not to win his freedom by pronouncing the Kalimah.

(7) The third manner of doing favor with the prisoners according to the Law of Islam is that they may be put under jizyah and made dhimmi subjects of the Islamic state and allowed to live as free citizens of dar a/Islam (abode of Islam) just like the Muslims. Imam Muhammad writes in his As-Siyar a/-Kabir: "Any person who can be made a slave, can also be made a dhimmi and put under jizyah. ¦ At another place he says: "The ruler of the Muslims has the right to levy jizyah on than and a tax on their lands and set than absolutely free. " This method has been practised generally in the condition when the territory of the people who have been made prisoners, is' conquered and annexed to the Islamic state. The Holy Prophet, for instance, practiced this method in the case of the people of Khaiber, and then Hadrat `Umar followed and practiced it extensively on the conquest of `Iraq and other territories. Abu `Ubaid writes in his Kitab al-Amwal: "After the conquest of `Iraq a deputation of the leading men of that country came before Hadrat `Umar and submitted: `O Commander of the Faithful, before this the people of Iran had subdued us: they subjected us to harsh treatment and committed all sorts of excesses against us. Then, when God sent you, we became very pleased, and we neither put up any resistance against you nor participated in the war. Now, we hear that you want to make us slaves.' Hadrat `Umar replied: `You have the option either to become Muslims, or accept to pay jizyah and remain free.' They agreed to pay the jizyah and they were granted full freedom. " At another place in the same book. Abu `Ubaid says: Hadrat `Umar wrote to Abu Musa al-Ash'ari: Set free every farmer and peasant from among the people who have been captured in the war. "

(8) The fourth favor is that the prisoner be set free without ransom. This is a special concession that the Islamic government can give only in case the special conditions of a prisoner demand it, or when it is expected that the concession will win the prisoner's gratitude for ever, and help turn him a friend from an enemy, or a believer from a disbeliever; otherwise, obviously it would in no way be a wise thing to set free

a person of the enemy camp, who could again return to fight the Muslims. This is why the Muslim jurists generally have opposed it, and imposed the condition: "If the ruler of the Muslims finds it expedient to set the prisoners, or some of them, free as a favor, there is no harm in doing so." (As-SiyaT al-Kabir). Many precedents of this are found in the time of the Holy Prophet, and in almost every case expediency seems to be the reason.

About the prisoners taken at Badr, he said: "If Mut'im bin `Adi were alive, and had spoken to me in respect of these treacherous people, I would have Iet them go for his sake." (Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Musnad Ahmad). The Holy Prophet said this because when he had returned from Ta'if to Makkah, Mut'im at that time had given him refuge, and his armed sons had escorted him to the Ka`bah. Therefore, he wanted to repay his debt of gratitude in this way.

According to Bukhari, Muslim and Musnad Ahmad, when Thumamah bin Uthal, the chief of Yamamah, was brought as a prisnoner, the Holy Prophet asked him: "Thumamah, what do you say?" He replied: "If I am killed, then such a one would be killed, whose blood has some value: if I am shown favor, then favor would be shown to a person, who appreciates favor; and if you want wealth, ask for it, you will be given it." For three days the Holy Prophet asked him the same thing and he gave the same reply. At last, the Holy Prophet ordered that Thumamah be set free. On attaining freedom, he went to a nearby oasis, washed himself and came back, pronounced the kalimah and became a Muslim, saying: Before this day nobody was more detestable than you and no religion more odious than your religion in my sight, but now for me no man is more lovable than you and no religion more lovable than your religion." Then he went to Makkah for 'Umrah and gave the people of Quraish a notice to the effect: "After this no grain will reach you from Yamamah unless Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) permits it." So, he stopped the grain supply and the people of Makkah had to request the Holy Prophet that he should not stop the supply of grain for them from Yamamah.

From among the prisoners of the Bani Quraizah, the Holy Prophet forgave Zabir bin Bata and 'Amr bin Sa'd (or Ibn Su'da), the former because he had given refuge to Hadrat Thabit bin Qais Ansari in the Battle of Bu'ath, in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance; therefore, he handed him over to Hadrat Thabit that he may repay him for his favor. And he forgave 'Amr bin Sa`d because it was he who was exhorting his tribe not to be treacherous when the Bani Quraizah were committing breach of the trust with the Holy Prophet.

After the Battle of Bani al-Mustaliq, when the prisoners were brought and distributed among the people, the Holy Prophet paid Hadrat Juwairiyah's ransom to the person to whom she was allotted to secure her freedom and then married her himself. At this all the Muslims set their own prisoners free, saying: "Now they have become the Holy Prophet's relatives. " Thus, the prisoners of a hundred families became free. (Musnad Ahmad, Tabaqat Ibn Sa`d, Ibn Hisham).

On the occasion of the treaty of Hudaibiyah, at about dawn, 80 men came from the direction of Tan'im with the intention of launching a sudden attack on the Muslim camp, but were all captured, and the Holy

Prophet set all of them free lest it became a cause of war on that critical occasion. (Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad).

At the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet forgave all the people of Makkah except only a few men, and did not kill more than three or four of even those who had been made an exception. The whole of Arabia was well aware of what atrocities the people of Makkah had committed against the Holy Prophet and the Muslims; yet the large-heartedness with which he forgave them after attaining complete victory over them, gave the Arabs the satisfaction that they had not been overpowered by a tyrant but by a merciful, affectionate and generous leader. That is why after the conquest of Makkah the Arabian peninsula did not take longer than two years to be completely subdued.

After the Battle of Hunain, when the Hawazin deputation came to secure the freedom of their prisoners, the prisoners had already been distributed. The Holy Prophet called the Muslims together and said: "These people have come with repentance, and I am of the opinion that their men should be rearmed to them. The one who would like to set the prisoner allotted to him free willingly without ransom, should set him free, and the one who would like to take ransom, shall be paid it out of the first income that is received in the Public Treasury." Thus, six thousand prisoners were set free, and those who wanted to take ransom, were given it by the government. (Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Musnad Ahmad, Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd). This also shows that the government is not authorized to set the prisoners free after they have been distributed; this can be done by the willing approval of those in whose possession the prisoners have been given, or by paying them the ransom.

After the Holy Prophet, precedents of setting the prisoners free as a favor continue to be found throughout the period of the Companions also. Hadrat Abu Bakr set fret Ash'ath bin Qais al-Kindi and Hadrat 'Umar granted freedom to Hurmuzan and the prisoners of Manadhir and Maisan. (Abu 'Ubaid, Kitab alAmwal).

(9) The precedent of setting the prisoners free on payment of the ransom in the time of the Holy Prophet is found only on the occasion of Badr, when the prisoners were set free on payment of one thousand to four thousand dirhams each. (Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd, Kitab al-Amwal). No precedent of this is found in the time of the Companions; and the jurists of Islam have generally disapproved it, for it means that we should take money and set a man free so that he may again rise against us with the sword. But since taking of ransom has been permitted in the Qur'an, and the Holy Prophet also acted according to it once, it is not absoluutely forbidden. Imam Muhammad writes in his As-Siyar al-Kabir that if the need arises the Muslims can free their prisoners on payment of the ransom.

(10) The criterion of freeing a prisoner for a service rendered is also found in connection with the Battle . of Badr. For those of the Quraish prisoners who had no ransom the Holy Prophet imposed the condition that they should teach reading and writing to ten Ansar children each to win their freedom. (Musnad Ahmad, Tabaqat Ibn Sa`d, Kitab al-Amwal.

(11) Several instances of the exchange of prisoners are found in the time of the Holy Prophet. Once he dispatched Hadrat Abu Bakr on an expedition and he brought some captives, including a beautiful woman, who fell to the lot of Hadrat Salamah bin Akwa' . The Holy Prophet urged him to give her back, then sent her to Makkah and had several ' Muslim prisoners released, in exchange for her. (Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tahawi Kitab al-Amwal of Abi `Ubaid, Tabaqat Ibn Sa`d). Hadrat 'Imran bin Husain relates that once the tribe of Thaqif arrested two men of the Muslims. Some time later, a man of the Bani 'Uqail, who were allies of the Thaqif, was arrested by the Muslims. The Holy Prophet sent him to Ta'if and got both the Muslims released in exchange for him. (Muslim, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad). From among the jurists Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad, Imam Shafe`i, Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad hold . the exchange of the prisoners as permissible. A ruling of Imam Abu Hanifah is that exchange should not be practiced, but according to another ruling of his exchange can be practiced. However, there is a consensus that the prisoner who becomes a Muslim should not be handed over to the disbelievers for the purpose of exchange.

This explanation makes it abundantly clear that Islam has formulated a comprehensive code in respect of the prisoners of war, which contains provision for this problem in every age under all sorts of conditions. Those people who take this Qur'anic verse in its simple meaning that the prisoners of war should "either be shown favor and set free or freed for ransom", do not know what different aspects the question of the , prisoners of war has, and what problems it has been creating in different ages and can create in the future.

9That is, "If Allah had only wanted to crush the worshipers of falsehood, He did not stand in need of your help for this. He could have done this through an earthquake or a tempest in no time, But what he wills is that the followers of the Truth among the people should enter into a conflict with the worshipers of falsehood and fight them so that the qualities and characteristics of each are brought out clearly by means of the test and each is given the place and rank that he deserves according to his conduct. "

10It means this: "A person's being slain in the way of Allah does not mean that he lost his life and as far as his person was concerned all his lifework was wasted. It is wrong to think that the sacrifices of the martyrs are not beneficial for themselves but only for those who live after them in the world, and take advantage of their sacrifices. The fact is that even for the martyrs themselves it is a bargain of profit, not of loss at all . "

11This is the profit that the martyrs falling in the way of Allah will gain. Its three grades have been stated:

(1) That Allah will guide them;

(2) that He will set their condition right; and

(3) that He will admit them to the Paradise with which He has acquainted them beforehand.

Guidance here obviously implies guiding to Paradise; setting the condition right implies that before their entry into Paradise, Allah will adorn them with robes of honor and remove every filth which had polluted them in the life of the world; and the third stage means that even in this world they have been told through the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet what kind of Paradise it is that has been prepared for them; when they enter that Paradise they will enter a place with which they will already be familiar and they will come to know that they have been blessed precisely with the same that had been promised to them in the world. "

12"If you help Allah": "If you participate in the work of raising Allah's Word with your life and wealth." But this has a deeper meaning too, which we have explained in E. N. 50 of Surah Al-`Imran above.

13Literally, to 's is to stumble and fall down on the face.

14That is, "They preferred the whims, superstitions, customs and moral perversion of their former ignorance and did not like the teaching that Allah had revealed to guide them to the right way.

15This sentence has two meanings:

(1) The same destruction that was met by those disbelievers now awaits these disbelievers, who are not accepting the invitation of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings); and

(2) 'the ruin of those people does not end with the torment of the world; the same doom also awaits Them in the Hereafter "

16After being wounded at Uhud when the Holy Prophet was resting in a hill pass with a few Companions, Abu Sufyan shouted: "We have 'Uzza and there is no 'Uzza for you." Thereupon the Holy Prophet told his Companions to respond, saying: "Our Protector and helper is Allah, and you have no protector and helper at all. " This reply of the Holy Prophet was derived from this very verse.

17That is, "Just as an animal cats and does not think where from the food it eats has come, who has created it, and what rights of the creator are imposed on it for providing it with food, so are these people also eating and have no higher values or ideals beyond eating. "

18The Holy Prophet was sorely distressed on leaving Makkah. When he was compelled to emigrate, he had stood facing the city outside it and said: "O Makkah, you are the most beloved city in the sight of Allah, and I have the greatest love for you out of all the cities of Allah; if the polytheists had not driven me out I would never have left you." About this it has been said: "After driving you out of the city the people of

Makkah think that they have achieved a great success, whereas, in fact, they have hastened only their own ruin by this evil act." The style of the verse clearly indicates that it must have been sent, down close after the Hijrah.

19That is, "How is it possible that when the Prophet and his followers have been guided by God to a clear and straight path and they have started following it in the light of full knowledge and vision, they should walk along, with those who are still persisting in their ways of ignorance, who regard their deviation as guidance and their evildoing as a praiseworthy thing, and who judge on the basis of their personal desires, and not by argument as to what is the truth and what is falsehood. Now, neither can the lives of these two groups be alike in this world nor can their end be alike in the Hereafter."

20Literally, asia is the taste and color of water which has changed, or which gives a bad smell. In the world the water of rivers and canals is generally muddy; its taste and color change due to the mixture of sand and dust and of different kinds of vegetation in it, and it also gives off a kind of bad smell. Therefore, the quality of the water of the rivers and canals of Paradise will be that it will be pure and clear, without any adulteration.

21In a Hadith directly reported from the Holy Prophet, it has been explained thus: "It will not be the milk squeezed from the teats of animals." That is, it will be the milk which Allah will bring out in the form of springs from the earth and cause it to flow into canals; it will not be squeezed from the teats of animals and then made to flow into the canals of Paradise. About this natural milk it has been said: Its flavor will not have changed at all ;" that is, it will not give even the slightest offensive smell that is found in every kind of milk squeezed from the animal teats.

22In another Hadith reported directly from the Holy Prophet, it has been explained, thus: "This wine will not have been distilled from rotten fruit by beating and crushing it under feet," like the wine in the world, but Allah will produce it also in the form of springs and cause it to flow into canals; then its quality will be that "it will be delightful for the drinkers"; that is, it will not be bitter and foul-smelling like the wines of the world, which cannot be drunk even by the most habitual drinker without showing some distaste. In Surah As-Saffa t, another quality of it has been described: "Neither will the drinker be harmed physically thereby nor become drunk." (v. 47) In Surah AI-Waqi'ah it has been said: "... which will neither cause them giddiness nor affect their sense." (v. 19) This shows that wine will not intoxicate, but will only give pleasure and delight.

23In the Hadith it has been explained, thus: "The honey will not have been drawn from the bees' bellies," but it also will come out from springs and flow into canals; therefore, it will not have wax, and pieces of the honey-comb and legs of dead bees mixed in it, but it will be absolutely pure.

24The mention of forgiveness from Allah after the blessings of Paradise can have two meanings:

(1) That the greatest blessing by far will be that Allah will forgive them; and

(2) that the errors and faults that they happened to commit in the world, will not even so much as be mentioned before them, but Allah will cover them up for ever so that they are not put to shame in Paradise.

25This is concerning those disbelievers and hypocrites and unbelieving followers of the former Books, who sat in the assemblies of the Holy Prophet, listened to his discourses, or the verses of the Qur'an, but since in their hearts they were averse to the themes presented by him, they would understand nothing in spite of listening to him. Therefore, when they came out, they would ask the Muslims, "What was he saying just now?"

26This was the real cause because of which their inner ears had become deaf to the teachings of the Holy Prophet; they were the slaves of their lusts, and the teachings that the Holy Prophet was presenting fell against their lusts. Therefore ,if ever they sat in the assemblies of the Holy Prophet and listened to him, they would understand nothing.

27That is, the same revelations about which the disbelievers and hypocrites ask, "What was he (the Holy Prophet) saying just now?" become a cause of further guidance for the rightly-guided people, and from the same assembly from which these unfortunate people rise without gaining anything, the fortunate ones return with a new treasure of knowledge and insight.

28That is, Allah grants them the grace to develop in themselves the kind of piety (taqwa) that they have the capability to develop.

29That is, as far as the explanation and clarification of the truth is concerned; it has been explained fully well by argument and reasoning, the miraculous discourses of the Qur'an, the pure character of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the revolution in the lives of his Companions. Now, are these people awaiting that Resurrection itself should take place and then only they will believe?

30The portents of Resurrection imply those signs which indicate that its approach is near. One such important sign is the advent of God's Last Prophet after whom no other prophet will come till Resurrection. Traditions have been related in Bukhari, Muslim. Tirmidhi and Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat Anas, Hadrat Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'idi and Hadrat Buraidah, saying that the Holy Prophet raised his index finger and the middle finger and said: "My advent and Resurrection are like these two fingers." That is, 'Just as there is no other finger between these two fingers, so no other prophet will be raised between the and Resurrection; after me only Resurrection now will occur."

31One of the morals taught to man by Islam is also this: However hard and sincerely may man be trying

to serve and worship Iris Lord and fighting and struggling in the cause of His Religion, he should never be involved in the misunderstanding that he has done and accomplished whatever he was required to do. Rather, on the contrary, he should have the feeling that he has not been able to do full justice to what was expected of him by his Lord and Master. Therefore, he should confess his errors constantly and pray to Allah saying 'Lord, forgive me for whatever fault and error I may have committed in Your service." 'this is indeed the essence of Allah's Command: 'O Prophet. ask forgiveness for your fault .." 'This does lint mean that God forbid. the Holy Prophet had actually committed an error willfully, but its correct meaning is that it did not even behoove the servant who was the greatest worshiper of his Lord that Ire should harbor even a tinge of the pride of accomplishment in his heart, but Iris true position also was that in spite of all his great :end glorious services he should continue confessing his shortcomings before Iris Lord. It was under this state of the mind that the Holy Prophet often implored his Lord for forgiveness. According to Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "I implore Allah for forgiveness one hundred rimes every day.

32That is, "In view of the conditions through which the Muslims were passing and the attitude that the disbelievers had adopted towards Islam and the Muslims at that time the believers were generally of the opinion that they should be permitted to fight even before fighting was actually enjoined by Allah. Rather they were asking Allah's Command in this regard impatiently and were awaiting again and again: "Why are we not permitted to fight these wicked people '?" But the condition of the people who had joined the ranks of the Muslims hypocritically was quite different from that of the believers. They held their lives and their properties as dearer to themselves than Allah and His Religion, and were not prepared to risk them at any cost. Therefore, as soon as fighting was enjoined they were clearly sorted out from the true believers. fill the time fighting had not been enjoined, the hypocrites and the common believers could not be distinguished one from the other. The hypocrites offered the Prayer just as the true believers did: they observed the Fast just like them, and practiced every article of the Faith as made no demand of a sacrifice on them. But when time came for making the supreme sacrifice of life for the sake of Islam, their hypocrisy was exposed and their veil of false display of the Faith was rent asunder. In Surah An-Nisa', their this state has been described thus: "Have you marked those to whom it was said: To withhold your hands a while and establish the salat and pay the zakat? Now that the fighting has been enjoined for them,some of them fear the people as they should fear Allah, or even snore than that; they say: Our Lord, why have You enjoined fighting for us? Why have You not given us a brief respite?" (v. 77)

33Another translation of the words in the original can be; "If you became rulers over the people, "

34Its one meaning is; 'If at this time you shirk supporting and defending Islam and refrain from fighting with your life and wealth for the cause of me great reformist revolution which the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and his Companions are struggling to bring about, there will be no other consequence of this than that you would return to the same system of ignorance in which you have been cutting each other's throat since centuries, burying your children alive and filling God's earth with injustice and wickedness." Its other meaning is: 'You are a people of depraved

character. You are not at all sincere in your claim of having affirmed the Faith, because you are not prepared to make any sacrifice in its cause. Now, is Allah gives you power in the land and entrusts the affairs of the world to you when morally you are unsound and unreliable, what else can be expected of you than that you would commit tyranny and mischief and resort to killing of your own near and dear ones.

This verse clearly points out that Islam forbids severing of relations with the kindred. On the other hand, in positive terms also, at several places in the Qur'an, treating the relatives kindly and well has been enjoined and counted among the major virtues. (For instance, see AI-Baqarah: 83, 177: An-Nisa': 8, 36; An-Nahl: 90. Bani Isra'il: 26; An-Nur: 22). The word rahm in Arabic is used far kinship and relationship by blood metaphorically. AII the relations of a person, whether near or distant, are his kinsmen (dhwil-arham). The nearer the relationship the greater the right one has upon the other and graver the sin of severing the ties of blood. To treat the kindred well implies that one should do one's utmost in doing whatever good one possibly can to one's relative, should avoid doing any ill or harm to him. Reasoning from this very verse Hadrat 'Umar had forbidden as unlawful selling of the slave girl who had given birth to a child from her master, and the Companions had concurred with him in this. Hakim in his Musradrik has related on the authority of Hadrat Buraidah that one day when he was sitting among the audience of Hadrat 'Umar, suddenly a clamor arose in the street. On inquiring it was known that a slave girl was being sold and her daughter was crying, Hadrat 'Umar immediately got the Ansar and the Muhajirin together and put before them the question: ¦Do you find in the Religion that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) has brought any room for severing of relations between the blood relationships?" Everybody replied in the negative. Thereupon, Hadrat 'Umar said: Then, how is it that in your houses a mother is being separated from her daughter? Could there be a greater and more serious instance of the cutting of these relationships? Then he recited this verse. The people said: You may adopt whatever measure you deem fit to stop this practice. At this Hadrat 'Umar issued this decree for enforcement in all the Islamic territories: "No slave-girl who has given birth to a child from her master is to be sold because this is breaking of kinship ties which is not lawful."

35That is, 'Either these people do not ponder over the Qur'an at all, or if they try to ponder over it, its teachings and meaning do not enter their hearts, because they have put locks on them." As for this that "there are their locks upon the hearts," it means this: "There are such locks on them as are specially meant for the hearts which are not susceptible to the truth."

36That is, "In spite of professing the Faith and being counted among the Muslims, they went on conspiring secretly with the enemies of Islam and even pledged to support them in certain matters. "

37That is, "In the world they adopted this attitude so that they may safeguard their interests and may protect themselves from the dangers of the conflict between Islam and infidelity, but how will they escape Allah's wrath after death? At that time no device of theirs will prove helpful for them to remain safe from the punishment by the angels. "

This verse also is one of those verses that point to the torment of barzakh (i.e. torment 'of the grave). It clearly shows that the unbelievers and hypocrites start being afflicted with the torment right from the time of death, and this torment is different from the punishment which they will get on Resurrection after their cases will have been decided by Allah. (For further explanation, see An-Nisa': 97: AI-An'am: 93-94; AI-Anfal: 50: An-Nahl: 28, 32; AI-Mu'minun: 99-100; Ya Sin: 26-27 and E.N.'s 22, 23; AI-Mu'min: 4b and E. N. 63) .

38This refers to all those works that they performed as "Muslims." Their Prayers, their fasting, their payments of the zakat, and all other acts of worship and virtue, which in appearance and form are counted among good works. were rendered void, for they failed to adopt the attitude of sincerity and loyalty towards Allah and Islam and the Muslim community even though they professed to be Muslims; but, on the contrary, they went on conspiring with the enemies of Islam for the sake of small worldly gains, and started devising schemes to save themselves from any possible risks as soon as time came for Jihad in the cause of Allah. These verses are absolutely decisive and conclusive in this regard that in the conflict between Islam and un-Islam the faith of the person whose sympathies are not with Islam and the Muslims, or are with disbelief and the disbelievers, cannot at all be reliable, not to speak of any of his works being acceptable before Allah.

39This sentence has two meanings:

(1) That Allah will render vain and fruitless all those works which they had performed as "good works", and they will get no reward whatever for them in the Hereafter; and

(2) that all the devices that they are adopting to obstruct the way of Allah and His Messenger's Religion will prove ineffective and fruitless.

40In other words, the deeds' being beneficial and yielding of good results depends wholly on one's obedience to Allah and His Messenger. After one has turned away from obedience, no deed remains a good deed so that one may deserve any reward for it.

41Here, one should bear in mind the fact that when this discourse was revealed only a handful of the Muslims consisting of a couple of hundreds of the Muhajirin and Ansar living in the small town of Madinah were upholding the standard of Islam and they were not only faced by the powerful Quraish but also by the whole of pagan Arabia. Such were the conditions when they were exhorted 'not to be faint-hearted and not to beg (the enemy) for peace", but to make preparations for the decisive conflict. This does not mean that the Muslims should never negotiate for peace, but it means that in a state like this it is not right to initiate peace negotiations when it shows the Muslims' weakness, for it will still further embolden the enemy. The Muslims should first establish their superiority in power and strength; then if they negotiate

peace there will be no harm.

42That is, "As against the Hereafter, this world is no more than a means of temporary entertainment. The success or failure here is not anything real and enduring, which might in any way be important. The real life is life hereafter success in which should be man's main concern. (For further explanation, see E.N. 102 of Surah AI-`Ankabut).

43That is, "Allah is Self-Sufficient: He does not need taking anything from you for His own Self. If He tells you to expend something in His way, He does so not for Himself but only for your own good."

44That is, "He does not put you to any severe trial that may bring out your weaknesses. "

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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48. Surah Al Fath (The Victory)

Name

It is derived from the words *Inna fatah-na laka fat-han mubina* of the very first verse. This is not only a name of the Surah but also its title in view of the subject matter, for it deals with the great victory that Allah granted to the Holy Prophet and the Muslims in the form of the Truce of Hudaibiyah.

Period of Revelation

Traditions concur that it was sent down in Dhil-Qadah, A. H. 6, at a time when the Holy Prophet was on his return journey to Madinah after concluding the Truce of Hudaibiyah with the disbelievers of Makkah.

Historical Background

The events in connection with which this Surah was sent down began life this: One day the Holy Prophet saw in a dream that he had gone to Makkah with his Companions and had performed the umrah there. Obviously, the Prophet's dream could not be a mere dream and fiction for it is a kind of Divine inspiration as Allah Himself has confirmed in verse 27 below and said that He Himself had shown that dream to His Messenger. Therefore, it was not merely a dream but a Divine inspiration which the Holy Prophet had to obey and follow.

Apparently, there was no possible way of acting on this inspiration. The disbelieving Quraish had debarred the Muslims from proceeding to the Ka'bah for the past six years and no Muslim had been allowed during that period to approach the Kabah for the purpose of performing hajj and umrah. Therefore, it could not be expected that they would allow the Holy Prophet to enter Makkah along with a party of his Companions. If they had proceeded to Makkah in the pilgrim garments with the intention of performing umrah, along with their arms, this would have provoked the enemy to war, and if they had proceeded unarmed, this would have meant endangering his own as well as his Companions' lives. Under conditions such as these nobody could see and suggest how the Divine inspiration could be acted upon.

But the Prophet's position was different. It demanded that he should carry out whatever Command his Lord gave fearlessly and without any apprehension and doubt. Therefore, the Holy Prophet informed his Companions of his dream and began to make preparations for the journey. Among the tribes living in the suburbs also he had the public announcement made that he was proceeding for umrah and the people could join him. Those who could only see the apparent conditions thought that he and his Companions were going into the very jaws of death none of them therefore was inclined to accompany him in the expedition. But those who had true faith in Allah and His Messenger were least bothered about the consequences. For them this information was enough that it was a Divine inspiration and Allah's Prophet had made up his mind to carry it into effect. After this nothing could hinder them from accompanying the Messenger of Allah. Thus, 1,400 of the Companions became ready to follow him on this highly dangerous journey.

This blessed caravan set off from Madinah in the beginning of Dhil Qa'dah, A. H. 6. At Dhul Hulaifah they entered the pilgrims robe with the intention of umrah, took 70 camels with collars round their necks indicating that they were sacrificial animals; kept only a sword each in sheaths, which the pilgrims to the Kabah were allowed to carry according to the recognized custom of Arabia, but no other weapon. Thus, the caravan set out for the Ka'bah, the House of Allah, at Makkah, chanting the prescribed slogan of *Labbaik, Allahuma Labbaik*.

The nature of the relations between Makkah and Madinah in those days was known too well to every Arab. Just the previous year, in Shawwal A. H. 5, the Quraish mustering the united strength of the Arab tribes had invaded Madinah and the well known Battle of the Trench had taken place. Therefore, when the Holy Prophet along with such a large caravan set off for the home of his blood-thirsty enemy, the whole of Arabia looked up with amazement, and the people also noticed that the caravan was not going with the intention to fight but was proceeding to the House of Allah in a forbidden month in the pilgrims garb carrying sacrificial animals and was absolutely unarmed.

The Quraish were confounded at this bold step taken by the Holy Prophet. Dhil-Qa'dah was one of those forbidden months which had been held as sacred for pilgrimage in Arabia for centuries. Nobody had a right to interfere with a caravan which might be coming for hajj or umrah in the pilgrims garb in this month; so much so that even an enemy tribe could not hinder it from passing through its territory according to the recognized law of the land. The Quraish therefore were caught in a dilemma, for if they attacked this caravan from Madinah and stopped it from entering Makkah, this would arouse a clamor of protest in the whole country, and all the Arab tribes would have the misgiving that the Quraish had monopolized the Ka'bah as exclusively their own, and every tribe would be involved in the mistrust that now it depended on the will of the Quraish to allow or not to allow anyone to perform hajj or umrah in the future and that they would stop any tribe with which they were angry from visiting the Ka'bah just as they had stopped the Madinese pilgrims. This they thought would be a grave mistake, which would cause the entire Arabia to revolt against them. But, on the other hand, if they allowed Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and his large caravan to enter their city safely, they would lose their image of power in Arabia and the people would say that they were afraid of Muhammad. At last, after a great deal of confusion, perplexity and hesitation they were overcome by their false sense of honor and for the sake of their prestige they took the decision that they would at no cost allow the caravan to enter the city of Makkah.

The Holy Prophet had dispatched a man of the Bani Ka'b as a secret agent so that he may keep him fully informed of the intentions and movements of the Quraish. When the Holy Prophet reached Usfan, he brought the news that

the Quraish had reached Dhi Tuwa with full preparations and they had sent Khalid bin Walid with two hundred cavalry men in advance towards Kura'al-Ghamim to intercept him. The Quraish wanted somehow to provoke the Holy Prophet's Companions into fighting so that they may tell the Arabs that those people had actually come to fight and had put on the pilgrims garments for umrah only to deceive others.

Immediately on receipt of this information the Holy Prophet changed his route and following a very rugged, rocky track reached Hudaibiyah, which was situated right on the boundary of the sacred Makkan territory. Here, he was visited by Budail bin Warqa the chief of the Bani Khuza'ah, along with some men of his tribe. They asked what he had come for. The Holy Prophet replied that he and his Companions bad come only for pilgrimage to the House of Allah and for going round it in worship and not for war. The men of Khuza'ah went and told this to the Quraish chiefs and counseled them not to interfere with the pilgrims. But the Quraish were obstinate. They sent Hulays bin Alqamah, the chief of the Ahabish, to the Holy Prophet to persuade him to go back. Their object was that when Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) would not listen to Hulays, he would come back disappointed and then the entire power of the Ahabish would be on their side. But when Hulays went and saw that the whole caravan had put on the pilgrims garments, had brought sacrificial camels with festive collars round their necks, and had come for doing reverence to the House of Allah and not to fight, he returned to Makkah without having any dialogue with the Holy Prophet and told the Quraish chiefs plainly that those people bad no other object but to pay a visit to the Ka'bah; if they debarred them from it, the Ahabish would not join them in that, because they had not become their allies to support them if they violated the sacred customs and traditions.

Then the Quraish sent `Urwah bin Mas'ud Thaqafi; he had lengthy negotiations with the Holy Prophet in an effort to persuade him to give up his intention to enter Makkah. But the Holy Prophet gave him also the same reply that he had given to the chief of the Khuza'ah, that they had not come to fight but to do honor to the House of Allah and carry out a religious duty. Urwah went back and said to the Quraish: "I have been to the courts of the Caesar and Khosroes, and the Negus also, but by God, never have I seen any people so devoted to a king as are the Companions of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) to him. If Muhammad makes his ablutions they would not let the water thereof fall on the ground but would rub it on their bodies and clothes. Now you may decide as to what you should do."

In the meantime when the messages were coming and the negotiations were going on, the Quraish tried again and again to quietly launch sudden attacks on the Muslim camp in order to provoke the Companions and somehow incite them to war, but every time they did so the Companions' forbearance and patience and the Holy Prophet's wisdom and sagacity frustrated their designs. On one occasion forty or fifty of their men came at night and attacked the Muslim camp with stones and arrows. The Companions arrested all of them and took them before the Holy Prophet, but he let them go. On another occasion 80 men came from the direction of Tan'im right at the time of the Fajr Prayer and made a sudden attack. They were also caught, but the Holy Prophet forgave them, too. Thus, the Quraish went on meeting failure after failure in every one of their designs.

At last, the Holy Prophet sent Hadrat Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) as his own messenger to Makkah with the message that they had not come to fight but only for pilgrimage and had brought their sacrificial camels along, and they would go back after performing the rite of pilgrimage and offering the sacrifice. But the Quraish did not agree and withheld Hadrat Uthman in the city. In the meantime a rumor spread that Hadrat Uthman had been

killed; and when he did not return in time the Muslims took the rumor to be true. Now they could show no more forbearance. Entry into Makkah was different for there was no intention to use force. But when the ambassador was put to death, the Muslims had no alternative but to prepare for war. Therefore, the Holy Prophet summoned all his Companions together and took a solemn pledge from them that they would fight to death. In view of the critical occasion it was not an ordinary undertaking. The Muslims numbered only 1400 and had come without any weapons, were encamping at the boundary of Makkah, 250 miles away from their own city, and the enemy could attack them in full strength, and could surround them with its allies from the adjoining tribes as well. In spite of this, none from the caravan except one man failed to give his pledge to fight to death, and there could be no greater proof of their dedication and sincerity than that in the cause of Allah. This pledge is well known in the history of Islam as the pledge of Ridwan.

Later it was known that the news about Hadrat Uthman was false. Not only did he return but under Suhail bin 'Amr from the Quraish also arrived a deputation to negotiate peace with the Holy Prophet. Now, the Quraish no more insisted that they would disallow the Holy Prophet and his Companions to enter Makkah. However, in order to save their face they only insisted that he went back that year but could come the following year to perform the umrah. After lengthy negotiations peace was concluded on the following terms:

1. War would remain suspended for ten years, and no party would indulge in any hostility, open or secret, against the other.

2. If any one during that period from among the Quraish went over to Muhammad, without his guardian's permission, he would return him to them, but if a Companion of Muhammad came over to the Quraish, they would not return him to him.

3. Every Arab tribe would have the option to join either side as its ally and enter the treaty.

4. Muhammad and his men would go back that year and could come the following year for umrah and stay in Makkah for three days, provided that they brought only one sheathed sword each, and no other weapon of war. In those three days the Makkans would vacate the city for them (so that there was no chance of a clash), but they would not be allowed to take along any Makkan on return.

When the conditions of the treaty were being settled, the whole of the Muslim army was feeling greatly upset. No one understood the expedience because of which the Holy Prophet was accepting the conditions. No one was far sighted enough to foresee the great benefit that was to result from this treaty. The disbelieving Quraish looked at it as their victory, and the Muslims were upset as to why they should be humiliated to accepting those mean conditions. Even a statesman of th caliber of Hadrat Umar says that he had never given way to doubt since the time he had embraced Islam but on this occasion he also could not avoid it. Impatient he went to Hadrat Abu Bakr and said "Is he (the Holy Prophet) not Allah's Messenger, and are we not Muslims, and are they not polytheists? Then, why should we agree to what is humiliating to our Faith?" He replied "O Umar, he is surely Allah's Messenger, and Allah will never make him the loser." Unsatisfied he went to the Holy Prophet himself and put the same questions to him, and he also gave him the same replies as Hadrat Abu Bakr had given. Afterwards Hadrat Umar continued to offer voluntary prayers and give aims so that Allah may pardon his insolence that he had shown towards the Holy

Prophet on that occasion.

Two things in the treaty were highly disturbing for the Muslims first, the second condition, about which they said that it was an expressly unfair condition, for if they had to return a fugitive from Makkah, why should not the Quraish return a fugitive from Madinah? To this the Holy Prophet replied: "What use would be he to us, who fled from us to them? May Allah keep him away from us!And if we return the one who flees to us from them, Allah will create some other way out for him." The other thing that was rankling in their minds was the fourth condition. The Muslims thought that agreeing to it meant that they were going back unsuccessful and this was humiliating. Furthermore, the question that was causing them feel upset wad that they had accepted the condition of going back without performing the pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, whereas the Holy Prophet had seen in the vision that they were performing tawaf at Makkah. To this the Holy Prophet replied that in his vision the year had not been specified. According to the treaty conditions, therefore, they would perform the *tawaf* the following year if it pleased Allah.

Right at the time when the document was being written, Suhail bin 'Amr's own son, Abu Jandal, who had become a Muslim and been imprisoned by the pagans of Makkah somehow escaped to the Holy Prophet's camp. He had fetters on his feet and signs of violence on his body. He implored the Holy Prophet that he help secure his release from imprisonment. The scene only increased the Companions' dejection, and they were moved beyond control. But Suhail bin 'Amr said the conditions of the agreement had been concluded between them although the writing was not yet complete; therefore, the boy should be returned to them. The Holy Prophet admitted his argument and Abu Jandal was returned to his oppressors.

When the document was finished, the Holy Prophet spoke to the Companions and told them to slaughter their sacrificial animals at that very place, shave their heads and put off the pilgrim garments, but no one moved from his place. The Holy Prophet repeated the order thrice but the Companions were so overcome by depression and dejection that they did not comply. During his entire period of apostleship on no occasion had it ever happened that he should command his Companions to do a thing and they should not hasten to comply with it. This caused him a great shock, and he repaired to his tent and expressed his grief before his wife, Hadrat Umm Salamah. She said, "You may quietly go and slaughter your own camel and call the barber and have your head shaved. After that the people would automatically do what you did and would understand that whatever decision had been taken would not be changed." Precisely the same thing happened. The people slaughtered their animals, shaved their heads or cut their hair short and put off the pilgrim garb, but their hearts were still afflicted with grief.

Later, when this caravan was returning to Madinah, feeling depressed and dejected at the truce of Hudaibiyah, this Surah came down at Dajnan (or according to some others, at Kura' al-Ghamim), which told the Muslims that the treaty that they were regarding an their defeat, was indeed a great victory. After it had come down, the Holy Prophet summoned the Muslims together and said: "Today such a thing has been sent down to me, which is more valuable to me than the world and what it contains." Then be recited this Surah, especially to Hadrat Umar, for he was the one who was feeling most dejected.

Although the believers were satisfied when they heard this Divine Revelation, not much longer afterwards the advantages of this treaty began to appear one after the other until every one became fully convinced that this peace treaty indeed was a great victory:

1. In it for the first time the existence of the Islamic State in Arabia was duly recognized. Before this in the eyes of the Arabs the position of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his Companions was no more than of mere rebels against the Quraish and other Arab tribes, and they regarded them as the outlaws. Now the Quraish themselves by concluding this agreement with the Holy Prophet recognized his sovereignty over the territories of the Islamic State and opened the way for the Arab tribes to enter treaties of alliance with either of the political powers they liked.

2. By admitting the right of pilgrimage to the House of Allah for the Muslims, the Quraish also admitted that Islam was not an anti-religious creed, as they had so far been thinking, but it was one of the admitted religions of Arabia, and like the other Arabs, its followers also had the right to perform the rites of hajj and umrah. This diminished the hatred in the Arabs hearts that had been caused by the propaganda made by the Quraish against Islam.

3. The signing of a no-war pact for ten years provided full peace to the Muslims, and spreading to every nook and corner of Arabia they preached Islam with such spirit and speed that within two years after Hudaibiyah the number of the people who embraced Islam far exceeded those who bad embraced it during the past 19 year or so. It was all due to this treaty that two years later when in consequence of the Quraish's violating the treaty the Holy Prophet invaded Makkah, he was accompanied by an army 10,000 strong, whereas on the occasion of Hudaibiyah only 1,400 men had joined him in the march.

4. After the suspension of hostilities by the Quraish the Holy Prophet had the opportunity to establish and strengthen Islamic rule in the territories under him and to turn the Islamic society into a full fledged civilization and way of life by the enforcement of Islamic law. This is that great blessing about which Allah says in verse 3 of Surah Al-Ma'idah:"Today I have perfected your Religion for you and completed My blessing on you and approved Islam as the Way of Life for you." (for explanation, see Introduction to Surah Al-Ma'idah and its E. N. 15).

5. Another gain that accrued from the truce with the Quraish was that being assured of peace from the south the Muslims overpowered all the opponent forces in the north and central Arabia easily. Just three months after Hudaibiyah, Khaiber, the major stronghold of the Jews, was conquered and after it the Jewish settlements of Fadak, Wad-il Qura, Taima and Tabuk also fell to Islam one after the other. Then all other tribes of central Arabia, which were bound in alliance with the Jews and Quraish, came under the sway of Islam. Thus, within two years after Hudaibiyah the balance of power in Arabia was so changed that the strength of the Quraish and pagan gave way and the domination of Islam became certain.

These were the blessings that the Muslims gained from the peace treaty which they were looking upon as their defeat and the Quraish as their victory. However, what had troubled the Muslims most in this treaty, was the condition about the fugitives from Makkah and Madinah, that the former would be returned and the latter would not be returned. But not much long afterwards this condition also proved to be disadvantageous for the Quraish, and experience revealed what far reaching consequences of it had the Holy Prophet fore seen and then accepted it. A few days after the treaty a Muslim of Makkah, Abu Basir, escaped from the Quraish and reached Madinah. The Quraish demanded him back and the Holy Prophet returned him to their men who had been sent from Makkah to

arrest him. But while on the way to Makkah he again fled and went and sat on the road by the Red Sea shore, which the trade caravans of the Quraish took to Syria. After that every Muslim who succeeded in escaping from the Quraish would go and join Abu Basir instead of going to Madinah, until 70 men gathered there. They would attack any Quraish caravan that passed the way and cut it into pieces at last, the Quraish themselves begged the Holy Prophet to call those men to Madinah, and the condition relating to the return of the fugitives of itself became null and void.

The Surah should be read with this historical background in view in order to fully understand it.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١﴾

لِّيَغْفِرَ لَكَ ٱللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنۢبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكَ
وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَٰطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٢﴾

وَيَنصُرَكَ ٱللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَزِيزًا ﴿٣﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ ٱلسَّكِينَةَ فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَزْدَادُوٓا۟ إِيمَٰنًا
مَّعَ إِيمَٰنِهِمْ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا
٤

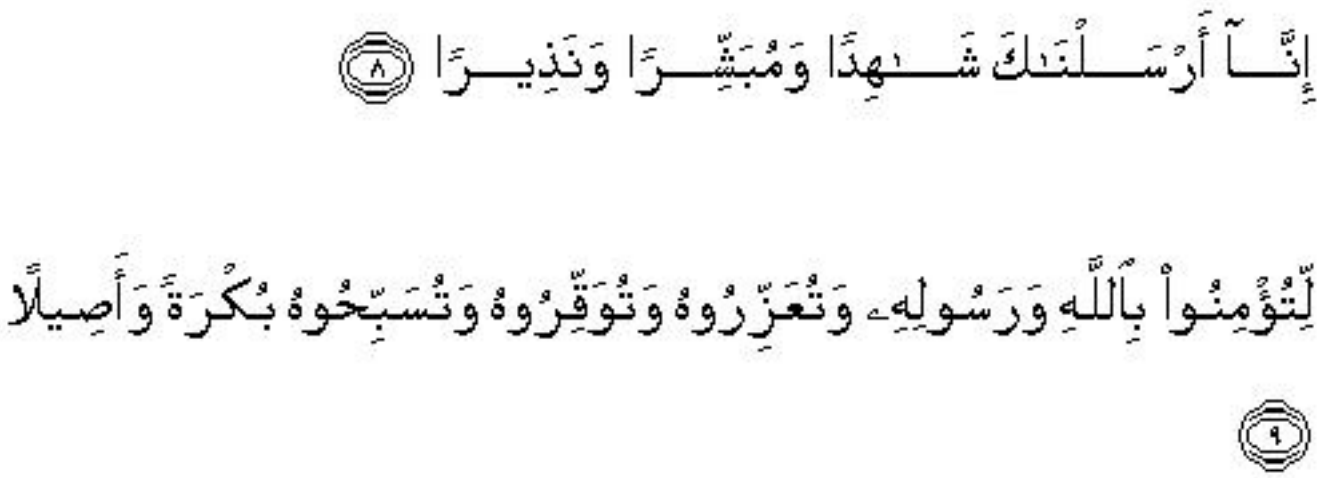
لِّيُدْخِلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيُكَفِّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا
٥

وَيُعَذِّبَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقَٰتِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ ٱلظَّآنِّينَ
بِٱللَّهِ ظَنَّ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۚ عَلَيْهِمْ دَآئِرَةُ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۖ وَغَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ
لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ٦

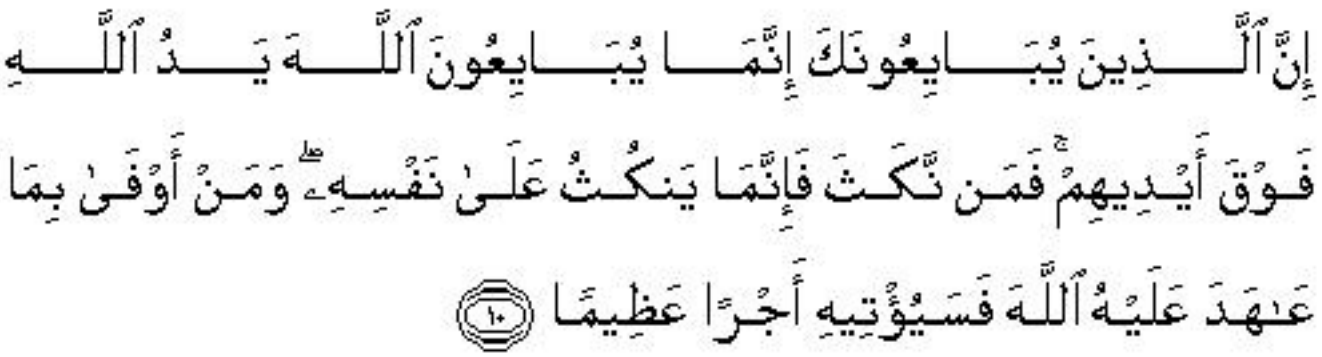
وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ٧

[1-7] O Prophet, We have indeed granted you a clear victory[1] so that Allah may pardon you your former and latter faults,[2] and may perfect His blessing upon you[3] and show you the right way,[4] and bestow on you a mighty help.[5] He it is Who sent down tranquility into the hearts of the believers[6] so that they may have another Faith added to their Faith.[7] To Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and He is All-Knowing, All Wise.[8] (He has done this) so that He may admit the believing men and the believing women[9] into the Gardens underneath which canals flow,

there to live for ever, and may remove their evils from them.[10] This is indeed the greatest success in the sight of Allah.-And that He may punish the hypocritical men and women and the mushrik men and women, who entertain evil thoughts about Allah.[11] They themselves have been encircled by the evil.[12] They came under the wrath of Allah and He cursed them and prepared for them Hell, which is a most evil abode. To Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and He is All-Mighty, All-Wise.[13]



[8-9] O Prophet. We have sent you as a witness,[14] as a bearer of good news and as a warner,[15] so that you, O people, may believe in Allah and His Messenger, and may help him (i.e.. the Messenger) and honor him, and glorify Allah morning and evening.[16]



[10] O Prophet, those who were swearing allegiance to you,[17] were indeed swearing allegiance to Allah. Allah's hand was over their hands.[18] Now whosoever breaks this pledge breaks it at his own peril, and whosoever keeps his pledge that he has made with Allah,[19] Allah will soon grant him a great reward.

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ ٱلْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَآ أَمْوَٰلُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ۚ
يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ قُلْ فَمَن يَمْلِكُ لَكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا
إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ بَلْ كَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا
١١

بَلْ ظَنَنتُمْ أَن لَّن يَنقَلِبَ ٱلرَّسُولُ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِيهِمْ
أَبَدًا وَزُيِّنَ ذَٰلِكَ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَنتُمْ ظَنَّ ٱلسَّوْءِ وَكُنتُمْ قَوْمًۢا بُورًا
١٢

[11-12] O Prophet, the desert Arabs who were left behind?[20] will surely come and say to you, "Our properties and our households kept us occupied; so ask forgiveness for us." They say with their tongues that which is not in their hearts.[21] Say to them: "If it is so, who that can have any power to withhold Allah's decree in your behalf if He intends to do some harm to you or bring some good to you? Allah is well aware of all your actions.[22] (But the real thing is not what you say) Nay, you rather thought that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families and this fancy delighted your hearts[23] and you harbored evil thoughts and you are a people, most wicked."[24]

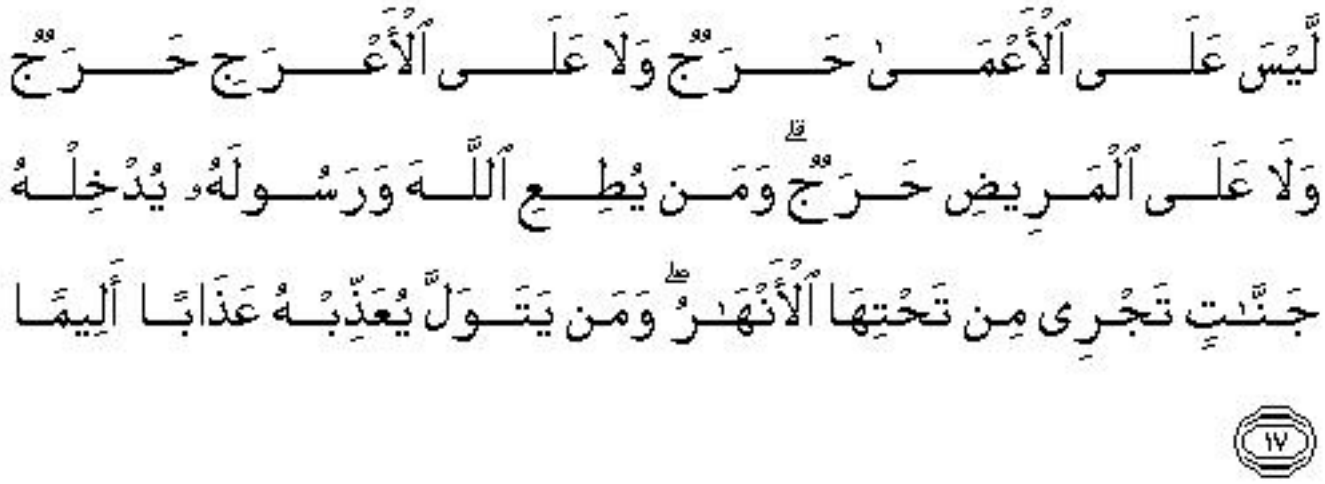
وَمَن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ فَإِنَّآ أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ
سَعِيرًا ١٣

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٤﴾

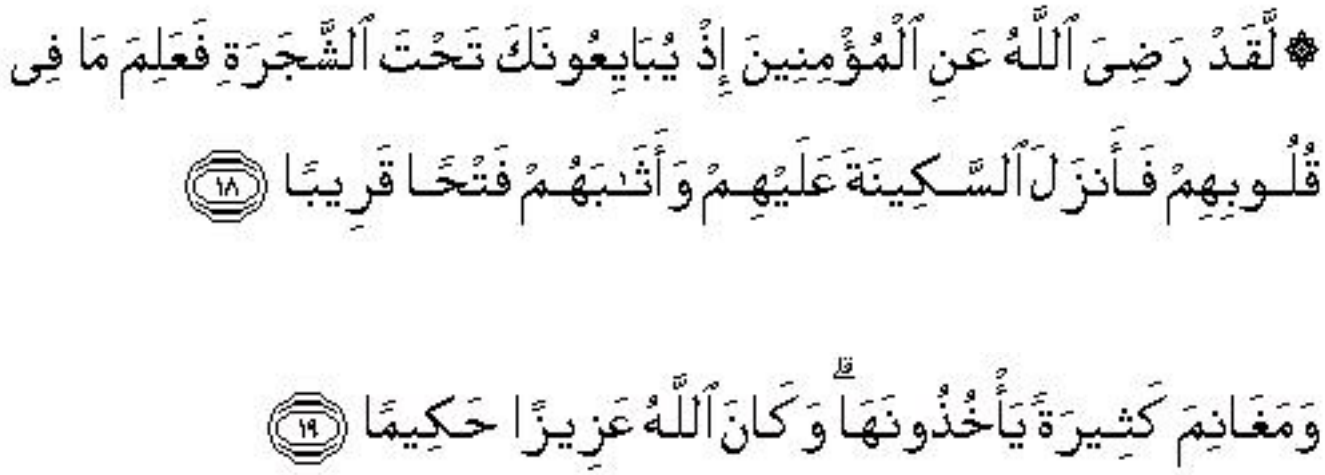
[13-14] Whoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger, for such disbelievers We have prepared a blazing Fire.[25] To Allah belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He may pardon whomever He wills and punish whomever He wills, and He is All-Forgiving, All -Merciful.[26]

سَيَقُولُ ٱلْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا ٱنطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَىٰ مَغَانِمَ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ۖ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُبَدِّلُوا۟ كَلَٰمَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قُل لَّن تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَٰلِكُمْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا۟ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾

قُل لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ أُو۟لِى بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَٰتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسْلِمُونَ ۖ فَإِن تُطِيعُوا۟ يُؤْتِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۖ وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾



[15-17] When you set out to take the spoils, those who were left behind, will surely say to you, "Allow us too to go with you."[27] They wish to change Allah's decree.[28] Tell them plainly, "You shall not come with us. Allah has already said this before."[29] They will say, "Nay, but you are jealous of us." (Whereas there is no question of jealousy), but they little understand the truth. Tell the desert Arabs who were left behind, "You shall soon be called upon to fight a mighty people. You shall have to fight them, or they will submit.[30] Then if you carried out the Command of Jihad, Allah will give you a good reward, and if you turned your backs as you did before, Allah will punish you with a painful torment. However, there is no harm if the blind and the lame and the sick person does not come forth for Jihad.[31] whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, Allah will admit him into Gardens underneath which canals flow; and the one who turns away, him He will punish with a painful torment.



وَعَدَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً تَأۡخُذُونَهَا فَعَجَّلَ لَكُمۡ هَٰذِهِۦ
وَكَفَّ أَيۡدِيَ ٱلنَّاسِ عَنكُمۡ وَلِتَكُونَ ءَايَةٗ لِّلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ
وَيَهۡدِيَكُمۡ صِرَٰطٗا مُّسۡتَقِيمٗا ٢٠

وَأُخۡرَىٰ لَمۡ تَقۡدِرُواْ عَلَيۡهَا قَدۡ أَحَاطَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَاۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ
قَدِيرٗا ٢١

[18-21] Allah was well pleased with the believers when they were swearing allegiance to you under the tree.[32] He knew what was in their hearts; therefore, He sent down tranquility upon them[33] and rewarded them with a victory near at hand, and many spoils which they will (soon) take.[34] Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. Allah promises you rich spoils which you will acquire.[35] Presently He has granted you this victory.[36] And has restrained the hands of the people from you[37] so that it they be a sign to the believers,[38] and Allah may guide you to the right way.[39] Besides, He promises you other spoils as well, which you are not as yet able to take, and Allah has encompassed them.[40] Allah has power over everything.

وَلَوۡ قَٰتَلَكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَوَلَّوُاْ ٱلۡأَدۡبَٰرَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيّٗا وَلَا نَصِيرٗا
٢٢

سُنَّةَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِي قَدۡ خَلَتۡ مِن قَبۡلُۖ وَلَن تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ ٱللَّهِ تَبۡدِيلٗا ٢٣

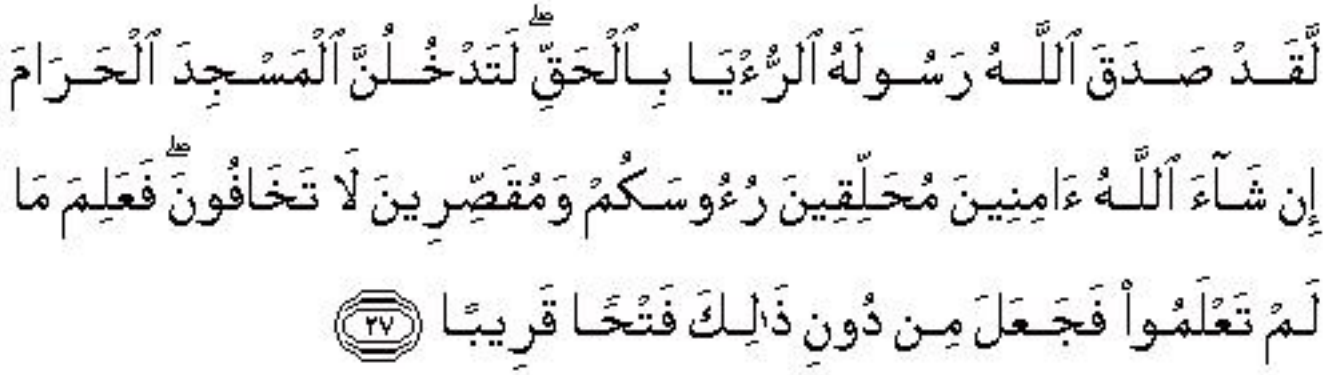
وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُم بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَنْ
أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾

[22-24] If the disbelievers had fought you then, they would certainly have turned their backs and would have found no protector or helper.[41] This is the Way of Allah that has been followed in the past,[42] and you will find no change in the Way of Allah. It is He Who restrained their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Makkah, whereas He had granted you victory over them, and Allah saw what you were doing.

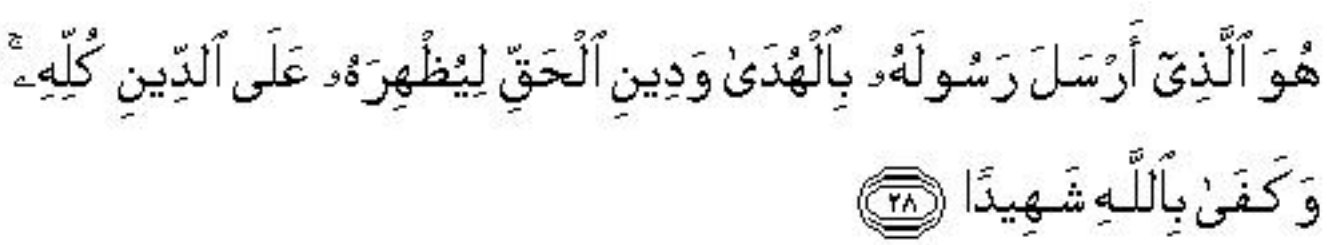
هُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَٱلْهَدْىَ
مَعْكُوفًا أَن يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُۥ ۚ وَلَوْلَا رِجَالٌ مُّؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَآءٌ مُّؤْمِنَٰتٌ
لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَن تَطَـُٔوهُمْ فَتُصِيبَكُم مِّنْهُم مَّعَرَّةٌۢ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ لِّيُدْخِلَ
ٱللَّهُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا۟ لَعَذَّبْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿٢٥﴾

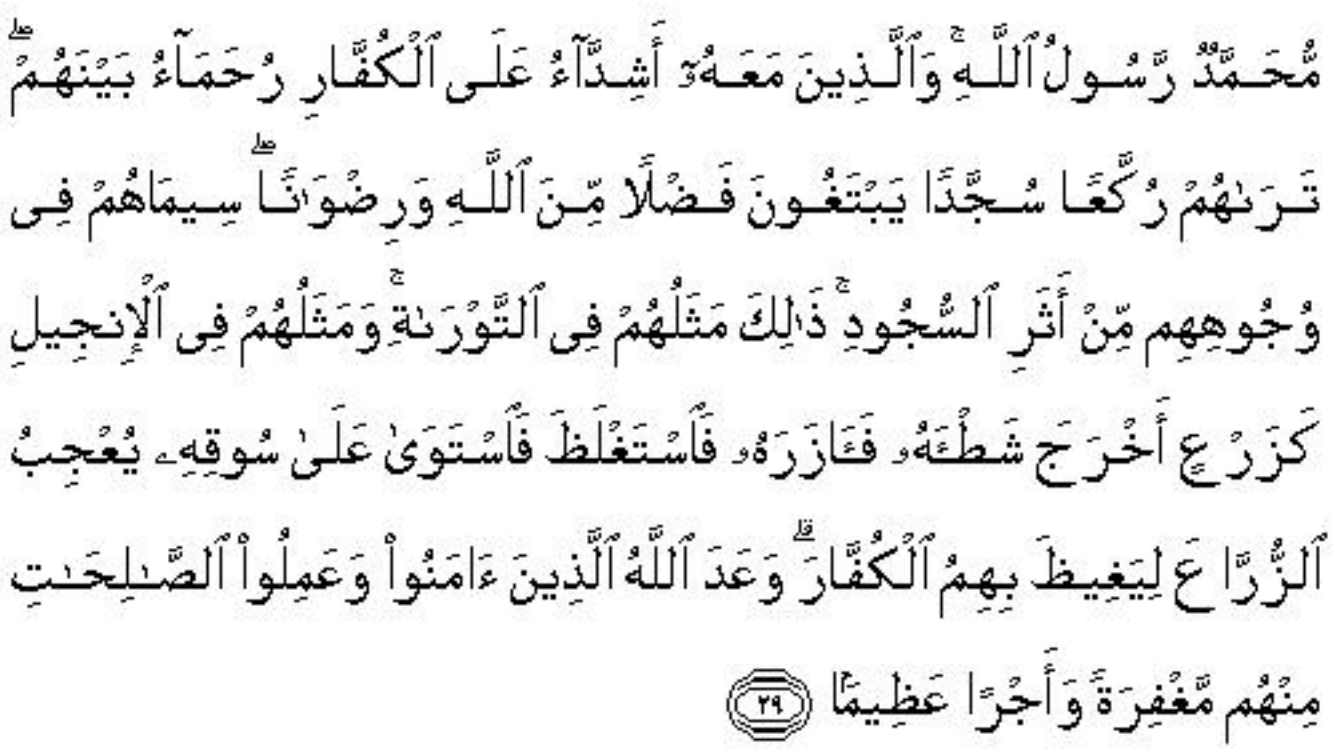
إِذْ جَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ
ٱلْجَٰهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوٓا۟ أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ
شَىْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٢٦﴾

[25-26] They are the ones who disbelieved and debarred you from the Masjid al-Haram and hindered the sacrificial animals from reaching their place of sacrifice.[43] men and women (in Makkah) whom you do not know and the fear that you would trample them under foot without knowing it and incur blame on that account, (the fighting would not have been allowed to stop. It was stopped), so that Allah may admit into His mercy whom He will. Had the believers stood apart (from the people of Makkah), We would have severely punished the disbelievers among them.[44] (That is why) when the disbelievers set in their hearts the arrogance of paganism,[45] is peace upon His Messenger and the believers,[46] and obliged the believers to adhere to the word of piety, for they were most worthy and deserving of it. Allah has knowledge of everything.



[27] Indeed, Allah had shown His Messenger a true vision, which was precisely according to the truth,[47] "You shall surely enter the Masjid al-Haram, if Allah so wills,[48] in full security.[49] you will have your heads shaved, your hair cut,[50] and you will have nothing to fear. He knew what you did not know. Therefore, He granted you this near victory before the fulfillment of the vision."




مُّحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ أَشِدَّآءُ عَلَى ٱلْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَآءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ
تَرَىٰهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنًا ۖ سِيمَاهُمْ فِى
وُجُوهِهِم مِّنْ أَثَرِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ ۚ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِى ٱلْإِنجِيلِ
كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْـَٔهُۥ فَـَٔازَرَهُۥ فَٱسْتَغْلَظَ فَٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِۦ يُعْجِبُ
ٱلزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ ٱلْكُفَّارَ ۗ وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ
مِنْهُم مَّغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًۢا ﴿٢٩﴾

[28-29] It is Allah Who has sent His Messenger with the Guidance and the religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religion, and Allah is sufficient as a Witness in this regard.[51] Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are hard[52] on the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.[53] When you see them you will find them bowing down and falling prostrate and craving for Allah's bounty and His good-will. They have the marks of prostrations on their faces by which they are distinguished[54] from others. This is their description in the Torah,[55] and in the Gospel they have been likened[56] to a crop which put out its shoot, then strengthened it, then swelled and then stood on its own stem, filling the sowers with delight and the disbelievers with jealousy of them. Allah has promised those of them, who have believed and done good works, forgiveness and a great reward.[57]

1When after the treaty of Hudaibiyah this good news of the victory was announced, .the people wondered as to how the treaty could be called a victory. The Muslims did believe in this Divine Revelation as true on the basis of their Faith, but no one could understand what aspect of the victory it had. On hearing this verse, Hadrat 'Umar asked: "Is it a victory, O Messenger of Allah?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes." (Ibn Jarir) Another Companion came before the Holy Prophet and he also put the same question; whereupon the Holy Prophet replied: "By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, this indeed is a victory." (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud) On arriving at Madinah still another person said to his companions: "What sort of a victory is it? We were debarred from the House of Allah; our sacrificial camels also could not go to their right places; the Holy Messenger of Allah had to halt at Hudaibiyah, and in consequence of this truce two of our oppressed brothers (Abu Jandal and Abu Basir) were handed over to their oppressors." When this thing reached the Holy Prophet, he said; "A vary wrong thing has been uttered: it indeed is a great victory. You reached the very home of the polytheists, and they had to persuade you to go back by soliciting you to perform 'Umrah the following year; they themselves expressed the desire to

suspend hostilities and have peace with you, whereas-their malice and enmity against you is too well-known. Allah has granted you the upper hand over them. Have you forgotten the day when you were fleeing from Uhud and I was calling you back from behind? Have you forgotten the day when the enemy had descended on us from every side in the Battle of the Trench and the hearts were coming up to the throats?" (Baihaqi on the authority of 'Urwah bin Zubair) . But not long after this the truce's being a victory began to become manifest, and everyone realized that the triumph of Islam had begun with the treaty of Hudaibiyah. Almost one and the same thing has been related from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat Jabir bin `Abdullah and Hadrat Bara' bin 'Azib. They are reported to have said: "The people look upon the Conquest of Makkah as the victory, but we regard the truce of Hudaibiyah as the real victory." (Bukhari, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir).

2If the context in which this sentence occurs is kept in view, one will certainly feel that the faults referred to here imply those shortcomings and weaknesses that had remained in the struggle that the Muslims had been making for the success and victory of Islam, under the leadership of the Holy Prophet, for the past nineteen years or so. These shortcomings are not known to any one because the intellect is absolutely helpless to find out any weakness in that struggle. But according to the highest standards of perfection in the sight of Allah there had remained some such weakness in it because of which the Muslims could not attain a decisive victory so soon over the pagans of Arabia. What Allah means to say is this: ¦If you had carried on your struggle along with those weaknesses, it would have taken you much longer to subdue Arabia, but We have overlooked all those weaknesses and shortcomings and compensated for them only through Our grace, and opened for you at Hudaibiyah the door to victory and conquest which you could not have achieved only by your ordinary endeavors"

Here, this thing also should be understood well that for the weaknesses that might occur and remain in the struggle and endeavor that a group might be making for an object, the leader and guide of the group only is addressed. This does not mean that the weaknesses are the leader's personal weaknesses. Those are, in fact, the weaknesses of the struggle that the group is making as a whole; but the address is made to the leader to tell him that his work suffers from such and such a weakness.

However, as the address is directed to the Holy Prophet and declared that Allah has forgiven him all his former and latter faults, the general words also give this meaning that Allah pardoned all the shortcomings (which were the shortcomings in view of his high position) of His Holy Messenger. That is why when the Companions saw that he took extraordinary pains over his worship, they would say: `Why do you subject yourself to such hardships when all your former and latter errors and shortcomings have been pardoned?" the Holy Prophet would reply: "Should I not behave as a grateful servant?" (Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud).

3"Perfection of his blessings" implies that the Muslims should become wholly free to live their lives in accordance with Islamic civilization, Islamic law and commandments, secure from every fear, every resistance and every external interference, and they should also be blessed with the power that they may

uphold Allah's Word throughout the world. Dominance of disbelief and wickedness which may be a hindrance in the way of Allah's worship and an obstacle in the struggle in propagating Allah's Word, is the greatest calamity for the believers; the Qur'an calls it 'fitnah " (mischief). Delivered and freed from this calamity when they arc able to achieve an abode of Islam (darul-Islam) in which the Divine Religion is enforced in its entirety, and along with that they are also provided with the means and resources by which they may establish faith and righteousness on Allah's earth in place of disbelief and wickedness, this would be the perfection of Allah's blessing on them. As this blessing was achieved by the Muslims only through the Holy Prophet, Allah addressed only him and said: "We willed to complete Our blessing on you; therefore we have granted this victory to you."

4"The right way": the way to conquest and success. In other words, it implies that by causing the treaty to be concluded at Hudaibiyah Allah paved the way for and inspired the Holy Prophet with the plan by which he could subdue all the forces that were resisting Islam.

5Another translation can be: "Bestow on you an unprecedented victory," for the word aziz in the original may mean mighty as well as unprecedented and unparalleled. According to the first meaning, the sentence means: "By means of this treaty Allah has helped you in a way as to make your enemies helpless"; and according to the second, it means: "Seldom has this novel method ever been adopted to help somebody, that a thing which apparently is a mere peace treaty, and that too a treaty concluded from a weak position, would turn into a decisive victory."

6"Sakinat" in Arabic is calmness and tranquility and peace of mind. Here Allah calls its being sent into the hearts of the believers an important factor in the victory that Islam and the Muslims achieved at Hudaibiyah. From a study of the conditions of the tuns one comes to know what kind of a Sakinat it was that was sent down into the hearts of the Muslims during that period and how it became a source of victory. If at the time when the Holy Prophet expressed his intention to go for 'Umrah to Makkah, the Muslims had become terror-stricken and started behaving like the hypocrites as if they were going into the very jaws of death, or if at the time when they heard the news on the way that the disbelieving Quraish were coming out in great strength to fight them, they had been alarmed as to how they would face the enemy un-armed, and thus become panic-stricken, obviously no benefits would have resulted from Hudaibiyah at all. Then, if at the time when at Hudaibiyah the disbelievers had stopped the Muslims from going any further, and when they had tried to provoke them by launching against them repeated sudden attacks, and when the rumor of Hadrat 'Uthman's martyrdom had spread, and when Abu Jandal had appeared on the scene as the very image of oppression and persecution, the Muslims had actually become provoked and broken the discipline that the Holy Prophet had instilled in them, the result would have been disastrous. Above all, if at the time when the Holy Prophet was going to conclude the treaty on the conditions which were un-acceptable to the entire party of the Muslims, the Muslims had happened to disobey him, the great victory of Hudaibiyah would have turned into a humiliating defeat. Thus, it was all because of Allah's bounty that on all these critical moments the Muslims were blessed with full peace of mind with regard to the leadership and guidance of the Holy Prophet, the truth of Islam and the

truthfulness of their mission. This is why they decided with a cool mind that they would face and accept whatever hardships they would encounter in the way of Allah; that is why they remained safe from fear, confusion, provocation and despair; that is why perfect discipline continues to prevail in the camp; and that is why, in spite of being deeply grieved at the conditions of peace, they submitted to the decision taken by the Holy Prophet. This was the sakinat that Allah had sent down into the hearts of the Muslims, and it was all because of this that the dangerous step of undertaking a journey for performing 'Umrah became the prelude to a unique victory.

7That is, "One Faith they already had before they set out on this expedition; they attained the additional Faith when they remained steadfast on the way of sincerity, piety and obedience in every trial that they faced in connection with the expedition. " This verse is one of those verses which show that Faith is not a static state which is incapable of growth, but it develops as well as decays and deteriorates. After embracing Islam till death the believer at every step in his life continues to be confronted with such tests and trials in which he has to take a decision whether in following the Divine Religion he is prepared to sacrifice his life, his wealth, his sentiments, desires, time, comforts and interests or not. If at the time of every such trial he adopts the way of sacrifice, his Faith progresses and develops, and if he turns away his Faith decays and deteriorates till a time may also come when the initial state of the Faith with which he had entered Islam is even endangered to be lost and destroyed. (For further explanation. see E.N. 2 of Surah AI-Anfal and E.N. 38 of AI-Ahzab).

8It means this: Allah has such hosts by which He can destroy and exterminate the disbelievers completely whenever He wills, but He has deliberately and by wisdom only placed this responsibility on the believers that they should enter a conflict with the disbelievers and struggle to make the Religion of Allah prevail and prosper in the world. In this way alone does a door to the enhancement of their ranks and successes in the Hereafter open as is being indicated in the following verse'.

9In the Qur'an generally mention of the rewards for the believers is made collectively and separate mention is not made of the rewards for the men and the women But here, since the general mention of giving the rewards could cause the doubt that this reward may perhaps be only meant for the men. Allah has made a separate mention of the believing women, saying that they too would be equal partners in this reward with the believing men. The reason is obvious. Those God-fearing women who encouraged their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers to proceed on the dangerous journey instead of stopping them from it and discouraging them by crying and wailing, who looked after their houses, their properties, their honor and children in their absence faithfully, who did not even feel the alarm lest at the sudden departure of 1,400 of the Companions the disbelievers and hypocrites of the surrounding areas would attack the city, should certainly have become equal partners with their men in the reward of Jihad although they stayed behind in their homes.

10That is, that He may pardon whatever errors they might have committed because of human weaknesses, remove every trace and mark of the errors from them before admitting them into Paradise

so that they may enter Paradise absolutely free from every evil that may cause them embarrassment.

11The hypocrites living in the suburbs of Madinah were thinking, as has been stated in verse 12 below, that the Holy Prophet and his Companions would not return alive from that journey. As for the polytheists of Makkah and their pagan companions, they were thinking that they had successfully put to rout the Holy Prophet and his Companions by preventing them from performing `Umrah. In fact, whatever these two groups had thought they had this misunderstanding about Allah that He would not help His Messenger and in the conflict between the Truth and falsehood would allow falsehood to defeat and frustrate the Truth.

12That is, "They were encompassed by the same evil fate which they wanted to avoid and against which they had devised all those plans, and their same plans caused the evil fate to be hastened."

13Here the theme of verse 4 has been reiterated for another object. There, the object was to state that Allah instead of employing His supernatural hosts to fight the disbelievers had employed the believers for it only because He willed to favor them. Here, the theme has been repeated to say that in order to punish the one whom Allah wills to punish He can employ whichever of His countless hosts He likes for the purpose; no one has the power to avert His punishment by his own plans.

14Shah Waliyullah has translated shahid as "a bearer of witness to the truth", and other translators translate it as "a bearer of the witness". The word shahadat comprehends both these meanings. For explanation, sec E.N. 82 of Surah Al-Ahzab.

15For explanation, see E.N. 33 of Surah Al-Ahzab.

16According to some commentators the verse means: ".... and help the Messenger, and honor him, and glorify Allah morning and evening", and according to others: "... and help Allah, and honor Him and glorify Him morning and evening. "

Glorifying Allah morning and evening does not mean glorifying Him only in the morning and the evening but at all times. It is just like saying about something that it is well-known in the east and the west when one actually means to say that it is well-known everywhere in the world. "

17The reference is to the pledge that the Holy Prophet took from his Companions at Hudaibiyah at the rumor that Hadrat `Uthman had been killed at Makkah. According to some traditions it was a pledge unto death, and according to others it was an undertaking that they would not nut away from the battlefield. The first thing has been reported from Hadrat Salamah bin Akwa' and the second from Hadrat Ibn `Umar, Jabir bin `Abdullah and Ma'qil bin Yasar. The purport of both is the same. The Companions had pledged allegiance on the Holy Prophet's hand with the express object that if the news of Hadrat `Uthman's

martyrdom proved to be true, they would settle the matter with the Quraish there and then even if they were cut to pieces in the clash. As on this occasion it was not yet certain whether Hadrat `Uthman actually had been killed or was still living, the Holy Prophet placed one of his own hands on the other and pledged allegiance on his behalf, and thus bestowed a unique honor on Hadrat `Uthman in that he made Hadrat 'Uthman a partner in the pledge by making his own sacred hand represent the hand of Hadrat `Uthman. The Holy Prophet's taking the pledge of allegiance on his behalf necessarily meant that he had full confidence that if Hadrat `Uthman had been present he would certainly have pledged the allegiance.

18That is, the hand on which the Muslims were swearing allegiance was not the hand of the Prophet's person but of Allah's representative, and this allegiance was in fact being sworn to Allah through His Messenger.

19Here, instead of `alaih-illah the words used in the original are alaihullah, which is a departure from the general rule of Arabic. `Allama Alusi has given two reasons for the unusual use of the vowel points here. First, the object on this special occasion is to express the great glory, eminence and majesty of the Being to Whom the pledge was being sworn for which alaih-u is more appropriate than `alaih-i; second, the ha in alaih-i actually represents howe; therefore, adhering here to the vowel points of the original goes well with the theme of the allegiance.

20This refers to the people living in the suburbs of Madinah whom the Holy Prophet had invited to accompany him in his march out for `Umrah, but they had not left their homes in spite of their claim to Faith just because they were afraid of death. Traditions show that these were the people of the tribes of Aslam, Muzainah, Juhainah, Ghifar, Ashja`, Dil and others.

21This has two meanings:

(1) "That after your returning to Madinah the excuse that these people will present for not going out with you, would only be a lame excuse, because they know in their hearts why they had stayed behind"; and

(2) that their imploring the Messenger of Allah for a prayer of forgiveness would only be an empty word of mouth, for in fact, they are neither feeling remorse for their failure to accompany you, nor have they any feeling that they committed a sin by not going out with the Messenger, nor are ,they seeking forgiveness sincerely.

As for themselves they think that they did a wise thing by not going on the dangerous journey; had they any desire for Allah and His forgiveness, they would not have stayed behind at home. "

22That is, "Allah's decision will be on the basis of the knowledge that He has about the reality of your actions. If your actions deserve the punishment and I pray for your forgiveness, my this prayer will not

save you from Allah's punishment; and if your actions do not deserve the punishment, and I do not pray for your forgiveness, my failure to pray will not do any harm to you. Everything is in Allah's control, not mine, and no one's empty words can deceive Him. Therefore, even if I accept as true what you say and then also pray for your forgiveness on its basis, it will be vain and without result. "

23That is,"You were delighted to think that you had saved yourselves from the danger into which the Messenger and his believing supporters were going. You thought you had done so by dint of your great wisdom; and you also did not feel any compunction in rejoicing at the thought that the Messenger and the believers would not return alive from their expedition. You did not feel uneasy in spite of your claim to the Faith but were pleased to think that you did not put yourselves in the danger by accompanying the Messenger. "

24The word ba- ir (pl.bur in the original) has two meanings:

(1) A sinful, perverted and evil-minded person, who is incapable of doing anything good; and

(2) one who is doomed to an evil end, who is following the path of destruction,

25Here, Allah in clear words is declaring all such people disbelievers and devoid of the faith, who are not sincere with regard to Allah and His Religion, who shirk endangering their interests, their lives and wealth for the sake of Allah's Religion when the time comes of their trial and test. But one should remember that this is not the .sort of disbelief on the basis of which somebody in the world may be regarded as excommunicated from Islam, but this is the disbelief because of which he will be declared a disbeliever in the Hereafter. The reason is that the Holy Prophet even after the revelation of this verse did not regard as outside Islam those people in respect of whom it was sent down, nor treated them like the disbelievers.

26The mention of Allah's being All-Forgiving and All-Merciful after the foregoing warning, contains in it a subtle aspect of admonition. It means this: 'Even now if you give up your insincere attitude and way of life and adopt sincerity, you will find Allah All- Forgiving and All-Merciful. He will forgive you your previous shortcomings and will treat you according to the quality of your sincerity in the future."

27That is, `The time is approaching when these very people who were shirking accompanying you on the dangerous journey, would see you going on an expedition in which there would be the possibility of attaining easy victory and much booty. Then they would come running and request you to take them also along." Such a time came just three months after the truce of Hudaibiyah, when the Holy Prophet invaded Khaiber and took it easily. At that time everyone could see that after the truce with the Quraish not only Khaiber but the Jewish settlements of Taima, Fadak, Wadi-al-Qura' and others also of northern Arabia would not be able to withstand the might of the Muslims and would easily fall to the Islamic State. Therefore, Allah in these verses forewarned the Holy Prophet that the opportunists of the suburbs of

Madinah would come up to take part in and receive their share when they would see easy victories being attained, and that he should tell them plainly: "You will never be allowed to take part in these, because only those who had gone forth to offer their lives in the conflict at Hudaibiyah regardless of every danger would be entitled o them. "

28"Allah's decree" implies the decree that only those people would be allowed to accompany the Holy Prophet in the expedition to Khaiber, who had taken part in the expedition to Hudaibiyah and sworn the pledge there for Allah has reserved the spoils of Khaiber exclusively for them; as has been stated clearly in verse 18 blow.

29The words "Allah has already said this before" caused the people the misunderstanding that this refers to some other command bearing upon the same subject that might have been sent down before this verse, and since no such command is found in this Surah before this verse, they started looking for it at other places in the Qur'an till they found verse 84 of Surah At-Taubah, in which this very subject has been dealt with for another occasion. But that verse, in fact, does not apply to this, for it was sent down in connection with the Battle of Tabuk, and its period of revelation is three years after the period of revelation of Surah AI-Fat-h. The fact of the matter is that this verse refers to vv. 18-19 of this Surah itself, and Allah's already having said this does not mean its having been said before this verse but its having boon said to the laggards before this conversation. This conversation with the laggards about which advance instructions are being given to the Holy Prophet was to take place at the time of the expedition to Khaiber, and this whole Surah, including vv. 18-19, had been sent down three months earlier on return from Hudaibiyah on the way. A careful study of the context shows that Allah here is giving this instruction to His Messenger: "When after your return at Madinah the laggards come to you with their excuses, you should give them this reply, and when they express their desire to accompany you in the expedition to Khaiber, you should tell them this. "

30The words au yuslimun in the original can have two meanings and both are implied:

(1) 'That they should accept Islam"; and

(2) 'that they should submit to the Islamic rule."

31That is, the one who has a genuine excuse for not joining Jihad is not accountable, but if the able-bodied, strong people make excuses for not joining it, they cannot be regarded as sincere with regard to Allah and His Religion, and they cannot be given the opportunity to take advantage of the gains as members of the Muslim community, but when time comes for making sacrifices for Islam, they should lag behind and seek the safety of their lives and properties."

Here, one should know that two kinds of the people have been exempted from Jihad duty by the Shari

ah:

(1) Those who are not physically fit for Jihad. e.g. young boys, women, the insane, the blind and such patients as cannot perform military duties, and such disabled people as cannot take part in war; and

(2) those for whom it may be difficult to join Jihad for other sound reasons, e.g. the slaves, or those persons who may be ready for Jihad but may not afford weapons of war and other necessary equipment, or such debtors who may have to pay their debts at the earliest opportunity and the creditors may not be willing to allow them more time, or such people whose parents (or a parent) might be alive, who stand in need of the children's help.

In this regard, it should also be known that the children should not join Jihad without the permission of their parents if they are Muslims, but if they are non-Muslims it is not permissible for a person to stay away from Jihad in case they refuse permission. "

32Here again the pledge taken from the Companions at Hudaibiyah has been mentioned. This is called Bai 'at Ridwan. for Allah in this verse has given the good news that he became well pleased with those who on this dangerous occasion did not show the least hesitation in offering their lives for the cause of Islam and gave an express proof of their being true in their faith by taking the pledge on the hand of the Holy Prophet. The Muslims at this time were equipped only with a sword each. numbered only 1,400, were unprepared for warfare, but were donning the pilgrim garments, were 25 miles away from their military headquarters (Madinah), while the enemy's stronghold (Makkah) where from it could get any kind of help was just 13 miles off. Had these people been lacking in their sincerity of Allah and His Messenger and His Religion in any degree, they would have abandoned the Messenger on this extremely dangerous occasion, and Islam would have been vanquished for ever. Apart from their own sincerity there was no external pressure under which they might have been compelled to take the pledge. Their becoming ready at that time to fight in the cause of Allah's Religion regardless of the dangers, is a clear proof that they were true and sincere in their Faith and loyal to th ò cause of Allah and His Messenger in the highest degree. That is why Allah honored them with this certificate of His good pleasure. Now it some one becomes angry with them after they have been honored with this certificate of Allah's good pleasure, or slanders and vilifies them, his enmity is with Allah, not with them. Those who say that at that time when Allah honored them with this certificate of His good pleasure, they were sincere, but afterwards they became disloyal to Allah and His Messenger, perhaps harbor a mistrust about Allah that while sending down this verse He was unaware of their future; therefore, He awarded them this warrant only in view of their state at that time, and probably due to the same unawareness inscribed this verse in His Holy Book as well so that afterwards also, when those people have turned disloyal, the world should continue reading this verse about them and praising the knowledge of the unseen of that Allah Who, God forbid, had granted these faithless and disloyal people the warrant of His good pleasure.

About the Tree under which this pledge was taken Ibn `Umar's slave Hadrat Nafi's tradition has generally

spread saying that the people had started visiting it and offering Prayers by it, so that when Hadrat 'Umar came to know of it, he rebuked and warned the people and ordered it to be cut down . (Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd, vol. II, p. l00). But there are several other traditions which contradict it. A tradition from Hadrat Nafi' himself has been reported in Tabaqat of Ibn S`ad to the effect that many years after the Bai at Ridwan the Companions looked for the Tree but they could not recognize it and differed as to which tree it was. (p. 106). The second tradition has been reported in Bukhari, Muslim, and Tabaqat on the authority of Hadrat Said bin al-Musayyab. He says that his father was one of those who had participated in the Bai `at Ridwan. He told him that when they had gone for 'Umrah al-Qada the following year, they had forgotten the Tree, and they could not locate it even after looking for it. The third tradition is from lbn Jarir. He says that when Hadrat `Umar during his caliphate passed by Hudaibiyah, he inquired about the Tree under which the pledge had been sworn. Someone pointed to one tree and another one to another tree. At this Hadrat `Umar told the people to forget it as there was no real need to bother about it.

33Here, sakinat means that state of the heart on whose strength a man throws himself into dangers with complete calm and peace of mind for the sake of a great objective and resolves without fear and consternation to undertake it regardless of the consequences.

34The reference is to the conquest of Khaiber and its rich spoils and this verse expressly points out that Allah had reserved this reward only for those

People who had taken part in the Bai at Ridwan; apart from them no one else was entitled to take part in the victory and have a share in the spoils. That is why when the, Holy Prophet marched out to attack Khaiber in Safar, A.H. 7, he took only those people with him. No doubt afterwards he gave some of the spoils of Khaiber to those emigrants also who returned from Habash and to some Companions from the Dus and Ash'ar tribes as well, but this was given either from Khums (one fifth of the spoils of war given into the public treasury), or with the approval of the Companions who had taken the pledge of Ridwan; no one else was given any share of it.

35This refers to the other victories that the Muslim achieved successively after Khaiber.

36This implies the treaty of Hudaibiyah which has been described as "a manifest victory" in the beginning of the Surah.

37That is, "He restrained the disbelieving Quraish from attacking you at Hudaibiyah although from all appearances they were in a much better position and yours was a much weaker side militarily." Furthermore, it also implies that no enemy power could muster courage to attack Madinah in those days, whereas after the departure of 1,400 soldiers the Madinah front had become very weak, and the Jews, the polytheists and hypocrites could take advantage of the situation.

38Sign of this as to how Allah helps the one who remains steadfast on obedience to Allah and His Messenger and comes out to support and defend the Truth and righteousness with his trust and faith in Allah.

39"To the right way" : "To the way of greater insight and faith so that you may remain steadfast on obedience to Allah and His Messenger in the future and may go on marching on the way of truth with trust in Allah, and may learn this lesson from these experiences that the believer should take practical steps to do whatever is demanded by Allahs Religion with his trust in Him, and should not overestimate either his own strength or the strength of the unbelievers."

40Most probably this is a reference to the Conquest of Makkah. The same is the opinion of Qatadah and Ibn Jarir. It seems to mean this: "Though Makkah has not yet fallen to you, Allah has encircled it, and as a result of this victory at Hudaibiyah, it will also fall to you. "

41That is, "Allah did not prevent fighting at Hudaibiyah because there was a possibility of your being defeated there, but there were other reasons for it, which are being stated in the following verses. Had that factor not been there and Allah had allowed the war to take place, the disbelievers would surely have been routed and Makkah would have fallen to you at that very time. "

42Here, "the Way of Allah" means: Allah disgraces the disbelievers who fight His Messenger and helps His own Messenger.

43That is, "Allah was seeing the sincerity and the selfless devotion with which you had become ready to lay down your lives in the cause of the true Faith and were obeying the Prophet without any question. Allah was also seeing that the disbelievers were being unfair and high-handed. The demand of this situation was that they should have been punished there and then through you, but in spite of that. Allah restrained your hands from them and their hands from you."

44This was the reason why Allah did not allow fighting to take place at Hudaibiyah. This has two aspects:

That at that time there were quite a number of the Muslim men and women living in Makkah, who were either hiding their faith, or were being persecuted because of their faith as they had no means to emigrate. Had there been fighting and the Muslims had pushed back the disbelievers and entered Makkah, these Muslims also would have been killed in ignorance along with the disbelievers. This would not only have grieved the Muslims but the Arab polytheists also would have got an opportunity to say that the Muslims did not even spare their own brethren in faith during wartime. Therefore, Allah took pity on the helpless Muslims and averted the war in order to save the Companions from grief and infamy. The other aspect of the expedience was that Allah did not will that Makkah should fall to the Muslims as a result of the defeat of the Quraish after a bloody clash but He willed that they should be encircled from all

sides so that within two years or so they should become absolutely helpless and subdued without offering any resistance, and then the whole tribe should accept Islam and enter Allah's mercy as it actually happened on the Conquest of Makkah.

Here the juristic dispute has arisen that if during a war between the Muslims and the disbelievers, the disbelievers should bring out some Muslim men and women, children and old men, in their possession and put them in the forefront as a shield for themselves, or if there is some Muslim population also in the non-Muslim city under attack by the Muslim forces, or if in a warship of the disbelievers, which is within our gun-fire, the disbelievers have taken some Muslims also on board, can the Muslim army open fire on it? In answer to it the nulings given by different jurists are as follows:

Imam Malik says that in such a case fire should not be opened, and for this he cites this very verse as an argument. He contends that Allah prevented the war at Hudaibiyah only in order to save the Muslims. (Ibn al-`Arabi, Ahkam al Qur'an). But this in fact is a weak argument. There is no word in the verse which may support the view that launching an attack on the enemy in this case is unlawful and forbidden. At the most what one can say on the basis of this verse is that the launching of an attack in such a case should be avoided in order to save the Muslims, provided that it does not put the disbelievers in an advantageous position against the Muslims militarily, or does not diminish the Muslims' chances of gaining an upper hand in the conflict.

Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Zufar and Imam Muhammad saythat it is lawful to open fire in such a case; so much so that even if the disbelievers use the children of the Muslims as a shield by putting them in the forefront, there is no harm in shooting at them, and it is not obligatory for the Muslims to expiate and pay any blood-money for the Muslims thus killed, (AIJassas, Ahkam al-Qur'an; Imam Muhammad, :Kitab as-Siyar).

Imam Sufyan Thauri also in this case regards opening of the fire as lawful, but he says that although the Muslims will not pay the blood-money of the Muslims thus killed, it is obligatory for them to expiate the sin. (AI-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur an).

Imam Auza`i and Laith bin Sa`d say that if the disbelievers use the Muslims as a shield, fire should not be opened on them. Likewise, if it is known that in their warship ow own prisoners also are on board, it should not be sunk. But if we attack a city of theirs and we know that there are Muslims also in the city, it is lawful to open fire on the city, for it is not certain that our shells will only hit the Muslims, and if a Muslim becomes a victim of this shelling, it will not be willful murder of a Muslim but an inadvertent accident. (Al-Jassas, Ahkam alQur an).

Imam Shafe`i holds the view that in such a case if it is not inevitable to open fire it is better to try to save the Muslims from destruction; although it is not unlawful to open fire in this case, it is undesirable. But if it is really necessary and it is feared that in case fire is not opened it will put the disbelievers in a better

position militarily against the Muslims, it is lawful to resort to shelling, but even then every effort should be made to save the Muslims as far as possible. Furthermore, Imam Shafe'i also says that if during a conflict the disbelievers put a Muslim in front as a shield and a Muslim kills him, there can be two possible alternatives: either the killer knew that the murdered person was a Muslim, or he did not know that he was a Muslim. In the first case, he will be under obligation to pay compensation for manslaughter as well as do expiation; in the second case he will only do expiation. (Mughni al-Muhtaj).

45The words hamiyyat al -jahiliyyah mean that a man should willfully do something unworthy and improper only for the sake of his honor and prestige. The disbelievers of Makkah themselves acknowledged and admitted that everybody ,had a right to visit the Ka`bah for performing Hajj and `Umrah, and that they had no right to slop anyone from this duty. This was an ancient admitted law of Arabia. But in spite of knowing that they were absolutely in the wrong and the Muslims in the right, they prevented the Muslims from performing `Umrah only for the sake of their prestige. The righteous even among the polytheists also were saving that preventing the people who had come in the pilgrim garbs along with sacrificial camels from performing pilgrimage was an improper act. Yet the Quraish leaders persisted in their resistance only under the idea that if Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) entered Makkah along with a large number of his followers, it would mean loss of prestige for them among the Arabs. This was their arrogance.

46Here, sakinat means the patience and dignity with which the Holy Prophet and the Muslims resisted the disbelievers rancor and spirit of paganism. They did not get provoked at their stubborn and insolent behavior and did not do anything which might have violated the spirit of Truth and righteousness, or which might have further complicated the situation instead of settling it amicably.

47This is the answer to the question that was constantly agitating the minds of the Muslim. They said, "The Holy Prophet had seen in his vision that he had entered the Masjid al-Haram and moved round the Ka`bah in worship. Then how is it that they were returning without performing `Umrah?" In answer to this, although the Holy Prophet had told them that in his vision he had not seen that they would perform the `Umrah that very year, still there remained some suspicion in the hearts. Therefore, Allah Himself explained that it was He Who had shown the vision and it was a true vision and it would certainly be fulfilled.

48Here, about the words insha'-Allah (if Allah so wills), which Allah Himself has used with His promise, one can raise the objection that when Allah Himself is making this promise, what is the meaning of making it conditional upon His own willing it? The answer is: Here the words insha'-Allah have not been used in the sense that if Allah does not will, He will not fulfill His promise, but in fact these relate to the background in which this promise was made. The presumption on the basis of which the disbelievers of Makkah had played the drama of preventing the Muslims from `Umrah was that only he whom they would allow would perform `Umrah, and would perform it only when they would allow it At this Allah has said: "This depends on Our, not on their, will. The reason why 'Umrah has not been performed this year is not

because the disbelievers of Makkah did not allow it to be performed, but because We did not will it to be performed; in the future 'Umrah will be performed if We will, no matter whether the disbelievers allow it or disallow it." Besides, these words also contain the meaning that the Muslims too, will perform `Umrah not by their own power but because We would will that they should perform it; otherwise if We do not will, they do not possess any power to perform it by themselves."

49This promise was fulfilled in the following year in Dhil-Qa'dah A. H. 7. This `Umrah is well known in history as 'Umrah al-Qada `.

50The words clearly point out that it is not obligatory to get the head shaved in `Umrah and Hajj, but it is also right to get the hair cut short. However, it is better to have the head shaved, for Allah has mentioned it first and then mentioned having the hair cut short.

51The reason why this thing has been mentioned here is that when at Hudaibiyah the peace treaty was going to be written down, the disbelievers had objected to the use of the words Rasul-Allah (Messenger of Allah) with the name of the Holy Prophet, and on their insistence the Holy Prophet himself had wiped off these words from the document. At this Allah says: "Our Messenger's being a Messenger is a reality which remains unaffected whether someone believes in it or not. If some people do not believe in it, they may not, for "Allah is enough for a witness" over it. Their denial will not change the reality, but the Guidance and the true Faith which this Messenger has brought from Us, shall prevail over all religion, no matter how hard the deniers try to obstruct its progress."

"All religion" implies all those ways of life which include the nature of din (religion). We have explained it fully in E.N. 3 of Surah Az-Zumar and E.N. 20 of Surah Ash-Shura above. Here what Allah has stated in clear words is: The purpose of the Holy Prophet's appointment as a Prophet was not merely to preach this Religion but to make it prevail over all others. In other words, he did not bring this Religion so that it might survive in a limited compartment of life which is allowed it by the dominant religion, while the rest of the spheres of life, by and large, should remain under the relentless control of some false religion. But he had brought it so that it should be the dominant Religion of life and any other religion should survive, if at all it survives, only within the limits in which it allows it to survive. (For further explanation, sec E.N. 48 of Surah Az-Zumar).

52"The Companions (of the Holy Prophet) are hard on the disbelievers" : they are not "wax that the disbelievers may mold them as they like; they can neither be cowed nor. purchased by any inducement. The disbelievers have no power to turn them away from the great objective for the sake of which they have joined and followed the Holy Prophet even at the cost of their lives."

53That is, "Whatever their hardness and severity, it is only for the disbelievers, not for the believers. As regards the believers they are soft, merciful, affectionate, sympathetic and compassionate. Their unity of

aim and object has produced in them love and harmony and complete accord among themselves."

54This does not imply the mark that appears on the forehead of some people on account of prostrations, but it implies the marks and traces of the fear of God, munificence, nobility and goodness of manner that naturally appears on the face of a person on account of bowing down before God. Man's face is an open book on the pages of which different states of a man's self can be seen easily. A vain and arrogant person's face is different from the face of a humble, modest and unassuming person; an immoral person's face is clearly distinguished from the face of a righteous and well-mannered person; and there is a marked difference between the facial appearance of a wicked man and of a noble and virtuous man. What Allah means to say is: "The Companions of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) are such that one can recognize them on first sight to be the best of mankind, because their faces shine forth with the light of God-worship and God -consciousness." This is the same thing about which Imam Malik has said that when the armies of the Companions entered Syria, the Syrian Christians remarked: "These people possess the very same qualities and characteristics of the disciples of the Prophet Jesus Christ."

55The allusion probably is to Deuteronomy, 33: 2-3, in which the Holy Prophet's advent has been foretold and the word "saints" has been used for his Companions. Apart from this, if some other quality of the Companions has been mentioned in the Torah, it is not found in the existing, corrupted Torah.

56This parable is found in a sermon of the Prophet Jesus that has been reported in the New Testament, thus:

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should east seed into the ground: And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. And he said, Where unto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sewn in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: Hut when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shouted out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it."

The last portion of this sermon is also found in Matthew, 13: 31-32.

57A section of the Muslims translates this verse, thus: "Allah has promised forgiveness and a great reward to those from among these people who have believed and done good works." Thus, they invent a way to vilify and slander the Companions, and claim that according to this verse many people among the Companions were not believers and righteous. But this commentary goes against vv. 4, 5, 18 and 26 of this very Sarah, and does not even accord with the initial sentences of this verse itself. In vv. 4-5, Allah has made mention of sending down sakinat (tranquillity) and of effecting increase in the Faith of all those

Companions who were present with the Holy Prophet at Hudaibiyah, and given them without any exception the good news of admission into Paradise. In verse 18, Allah has expressed His good pleasure for all those who took the pledge to the Holy Prophet, and in this also there is no exception. In verse 26 also Allah has used the word mu 'minin (believers) for all the Companions, has made mention of sending down His sakinat to there, and obliged them to be righteous and pious, for they were most worthy and deserving of all mankind. Here also it was not said that the news was being given only abut those who were believers among them. Then in the initial sentences also of this verse itself the characteristics mentioned arc of all those people who were with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). The words are to the effect that all the people who are with him have this and this quality and characteristic. After this, suddenly in the last sentence there could be no excuse to say that some of them were the believers and others were not.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

49. Surah Al Hujaraat (The Private Apartments)

Name

The Surah takes its name from verse 4 in which the word *hujurat* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

Traditions show and the subject matter of the Surah also supports the same that this Surah is a collection of the commandments and instructions sent down on different occasions, which have been put together because of the relevancy of the theme. Moreover, the traditions also show that most of these commandments were sent down during the final stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Madinah. For instance, about verse 4 the commentators state that it was sent down concerning the Bani Tamim whose deputation had arrived in Madinah and started calling out to the Holy Prophet from outside the apartments (*hujurat*) of his wives, and according to all biographical books on the Holy Prophet's life this deputation had visited Madinah in A. H. 9. Likewise, about verse 6 a large number of the traditions of *Hadith* confirm that it was sent down concerning Walid bin Uqbah whom the Holy Prophet had sent to collect the zakat from the Bani al-Mustaliq, and it is well known that Walid bin Uqabah had become a Muslim on the conquest of Makkah.

Subject Matter and Topics

The subject matter of this Surah is to teach the Muslims the manners worthy of true believers.

In the first five verses they have been taught the manners they should observe with regard to Allah and His Messenger.

Then, they have been given the instruction that it is not right to believe in every news blindly and to act according to it, without due thought. If information is received about a person, a group or a community, it should be seen carefully whether the means of the information is reliable or not. If the means is not reliable, it should be tested and examined to see whether the news is authentic or not before taking any action on it.

Then, it has been told what attitude should the other Muslims adopt in case two groups of the Muslims fall to mutual fighting.

Then the Muslims have been exhorted to safeguard against the evils that corrupt collective life and spoil mutual relationships. Mocking and taunting each other, calling others by nicknames, creating suspicions, prying into other people's affairs and back biting are the evils which are not only sins in themselves but they also corrupt society. Allah has mentioned all these evils separately and forbidden them as unlawful.

After this, the national and racial distinctions that cause universal corruption in the world have been condemned. Nations and tribes and families pride of Ancestry and their looking down upon others as inferior to themselves and their pulling down others only for the sake of establishing their own superiority is an important factor that has filled the world with injustices and tyranny. Allah in a brief verse has cut at the root of this evil by stating that all men are descendants of the same one pair and their division into tribes and communities is only for the sake of recognition, not for boasting and pride, and there is no lawful basis of one man's superiority over the other except on the basis of moral excellence.

In conclusion, the people have been told that the real thing is not the verbal Profession of the Faith but to believe in Allah and His messenger truly, to obey them in practical life and to exert sincerely with one's self and wealth in the cause of Allah. True believers are only those who adopt this attitude. As for those who profess Islam merely orally without affirmation by the heart and then adopt an attitude as if they had done someone a favor by accepting Islam, may be counted among the Muslims in the world, may even be treated as Muslims in society, but they cannot be counted as believers in the sight of Allah.

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُقَدِّمُواْ بَيۡنَ يَدَيِ ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٞ ١

[1] O you who have believed, do not go in advance of Allah and His Messenger,[1] and fear Allah: Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.[2]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَرۡفَعُوٓاْ أَصۡوَٰتَكُمۡ فَوۡقَ صَوۡتِ ٱلنَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجۡهَرُواْ لَهُۥ بِٱلۡقَوۡلِ كَجَهۡرِ بَعۡضِكُمۡ لِبَعۡضٍ أَن تَحۡبَطَ أَعۡمَٰلُكُمۡ وَأَنتُمۡ لَا تَشۡعُرُونَ ٢

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ أَصۡوَٰتَهُمۡ عِندَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱمۡتَحَنَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمۡ لِلتَّقۡوَىٰۚ لَهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ وَأَجۡرٌ عَظِيمٌ ٣

[2-3] O you who have believed, do not raise your voices above the Prophet's voice, nor speak to him loud as you speak loud to one another[3] lest all your works be rendered void, while you do not know.[4] Those who lower their voices in the presence of the Messenger of God, are, in fact, those whose hearts Allah has disposed to piety.[5] For them is forgiveness and a great reward!

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنَادُونَكَ مِن وَرَآءِ ٱلۡحُجُرَٰتِ أَكۡثَرُهُمۡ لَا يَعۡقِلُونَ ٤

وَلَوۡ أَنَّهُمۡ صَبَرُواْ حَتَّىٰ تَخۡرُجَ إِلَيۡهِمۡ لَكَانَ خَيۡرٗا لَّهُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٥

[4-5] O Prophet, those who call out to you from outside the apartments, most of them have no sense. If only they had had patience until you came out to them, it would be better for them.[6] Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.[7]

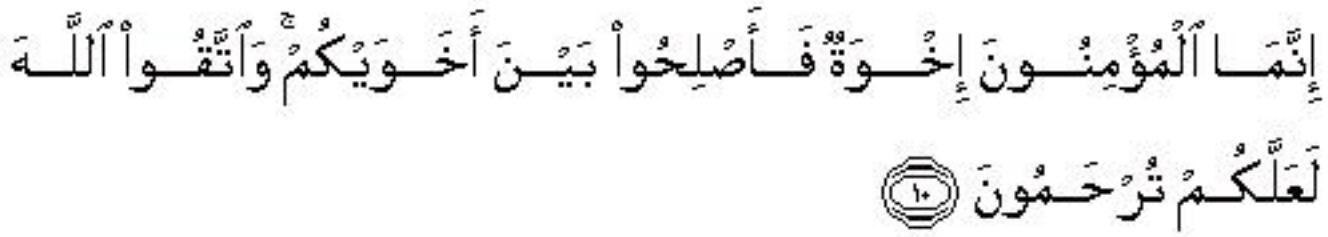
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِن جَآءَكُمۡ فَاسِقُۢ بِنَبَإٖ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓاْ أَن تُصِيبُواْ
قَوۡمَۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٖ فَتُصۡبِحُواْ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلۡتُمۡ نَٰدِمِينَ ٦

وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ فِيكُمۡ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِۚ لَوۡ يُطِيعُكُمۡ فِي كَثِيرٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡأَمۡرِ لَعَنِتُّمۡ
وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡإِيمَٰنَ وَزَيَّنَهُۥ فِي قُلُوبِكُمۡ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيۡكُمُ
ٱلۡكُفۡرَ وَٱلۡفُسُوقَ وَٱلۡعِصۡيَانَۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلرَّٰشِدُونَ ٧

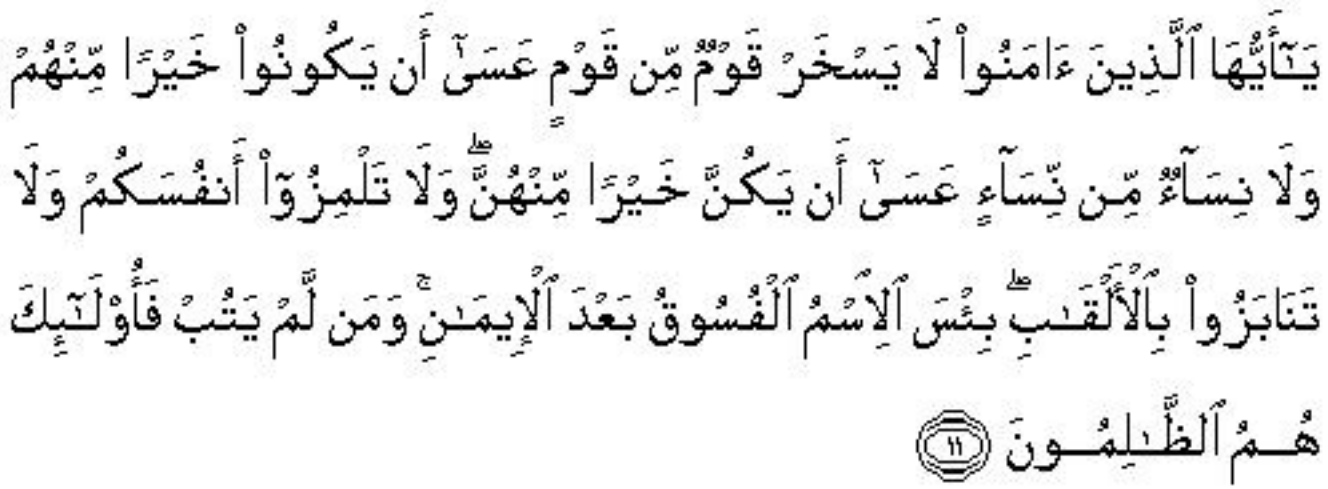
فَضۡلٗا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَنِعۡمَةٗۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ ٨

[6-8] O you who have believed, if a wicked person brings you some news, inquire into it carefully lest you should harm others unwittingly and then regret what you have done.[8] Knew it well that the Messenger of Allah is among you. If he were to obey you in most affairs, you would certainly be in trouble.[9] But Allah has endeared the Faith to you and made it seem fair in your hearts and made disbelief, wrongdoing and disobedience abhorrent to you. Such are those who are rightly guided through Allah's grace[10] and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[11]

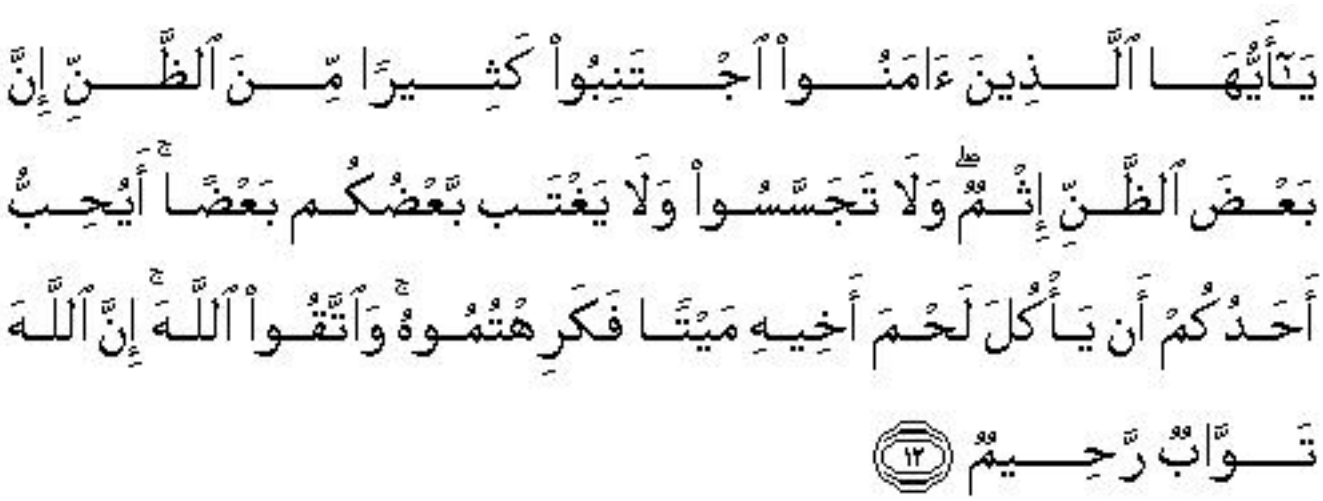
وَإِن طَآئِفَتَانِ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ٱقۡتَتَلُواْ فَأَصۡلِحُواْ بَيۡنَهُمَاۖ فَإِنۢ بَغَتۡ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا
عَلَى ٱلۡأُخۡرَىٰ فَقَٰتِلُواْ ٱلَّتِي تَبۡغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيٓءَ إِلَىٰٓ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ فَإِن فَآءَتۡ
فَأَصۡلِحُواْ بَيۡنَهُمَا بِٱلۡعَدۡلِ وَأَقۡسِطُوٓاْۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُقۡسِطِينَ ٩



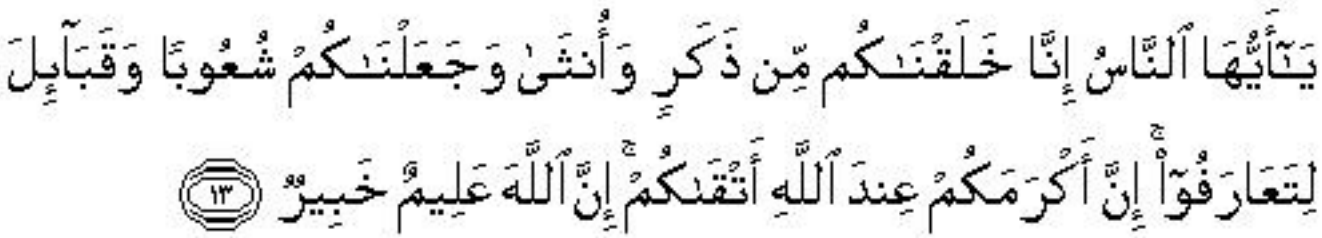
[9-10] And if two parties of the believers fall to mutual fighting,[12] make peace between them.[13] Then if either of them transgresses against rite other, fight the one that has transgressed[14] till it returns to Allah's Command.[15] Then if it returns, make peace between them with justice,[16] and be just because Allah loves those who do justice.[17] The believers are brothers of one another; so set the relations right between your brothers,[18] and fear Allah; it is expected that you will be shown mercy.



[11] O you[19] who have believed, neither should men mock other men, it may be that these are better than they; nor should women mock other women, it may be that these are better than they.[20] Do not taunt one another among yourselves,[21] nor call one another by nicknames.[22] It is an evil thing to be called by a bad name after faith.[23] Those who fail to avoid this are wrongdoers.



[12] O you who have believed, avoid much suspicion, for some suspicions are sins.[24] Do not spy,[25] nor should any one backbite the other.[26] Is there any among you who would like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?[27] Nay, you yourselves abhor it. Fear Allah, for Allah is Acceptor of repentance and All-Merciful.



[13] O mankind, We created you from one man and one woman, and then divided you into nations and tribes so that you may recognize one another. Indeed, the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious of you.[28] Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Wise.[29]



إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟
بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ
١٥

[14-15] The desert Arabs say, "We have believed."[30] Say to them, "You have not believed: rather say, “We have submitted.”[31] Faith has not yet entered your hearts. If you adopt obedience to Allah and His Messenger, He will not diminish anything from the reward of your works." Surely, Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful. in fact, the true believers are those who believed in Allah and His Messenger; then they entertained no doubt and exerted their utmost in the Way of Allah with their selves and their wealth. They indeed are the truthful ones.

قُلْ أَتُعَلِّمُونَ ٱللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ١٦

يَمُنُّونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا۟ ۖ قُل لَّا تَمُنُّوا۟ عَلَىَّ إِسْلَٰمَكُم ۖ بَلِ ٱللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ
أَنْ هَدَىٰكُمْ لِلْإِيمَٰنِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ١٧

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بَصِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ١٨

[16-18] O Prophet, say to those (who claim to have believed), "Are you apprising Allah of your Faith? whereas Allah knows all that there is in the heavens and the earth and has knowledge of everything." They deem it as a favor to you that they have accepted Islam. Say to them, "Do not deem your Islam as a favor to me, but rather Allah has done you a favor that He has guided you to the Faith, if you are really truthful (in your claim to have believed). Allah

has the knowledge of every hidden thing in the heavens and the earth, and He sees whatever you do."

1This is the foremost and basic demand of the Faith. If the person who regards Allah as his Lord and accepts Allah's Messenger as his guide and leader. is true in his belief, he can never have the attitude that he should give his own opinion and view precedence over the decision of Allah and His Messenger, or -should adopt an independent opinion in the matters, and pass his own judgments without caring to find out whether Allah and His Messenger have given any guidance in those matters or not, and if they have given it, what it is. That is why it has been said "O believers, do not go `in advance' of Allah and His Messenger. " That is, "Do not go ahead of them, but follow behind: Do not precede them, but be subordinate to them. " This Command is, in its application and effect, a step further to verse 36 of AI-Ahzab. There it was said: `It does not behoove a believing man and a believing woman that when Allah and His Messenger have given their decision in a matter, they should exercise an Option in that matter of theirs", and here it is said that the believers should not decide their matters themselves by their own initiative, but should look for guidance in Allah's Book and His Prophet's Sunnah concerning those matters.

This Command it not confined only to individual matters of the Muslims but it also applies to their collective affairs. This is in fact the fundamental article of the Islamic Law, which can neither be set aside or ignored by a Muslim government, nor by a Muslim court, nor by a parliament. A tradition has been reported in Musnad~Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, with authentic chains of transmitters, saying that when the Holy Prophet was sending Hadrat Mu'adh bin Jabal to the Yaman as a judge, he asked him: "By what will you decide the matters?" He submitted: "By the Book of Allah. " The Holy Prophet said: "If you do not find the Command concerning a matter in the Book of Allah, what will you turn to?" He replied "To the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger. " The Holy Prophet asked "If this also fails you?" He replied: "Then I shall exert and find out a solution by myself. " Thereupon the Holy Prophet placed his hand on Hadrat Mu'adh's chest and said: "Thank God Who has helped His Messenger's deputy to adopt the way that is approved by His Messenger. " This giving of precedence to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger over one's own exercise to find out a solution and to turn to them first to obtain guidance is the

Thing that marks the distinction between a Muslim judge and a non-Muslim judge. Likewise, in the matter of legislation also there is absolute consensus that the first and foremost source of the law is the Divine Book and after it the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah. Even the consensus of the entire Ummah cannot go against or remain independent of them, not to speak of the individual Muslims reasoning and endeavor to interpret the law.

2That is, "If ever you adopted an attitude of independence as against Allah and His Messenger, or gave priority to your own opinion and view over their Command, you should know that you have to deal with that God Who is hearing whatever you utter and is even aware of your secret intentions. "

3This is the etiquette that was taught to the people who sat among the audience of the Holy Prophet or came to visit him. Its intention was that the believers should treat 'the Holy Prophet with the highest respect and reverence when visiting him and talking to him. Nobody should raise his voice louder than his: the people should not be unmindful of the fact that they are addressing the Messenger of Allah, and not a common man, or a person of equal rank; therefore, there should be a marked difference between one's tone of conversation with the common people and one's tone of conversation with the Holy Prophet, and no one should talk to him in a voice louder than his.

Although this etiquette was taught for sitting in the Holy Prophet's assembly and its addressees were the people who were living in his time, the people of the later ages also should observe the same respect and reverence on the occasion when the Holy Prophet's name is mentioned, or a command of his is stated, or his sayings are explained. Besides, this verse also points out what attitude the people should adopt when talking to persons of a higher rank and status than themselves. A person's talking before the men of a higher rank in a way as he talks before his friends or the common men, is in fact a sign that he has no respect for them in his heart, and he does not recognize any difference between them and the common people.

4This shows what high position the person of the Holy Prophet occupies in Islam. No one beside the Holy Prophet, whatever his rank and status, has a position that unmannerly behavior towards him should deserve in the sight of Allah the same punishment which is, in fact, the punishment for disbelief. In respect of ordinary people it is at the most a sort of rudeness, an uncivilized conduct, but in respect of the Holy Prophet a little lack of reverence is such a grave sin as can destroy all the services of one's lifetime. For the reverence of the Holy Prophet is indeed reverence of that God Who has sent him as His Messenger and lack of reverence for him amounts to lack of reverence to God Himself.

5That is, "Only those people give due reverence to the Messenger of Allah, who have passed successfully through the tests and trials set by Allah and proved by their steadfastness that their hearts indeed possess taqwa (piety). " From this it follows automatically that the heart which is devoid of reverence for the Holy Prophet is, in fact, devoid of taqwa, and a person's raising his voice louder than the Holy Prophet's is not only an uncivilized act outwardly but also a sign of the absence of taqwa in his heart.

6The people who in the blessed time of the Holy Prophet had received training in Islamic etiquette and manners under the Holy Prophet himself had a full regard for his person. They fully realized how busy he remained in performing the mission entrusted to him by Allah; they also understood full well that during those tiresome activities he must necessarily have some time for rest, time for his important occupations and also time for attending to his domestic affairs. Therefore, they would come to visit him only at the time when he was available outside his house, and if ever they did not find him outside his living quarters among his Companions, they would sit and await his emergence and would avoid giving him the trouble of coming out of his house unless there was a special need for it. But many a time it so happened that the

people from far flung areas, who had had no opportunity to receive training in good manners, would come to visit the Holy Prophet with the idea that the one who invited others to Allah and was working for the reformation of the people had no right to have rest at any time, and they had the right to visit and see him any time they pleased in the day or night and it was his duty that whenever they happened to arrive he should be ready to receive them. Some of these people who came to see the Holy Prophet from different parts of Arabia were so uncouth and impolite that they would not take the trouble to inform him of their arrival through some attendant, but would start shouting from outside the apartments of his wives to call him out. Several such incidents have been reported by the Companions in the Hadith. This sort of behavior troubled him much, but he was tolerant on account of his natural clemency. At last, Allah had to intervene, Who reproved the people for their uncivilized behavior and gave this instruction: whenever they came to see the Holy Prophet and did not find him, they should wait for him patiently until he came out to them himself, instead of shouting to call him out, from the house.

7This is, "Whatever had happened until then will be over-looked and forgiven by Allah and He will not hold those people accountable for the trouble they had been causing to His Messenger on account of His mercy and kindness, but they should not repeat such behavior in the future.

8Most of the commentators have expressed the view that this verse was sent down concerning Walid bin 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait. Its background is this: When the tribe of the Bani al-Mustaliq embraced Islam, the Holy Prophet sent Walid bin `Uqbah to collect the zakat from them. When he arrived in their territory, he became scared due to some reason and without visiting the people of the tribe returned to Madinah and complained to the Holy Prophet that they had refused to pay the zakat and had even wanted to kill him. On hearing this the Holy Prophet became very angry and he made up his mind to dispatch a contingent to punish those people. According to some traditions he had dispatched the contingent, and according to others, he was about to dispatch it. In any case all agree that in the meantime the chief of the Bani al-Mustaliq, Harith bin Dirar (father of Juwairiyah, wife of the Holy Prophet), arrived at the head of a deputation, and submitted: "By God, we did not at all see Walid; therefore, there could be no question of refusing to pay the zakat and wanting to kill him. We arc steadfast to the Faith and have no intention to withhold the zakat. " At this, this verse was sent down. With a little variation in wording this incident has been related by Imam Ahmad, Abi Hatim, Tabarani, and Ibn Jarir, on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, Harith bin Dirar, Mujahid, Qatadah, 'Abdur Rehman bin Abi Laila, Yazid bin Ruman, Dahhak and Muqatil bin Hayyan. In the tradition reported by Hadrat Umm Salamah this whole story has been related likewise but there is no reference to the name of Walid.

On this critical occasion when on account of believing in a baseless report a grave blunder was about to be committed, Allah gave the Muslims this guiding principle to be followed on receipt of news: 'Whenever you receive important news bearing upon a vital matter, you should not accept it immediately but should first examine the man who has brought it. If he is an evil man whose report they not be authentic normally, you should inquire into it carefully to ascertain the truth instead of accepting it and acting on it immediately." From this Divine Command An important legal principle is deduced, the sphere of

application of which is very vast. According to it, it is not permissible for a Muslim government to take any action against a person or a group or a nation on the basis of the reports provided by the secret agents whose character might be doubtful. On the basis of this very principle the traditionists introduced the art of critical appraisal in the science of Hadith in order to determine the value and worth of the people through whom traditions of the Holy Prophet reached the later generations, and the jurists established this principle in the law of evidence that in a matter from which a Shari'ah value can be deduced, or a duty imposed on a person; the evidence of an evil man would be unacceptable. However, all scholars agree that as far as the common worldly matters are concerned it is not necessary to ascertain the truth of every news and the reliability of every informer. For the word used in the verse is naba'. which does not apply to every news but only to the news of consequence. That is why the jurists say that this principle does not apply in the case of ordinary matters. For example, if a person goes to visit somebody and seeks permission to enter the house, and a person comes out and conveys the permission, he can enter the house accordingly no matter whether the one conveying the permission from the master of the house was good or bad. Likewise, the scholars are also agreed that the evidence, as well as the report, of the people whose evil does not relate to lying and immorality, but they are regarded as unrighteous only on account of false beliefs, will also be acceptable. Only the falsehood of heir creed cannot be a hindrance to accepting their evidence or reports.

9This is evident from the context as well as understood by several commentators from this verse that the Holy Prophet was hesitant to take any military action against the Bani al-Mustaliq on the report given by Walid bin 'Uqbah in their case, but some of the people insisted that they should be attacked at once. At this those people were warned that they should not forget that the Holy Prophet was present among them, who understood them better than they did. Therefore, their thinking that the Holy prophet should act according to their counsel in important matters was undue boldness. For if he started acting according to what they counseled it would generally lead to blunders for which they themselves would have to suffer.

10It means this: The whole community of the believers has not committed the error that was committed by those few people who wanted the Holy Prophet to act as they counseled, and the believing community s remaining steadfast on the right path was due to the reason that Allah by His bounty and grace had endeared to them the path of the Faith and made unbelief, wrongdoing and disobedience abhorrent to them. The addressees in the two parts of this verse are two separate groups. The sentence beginning with lau yuti'ukum is not addressed to the entire class of the Companions but only to those particular Companions who were insisting that the Bani al-Mustaliq should be attacked at once, and the sentence beginning with wa lakin-nallaha . . , is addressed to the general class of the Companions who would never dare insist on their own opinion and view before the Holy Messenger of Allah, but had full faith in his leadership and remained steadfast on the path of obedience, which is, and should he, the demand of true Faith. From this it cannot be concluded that those who had insisted on their own opinion were devoid of the love of the Faith, but what becomes obvious from this is that they had become forgetful of this demand of the Faith because of which they made the error of insisting on their own opinion in the

presence of the Holy Prophet. Therefore, Allah first warned them of their error, then of its evil consequences, and finally stated that the right attitude for a believer was the one that had been adopted by the generality of the Companions.

11That is, "Allah does not bestow His bounty and favor blindly, but He grants this great blessing to whomever He grants on the basis of wisdom and His knowledge that he is worthy of it. "

12Instead of saying: "When two parties of the believers fight mutually", it has been said: ¦If two parties of the believers fall to mutual fighting." From these words it by itself follows that mutual fighting is not the character of the Muslims, nor should it be. It is not expected that being the believers they would fight mutually. However, if such a thing ever happens, the procedure that follows should be adopted. Moreover, the word ta 'ifah has been used for a group instead of firqah: the words ta'ifah and firqah in Arabic are used for a large group and a small group respectively. This also shows that it is indeed a highly offensive state in the sight of Allah in which large groups of the Muslims cannot be expected to be involved.

13The recipients of this Command are all those Muslims who may not be a party to either of the groups and for whom it may be possible to try to make peace between them. In other words, Allah does not approve that the other Muslims should just sit and watch the clash when two groups of their own community have fallen to mutual fighting. But whenever such a sad situation arises all the believers should become concerned and should do whatever they can to bring about peace and reconciliation between the parties. They should urge the parties to desist from fighting; they should exhort them to fear God; their influential people should go and talk to the responsible men of the two sides, should find out the causes of the dispute and do whatever they can to effect reconciliation between them.

14That is, "The Muslims also should not allow the aggressor to continue his aggression and leave the victim alone, or, still worse, join hands with the aggressor. But their duty is that if all their efforts at reconciliation between the parties fail, they should find out as to who is in the right and who is the aggressor. Then they should join hands with the one who is in the right and fight the aggressor. As this fighting has been enjoined by Allah, it is obligatory and comes under Jihad,' it is not the fitnah (mischief) about which the Holy Prophet has said: "It is a situation in which the one standing is bettor than the one moving, and the one sitting is better than the one standing" For that fitnah implies the mutual fighting of the Muslims in which the parties might be fighting out of bigotry, or for a false sense of honor and worldly possessions and neither may be having the truth on its side. As for the fight that is undertaken in support of the group who is in the right against the aggressor, it is not taking part in the fitnah but carrying out Allah's Command. All the jurists arc agreed on its bring an obligation, and there was no difference of opinion among the Holy Prophet's Companions about its being obligatory. (Al-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur'an). Some jurists even regard it as superior to Jihad itself and their reasoning is that Hadrat 'Ali spent the entire period of his caliphate in fighting against the rebels instead of performing Jihad against the disbelievers. (Ruh al-Ma ani). If a person argues that it was not obligatory because Hadrat `Abdullah bin

`Umar and some other Companions had not participated in the wars fought by Hadrat `Ali, he would be in the wrong. Ibn 'Umar himself says: "I have never been so much grieved at heart on anything as on account of this verse as to why I did not fight the rebels as enjoined by Allah. " (Hakim, al-Mustadrik).

The Command to "fight" the aggressor does not necessarily mean that he should be fought with the weapons and killed, but it implies the use of force against him, the real object being the removal of his aggression. For this object whatever force is necessary should be used, and no more and no less force should be used than what is absolutely necessary.

The addressees of this Command are the people who have the power to repel the aggression by the use of force.

15This shows that the fighting is not meant to punish the rebel (the aggressing pang) for his rebellion (aggression), but to force him to return to the Command of Allah. Allah's Command implies that the rebel group should submit to what is right according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, and should give up the attitude and conduct that amounts to aggression according to this criterion of the truth. As soon as a rebel group becomes ready and willing to follow this Command, use of force against it should be stopped, for this is the actual object of the fighting and its target. The one who commits an excess after this would himself become the aggressor. As for this as to what is the truth and what is the aggression in a dispute according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, its determination is inevitably the job of those people of the Ummah, who have the ability to carry out research by virtue of their knowledge and insight.

16The Command is not only to make peace but to make peace with justice and equity. This shows that in the sight of Allah the peace (and reconciliation) which is brought about only to stop fighting, overlooking the distinction between the truth and falsehood, and in which pressure is used against the party that is in the right to come to terms with the aggressor, is not commendable. True peace is that which is based on justice. This alone can avert disaster and mischief; otherwise the inevitable result of pressing those in the right and encouraging the aggressors would be that the real causes of the evil would remain as they were, rather would go on adding up, and cause the mischief to appear and re-appear over and over again.

17This verse forms the actual basis of the Islamic law about the mutual fighting between the Muslims. No explanation of this law is found in the Sof the Holy Prophet except one Hadith which we shall take up below. For in the time of the Holy Prophet no war took place between the Muslims; hence nothing is found in his practice and sayings that could throw light on the commandments concerning it Afterwards when during the caliphate of Hadrat 'Ali wars took place between the Muslims themselves authentic explanation of this law became possible At that time since a large number of the Companions were still living, a detailed code of this aspect of the Islamic law was compiled in the light of their practice and statements. Hadrat 'Ali's personal example in particular has been the real source in this matter for all the

jurists. Below we give a brief resume of this code:

(1) There are several forms of mutual fighting between Muslims and each has its own separate injunctions:

(a) When both the fighting groups may be the subjects of a Muslim government: In this case it is the duty of the government to make peace between them, or to decide as to who is the aggressor between them, and to compel him by use of force to revert to the truth.

(b) When the parties may be two powerful groups, or two Muslim governments, and both may be fighting for the sake of the world: In this case, the believers should absolutely refrain from taking part in the fitnah and should exhort the parties concerned to fear God and desist from fighting.

(c) When one of the belligerent parties as mentioned under (b) above may be in the right and the other the aggressor, who may not be listening to counsel nor be inclined to make peace: In this case believers should side with and support the party that is in the right against the aggressor.

(d) When one of the parties may be the subjects, who may have revolted against the government, i.e. the Muslim government: The jurists use the term "baghi"(rebel) for this very party which is guilty of rebelling.

(2) The rebels against the government may also be of several kinds:

Those who may have risen only to create chaos and confusion, and may have no legal ground for their revolt. There is consensus that against such people it is lawful for the government to wage war, and it is obligatory for the believers to side with it, no matter whether it is a just government or not.

(b) Those who may revolt against a government in order to depose it from power, and may have no legal ground for this, and may also appear to be unjust and evil. In this case, if the government is just, it is obligatory to side with it without any question, but even if it is unjust, it is obligatory to fight in order to sustain it, for there is peace and order in the country because of it.

(c) Those who may revolt against a government on the basis of a legal ground, but their ground may be false and their belief vicious and perverse, e.g. the Khwarij. In this case also a Muslim government. whether it is just or unjust, has a lawful right to fight them and it is obligatory to side with it.

(d) Those who may revolt against a just government when its head might have assumed power lawfully. In this case whether they have a legal ground or do not have any, the government in any case is justified to wage war against them and it is obligatory to side with it.

(e) Those who may revolt against an unjust government, which might have come to power by coercion and whose leaders might be wicked and the rebels might have risen to establish justice and enforce articles of the Divine Law, and they might appear to be righteous. In this case, acute difference of opinion has appeared among the jurists as to whether they should be declared the "rebels"(i.e. transgressors) and whether it is obligatory to fight them or not. This we state below briefly:

The generality of the jurists and the Ahl al-Hadith hold the view that it is unlawful to rise in revolt against a ruler whose government has once been established and there is complete peace and order in the land under him, no matter whether he is just or unjust, and he has come to power in any way whatever, except in case he commits disbelief openly. Imam Sarakhsi writes: "In a case when the Muslims are agreed on a ruler and they enjoy peace under him and the roads are safe, if a group of the Muslims rises in revolt against him, everyone who has power is under obligation to side with the ruler of the Muslims and wage war against the rebels." (Al-Mabsut, Bab al-Khwarij) Imam Nawawi writes in his commentary of Sahih Muslim:"It is forbidden to rise in revolt and fight against the Imams (i.e. the Muslim rulers) even if they are wicked and unjust." Imam Nawawi claims that there is consensus on this.

But this claim of the consensus is not correct. A large group of the jurists of Islam which includes some major scholars, declares those rising in revolt as "rebels only in case they rise in revolt against a just ruler. They do not regard as rebellion" in the Qur'anic terminology the rising in revolt of the righteous against the unjust and wicked rulers, nor declare the waging of war against them as obligatory. The view of Imam Abu Hanifah about fighting against unjust rulers is. well known among the scholars. Abu Bakr al Jassas clearly writes in his Ahkam al-Qur an that the Imam regarded this fighting not only as permissible but as obligatory in favorable conditions. (Vol. I, p. 81; Vol. II, p. 39). In Zaid bin 'Ali's revolt against the Umayyads he not only provided financial help but urged others also to do the same. (Al-Jassas, Vol I, p. 81). In Nafs al-Zakiyah's rcvolt against Mansur he went on earnestly supporting Nafs al-Zakiyah, and he declared this war as superior to a war against the disbelievers. (Al-jassas, Vol. I, p. 81; Al-Kardari, Manaqib Abi Hanifah, Vol. II, pp. 71-72). Then the view as stated by Imam Sarakhsi is the just ruler." Ibn 'Aqil and Ibn al-Jawzi from among the Hanbalis not unanimous even among the Hanafi jurists. Ibn Humam writes in Fath al-Qadir (commentary of Hedaya): "In the parlance of the jurists the rebel is he who gives up obedience of regard rising in revolt against an unjust ruler as lawful and present Hadrat Husain's revolt as an argument. (Al-Infaf, Vol. -X, Bab Qital Ahl al-Baghyi). Imam Shafe`i in his Kitab al-Um regards as rebel the one who fights against a just ruler (Vol. IV, p. 135). Imam Malik's view as cited in Al-Mudawwanah is: "If the rebels come out to fight against a just ruler, they should be forcibly opposed." (Vol. I, p. 407). Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-`Arabi has cited his this view in Ahkam al-Qur 'an: "When a person rises in revolt against a just ruler like 'Umar bin Abdul 'Aziz, it is obligatory to resist and repel him; as for some other kind of the ruler, he should be left alone. Allah will punish him through some other unjust person and then both of them through some third unjust person." Another saying of Imam Malik that has been cited is: "When the pledge has been sworn to a ruler, and then his brothers rise in revolt against him, they will be fought against, if he is a just ruler. As for the rulers of our tune, there is no pledge for them, for pledge to them has been taken by coercion. " Then the view of the Maliki scholars

that the Qadi has cited with reference to Sahnun is: 'Fighting will be undertaken only under the just ruler, whether the just ruler is the former one or the one who has risen in revolt against him later, but if neither is just, one should keep away from both. However, if one's own self is attacked, or the Muslims are being subjected to tyranny, one should put up resistance." After citing these different views, Qadi Abu Bakr says: "We will not fight except on the side of the just ruler, whom the truth-loving people have made their head of their own free will. "

(3) If the ones rising in revolt are small in number, and may have no large party on their back, nor be possessing any substantial war equipment, the law of rebellion will not be applied against them, but they will be proceeded against under the common penal law, i.e. if they kill, they will be subjected to the law of retaliation, and if they damage property, they will be required to pay the penalties. The law of sedition is applied only against those rebels who might be powerful, and rise in revolt in large numbers and with substantial military equipment.

(4) As long as the ones rising in revolt only express their false and perverse beliefs or hostile and seditious ideas against the government or its head, they cannot be killed or imprisoned. War will be waged against them only when they actually rise in armed revolt and start shedding blood. (Al-Mabsut, Bab al-Khwarij; Fath al-Qadir, Bab al-Bighat, al-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur an).

(5) Before starting war against the rebels they will first be invited, according to the Qur'anic instructions, to give up the way of rebellion and adopt the way of justice; if they have some doubts and objections, effort will be made to remove them; even then if they do not listen, and fighting begins from their side, force will be used to deal with them. (Fath al-Qadir,' al Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur 'an).

(6) The code of regulations that has to be observed in the war against the rebels is based on the Holy Prophet's following Command that has been related by Hakim, Bazzar and al-Jassas on the authority of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar:

"The Holy Prophet asked Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud: O Ibn Umm 'Abd: Do you know what is Allah's Command concerning the rebels of this Ummah? He replied: Allah and His Messenger have the best knowledge. The Holy Prophet said: Their wounded ones will not be laid hands on and their captives will not be killed, and the one who flees, will not be pursued, and their properties will not be distributed as spoils."

The second source of this code which has been held as trust-worthy by all the jurists is the word and deed of Hadrat 'Ali. After attaining victory in the Battle of the Camel, he announced; "Do not pursue him who flees; do not attack the wounded; do not kill the captives; give shelter to him who surrenders; do not make forcible entry into the people's houses; and do not raise your hands at the women even if they are abusing and cursing you." Some of his soldiers made the demand that the opponents and their. family members be taken prisoners and distributed. At this he became furious and said: 'Who among you will

take 'A'ishah, mother of the Faithful, as his share"

(7) The injunction concerning the properties of the rebels as derived from the good example of Hadrat 'Ali is that no part of it, whether it is found on the battlefield or behind them in their houses, and whether they are living or have been killed, will be declared as the spoils nor distributed among the army. However. no compensation will be necessary for the properties that have been damaged or destroyed. As soon as the war comes to an end and rebellion has been put down, their properties and belongings will be returned to them. Their weapons and conveyances, if seized during the war, will be used- against them, but will not be made the possession of the victors and distributed as the spoils; and if there is no more fear of a rebellion from them, their these things also will be returned to them. Only Imam Abu Yusuf has expressed the opinion that the government will declare them to be the spoils, (AI-Mabsut; Fath al-Qadir,' al-Jassas).

(8) Their prisoners of war, after they have pledged not to rise in rebellion again, will be set free . (Al-Mabsut).

(9) To cut off the heads of the slain rebels and to take theta about the streets is a highly undesirable thing, for this is mutilation which the Holy Prophet has strictly forbidden. When the head of a Roman patriarch was brought before Hadrat Abu Bakr, he expressed great displeasure at it, and said: "We are not here to imitate the Romans and Iranians." When it is not allowed to meet out such a treatment to the unbelievers, how much more so should it be with regard to the Muslims. (AI-Mabsut).

(10) Whatever damage might have been caused to life and property by the rebels during the war, no retaliation and recompense for it will be imposed on them after the war has come to an end and peace has been restored. Neither will there be any retaliation for a slain person nor any recompense for the lost property, so as to avoid any chance of the recurrence of the sedition. This same law was observed in the mutual fighting between the Companions. (Al-Mabsut: al.Jassas; Ibn al-'Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur 'an).

(11) After the government has recaptured the territories which had gone under the rebels and where they had established their rule and order and collected the zakat and other taxes, it will not demand the zakat and the taxes from the people once again. If the rebels have spent the money thus collected lawfully, the payers will be deemed to have paid them off lawfully in the sight of Allah as well. but if the rebels have spent the money unlawfully, it will be a matter between the payers and their God; if they so like they may pay their zakat dues once again. (Fat-h al-Qadir, al-Jassas; Ibn al-'Arabi).

(12) The decisions of the judges, who may be just and may have given the decisions according to the Shari'ah in the courts established by the rebels in the territories under them, will be up-held although the ones who appointed them might be guilty of sedition. However, if their decisions are against the Shari'ah. and they are brought before the courts of the government after the rebellion has been put down, they will not be enforced. Moreover, no warrant or summons issued by the courts established by the rebels will be acceptable in the courts of the government. (AI-Mabsut; al-Jassas).

(13) The evidence of the rebels will not be acceptable in the Islamic courts, for it is iniquitous to fight against the just. Imam Muhammad says: "As long as they do not fight and actually rise in revolt against the people of justice, their evidence will be acceptable, but when they have already fought, I will not accept their evidence" (AI-Jassas).

From these rulings it becomes plain as to what is the difference between the law of fighting against the disbelievers and of fighting against the Muslim rebels

18This verse establishes a universal brotherhood of all the Muslims of the world, and it is by virtue of this that the sort of fraternity that exists among the Muslims exists among the followers of no other religion and creed. The importance of this Command and its demands have been explained by the Holy Prophet in many of his Traditions from which one can understand its full significance and spirit.

Hadrat Jarir bin 'Abdullah says: The Holy Prophet took a pledge from Me on three things: That I will establish the Prayer; that I will continue to pay the zakat: and that I will remain a well-wisher of every Muslim. " (Bukhari: Kitab-al-Iman. According to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, the Holy Prophet said: "To abuse a Muslim is sinful and to fight him disbelief." In Musnad Ahmad a tradition bearing on the same subject has also been related by Hadrat Said bin Malik on the authority of his father.

Hadrat-Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The life, property and honor of every Muslim is forbidden to every other Muslim. " (Muslim: Kitab-al-Birr was Silah; Tirmidhi: Abwab-al-Birr was-Silah).

Hadrat Abu Said Khudri and Hadrat Abu Hurairah say that the Holy Prophet said: "A Muslim is a brother to the other Muslim: he does not treat him unjustly; he does not leave him alone; and he does not dishonor him. There is no greater evil than that one should hold a Muslim in contempt." (Musnad Ahmad).

Hadrat Sahl bin Sa'd as-Sa`idi has related this saying of the Holy Prophet: "A believer's relation with the community of the believers is just like the head's relation with the body. He feels their afflictions as the head feels the pain of every part of the body." (Musnad Ahmad). In another Hadith bearing on the same subject the Holy Prophet said: "The believers' example in the matter of their mutual love, relationship and compassion with one another is of the state of the body that when a part of it is afflicted the whole of it is afflicted with fever and restlessness." (Bukhari, Muslim).

In another Hadith he is reported to have said: The believers are with one another like the bricks of a wall so that each is strengthened by the other. " (Bukhari: Kitab al-Adab; Tirmidhi; : Abwab al-Birr was-Silah).

19In the preceding two verses after giving necessary instructions about the Muslim people's mutual fighting, the believers were made to realize that by virtue of the most sacred relationship of the faith they were brothers one to another, and they should fear God and try to keep their mutual relations right. Now,

in the following two verses, they are being enjoined to avoid and shun those major evils which generally spoil the mutual relationships of the people in a society. Slandering and taunting the people and harboring suspicions and spying on others are, in fact, the evils that cause mutual enmities and then lead to grave mischief. In this connection, from the commandments that are being given in the following verses and the explanations of these found in the Hadith a detailed law of libel can be compiled. The western law pertaining to libel in this regard is so defective that a person who sues another under this law may well cause some loss to his own honor. The Islamic law, on the contrary,, recognizes a basic honor for every person and gives nobody the right to attack it, no matter whether the attack is based on reality or not, and whether the person who has been attacked has a `reputation" of his own or not. Only the fact that a person has debased and humiliated the other person is enough to declare him a criminal unless, of course, it is proved. that the humiliation caused had a legal ground for it.

20Mocking does not only imply mocking with the tongue but it also includes mimicking somebody, making pointed references to him, laughing at his words, or his works, or his appearance, or his dress, or calling the people's attention to some defect or blemish in him so that others also may laugh at him. All this is included in mocking. What is actually forbidden is that one should make fun of and ridicule another, for under such ridiculing there always lie feelings of one's own superiority and the other's abasement and contempt, which are morally unworthy of a gentleman. Moreover, it hurts the other person, which causes mischief to spread in society. That is why it has been forbidden,

To make mention of the men and the women separately does not mean that it is lawful for the men to mock the women or the women to mock the men. The actual reason for making a separate mention of the two sexes is that Islam does not at all believe in mixed society. Ridiculing each other generally takes place in mixed gatherings and Islam does not permit that non-mahram males and females should meet in such gatherings and make fun of each other. Therefore, in a Muslim society it is inconceivable that the men would mock a woman, or the women would mock a man in an assembly.

21The word lamz as used in the original is very comprehensive and applies to ridiculing, reviling, deriding, jeering, charging somebody or finding fault with him, and making him the target of reproach and blame by open or tacit references. As all such things also spoil mutual relationships and create bad blood in society, they have been forbidden. Instead of saying, “Do not taunt one another", it has been said "Do not taunt yourselves", which by itself shows that the one who uses taunting words for others, in fact, taunts his own self. Obviously, a person does not use invectives against others unless he himself is filled with evil feelings and is almost in a state of bursting like a volcano. Thus, tire one who nourishes such feelings has made his own self a nest of evils before he makes others a target, Then, when he taunts others, it means that he is inviting others to taunt him. It is a different matter that the other person may evade his attacks because of a gentle nature, but he himself has opened the door to mischief so that the other may treat him likewise.

22This Command requires that a person should not be called by a name or a title which may cause him

humiliation, e.g. calling somebody a sinner or a hypocrite, or calling someone a lame or blind one, or one-eyed, or giving him a nickname containing a reference to some defect or blemish in him, or in his parents, or in his family, or calling a person a Jew or a Christian even after his conversion to Islam, or giving such a nickname to a person, or a family, or a community, or a group, which may bring condemnation or disgrace on it. Only those nicknames have been made an exception from this Command, which though apparently offensive, are not intended to condemn the persons concerned, but they rather serve as a mark of recognition for them. That is why the traditionists have allowed as permissible names like Suleman al-A`mash (the weak-eyed Suleman) and Wasil' al-Ahdab (the hunch-backed Wasil) among the reporters of the Hadith. If there are several men of the same name and a particular man among them may be recognized only by a particular title or nickname of his, the title or nickname can be used, even though the title by itself may be offensive. For instance, if there are several men called `Abdullah, and one of them is blind, he may be called Abdullah the blind, for his recognition. Likewise, those titles also are excluded from this Command, which though apparently offensive, are in fact, given out of love and the people who are called by those titles themselves approve them, like Abu Hurairah (father of the kitten) and Abu Turab (father of the dust).

23That is, "It is very shameful for a believer that in spite of being a believer he should earn a name for using abusive language and for immodest behavior. If a disbeliever earns reputation for himself for mocking the people, or taunting them, or for proposing evil and offensive titles for others, it may not be a good reputation from the point of view of humanity, but it at least goes well with his disbelief. But if a person after affirming the Faith in Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter earns reputation on account of these base qualities, it is simply regrettable.

24What is forbidden is not conjecture as such but excessive conjecture and following every kind of conjecture, and the reason given is that some conjectures are sins. In order to understand this Command we should analyze and see what are the kinds of conjecture and what is the moral position of each.

One kind of conjecture is that which is morally approved and laudable, and desirable and praiseworthy from religious point of view, e.g. a good conjecture in respect of Allah and His Messenger and the believers and those people with whom one comes in common contact daily and concerning whom there may be no rational ground for having an evil conjecture.

The second kind of conjecture is that which one cannot do without in practical life, e.g. in a law court a judge has to consider the evidence placed before him and give his decision on the basis of the most probable conjecture, for he cannot have direct knowledge of the facts of the matter, and the opinion that is based on evidence is mostly based on the most probable conjecture and not on certainty. Likewise, in most cases when one or the other decision has to be taken, and the knowledge of the reality cannot possibly be attained, there is no way oat for men but to form an opinion on the basis of a conjecture.

The third kind of conjecture, which is although a suspicion, is permissible in nature, and it cannot be

regarded as a sin. For instance, if there are clear signs and pointers in the character of a person (or persons), or in his dealings and conduct, on the basis of which he may not deserve to enjoy one's good conjecture, and there are rational grounds for having suspicions against him, the Shari `ah does not demand that one should behave like a simpleton and continue to have a good conjecture about him. The last limit of this lawful conjecture, however, is that one should conduct oneself cautiously in order to ward off any possible mischief from him; it is not right to take an action against him only on the basis of a conjecture.

The fourth kind of conjecture which is, in fact, a sin is that one should entertain a suspicion in respect of a person without any ground, or should start with suspicion in forming an opinion about others, or should entertain a suspicion about the people whose apparent conditions show that they are good and noble. Likewise, this also is a sin that when there is an equal chance of the evil and goodness in the word or deed of a person, one should regard it as only evil out of suspicion. For instance, if a gentleman while leaving a place of assembly picks up another one's shoes, instead of his own, and we form the opinion that he has done so with the intention of stealing the shoes, whereas this could be possible because of oversight as well, there is no reason for adopting the evil opinion instead of the good opinion except the suspicion.

This analysis makes it plain that conjecture by itself is not anything forbidden; rather in some cases and situations it is commendable, in some situations inevitable, in some permissible up to a certain extent and un-permissible beyond it, and in some cases absolutely unlawful. That is why it has not been enjoined that one should refrain from conjecture or suspicion altogether but what is enjoined is that one should refrain from much suspicion. Then, to make the intention of the Command explicit, it has been said that some conjectures are sinful. From this warning it follows automatically that whenever a person is forming an opinion on the basis of conjecture, or is about to take an action, he should examine the case and see whether the conjecture he is entertaining is not a sin, whether the conjecture is really necessary, whether there arc sound reasons for the conjecture, and whether the conduct one is adopting on the basis of the conjecture is permissible. Everyone who fears God will certainly take these precautions. To make one's conjecture free and independent of every such care and consideration is the pastime of only those people who are fearless of God and thoughtless of the accountability -of the Hereafter.

25"Do not spy': Do not grope after the secrets of the people: do not search for their defects and weaknesses: do not pry into their conditions and affairs. Whether this is done because of suspicion, or for causing harm to somebody with an evil intention, or for satisfying one's own curiosity, it is forbidden by the Shari 'ah in every case. It does not behoove a believer that he should spy on the hidden affairs of other people, and should try to peep at them from behind curtains to find out their defects and their weaknesses. This also includes reading other people's private letters, listening secretly to private conversation, peeping into the neighbor's house, and trying to get information in different ways about the domestic life or private affairs of others. This is grave immorality which causes serious mischief in society. That is why the Holy Prophet once said in an address about those who pry into other people's

affairs:

"O people, who have professed belief verbally, but faith has not yet entered your hearts: Do not pry into the affairs of the Muslims, for he who will pry into the affairs of the Muslims, Allah will pry into his affairs, and he whom Allah follows inquisitively, is disgraced by Him in his own house. " (Abu Da'ud).

Hadrat Mu'awiyah says that he himself heard the Holy Prophet say; `If you start prying into the secret affairs of the people, you will corrupt them, or at least drive them very near corruption. " (Abu Da'ud).

In another Hadith he said: "When you happen to form an evil opinion about somebody, do not pry about it. " (AI-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur'an).

According to still another Hadith, the Holy Prophet said: "The one who saw a secret affair of somebody and then concealed it is as though he saved a girl who had been buried alive." (AI-Jassas).

This prohibition of spying is not only applicable to the individuals but also to the Islamic government. The duty of forbidding the people to do evil that the Shari`ah has entrusted to the government does not require that it should establish a system of spying to inquire too curiously into the people's secret evils and then punish them, but it should use force only against those evils which are manifested openly. As for the hidden evils spying is not the way to reform them but it is education, preaching and counseling, collective training of the people and trying to create a pure social environment. In this connection, an incident concerning Hadrat `Umar is very instructive. Once at night he heard the voice of a person who was singing in his house. He became curious and climbed the wall. There he saw wine as well as a woman present. He shouted at the man, saying: "O enemy of God, do you think you will disobey Allah, and Allah will not expose your secret?" The man replied: “Do not make haste, O Commander of the Faithful: if I have committed one sin, you have committed three sins: Allah has forbidden spying, and you have spied; Allah has commanded that one should enter the houses by the doors, and you have entered it by climbing over the wall; Allah has commanded that one should avoid entering the other people's houses without permission, and you have entered my house without my permission. " Hearing this reply Hadrat `Umar confessed his error, and did not take any action against the man, but made him to promise that he would follow the right way in future. (Abi Bakr Muhammad bin Ja`far al-Khara'iti, Makarim al-Akhlaq). This shows that it is not only forbidden for the individuals but also for the Islamic government itself to pry into the secrets of the people and discover their sins and errors and then seize them for punishment. The same thing has been said in a Hadith in which the Holy Prophet has said: `When the ruler starts searching for the causes of suspicions among the people he corrupts them" (Abu Da'ud).

The only exception from this Command are the special cases and situations in which spying is actually needed. For instance, if in the conduct of a person (or persons) some signs of corruption are visible and there is the apprehension that he is about to commit a crime, the government can inquire into his affairs; or, for instance, if somebody sends a proposal of marriage in the house of a person, or wants to enter

into business with him, the other person can, inquire and investigate into his affairs for his own satisfaction.

26Ghibat (back-biting) has been defined thus: "It is saying on the back of a person something which would hurt him if he came to know of it. " This definition has been reported from the Holy Prophet himself. According to a tradition which Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i and others have related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet defined ghibat as follows:

"It is talking of your brother in a way irksome to him." It was asked: "What, if the defect being talked of is present in my brother ?" The Holy Prophet replied: "If it is present in him, it would be ghibat; if it is not there, it would be slandering him. "

In another tradition which Imam Malik has related in Mu'watta, on the authority of Hadrat Muttalib bin `Abdullah, "A person asked the Holy Prophet: What is ghibat? The Holy Prophet replied: It is talking of your brother in a way irksome to him. He asked: Even if it is true, O Messenger of Allah? He replied: If what you said was false, it would then be a calumny."

These traditions make it plain that uttering a false accusation against a person in his absence is calumny and describing a real defect in him ghibat; whether this is done in express words or by reference and allusion, in every case it is forbidden. Likewise, whether this is done in the lifetime of a person, or after his death, it is forbidden in both cases. According to Abu Da'ud, when Ma`iz bin Malik Aslami had been stoned to death for committing adultery, the Holy Prophet on his way back heard a man saying to his companion: "Look at this man: Allah had concealed his secret, but he did not leave himself alone till he was killed like a dog!" A little further on the way there was the dead body of an ass lying rotting. The Holy Prophet stopped, called the two men and said: "Come down and cat this dead ass." They submitted: "Who will eat it, O Messenger of Allah?" The Holy Prophet said: "A little before this you were attacking the honor of your brother: that was much worse than eating this dead ass."

The only exceptions to this prohibition are the cases in which there may be a genuine need of speaking in of a person on his back, or after his death, and This may not be fulfilled without resort to backbiting, and if it was not resorted to, a greater evil might result than backbiting itself. The Holy Prophet has described this exception as a principle, thus: "The worst excess is to attack the honour of a Muslim unjustly." (Abu Da'ud).

In this saying the condition of `unjustly" points out that doing so "with justice" is permissible. Then, in the practice of the Holy Prophet himself we find some precedents which show what is implied by "justice" and in what conditions and cases backbiting may be lawful to the extent as necessary.

Once a desert Arab came and offered his Prayer under the leadership of the Holy Prophet, and as soon as the Prayer was concluded, walked away saying: "O God, have mercy on me and on Muhammad, and

make no one else a partner in this mercy beside the two of us." The Holy Prophet said to the Companions: `What do you say: who is more ignorant: this person or his camel? Didn't you hear what he said?" (Abu Da`ud). The Holy Prophet had to say this in his absence, for he had left soon after the Prayer was over. Since he had uttered a wrong thing in the presence of the Holy Prophet, his remaining quiet at it could cause the misunderstanding that saying such a thing might in some degree be lawful; therefore, it was necessary that he should contradict it.

Two of the Companions, Hadrat Mu`awiyah and Hadrat Abu Jahm, sent the proposal of marriage to a lady, Fatimah bint Qais. She came to the Holy Prophet and asked for his advice. He said: "Mu`awiyah is a poor man and Abu Jahm beats his wives much." (Bukhari, Muslim). In this case, as there was the question of the lady's future and she had consulted the Holy Prophet for his advice, he deemed it necessary to inform her of the two men's weaknesses.

One day when the Holy Prophet was present in the apartment of Hadrat 'A'ishah, a man came and sought permission to see him. The Holy Prophet remarked that he was a very bad man of his tribe. Then he went out and talked to him politely. When he came back into the house, Hadrat `A'ishah asked: "You have talked to him politely, whereas when you went out you said something different about him. " The Holy Prophet said, "On the day of Resurrection the worst abode in the sight of Allah will be of the person whom the people start avoiding because of his abusive language." (Bukhari, Muslim). A study of this incident will show that the Holy Prophet in spite of having a bad opinion about the person talked to him politely because that was the demand of his morals; but he had the apprehension lest the people of his house should consider the person to be his friend when they would see him treating him kindly, and then the person might use this impression to his own advantage later. Therefore, the Holy Prophet warned Hadrat `A'ishah telling her that he was a had man of his tribe. Once Hind bint 'Utbah, wife of Hadrat Abu Sufyan, came to the Holy Prophet and said: "Abu Sufyan is a miserly person: he does not provide enough for me and my children's needs. " (Bukhari, Muslim). Although this complaint from the wife in the absence of the husband was backbiting, the Holy Prophet permitted it, for the oppressed one' has a right that he or she may take the complaint of injustice to a person who has the power to get it removed.

From these precedents of the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet, the jurists and traditionists have deduced this principle: 'Ghibat (backbiting) is permissible only in case it is needed for a real and genuine (genuine from the Shari'ah point of view) necessity and the necessity may not be satisfied without having resort to it". Then on the basis of the same principle the scholars have declared that ghibat is permissible in the following cases:

(1) Complaining by an oppressed person against the oppressor before every such person who he thinks can do something to save him from the injustice.

(2) To make mention of the evils of a person (or persons) with the intention of reform before those who can do expected to help remove the evils.

(3) To state the facts of a case before a legal expert for the purpose of seeking a religious or legal ruling regarding an unlawful act committed by a person.

(4) To warn the people of the mischiefs of a person (or persons) so that they may ward off the evil, e g. it is not only permissible but obligatory to mention the weaknesses of the reporters, witnesses and writers, for without it, it is not possible to safeguard the Shari ah against the propagation of false reports, the courts against injustices and the common people or the students against errors and misunderstandings. Or, for instance, if a person wants to have the relationship of marriage with somebody, or wishes to rent a house in the neighborhood of somebody, of wants to give something into the custody of somebody, and consults another person, it is obligatory for him to apprise him of all aspects so that he is not deceived because of ignorance.

(5) To raise ' voice against and criticize the evils of the people who may be spreading sin and immorality and error, or corrupting the people's faith and persecuting them.

(6) To use nicknames for the people who may have become well known by those names, but this should be done for the purpose of their recognition and not with a view to condemn them. (For details, see Fat-h al-Bani, vol. X, p. 362; Sharh Muslim by An-Nawawi; Riyad us-Salihin; al-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur an; Ruh al-Ma ani commentary on verse wa a yaghtab ba 'dukum ba 'dan).

Apart from these exceptions it is absolutely forbidden to speak ill of a person behind his back. If what is spoken is true, it is ghibat; if it is false, it is calumny; and if it is meant to make two persons quarrel, it is slander. The Shari 'ah has declared all these as forbidden. In the Islamic society it is incumbent on every Muslim to refute a false charge made against a person in his presence and not to listen to it quietly, and to tell those who are speaking ill of somebody, without a genuine religious need, to fear God and desist from the sin. The Holy Prophet has said: If a person does not support and help a Muslim when he is being disgraced and his honor being attacked, Allah also does not support and help him when he stands in need of His help; and if a person helps and supports a Muslim when his honor is being attacked and he is being disgraced, Allah Almighty also helps him when he wants that Allah should help him. (Abu Da'ud).

As for the backbiter, as soon as he realizes that he is committing this sin, or has committed it, his first duty is to offer repentance before Allah and restrain himself from this forbidden act. His second duty is that he should compensate for it as far as possible. If he has backbitten a dead person, he should ask Allah's forgiveness for the person as often as he can. If he has backbitten a living person, and what he said was also false, he should refute it before the people before whom he had made the calumny. And if what he said was true, he should never speak ill of him in future, and should ask pardon of the person whom he had backbitten. A section of the scholars has expressed the opinion that pardon should be asked only in case the other person has come to know of it; otherwise one should only offer repentance, for if the person concerned is unaware and the backbiter in order to ask pardon goes and tells him that he

had backbitten him, he would certainly feel hurt.

27In this sentence Allah by likening backbiting to eating the dead brother's flesh has given the idea of its being an abomination. Eating the dead flesh is by itself abhorrent; and when the flesh is not of an animal, but of a man, and that too of one's own dead brother, abomination would be added to abomination. Then, by presenting the simile in the interrogative tone it has been made all the more impressive, so that every person may ask his own conscience and decide whether he would like to eat the flesh of his dead brother. If he would not, and he abhors it by nature, how he would like that he should attack the honor of his brother-in-faith in his absence, when he cannot defend himself and when he is wholly unaware that he is being disgraced. This shows that the basic reason of forbidding backbiting is not that the person being backbitten is being hurt but speaking ill of a person in his absence is by itself unlawful and forbidden whether he is aware of it, or not, and whether he feels hurt by it or not. Obviously, eating the flesh of a dead man is not forbidden because it hurts the dead man; the dead person is wholly unaware that somebody is eating of his body, but because this act by itself is an abomination. Likewise, if the person who is ` backbitten also does not come to know of it through any means, he will retrain unaware throughout his life that somebody had attacked his honor at a particular time before some particular people and on that account he had stood disgraced in the eyes of those people. Because of this unawareness he will not feel at all hurt by this backbiting, but his honor would in any case be sullied. Therefore, this act in its nature is not any different from eating the flesh of a dead brother.

28In the preceding verses the Muslims were addressed and given necessary instructions to safeguard the Muslim community against social"evils. In this verse the whole of mankind bas been addressed to reform it of the great evil that has always been causing universal disruption in the world, that is, the prejudices due to race, color, language, country, and nationality. On account of these prejudices man in every age has generally been discarding humanity and drawing around himself some small circles and regarding those born within those circles as his own people and those outside them as others. These circles have been drawn on the basis of accidental birth and not on rational and moral grounds. In some cases their basis is the accident of being born in a particular family, tribe, or race, and in some particular geographical region, or in a nation having a particular color or speaking a particular language. Then the discrimination between one's own people and others is not only confide to this that those who are looked upon as one's own people are shown greater love and cooperation than others, but this discrimination has assumed the worst forms of hatred, enmity, contempt and tyranny. New philosophies have been propounded for it, new religions invented, new codes of law made and new moral principles framed; so much so that nations and empires have made this distinction a permanent way of life with them and practiced it for centuries. The Jews on this very basis regarded the children of Israel as the chosen people of God and even in the practice of their religious rites looked upon the non-Jews as inferior to the Jews in rights and rank. This very discrimination gave birth to class distinctions (varnashrama) among the Hindus according to which superiority of the Brahmins was established, all other human beings came to be regarded as inferior and unclean and the shudras cast into the depths of disgrace and degradation. Every person can see for himself even in this 20th century what atrocities have been committed against

the colored people in Africa and America on account of the distinction between the white and the black. The treatment that the Europeans meted out to the Red Indian race in America and to the weak nations of Asia and Africa had the same concept underlying it. They thought that the lift and property and honor of all those who had been born outside the frontiers of their own land and nation were lawful for them and they had the right to plunder and take them as their slaves and exterminate them if need be. The worst examples of how the nationalism of the western nations has turned one nation against the others and made it their bloodthirsty enemy have been seen in the wars of the recent past and are being seen even in the present time. In particular, if what was manifested by the racism of the Nazi Germany and the concept of the superiority of the Nordic race m the last World War is kept in view. One can easily judge how stupendous and devastating is the error for whose reform this verse of the Qur'an was revealed.

In this brief verse, Allah has drawn the attention of all mankind to three cardinal truths:

(1) "The origin of all of you is one and the same: your whole species has sprung up from one man and one woman: all your races that arc found in the world today are, in fact, the branches of one initial race that started with one mother and one father. In this process of creation there is no basis whatever for the divisions and distinctions in which you have involved yourselves because_ of your false notions. One God alone is your Creator. Different men have not been created by different Gods. You have been made from one and the same substance; it is not so that some men have been made from some pure and superior substance and some other men from some impure and inferior substance. You have been created in one and the same way; it is not also so that different men have been created in different ways. And you are the offspring of the same parents; it is not so that in the beginning there were many human couples which gave birth to different populations in the different regions of the world.'

(2) "In spite of being one in origin it was natural that you should be divided into nations and tribes. Obviously,. all the men on the earth could not belong to one and the same family. With the spread of the race it was inevitable that countless families should arise, and then tribes and nations should emerge from the families. Similarly, it was inevitable that after settling in different regions of the earth, there should be differences of colors, features, languages and ways of living among the people, and it was also natural that those living in the same region should be closer in affinity and those living in remote regions not so close; but this natural difference never demanded that distinctions of inequality, of high and low, of noble and mean, should be established on its basis, that one race should claim superiority over the other, the people of one color should look down upon the people of other colors, and that one nation should take preference over the ocher without any reason. The Creator had divided the human communities into nations and tribes for that was a natural way of cooperation and distinction between them. In this way alone could a fatuity, a brotherhood, a tribe and a nation combine to give birth to a common way of life and to cooperate with each other in the affairs of the world. But it was all due to satanic ignorance that the differences among mankind created by Allah to be a means of recognition, were trade a means of mutual boasting and hatred, which led mankind to every kind of injustice and tyranny.

(3) The only basis of superiority and excellence that there is, or can be, between man and man is that of moral excellence. As regards birth, all men arc equal, for their Creator is One, their substance of creation is one, and their way of creation is one, and they are descended from the same parents. Moreover, a person's being born in a particular country, nation, or clan is just accidental. Therefore, there is no rational ground on account of which one person may be regarded as superior to the other. The real thing that makes one person superior to others is that one should be more God-conscious, a greater avoider of evils, and a follower of the way of piety and righteousness. Such a man. whether he belongs to any race, any nation and any country, is valuable and worthy on account of his personal merit. And the one who is reverse of him in character is in any case an inferior person whether he is black or white, born in the east or the west.

These same truths that have been stated in this beef verse of the Qur'an, have been explained in greater detail by the Holy Prophet in his addresses and traditions. In the speech that he made on the conquest of Makkah, after going round the Ka'bah, he said:

'Thank God Who has removed from you the blemish of ignorance and its arrogance. O people, men are divided into classes: the pious and righteous, who arc honorable in the sight of Allah, and the sinful and vicious, who arc contemptible in the sight of Allah, whereas all men are the children of Adam and Adam had been created by Allah from clay." (Baihaqi, Tirmidhi).

On the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, in the midst of the Tashriq days, he addressed the people, and said:

'O people, be aware: your God is One. No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab, and no non-Arab any superiority over an Arab, and no white one has any superiority over a black one, and no black one any superiority over a white one, except on the basis of taqwa (piety). The most honorable among you in the sight, of Allah is he who is the most pious and righteous of you. Say if I have conveyed the Message to you?" And the great congregation of the people responded, saying: Yes, you have, O Messenger of Allah." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "Then let the one who is present convey it to those who are absent," (Baihaqi)

In a Hadith he has said: "You are all the children of Adam, and Adam was created from the dust. Let the people give up boasting of their ancestors, otherwise they will stand more degraded than a mean insect in the sight of Allah." (Bazzar)

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet said: "Allah will not inquire about your lineage on the Day of Resurrection. The most honorable in the sight of Allah is he who is most pious. "(Ibn Jarir)

In still another Hadith he said: "Allah dces not see your outward appearances and your possessions ,but He sees your hearts and your deeds." (Muslim, lbn Majah).

These teachings have not remained confined to words only but Islam has practically established a universal brotherhood of the believers on the basis, which does not allow any distinction on account of color, race, language, country and nationality which is free from every concept of high and low, clean and unclean, mean and respectable, which admits all human beings with equal rights, whether they belong to any race and nation, any land or region. Even the opponents of Islam have had to admit that no precedent is found in any religion and any system of the success with which the principle of human equality and unity has been given practical shape in the Muslim society, nor has it ever been found. Islam is the only religion which has welded and combined innumerable races and communities scattered in all corners of the earth into one universal Ummah.

In this connection, a misunderstanding also needs to be removed. In the case of marriage, the importance that Islamic law gives to kufv (likeness of status) has been taken by some people in the sense that some brotherhoods are noble and some mean, and matrimonial relations between them are objectionable. But this, in fact, is a wrong idea. According to the Islamic law, every Muslim man can marry every Muslim woman, but the success of the matrimonial life depends on maximum harmony and conformity between the spouses as regards habits, characteristics and ways of life, family traditions and economic and social status, so that they may get on well with each other. This is the real object of being equal and alike. Where there is unusual difference and disparity between the man and the woman in this regard, lifelong companionship will be difficult. That is why the Islamic law disapproves of such intermarriages, and not for the reason that one of the spouses is noble and the other mean, but for the reason that in case there is a clear and apparent difference and distention in status, there would be a greater possibility of the failure of the matrimonial life if the marriage relationship was established.

29That is, "This is only known to Allah as to who is really a man of high rank and who is inferior in respect of qualities and characteristics. The standards of high and low that the people have set up of their own accord, are not acceptable to and approved by Allah. Maybe that the one who has been regarded as a man of high rank in the world is declared as the lowest of the low in the final judgment of Allah, and maybe that the one who has been looked upon as a very low person here, attains to a very high rank there. The real importance is not of the honor and dishonor of the world but of the honor and dishonor that one will receive from Allah. Therefore, what man should. be most concerned about is that he should create in himself those real qualities and characteristics which make him worthy of honor in the sight of Allah."

30This does not imply all the desert Arabs but only a few particular groups of the Bedouins who had become Muslims, seeing the increasing power of Islam, thinking that they would not only remain safe from any attack by the Muslims but would also gain materially from the Islamic conquests. These people had not embraced Islam sincerely but had professed faith only verbally in order to be counted among the Muslims, and their this inner state became exposed whenever they would come before the Holy Prophet with different sorts of demands and would enumerate and mention their rights as if they had done him a

great favor by accepting Islam. Traditions mention several of such tribal groups, e.g. Muzainah, Juhainah, Aslam, Ashja', Ghifar, etc. About the Bani Asad bin Khuzaimah in particular, Ibn 'Abbas and Said bin Jubair have stated that once during a drought they came to Madinah and making a demand for financial help they said to the Holy Prophet again and again: "We became Muslims without any conflict: we did not fight against you as have such and such other tribes fought." By this they clearly meant to point out that their refraining from fighting against the Messenger of Allah and their accepting Islam was a favour for which they must be rewarded by the Messenger and the Muslims. It was this same attitude and conduct of the Bedouin group living around Madinah, which has been commented upon in these verses. One can understand this appraisal better if one reads it together with vv. 90-110 of At-Taubah and vv. 11-17 of Al-Fat-h.

31Another translation of the words qulu aslamna can be; "Say: we have become Muslims. " From these words some people have concluded that in the language of the Qur'an, "Mu 'min" and "Muslim" are two opposite terms. A "Mu'min" is he who has believed sincerely and a "Muslim" he who might have accepted Islam only verbally without true faith. But, in fact, this is an absolutely wrong idea. No doubt the word iman here has been used for sincere affirmation by the heart and the word Islam for only outward and external submission but to understand them as two independent and mutually contradictory terms of the Qur'an is not correct. A study of the Qur'anic verses in which the words Islam and Muslim have been used, shows that in the Qur'anic terminology "Islam " is the name of the the Faith, which Allah has sent down for mankind; it comprehends the faith and obedience both, and a ¦MuslIm " is he who believes with a sincere heart and obeys the Commands practically. This is borne out by the following verses:

"Indeed, Islam is the only right way of life in the sight of Allah." (Al 'Imran: 19)

"And whoever adopts any other than this way of submission (Islam), that way shall not be accepted from him," (Al-'Imran: 85)

And I have approved Islam as the way of life for you." (Al-Ma'idah: 3)

`Whomever Allah wills to guide aright, He makes his breast wide open to Islam." (Al-An'am: 125)

Obviously, in these verses Islam " does not imply obedience without the Faith. Here are some other verses:

'Say (O Prophet): I have been enjoined to be the first one to affirm (faith in) Islam. "(AI-An'am: 14) '

"If they have surrendered (to Islam), they are rightly guided." (AI-'Imran: 20)

All the Prophets, who were Muslims, judged the cases according to the Torah." (AI-Ma'idah: 44)

Here, and at scores of other places, acceptance of Islam cannot mean adopting obedience without the the faith. Likewise, here are a few verses in which the word "Muslim" has occurred signifying the meaning in which it has been used repeatedly in the Qur'an:

"O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should truly be feared and see that you do not die save as true Muslim. " (Al-`Imran: 102)

`Allah had called you "Muslims" before this and has called you (by the same name) in this Qur'an, too." (Al-Hajj: 78)

"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Muslim, sound in the faith." (Al-i-'Imran: 67)

`And remember that when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the walls of this House, they prayed: ... Lord, make us Thy Muslims and also raise from our offspring a community which should be Muslim. " (Al-Baqarah: 128)

(The Prophet Jacob's will for his children:) "O my children, Allah has chosen the same way of life for you Hence remain Muslims up to your last breath. (Al-Baqarah: 132)

After a study of these verses who can say that in these the word "Muslim" implies a person who does not believe sincerely but has accepted Islam only outwardly? Therefore, to make the claim that in the Qur'anic terminology "Islam" implies obedience without the faith and the "Muslim" in the language of the Qur'an is he who accepts Islam only outwardly is absolutely wrong. Likewise, this claim also is wrong that the words iman and mu'min have been used in the Qur'an necessarily in the sense of believing sincerely. No doubt, at most places these words have occurred to express the same meaning, but there are many places where these words have also been used for outward affirmation of the faith, and all those who might have entered the Muslim Community with verbal profession have been addressed with. "O you who have believed", no matter whether they arc the true believers, or people with a weak faith, or mere hypocrites. For a few instances of this, see Al-i-`Imran: 156, An-Nisa' :13t5, Al-Ma'idah: 54, Al-Anfal: 20-27, At-Taubah: 38, Al-Hadid: 28, As-Saff: 2.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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50. Surah Qaf

Name

The Surah derives its name from the initial letter *Qaf*, thereby implying that it is the Surah which opens with the alphabetic letter *Qaf*.

Period of Revelation

There is no authentic tradition to show as to when exactly this Surah was sent down. A study of the subject matter, however, reveals that its period of revelation is the second stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah, which lasted from the third year of the Prophethood till the fifth year. We have given the characteristics of this period in the Introduction to the Sarah Al-An'am. In view of those characteristics it can be said that this Surah might have been sent down in about the 5th year, when the antagonism of the disbelievers had become quite intense but had not yet assumed tyrannical proportions.

Theme and Topics

Authentic traditions show that the Holy Prophet used to recite this Surah generally in the Prayer on the Eid days. A woman named Umm Hisham bin Harithah, who was a neighbor of the Holy Prophet, says that she was able to commit Surah Qaf to memory only because she often heard it from the Holy Prophet in the Friday sermons. According to some other traditions he often recited it in the Fajr Prayer. This makes it abundantly clear that this was an important Surah in the sight of the Holy Prophet. That is why he made sure that its contents reached as many people as possible over and over again.

This reason for this importance can be easily understood by a careful study of the Surah. The theme of the entire Surah is the Hereafter. When the Holy Prophet started preaching his message in Makkah what surprised the people most was the news that people would be resurrected after death, and they would have to render an account of their deeds. They said that that was impossible; human mind could not believe that that would happen. After all, how could it be possible that when the body had disintegrated into dust the scattered particles would be reassembled

after hundreds of thousands of years to make up the same body once again and raised up as a living body, Allah in response sent down this discourse. In it, on the one hand, arguments have been given for the possibility and occurrence of the Hereafter in a brief way, in short sentences, and, on the other, the people have been warned, as if to say: "Whether you express wonder and surprise, or you regard it as something remote from reason, or deny it altogether, in any case it cannot change the truth. The absolute, un-alterable truth is that Allah knows the whereabouts of each and every particle of your body that has scattered away in the earth, and knows where and in what state it is. Allah's one signal is enough to make all the scattered particles gather together again and to make you rise up once again as you had been made in the first instance. Likewise, your this idea that you have been created and left free to yourselves in the world and that you have not been made answerable to anyone, is no more than a misunderstanding. The fact is that not only is Allah Himself directly aware of each act and word of yours, even of the ideas that pass in your mind, but His angels also are attached to each one of you, who are preserving the record of whatever you do and utter. When the time comes, you will come out of your graves at one call just as young shoots of vegetable sprout up from the earth on the first shower of the rain. Then this heedlessness which obstructs your vision will be removed and you will see with your own eyes all that you are denying today. At that time you will realize that you had not been created to be irresponsible in this world but accountable to all your deeds the meeting out of the rewards and punishments, the Hell and Heaven, which you regard as impossible and imaginary things, will at that time become visible realities for you in consequence of your enmity and opposition to the Truth you will be cast into the same Hell which you regard as remote from reason today and the ones who fear the Merciful God and return to the path of righteousness, will be admitted to the same Paradise at whose mention you now express wonder and surprise.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

قٓۚ وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ٱلْمَجِيدِ ﴿١﴾

بَلْ عَجِبُوٓاْ أَن جَآءَهُم مُّنذِرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَقَالَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ هَٰذَا شَىْءٌ عَجِيبٌ ﴿٢﴾

أَءِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ۖ ذَٰلِكَ رَجْعٌ بَعِيدٌ ﴿٣﴾

قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ ۖ وَعِندَنَا كِتَابٌ حَفِيظٌ ﴿٤﴾

[1-4] Qaf. By the glorious Qur'an![1] -Nay, but they wondered that a Warner from among themselves had come to them.[2] So the disbelievers said, "This is indeed a strange thing: when we are dead and have become dust, (shall we be raised up again)? Such a return is far removed from reason."[3] (Whereas) We know very well whatever the earth consumes of their bodies, and We have a Book which preserves every thing.[4]

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي أَمْرٍ مَّرِيجٍ ﴿٥﴾

[5] Nay, but these people plainly denied the Truth when it came to them. That is why they are confused now.[5]

أَفَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِن فُرُوجٍ ﴿٦﴾

وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ ﴿٧﴾

تَبۡصِرَةٗ وَذِكۡرَىٰ لِكُلِّ عَبۡدٖ مُّنِيبٖ ٨

[6-8] What![6] Have they never looked up to the sky above them, (and observed) how we made it and adorned it,[7] and how there is no flaw in it?[8] And We spread out the earth and set mountains in it and caused to grow in it every kind of beautiful vegetable.[9] All these things are eye-openers and object lessons for every servant who turns (to the Truth).

وَنَزَّلۡنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءٗ مُّبَٰرَكٗا فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا بِهِۦ جَنَّٰتٖ
وَحَبَّ ٱلۡحَصِيدِ ٩

وَٱلنَّخۡلَ بَاسِقَٰتٖ لَّهَا طَلۡعٞ نَّضِيدٞ ١٠

رِّزۡقٗا لِّلۡعِبَادِۖ وَأَحۡيَيۡنَا بِهِۦ بَلۡدَةٗ مَّيۡتٗاۚ كَذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡخُرُوجُ ١١

[9-11] And from the sky We sent down blessed water where-by We produced gardens and harvest grain and tall palm-trees laden with clusters of fruit, piled one over another. This is the arrangement to provide food for the servants. With this water We revive a dead land.[10] Such also will be the resurrection (of the dead from the earth)."[11]

كَذَّبَتۡ قَبۡلَهُمۡ قَوۡمُ نُوحٖ وَأَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلرَّسِّ وَثَمُودُ ١٢

وَعَادٞ وَفِرۡعَوۡنُ وَإِخۡوَٰنُ لُوطٖ ١٣

وَأَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡأَيۡكَةِ وَقَوۡمُ تُبَّعٖۚ كُلّٞ كَذَّبَ ٱلرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيدِ ١٤

[12-14] Before them the people of Noah and the people of the Rass[12] and Thamud also denied, and so did `Ad and Pharaoh[13] and the brethren of Lot and the dwellers of Aiykah and the people of Tubba`.[14] [15] Every one denied the Messengers,[16] and consequently My scourge proved true against them.[17]

أَفَعَيِينَا بِٱلۡخَلۡقِ ٱلۡأَوَّلِۚ بَلۡ هُمۡ فِي لَبۡسٖ مِّنۡ خَلۡقٖ جَدِيدٖ ١٥

[15] What! Were We powerless in case of the fast creation? Yet these people are in doubt concerning a new creation.[18]

وَلَقَدۡ خَلَقۡنَا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ وَنَعۡلَمُ مَا تُوَسۡوِسُ بِهِۦ نَفۡسُهُۥۖ وَنَحۡنُ أَقۡرَبُ إِلَيۡهِ مِنۡ حَبۡلِ ٱلۡوَرِيدِ ١٦

إِذۡ يَتَلَقَّى ٱلۡمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ ٱلۡيَمِينِ وَعَنِ ٱلشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٞ ١٧

مَّا يَلۡفِظُ مِن قَوۡلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيۡهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٞ ١٨

وَجَآءَتۡ سَكۡرَةُ ٱلۡمَوۡتِ بِٱلۡحَقِّۖ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنتَ مِنۡهُ تَحِيدُ ١٩

وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ ٱلْوَعِيدِ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَجَآءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَآئِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٢١﴾

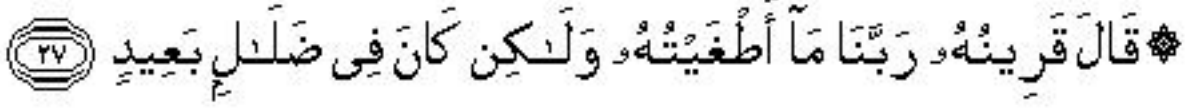
لَّقَدْ كُنتَ فِى غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَٰذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنكَ غِطَآءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

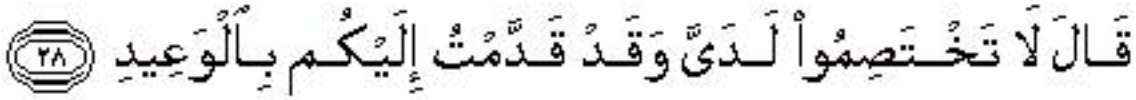
وَقَالَ قَرِينُهُۥ هَٰذَا مَا لَدَىَّ عَتِيدٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

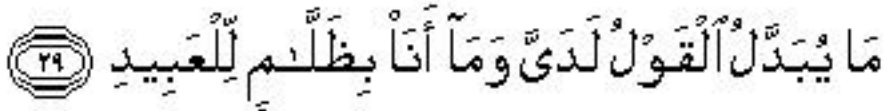
أَلْقِيَا فِى جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُّرِيبٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

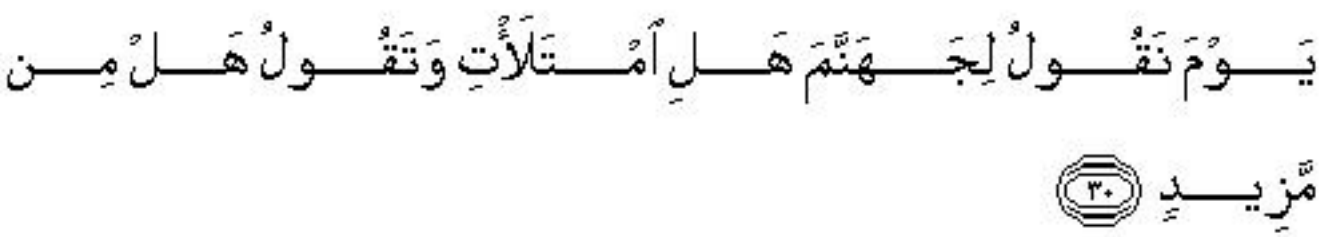
ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَأَلْقِيَاهُ فِى ٱلْعَذَابِ ٱلشَّدِيدِ ﴿٢٦﴾







[16-29] We[19] have created man and know every evil suggestion that arises in his heart: We are even closer to him than his neck-vein.[20] (And besides this direct knowledge of Ours) two scribes, sitting on his right and on his left, are recording everything. He utters not a word but there ' is an ever ready observer to note it down.[21] Then behold, the agony of death has come with the truth.[22] This is the same thing that you were trying to escape.[23] And then the Trumpet was blown.[24] threatened. Every person has come in a state that there is a driver with him and a witness.[25] You were heedless of this. We have removed your curtain from you, so your sight is very sharp today.[26] His companion submitted, "Here is the one who was given in my charge."[27] It was commanded, "Cast into Hell[28] every stubborn disbeliever,[29] who was hostile to the Truth, who was a forbidden of the good,[30] a transgressor,[31] a doubter[32] and who had set up another god with Allah. Cast him into severe torment."[33] His companion submitted, "Our Lord, I did not cause him to rebel, but he himself had gone far astray."[34] In reply it was said, "Do not dispute in My Presence: I had already warned you of the evil end.[35] My sentence cannot be changed[36] nor am I unjust to My servants."[37]





هَـٰذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

مَّنْ خَشِيَ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنَ بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَجَآءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيبٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

ٱدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَـٰمٍ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ ٱلْخُلُودِ ﴿٣٤﴾

لَهُم مَّا يَشَآءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

[30-35] The Day when We shall ask Hell, "Are you full?" it will say, "Is there any more?"[38] And Paradise shall be brought close to the righteous, no longer distant.[39] It will be said, "This is that which was promised to you, to every such person who turned (to God) again and again,[40] who Was watchful,[41] who feared the Merciful, unseen.[42] Who has come with a devoted heart.[43] Enter Paradise in peace."[44] That Day will be the Day of eternal life. There they shall have all that they will desire, and We have with us yet more for them.[45]

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُم بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوا۟ فِى ٱلْبِلَـٰدِ هَلْ مِن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُۥ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى ٱلسَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

[36-37] We have destroyed many nations before them, who were much stronger than they in power, and they ransacked all the lands.[46] Then, could they find a place of refuge?[47] Indeed, in this there is a lesson for every such person who has a heart, or who gives ear and listens with attention.[48]

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَمَا مَسَّنَا مِن لُّغُوبٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ ٱلشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ ٱلْغُرُوبِ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَٰرَ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿٤٠﴾

[38-40] We created the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them in six days,[49] and no fatigue overcame Us. Therefore, O Prophet, bear with patience whatever they say,[50] and keep up glorifying your Lord with His praise, before sunrise and before sunset. And glorify Him again in the night and also when you are free from prostrations.[51]

وَٱسْتَمِعْ يَوْمَ يُنَادِ ٱلْمُنَادِ مِن مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ﴿٤١﴾

يَوْمَ يَسْمَعُونَ ٱلصَّيْحَةَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ ٱلْخُرُوجِ ﴿٤٢﴾

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِۦ وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٣﴾

يَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ ٱلْأَرْضُ عَنْهُمْ سِرَاعًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ حَشْرٌ عَلَيْنَا يَسِيرٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

[41-44] And listen! The Day when the caller shall call out froth near (every person),[52] the Day when all the people shall be hearing the Cry rightly,[53] shall be the Day of the coming out of the dead from the earth. It is We Who bestow life and give death and to Us shall all return on that Day, when the earth shall split asunder and the people shall be rushing out of it in all haste. This gathering together is very easy for Us.[54]

نَّحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ عَلَيْهِم بِجَبَّارٍ ۖ فَذَكِّرْ بِٱلْقُرْءَانِ مَن يَخَافُ وَعِيدِ ﴿٤٥﴾

[45] O Prophet, We know very well what they say,[55] and you are not there to compel them into believing. Therefore, admonish with this Qur'an every such person who fears My warning.[56]

1The word "majid" is used for expressing two meanings in Arabic: for expressing the high rank, status, honor and dignity of a person, and for saying that somebody is highly generous, charitable and beneficent. This word has been used for the Qur'an in both these meanings. The Qur'an is great and glorious in the sense that no book of the world can be brought up against it. It is a miracle both in its language and literary excellence and in its teaching and wisdom. Humans were helpless to produce the like of it at the time when it was sent down and are likewise helpless even today. Nothing of it could ever be proved wrong in any age, nor can anything of it be proved wrong in the present age. Falsehood can neither attack it from the front nor from the rear, and defeat it. And it is generous and beneficent in the sense that the more a man goes on trying to gain guidance from it, the more of guidance it goes on giving him, and the more he follows and obeys its commands and instructions the more he continues to be blessed with good, things of the world and the Hereafter. There is no limit to its benefits and advantages where a man may become independent of it, and where it may cease to be beneficial and useful for him.

2This sentence is a unique example of eloquence. In it a vast subject has been compressed into a few

brief words. The object for which an oath has been sworn by the Qur'an has not been mentioned. In stood, a subtle gap has been left and the sentence is resumed with "nay". If one thinks a little and also keeps in view the background in which this has been said, one comes to know what-is the subject of the gap that has been left between the oath and "nay". In fact, what has been sworn of is this: "The people of Makkah have not refused to acknowledge the Prophet hood of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) for any sound reason but for the highly unsound reason that a member of their own kind and an individual of their own nation has conic to them as a Warner from God and this is something highly surprising for them; whereas what would actually be surprising was if God had remained unconcerned about the well-being and adversity of His servants and made no arrangement whatever to warn them; or had sent a non-human to warn the human beings; or a Chinese to warn the Arabs. Therefore, this basis of the denial is absolutely unsound, and a reasonable person cannot but admit that there must exist some arrangement from God to warn the servants, and in the form that the Warner himself should be a person from among the people to whom he is sent." As for the question whether Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is the person whom God has sent on this mission, no other evidence is needed to settle it but this glorious and beneficent Qur'an, which he is presenting; this is by itself enough to provide a proof of it. This explanation shows that in this verse an oath has been sworn by the Qur'an to impress the point that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is really the Messenger of Allah and the disbelievers' surprise and wonder about his apostleship is misplaced, and the fact of the Qur'an's being "majid" is a proof of this claim.

3This was the second cause of their surprise, the first being that a member of their own kind and clan had arisen with the claim that he had come as a warner to them from God. They were further surprised that the person was warning them to the effect that all men will be raised back to life after death and they will be produced all together in the Court of Allah where their deeds will be subjected to accountability and they will be rewarded and punished accordingly.

4That is, "If it cannot be comprehended by intellect, it is their own narrow mind to blame. It does not mean that Allah's knowledge and power also should be narrow. They think that it is in no way possible to collect the scattered particles of the bodies of the countless human beings who have died since the beginning of creation and will die till Resurrection. But the fact is that Allah directly knows each of those particles in whatever form and in whichever place they are. Furthermore, a full record of this is being maintained in the Register of Allah, which has not left out any particle un-recorded. Then, as soon as Allah commands, His angels will forthwith take out every particle from wherever it is with the help of this record, and will make up the same bodies once again in which human beings had lived and worked in the world."

This verse also is one of those verses which point out that the lift hereafter will not only be a physical lift as it is in this world, but the body of every person also will be the same which he had in this world. If it were not so, it would be meaningless to tell the disbelievers: "We know very well whatever the earth consumes of their bodies and We have a Book which preserves everything. " (For further explanation,

sec E.N. 25 of Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah) "

5In this brief sentence also a vast subject has been compressed. It means: These people did not rest content only with expressing wonder and declaring the thing to be far removed from reason, but when the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) presented his message of the Truth they denied it as falsehood without any hesitation. Its inevitable result was, and the same only could follow from it, that they arc not agreed on any one position with regard to the invitation and the Messenger who has presented it. Sometimes they brand him a poet, sometimes g sorcerer, and sometimes a madman. Sometimes they say that he is a magician and sometimes that he is bewitched. Sometimes they say that he has fabricated this thing by himself in order to establish-. his superiority, and sometimes they bring the charge that there peace and blessings) himself was standing in Makkah and reciting the Qur'an to the people, who had known and seen him grow up from childhood to youth and mature manhood before their eyes, the full meaning of these allusions was by itself clear and evident to every person. Therefore, leaving it aside, detailed reasoning is now being presented about the authenticity of the second thing which those people regarded as strange and far removed from reason and intellect.

6_____

7Here, by the sky is implied the whole firmament that man finds spread over him, day and night, in which the sun shines in the day and the moon and countless stars glitter at night, which amazes him even when he sees it with the bare eye, but which appears as a vast, limitless Universe when he looks at it through the telescope. It seems to be starting from nowhere and ending nowhere. Millions of times larger planets than our earth are moving in it like tiny balls; thousands of times brighter stars than ow sun are shining in it our this entire solar system is located in a comer of its only one galaxy; only in this one galaxy there exist at (east three thousand million other stars like our own sun, and man's observation has so far discovered one million such galaxies. Out of the lacs of galaxies our nearest, neighboring galaxy is 'so distant from us that its light reaches the earth in ten lac years traveling at the speed of 186,000 miles per second. This shows the vastness of that part of the Universe which has so far been observed and explored by man. As to how vast is the entire Universe of God we have no means to estimate and judge. Maybe that the known Universe of man does not bear with the entire Universe even that ratio which a drop of water beats with the ocean. If about the God Who has brought this huge and wonderful Universe into being, this tiny talking animal, called man, who creeps the earth, asserts that He cannot recreate him once again after death, it would be due to narrowness of his own mind. The power of the Creator of the Universe would not at all be affected by it !

8That is, "In spite of its amazing vastness the wonderful order of the Universe is so coherent and firm and its composition so perfect that there is no crack or cleft in it, and its continuity breaks nowhere. This can be understood by an example. Radio astronomers of the present age have observed a galactic system which they have named Source 3c 295. They think that its rays which are now reaching us might have

left it more than four thousand million years ago. The question is: How could it be possible for the rays to reach the earth from such a distant source had the continuity and coherence of the Universe between the earth and the galaxy been broken somewhere and its composition been split at some point. Allah, in fact, alludes to this reality and puts this question before man "When you cannot point out even a small breach in this system of My Universe, how did the concept of any weakness in My power enter your mind, that after the respite of your test is over, if I like to bring you back to life to subject you to accountability before Me, I would not be able to do so?"

This is not only a proof of the possibility of the Hereafter but also a proof .of Tauhid. These rays' reaching the earth from a distance of four thousand million light years and being detected by the man-made instruments expressly points to the fact that from the galaxy to the earth the entire world has been made up of one and the same substance continuously, one and the same kind of the forces are working in it, and they are functioning according to the same laws without any difference and disparity. Were it not so the rays could neither have reached here, nor detected by the instruments which Man had made after understanding the laws working on the earth and its surroundings. This proves that One God alone is the Creator of this whole Universe and its Master and Ruler and Controller .

9For explanation, sec E.N.'s 12, 13, 14 of An-Nahl, E.N.'s 73, 74 of An-Naml, and E.N. 7 of Az-Zukhruf.

10For explanation, set E.N.'s 73, 74, 81 of An-Naml, E.N.'s 25, 33, 35 of Ar-Rum and E. N . 29 of Ya Sin.

11The reasoning is this: `Your conjecture about God Who made this sphere of the earth a suitable home for living creatures and Who by combining the lifeless clay of the earth with the lifeless water from the sky produced such a fine vegetable life that you witness flourishing in the form of your gardens and crops, and W ho made the vegetation a means of sustenance for both man and beast, that He has no power to resurrect you after death, is a foolish and absurd conjecture. You witness almost daily the phenomenon that a land is lying barren and lifeless; then as soon as it receives a shower of rain, it gives birth to an endless train of life all of a sudden, the roots lying dead for ages sprout up and a variety of insects emerge playfully from the layers of the earth. This is a manifest proof that life after death is not impossible. When you cannot deny this express observation of yours, how can you deny that when Allah wills, you too will sprout up from the earth as the vegetation sprouts up. In this connection, one may note that in many parts of Arabia it does not sometimes rain for as long as five years at a stretch and sometimes even for longer periods the land does not receive even a drop of rain. For such long intervals in the burning deserts it is not conceivable that the roots of grass and the insects of the earth would survive. In spite of this when a little of the rain falls at some place, grass sprouts up and the insects of the earth return to life. Therefore, the inhabitants of Arabia can understand this reasoning much better than those people who do not have to experience such long periods of drought.

12Before this the people of Rass (Ashab ar-Rass) have been mentioned in Surah AI-Furqan: 38 above,

and now here, but at both places they have been only referred to as of those nations who rejected the Prophets. No other detail about them has been given. In the traditions of Arabia two places are well known by the name of ar-Rass, one in the Najd and the other in northern Hejaz. Of these ar-Rass of the Najd is better known and has been referred to more often in the pre-Islamic poetry of Arabia. Now it is difficult to determine which of these was the home of the Ashab ar-Rass. No reliable detail of their story is found in any tradition either. The most that one can say with certainty is that it was a nation which had thrown its Prophet into a well. But from the mere allusion that has been made to them in the Qur'an one is led to think that in the time of the revelation of the Qur'an the Arabs were generally aware of this nation and its history, but the traditions about them could not be preserved in historic records.

13Only the Pharaoh has been mentioned instead of the people of Pharaoh, for he had so dominated his people that they had been left with no independent opinion and will of their own, apart from him. They followed him willy-nilly wherever he led them. That is why he alone was held responsible for the deviation and degeneration of his people. Wherever there exists the freedom of will and action for a nation, it by itself bears the burden of its deeds, and wherever one man's dictatorship may have rendered a nation powerless the one man alone takes on his head the burden of the sins of entire nation. This doesn't mean that the nation becomes absolved from its duty and responsibility when the one man alone has burdened himself with the responsibility. This is not so. The nation in such a case becomes responsible for the moral weakness shown by it in that why it allowed a man to overpower and dominate it so completely. The same thing has been alluded to in Az-Zukhruf: 54, thus: "Pharaoh took his people to be light, and they obeyed him, for they were indeed a sinful people. " (For explanation, see E.N. 50 of Surah Az-Zukhruf).

14For explanation, see E.N. 37 of Surah Saba; E.N, 32 of Surah Dukhan.

15That is, they all denied the apostleship of their Messengers as well as the news given by them that they will be raised back to life after death.

16Although every nation denied only the Messenger who was sent to it, as it denied the news which all the Messengers have been presenting unanimously, denying one Messenger, therefore, amounted to denying all of them. Moreover, these nations did not merely deny the apostleship of the Messenger who had come to them, but they were not at all inclined to believe that a mere human could be appointed by Allah for the guidance of other men. Therefore, they denied apostleship itself, and .the crime of no one was confined to belying and rejecting any one Messenger only.

17This is a reasoning from history for the Hereafter. In the preceding six verses, arguments were given for the possibility of the Hereafter; in these the historical end of the nations of Arabia and the adjoining lands has been presented as an argument to prove that the doctrine of the Hereafter which all the Prophets have been presenting, is the very truth, for whichever nation denied it became involved in the

moral degeneration of the worst kind with the result that the torment of God descended on it and eliminated it from the world. This necessary result of the denial of the Hereafter and moral perversion which one can witness throughout history, is an express proof of the fact that man has not been created to be irresponsible in this world, but he has necessarily to render an account of his deeds as soon as the time limit for action at his disposal comes to an end. That is why whenever he works in the world irresponsibly, his whole lift pattern is set on the path of ruin. If evil and wrong results go on following a course of action successively, it is a clear proof that that course of action is in conflict with the truth.

18This is a rational argument for the Hereafter. The person who is not a denier of God and is also not so foolish as to regard this excellently ordered Universe and the creation of man in it as a mere accident, cannot help but admit that God alone has created man and this whole Universe. Now this actual fact that we exist alive in this world and this great work-house of the earth and heavens is functioning before us, by itself is an obvious proof that God was in no way powerless in creating us and this Universe. Yet if a man says that after bringing about Resurrection the same God will not be able to bring about a new world order and will not be able to create us once again, he says an irrational thing. Had God been powerless He would not have been able to create all this in the first instance. When He has created the Universe in the first instance and we ourselves came into existence by virtue of that act of creation, what can then be the rational ground for assuming that He will become powerless to re-make the dismantled thing originally made by Himself?

19After presenting the arguments for the Hereafter, it is being stated: `Whether you believe in the Hereafter, or deny it, it has to come in any case, and it is such a factual reality, which will certainly come about in spite of your denial. If you heed the warning given by the Prophets in advance and prepare for it, you will be doing good to yourselves; if you do not believe in it, you will be inviting your own doom. Your denial will not prevent the Hereafter from taking place and God' s Law of justice will not became suspended."

20That is, "Our power and Our knowledge has so encompassed man from within and without that Our power and knowledge is closer to him than his own neck-vein. We do not have to travel from a distance to hear what he says, but We directly know every thought that arises in his heart. Likewise, when We shall want to seize him, We will not have to seize him after covering a distance, for wherever he is, he is in Our grasp; and whenever We will, We will seize him."

21That is, "On the one hand, We Our self directly know man's actions and movements, even his hidden thoughts; on the other, every man has two angels appointed over him, who are recording whatever he does and says; none of his actions or words is left unrecorded. " This means that when man is produced in the Court of Allah, Allah at that time Himself also will be knowing what each person has done in the world; besides, there will also be two witnesses who will produce documentary evidence of the person's actions and deeds. As to what will be the nature of this documentary evidence, it is difficult for us to have a precise conception of it. But from the facts that we are witnessing today, it seems certain that the voices

and pictures and marks of man's actions and movements are being preserved and imprinted on every particle of the environment in which he lives and works, and each one of these can be reproduced in exactly the same form and voice so as to Leave no difference whatever between the original and its copy. Man is doing this on a very limited scale with the help of his inventions, but the angels of God neither stand in need of these machines nor are bound by any limitation. Man's own body and everything around it is their tape and their film upon which they can record every voice and every image along with its minutest and most delicate detail precisely and exactly, and can make man hear, on the Day of Resurrection, with his own ears, in his own voice, those very things which he talked in the world, and can make him see, with his own eyes, the pictures of all his misdeeds, whose genuineness he would not possibly be able to deny.

Here, one should also understand that in the Court of the Hereafter Allah will not punish anybody only on the basis of His own knowledge, but will punish him after fulfilling all the requirements of justice. That is why an exhaustive record is being got prepared of every person's words and deeds in the world so that a complete proof with undeniable evidence becomes available of everyone's life-work and activity.

22"To come with the truth" implies that the agony of death is the starting point when the reality which had remained concealed in the world, begins to be uncovered. At this point man starts seeing clearly the other world of which the Prophet had forewarned him. Here, man also comes to know that the Hereafter is the very truth, and also this whether he is entering this second stage of life as favored or damned.

23That is, "This is the same reality which you refused to believe. You desired that you should live and go about as an unbridled rogue in the world, and there should be no other life after death, in which you may have to suffer for the consequences of your deeds, That is why you shunned the concept of the Hereafter and were not at all inclined to believe that this next world would ever be established. Now, you may see that the same next world is unveiling itself before you.".

24This implies that blowing of the Trumpet at which all dead men will rise back to life in their own physical bodies. For explanation, see E.N. 47 of Al An'am, E.N. 57 of Ibrahim, E.N. 78 of Ta. Ha, E.N.1 of Al-Hajj, E.N.'s 46,47 of Ya Sin, and E.N. 79 of Az-Zumar.

25Most probably this implies the same two angels who had been appointed for compiling the record of the words and deeds of the person in the world. On the Day of Resurrection, when every man will rise from his grave on the sounding of the Trumpet, the two angels will come forth immediately and take him into their custody. One of them will drive him to the Divine Court and the other will be carrying his record.

26That is, "You can clearly see that everything of which the Prophets foretold is present here. "

27Some commentators say that "the companion" implies the angel who has been referred to as "a witness" in verse 21. He will say: "I have this person's record ready with me here" . Some other commentators say that "the companion" implies the satan who was attached to the person in the world. He will say: "This person whom I was controlling and preparing for Hell, is now presented before You. " But the commentary that is more relevant to the context is the one that has been reported from Qatadah and Ibn Zaid. They say that the companion implies the angel who drove and brought the person to Allah's Court He will say, ¦Here is the person who had been given in my charge"

28As the context shows this command will be given to the two angels who had taken the culprit into their custody as soon as he had risen from the grave, and then brought him before the Court. "

29The word kaffar" as used in the Text means an ungrateful person as well as a denier of the truth.

30"Khair" in Arabic is used both for wealth and for goodness. According to the first meaning, the sentence means that he paid no one his dues from his wealth, neither the dues of Allah nor of the people. According. to the second meaning, it would mean that he did not only withhold himself from the path of goodness but forbade others also to follow it. He had become a hindrance for the people in the way of goodness and exerted his utmost to sec that goodness did not spread.

31That is, "He transgressed the bounds of morality in every-thing he did. He was ever ready to do anything and everything for the sake of his interests, his desires and his lusts. He amassed wealth by unlawful means and spent it in unlawful ways. He usurped the people's rights, had neither control over his tongue nor over his hands, and committed every injustice and excess. He did not rest content with creating hindrances in the way of goodness but harassed those who adopted goodness and persecuted those who worked for it."

32The word murib" as used in the original has two meanings: a doubter and the one who puts others in doubt, and both arc implied here. It means that he was not only himself involved in doubt but also created doubts in the hearts of others. He held as doubtful the Being of Allah and the Hereafter and the angels and the Prophet hood and Revelation and every other truth of religion. Anything that was presented by the Prophets as a truth was held as unbelievable by him, and the same disease he spread to other people. Whomever he came in contact with, he would create one or the other doubt, one or the other evil thought in his mind.

33Allah, in these verses, has enumerated the qualities that make a man worthy of Hell:

(1) Denial of the Truth,

(2) ingratitude to Allah,

(3) enmity for the Truth and the followers of the Truth,

(4) to become a hindrance in the way of goodness,

(5) failure to fulfill the rights of Allah and the people from one's wealth,

(6) to transgress the bounds in one's affairs,

(7) to commit injustices and excesses against others,

(8) to doubt the truths of religion,

(9) to create doubts in the hearts of the people, and

(10) to hold another as an associate in the Godhead of Allah.

34Here by “companion” is meant the satan who was attached to the disobedient person in the world. And this also becomes evident from the style that both the person and his satan are disputing between themselves in the Court of Allah. He says: "My Lord, this wretched one pursued me in the world and did not leave me until he succeeded in misleading me; therefore he alone should be punished. And the satan replies "Lord, I had no power over him. Had he not himself willed to become rebellious, I could not have seduced him forcibly. This wretched person himself fled from goodness and was fascinated by evil. That is why he did not like anything that the Prophets presented and went on yielding to every temptation and inducement presented by me."

35That is, "I had warned both of you as to what punishment will be given to the one who beguiles and what punishment will be suffered by him who is beguiled. In spite of this warning when you did not desist from committing your

Respective crimes, there is no use quarreling now. Both the one who beguiled and the one who was beguiled have to be punished for the crimes committed by them. "

36That is, "It is not My way to change the decisions once taken. The decision that I have taken to east you into Hell cannot be withdrawn, nor can the law that I had announced in the world be changed that the punishment for misleading and for being misled will be awarded in the Hereafter."

37The word zallam as used in the original means the one who is highly unjust. It does not mean: "I am unjust to My servants but not highly unjust. " But it means: "If I were unjust to My own servants being their

Creator and Sustainer, I would be highly unjust. Therefore, I am not at all unjust to My servants. This punishment that I am giving you is precisely the same punishment which you have made yourselves worthy of. You arc not being punished an iota more than what you actually deserve, for My Court is a Court of impartial justice. Here, no one can receive a punishment which he does not actually deserve, and for which his being worthy has not been proved by certain and undeniable evidence.

38This can have two meanings:

(1) "There is no room in me for more men; " and

(2) "bring all other culprits who may be there. "

According to the first meaning the scene depicted would be that Hell has been so stuffed up with culprits that it cannot hold any more; so much so that when it was asked: "Are you full ?" it cried out, alarmed: "Are there still more culprits to come ?" According to the second meaning, the scene depicted before the mind is that the wrath of Hell is so flared up against the culprits that it is constantly demanding more and more of them to be cast into it so that no culprit escapes un-punished.

"Here, the question arises: What is the nature of Allah Almighty's addressing Hell and its reply? Is it only something metaphoric, or is Hell actually a living and intelligent being which may be spoken to and it may respond and give replies? In this regard nothing can, in fact, be said with certainty. Maybe the meaning is metaphoric and only for the purpose of depicting the actual scene of the state of Hell it may have been described in the form of the question and answer, just as one may ask a motor-car: "Why don't you move forward?" and it may say: "There is no petrol in me." But this also is quite possible that this conversation is based on reality. Therefore, it is not correct to assume about the

Respective crimes, there is no use quarreling now. Both the one who beguiled and the one who was beguiled have to be punished for the crimes committed by them. "

39That is, "It is not My way to change the decisions once taken. The decision that I have taken to east you into Hell cannot be withdrawn, nor can the law that I had announced in the world be changed that the punishment for misleading and for being misled will be awarded in the Hereafter."

40The word awwab is very extensive in meaning. It implies the person who might have adopted the way of obedience and Allah's goodwill instead of the way of disobedience and the flesh, who gives up everything that is disapproved by Allah and adopts everything that is approved by him, who gets alarmed as soon as he swerves a little from the path of worship and obedience and repents and returns to the path of worship and obedience, who remembers Allah much and turns to Him in all matters of life.

41The word hafiz means the "one who guards. " This implies the person who takes care of the bounds and duties enjoined by Allah, who guards the trusts imposed by Allah and avoids the things forbidden by him, who keeps watch over his time, energies and activities to see that none of these is being misemployed or misused, who offers repentance, remains steadfast and keeps it. strong and intact, who examines himself over and over again to see that he is not disobeying his Lord anywhere in word or deed.

42That is, Although he could not see the Merciful God and could not perceive Him by his senses in any way, yet he feared His disobedience. His heart was more dominated by the fear of the unseen Merciful God than the fear of other perceptible powers and visible and mighty beings, and in spite of knowing that He is All-Merciful, he did not become a sinner, trusting His Mercy, but feared His displeasure in whatever he said and did. Thus, this verse points to two of the believer's important and basic characteristics: first, that he fears God although he cannot see and perceive Him; second, that he does not persist in sin in spite of his full awareness of God's quality of mercy. These very two characteristics make him worthy of honor in the sight of Allah. Besides, there is another subtle point also in it, which Imam Razi has pointed out. In Arabic, there are two words for fear, khauf and khashiyyat, which have a difference in their shade of meaning. The word khauf is generally used for the fear that a man feels in his heart on account of his sense of weakness as against someone's superior power and strength, and the word khashiyyat is used for the dread and awe with which a man is filled and inspired because of somebody's glory and grandeur and greatness. Here, the word khashiyyat has been used instead of khauf, which is meant to point out that a believer does not fear Allah only on account of the fear of His punishment, but it is the sense of Allah's glory and greatness that keeps him awe inspired at all times.

43The word munib in the original is derived from inabat, which means to turn to one direction and to turn to the same again and again, just like the needle of the compass that points to the magnetic north persistently, however one may try to turn it away from that direction. Therefore, qalb-i-munib would mean such a heart as has turned away from every other direction and turned towards One Allah alone and then kept on turning towards Him again and again throughout life. The. same sense has been conveyed by the "devoted heart." This shows that in the sight of Allah the man of real worth is he who remains attached and devoted to Allah alone not merely verbally but also truly and sincerely.

44If the word salam in udkhulu-ha bi-salam-in is taken in the meaning of peace and security, it would mean: "Enter this Paradise safe and secure from every kind of grief, sorrow, anxiety and affiliation"; and if it is taken in the meaning of salam itself, it would mean: "Enter this Paradise you are welcomed here with the greeting of peace by Allah and his angels."

In these verses Allah has mentioned the qualities because of which a person makes himself worthy of Paradise, and they are:

(1) Taqwa (piety),

(2) Turning towards Allah,

(3) watching over and guarding one's relationship with Allah,

(4) fearing Allah although one has not seen Him, and has full faith in His quality of mercy, and

(5) coming into His Presence with a devoted and captivated heart, i.e. remaining constant on the way of devotion and dedication till death.

45That is, "They will certainly get whatever they desire, but in addition We will also give them that which they have never conceived and, therefore, could not desire."

46That is, "They were not only powerful and strong in their own land but had also made incursions into other lands and brought under their sway far off lands as well. "

47That is, "Could their power and might save them when the time appointed by Allah came for their seizure? And could they find shelter and refuge anywhere? Now, on what trust do you hope that you will get refuge somewhere in the world when you have rebelled against Allah ?"

48In other words, either one should have so much of native intelligence that one may think right of one's own accord, or if not so, one should be so free from prejudice and neglect that one may listen with attention when another person tries to make one understand the truth.

49For explanation, see E.N.'s 11 to 15 of the commentary of Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah.

50That is, "The fact of the matter is that We have made this entire Universe in six days and We did not become weary at the end so that We might be powerless to reconstruct it Now, if these ignorant people mock you when they hear the news of the life-after-death from you and call you a madman, have patience at it, listen to whatever nonsense they utter with a cool mind, and continue to preach the truth that you have been appointed to spread. "

In this verse, there is a subtle taunt on the Jews and the Christians as well, in whose Bible the story has been fabricated chat God made the earth and the heavens in six days and rested on the seventh day (Gen., 2: 2). Although the Christian priests are now feeling shy of it and have changed "rested" into “farigh hua” (ceased from working) in their Urdu translation of the Holy Bible, yet in King James Authorized Version of the Bible, the words"...and he rested on the seventh day" are still there, and the same words are also found in the translation that the Jews have published from Philadelphia in 1954. In the Arabic translation also the words are: fastraha ft! yaum as-sebi'.

51This is the means by which man gets the power and energy to continue his struggle to raise the Word of the Truth and to call the people towards righteousness throughout life with full determination even though he may have to pass through heart-breaking and soul-destroying conditions and his efforts may seem to be bearing no fruit. Praising and glorifying the Lord implies the Prayer here, and wherever in the Qur'an the praise and glorification has been associated with specific times, it implies the Prayer. The Prayer "before sunrise" is the Fajr Prayer, and the Prayers "before sunset" are the 'Asr and the Zuhr Prayers. The Prayers in the night are the Maghrib and the `Isha` Prayers, and the third, the Tahajjud Prayer, is also included in the glorification of the night. (For explanation, see E.N. 111 of Ta Ha; E.N.'s 23, 24 of Ar-Rum). As for the glorification that has been commanded after "being free from prostrations", it may imply the after-Prayer devotions as well as the offering of the voluntary prayers at the end of the prescribed obligatory Prayers. Hadrat Umar, Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat Hasan bin 'Ali, hadrat Abu Hurairah, Ibn `Abbas, Sha`bi, Mujahid, 'Ikrimah, Hasan Basri, Qatadah, Ibrahim Nakha`i and Auza'i say that it implies the two rak ats after the Maghrib Prayer. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr bin 'As, and according to a tradition, Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas also, held the opinion that it implies the after-Prayer devotions, and Ibn Zaid says -that the object of this Command is that voluntary Prayers also should be offered after the prescribed obligatory Prayers.

According to a tradition reported in Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, once the poor emigrants from Makkah came before the Ho]y Prophet, and said "O Messenger of Allah, the rich people have attained high ranks for themselves The Holy Prophet asked: What has happened ? They said: They offer the Prayers as we offer, and they observe the Fasts as we observe; but they practice charity, which we cannot, and they set the slaves free which we cannot. The Holy Prophet said: Should I tell you a thing which if you practiced, you would surpass all others, except those who practiced the same that you practiced? It is this that you should pronounce Subhan-Allah, al-Hamdu-lillah and Allah-u-Akbar, 33 times each after every Prayer. " After some time, the same people came and said: `Our rich brothers also have heard this and they too have started practicing, it." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "This is Allah's bounty and He bestows it on whomever He wills." According to a tradition these devotional words have to be repeated ten times each instead of 33 times each.

Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit has reported that the Holy Prophet instructed his Companions that they should pronounce Subhan-Allah and al Hamdu-lillah 33 times each and Allah-u-Akbar 34 times after every Prayer. Afterwards an Ansar Companion submitted: "I have seen in a vision that somebody was telling me that it would be better if I pronounced these three devotional words 25 times each and then La ilaha ill-Allah 25 times. The Holy Prophet replied: Well, you may do likewise." (Ahmad, Nasa'i, Darimi).

Hadrat Abu Said Khudri says: ¦I have heard the Holy Prophet pronounce the following words when he would return after the Praye rs were over: Subhana Rabbika Rabbil- `izzat-i `anima yasifun ' wa salam-un 'alal-mursalin, wal-hamdu lillah-i Rabb-il alamin. " (Jassas Ahkam al-Qur 'an).

Besides these, several other forms of the after-Prayer devotional pronouncements also have been reported from the Holy Prophet. Those who wish to act on this instruction of the Qur'an may select the one they find suitable from Mishkat.' Bab adh-dhikr 6a `d as-Salat, commit it to memory and practice it. Nothing can be better than what the Holy Prophet himself has taught in this regard. But what one should bear in mind is that the real object of the devotional pronouncements is not to utter these words only as a matter of course but to refresh and fix their meaning in the mind. Therefore, the meaning of whatever devotions one pronounces should be understood well and then practiced with full consciousness of the meaning.

52That is, "Wherever a dead person would be lying, or wherever his death had occurred is the world, the cry of the caller shall reach him there, which will urge him to rise and go before his Lord to render his account. This cry will be such that everybody who rises from death anywhere on the surface of the earth, will feel as though the caller had called him from a nearby place. Simultaneously will this cry be heard everywhere on the globe equally clearly. From this also one can judge how different will be the concepts of space and time in the neat world from what they arc in this world, and what forces will be working there in accordance with the new laws. "

53The words yasm'aun-as-saihata bil haqq-i can have two meanings:

(1) That all the people will be hearing the cry of the right Command; and

(2) that they will be hearing the cry rightly.

In the first case the sentence will mean that the people will be hearing the same right Command with their cars, which they were not inclined to accept in the world, which they had persistently refused to believe, and mocked the Prophets who had brought it. In the second case it will mean that they will certainly hear this cry, and they will realize that it is no fancy but indeed the Cry of Resurrection; they will be left with no doubt that the Day of Resurrection of which they had been forewarned had arrived and the Cry that was being raised was of the same.

54This is the answer to the saying of the disbelievers that has been reproduced in verse 3 above. They said: "How can it be that when we arc dead and become dust, we shall be raised back to life once again 7 This resurrection is far removed from reason. " In reply it has been said: "This gathering together, i. e. , raising back to life and gathering all the people of the former and latter times together, is very easy for Us. It is not at all difficult for Us to know as to where the dust of one particular person lies and where of the other. We shall also face no difficulty in knowing as to which arc the particles of Harry and which of Dick among the scattered particles of the dust. Gathering together all these particles separately and re-making each and every man's body once again and then creating in that body, the same very personality which had lived in it before, is not a task that may require any hard labor from Us, but all this can be accomplished immediately at one signal from Us. All those human beings who have been born in the

world since the time of Adam till Resurrection can be brought together by one Command of Ours. If your petty mind thinks it is far off, it may think so, but it is not beyond the power of the Creator of the Universe."

55In this sentence there is consolation for the Holy Prophet as well as a threat for the disbelievers. Addressing the Holy Prophet it has been said: "Do not care at all about what these foolish people utter about you: We are hearing everything and it is for Us to deal with it. " The disbelievers are being warned to the effect: "The taunting remarks that you are passing against Our Prophet, will cost you dearly. We Our self are hearing everything that you utter and you will have to suffer for its consequences."

56This does not mean that the Holy Prophet wanted to compel the people into believing and Allah stopped him from this, but, in fact, although the Holy Prophet has Been addressed the disbelievers are being warned, as if to say, 'Our Prophet has not been sent as a dictator over you. He is not there to compel you to become believers even if you did not wish to believe. His only responsibility is that he should recite the Qur'an and make the truth plain to the one who would take the warning. Now, if you do not accept his invitation, We Our self will deal with you, not he."

51. Surah Adh Dhariyat (The Winds)

Name

It is derived from the very first word *wadh-dhariyat*, which implies that it is a Surah which begins with the word *adh-dhariyat*.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter and the style clearly show that it was sent down in the period when although the Holy Prophet's invitation was being resisted and opposed with denial and ridicule and false accusations stubbornly, persecution had not yet started. Therefore, this Surah also seems to have been revealed in the same period in which the Surah Qaf was revealed.

Subject Matter and Topics

The Surah mostly deals with the Hereafter, and in the end it presents the invitation to *Tauhid*. In addition, the people have also been warned that refusal to accept the message of the Prophets and persistence in the concepts and creeds of ignorance have proved to be disastrous for those nations themselves which have adopted this attitude and way of life in the past.

About the Hereafter what this Surah presents in short but pithy sentences is this: The people's different and conflicting beliefs about the end of human life are themselves an express proof that none of these beliefs and creeds is based on knowledge; everyone by himself has formed an ideology on the basis of conjecture and made the same his creed. Someone thought that there would be no life-after-death; someone believed in the life- after-death, but in the form of the transmigration of souls someone believed in the life hereafter and the meting out of the rewards and punishments but invented different sorts of props and supports to escape retribution. About a question of such vital and fundamental importance a wrong view of which renders man's whole life-work wrong and waste and ruins his future for ever, it would be a disastrous folly to build an ideology only on the basis of speculation and conjecture, without knowledge. It would mean that man should remain involved in a grave misunderstanding, pass his whole life in the heedlessness of error, and after death should suddenly meet with a situation for which he had

made no preparation at all. There is only one way of forming the right opinion about such a question, and it is this: Man should seriously ponder over the knowledge about the Hereafter that the Prophet of Allah is conveying to him from Him, and should study carefully the system of the earth and heavens and his own existence: and should see whether the evidence of that knowledge's being sound and correct is afforded by everything around him or not. In this regard, the arrangement of the wind and rain, the structure of the earth and the creatures found on it, man's own self, the creation of the heavens and of everything in the world in the form of pairs have been presented as evidence of the Hereafter, and instances have been cited from human history to show that the temper of the empire of the Universe requires that the law of retribution must operate here.

After this, giving the invitation to *Tauhid* briefly, it has been said : "Your Creator has not created you for the service of others but for His own service. He is not like your false gods, which receive sustenance from you and godhead of which cannot function without your help, but He is a God Who is the Sustainer of all, Who does not stand in need of sustenance from anyone and Whose Godhead is functioning by His own power and might.

In this very connection, it has also been stated that whenever the Prophets of Allah have been opposed and resisted, they have not been opposed and resisted on the basis of any rational ground but on the basis of the same obduracy and stubbornness and false pride that is being shown against the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and there is no other motive for it than rebellion and arrogance. Then the Holy Prophet has been instructed not to bother about the rebels but to go on performing his mission of invitation and admonition, for it is useful and beneficial for the believers although it may not be so for the other people. As for the wicked people who still persist in their rebellion, they should know that their predecessors who followed the same way of life, have already received their shares of the punishment, and these people's share of the punishment has been made ready for them.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلذَّٰرِيَٰتِ ذَرْوًا ﴿١﴾

فَٱلْحَٰمِلَٰتِ وِقْرًا ﴿٢﴾

فَٱلْجَٰرِيَٰتِ يُسْرًا ﴿٣﴾

فَٱلْمُقَسِّمَٰتِ أَمْرًا ﴿٤﴾

إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَصَادِقٌ ﴿٥﴾

وَإِنَّ ٱلدِّينَ لَوَٰقِعٌ ﴿٦﴾

[1-6] By the winds that raise up dust, then lift up clouds laden with water.[1] then glide with ease, then distribute a big affair (rain).[2] The truth is that that with which you are being threatened[3] is true, and the meting out of the rewards and punishments is inevitable.[4]

وَٱلسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ ٱلْحُبُكِ ﴿٧﴾

إِنَّكُمْ لَفِى قَوْلٍ مُّخْتَلِفٍ ﴿٨﴾

يُؤْفَكُ عَنْهُ مَنْ أُفِكَ ﴿٩﴾

[7-9] By the sky of various appearances,[5] you are at variance with one another (concerning the Hereafter).[6] Only

such a one is perverted from it who has turned away from the Truth.[7]

قُتِلَ ٱلۡخَرَّٰصُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ فِي غَمۡرَةٖ سَاهُونَ ﴿١١﴾

يَسۡـَٔلُونَ أَيَّانَ يَوۡمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٢﴾

يَوۡمَ هُمۡ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ يُفۡتَنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

ذُوقُواْ فِتۡنَتَكُمۡ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِۦ تَسۡتَعۡجِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

إِنَّ ٱلۡمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّٰتٖ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٥﴾

ءَاخِذِينَ مَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمۡ رَبُّهُمۡۚ إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ قَبۡلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُحۡسِنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

كَانُوا۟ قَلِيلًا مِّنَ ٱلَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَبِٱلْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَفِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَٱلْمَحْرُومِ ﴿١٩﴾

[10-19] Doomed are they who judge by conjecture,[8] who are deeply engrossed in ignorance and heedlessness.[9] They ask, "When will be the Day of Retribution?" It will be when they are punished at the Fire.[10] (It will , be said to them:) "Now taste your mischief.[11] This is the same which you were seeking to be hastened.[12] The righteous,[13] however, shall be among gardens and water springs that Day, and shall be joyfully receiving what their Lord shall give them.[14] They were doers of good even before the coming of this Day: they slept but little in the night,[15] prayed for forgiveness in the early hours of dawn,[16] and in their possessions was a due share of him who asked and of him who was needy.[17]

وَفِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ءَايَٰتٌ لِّلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

وَفِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَوَرَبِّ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ إِنَّهُۥ لَحَقّٞ مِّثۡلَ مَآ أَنَّكُمۡ تَنطِقُونَ ٢٣

[20-23] There are many signs in the earth for those who affirm faiths[18] and also in your own selves.[19] Do you not perceive? In the heaven is your provision and also that which is being promised to you.[20] So, by the Lord of the heaven and the earth! It is true, as true as you are speaking now.

هَلۡ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيۡفِ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ ٱلۡمُكۡرَمِينَ ٢٤

إِذۡ دَخَلُواْ عَلَيۡهِ فَقَالُواْ سَلَٰمٗاۖ قَالَ سَلَٰمٞ قَوۡمٞ مُّنكَرُونَ ٢٥

فَرَاغَ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِۦ فَجَآءَ بِعِجۡلٖ سَمِينٖ ٢٦

فَقَرَّبَهُۥٓ إِلَيۡهِمۡ قَالَ أَلَا تَأۡكُلُونَ ٢٧

فَأَوۡجَسَ مِنۡهُمۡ خِيفَةٗۖ قَالُواْ لَا تَخَفۡۖ وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَٰمٍ عَلِيمٖ ٢٨

فَأَقۡبَلَتِ ٱمۡرَأَتُهُۥ فِي صَرَّةٖ فَصَكَّتۡ وَجۡهَهَا وَقَالَتۡ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٞ ﴿٢٩﴾

قَالُواْ كَذَٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ٱلۡعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٠﴾

۞قَالَ فَمَا خَطۡبُكُمۡ أَيُّهَا ٱلۡمُرۡسَلُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّآ أُرۡسِلۡنَآ إِلَىٰ قَوۡمٖ مُّجۡرِمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

لِنُرۡسِلَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ حِجَارَةٗ مِّن طِينٖ ﴿٣٣﴾

مُّسَوَّمَةً عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلۡمُسۡرِفِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

فَأَخۡرَجۡنَا مَن كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

فَمَا وَجَدۡنَا فِيهَا غَيۡرَ بَيۡتٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَآ ءَايَةً لِّلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلْأَلِيمَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[24-37] O Prophet,[21] has the story of Abraham's honored guests reached you?[22] When they came to him, they said, "Peace to you." He said, "Peace to you too, unfamiliar folks they are!"[23] Then he went quietly to his family[24] and brought out a fatted (roasted) calf[25] and laid it before the guests. He said, "Will you not eat?" Then he became afraid of them.[26] They said, "Be not afraid!" And they gave him the good news of the birth of a son, possessing knowledge.[27] Hearing this his wife came forward, crying, and she smote her face, and said, "An old woman, barren!"[28] "Thus has said your Lord," they replied, "He is the All-Wise, the All-Knowing."[29] Abraham said," O Divine Messengers, what is your special errand?"[30] They said, "We have been sent to a guilty people,[31] to rain upon them stones of baked clay, which are marked with your Lord for the transgressors."[32] Then[33] We evacuated all those who were believers in that settlement, and We did not find in it any house of the Muslims except one.[34] Then We left there only one sign for those who fear the painful torment.[35]

وَفِى مُوسَىٰٓ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَٰهُ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَتَوَلَّىٰ بِرُكْنِهِۦ وَقَالَ سَٰحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

فَأَخَذْنَٰهُ وَجُنُودَهُۥ فَنَبَذْنَٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

[38-40] (And there is a sign for you) in the story of Moses. When We sent him to Pharaoh with a clear authority,[36] he showed arrogance on account of his might, and said, "He is a sorcerer or a madman."[37] Consequently, We seized him and his hosts and cast them into the sea, aid he became blameworthy.[38]

وَفِى عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلرِّيحَ ٱلْعَقِيمَ ﴿٤١﴾

مَا تَذَرُ مِن شَيۡءٍ أَتَتۡ عَلَيۡهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَتۡهُ كَٱلرَّمِيمِ ٤٢

[41-42] And (for you is a sign) in `Ad when We sent upon them a blighting wind which made rotten everything that it blew on.[39]

وَفِي ثَمُودَ إِذۡ قِيلَ لَهُمۡ تَمَتَّعُواْ حَتَّىٰ حِينٖ ٤٣

فَعَتَوۡاْ عَنۡ أَمۡرِ رَبِّهِمۡ فَأَخَذَتۡهُمُ ٱلصَّٰعِقَةُ وَهُمۡ يَنظُرُونَ ٤٤

فَمَا ٱسۡتَطَٰعُواْ مِن قِيَامٖ وَمَا كَانُواْ مُنتَصِرِينَ ٤٥

[43-45] And (for you is a sign) in Thamud when it was said to them, "Enjoy yourselves for a while."[40] But in spite of this warning they defied the Command of their Lord. Consequently, they were overtaken by a thunderbolt[41] even while they looked on. Then they could neither stand up nor were able to save themselves.[42]

وَقَوۡمَ نُوحٖ مِّن قَبۡلُۖ إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ قَوۡمٗا فَٰسِقِينَ ٤٦

[46] And before them We destroyed the people of Noah because they were a sinful people.

وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بَنَيۡنَٰهَا بِأَيۡيْدٖ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ٤٧

وَٱلْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَٰهَا فَنِعْمَ ٱلْمَٰهِدُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَمِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

فَفِرُّوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّى لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَلَا تَجْعَلُواْ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ ۖ إِنِّى لَكُم مِّنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٥١﴾

[47-51] We[43] have built the heaven with Our own might and We possess the power for it.[44] We have spread out the earth and (behold) how excellent Spreaders We are![45] And We have created everything in pairs[46] maybe that you learn a lesson from it[47] So flee unto Allah: I am an open warner from Him to you. And do not set up another god with God; I am on open warner from Him to you.[48]

كَذَٰلِكَ مَآ أَتَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُواْ سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

أَتَوَاصَوْاْ بِهِۦ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَآ أَنتَ بِمَلُومٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ تَنفَعُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[52-55] This has always been so. Whenever a Messenger came to the peoples before them, they said, "He is a sorcerer or a madman."[49] Have they reached a mutual understanding concerning this? Nay, but they are all a rebellious people.[50] So, O Prophet, turn away from them: you are not at all to blame.[51] But go on admonishing them, for the admonition is beneficial for the believers.[52]

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ ٱلْجِنَّ وَٱلْإِنسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

مَآ أُرِيدُ مِنْهُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَن يُطْعِمُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلرَّزَّاقُ ذُو ٱلْقُوَّةِ ٱلْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾

فَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ ذَنُوبًا مِّثْلَ ذَنُوبِ أَصْحَٰبِهِمْ فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونِ ﴿٥٩﴾

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن يَوْمِهِمُ ٱلَّذِى يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

[56-60] I have not created the jinn and the men except for this that they should worship Me.[53] I do not ask any sustenance of them, nor do I ask them to feed Me.[54] Allah Himself is the Sustainer, Possessor of power and might.[55] Therefore, those who have done wrong,[56] have also their portion of a similar torment ready as the people like them have been meted out their portions before. So let them not ask Me to hasten.[57] Ultimately, there will be destruction for those who have disbelieved, on the Day with which they are being threatened.

1All the commentators are agreed that adh-dhariyat implies the winds that disperse and mist up the dust, and al-hamilat-i wiqran implies the winds that lift up millions of tons of water vapors from the oceans in the form of clouds. This same commentary has been reported from Hadrat `Umar, Hadrat `Ali, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar, and also from Mujahid, Said bin Jubair, Hasan Basri, Qatadah, Suddi and other scholars.

2The commentators have disputed the commentary of al-Jariyat-i yusran and al-muqassimat-i amran. One group has preferred the view, or held this meaning as admissible, that by these two also are meant the winds; that is, the same very winds then transport the clouds, and spreading over different parts of the earth, distribute the water as and where required according to Allah's command, The other group holds that al-ariyat-i yusran implies fast moving boats, and al-muqassimat-i amran implies the angels who distribute among the creatures their shares of the provisions according to Allah's command. According to a tradition, Hadrat `Umar explained this very meaning of these two sentences and said: "Had I not heard this from the Holy Prophet, I would not have mentioned it." On this very basis, `Allama Alusi has expressed the opinion that it is not permissible to take any other meaning of these sentences than this, and those who have taken any other meaning, have taken undue liberties. But Hafiz Ibn Kathir says that this tradition has weak links of the transmitters and on its basis it cannot be said with absolute certainty that the Holy Prophet might himself have given this commentary of these sentences. There is no doubt that from a good number of the Companions and their immediate followers only this second commentary has been reported, but a good number of the commentators have given the first commentary also, and it fits in better with the context. Shah Rafi`uddin, Shah 'Abdul Qadir and Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan also have preferred the first meaning in their translations of the Qur'an.

3The word used in the original is to 'edun. If it is derived from we'd, the meaning would be: "That which you are being promised;" and if it is from wa'id, it would mean: "That which you are being threatened with." As regards the context, the second meaning is preferable, for the addressees are the people who were lost in disbelief, polytheism and sin, and were not prepared to believe that they would be held accountable some time in the future and would be rewarded or punished accordingly. That is why, we have taken to 'adun in the meaning of wa' id and not of wa'd (promise).

4This is the thing for which the oath has been sworn. The oath implies this: The unique order and regularity with which the wonderful system of the rain is functioning before your eyes, and the wisdom and good reasons which clearly underlie it, testify to the reality that this world is not a meaningless and useless toy-house where the great drama of life is being presented at random since millions and millions

of years. Hut, it is, in fact, a wise system of the highest order in which everything that happens has a purpose and reason behind it. In this system it is not possible that n creature like man should have been given intellect, sense and the powers to exploit things to advantage, should have been granted moral sense to distinguish the good and evil, right and wrong deeds and then might have ban left alone foolishly and meaninglessly in the world to behave as he pleased, and that he should never be questioned as to how he had used and employed the powers of the heart and mind and body, the vast means placed at his disposal w work in the world, and the power and authority granted to him to employ the countless creatures of God to advantage. In this system of the Universe where everything is purposeful, how can the creation of a unique being like man only be purposeless? In a system where everything is based on wisdom, how can the creation of man only be useless and futile? The purpose of the creation of those things which do not possess consciousness and intellect is fulfilled in this very physical world. Therefore, it would be right and reasonable if they were destroyed after they had reached the end of their life term, for they have not been granted any powers and authority for which they might have to be called to account. But a creature which possesses intellect and consciousness and authority, whose activities are not confined only to the physical world, but are also moral in nature, and whose actions entailing moral consequences do not take place only till the end of life, but continue to register their moral effects on it even after death, cannot be destroyed like plants and animals just after it has fulfilled the function of its physical existence. Whatever good or evil act he has committed by his own will and choice, he must get the reward 'or suffer the punishment for it justly and equitably, for this is the basic requirement of the factor under which, contrary to other creatures, he has been endowed with the freedom of choice and will. If he is not held accountable, if he is not rewarded or punished according to his moral acts, and if he also is destroyed at the conclusion of his physical life like the creatures which have been given no freedom of will and choice, his creation would inevitably be altogether futile, and a Wise Being cannot be expected to indulge in a futile exercise.

Besides, there is also another reason for swearing an oath by these four phenomena of the Universe regarding the occurrence of the Hereafter and the meting out of rewards and punishments. The ground on which the deniers of the Hereafter regard the life after death as impossible is this: When we are mixed up with dust after death and our particles have scattered away in the earth, how can it be possible that all these scattered particles of the body are reassembled and we are made to rise up again? The error of this apprehension is by itself removed when we consider deeply the four phenomena of the Universe, which have been presented as an argument for the Hereafter. The rays of the sun have their effect on all the collections of water on the surface of the earth, where their heat reaches. In this process countless drops of water evaporate from the collection, but they do not become extinct, and every drop remains preserved in the air as vapors. When Allah commands the same wind gathers the same vapors of the drops together, combines them into thick clouds, spreads those clouds on different parts of the earth and precisely at the time appointed by Allah causes each single drop to fall back to the earth in the form as it was in the beginning. This phenomenon that is occurring before the eyes of man daily testifies that the particles of the bodies of the dead men can also gather together at one command by Allah and the men can be raised up in the shape in which they lived before. Whether these particles are in the dust, or in the

water, or in the air, in any case they remain preserved in this very earth and its atmosphere. Why should it be difficult for the God Who gathers together the vapors of water after they had dispersed in the air, by means of the same air, and then causes them to rain as water, to gather together the scattered particles of the human bodies from the air, water and earth and then combine them in their original form and shape?

5The word hubuk in the original is also used for the paths and for the waves which are produced on the sand of the desert and the surface of stagnant water by the wind; it is also spoken for the curls in wavy hair. Here, the sky has been characterized by "hubuk" either because the sky is often overcast with clouds of different shapes, which go on changing because of the wind, and no shape lasts nor resembles any other, or because at night one sees the stars scattered in the sky in many different combinations and no combination resembles any other combination.

6The oath has been sworn by the sky of various appearances on this difference of views because of the similarity. That is, just as the clouds and the clusters of stars in the sky have different appearances and there is uniformity among them, so are also your views about the Hereafter, each different from the other. Some one says that this world is eternal and no Resurrection can take place. Another say s that this system is not eternal and can come to an end in the course of time, but whatever becomes extinct, including man, cannot possibly be resurrected. Another one regards resurrection as possible but, holds the belief that man in order to be requited for his good and evil deeds is born and reborn again and again in this very world. Some one believes in Hell and Heaven but combines the transmigration of the souls also with it. He thinks that the sinner goes to Hell to suffer the punishment as well as is born and reborn in this world for the sake of the punishment. Some one says that the life in the world is in itself an agony; as long as man's self remains attached to physical life, he goes on dying and taking birth again and again in this very world, and his real salvation is that he should attain annihilation. Some one believes in the Hereafter and Hell and Heaven, but says that God by giving death to His only son on the cross had atoned for the original sin of man, and man will escape the evil consequences of his evil acts by believing in the son. Some other people generally believe in the Hereafter and the meting out of the rewards and punishments but at the same time regard certain holy men as the intercessors, who are such favorites of Allah, or wield such influence with Him, that any one who attaches himself to them as a disciple, can escape the punishment whatever he may do in the world. About these holy men also there is no agreement among their devotees; every group of them has its own separate intercessor. This difference of the views itself is a proof that whenever man has formed an opinion about his own and the world's end, independent of Revelation and Prophet hood, he has formed it without knowledge; otherwise if man in this regard really had some direct means of knowledge there would not have arisen so many different and contradictory beliefs.

7The pronoun of anhu in this sentence either turns to the meting out of the rewards and punishments, or to various views. In the first case, it means: "The meting out of the rewards has to take place, in spite of your holding different beliefs about it; but only such a person is perverted from it, who has turned away

from the Truth." In the second case, the meaning is: “Only such a one is misled by these different views, who has turned away from the Truth."

8Here the Qur'an is warning man of an important truth. To judge or make an estimate on the basis of conjecture and speculation in the ordinary matters of worldly life may be useful to some extent, although it would be no substitute for knowledge, but it would be disastrous to make estimates and give judgments merely according to one's own conjectures and speculations in a question of such fundamental nature and importance as whether we are, or are not, responsible and accountable to anyone for the deeds and actions of our lifetime, and if we arc, to whom we are accountable, when and what shall be the accountability, and what will be the consequences of our success and failure in that accountability. This is not a question on which man may form an estimate merely according to his conjecture and speculation and then stake his entire life capital on the gamble. For if the conjecture proves to be wrong, it would mean that the man has doomed himself to utter ruin. Furthermore, this question is not at all included among those questions about which one may form a right opinion by the exercise of analogy and conjecture, For conjecture and analogy can work only in those matters which are perceptible for man, whereas this is a question which does not come under perception in any way, Therefore, it is not at all possible that a conjectural and analogical judgment about it may be right and correct. As for the question: What is the right way for man to form an opinion about the matters which are no perceptible and incomprehensible in nature? this has been answered at many places in the Qur'an, and from this Surah also the same answer becomes obvious, and it is this:

(1) Man himself cannot reach the reality directly;

(2) Allah gives the knowledge of the reality through His Prophets; and

(3) man can ascertain the truth of that knowledge in this way: he should study deeply the countless signs that are found in the earth and heavens and in his own self, then consider seriously and impartially whether those signs testify to the reality that the Prophet bas presented, or to the different ideologies that the other people have presented in this regard.

This is the only method of scientific investigation about God and the Hereafter that has been taught in the Qur'an. Doomed would be the one who discarded this method and followed his own analogies and conjectures.

9That is, "They do not know what fate they are heading for on account of their wrong conjectures, whereas every way that is adopted with a wrong view of the Hereafter only leads to ruin. He who is a denier of the Hereafter is not at all preparing himself for any accountability and is engrossed in the thought that there would be no life after death, whereas the time would suddenly come when against all this expectations he would open his eyes in the new life and he would realize that there he has to render an account of each of his acts and deeds. The person who is expending his life under the idea that he

would come back to this very world after death, will come to know as soon as he dies that all doors of return are closed, that there is no chance of compensating for the misdeeds of the previous life by any new actions, and that there is another life ahead in which he has to meet with and suffer the consequences of his worldly life for ever after. The person who commits suicide in the hope that after he has destroyed his self and its desires he would escape the agony of life in the form of total annihilation, will find as soon as he passes through the gate of death that there is an everlasting life ahead and not mortality, where he has to explain as to why he had been straining every nerve to destroy the self that he had been blessed with instead of developing and adorning it in every possible way. Likewise, the one who continued committing disobedience of Allah throughout life, placing, reliance upon some son of Allah's becoming an atonement or some holy one's becoming an intercessor, will come to know as soon as he appears before Allah that there is neither any atoner there nor anyone wielding such influence and power that he may save him from Allah's grasp and punishment by means of his own power and influence. Thus, all these conjectural creeds are, in fact, an opiate under the intoxication of which these people are Lying senseless, and do not know where they are being misled by the ignorance which they have adopted by rejecting the true knowledge given by God and His Prophets.

10The disbelievers did not ask the question: When will Resurrection be? for the sake of seeking knowledge but for the purpose of taunt and ridicule. That is why they have been given such an answer. It is just like the taunting reaction of the wicked person who is admonished to desist from his immoral deeds, otherwise he would meet with the evil consequences of those deeds one day, and he asks in jest: When will that day be? Obviously, such a question is not asked to know the date of the occurrence of the evil end but to make fun of the admonition. Therefore, its right answer is that it will occur when the evildoers will meet with their doom. Besides, one should also understand well that if a denier of the Hereafter is discussing the question of the Hereafter sensibly, he can dispute the arguments in favor and against it, but he can never ask the question: On what date will the Hereafter occur? unless he has lost all reason. Whenever he puts such a question, it will only be as a taunt and ridicule. For it does not at all affect the real discussion whether the date of the occurrence of the Hereafter is stated or not. No one can deny the Hereafter only because the year and the month and the day of its occurrence have not been given, nor can one believe in it on hearing that it will occur on such and such a day of such and such a month and year. The date is no argument that may cause a denier to be convinced of its coming, for after that the question will arise: How can One believe whether on that particular day the Hereafter will actually occur?

11The word fitnah gives two meanings here:

(1) “Taste this torment of yours ; " and

(2)-"taste the mischief that you had created and spread in the world. "

12The disbelieves' asking: "When will the Day of Retribution be?" implied: "Why is it being delayed ?"

That is, "When we have denied it and have deserved the punishment for belying it, why doesn't it overtake us immediately ?" That is why when they will be burning in the Hell-fire, at that time it will be said to them: "This is that which you sought to be hastened. " This sentence by itself gives the meaning: It was Allah's kindness that He did not seize you immediately on the occurrence of disobedience from you and went on giving you respite after respite to think and understand and mend your ways. But the foolish people that you were, you did not take advantage of the respite but demanded that your doom should be hastened for you instead. Now you may see for yourself what it was that you were seeking to be hastened?"

13In this context the word muttaqi (the righteous) clearly implies those people who believed in the Hereafter when they were given the news of it by the Book of Allah and His Messenger, and adopted the attitude and way of life that they were taught for success in the life hereafter, and refrained from the way about which they had been told that it would involve man in the torment of God.

14Literally: ".. shall be receiving what their Lord will have granted them", but in this context "receiving" does not merely mean "to receive" but to receive joyfully. Obviously, when a person is given something of his own choice and liking, his receiving it will naturally have the meaning of accepting and receiving it joyfully.

15Some commentators have given this meaning of this verse: "Seldom did it so happen that they spent the whole night sleeping and did not spend a part of it, in the beginning of the night or in the middle or in the end of it, awake in the worship of Allah. " This commentary with a little variation in wording has been related from Hadrat lbn "Abbas, Anas bin Malik, Muhammad al-Baqir, Mutrif bin 'Abdullah, Abul 'Aliyah, Mujahid, Qatadah, Rabi` bin Anas and others. According to some other commentators, it means this: "They spent the major part of their nights in the worship of Allah Almighty and slept little. " This meaning has been reported from Hadrat Hasan Basri, Ahnaf bin Qais, and Ibn Shihab Zuhri, and the later commentators and translators have preferred this, for this appears to be in better agreement' with the words of the verse and the context. That is why we have adopted this meaning in the translation.

16That is "They did not belong to those who spent their nights in immoral and indecent acts and even then never thought of seeking Allah's forgiveness. On the contrary, they spent a major part of the nights in the worship of Allah and then in the early hours of dawn sought His forgiveness, saying that they did not do full justice to the worship that was due from them. The words hum yastaghfirun also contain an allusion to this that it befitted and suited them alone that they should exert their utmost in the service of their Lord and then, at the same time, should implore Him humbly for the forgiveness of their errors and shortcomings instead of exulting at and waging proud of their good acts. This could not be the way of those shameless, wicked people who committed sin and behaved arrogantly as well.

17In other words, on the one hand, they recognized the right of their Lord and duly discharged it; on the

other, they did not think that whatever Allah had given them, whether little or much, was wholly their own and their children's right, but they had the sense that in their possessions there was the right and share of every such person who was indigent and needy. They did not render help to the people as a charity so as to earn their gratitude for the favor done, but they regarded it as the people's right and discharged it as their own duty. Then their this service to mankind was not only confined to those who came to them for seeking help as beggars but anyone about whom they came to know that he had been left destitute, they would become anxious to render him necessary help of their own accord. There was no orphan who might have been left helpless, no widow who might have had no bread-winner, no disabled person who might be unable to earn a living, no one who might have lost his job, or whose taming might not be sufficing his needs, nobody who might have been hit by a calamity and might be unable to compensate for the loss by himself, in short, there was no needy one whose condition they might have known and yet might have withheld their help when they could have rendered him necessary help and support.

The following are the three qualities on the basis of which Allah regards them as the righteous doers of good, and says that these very qualities have made them worthy of Paradise; (1) That they believed in the Hereafter and refrained from every act and conduct which Allah and His Messenger had stated to be disastrous for the life-after-death; (2) that they exeted their utmost to do full justice to the service of Allah and still sought Allah's forgiveness instead of exulting at their acts of piety; and (3) that they served Allah's servants not as a favor to them but as their own duty and their right due from them. '

Here, one should also know and understand another thing; The right of the needy ones that has been mentioned here in the wealth of the believers does not imply the zakat, which has been imposed as religious duty on them. But this is the right that a well-.to-do believer himself feels there is in his possessions of the needy even after he has paid off the zakat, and he discharges it willingly even if it has not been made obligatory by the Shari'ah. lbn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Zaid bin Aslam and other scholars have understood this very meaning of this verse. In tact, the real spirit of this Divine Command is that a pious and virtuous person is never involved in the misunderstanding that he has become relieved of his duty of discharging the right of Allah and His servants that there was in his possessions after he has paid the zakat, and now he is not bound to help every needy and destitute person whom he comes across. Contrary to this, every servant of Allah, who is really pious and righteous, remains ever ready to do whatever good he can willingly, does not let slip any opportunity when he could do some good to the people in the world. He is not of the way of thinking that he has done whatever good he had been enjoined w do and now no more good is required to be done by him. The one who has recognized the true value of goodness, does not perform it as a burden but tries to cam more and more of it, greedily as a bargain to his own advantage, in his own interest.

18The signs imply those proofs which testify to the possibility and necessity of the Hereafter. The earth's own body and its structure, its having been placed at a suitable distance from the sun at a particular angle, the arrangement of heat and light and of different seasons on it, the provision of air and water on it, and of countless different kinds of treasures in its belly, covering its surface with a fertile crest and

causing to grow in it an endless variety of vegetables, generating countless races of the animals of the land and water and air, providing suitable food and proper conditions for the life of every species, creating and making available all those means and resources on it even before the creation of man, so as to meet and suit his ever increasing needs in every stage of history as well as accord with the development of his civilization and way of living, these and countless other signs can be seen in the earth and its surroundings by every discerning eye. The case of the one who has closed the doors of his heart to belief and faith is different. He will see in these every thing else but not any sign that may point to the reality. But an un-prejudiced person who has an open mind, will never form the idea after observing these signs that all this has come about as the result of an accidental explosion, that had occurred suddenly in the universe millions of years ago; he will rather be convinced that this wise and perfect work of art is the creation of an Omnipotent and Omniscient God. And that God Who has made this earth cannot be helpless to resurrect man after death, nor can He be so foolish as to leave a sensible and intelligent being like man after granting him powers and authority to roam at will in His earth. The fact that man has been granted powers and authority by itself demands that he should be accountable; otherwise it would be against wisdom and justice; and the Creator's being all-powerful (Omnipotent) is by itself a proof that after the human species has fulfilled its function in the world, He can raise all its members back to life and gather them together from wherever they are lying dead in the catch for the purpose of accountability.

19That is, "You may not look outside yourself; look within your own self, and you will find countless signs testifying to the same truth. You will see how your creation was begun by combining a microscopic sperm with a microscopic egg in a corner of the mother's body; how you were blessed with a body of unique structure and a self endowed with wonderful powers and abilities; how you were brought out from the dark world of your mother's womb, as soon as your structure became complete, into this vast world, equipped with an automate machine within yourself, which goes on functioning by itself from the day you take birth till your maturity and old age, to assimilate food, produce blood and circulate it in the veins, discharge waste matter, prepare new parts in place of the wasted and worn out parts of the body, resisting the internal and the external hazards to the body and compensating for the losses, even for sending you to peaceful sleep after exhaustion, without any effort required to be made by you towards these basic needs of life. A wonderful brain has been placed under your skull in whose complicated layers lies filled an invaluable wealth of intellect, thought, imagination, consciousness, discrimination, will, memory, desire, feeling and emotions. Inclinations and trends, and other mental abilities. You have been provided with numerous means of knowledge which supply you with every kind of informational through the eye, nose, cars and skin. You have been given the tongue and the power of speech by which you can express your thoughts and feelings. And then your ego has been placed as a ruler over the entire kingdom of your body so that it may employ all the powers and abilities and form opinions and decide as in what ways ,you have to expend and employ your time and labor and efforts, what you have to reject and what you have to accept, what should be your objective in life and what you should shun and avoid.

Thus equipped when you were brought into the world, you saw what provisions had been made ready here for your nourishment, development and the progress and perfection of your self by virtue of which

you reached a particular stage of lift when you became able to use the powers and authority you had been endowed with.

For using these powers you were given means in the earth, provided with opportunities, and given ability to control and employ many of the things as you pleased. You had all the ways of disbelief and faith, sin and obedience, justice and injustice, good and evil, truth and falsehood, open before you; there were those who invited to each of these ways and there were the means to lead to each one of them. Whoever among you selected one particular way did so on his own responsibility, for he had the power to decide and choose endowed in himself. Depending on the choice made by each one and taking advantage of the opportunities thus afforded of employing his powers of will and intention some one became a good man and another a bad man; some one adopted the way of belief and faith and another the way of disbelief, polytheism or atheism; some one withheld himself from unlawful desires, and another did whatever he wanted in obedience to his self; some one became an oppressor and another the oppressed; some one carved out his duties and another usurped the rights of others; some one continued to do good till his last breath, another went on committing evil till his last moment of lift; some one exerted himself to raise the word of the truth, another went on oppressing the followers of the truth in order to cause falsehood to flourish.

Now can a person, unless he is absolutely blind and senseless, say that a being such as this has appeared on the earth just by an accident? that there is no wisdom and no plan working behind his creation? that the storms that he is raising on the earth are without a purpose and will end up without entailing any consequence ? that there will be no reward for a good act and no punishment for an evil act? and that injustice will not be redressed and the unjust will not be brought to book? Such things may be said by a person who has lost his reason, or by the one who is resolved not to acknowledge at all the wisdom of a Wise Being working behind the creation of man. But an un-prejudiced, sensible person cannot help but admit that the creation of man, the powers and abilities he has been given, and the position he has been granted here, is certainly a grand, wise plan, and the wisdom of the God Whose plan it is, inevitably demands that man should be questioned about his actions and deeds; and it cannot be right to entertain the doubt about the powers of God that He will not be able to recreate man whom He has brought up to this noble position of honor from a mere microscopic cell.

20By the heaven here is meant the "heavens", by "provisions" all that man is given for his survival and functioning in the world, and by "that which is promised. " Resurrection, gathering together, accountability, meting out of rewards and punishments, and Hell and Heaven, which have been foretold and promised in all Divine Books and now in the Qur'an. The verse means to say; "The decisions as to who should be given what and how much in the world arc taken in heavens, and also the decision as to when should any of you be recalled for the purpose of accountability and dispensation of the rewards and punishments."

21Now, from here to the end of verse 46, brief allusions have been made, one after the other, to the end

of Allah's Prophets and some of the nations of the past, which arc meant to impress two things:

First, that in human history God's law of retribution has been working constantly, in which precedents are found of the rewards for the righteous and of punishments for the wicked people continuously. This is a clear evidence of the fact that even in the life of this world the Creator's relationship with man is not merely based on the physical law but the moral law also is working side by aide with it. And when the temper of the kingdom of the universe is such that the creation which has been given an opportunity to act morally while living in a physical body, should not only be dealt with on the basis of physical laws, like animals and plants, but the moral law also should be applied to its moral acts this by . itself points to the truth that a time must come in this kingdom when on the completion of man's role in the physical world full results of his moral acts should also appear strictly in accordance with the moral law because in the physical world they do not appear fully.

The second thing that has been impressed by these historical allusions Is that the nations which did not believe in the Prophets of Allah and based thou conduct and attitude in life on the denial of the Oneness of Allah, the Prophet hood and the Hereafter, were ultimately doomed to destruction. This continuous experience of history testifies that God's law of morality that was conveyed through the Prophets, and on the basis of which man will be subjected to accountability in the Hereafter, is entirely based on the truth. For whichever nation determined its conduct and attitude in the world independent of this law, considering itself irresponsible and un-accountable, has gone straight to its doom.

22This story has been narrated at three places in the Qur'an above, in Hud: 69-73, Al-Hijr: 51-56 and Al-`Ankabut: 31.

23In view of the context in which this sentence has occurred, it can have two meanings:

(1) That the Prophet Abraham himself said to the guests, "I have never had the chance to see you before: you are perhaps new-comers in this land. "

(2) That after responding to their salutation, the Prophet Abraham said these words to himself, or to his servants, while going inside the house for arranging the feast, "They appear to be strangers: people of their noble nature and appearance have not been seen before in this land."

24That is, "He did not tell his guests that he was going to arrange food for them, but after they were seated he went quietly into the house to arrange a feast for them, so that the guests should not refuse it out of formality. "

25In Surah Hud, the words are ijlin hanidh, a roasted calf; here bi-'ijlin samin: a fatted calf that he got roasted.

26That is, "When they did not stretch out their hands for food, the Prophet Abraham became afraid in his heart. The reason for this fear could be that in tribal life the strangers' going to a house and avoiding food used to be an indication that they had come with an evil design. But most probably when they. refrained from food the Prophet Abraham realized that they were angels, who had come in human guise; and since the angels came in human guise only on extraordinary occasions, he became afraid that they must have come in that guise on some dreadful mission.

27According to Surah Hud: 71, this was the good news of the birth of the Prophet Isaac (peace be upon him) and this also contained the good news that through the Prophet Isaac he would have a grandson like the Prophet Jacob (peace be upon him).

28That is, "I am not only old but barren too. How shall a child be born to me?" According to the Bible, the Prophet Abraham at that time was a hundred years old and Sarah was ninety. (Gen., 17: 17).

29The object of this story is to tell that Allah will certainly reward His servant, who did full justice to the rights of His worship in the world, in the Hereafter handsomely, but even In this world he rewarded him well by giving him children at an age when according to the common physical laws he could not beget children and his aged wife having remained childless throughout life had completely despaired of ever bearing children; and then He granted him such extraordinary children as have not been granted to any one else in the world. There has been no other man in history in whose line four Prophets might have been born in succession. It was the Prophet Abraham alone whose line continued to be blessed with Prophet hood for three generations, and the illustrious Prophets like Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph (peace be upon them) emerged from his house.

30As the angels come in human guise only on highly important occasions the Prophet Abraham used the word khatb to find out the purpose of their visit; the word khatb in Arabic is used for an errand of same extraordinary nature.

31That is, to the people of the Prophet Lot. The epithet of "a guilty people" was enough to. tell which people were meant in view of the gravity of their crimes. They have already been mentioned in the Qur'an in Al-A'raf: 80-84, Hud:74-83, Al-Hijir : 58-79, Al-Anbiya`: 74-75, Ash-Shu'ara: 160-175, AnNaml: 54-58, As-Saaffat : 133-137.

32That is, "Each stone has been marked by your Lord's command to show 'for which culprit it is meant." According to the details given in the Qur'an, in Surahs Hud and Al-Hijr, their towns were turned upside down, and then showered with stones of baked clay. From this one can understand that the entire land was overturned by a severe earthquake and the people who tried to escape were showered with brimstone and destroyed.

33As to what happened between them and the people of the Prophet Lot when the angels reached his house after their meeting with the Prophet Abraham, has been left out. The details have been given in the Surahs Hud, AI-Hijr and Al Ankabut above. Here mention is being made only of the time when they were going to be visited by the scourge.

34That is, "Among the whole nation and in the entire land there was only one house that shone with the light of the Faith and Islam, and it was no other but the house of the Prophet Lot himself. The rest of the entire nation was sunk , deep in sin and wickedness and its whole country was brimming over with filth and immorality. Therefore Allah rescued the people of that one house and then sent down the torment on the land, which did not spare any one of the wicked people. In this verse three important themes have been discussed:

(1) That Allah's law of retribution does not decree the total destruction of a nation as long as there remains a considerable element of good in it. As against the majority of the bad people if it still contains a small element of those who continue trying to invite others to the right way, Allah gives it an opportunity to work, and goes on increasing the respite of the nation which is not yet wholly devoid of goodness. But in case theca remains no element of goodness at all in the nation, Allah's law is that He somehow rescues by His power and grace some of the good people, who might have become weary and helpless fighting evil in its settlements, and deals with the rest as every sensible master would deal with his rotten fruit.

(2) That "Muslim" is not the name only of the people who arc the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) but of all the Prophets before him and their followers who were also Muslims. Their religions were not mutually exclusive that one might be the religion of the Prophet Abraham, another of the Prophet Moses and still another of the Prophet Jesus, but they all were Muslims and their religion was this same Islam. This truth has been explained at several places in the Qur'an and there is no room for ambiguity in this regard. For instance, sec Al Baqarah: 128, 131-132; Al-'Imran: 67: Al-Ma'idah: 44, 111; Yunus: 72,84; Yusuf: 101; AI-A'raf: 126; An-Naml: 31, 42, 44.

(3) That the words `Mu 'min " and Muslim " have been used as synonyms in this verse. If this verse is read with verse 14 of Al-Hujurat, the error of the thinking of those people becomes obvious, who regard Mu 'min and Muslim as two independent terms of the Qur'an, which have been used in one and the same meaning every where, and Muslim is necessarily used for the person who might have entered the fold of Islam by professing the Faith only verbally, without true faith. (For further explanation, see E. N . 31 of Surah AI-Hujurat).

35One sign": the Dead Sea, southern part of which still presents the signs of a great disaster. The archaeologists have expressed the opinion that the principal cities of the people of Lot were probably sunk underground and the waters of the Dead Sea spread over them. For that part of this sea which is situated to the south of the small peninsula called "AI-Lisan" clearly seems to be a later development, and the signs of the ruins of the Dead Sea found to the north of this peninsula are very different from

those found in the south. From this it is concluded that the southern part was once higher than the sea level. At some later time it sank and went under water. The period of its sinking also seems to be about 2000 B.C. and the same precisely is the time of the Prophets Abraham and Lot historically. In 1965 an American archaeological research party discovered a large grave-yard at Al-Lisan which contains more than twenty thousand graves. From this one is led to think that nearby it there must have existed a large city. But no ruins of any such city are found in the adjoining area, which might have given rise to such a big grave-yard. This fact also strengthens the doubt that the city whose grave-yard it was has sunk under the sea. The area to the south of the sea still abounds in the ruins and the underground stocks of sulfur, resin, tar and natural gas found in this area lead one to believe that hell must have been let loose at this place at Borne time by the eruption of lava and the play of lightning. (For further explanation, see E.N. 114 of Ash-Shu'ara').

36"A clear authority': such miracles and clear evidences which made it absolutely manifest that he had been appointed as a Messenger by the Creator of the earth and heavens.

37That is, they called him sometimes a sorcerer and sometimes a madman.

38A whole history has been compressed into this brief sentence. To understand it well one should know that Pharaoh was the absolute ruler of the greatest center of civilization and culture of the world in those days and the people of the adjoining lands were overawed by his power and might. Obviously, when he might have sunk suddenly one day in the sea along with his armies, the event must have become well known not only in Egypt but among all the neighboring nations as well. At this, except for those whose kith and kin had sunk, there was no one else among their own people, or in the other nations of the world who would mourn them or write an elegy on them, or would at least express sorrow and say that good and noble people had become a victim of the disaster. Instead of this, as the world had become fed up with their wickedness and injustices, every person heaved a sigh of relief at their exemplary fate, everyone cursed them, and anyone who heard this news exclaimed that the wicked people had deserved the fate justly. In Surah Ad-Dukhan the same thing has been expressed, thus: "Then neither did the heavens weep on them nor the earth." (For explanation, see E.N. 26 of Surah Ad-Dukhan).

39The word used for this wind is aqim, which is used for a barren woman, though literally it means dry. If the literal meaning is taken it would mean that it was such an intensely hot and dry wind that on whatever it blew it caused it to become absolutely dry; and if it is taken in the idiomatic sense it would mean that like a barren woman it was a wind without any benefit: neither it was pleasant, nor it brought rain, nor fertilized the trees, nor contained any other benefit for which the wind blows. At other places it has been stated that this wind was not only useless and dry but it blew so violently that it swept the people off the ground and it continued to rage for eight days and seven nights continuously, till it laid the entire land of the `Ad waste. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 20, 21 of Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah, and E.N.'s 25 to 28 of Al-Ahqaf).

40The commentators have disputed as to which respite it implies. Hadrat Qatadah says that it alludes to that verse of Surah Hud in which it has been stated that when the Thamud killed the she camel of the Prophet Salih, they were warned by Allah that they had three more days to enjoy lift after which they would be overtaken by the torment. Contrary to this, Hadrat Hasan Basri has expressed the opinion that this thing had been said by the Prophet Salih to his people in the beginning of his mission and by this he meant that if they would not adopt the way of repentance and faith, they would be granted a respite to enjoy lift in the world only till an appointed tint, and then they would be overtaken by the torment. The second of these two commentaries seems to be more correct, for the following verse ("But in spite of this they defied the command of their Lord") indicates that the respite being mentioned here had been given before the defiance and they committed it after the warning. On the contrary, the three days' respite mentioned in Surah Hud had been given after the wicked people had committed the final defiance which became decisive in their cast and sealed their doom for ever afterwards

41Different words have been used for this torment at different places in the Qur'an. Somewhere it has been called rajfah (a frightful and shocking calamity), somewhere saihah (a crashing and thundering disaster), somewhere taghiyah (a most severe affliction) and here it has been described as sa'iqah (a calamity that strikes like a thunderbolt). Probably this torment had occurred as an earthquake which was also accompanied by a terrible noise.

42Intisar from which the word muntasirun in the original is derived means to save oneself from an attack by somebody as well as to avenge oneself on the attacker.

43After presenting historical arguments 'for the Hereafter, now arguments from the universe are being presented in proof of the same.

44The word must' (pl. musi'un) may mean the one who possesses power and means, and also the one who can extend and expand something. According to the first meaning, the verse would mean: "We have built this heaven by Our own might and not with somebody else's help, and its erection was in no way beyond Us. Then how can you ever conceive that We shall not be able to recreate it ?" According to the second meaning, it would mean: "This huge universe that We have created, is not a finished work, but We are expanding it continuously, and new and ever new manifestations of Our creation are appearing in it every moment. How do you then think that such a marvelous Creator would not be able to repeat His creation.

45For explanation, sec E.N. 18 above. For further explanation, sec E.N. 74 of Surah An-Naml, E.N. 29 of Surah Ya Sin and E.N.'s 7 to 10 of AzZukhruf

46That is, "Everything in the world has been created on the principle of the pairs. The whole system of the Universe is functioning on the principle that certain things arc complementary and matching to certain

others, and their combination brings into being countless new forms and combinations. Nothing here is so unique as may have no match, for the fact is that a thing becomes productive only after it has combined with its matching partner. " (For further explanation, sec E.N. 31 of Surah Ya Sin, and' E.N. 12 of Az-Zukhruf).

47That is, "The erection of the whole Universe on the principle of the pairs and the existence of all things in the world in couples is a reality that testifies . expressly to the necessity of the Hereafter. If you consider it deeply you will yourself come to the conclusion that when everything in the world has a partner and nothing becomes productive without combining with its partner, how can the life of the world be without a match and partner? Its match and partner necessarily is the Hereafter. Without that partner it would be absolutely fruitless."

To understand what follows one should also understand that the discussion heretofore centers around the Hereafter, but this very discussion and. argument afford a proof of the Oneness of God. Just as the argument of the rain, the structure of the earth, the creation of the heavens, man's own existence, the wonderful working of the law of pairs in the Universe, testify to the possibility and necessity of the Hereafter, so they are also testifying that neither is this Godless nor it has many gods, but One All-Wise and All-Powerful God alone is its Creator and Master and Controller. That is why in the following verses the invitation to the Oneness of God is being presented on the basis of these very arguments. Furthermore, the inevitable result of believing in the Hereafter is that man should give up his attitude of rebellion against God and should adopt the way of obedience and servitude. He remains turned away from God as long as he remains involved in the false belief that he is not accountable before anyone and that he will not have to render an account of his deeds of the worldly life to anyone. Whenever this misunderstanding is removed, man immediately comes to the realization that he was committing a grave error by regarding himself as irresponsible, and this realization compels him to return to God. That is why immediately after concluding the arguments for the Hereafter, it has been said: "So flee unto Allah."

48Though these sentences are the Word of Allah, the speaker here is not Allah but the Holy Messenger of Allah. In fact, Allah has made his Messenger say: "Flee unto Allah: I am warning you from Him." An instance of this style is found in the very first Surah of the Qur'an, Surah Al-Fatihah, where the Word is of Allah, but the speakers are the servants, who say: Iyyaka na `budu wa Iyyaka nasta 'in; ihdi-nas sirat al-mustaqim: "Thee alone we worship and to Thee alone we pray for help. Show us the Straight Way." Just as there it has not been said: "O believers, pray to your Lord thus," but the context itself shows that it is a supplication which Allah is teaching His servants, so here also it has not been said; "O Prophet, say to these people,".but the context itself indicates that it is an invitation to the Oneness of God, which the Holy Prophet is presenting according to Allah's command. Besides Surah Al-Fatihah, there are several other instances also of this style in the Qur'an, where though the Word is of Allah, the speakers somewhere are the angels and somewhere the Holy Prophet, and the context shows as through whom Allah is speaking at that particular place. For instance, see Surah Maryam: 64-65, As-Saaffat :159-167, Ash-Shu`ara': 10.

49That is, “This has not happened for the first time that the people are calling the Messenger sent by Allah a sorcerer and a madman when they heard the news of the Hereafter and the invitation to the Oneness of Allah from him. The whole history of Prophethood bears evidence that ever since the Messengers started coming for the guidance of mankind, ignorant people have been repeating the same folly in the same manner. Whichever Messenger came and gave them the warning that they were not the servants of many gods but One God alone is their Creator and Deity and Master of their destinies, ignorant people said that he was a sorcerer, who wanted to beguile and misguide them by his sorcery. Whichever Messenger came and warned them that they had not been created and left irresponsible in the world, but that at the conclusion of their life-work they would have to present themselves before their Creator and Master and render an account of their deeds and in consequence thereof they will be rewarded or punished accordingly, the foolish people cried out that he was a madman and had lost his reason because no one could be resurrected after death. "

50That is, “The fact that the people of different countries and nations adopted the same attitude as against the invitation of the Prophets and opposed them in the same manner in different ages for thousands of years could not be due to the reason that all the former and the latter generations had settled in a conference that whenever a prophet came with his message, he should be given such and such an answer. Then, what could be the reason for the uniformity of their attitude and behavior? There could be no other reason for this than that rebellion and transgression was their common characteristic. As all the ignorant people of every age have been desirous of living a life free of Allah's service and fearless of His accountability, whoever called them to the service of Allah and to lead a God-conscious life, they gave him one and the same fixed answer. "

This also throws light on an important truth and it is this: The motives that man has been naturally endowed with for adopting error and guidance, goodness and evil, justice and injustice, and similar other conducts, have been appearing in every age and in every corner of the world in the like manner no matter how different might have been their forms due to advancement of means and resources. Whether the man of today fights by means of the tanks and aircraft and hydrogen bombs and the man of the ancient time fought with stones and sticks, the basic motives for fighting between men have always been the same. Likewise, the atheist of today might heap up his arguments for atheism as he likes, his motives for following that creed are precisely the same as had been of an atheist six thousand years ago and in his reasoning also he is not basically any different from his predecessor

51In this verse a method of the preaching of religion has been taught, which should be well understood. When a preacher of the truth has presented his message clearly before a person with rational arguments, and has also removed his doubts and objections and answered his arguments, he becomes relieved of his duty of making the truth plain. Even after this if the other person persists in his belief and creed, the responsibility for it does not lie on the preacher of the truth. It is no more necessary that he should pursue the same person, should go on spending his time in discussing things with him, and should make it a point that he has somehow to convince the same one man of the truth. The preacher, in fact, has done

his duty; if the other man is not convinced, let hire alone. If the preacher does not any more attend to him, he cannot be blamed for letting a person remain involved in error, because now the other person himself is responsible for his deviation and error.

52The Holy Prophet has not been addressed here to be taught this method because, God forbid, in his preaching he unnecessarily pursued the people and Allah wanted to stop him from this fact, the actual reason for stating this method is that when a preacher of the truth has done his best to make the people understand his message in a rational way and then seeing the signs of stubbornness in them withdraws from them, the people inveigh against him and start accusing him of indifference and inattention whereas, they, as they say, want to discuss things in order to understand his message. The fact, however, is that they do not intend to understand anything but only to involve the preacher in disputation and waste his time. Therefore, Allah Himself said in clear words: "Turn away from them: you are not at all to blame for showing any indifference towards them." After this nobody could blame the Holy Prophet that according to the Book that he had brought he had been appointed to make them understand his religion: then why he did not answer their objections.

53That is, "I have not created them for the service of others but for My own service. They should serve Me, for I am their Creator. When no one else has created them, no one else has the right that they should serve him; and how can it be admissible for them that they should serve others instead of Me, their Creator?" Here, the question arises that Allah Almighty is not the Creator only of the jinn and men but of the entire Universe and of every thing in it. Then, why has it been said only about the jinn and men that He has not created them for the service of others but of Himself ? whereas every single creature is there to serve Allah. The answer is: On the earth only the jinn and men have been granted the freedom that they may serve Allah within their sphere of choice if they so like; otherwise they can turn away from Allah's service as well as serve others beside Hun. The rest of the creatures in the world do not have this kind of freedom. They do not have any choice whatever that they may not worship and serve Allah, or may serve any other. Therefore, only about the jinn and men it has been said here that by turning away from the obedience and servitude of their Creator within the bounds of their option and choice and by serving others than the Creator, they are fighting their own nature. They should know that they have not been created for the service of any other but the Creator, and for them the right way is that they should not abuse the freedom granted them, but within the bounds of this freedom also they should serve God voluntarily just as every particle of their body is serving Him involuntarily in the sphere where they have not been granted any freedom,

The word `ibadat (service, worship) in this verse has not been used in the sense of only prayer, fasting and other kinds of such worship so that one may understand that the jinn and men have been created only for performing the Prayer, observing the Fast and for praising and glorifying Allah. Although this sense also is included in it, this is not its complete sense. Its complete sense is that the jinn and men have not been created for the worship, obedience and carrying out of the orders of any other but Allah. They are not there to bow to any other, to carry out the orders of any other, to live in fear of any other, to

follow the religion enjoined by any other, to look upon any other as the maker and destroyer of ones destiny, and to supplicate any other than Allah for help. (For further explanation, see E.N. 63 of Surah Saba, E.N. 2 of Az-Zumar, E.N. 30 of A1 Jathiyah).

Another thing that incidentally becomes quilt obvious from this verse is that the jinn arc a separate and independent creation from men. This brings out the error of the thinking of those people, who assert that sonic people from among mankind have been called the jinn in the Qur'an. This same thing is also confirmed and testified by the following verses of the Qur'an: AI-An'am :100, 128, AI-A`raf, 38, 179, Hud: 119, AI-Hijr: 27 to 33, Bani Isra`il: 88, AI-Kahf: S0, As-Sajdah: 13, Saba: 41, Suad: 75, 76, Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 25, AI-Ahqaf: 18, Ar-Rahman: 15, 39, 56. (For a complete discussion of this question, see E. N . 21 of AI-Anbiya', E.N.'s 23, 45 of An-Naml, E.N. 24 of Saba).

54That is, "I do not stand in need of any kind of help from the jinn and men: that My Godhead would not function if they did not worship Me: that I would be no more God if they turned away from My service. I indeed do not stand in need of their service, but it is the demand of their own nature that they should serve Me. They have been created for this very object, and fighting nature would be to their own detriment."

And in saying: "I do not ask any sustenance of them nor do I ask them to feed Me," there is a subtle hint to this Those whom the people who have turned away from God worship in the world, worship, indeed, stand in need of these their worshipers. If they do not help sustain their godhead, it would not function even for a day. The gods do not provide for the worshipers but the worshipers provide for the gods instead. The gods do not feed them but they feed the gods instead. The gods do not protect them but the worshipers protect the gods instead. The worshipers, in fact, are their army through whom their godhead functions. Wherever the worshipers of the, false gods have ceased to exist, or the worshipers have given up their worship, the gods have lost all their pomp and glory and the world has seen how helpless they have become. Of all the deities Allah Almighty is the only real Deity Whose Godhead is functioning by His own power and might, Who does not take anything from His servants, but He alone gives His servants everything.

55The word matin as used in the original means strong and stable whom nobody can shake and move.

56"Those, ... wrong" Those who have violated the reality and the truth and their own nature The context itself shows that `those who have done wrong", here implies the people who are serving others than the Lord of the Universe, who disbelieve in the Hereafter, who regard themselves as irresponsible in the world, and have denied those Prophets who have tried to make them understand the reality.

57This is the answer to the disbelievers' demand: "Why doesn't the Day of Retribution Overtake us? Why is it being delayed?"

52. Surah At Tur (The Mount)

Name

It is derived from the very first cord "*Wat Tur-i*."

Period of Revelation

From the internal evidence of the subject matter it appears that this Surah too was revealed in the same stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah in which the Surah Adh-Dhariyat was revealed. While going through it one can clearly feel that during the period of its revelation the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was being showered with objections and accusations but there is no evidence yet to show that severe persecution of the Muslims had started.

Subject Matter and Topics

The subject matter of its first section (vv. 1-28) is the Hereafter. As arguments for its possibility, necessity and occurrence had already been given in Surah Adh-Dhariyat, these have not been repeated here. However, swearing an oath by some realities and signs which testify to the Hereafter, it has been stated most emphatically that it will surely come to pass, and none has the power to prevent its occurrence. Then, it has been stated as to what will be the fate of those who deny it when it actually occurs, and how will those who believe in it and adopt the way of piety and righteousness accordingly, be blessed by Allah.

Then, in the second section (vv. 29-49) the Quraish chiefs' attitude towards the message of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah he upon him) has been criticized. They called him a sorcerer, a madman, or a poet, and would thus mislead the common people against him so that they should not pay any serious attention to the message he preached. They looked upon him as a calamity that had suddenly descended on them and would openly wish that he met with a disaster so that they were rid of him. They accused him of fabricating the Qur'an by himself and of presenting it in the name of Allah, and this was, God forbid, a fraud that he was practicing. They would often taunt him, saying that God could not have appointed an ordinary man like him to the office of Prophethood. They expressed great disgust at his invitation and message and would avoid him as if he was asking

them for a reward for it. They would sit and take counsels together to devise schemes in order to put an end to his mission. And while they did all this they never realized what creeds of ignorance they were involved in and how selflessly and sincerely was Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) exerting himself to deliver them from their error. While criticizing them for this attitude and conduct, Allah has put them certain questions, one after the other, each of which is either an answer to some objection of theirs, or a criticism of some error. Then, it has been said that it would absolutely be of no avail to show them a miracle in order to convince them of his Prophethood, for they were such stubborn people as would misinterpret anything they were shown only to avoid affirming the faith.

In the beginning of this section as well as in its end, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has been given the instruction that he should persistently continue giving his invitation and preaching his message in spite of the accusations and objections of his opponents and enemies, and should endure their resistance patiently till Allah's judgment comes to pass. Besides, he has been consoled, as if to say "Your Lord has not left you alone to face your enemies, after raising you as a Prophet, but He is constantly watching over you. Therefore, endure every hardship patiently till the Hour of His judgment comes, and seek through praising and glorifying your Lord the power that is required for exerting in the cause of Allah under such conditions.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلطُّورِ ﴿١﴾

وَكِتَٰبٍ مَّسْطُورٍ ﴿٢﴾

فِى رَقٍّ مَّنشُورٍ ﴿٣﴾

وَٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْمَعْمُورِ ﴿٤﴾

وَٱلسَّقْفِ ٱلْمَرْفُوعِ ﴿٥﴾

وَٱلْبَحْرِ ٱلْمَسْجُورِ ﴿٦﴾

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ﴿٧﴾

مَّا لَهُۥ مِن دَافِعٍ ﴿٨﴾

يَوْمَ تَمُورُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ مَوْرًا ﴿٩﴾

وَتَسِيرُ ٱلْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا ﴿١٠﴾

فَوَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ فِي خَوۡضٖ يَلۡعَبُونَ ١٢

يَوۡمَ يُدَعُّونَ إِلَىٰ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعّٗا ١٣

هَٰذِهِ ٱلنَّارُ ٱلَّتِي كُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ١٤

أَفَسِحۡرٞ هَٰذَآ أَمۡ أَنتُمۡ لَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ١٥

ٱصۡلَوۡهَا فَٱصۡبِرُوٓاْ أَوۡ لَا تَصۡبِرُواْ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيۡكُمۡۖ إِنَّمَا تُجۡزَوۡنَ مَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ١٦

[1-16] By the (mount) Tur,[1] and an open Book written on a fine scroll,[2] and the inhabited House,[3] and the elevated roof,[4] and the surging ocean,[5] the torment of your Lord shall surely come to pass, which none can avert.[6] It will be on a Day when the heaven shall reel and shake violently,[7] and the mountains shall fly about.[8] Woe on that Day to the deniers who are today engaged in their (useless) arguments for sport.[9] The Day when they are driven and pushed to Hell-Fire, it will be said to them, "This is the same Fire that you were wont to deny. Now tell: Is this magic? Or, do you not perceive it?[10] Now burn! Whether you bear it patiently or not, it is all the same for you. You are being recompensed only according to your deeds."

إِنَّ ٱلۡمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّٰتٖ وَنَعِيمٖ ١٧

فَـٰكِهِينَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ۖ وَوَقَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ عَذَابَ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٨﴾

كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوفَةٍ ۖ وَزَوَّجْنَـٰهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

[17-20] The righteous[11] shall be in Gardens and Bliss, rejoicing in what their Lord shall give them; and their Lord shall save them from the torment of Hell.[12] (It will be said to them:) "Eat and drink with relish[13] as a reward for what you have been doing." They will be reclining on couches, .facing each other, and We shall wed them to houris with beautiful eyes.[14]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِإِيمَـٰنٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَآ
أَلَتْنَـٰهُم مِّنْ عَمَلِهِم مِّن شَىْءٍ ۚ كُلُّ ٱمْرِئٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ ﴿٢١﴾

وَأَمْدَدْنَـٰهُم بِفَـٰكِهَةٍ وَلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

يَتَنَـٰزَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَّا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْثِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

۞ وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِلْمَانٌ لَّهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَّكْنُونٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِىٓ أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَىٰنَا عَذَابَ ٱلسَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْبَرُّ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٨﴾

[21-28] Those who have believed and their offspring also have followed in their footsteps in degrees of faith, We shall join to them those of their offspring also (in Paradise) and shall not deprive them of anything of their deeds.[15] Every person is a pledge for what he has earned.[16] We shall go on providing them well with fruits and meat,[17] such as they may desire. They shall zealously be passing from hand to hand a cup of wine which shall neither contain idle talk nor immorality.[18] And there will go round to them young boys, exclusively appointed for their service,[19] who will be as lovely as- well-guarded pearls. They will turn to one another and ask (about their worldly lives). They will say, "Before this we lived among our kinsfolk, in fear and dread.[20] Consequently, Allah has been bounteous to us and has saved us from the torment of the scorching wind.[21] Indeed, we prayed only to Him in our previous life. Most surely He is the Beneficent, the Merciful."

فَذَكِّرْ فَمَآ أَنتَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

[29] So, O Prophet, go on admonishing (them). By the grace of your Lord, you are neither a soothsayer nor mad.[22]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرَبَّصُ بِهِۦ رَيْبَ ٱلْمَنُونِ ﴿٣٠﴾

قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا۟ فَإِنِّى مَعَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلَٰمُهُم بِهَٰذَآ ۚ أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

[30-32] Do they say, "He is a poet for whom we are awaiting the adverse turn of fortune?"[23] them, "Yes, wait; I too shall wait with you."[24] Do their minds command them to do so, or, are they a people who have transgressed all limits?[25]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقَوَّلَهُۥ ۚ بَل لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

فَلْيَأْتُوا۟ بِحَدِيثٍ مِّثْلِهِۦٓ إِن كَانُوا۟ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[33-34] Do they say, "This man himself has forged this Qur'an" The fact is that they do not want to believe.[26] Let them then produce a discourse like it, if they are true in what they say.[27]

أَمْ خُلِقُوا۟ مِنْ غَيْرِ شَىْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰلِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

أَمْ خَلَقُوا۟ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ ۚ بَل لَّا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

[35-36] Have they been created without a Creator? Or, are they their own creators? Or, have they created the heavens and the earth? The fact is that they lack faith.[28]

أَمْ عِندَهُمْ خَزَآئِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ ٱلْمُصَيْطِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[37] Do they possess the treasures of your Lord? Or, is it they who control them?[29]

أَمْ لَهُمْ سُلَّمٌ يَسْتَمِعُونَ فِيهِ ۖ فَلْيَأْتِ مُسْتَمِعُهُم بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

أَمْ لَهُ ٱلْبَنَٰتُ وَلَكُمُ ٱلْبَنُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

[38-39] Do they have a ladder by climbing which they overhear what goes on in heavens? Then let any of them who has overheard bring a clear proof. Is Allah to have daughters and you sons?[30]

أَمْ تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُم مِّن مَّغْرَمٍ مُّثْقَلُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

[40] Do you ask them for any rewards that they are weighed down under a load of debt?[31]

أَمْ عِندَهُمُ ٱلْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

[41] Do they have the knowledge of the unseen realities whereby they may be writing down?[32]

أَمْ يُرِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ هُمُ ٱلْمَكِيدُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[42] Do they intend to devise a plot?[33] (If so,) the plot shall recoil upon the disbelieves themselves.[34]

أَمْ لَهُمْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[43] Do they have a god other than Allah? Exalted is Allah above what they associate with Him.[35]

وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ كِسْفًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ سَاقِطًا يَقُولُوا۟ سَحَابٌ مَّرْكُومٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

فَذَرْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُلَٰقُوا۟ يَوْمَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى فِيهِ يُصْعَقُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِى عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ عَذَابًا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

[44-47] Even if they saw fragments of the sky falling down, they would say, "this is a mass of clouds advancing."[36] Therefore, O Prophet, leave them to themselves till they meet that Day of theirs wherein they shall be struck down, the Day when neither shall their own plotting avail them anything nor shall anyone else come to their rescue. And even before that there awaits the wrongdoers another torment, but most of them do not know.[37]

وَٱصۡبِرۡ لِحُكۡمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعۡيُنِنَاۖ وَسَبِّحۡ بِحَمۡدِ رَبِّكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلَّيۡلِ فَسَبِّحۡهُ وَإِدۡبَٰرَ ٱلنُّجُومِ ﴿٤٩﴾

[48-49] Endure patiently, O Prophet, until your Lord's judgment comes to pass[38] sight.[39] Glorify your Lord with His praise when you rise up,[40] and glorify Him in the night too,[41] and also at the retreat of the stars.[42]

1Tur means a mountain, and at-Tur the particular mountain on which Allah had blessed the Prophet Moses with the Prophet hood.

2In ancient times the books and writings which were meant to be preserved for long were written on the skin of deer instead of the paper. This skin was especially prepared for writing as a thin and fine parchment and was called raqq terminologically. The Jews and Christians in general wrote the Torah, Psalms, the Gospels and the Prophets' Books on this same raqq so that they would endure. Here, by "an open Book" is implied the same collection of the holy scriptures which the followers of the Book possessed. It has ban described as "an open Book" because it was not extinct; it was read and one could easily find out what was written in it.

3According to Hadrat Hasan Basri, "the inhabited House" implies the House of Allah, the Ka`bah, which is never without its visitors and pilgrims at any time of the day and night. However, Hadrat `Ali, Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Qatadah, Dahhak, Ibn Zaid and other commentators have stated that it implies the Bait-al-ma 'mur (the inhabited House) which the Holy Prophet referred to in connection with his Mi'raj (Ascension), against the wall of which he had seen the Prophet Abraham reclining. Mujahid, Qatadah and Ibn Zaid say that just as the Ka`bah is the center and place of refuge for all God-worshipers, so is there in every heaven a similar Ka`bah for its dwellers which occupies a similar central position for the worshipers of Allah there. One of these Ka`bahs was the one against the wall of which the Holy Prophet had seen the Prophet Abraham reclining on the occasion of the Mi'raj; and with it the Prophet Abraham had a natural affinity, for he himself was the founder of the Ka`bah of the earth. In view of this explanation, this second commentary does not go against the commentary given by Hadrat Hasan Basri, but if both are read together, we can understand that here the oath has not been sworn only by the Ka'bah of the earth, but it also includes an oath by all the Ka'bahs that are there in the entire Universe.

4"The elevated roof : the sky which seems to be spread over the earth like a vault; here this word has

been used for the entire Universe. (For explanation, sec E.N. 7 of Surah Qaf).

5Several meanings have ban given of the word al-bahr-il-masjur as used in the original. Some commentators have taken it in the meaning of "full of fire"; sonic take it in the sense of "empty and un-occupied", the water of which might have sunk into the earth; some take it in the meaning of "restricted and confined" , by which they imply that the ocean has ban restrained so that its water neither sinks into the earth nor spreads over the land to drown all its dwellers. Some have taken it in the meaning of mixed and blended because in it swat and saline, warm and cold, water is mixed together; and sonic take it in the meaning of brimful and surging. The first two of these meanings bear no relevance to the context. These two states of the ocean-splitting of the bottom of the ocean and sinking of its water into the earth and then its being filled with fire-will appear on the Day Of Resurrection, as mentioned in Surah Takvir: 6 and Infitar: 3. These states of the future do not exist at present and therefore cannot be sworn by to convince the people of today of the occurrence of the Hereafter. Therefore, here al-bahr il-masjur can be taken only in the meaning of confined, mixed, brimful and surging.

6This is that truth for which an oath has been sworn by the five things. 'The torment of your Lord" implies the Hereafter, for it will be a torment for those who deny that it will come. That is why it has been called "the torment of your Lord" instead of the Resurrection, or the Hereafter, or the Day of Retribution. Now let us consider how the flue things by which an oath has been sworn point to ita occurrence.

Mount Tur is the place where a decision was taken to exalt an oppressed nation and to abase an oppressive nation, and this decision was taken not on the basis of a physical law but on the basis of a Moral Law and the Law of ' Retribution. Therefore, Mount Tur has been presented as a symbol for the Hereafter. It implies that the decision of exalting a helpless nation like the children of Israel and the drowning of a powerful and mighty ruler like the Pharaoh along with his hosts, which was taken in a quiet and listless night on the Mount Tur, is proof of the fact how the nature of the Kingdom of the Universe demands that man who has been endowed with powers and authority, should be subjected to moral accountability and rewarded and punished accordingly, and for meeting this demand adequately a Day of Reckoning is necessary when the whole of mankind should be gathered together and called to account for its deeds. (For further explanation, see E.N. 21 of Surah Adh-Dhariyat).

The holy scriptures have' been sworn by because all the Prophets who came to the world from the Lord of the Universe and the Books they brought gave the same one news in every age which the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is giving, i.e. that all humans of the former and latter generations will one day be resurrected and presented before their God and rewarded and punished according to their deeds. There has been no heavenly Book that fails to proclaim that this life is not the only life, that man will not end in the dust after death and that there will be both accountability and reckoning.

"The inhabited House" has been sworn by for the reason that in those days the building of the Holy

Ka'bah was a great sign, particularly for the Arabs, which pointed to the truthfulness of Allah's Prophets and to the fact that they were supported by Allah Almighty's far-reaching wisdom and great power. 2,500 years before the revelation of these verses a person happens to visit these barren and uninhabited mountains, without any army or worldly provision, leaving behind a wife and a suckling child devoid of material support. Then, some time later the same man returns and builds at this desolate place a house for the worship of Allah and gives a call to the people to come and visit that house as pilgrims. This same structure and the call are so fervently received that the House becomes the center of the entire population of Arabia. People respond to the call enthusiastically and are drawn from every corner of the country to the House in a spirit of devotion and dedication. For 2,500 years this House continues to remain such a sanctuary of peace that while blood is shed in the country around it, none can dare raise his hand against another as soon as people enter its sacred boundaries; and then because of this very House Arabia is blessed with four months of such total peace every year when caravans travel in full safety, trade flourishes and markets are held. Then the House inspired such awe that during this whole period no tyrant could ever look towards it with an evil intention, and whoever dared do so was so seized by Allah's wrath that he became an object of warning for others. Such a miracle had been witnessed by the people themselves only 45 years before the revelation of these verses, and many of those who had witnessed it wore still present and living in the city at the time when these verses were being recited to the people of Makkah. What greater proof could be there of the fact that the Prophets of God never uttered empty words? They see with their eyes that which others do not see; they talk freely of such realities as cannot be comprehended by others by intellect; they engage at times in works which might be viewed as madness by the contemporary world but which might strike with amazement the people coming centuries afterwards. When men of such caliber have unanimously been giving in every age the news that Resurrection shall occur and accountability shall take place, it would be sheer madness to dub it as the bragging of the insane

The elevated roof (the sky) and the surging ocean have been Sworn by, for both these are a pointer to Allah's wisdom and His power, and the same wisdom and power prove both the possibility of the Hereafter and its occurrence and necessity. As for the sky's being a pointer we have already explained it in E. N . 7 of Surah Qaf above. As for the ocean, anyone who considers it deeply with an unbiased mind will testify that the provision of water in such abundance on the earth is by itself such an amazing work which cannot be the result of an accident or chance. This also proves that it is not possible that such a perfect system could comes into being by chance and the bodies of each species could be made precisely according to the depth in which it has to live. Its water has been made saline so that the bodies of the millions of the animals which die in it daily do not rot. Its water has been restrained at a particular level in such a way that it neither sinks into the earth's belly passing through its cracks and holes, nor it spreads over the land to submerge it, but has been checked at the same level for millions of years. Because of the existence of this great store of water the rainfall is arranged on the dry parts of 'the earth, in which the heat of the sun and the circulation of the winds cooperate with full regularity. Then the ocean's being inhabited with life and the creation in it of the various kinds of creatures has given man the advantage that he obtains from it his food and other necessities in large quantities. Then its being

checked and restrained to a limit has given birth to the continents and islands which are the home of man, and became of its adhering to and following some fixed laws has it become possible that man may navigate his ships in it. Such an arrangement could not have possibly existed without the wisdom of an All-Wise Being and the power of an Absolute Ruler, nor could this deep relationship that binds the interests of man and other creatures of the earth to the arrangement of the ocean be established at random. Now, if this is undeniable evidence that an All-Wise and All-Powerful God has created a vast and surging, brackish ocean also besides making countless other arrangements for the purpose of settling man on the earth, that person would be foolhardy, who expects that the All-Wise God would make arrangements for man that he should water his crops from the ocean and provide him sustenance thereby but would never question him as to how he returned thanks after eating His provisions, and that He would grant man the power that he should run his ships on the surface of the ocean but would never question him as to whether he had run the ships for the sake of the truth, righteousness and justice, or had committed robberies. Likewise, it would also be sheer folly to imagine that the Absolute Sovereign of Whose power the creation of the wonderful ocean is a petty, insignificant sign, Who has checked and restrained this vast store of water on this suspended globe which is moving in space, Who has dissolved a huge quantity of salt in it, Who has created countless varieties of creatures in it, and has arranged their sustenance therein, Who carries billions of cons of water from it every year by means of the wind and causes it to fall regularly as rain on millions of square miles of dry land, becomes so helpless and powerless after creating man that He could not resurrect him again.

7The word maut in the original is used for turning round, boiling, fluttering, rotating, swinging and moving forward and backward. The object of depicting the condition of the heavens on the Day of Resurrection in these words is to give the idea that the system of the heavens on that Day will be wholly upset, and when an observer will look up to the sky, he will feel that the constant pattern and order that it always used to present, has been broken and there is disorder, confusion and chaos on every side.

8In other words, the pull of the earth which is keeping the mountains in place, will become loose, they will be uprooted and start floating about in space like clouds.

9It means that they are mocking and ridiculing the news of Resurrection, Hereafter, Heaven and Hell when they hear it from the Prophet, and instead of û considering it seriously they are disputing it only for fun and amusement. Their discussions of the Hereafter are not meant to understand the reality, but only to amuse themselves, and they do not at all realize the fate for which they arc destined.

10That is, "When the Messengers in the world warned you of this Hell. you said that it was only by magic that they were fooling you. Now say: Is this Hell which you are facing mere magic, or you still do not see that you have actually met with the same Hell which was being foretold to you?"

11"The righteous" : the people who believed in the news given by the Prophets and who safeguarded

themselves in the world itself and refrained from thoughts and deeds that doom man to Hell.

12There seems to be no need to mention a person's being saved from Hell after it has been said that he will be admitted to Heaven, but at several places in the Qur'an these two things have been mentioned separately because a person's being saved from Hell is by itself a great blessing. And the words, "their Lord shall save them from the torment of Hell", is an allusion to the truth that man's being saved from Hell is possible only through Allah's grace and bounty; otherwise human weaknesses cause such flaws to occur in everyone's work that if Allah does not overlook them by His grace and instead decides to subject him to accountability, none can save himself from His punishment. That is why although entry into Paradise is a great bounty from Allah, his being saved from Hell is no less a mercy.

13Here, the word "with relish" contains vast meaning in itself. In Paradise whatever a man receives, he will have it without any labor and toil. There will be no question of its sustenance in short supply. Man will not have to spend anything for it. It will be precisely according to his desire and choice and taste. In whatever quantity and whenever he will desire it, it will be made available. He will not be staying there as a guest that he may feel shy of asking for something, but everything will be the reward of his lifelong deeds and the fruit of his own labors. His eating and drinking anything will not cause any illness nor will he eat for satisfying hunger or for survival but only for the sake of enjoyment. Man will be able to obtain as much pleasure from it as he pleases without the fear of indigestion, and the food eaten will not produce any filth. Therefore, the meaning of eating and drinking "with relish" in Paradise is much mere vast and sublime than what is understood by it in the world.

14For explanation, see E. N . 's 20, 29 of Surah As-Saaffat, and E. N . 42 of Ad-Dukhan.

15This theme has already been mentioned in Surah Ar-Ra`d: 23 and Al Mu'min: 8 above, but here a greater good news has been given. In the verse of Surah Ar-Ra'd only this much was said: "They will enter into them (Gardens) along with the righteous from among their forefathers, wives and descendants," and in Surah Al-Mu'min: "The angels ask forgiveness for the believers; they say Our Lord... (admit therein also) of their parents and wives and children who are righteous." Here, what has been said in addition is: If the children had been following in the footsteps of their forefathers in faith, they will be joined with them in Paradise even though they might not deserve, on the basis of their deeds, the same high rank which the elders would attain on the basis of their superior faith and deeds, and this joining will not be of the nature of occasional visits and meetings but they will be lodged permanently with them in Paradise as is borne out by the words: alhaqna bi-him. For the sake of further satisfaction it has been stated: "In order to be joined with their offspring the parents will not be lowered and reduced in rank, but in order to be joined with their elders the rank of the children will be enhanced and exalted".

Here, it should be borne in mind that this news has been given in respect of the children who on reaching maturity voluntarily decided to affirm faith and of their own free will followed in the footsteps of their righteous forefathers. As for those of the children of a believer, who might have died even before

reaching maturity, there cannot be any question of belief or disbelief, obedience or disobedience, for they will be admitted to Paradise automatically and will be lodged along with their parents to be a comfort of the eyes for them.

16Here, the metaphor of rahn (pledge) is very meaningful. If a person takes a loan from somebody, and the creditor keeps some article belonging to the debtor as a pledge with himself as a guarantee for the payment of his right, the debtor cannot redeem his pledge unless he pays off the debts; and if he does not redeem his pledge within the fixed time limit, the pledged article stands forfeited. The nature of the affair between man and God has been compared here to this very situation. The provisions, powers, capabilities and authority that God has granted man in the world are a debt that the Master has given to His servant, and as a guarantee for this debt the self of man is a pledge with Allah. If man by employing the provisions and the powers and authority in the right way earns the good by which the debt can be paid off, he will redeem the pledged thing, i.e. his own self, otherwise it will be forfeited. This thing has been said immediately after the preceding verse because even though the righteous believers may themselves be the people of a very high rank, their children cannot redeem their pledge unless they redeem their self by their own labor and effort. The earning of the forefathers cannot redeem the children. However, if the children are able to redeem themselves by virtue of their faith in some degree by following their righteous forefathers in their footsteps, it would then be Allah's grace and bounty that in Paradise He may exalt them from lower ranks to be joined with their parents in the higher ranks. The good done by the forefathers can benefit the children only so far, but if by their own deeds they deserve Hell, it is not possible that they may be admitted to Paradise for the sake of the forefathers. Another thing that can be deduced from this verse is that the less righteous children's being joined with their more righteous forefathers is not in reality the result of the lifework of the children but of their forefathers'. They by virtue of their deeds will deserve the grace that their children be joined with them in order to be a comfort of the eyes for them. That is why Allah will not lower their ranks to join them with their children but will exalt the children's ranks to be joined with them, so that the perfection of Allah's blessings on them is not marred by the distress that they may suffer on account of the remoteness of their children far away.

17In this verse, there is the mention of providing the dwellers of Paradise with every kind of meat generally, and in Surah Al-Waqi'ah it has been said: "They will be served with the flesh of fowls." We do not know what exactly will be the nature of this flesh. But just as in some expressions of the Qur'an and in some Ahadith it has been said about the milk of Paradise that it will not have been drawn from the udders of animals, and about the honey of Paradise it has been said that it will not have been produced by the bees, and about the wine of Paradise it has been said that it will not have been distilled froth rotten fruit, but these things will flow out of the springs into the canals by the power of Allah, so it can be argued by analogy that this flesh too will not be obtained from slaughtered animals but this too will be a natural product. The God Who can produce milk and honey and wine directly from earthly substances can also produce tasty flesh of every kind from the same substances, which should even surpass the flesh of animals in taste and delight. (For further explanation, see E.N. 25 of Surah AsSaaffat, E.N.'s 21 to 23 of

Surah Muhammad).

18That is, the wine of Paradise will not intoxicate that they should get drunk and talk nonsense, or use abusive language, or conduct and behave indecently as drunkards. (For further explanation, see E.N. 27 of As-Saaffat).

19Here, the word used is ghilman-ul lahum and not ghilman-u-hum. If ghilman-u-hum had been used, it would have meant that their servants in the world would be made their servants in Paradise too; whereas whoever from the world goes to Paradise, will go there on the basis of his own work and entitlement, and there is no reason that after his entry in Paradise he may be made a servant of the same master whom he had been serving in the world. But it can also be that a servant on account of his deeds may attain a higher rank than his master in Paradise. Therefore, by using ghilman-ul-lahum no room has been left for this suspicion This word provides the explanation that these will be the boys who will be exclusively appointed for their service in Paradise. (For further explanation, see E.N. 26 of Surah As-Saffat).

20That is, "We were not heedless and living a care-free life of ease and comfort, but we were always on our guard lest we should commit an evil for which we may be held accountable before God." Here, the mention of "...living among our kinsfolk, in fear and dread," in particular, has been made for the reason that man commits evil mostly when he is deeply engrossed in arranging ease and comfort for his children and trying to make their future secure and happy. For the same purpose he earns forbidden things by forbidden means, usurps the rights of others and makes evil plans. That is why the dwellers of Paradise will say to one another: "That which particularly saved us from the evil of the Hereafter was that while living among our families we did not think so much of arranging the pleasures of life and a splendid future for them as for avoiding for their sake those methods and means that might ruin our life in the Hereafter and that we should not lead our children also on to the way that might make them worthy of the torment of Allah.

21The word samum in the original means hot, scorching wind; here it implies the waves of hot wind that will be arising from Hell.

22After depicting a scene of the Hereafter the address now turns to the obduracies of the disbelieves of Makkah with which they were resisting the message of the Ho]y Prophet (upon whom be peace): This verse though apparently addressed to the Holy Prophet is actually meant for the disbelievers through him. Whenever he spoke of Resurrection and the gathering together of mankind, and accountability, and meting out of rewards and punishments, and Heaven and Hell and recited the verses of the Qur'anin support thereof, with the claim that he received that information from Allah and that it was Allah's Word that had been revealed to him, their leaders and religious guides and depraved people neither listened to him seriously themselves nor wanted that the other people should pay " any attention to him. Therefore, they would sometimes taunt him saying that he was a sorcerer, or that he was a poet, or that he was a

madman, or that he fabricated those strange things himself and presented them as Revelations from Allah only in order to impress the people. They thought that by passing such remarks against him they would be able to create suspicions among the people about him and would thus render his preaching ineffective and vain. About this it is being said: "O Prophet, the truth in fact is the same that has been presented from the beginning of the Surah to this point. If these people call you a sorcerer and a madman on account of these things, you should not take it to heart but should go on arousing the people from their heedlessness and warning them of the reality, for by the grace of God you are neither."

The word kahin (sorcerer) in Arabic is used for an astrologer, fortune teller and a wise man. In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance it was a full-fledged profession. The sorcerers claimed, and the credulous people thought and believed, that they knew the destinies of the people, or they had a special link with the spirits, devils and jinn through whom they came to know of the unseen realities. If a thing was lost, they could tell where it lay; if a theft occurred somewhere, they could tell who the thief was; and they could foretell destinies. People came to there, and they would tell them unseen things in exchange for gifts and offerings. They would sometimes visit the towns and villages and would cry about their profession so that the people might approach them. They had a way and manner and appearance of their own by which they became easily recognizable. The language they used also differed from the common speech of the people. They would utter rhymed and rhythmical sentences with a peculiar accent and modulation and generally used vague and ambiguous sentences from which every person could draw his own meaning. The Quraish chiefs in order to deceive the common people accused the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) of sorcery only for the reason that he was giving the news of the realities that arc hidden and his claim was that an angel from God came to reveal that news to him, and the Word of God that he was presenting was also rhymed. But no one in Arabia could be deceived by this accusation because no one was unaware of the sorcerers' profession and their general way and appearance and their language and business. Everyone knew what they did, why the people visited them, what they told them, what sort of modulated sentences they uttered and what subject-matter they contained. Then, above all, it could not be that a sorcerer would rise with a creed that went against the prevalent beliefs of the nation and would exert himself preaching it continuously at his own risk. Therefore, this accusation of sorcery did not apply to the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) at all and no one in Arabia who had any common sense could be deceived by it.

Likewise, the disbelievers of Makkah also accused him of madness only for their own satisfaction, just as some shameless Western scholars of the present day in order to satisfy their malice and enmity against Islam, claim that, God forbid, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had epileptic fits and whatever he uttered during those fits was taken as Divine Revelation by the people. No sensible person in those days regarded such absurd accusations as worthy of any attention, nor can anyone today who reads the Qur'an and studies the wonderful feats of the Holy Prophet's leadership and guidance believe that these were the product of epileptic fits.

23That is, "We are waiting for him to be afflicted with calamity so that we be rid of him. " Probably they

thought that since Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) was opposing their deities and denying their supernatural powers, he would fall under the curse of some deity, or some bold devotee of a god would put an end to him.

24This can have two meanings:

(1) "I would also see whether this desire of yours is fulfilled or not ; " and

(2) "I am also waiting to see who goes to his doom, you or I. "

25In these two sentences, the opponents' entire propaganda has been nailed, and they have been completely exposed. The reasoning briefly is this: These Qaraish chiefs and elders pose as very wise people, but does their intellect tell them that they should call a person a poet when he is not a poet, and call him a madman when he is well-known for his wisdom among the people, and dub him a sorcerer when he has not the remotest association with sorcery ? Then, if you are passing these judgments only on the basis of intellect and reason, you should have passed one judgment, and not so many contradictory judgments simultaneously. After all, how can one and the same man be a poet and a madman and a sorcerer at one and the same time ? If he is mad, he can then neither be a sorcerer nor a poet. If he is a sorcerer, he cannot be a poet, and if he is a poet, he cannot be a sorcerer, for the language and diction and themes of poetry are quite different from the language and themes of sorcery. The one who knows the distinctions between poetry and sorcery cannot possibly call and regard the same discourse both as poetry and as sorcery at one and the same time. Therefore, it is evident that these contradictory things are being said against the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) not on the basis of intellect and reason but only due to obduracy and stubbornness, and the big chiefs of the nation blinded by their prejudice and enmity are leveling absurd charges which no serious person can regard as worthy of any attention. (For further explanation, see E.N. 104 of Al A'raf, E.N. 3 of Surah Yunus, E.N.'s 53, 54, of Bani Isra'il, E.N.'s 130, 131, 140, 14_2-144 of Ash-Shu'ara'.

26In other words, it means this: The Quraish who think that Muhammad (upon whom be peace) himself is the author of the Qur'an know it in their innermost hearts that it cannot be his word, and those others also whose mother tongue is Arabic not only clearly feel that it is far more sublime and superior to human speech but any one of them who knows Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) personally cannot ever suspect that this is actually his own word and speech. Therefore, the thing plainly is that those who ascribe the authorship of the Qur'an to the Holy Prophet do not, in fact, wish to affirm faith. That is why they are inventing false excuses one of which is this excuse. (For further explanation, see E.N. 21 of Yunus, E N. 12 of Al-Furqan, E N. 64 of AlQasas, E.N.'s 88,89 of Al-Ankabut, E.N.'s 1 to 4 of As-Sajdah, E.N. 54 of Ila Mim As- Sajdah, E.N.'s 8 to 10 of Al-Ahqaf).

27That is, `Not only is the Qur'an not the word of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and

blessings) but the truth' is that it is not human at all; it is beyond the power of man to compose and produce it. If you think it is human, you are challenged to produce the like of it, which should also be human. " This challenge had been given not only to the Quraish but to all the disbelievers of the world first of all in this verse. Then it was repeated thrice in Makkah and then finally in Madinah. (Please see Yunus: 38, Hud: 13, Bani Isra'il: 88, Al-Baqarah: 23). But no one could dare meet this challenge of the Qur'an at that time, nor has any one else had so far the ability to compose and produce a man-made work like the Qur'an.

Some people because of lack of understanding the real nature of this challenge, say that not to speak of the Qur'an, no one has the power to write prose or compose poetry in the style of another person. Homer, Rumi, Shakespeare, Goethe, Ghalib, ' Tagore, Iqbal, all are unique in their styles: it lies in no one's power to produce poetry like theirs by imitation. Those who give this answer to the challenge of the Qur'an are, in fact, involved in the misunderstanding that the meaning of `let them then produce a discourse like it", is a challenge to man to compose and write a book like the Qur'an, in the style of the Qur'an; whereas it dces not imply any resemblance in literary style but it implies this: Bring a book of the same sublimity and quality and rank, not only in Arabic but in any language of the world, that may be regarded as a match for the Qur'an in respect of the characteristics for which the Our'an is a miracle. The following are in brief some of the main characteristics because of which the Qur'an has been a miracle before as it is a miracle today:

(1) The Qur'an is the highest and most perfect model of the literature of the language in which it was revealed. No word and no sentence in the entire Book is sub-standard. Whatever theme has been presented in it, has been presented in the most appropriate words and in the most suitable style. One and the same theme has been presented over and over again but every time in a new style avoiding the defect of repetition everywhere. The entire Book, from the beginning to the end, is set in the choicest words, like chiseled and polished gems, that cannot be replaced. The discourses are so impressive that no one who knows the language, even if he is a disbeliever, can help being moved to ecstasies on hearing them. Even after 1,400 years this Book is still the model of Arabic literature and no other Arabic book can approach it in literary excellence not to speak of equaling it, Not only this: this Book has so controlled the Arabic language that even after the passage of 14 centuries the standard of this language's beauty and eloquence is the same that had been set by it; whereas in such long periods languages change out of recognition. No other language of the world has remained in the same state in so far as its spelling and diction, idiom, rules of language and usages are concerned. But it is only the power of the Qur'an that has held the Arabic language in place each idiom of it is still in use in Arabic literature; its literature is still the standard literature of Arabic; and in writing and speech still the same language is regarded as good Arabic that had been used in the Qur'an 1,400 years ago. Is there any man-made book in any language of the world that bears the same characteristics?

(2) This is the one single Book in the world, which has so extensively and so universally influenced mankind's thoughts, morals, civilization and way of life as has no precedent in history. In the first

instance, its impact changed one nation; then that nation rose and changed a major part of the world. No other Book has proved to be so revolutionary. This Book has not remained confined to writing on paper but in-the practical world its each word has formed and molded ideas and thoughts and built up a lasting civilization. Its influence has continued being operative for 1,400 years and its circle of influence and impact is still expanding every day.

(3) The theme that this Book discusses is the most extensive theme which comprehends the whole Universe, from eternity to eternity. It deals with the reality of the Universe, its beginning and end, its system and law. It tells as to who is the Creator and Controller and Disposer of this Universe, what are His attributes, what are His powers, and what is that essence and basis on which He has established this entire system of the world. It specifies man's position and his place which he cannot change. It tells what is the right and correct way of thought and action for man in view of this place and position, which corresponds to the reality, and what are the wrong ways which clash with the reality. Then to prove why the right way is right and the wrong ways wrong, it presents countless arguments from various phenomena of the earth and heavens, from different aspects of the system of the Universe, from man's own self and existence and from man's own history. Besides, it also tells how and for what reasons man adopts the wrong ways, by what means he can find out the right Way, which has always been one and shall remain one, and how he has been guided to it in every age. It does not merely point to the Right Way but presents a plan of the complete system of life for following that way, which contains a detailed and systematic code concerning beliefs, morals, purification of self, worship, social life, civilization, economy, politics, justice, law and every other aspect of human life. Furthermore, it also tells in full detail what are the results of following this Right Way and of adopting the wrong ways in this world and what consequences of this will appear in the Next World after the present system of the world has come to an end. It depicts fully the coming to an end of the present world and of the establishment of the New World; it gives every detail of the process of change; it portrays the Next World and describes fully how man will find a totally new life there, how his deeds from worldly life will be subjected to accountability, what things he will be questioned about, how his complete record, which lie will not be able to deny or dispute, will be placed before him, what strong evidence will be produced in proof thereof, why the culprits will be punished and the righteous rewarded, what rewards will be bestowed on the righteous and in what forms will the culprits suffer the evil consequences of their misdeeds. The way this vast theme has been dealt with in this Book is not of the nature of some conclusions that its Author might have reached from some syllogistic premises but its nature is that its Author has the direct knowledge of the Reality.

He sees everything happening from eternity to eternity. All the realities are manifest for Him and the entire Universe is like an open book before Him. He sees the entire life of mankind, from its origin to its end, even beyond the present life into the second life simultaneously, and He is guiding man not on the basis of conjecture and speculation but on the basis of knowledge. Not a single truth that He presents as knowledge has been proved to be wrong so far. The concept of the Universe and Man that He presents fully explains all the phenomena and events and can become the basis of research in every branch of knowledge. His Word contains the answers to all the ultimate problems of philosophy and natural and

social sciences, and they are so coherent and consistent logically that a perfect, consistent and comprehensive system of thought can be built on their basis. Then from the practical aspect the guidance that He has given to man about various spheres of life is not only highly rational and pure but countless men have been living according to it in actual fact in different parts of the earth for 1,400 years and have found it by experience to be the only valid way. Is there any man made book of this unique quality present in the world, or has ever been, which may be produced to match this Book ?

(4) This Book was not composed and written all at once and presented before the world, but a reformatory movement was started with some basic and initial instructions and then for 23 years as the movement passed through different stages of its development its parts were presented by the tongue of the leader, sometimes as lengthy discourses and sometimes as brief sentences, as the conditions and requirements of the occasion demanded. Then, when the Mission was brought to completion, these parts that had been issued at different times were compiled in the form of a complete Book which has been known by the name of the "Qur'an" . The leader of the movement states that these discourses and sentences are not his original work but were sent down to him by the Lob of all Creation. If a person asserts that they arc the original work of the leader himself, he should produce a precedent from history to prove his contention. He should show whether it is possible that the speeches made and the instructions given by a man at different times while leading a powerful collective movement for years continuously by himself in different capacities, sometimes as a preacher and teacher of morals, sometimes as a leader of an oppressed class, sometimes as the ruler of a state, sometimes as the commander of a fighting army, sometimes as a victor. sometime as a law-giver and legislator, could form a complete and consistent and comprehensive system of thought and action, which should be free from every contradiction and inconsistency, which should appear to be dominated by the same central idea and pattern of thought, which should show that the leader has been building up a universal system of belief and action on the basis of the same foundation of his message with which he had started his work, and which should be a system each clement and part of which is in perfect harmony and consistency with the other parts, Then the one who reads this collection of the discourses with a discerning eye cannot help realizing that the founder of the movement at the outset had a full plan of the movement in view till the last stage, and it never happened that a new idea might have struck him at some later stage, which was unknown to him before, or which he had to change later. If ever there has been a man of this caliber, his name should be made known to the world.

(5) The leader who had been made to give these discourses and speak these sentences did not suddenly emerge from a hidden place to present these before the people nor would disappear after he had done so. He had lived his life in full view of society before he started his movement as well as continued to live in the same society after that till his last breath. The people were well aware of the language and style of his conversation and speech. Hadith still presents a major part of it and by going through it the people who know Arabic can easily find out even today what was the leader's own style of speech and conversation. His contemporaries who spoke his language felt then and those who know Arabic feel today that the language and the style of this Book is very different from the language and style of that

leader. So much so that whenever in the midst of a sermon delivered by the leader there occurs a sentence or two of this Book, the distinction between the two becomes all too obvious. The question is: Has a man in the world ever had the power, or can he have the capability, that he should go on conversing in two absolutely different styles consistently for years at a stretch and it should never become known that the two separate styles arc, in fact, of one and the same person? It is possible that one may succeed in such affectation temporarily but it is not " at all possible that for twenty-three years continuously a person should have a different diction and style when he recites the Revelations from Allah and a wholly different diction and style when he speaks in his personal capacity.

(6) The leader while leading and guiding the movement met with different sorts of conditions. Sometimes he became the target of ridicule, humiliation and severe persecution of his fellow-countrymen and the people of his own tribe and clan; sometimes his companions were so harshly treated that they were compelled to emigrate from the country; sometimes the enemies plotted against his life; sometimes he himself had to leave his home and city; sometimes he had to pass through extreme poverty and starvation; sometimes he had to fight wars successively in which he suffered defeats as well as won victories; sometimes he overcame the enemies and the same enemies who had persecuted him, came before him humbled: sometimes he achieved such power which few people in the world have been able to achieve. Under all such conditions a person's feelings obviously cannot remain the same. When on these different occasions the leader spoke in his personal capacity, his words, and speeches carried the clear impression of his personal feelings. which naturally arise in the heart of a man on such occasions. But the discourses that were heard from him as Allah's Revelations in these different conditions, are wholly devoid of human feelings. At no place can even an acute observer and critic point out the play of human feelings in them. The vast and comprehensive knowledge that is contained in this Book, is not possessed even by any of the distinguished learned people of this 20th century, not to speak of the people of Arabia and Rome and Greece and Iran of those days. The condition today is that after a man has spent his whole life-time studying a branch of philosophy or a natural or social science, he comes to know what ultimate problems of his field of study are, but when he studies the Qur'an seriously he comes to know that this Book contains a clear answer to those problems. This thing is not confined to any one branch of knowledge but holds good in respect of all those sciences which have anything to do with the Universe and Man. How can one believe that 1,400. years ago an un-lettered man in the Arabian desert possessed such deep insight into every branch of knowledge, and he had thought over every basic problem and thought out an absolute and final answer to it?

Although there are several other aspects also of the Qur'an's being a miracle, if a man ponders over these few aspects only he will realize that the Qur'an's being a miracle is far more evident today than it was at the time when it was revealed and if Allah so wills, it will go on becoming more and more evident and manifest as time passes till the Day of Resurrection.

28The questions asked before this were meant to make the disbelievers of Makkah realize that whatever they were saying to belie the Prophet Muhammad's claim to prophet hood was highly irrational. Now in

this verse the question put before them is: "What is that in the message of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) which you find so embarrassing for yourselves? He just says that Allah is your Creator and you should only serve Him. Why are you annoyed at it? Are you your own creators? Or, has this vast Universe been created by you? If neither of these is true, and you admit that your Creator as well as the Creator of the Universe is Allah alone, why do you then feel angry with the person who tells you that Allah alone is worthy of your service and worship? What you should actually feel angry about is that you worship him who is not your Creator instead of Him Who is your real Creator. You admit with the tongue that Allah alone is your Creator as well as of the whole Universe, but if you really had faith in this, you would not have so maligned the person who was calling you to Allah's service

This was such a pungent and stinging question that it shook the polytheistic faith to the root. Bukhari and Muslim have related that after the Battle of Badr, Jubair bin Mut`im came to Madinah to negotiate release of the Quraish prisoners of war on behalf of the people of Makkah. The Holy Prophet at that time was leading the Maghrib Prayer, and he recited this Surah at-Tur in it. Mut`im himself has stated that when the Holy Prophet reached this place, his heart seemed to be leaving his breast. One main reason of his embracing Islam afterwards was that Islam had taken root in his heart on hearing these very verses on that day.

29This is an answer to the objection of the disbelievers of Makkah who said: Why had Muhammad, son of `Abdullah (upon whom be peace), only been appointed a Messenger? The answer implies this: "Somebody in any case had to be appointed a Messenger in order to deliver the people from their error of serving others than Allah. Now the question is: Who should decide whom Allah should appoint His Messenger and whom He should not? If these people refuse to accept the Messenger appointed by Allah, it means that either they regard themselves as the masters of the world or they presume that the world may belong to Allah, but it should be ruled by them.

30A detailed reasoning has been compressed into these brief sentences. It means to say "If you deny what the Prophet says, then what means have you got to know the reality? Has any of you had access to the heavens where he found out directly from Allah or His angels that the beliefs on which you have based your religion are absolutely in accord with the reality ? If someone makes this claim he should come forward and tell as to when and how he had access to the heavens and what knowledge he has brought from there. If you do not make any such claim, then consider how ridiculous is your creed that you assign children to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and that too daughters, whore you regard as disgraceful for yourselves. Without knowledge you arc wandering in the darkness of such errors and turning hostile to the person who bring you the light of knowledge from God.

31The question is actually directed to the disbelievers. It means: "If the Messenger had a selfish motive and had been exerting only for a personal gain from you, there would be a rational ground for you to avoid him. But you yourselves know that he is absolutely selfless in his invitation and is exerting himself only for your own benefit and well-being. Then, how is it that you are not even inclined to listen to him

with a cool mind ?" There is also a subtle hint in this question. Like the self-styled guides and guardians of religious shrines of the world, the religious guides, priests and scholars of the polytheists of Arabia also were engaged in a religious business. In view of the same, this question was put before them: "On the one hand, these dealers in religion are openly receiving gifts and offerings and fees for every religious service from you; on the other, a person who has ruined his trading business, is trying to show you the right way with highly rational arguments, absolutely selflessly. Is it not sheer senselessness that you shun him but run after them?"

32That is, "What particular knowledge do you have to refute the truths that the Messenger is presenting before you, which you may present with the claim that you directly know the realities hidden behind the phenomenal world? Do you really have the knowledge that God is not One, but all those whom you have set up as deities also possess godly attributes and powers ? Have you really seen the angels and found that they are girls, and, God forbid, are begotten of God? Do you really know that the Revelation has neither come to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), nor it can come to any man, from God? Do you really have the knowledge that no Resurrection will take place, that there is going to be no life after death, that there will be no Hereafter when man will be subjected to accountability and rewarded or punished according to his deeds? If you claim to possess any such knowledge, can you give in writing that you are belying what the Prophet says about the unseen realities on the ground that you have peeped into the hidden realities and seen that the truth is not that which the Prophet presents. " Here, one may express the misgiving that if in response to this, those people had given this in writing, in their stubbornness, will not this reasoning have become meaningless? But this misgiving is misplaced because even if they had given this in writing on account of their stubbornness, the common people of society in which this challenge had been given openly were not blind: everyone of them would have understood that the writing had been given out of sheer stubbornness, and no one, in fact, was refining what the Prophet said on the basis that he had the knowledge that it was false.

33The allusion is to the secret plots that the disbelievers of Makkah used to devise in their meetings in order to defeat the mission of the Holy Prophet (on whom be Allah's peace) and to kill him.

34This is one of the clear prophecies of the Qur'an. In the initial stage at Makkah when the Holy Prophet (on wham be Allah's peace) had no apparent power and support with him except a handful of the ill-equipped Muslims and the whole nation was opposing and resisting him relentlessly, the confrontation between Islam and disbelief appeared to be utterly unequal. No one at that time could imagine that after a few years the tables would be turned on disbelief. Rather, the superficial observer could safely predict that the strong opposition of the Quraish and entire. Arabia would at last put an end to the message of Islam. But even under those conditions, a challenge was thrown to the disbelievers and they were told in clear terms: "You may devise whatever plots you wish in order to frustrate this message, they will all recoil upon you, and you will never succeed in defeating and putting an end to it.

35That is, "The fact of the matter is that chose wham they have set up as deities, are not in fact the

deities, and shirk is wholly an unreal thing. Therefore, the person who has risen with the message of Tauhid has the power of the truth with him; and those who are supporting shirk are indeed fighting for the imaginary. How will then shirk win in this conflict?"

36This is meant to expose the stubbornness of the Quraish chiefs, on the one hand, and to console the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and his Companions, on the other. The Holy Prophet and his Companions wished that those people should be shown such a miracle by Allah as should convince them of the truth of his Prophet hood. At this, it has been said: Whatever miracle they might see with their eyes, they will in any case misinterpret it and invent an excuse for persisting in disbelief, for their hearts are not at all inclined to believe. At several other places also in the Qur'an their this stubbornness has been mentioned, e.g. in Surah Al-An`am: 111, it has been said: "Even if we had sent down the angels to them and made the dead speak with them and ranged all the things of the world before them (as a proof thereof), they would still have disbelieved," and in Surah AI-Hijr: 15: "Even if We had opened a gate for them in heaven, and they had begun w ascend through it during day time, they would have said: "Our eyes have been dazzled; nay, we have been bewitched."

37This is a repetition of the same theme that has already occurred in As-Sajdah: 21 above: "Even in this world We shall make them taste (one or the other) lesser torment before that greater torment; maybe they desist (from their rebellious attitude)." That is, "We shall send down personal and national disasters from time to time in the world to remind that there is above them a superior power which is deciding their destinies and none has the power to change its decisions. But the people who are involved in ignorance have neither learned any lesson from these events before not will learn any lesson in the future. They do not understand the meaning of the disasters and calamities occurring in the world. Therefore, they explain them away in every such way as takes than further and further away from the reality, and thou mind never turns to any' explanation, which might make the error of their atheism or polytheism manifest to them. This same thing has been explained by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in a Hadith, thus: "The example of a hypocrite who falls ill and then gets well, is of the camel whom the masters tied, but it did not understand why they had tied it, and when they untied it, it did not understand why they had untied it." (Abu Da'ud: Kitab al-.Jana'iz). For further explanation, see E.N. 45 of Al-Anbiya', E.N.,66 of An-Naml, E.N.'s 72. 73 of AI-'Ankabut).

38Another meaning can be: Remain firm and steadfast in carrying out the Command of your Lord."

39That is, "We are watching over you and have not left you alone." implied:

40There can be several meanings of this and possibly all may be First, "Whenever you rise from a meeting, you should rise glorifying and praising Allah. " The Holy Prophet himself acted upon this as well as instructed the Muslims that they should glorify and praise Allah when they rose from a meeting. Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa`i and Hakim have related, on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, that the Holy

Prophet said: "If a person sat in a meeting in which much controversy took place, and he pronounced the following words before rising, Allah would forgive whatever passed in the meeting: subhanaka Allahumma wa bi-hamdika, ashhadu-al la-ilaha illa Anta, astaghfiruka wa utubu ilaika: "O Allah, I glorify You with Your praises: I bear witness that there is no deity but You: I seek Your forgiveness and offer repentance before You. "

The second meaning is: "When you get up from bed, glorify your Lord with His praise. " The Holy Prophet acted upon this himself and had also taught his Companions that they should pronounce the following words when they got up after sleep: l a ilaha ill-Allah wahda-hu la sharika lahu, lahul mulku wa lahul-hamdu wa haws ala kulli shai In Qadir. Subhan-Allah-i wal-hamdu-lillahi wa la ilaha ill-Allah, wallahu Akbar, wa la hauls wa la quwwata-illa-billah. " (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, on the authority of `Ubadah bin as-Samit).

Its third meaning is: "When you stand up for the Prayer, begin it with the praise and glorification of Allah. " Accordingly, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) taught that the Prayer should be begun, after the first takbir, with the following words: Subhanak-Allahumma wa bi-hamdi-ka wa tabarak asmuka wa ta'aIa jadduka wa la ilaha ghairuka: "Glory be to You, O Allah, and I praise You. Blessed is Your name, and You are exalted. There is no god other than You."

Its fourth meaning is: "When you rise to invite others to Allah, begin your invitation with the praise and glorification of Allah." That also was the Holy Prophet's constant practice, and he always began his addresses with the praise and glorification of Allah Almighty.

Commentator Ibn Jarir has given still another meaning of it, and it is this: When you get up after the midday nap, offer the Prayer and this implies the Zuhr Prayer."

41This implies the Maghrib, the 'Isha' and the Tahajjud Prayers as well as the recital of the Qur'an and the remembrance of Allah.

42"Retreat of the stars" implies the early hours of the morning when the stars set and they lose their luster on the appearance of dawn. This is the time of the Fajr Prayer.

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53. Surah An Najm (The Star)

Name

The Sarah derives its name from the very first word *wan Najm*. This title also does not relate to the subject matter, but is a name given to the Surah as a symbol.

Period of Revelation

According to a Tradition related by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud and Nasai, on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, the first Surah in which a verse requiring the performance of a *sajdah* (prostration) as sent down, is Surah An-Najm. The parts of this *Hadith* which have been reported by Aswad bin Yazid, Abu Ishaq and Zubair bin Mu'awiyah from Hadrat Ibn Mas'ud, indicate that this is the first Surah of the Qur'an, which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had publicly recited before an assembly of the Quraish (and according to Ibn Marduyah, in the Ka'bah) in which both the believers and the disbelievers were present. At the end, when he recited the verse requiring the performance of a *sajdah* and fell down in prostration, the whole assembly also fall down in prostration with him, and even those chiefs of the polytheists who were in the forefront of the opposition to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) could not resist falling down in prostration. Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) says that he saw only one man, Umayyah bin Khalaf, from among the disbelievers, who did not fall down in prostration but took a little dust and rubbing it on his forehead said that that was enough for him. Later, as Ibn Mas'ud relates, he saw this man die in the state of disbelief.

Another eye witness of this incident is Hadrat Muttalib bin Abi Wada'ah, who had not yet become a Muslim. Nasai and Musnad Ahmad contain his own words to the effect: "When the Holy Prophet recited the Surah An-Najm and performed the *sajdah* and the whole assembly fell down in prostration along with him, I did not perform the *sajdah*. Now to compensate for the same whenever I recite this Surah I make sure never to abandon its performance."

Ibn Sad says that before this, in the Rajab of the 5th year of Prophethood, a small group of the Companions had emigrated to Abyssinia. Then, when in the Ramadan of the same year this incident took place the news spread that

the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had recited Surah An-Najm publicly in the assembly of the Quraish and the whole assembly, including the believers as well as the disbelievers, had fallen down in prostration with him. When the emigrants to Abyssinia heard this news they formed the impression that the disbelievers of Makkah had become Muslims. Thereupon, some of them returned to Makkah in the Shawwal of the 5th year of Prophethood, only to learn that the news was wrong and the conflict between Islam and disbelief was raging as furiously as before. Consequently, the second emigration to Abyssinia took place, in which many more people left Makkah.

Thus, it becomes almost certain that this Surah was revealed in the Ramadan of 5th year of Prophethood.

Historical Background

The details of the period of revelation as given above point to the conditions in which this Surah was revealed. During the first five years of his appointment as a Prophet, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had been extending invitation to Allah's Religion by presenting the Divine Revelations before the people only in private and restricted meetings and assemblies. During this whole period he could never have a chance to recite the Quran before a common gathering openly, mainly because of the strong opposition and resistance from the disbelievers. They were well aware of how magnetic and captivating was the Holy Prophet's personality and his way of preaching and how impressive were the Revelations of the Qur'an. Therefore, they tried their best to avoid hearing it them- selves and to stop others also from hearing it and to suppress his invitation by false propaganda by spreading every kind of suspicion against him. For this object, on the one hand, they were telling the people that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had gone astray and was now bent upon misleading others as well; on the other hand, they would raise on uproar whenever he tried to present the Qur'an before the people so that no one could know what it was for which he was being branded as a misled and misguided person.

Such were the conditions when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) suddenly stood up one day to make a speech in the sacred precincts of the Ka'bah, where a large number of the Quraish had gathered together. Allah at that time made him deliver this discourse, which we have now in the form of the Surah An-Najm with us. Such was the intensity of the impression that when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) started reciting it the opponents were so completely overwhelmed that they could not think of raising any disorder, and when at the conclusion he fell down in prostration, they too fell down in prostration along with him. Later they felt great remorse at the weakness they had involuntarily shown. The people also started taunting them to the effect that whereas they had been forbidding others to listen to the Qur'an, that day not only had they themselves listened to it, with complete absorption but had even fallen down in prostration along with Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). At last, they had to invent a story in order to get rid of the people's taunt and ridicule. They said "After he had recited *afara'ait-ul Lata wal Uzza wa Manat ath-thalitha-al ukhra*, we heard from Muhammad the words: *tilk al-gharaniqa- tal-'ula, wa anna shafa'at-u-hunna latarja*: 'They are exalted goddesses: indeed, their intercession may be expected.' From this we understood that Muhammad had returned to our faith." As a matter of fact, only a mad person could think that in the context of this Surah the sentences they claimed to have heard could have any place and relevance.(For details, please see E. N.'s 96 to 301 of Surah Al Hajj).

Subject Matter and Topics

The theme of the discourse is to warn the disbelievers of Makkah about the error of the attitude that they had adopted towards the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The discourse starts in a way as if to say: "Muhammad is neither deluded nor gone astray, as you are telling others in your propaganda against him, nor has he fabricated this teaching of Islam and its message, as you seem to think he has. In fact, whatever he is presenting is nothing but Revelation which is sent down to him. The verities that be presents before you, are not the product of his own surmise and speculation but realities of which he himself is an eye witness. He has himself seen the Angel through whom this knowledge is conveyed to him. He has been directly made to observe the great Signs of his Lord: whatever he says is not what he has himself thought out but what he has seen with his own eyes. Therefore, your disputing and wrangling with him is just like the disputing and wrangling of a blind man with a man of sight over a thing which the blind man cannot see but he can see."

After this, three things have been presented in their successive order:

First, the listeners have been made to understand that: "The religion that you are following is based on mere conjecture and invented ideas. You have set up a few goddesses like Lat and Manat and Uzza as your deities, whereas they have no share whatever in divinity. You regard the angels as the daughters of Allah, whereas you regard a daughter as disgraceful for your own selves. You think that these deities of fours can influence Allah in your favor, whereas the fact is that all the angels together, who are stationed closest to Allah, cannot influence Him even in their own favor. None of such beliefs that you have adopted, is based on knowledge and reason, but are wishes and desires for the sake of which you have taken some whims as realities. This is a grave error. The right and true religion is that which is in conformity to the reality, and the reality is never subject to thee people's wishes and desires so that whatever they may regard as a reality and truth should become the reality and truth. Speculation and conjecture cannot help to determine as to what is according to the truth and what is not; it is knowledge. When that knowledge is presented before you, you turn away from it, and brand the one who tells you the truth as misguided. The actual cause of your being involved in this error is that you are heedless of the Hereafter. Only this world is your goal. Therefore, you have neither any desire for the knowledge of reality, nor you bother to see 'whether the beliefs you hold are according to the truth or not.

Secondly, the people have been told that: Allah is the caster and Sovereign of the entire Universe. The righteous is he who follows His way, and the misguided he who has turned away from His way. The error of the misguided and the righteousness of the righteous are not hidden from Him. He knows whatever everyone is doing: He will requite the evil with evil and the good with good. The final judgment will not depend on what you consider yourself to be, and on tall claims you make of your purity and chastity but on whether you are pious or impious, righteous or unrighteous, in the sight of God. If you refrain from major sins, He in His mercy will overlook your minor errors." .

Thirdly, a few basic principles of the true Religion which had been presented hundreds of years before the revelation of the Qur'an in the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses have been reiterated so that the people did not remain involved in the misunderstanding that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had brought some new and novel religion, but they should know that these are the fundamental truths

which the former Prophets of Allah have always been presenting in their respective ages. Besides, the same Books have been quoted to confirm the historical facts that the destruction of the 'Ad and the Thamud and of the people of the Prophets Noah and Lot was not the result of accidental calamities, but Allah has destroyed them in consequence of the same wickedness and rebellion from which the disbelievers of Makkah were not inclined to refrain and desist in any case.

After presenting these themes and discourses the Surah has been concluded, thus: "The Hour of Judgment has approached near at hand, which no one can avert. Before the occurrence of that Hour you are being warned through Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Quran in the like manner as the former people had been warned before. Now, is it this warning that you find novel and strange? Which you mock and ridicule? Which you turn away from and cause disorder so that no one else also is able to hear what it is ? Don't you feel like weeping at your folly and ignorance? Abandon this attitude and behavior, bow down to Allah and serve Him alone!"

This was that impressive conclusion hearing which even the most hardened deniers of the Truth were completely overwhelmed, and when after reciting these verses of Divine Word the Holy Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) fell down in prostration, they too could not help falling down in prostration along with him.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ ﴿١﴾

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ ﴿٢﴾

وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰٓ ﴿٣﴾

إِنۡ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحۡيٞ يُوحَىٰ ٤

عَلَّمَهُۥ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡقُوَىٰ ٥

ذُو مِرَّةٖ فَٱسۡتَوَىٰ ٦

وَهُوَ بِٱلۡأُفُقِ ٱلۡأَعۡلَىٰ ٧

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّىٰ ٨

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوۡسَيۡنِ أَوۡ أَدۡنَىٰ ٩

فَأَوۡحَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ عَبۡدِهِۦ مَآ أَوۡحَىٰ ١٠

مَا كَذَبَ ٱلۡفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰٓ ١١

أَفَتُمَٰرُونَهُۥ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾

[1-12] By the Star.[1] When it set, your companion[2] is neither gone astray nor deluded.[3] He does not speak of his own desire; it is but a Revelation which is sent down to him.[4] One mighty in power has taught him,[5] who is endowed with great wisdom.[6] He stood poised in front when he was on the uppermost horizon.[7] Then he drew near and hung suspended above, two bow-lengths away or even closer.[8] Then he revealed to the servant of Allah whatever he had to reveal.[9] The heart belied not what he saw.[10] Do you then dispute with him concerning what he sees (with the eyes)?

وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾

عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾

عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٥﴾

إِذْ يَغْشَى ٱلسِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾

مَا زَاغَ ٱلْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾

لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ ءَايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِ ٱلْكُبْرَىٰٓ ﴿١٨﴾

[13-18] And he saw him once again by the farthest lote-tree, nearby which is the Garden of Repose.[11] At that time the lote-tree was covered with that which covered it.[12] The sight was neither dazzled nor it exceeded the limit,[13] and he saw of the greatest Signs of his Lord.[14]

أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱللَّـٰتَ وَٱلْعُزَّىٰ ﴿١٩﴾

وَمَنَوٰةَ ٱلثَّالِثَةَ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰٓ ﴿٢٠﴾

أَلَكُمُ ٱلذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾

تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰٓ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِنْ هِىَ إِلَّآ أَسْمَآءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَـٰنٍ ۚ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى ٱلْأَنفُسُ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مِّن رَّبِّهِمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ﴿٢٣﴾

أَمْ لِلْإِنسَـٰنِ مَا تَمَنَّىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَلِلَّـهِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ وَٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿٢٥﴾

[19-25] Now tell: Have you ever pondered over the reality of this Lat, and this `Uzza, and another, the third goddess, Manat?[15] Are the sons for you and the daughters for Allah?[16] This would indeed be an unfair division! These are nothing but mere names which you and your forefathers have invented. Allah has sent down no authority for them.[17] The fact is that the people are following mere conjecture and the lusts of their souls,[18] even though right guidance has come to them from their Lord.[19] Is it that whatever man desires should become the truth for him?[20] To Allah belongs the present and the Hereafter.

۞ وَكَم مِّن مَّلَكٍ فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ لَا تُغْنِى شَفَـٰعَتُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ أَن يَأْذَنَ ٱللَّهُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَرْضَىٰٓ ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةَ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَمَا لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ ۖ وَإِنَّ ٱلظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِى مِنَ ٱلْحَقِّ شَيْـًٔا ﴿٢٨﴾

[26-28] How many an angel is there in the heavens! Their intercession can avail nothing until Allah permits it in favor of whomever He wills and is pleased with.[21] But those who do not believe in the Hereafter. name the angels with the names of goddesses,[22] although they have no knowledge of this. They follow mere conjecture,[23] and

conjecture can avail nothing against the Truth.

فَأَعۡرِضۡ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكۡرِنَا وَلَمۡ يُرِدۡ إِلَّا ٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا ﴿٢٩﴾

ذَٰلِكَ مَبۡلَغُهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡعِلۡمِۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَنِ ٱهۡتَدَىٰ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ لِيَجۡزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَسَٰٓـُٔواْ بِمَا عَمِلُواْ وَيَجۡزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَحۡسَنُواْ بِٱلۡحُسۡنَى ﴿٣١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَجۡتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلۡإِثۡمِ وَٱلۡفَوَٰحِشَ إِلَّا ٱللَّمَمَۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَٰسِعُ ٱلۡمَغۡفِرَةِۚ هُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِكُمۡ إِذۡ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَإِذۡ أَنتُمۡ أَجِنَّةٞ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمۡۖ فَلَا تُزَكُّوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمۡۖ هُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَنِ ٱتَّقَىٰٓ ﴿٣٢﴾

[29-32] So, O Prophet, leave him alone who turns away from Our remembrance[24] and seeks nothing but the life of the world,[25] this[26] only is their amount of knowledge,[27] Only your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Way and who is on the right path, and to Allah belongs everything in the heavens and the earth[28] so that[29] Allah may recompense the evil doers according to their deeds and give good rewards to those who have adopted the righteous attitude, who avoid grave sins[30] and open indecencies[31] save the minor offenses.[32] Surely your Lord is liberal in forgiveness.[33] He knows you well from the time He produced you from the earth and when you were yet embryos in your mothers' wombs. Therefore, do not claim piety for yourselves: He alone knows best who is really pious and God fearing.

أَفَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى تَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَأَعْطَىٰ قَلِيلًا وَأَكْدَىٰٓ ﴿٣٤﴾

أَعِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ فَهُوَ يَرَىٰٓ ﴿٣٥﴾

أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِى صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَإِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلَّذِى وَفَّىٰٓ ﴿٣٧﴾

أَلَّا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُۥ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾

ثُمَّ يُجۡزَىٰهُ ٱلۡجَزَآءَ ٱلۡأَوۡفَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلۡمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ أَضۡحَكَ وَأَبۡكَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ أَمَاتَ وَأَحۡيَا ﴿٤٤﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥ خَلَقَ ٱلزَّوۡجَيۡنِ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَٱلۡأُنثَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾

مِن نُّطۡفَةٍ إِذَا تُمۡنَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَأَنَّ عَلَيۡهِ ٱلنَّشۡأَةَ ٱلۡأُخۡرَىٰ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ أَغۡنَىٰ وَأَقۡنَىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥ هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلشِّعۡرَىٰ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥٓ أَهۡلَكَ عَادًا ٱلۡأُولَىٰ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَثَمُودَاْ فَمَآ أَبۡقَىٰ ﴿٥١﴾

وَقَوۡمَ نُوحٖ مِّن قَبۡلُۖ إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ هُمۡ أَظۡلَمَ وَأَطۡغَىٰ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَٱلۡمُؤۡتَفِكَةَ أَهۡوَىٰ ﴿٥٣﴾

فَغَشَّىٰهَا مَا غَشَّىٰ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارَىٰ ﴿٥٥﴾

[33-55] Then, O Prophet, have you seen him who turned away from God's Way, who gave a little and stopped?[34] Does he possess the knowledge of the unseen that he sees the reality?[35] Has he not heard of those things that have been mentioned in the Books of Moses and in the Books of that Abraham who proved true to his pledge?[36]

"That no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another.[37] And that there is nothing for man but what he has

striven for.[38] And that his striving shall soon be seen,[39] and then he will be fully rewarded for it; and that to your Lord is the final goal; and that it is He Who made (men) to laugh and to weep.[40] And that it is He Who gave death and granted life; and that it is He Who created the pair of male and female from a sperm-drop when it is emitted.[41] And that it rests upon Him to grant the second life[42] and that it is He Who made rich and bestowed property.[43] And that He is the Lord of Sirius.[44] And that it is He Who destroyed the former 'Ad,[45] and annihilated Thamud so as to spare none of them. And before them He destroyed the people of Noah because they were a most wicked and rebellious people. And He overthrew the subverted settlements, then there covered them that which (you know well) covered them.[46] Then,[47] O man, which of your Lord's bounties will you doubt?"[48]

هَٰذَا نَذِيرٌ مِّنَ ٱلنُّذُرِ ٱلْأُولَىٰٓ ﴿٥٦﴾

أَزِفَتِ ٱلْآزِفَةُ ﴿٥٧﴾

لَيْسَ لَهَا مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَاشِفَةٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

أَفَمِنْ هَٰذَا ٱلْحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

وَتَضْحَكُونَ وَلَا تَبْكُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَأَنتُمْ سَٰمِدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

فَٱسۡجُدُواْ لِلَّهِ وَٱعۡبُدُواْ ۩ ٦٢

[56-62] This is a warning of the warnings already given.[49] That which is coming is near at hand.[50] None but Allah can. avert it.[51] Is it at these things that you marvel?[52] And you laugh and weep not?[53] And you ward them off by merry-making?[54] Bow down before Allah and worship Him.[55]

1In the original the word "an-najm"has been used. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and Sufyan Thauri opine that it implies the Pleides. Ibn Jarir and Zamakhshari have held this same interpretation as preferable, for in Arabic when the word an -najm is used absolutely it usually implies the Pleides. Suddi says that it implies Venus; and Abu `Ubaidah, the grammarian, holds that here the word an-najm has been used generically so as to express this idea: "When the day dawned, and the stars set." In view of the context we are of the opinion that this last interpretation is more preferable.

2"Your Companion" implies the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace) and the addressees are the Quraish. The word Sahib as used in the original means a friend, a companion, a close associate. Here, making mention of the Holy Prophet by the word Sahib-u-kum (yew Companion) instead of "Our Messenger" is very meaningful. This is meant to make the people of the Quraish realize: "The person being mentioned is no stranger to you: he is not an outsider whom you may not be knowing or recognizing already. He is a man of your own clan and tribe; he lives and moves among you; even your children know who and what he is, what is his character, what are his dealings, what are his ways and habits and characteristics, and how he has passed his life among you so far. If same one of you were to say an improbable thing about him, there would be a thousand men among you who knew him, who could see for themselves whether what was said actually applied to him or not. "

3This is the thing for which an oath has been sworn by the setting star or stars. "Going astray" means a person's adopting a wrong way being unaware of the right way, and "being deluded" means his adopting the wrong way knowingly and consciously. The verse means: "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is a well-known man among you. Your accusation that he has gone astray, or is misguided, is utterly wrong. In fact, he is neither gone astray nor misguided." Here, the propriety of swearing by the setting stars is that in the darkness of the starry night a person cannot see the things of his surroundings clearly, and from their vague appearances can form wrong judgments about them, e.g.. he may take a tra for a ghost in the dark, a string for a snake, a rock in the sand for a beast of prey. But when the stars have set and the day has dawned, everything appears before man in its real form and shape, and there remains no doubt whatever about the reality of anything. The same is the case also of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) among you. His life and personality is. not hidden in darkness, but is manifest like the bright dawn. You are aware that this "companion of yours" is a right-minded, wise and sagacious man. How can somebody from among the Quraish have the

misunderstanding that he has gone astray? You also know how well-intentioned and honest and righteous person he is. How can one of you form the view that he has knowingly adopted a crooked way not only for himself but has started inviting others also to the same falsehood?

4It means this: "The things for which you accuse him of having gone astray or been misled and deceived, have neither been fabricated by himself nor motivated by any selfish desire on his part, but they have been sent down, and are being sent down, to him by God. He did not intend to become a Prophet of his own desire so that he might have laid a claim to Prophet hood in order to satisfy his desire, but when Allah appointed him to that office through Revelation, then only did he rise to preach his mission and to tell you that he had been appointed God's Messenger to you. Likewise, this invitation to Islam, this teaching of the doctrine of Tauhid, this news about the gathering together of all mankind on the Day of Resurrection and their accountability, the truths that he is presenting about the Universe and Man and the principles of leading a pure life, are not a philosophy propounded by himself, but the knowledge of all this has been bestowed on him by Revelation. Likewise, this Qur'an that he recites before you, is also not of his own composition but it is Divine Word which is sent down to him by Revelation."

Here, the question arises: To which of the words spoken by the Holy Prophet do Allah's Words: "He does not speak of his own desire; it is only a Revelation which is sent down to him," apply? Do they apply to everything that he spoke, or to sonic of his words and not to others? The answer is: As far as the Qur'an is concerned, the Divine Words apply to it most completely. As for the other words, apart from the Qur'an, which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) spoke, they could inevitably be of three kinds:

First, those words which he employed for preaching religion and inviting others to Allah, and for explaining the themes, teachings and commands of the Qur'an, or for giving admonition and instruction to the people to fulfill the object for which the Qur'an was revealed. In this regard, obviously nobody can have the doubt that, God forbid, he fabricated these things from his own mind. In these matters, his position, in fact, was of the official interpreter of the Qur'an and of Allah's authorized representative. Although these things were not revealed to him literally as the Qur'an was revealed; yet these were necessarily based on the same knowledge that he had been given by Revelation. The only difference between the Qur'an and these was that the Qur'an, both in word and in meaning, was entirely from Allah, and in these other things the meanings were those taught by Allah and the words those which he himself employed to express those meanings. On the basis of this very distinction, the Qur'an has been described as wahi-jali (manifest Revelation) and the Holy Prophet's other sayings as wahi-khafi (concealed Revelation).

The second kind of the words were those which the Holy Prophet spoke in connection with the struggle of raising Allah's Word and his services for establishing Islam. In this regard, he had to perform countless duties of different kinds as the leader and guide of the Muslim community. In this many a time he took counsel with his Companions as well, and followed their advice instead of his own view. On being asked he sometimes told them that he was expressing a particular view not under Allah's command but as his

personal opinion, and on several occasions it so happened that he said something on the basis of his own opinion and later. an instruction came down against it from Allah. None of the things of this nature that he said or did could be based on a selfish motive. As for the question whether these sayings were based on Divine inspiration, the answer is that except for the things in regard to which he made it explicit that they were not based on Divine command, or about which he took counsel with his Companions and accepted their advice, or with regard to a thing against which Allah sent down an instruction after he had said or done something on the basis of his personal judgment, all other things were based on concealed Revelation (wahi khafi) just like the things of the first kind. For the office of the leader and guide of the Islamic Movement and the chief of the believing community and the ruler of the Islamic State, which he held, was not self-invented or bestowed by the people, but he had been appointed to it by Allah, and whatever he said and did in carrying out the duties of this office, his position in it was of the representative of Divine, Will. In this matter, whatever he said on the basis of his personal judgment, his judgment in those matters was approved by Allah, and was, derived from the light of the knowledge which Allah had blessed him with. That is why whenever his personal judgment was even slightly turned away from Allah's pleasure, it was immediately rectified by manifest Revelation (wahi jali;). This rectification of some of his personal judgments is itself a proof that all the rest of his religious judgments and interpretations were precisely in accordance with Divine Will.

The third kind of the things were those he said concerning common matters of life as a man, which had nothing to do with the duties of Prophet hood, which he said before being appointed a Prophet as well as continued saying even after having been appointed a Prophet. About this kind of the Things it should be understood at the outset that there was no dispute with the disbelievers concerning them. They had not accused him of being a misled and misguided person because of these but because of the first two kinds of the things. These things were not disputed and therefore could not become the cause of a verse from Allah. But although they were not the subject of any dispute, yet the fact is that in this private aspect of his life also never did the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) utter a word that was opposed to the truth, but at all times, under all conditions, his words and deeds remained within the bounds that Allah had prescribed for living his life as a Prophet and righteous man. Therefore, the light of Revelation shone in that sphere as well. This same thing has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in some authentic Ahadith. In Musnad Ahmad a Tradition has been related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet once said: "I never say anything but what is true and right. " A Companion said, "O Messenger of Allah, you say things sometimes in jest also.' The Holy Prophet replied: "Indeed, I never say anything but the truth. " According to Musnad Ahmad and Abu Da'ud, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr bin 'As is reported to have said: "I used to write down whatever I heard from the sacred tongue of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) so as to preserve it. The people of the Quraish forbade me to do this, saying: 'You arc writing down everything whereas the Holy Prophet is a man: he sometimes says things in the state of anger too'. At this I gave up writing. Afterwards when I mentioned this before the Holy Prophet, he said: 'You should continue writing: By Him in Whose hand is my life, never have I said anything but the truth'." (For a complete discussion of this question, see my book Tafhimat vol. I, Article: Prophethood and Its Injunctions).

5That is, "There is no human being who teaches him this, as you seem to think, but he obtains this knowledge through a supernatural source. " According to some people, "mighty in power" implies Allah Himself, but a great majority of the commentators are agreed that it implies the Angel Gabriel (upon whom be peace). This same view has been reported from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Qatadah, Mujahid and Rabi` bin Anas. Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Razi, Alusi and others also have adopted this very view. Shah Waliyullah and Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi also have followed this same view in their translations. And the fact is that from the other explanations of the Qur'an itself also this very thing is confirmed. In Surah Takvir it has been said: "This indeed is the word of a noble Messenger, who has great power and high rank with the Owner of the Throne: there he is obeyed and held as trustworthy. And (O people of Makkah), your Companion is not mad. He has seen that Messenger on the bright horizon." (vv. 19-23). Then, in Surah Al-Baqarah: 97, the Angel has been mentioned by name through whom this teaching had been revealed on the heart of the Prophet: "Say to them: Whoever is enemy to Gabriel should understand that he has, by Allah's Command, revealed to your heart the Qur'an." If these verses are read with this verse of Surah An-Najm, there remains no doubt that here "mighty in power" implies the Angel Gabriel and not Allah. More about, it to follow.

Here, some people express the doubt as to how the Angel Gabriel can be regarded as the Holy Prophet Muhammad's teacher. For this would mean that he was the teacher and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) his pupil, and this would place him above the Holy Prophet in rank. But this suspicion is misplaced, because Gabriel did not impart instruction to the Holy Prophet from any personal knowledge of his own, which might give him superiority over the Holy Prophet. Allah, in fact, had made him a means of conveying knowledge to the Holy Prophet, and he was the Holy Prophet's teacher in the metaphoric sense for being only a medium of instruction. That does not give him any superiority whatever. To quote an example: After the Prayer was prescribed five times a day, Allah sent Gabriel (peace be upon him) to teach the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) the correct times of the Prayers, and he led him in the Prayers five times daily for two days. This has been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Mu'watta and other collections of the Ahadith, with authentic chains of reporters, and in this the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself has explained that he was the follower and Gabriel his leader in the Prayers. But his being made the leader only for the purpose of instruction does not mean that he was superior to the Holy Prophet in rank.

6Ibn `Abbas and Qatadah take dhu mirra-tin of the Text in the meaning of beautiful and grand. Mujahid, Hasan Basri, Ibn Zaid and Sufyan Thauri say that it mean: strong and powerful. Said bin Musayyab has expressed the opinion that it means wise. In a Hadith the Holy Prophet has used this word in the sense of healthy and sound. In Arabic usage this word is used in the meaning of sound in judgment, wise and learned also. Allah has chosen this word for Gabriel (peace be upon him) here because he possesses both intellectual and physical powers to the highest degree. We have adopted only one of these meanings in the translation, for his physical powers have been mentioned in the preceding sentence.

7The horizon means the eastern edge of the sky where the sun rises and the day dawns. The same has been referred to as ufuq mubin (bright horizon) in Surah Takvir: 23. Both the verses make it explicit that when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) saw Gabriel (peace be upon him) for the first time, he had appeared on the eastern horizon of the sky; and there are several authentic Traditions which show that at that time he was in his real shape in which Allah has created him. We shall quote all such Traditions below.

8That is, "After appearing on the uppermost edge of the sky, Gabriel started advancing towards the Prophet till he reached and hung suspended about him in mid air. Then he bent down to him and came within just two bow-lengths or even closer. " The commentators generally have taken qaba qausain in the meaning of "two bow-lengths", but Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas and Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud have taken qaus in the meaning of a dhira'(an amm-length, cubit), and have interpreted the words kama qaba qausain, saying that the distance between them was reduced to only two arm-lengths. And since all bows are not equal in length, the approximate distance has been expressed by "two bow-lengths away or even closer.

9The sentence fa auha ila `abd-i -hi ma auha of the Text can have two translations:

(1) "He revealed to His (Allah's) servant whatever he revealed"; and

(2) "He (Allah) revealed to His own servant whatever He revealed. "

According to the first translation, the meaning would be: Gabriel revealed to the servant of Allah whatever he had to reveal"; according to the second: "Allah revealed through Gabriel to His servant whatever He had to reveal. " The commentators have given both these meanings; the first meaning, however, fits in better with the context, .and the same has been reported from Hadrat Hasan Basri and lbn Zaid. Here, the question may be asked: "How can the pronoun of abd-i-hi turn to Allah instead of to the subject of auha, whereas Allah has nowhere been mentioned from the beginning of the Surah to this place ?" The answer is that wherever it becomes apparent from the context that the antecedent of a pronoun refers to a particular person, the pronoun turns to him automatically whether it has been mentioned before or not. There are several instances of this available in the Qur'an itself. In Surah Al-Qadr: l, Allah says: "We have sent it down in the Night of Glory." There is no mention of the Qur'an in this sentence, but the context explicitly shows that the antecedent of the pronoun is the Qur'an. At another place Allah says: ¦If Allah were to seize the people because of their misdeeds, He would not leave any creature (unpunished) on its back. " In this sentence there is no mention of the earth anywhere, but the context clearly shows that "its back" implies "the earth's back". In Surah Ya Sin: 69, it has been said: "We have not taught him poetry, nor does poetry behoove him." Here, there is no mention of the Holy Prophet, neither before this sentence nor after it, yet the context is explicit that the antecedent of the pronouns is the Holy Prophet himself. In Surah Ar-Rahman: 26, it has been said: "Whatever exists on it shall perish." There is no mention of the earth either before or after it, but the style clearly shows that the pronoun of 'alaika turns to

it. In Surah AI-Waqi'ah: 35, it has been said: "We shall have created them especially." There is no noun or pronoun before or after it to which the pronoun of hunna may be referring. It is apparent from the context that it signifies the women of Paradise. Thus, as auha ila `abd-i hi cannot at all mean that Gabriel revealed to his servant, the meaning necessarily would be that "Gabriel revealed w the servant of Allah", or that "Allah revealed to His own servant through Gabriel. "

10That is, "As the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) observed all this in broad daylight in the waking condition, with open eyes, his heart did not deem it was a delusion, or that it was a jinn or a devil, who had appeared before him, or that it was an imaginary figure, or a vision that he was seeing while awake, but his heart fully confirmed what his eyes saw. He did not for a moment doubt that it was the Angel Gabriel and the Message he was conveying was indeed God's Revelation to him."

Here, the question arises: How is it that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did not entertain any doubt at all concerning such a wonderful and extraordinary observation, and he confirmed with full faith that whatever his eyes saw was an actual fact and not an imaginary figure, nor a jinn or devil ? When we consider this question deeply we are led to five reasons for it:

First, that the external conditions in which this observation was made, testified to its truth and validity. The Holy Prophet did not observe this in darkness, or in a state of meditation, or in a vision, or in a sleep-like condition, but the day had dawned and he was fully awake, and he was seeing the whole scene in the broad daylight in the open with his own eyes precisely in the way as one sees the other things in the world. If doubt is cast on this, then whatever we see in the day time, e.g. rivers, mountains, men, houses, etc., also would become doubtful and illusory.

Second, that the Holy Prophet's own internal condition also testified to its validity. He was in his full senses. He had no idea whatever in his mind that he should observe, or that he was going to observe, such a thing. His mind was absolutely free from such a thought and any longing for it, and in this state he met with this experience suddenly. There was no room for doubting that the eyes were seeing an actual scene, but that an imaginary thing had appeared before his eyes.

Third, that the being who had appeared before him in that condition was so marvelous and magnificent, so beautiful and bright, that neither had he ever had any concept of such a being before that he could take it for a product of his own imagination, nor could a jinn or a devil have such an appearance that he would have taken him for a being other than an angel. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: “I saw Gabriel in the shape that he had six hundred wings.” (Musnad Ahmad), In another Tradition Ibn Mas`ud has further explained that each single wing of Gabriel (on whom be peace) was so extensive that it seemed to be covering the whole horizon (Musnad Ahmad), Allah Himself has described him as shadid al-quwa (one mighty in power) and dhu-mirra (one endowed with great wisdom).

Fourth, that the teaching that the being was imparting also testified to the validity of the observation. The Holy Prophet had no concept of the knowledge that he received suddenly through him, a knowledge that comprehended the realities and truths of the whole Universe. About it he could not have the doubt that it consisted of his own ideas which were being set and arranged by his own mind. Likewise, there was no ground for thinking either that it was Satan who was imparting that knowledge to him and thus deluding him, for it is not for Satan that he should teach, nor can he ever teach, the doctrine of Tauhid to man as against polytheism and idol-worship, that he should warn of the accountability of the Hereafter, that he should create contempt against ignorance and its practices, that he should invite people to moral excellences, and should exhort a person not only to accept that teaching himself but should also rise to eradicate polytheism, injustice, wickedness and sin from the world and replace these evils by the virtues of Tauhid, justice, equity and piety.

The fifth and by far the most important reason is that when Allah chooses a certain person for His Prophet hood, He cleanses his heart of doubts and suspicions and evil suggestions and fills it with faith and conviction. In this state no hesitation or vacillation is caused in his mind about the validity of whatever his eyes see and his ears hear. He accepts with complete satisfaction of the heart every truth that is revealed to him by his Lord, whether it is in the form of an observation that he is made to witness with the eyes, or in the form of knowledge which he is inspired with, or in the form of a Revelation that is recited to him literally. In all these cases the Prophet is fully aware that he is absolutely safe and secure against Satanic interference of every kind, and whatever he is receiving in any form is precisely and definitely from his Lord. Like all God-given feelings this sense and feeling of the Prophet also is a certainty which does not admit of any misunderstanding. Just as the fish has a God-given sense of being a swimmer, the bird of being a bird, and the man of being a man, and there can be no likelihood of any misunderstanding in this regard, so has the Prophet also a God given sense of his being a Prophet. He does not even for a moment entertain the doubt that he has perhaps been involved in the misunderstanding of being a Prophet.

11This is about the Holy Prophet's second meeting with Gabriel (upon whom be peace) in which he appeared before him in his real shape and nature. The place where this meeting took place has been described as Sidrat-al-muntaha, along with which it has been said that nearby it is located Jannat al ma'va (Garden of Repose).

Sidrah in Arabic means the lote-tree and muntaha the extreme edge or limit. Thus, literally, sidrat al-muntaha means "the lote-tree that is situated on the extreme edge or limit". 'Allama Alusi in his Ruh al-Ma'ani has explained it thus: "At this the knowledge of every learned man comes to an end; whatever is beyond it is known to none but Allah. " Almost the same explanation of it has been given by Ibn Jarir in his commentary, and by Ibn kathir in An-Nihayah fi Gharib alHadith wal-Athar. It is difficult for us to know what kind of a lote-tree it is that is situated at the farthest end of this physical world and what is its nature and state. These are the mysteries of the Divine Universe which are incomprehensible for us. In any case, it is some such thing for which there was no more appropriate word than "sidrah " in human

language, in the sight of Allah.

" Jannat al-ma'va' literally means "the Jannat (Garden) that is to be an abode. " Hadrat Hasan Basri says that this is the same Jannat which the believers and righteous will be given in the Hereafter, and from this same verse he has argued that that Jannat is in the heavens. Qatadah says that this is the Jannat in which the souls of the martyrs are kept; it does not imply the Jannat that is to be given in the Hereafter. Ibn 'Abbas also says the same but adds that the Jannat to be granted to the believers in the Hereafter is not in the heavens but here on the earth.

12That is, "its Splendor and Glory exceeds all description. The Divine Glory and effulgence was such as can neither be conceived by man nor can any human language depict it adequately.

13That is, "On the one hand, the Holy Messenger of Allah was so firm and steadfast that even in the Presence of the great Divine Splendor and Glory his sight was not dazzled and he went on gazing at it with great composure. On the other, he was in such complete control of himself and so exclusively attentive that he kept his mind and his sight focused upon the object for which he had been summoned, and he did not let his sight wander to any side like a spectator's to have a glimpse of the wonderful objects present there. This can be understood by the example of a person who gets an opportunity to be present in the court of a mighty and powerful king, where he comes across such glory and splendor that had never even been conceived by him before. Now, if he be a shallow person, he would be struck with amazement, and if he be un-initiated in the court coquette, he would become heedless of the royal presence and would turn his gaze to every side to look at the embellishments of the court. But a noble, reverent and dutiful person will neither be stupefied and confounded, nor will become lost in witnessing the court, but will present himself with full dignity and will keep his mind concentrated on the object for which he had been summoned in the royal court. This very virtue and quality of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been esteemed in this verse.

14This verse clearly starts that the Holy Prophet had not seen Allah but His wonderful Sings. Even according to the context, this second meeting also took place with the same being with whom the first meeting had taken place. Therefore, one will have to admit that neither the one whom he had first seen on the uppermost horizon was Allah nor he whom he saw afterwards by the farthest lote-tree was Allah. Had he seen Allah Almighty on either occasion it would have been a great thing and must certainly have been mentioned here explicitly. About the Prophet Moses it has been said in the Qur'an that he had besought to see Allah And the reply given was: Lan tarani "You cannot sec Me." (Al-A'raf 143). Now, obviously if this honour that was not granted to the Prophet Moses, had been granted to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), it would by itself have been such an important thing which must have been stated in clear words. But we see that nowhere in the Qur'an has it been said that the Holy Prophet had seen his Sustainer and Lord. But in Surah Bani Isra'il also, where mention has been made of the event of Mi`raj (Ascension), it has been said that "We had transported Our servant...so that We may show him some of Our Signs" (li-nuriya -hu min ayat-i na), and here in connection with his

visit at Sidrat al-muntaha also it has been said: "He saw of the greatest Signs of His Lord" (laqad ra a min ayat-i Rabb-i-hil kubra).

In view of these reasons apparently there was no ground for the dispute whether the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) on both these occasions had seen Allah Almighty or the Angel Gabriel (on whom be peace). But, the reason that has given rise to this dispute is that the traditions of Hadith differ on this question. Below we reproduce in their sequence the Ahadith that have been reported from the different Companions in this regard:

(1) Traditions of Hadrat `A'ishah:

Hadrat Masruq has stated in Kitab at-Tafsir of Bukhari asked Hadrat 'A'ishah: O mother of the faithful! Had Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) seen his Lord and Sustainer? She replied: Your question has terrified me. Why do you forget that if a person lays claim to three of the things, he would lay a false claim? (The first of these things that Hadrat `A'ishah mentioned was): Whoever among you says that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) had seen his Lord and Sustainer, tells a lie. Then Hadrat `A'ishah recited these verses: La tudriku-hul-absar "Eyes cannot comprehend Him; " and: Ma kana li-bashar-in anyyukallima-hullah-u ills wahy-an au min-wara-i-hijab- in au yursila rasul an fayu-hia bi-idhni hi ma yasha-u: "It is not given to any mortal that Allah should speak to him, face to face; He, speaks either through Revelation (secret instruction), or from behind a curtain, or He sends a messenger (an angel), who by Allah's Command, reveals whatever He wills." (Ash-Shura: 51). Then she said: ¦The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in fact had seen Gabriel (on whom be peace) in his real shape twice."

A part of this Hadith is also found in Bukhari (chapter 4 of Kitab atTauhid) And in the tradition that Bukhari has cited from Masruq in Kitab Bida 'aI-Khalq, he states: "Hearing this thing from Hadrat `A'ishah, I asked: What would then Allah's words, Thumma dana fa-tadalla, fa-Kana qaba qausain-i au adha. mean ? She replied: This refers to Gabriel; he always appeared before the Holy Prophet in human shape, but on this occasion he had appeared before him in his real shape and nature and the whole horizon was filled with him. "

In Muslim (Kitab al-Iman, Babu fi Dhikr Sidrat al-muntaha) this conversation between Hadrat `A'ishah and Masruq has been related in greater detail, its most important part being this: "Hadrat `A'ishah said: The one who claims that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had seen his Lord and Sustainer imputes a lie to Allah. Masruq says: I was leaning back. Hearing this I sat up and said: Mother of the faithful, do not make haste: Has not Allah said: wa lagad ra'a-hu bi/-ufuq-i/ mubin? and lagad ra'a-hu nazlat-an ukhra " Hadrat 'A'ishah replied: I was the first one in this Ummah who inquired of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about this. He had replied: "It was Gabriel (on whom be peace). I have never seen him in his real shape and form in which Allah has created him except on these two occasions. On these two occasions I saw him descending from the heavens and his great presence was covering the whole space between the earth and the heavens."

Ibn Marduyah has related this tradition of Masruq, thus: "Hadrat `A'ishah said: I was indeed the first person who asked the Holy Prophet: Did you ever see your Lord and Sustainer? He replied: No, I had only seen Gabriel descending from the heavens."

(2) Traditions of Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud:

Bukhari (Kitab at-Tafsir), Muslim (Kitab al Iman) and Tirmidhi (Abwab' at-Tafsir) contain a tradition on the authority of Zin bin Hubaish, saying that Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud gave this commentary of fa-kana qaba qausain-i au adha: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) saw Gabriel (on whom be peace) in the shape that he had six hundred wings."

In the other traditions of Muslim, Zirr bin Hubaish has reported this very commentary of Ma kadhab al-fu adu ma ra'a and lagad ra a min ayat-i Rabbi-hil kubra from Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud.

In Musnad Ahmad this commentary of Ibn Mas`ud has been reported by 'Abdur Rahman bin Yazid and Abu Wail also besides Zirr bin Hubaish. Furthermore, in Musnad Ahmad two more traditions of Zirr bin Hubaish have been related in which Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud commenting upon wa lagad ra a-hu nazlat-an ukhra, 'inda-sidrat-il muntaha stated: "The Holy Messenger of Allah said that he saw Gabriel by the lote-tree he had six hundred wings. "Imam Ahmad has cited a tradition on the same subject, on the authority of Shaqiq bin Salamah also, in which he states that he heard Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud saying that the Holy Prophet himself had said that he had seen Gabriel (on whom be peace) in that shape at sidrat al-muntaha.

(3) When 'Ata' bin Abi Rabah asked Hadrat Abu Hurairah the meaning of the verse lagad ra a-hu nazlat-an ukhra, he replied: "The Holy Prophet had seen Gabriel (on whom be peace).": (Muslim: Kitab al lman).

(4) Imam Muslim has related in kitab al-Iman two traditions of `Abdullah bin Shaqiq on the authority of Hadrat Abu Dharr Ghifari, in one of which he says that he asked the Holy Prophet: "Did you ever see your Lord?" The Holy Prophet replied: Nur-un anna ara-hu; and in the other he says that the Holy Prophet gave this answer to his question: Ra 'aitu nur-an. Of the first answer of the Holy Prophet Ibn al-Qayyim has given this meaning in his Zad al-Ma ad: "Between me and the sight of my Lord there was Light," and of the second this: "I did not see my Lord but only a Light."

Nasa'i and Ibn Abi Hatim have reported the saying of Hadrat Abu Dharr, thus: "The Holy Prophet had seen his Lord with the heart (mind), not with the eyes.

(5) Imam Muslim in his Kitab al-Iman has related this tradition from Hadrat Abu Musa al-Ash`ari: "The Holy Prophet said: The sight of no one from among His creatures has reached Allah Almighty."

(6) Traditions of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas:

According to Muslim, when Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas was asked the meaning of: Ma kadhab al-fu 'adu ma ar'a, wa lagad ra'a hu nazlat-an ukhra, he said: "The Holy Messenger of Allah saw his Lord twice with his heart. " This tradition is also contained in Musnad Ahmad.

Ibn Marduyah has cited this saying of Ibn `Abbas, on the authority of 'Ata' bin Abi Rabah: The Holy Messenger of Allah had not seen Allah with the eyes but with the heart. "

Nasa'i contains a tradition from `Ikrimah saying that Ibn `Abbas said "Do you wonder at this that Allah made the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) His friend, blessed Moses with His Word and honoured Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) with His sight?" Hakim also has cited this tradition and held it as authentic.

In Tirmidhi, there is a tradition from Sha`bi to the effect that Ibn `Abbas said in a gathering: "Allah had distributed His Sight and His Word between Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and Moses (upon whom be peace). He spoke to Moses twice, and Muhammad saw Him twice " Hearing these very words of lbn 'Abbas, Masruq had approached Hadrat `A'ishah with the question: "Had Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) seen his Lord?" She had replied: What you have said has made my hair stand on end." After this the same dialogue that we have cited above under the tradition of Hadrat 'A'ishah tool place between Hadrat 'A'ishah and Masruq.

In one of the traditions reported in Tirmidhi from lbn `Abbas, he says: "The Holy Prophet had seen Allah Almighty." In yet another he says: "He had seen Him twice", and in a third one; "He had seen Him with the heart."

In Musnad Ahmad a tradition from Ibn `Abbas is to the effect: "The Holy Prophet said: I saw my Lord, the blessed, the exalted. " In another tradition he says: "The Holy Messenger of Allah said: Tonight my Lord came to me in the best shape. " I think that by this the Holy Prophet meant that he saw Allah Almighty in a vision.

Tabarani and Ibn Marduyah have related this tradition also from Ibn `Abbas: "The Holy Messenger of Allah had seen his Lord twice, once with the eyes and the second time with the heart. "

(7) Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurzi states that when some of the Companions asked the Holy Prophet,: 'Did you ever see your Lord? he replied: I have seen Him twice with my heart." (Ibn Abi Hatim) Ibn Jarir has related this very tradition, thus: "He said: I have not seen Him with the eye, but with the heart twice. "

(8) A tradition of Hadrat Anas bin Malik which Imam Bukhari has cited in his Kitab at-Tauhid in connection with the event of the Mi'raj, on the authority of Sharik bin `Abdullah, contains words to the effect: "When

the Holy Prophet reached sidrat al-muntaha, Allah Almighty drew near him and hung suspended above him till there remained between the Holy Prophet and Him a distance equal to two bow-lengths or even less. Then, what Allah revealed to him included the Command for SO Prayers." But, besides the objections that Imam Khattabi, Hafiz Ibn Hajar, Ibn Hazm and Hafiz `Abdul Haq (author of Al-Jam' bain al-Sahihain) have raised in respect of the authenticity and subject-matter of this tradition, the main objection against it is that it clearly contradicts the Qur'an, for the Qur'an mentions two separate occasions when the experience of the vision took place, the first initially at the uppermost horizon to which reference has been made in: Dane fa-tadalla, fa-kana qaba qausain-i au adna, and a second time near sidrat al muntaha. But this tradition mixes up the two occasions and presents them both as one occasion of the vision. Therefore, because of its being contradictory to the Qur'an, it cannot be acceptable in any case.

As for the other traditions that we have cited above, the weightiest among them are those that have been related from Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud and Hadrat `A'ishah, for both of them have unanimously reported this saying of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself that on neither occasion he had seen Allah but Gabriel (peace be on him), and these traditions fully conform to the explanations and allusions of the Qur'an. Furthermore, they are also confirmed by the sayings of the Holy Prophet which Hadrat Abu Dharr and Hadrat Abu Musa al-Ash'ari have reported from him. On the contrary the traditions that have been cited from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas in the books of Hadith are self-contradictory. In some he regards both the experiences as a vision with the eyes, in some both as a vision with the heart, in some one with the eyes and the other with the heart, and in some he wholly negates the vision with the eyes. In none of these traditions he has cited any saying of the Holy Prophet himself and where he has cited such a saying, it contains no mention of either of the two experiences stated in the Qur'an; besides, the explanation of one of his traditions givcn by the other indicates that the Holy Prophet at some time bad seen Allah Almighty not in the waking condition but in a vision during sleep. Therefore, in fact, for the commentary of these verses the traditions ascribed to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas cannot be held as reliable. Likewise, although the traditions of Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Qurzi cite a saying of the Holy Prophet, they do not mention the names of the Companions who might have heard this thing from the Holy Prophet himself. Moreover, in one of them it has been said that the Holy Prophet had clearly denied having seen Allah with the eyes.

15That is, "You regard the teachings being given to you by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as erroneous and falsehood, whereas he is being given this knowledge by Allah, and Allah has made him see with his own eyes the verities to which he is testifying before you. Now consider it for yourself as to how irrational are the beliefs that you are following persistently and" as to whom you arc causing loss by opposing and resisting the person who is guiding you to the Right Way. In this connection, especially the three goddesses that were worshiped generally by the people of Makkah, Ta'if and other parts of Hejaz have been taken as an example. About them, they have been asked: Have you ever considered rationally whether they could have even the slightest role in the affairs of the Godhead of the earth and heavens? Or could they bear any relationship whatever with the Lord of the Universe?

The shrine of Lat was in Ta'if and the Bani Thaqif were so devoted to it that when Abraha was advancing to Makkah with his army of elephants to destroy the Ka'bah, the people only in order to save the temple of their deity had provided the wicked man with guides to lead him w Makkah so that he should spare Lat, whereas like all the Arabs the people of Thaqif also believed that the Ka'bah is Allah's House. Scholars have disputed the meaning of Lat. According to Ibn Jarir Tabari, it is the feminine gender of Allah, i.e. originally this word was allahatun which became al-Lat. According to Zamakhshari, it is derived from hva yalvi, . which means to turn to or bow to somebody. As the polytheists turned to it for worship and bowed to it and circumambulated it, it began to be called Lat. Ibn 'Abbas reads it as left (with a stress on t) and holds it is derived from latt yalittu, which means to churn and mix together. He and Mujahid state that this, in fact, was a man, who lived on a rock near Ta'if, and used to entertain the pilgrims to Makkah with barley drinks and food. When he died the people built a shrine to him on the same rock and began to worship him. But this explanation of Lat, in spite of having been reported on the authority of scholars like Ibn 'Abbas and Mujahid, is not acceptable for two reasons. First, that in the Qur'an it has been called Lat and not Latt; second, that the Qur'an describes all the three as goddesses, and according to this tradition Lat was a man, not a woman.

'Uzza is derived from 'izzat, and it means the one (female) enjoying veneration and respect. This was the special goddess of the Quraish and her shrine was situated at Hurad in the valley of Nakhlah, between Makkah and Ta'if. (For the location of Nakhlah, see E.N. 33 of Surah AL-Ahqaf). The people of Bani Shaiban, who were the allies of the Bani Hashim, were its attendants. The Quraish and the people of other tribes paid visits to it and presented offerings and made sacrifices to it. As for the Ka`bah sacrificial animals were driven to it also and it was held in the highest esteem. Ibn Hisham relates that when Abu Uhaihah was on the point of death, Abu Lahab paid him a visit and found him weeping. Abu Lahab asked, ¦Why do you weep, Abu Uhaihah ? Are you afraid of death ?-and death is the destiny of everybody !" He said, `By God, I do not weep because of the fear of death, but I am grieved to think as to how 'Uzza will be worshipped after me. " Abu Lahab said, "It was neither worshipped for your sake in your lifetime, nor will it be given up after you have left the world." Abu Uhaihah said, 'Now I am satisfied that there are people who will take my place after me."

The shrine of Manat was situated at Qudaid by. the Red Sea between Makkah and Madinah, and the people of Khuza`ah and Aus and Khazraj were in particular its great devotees. People visited it as pilgrims, circumambulated it and made offerings and sacrifices before it. In the Hajj months as soon as the pilgrims became free from their visit to the Ka`bah and the religious services at Mina and 'Arafat, they would start raising cries of ¦Labbaik, labbaik"even there for the purpose of visiting Manat, and the people who intended to go on this second "hajj" did not run between the Safa and the Marwah.

16That is, "You held these goddesses as daughters of Allah, Lord of the worlds, and did not consider while inventing this absurd creed that as for yourselves you regarded the birth of a daughter as disgraceful, and desired to have only male children, but as for Allah you assign w Him only daughters!"

17That is, "Those whom you call gods and goddesses are neither gods nor goddesses, nor do they possess any attribute of divinity, nor any share whatever in the powers of Godhead. You have of your own whim made them children of God and deities and associates in Godhead. Allah has sent down no authority which you may, produce as a proof in support of your presumptions. "

18In other words, the basic causes of their deviation are two: First, that they do not feel any need for the knowledge of reality for the purpose of adopting a creed and religion, but make a supposition on the basis of a mere conjecture and then put belief in it as though it were the reality, Second, that they have, in fact, adopted this attitude in order to follow the lusts of their souls: they desire that they should have such a deity as should help them attain their aims and objects in the world, and if at all there is to be a Hereafter, it should take the responsibility to have them granted forgiveness there too, But it should not impose any restriction of the lawful and the unlawful on them nor should bind them in any discipline of morality. That is why they do not feel inclined to worship One God as taught by the Prophets, and only like to worship these invented gods and goddesses.

19That is, in every age the Prophets appointed by Allah have been guiding these wicked people to the Truth, and now Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has come to tell them as to whom belongs Godhead in reality in the Universe.

20Another meaning of this verse can be: "Is man entitled to take anyone he pleases as his god ?" Still another meaning can be: "Can the desire of man to have his prayers answered by these gods ever be fulfilled?"

21That is, "Even if all the angels together intercede for a person, it cannot be beneficial for him not to speak of the intercession by these invented deities of yours, which can do no one any good. All the powers of Godhead rest with Allah. Even the angels cannot dare intercede for somebody before Him unless He permits it and is pleased to hear their intercession in his behalf."

22That is, "Their first folly is that they have taken these powerless angels who cannot even intercede for anyone before Allah as their deities; their second folly is that they regard them as female and daughters of Allah. The basic reason for these errors is that they do not believe in the Hereafter. For had they been believers in the Hereafter, they would never have behaved so irrationally and irresponsibly. Their denial of the Hereafter has made them heedless of their end, and they think that believing or disbelieving in God, or believing in a thousand gods, does not make any difference, for none of these creeds seems to entail any good or bad result in the present life of the world. Whether the people are deniers of God, or believers in many gods, or in One God, their crops ripen as well as fail, they fall ill as well as recover from illness, and they pass through all kinds of circumstances, good as well as bad. Therefore it is not at all an important and serious matter for them that man should or should not take some one as a deity, or should take as many deities or of any kind as he likes of his choice. When according to them the decision as to

what is truth and what is falsehood is to take place in this very world, depending on the results thereof appearing here, obviously the results here do not decide absolutely that one creed is true and another false. Therefore, the adoption of one creed and rejection of another is a matter of men whim with these people."

23That is, "They have not adopted this creed about the angels on the ground that they had found through some means of knowledge that they were females and daughters of God, but they have presumed this on mere conjecture and have set up these shrines at which they pray for fulfillment of desires, make offerings and pay tributes."

24Dhikr here may imply the Qur'an as well as mere admonition; it may also mean that he does not like that even God be mentioned before him.

25That is, "You should not waste your time in making him understand the truth, for such a person will never be inclined to accept any invitation which is based on God-worship, which calls to objects and values higher than the material benefits of the world, and according to which the real aim of life may be the eternal success and well-being of the Hereafter. Instead of expending your time and energy on such a materialistic and ungodly person, you should devote attention to the people who arc inclined to heed the remembrance of Allah and arc not involved in the worship of the world. "

26This is a parenthetical sentence which has been inserted here as an explanation of the preceding verse.

27That is, "These people neither know nor can think anything beyond the world and its immediate gains; therefore, it is futile merely to expend time and energy on them."

28In other words, neither the question whether a person is gone astray or is on right guidance, is to be decided in this world, nor has its decision been left to the judgment of the people of the world; the decision rests with Allah. He alone is the Master of the earth and heavens and He alone knows which way out of the different ways being followed by the people of the world, is the way of guidance and which of error and deviation. Therefore, you should least bother if the polytheistic Arabs and the Makkan disbelievers think you are deluded and misguided and regard their own ignorance as truth and guidance. Leave them alone if they wish to remain lost in their falsehood. You need not waste your time in disputing with them.

29The theme is resumed here and connected as a continuous whole with verse 29. Without the parenthesis, it would read: 'Leave him alone so that Allah may requite the evildoers for their evil deeds."

30For explanation, see E.N. 53 of An-Nisa.

31For explanation, sec E.N. 130 of AI-An'am and E.N. 89 of An-Nahl.

32The word lamam as found in the original is used for a small quantity of something, or its slight effect, or its mere closeness, or its existence for a short time. This word is used to express the sense that a person did not commit an act but was very near to committing it.

On the basis of its usages some commentators have taken the word lamam in the meaning of minor sins. Some others have taken it in the meaning that a person should practically reach very near a grave sin but -should desist from actually committing it. Still others take it in the sense of a person's remaining involved in a sin temporarily and then desisting from it. And according to some it implies that a person should think of, or wish, or intend to commit a sin but should rake no practical steps towards it. In this regard, the views of the Companions and their immediate followers are as follows:

Zaid bin Aslam and Ibn Zaid opine, and a saying of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also is to the same effect, that it signifies those sins which the people had committed in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, then alter embracing Islam they refrained from them.'

Another view of Ibn `Abbas is, and the same is also the view of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'As, Mujahid, Hasan Basri and Abu Salih, that it implies a person's being involved in a grave sin or indecency temporarily, or occasionally, and then giving it up.

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Masruq and Sha'bi say, and the same also has been reported from Hadrat Abu Hurairah and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas in authentic traditions, that this implies a person's approaching the very point of a grave sin and crossing all its preliminaries but then restraining himself at the final stage, e.g. a person goes out with the intention of stealing but refrains from it in the end, or has close association with other women, but refrains from committing adultery.

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair, `Ikrimah, Qatadah and Dahhak say that this signifies those minor sins for which no punishment has been prescribed in the world nor any threat of punishment held out in the Hereafter.

Said bin al-Musayyab says that this implies one's thinking of a sin in the mind but restraining oneself from committing it practically .

These arc the different explanations which have been reported in the traditions from the Companions and their immediate followers. The majority of the later commentators and doctors of law and jurists arc of the opinion that this verse and verse 31 of Surah An-Nisa classify sins into two main kinds: the major sins and the minor sins, and these two verses give man the hope that if he abstains from the major sins and open indecencies, Allah will overlook his minor errors. Although some distinguished scholars have also

opined that no sin is minor and the disobedience of Allah is by itself a major sin, yet as stated by Imam Ghazali the distinction between the major and the minor sins is something which cannot be denied, for the sources of knowledge of the Shari'ah values and injunctions all point to this.

As for the question, what is the distinction between the major and the minor sins, and what kinds of sins are major and what kinds of them minor? we are satisfied that: "Every such act is a major sin which has been forbidden by a clear ordinance of the Divine Book and the Shari'ah of the Prophet, or for which Allah and His Messenger have prescribed a punishment in the world, or have held out a threat of punishment in the Hereafter, or have cursed the one guilty of committing it, or given the news of infliction of punishment on those guilty of committing it. " Apart from this class of sins all other acts which are disapproved by the Shari'ah, come under the definition of minor sins. Likewise, the mere desire for a major sin, or an intention to commit it, also is not a major sin but a minor sin; so much so that even crossing all the preliminaries of a major sin does not constitute a major sin unless one has actually committed it. However, even a minor sin becomes a major sin in case it is committed with a feeling of contempt for religion and of arrogance against Allah, and the one guilty of it does not consider the Shari`ah that has declared it an evil worthy of any attention and reverence.

33That is, "The forgiveness for the one guilty of minor sins is not for the reason that a minor sin is no sin, but for the reason that Allah Almighty does not treat His servants narrow-mindedly and does not seize them on trifling faults; if the servants adopt piety and abstain from major sins and indecencies, He will not seize them for their minor errors and will forgive them magnanimously on account of His infinite mercy."

34The reference is to Walid bin Mughirah who was one of the prominent chiefs of the Quraish. According to Ibn Jarir Tabari, this person had first become inclined to accept the invitation of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), but when a polytheist friend of his came to know of his intention to become a Muslim, he counseled him not to give up his ancestral faith, and asked him that if he was afraid of the punishment of the Hereafter, he should pay him a certain amount of money and he would take the responsibility to suffer the punishment on his behalf. Walid accepted the offer and turned away from Allah's way. Then he paid only a little of the amount that he had promised to pay his polytheist friend and withheld the rest, The allusion to this incident was meant to toll the disbelievers of Makkah what kind of errors and follies they were involved in because of their heedlessness of the Hereafter and their ignorance of the Divine Religion. "

35That is, “Does he know that this conduct is in any way beneficial for him? Does he know that a person can save himself even in this way from the punishment of the Hereafter?"

36In the following verses a resume is being given of the teachings sent down in the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses. The Books of Moses signify the Torah. As for the Books of the Prophet Abraham they have become extinct and no mention of them is found even in the holy scriptures of the Jews and Christians. Only in the Qur'an at two places have some parts of the teachings contained in the

Books of the Prophet Abraham been cited, here and in the concluding verses of Surah Al-A`la.

37From this verse three cardinal principles are derived:

(1) That every person is himself responsible for what he does;

(2) that the responsibility of one man's act cannot be transferred to another unless he has a share in the commission of the act; and

(3) that even if a person wishes he cannot take on himself the responsibility of another man's act, nor can the actual culprit be let off on the ground that another person is willing to suffer the punishment on his behalf.

38From this verse also three important principles are derived:

(1) That every person will get only the fruit of his own deeds;

(2) that the fruit of one man's deeds cannot be given to another unless he has a share in that deed, and

(3) that none can attain anything without striving for it.

Some people wrongly apply these three principles to the economic problems of the world and conclude that no person can become the lawful owner of anything except of his own earned income. But this conclusion clashes with several laws and injunctions given by the Qur'an itself, e.g. the law of inheritance, according to which many individuals inherit a person and are regarded as his lawful heirs, whereas the heritage is not their earned income. As for a suckling for instance, it cannot be proved by any stretch of imagination that its labor had any share in the wealth left by its father. Likewise, there arc the injunctions about the zakat and voluntary charities according to which the wealth of one man is transferred to others only on the basis of their legal and moral entitlement and they become its lawful owners, whereas in the production of this wealth they did not make any contribution at all. Thus, it is against the intention of the Qur'an to take a verse of it and derive from it such conclusions as clash with the other teachings of the Qur'an itself.

Some other people regard these principles as concerning the Hereafter and raise the question whether, according to these principles, the deeds of one man can in some way be also beneficial for the other person, and whether the deeds of a person which he does for another person, or on his behalf, can be accepted from him, and whether it is also possible that a person may transfer the reward of his act to another. If the answer to these questions be in the negative the sending of spiritual rewards (isal thawab) for the dead and performing Hajj on behalf of another, would be inadmissible; even the prayer of

forgiveness for the other person would be meaningless, for this prayer also is not the concerned person's own act and deed. However, this extreme point of view has been adopted by none among the followers of Islam except the Mu`tazilites. Only they take this verse in the meaning that one man's acts and deeds can in no case be beneficial for the other. On the contrary, the followers of the Sunnah are unanimous that the prayer of one man is beneficial for the other because it is confirmed by the Qur'an; however, they differ only in details, and not in principles, as to whether the sending of spiritual rewards for another and doing a good work on behalf of another is beneficial or not.

(1) The tern isal thawab means that after a person has performed a good act, he may pray to Allah to grant its rewards to another. In this regard, Imam Malik and Imam Shafe'i have expressed the opinion that the rewards of the pure bodily acts of worship, e.g, the Prayer, the Fasting and recitals of the Qur'an, etc. cannot reach the other person; however, the rewards of one's monetary acts of worship, e.g. charities, or Hajj, which is a combination of the monetary and bodily worships, can reach the other, for the principle is that one man's act should not be beneficial for the other. But since according to authentic Ahadith the rewards of charities can be conveyed and Hajj on behalf of another also can be performed, they admit the permissibility of conveying of rewards to the extent of this kind of the acts of worship only. On the contrary, the Hanafi viewpoint is that a man can send the reward of each of his virtuous acts as a gift to the other, whether it is the Prayer, or the Fast, or the recitation of the Qur'an, or remembrance of Allah, or charity, or Hajj and `Umrah. The argument is that just as a man after carrying out a piece of work can tell the master to pay the wages to such and such other person instead of him, so after performing a good deed also he can pray to Allah to grant its rewards to such and such other person instead of him. In this there is no rational ground for making exception of some kinds of virtues and keeping it restricted to some other kinds of virtues. The same is confirmed by a large number of the traditions:

A Tradition, on the unanimous authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah. Hadrat Abu Rafi', Hadrat Abu Talhah Ansari and Hudhaifah bin Usaid al-Ghifari has been reported in Bukhari, Muslim. Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Majah, Tabari (in Awsat, Musradrik and Ibn Abi Shaibah saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) got two rams and sacrificed one on behalf of himself and his family and the other on behalf of his, Ummah.

Muslim, Bukhari, Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i have related a Tradition from Hadrat 'A'ishah to the effect that a person said to the Holy Prophet: "My mother has died suddenly. I think if she had a chance to speak, she would have asked me giving away something in charity. Now, if I give away something in charity on her behalf, will she get a reward for it ?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, she will. "

In Musnad Ahmad there is a Tradition from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'As to the effect. that his grandfather, `As bin Wail, had vowed in the preIslamic days of ignorance to sacrifice 100 camels. His uncle, Hisham bin 'As, sacrificed fifty camels of his own share. Hadrat 'Amr bin 'As, asked the Holy Prophet as to what he should do. The Holy Prophet replied: "If your father had affirmed faith in the

Oneness of God, you may observe fasts on his behalf. or give something in charity: this would be beneficial for him."

A Tradition has been reported in Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i and Ibn Majah, on the authority of Hadrat Hasan Basri, to the effect that Hadrat Sa'd bin 'Ubadah asked the Holy Prophet: "My mother has died. Should I give something in charity on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet replied in the affirmative. Several other traditions bearing on the same subject also have been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, etc. on the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat Abu Hurairah and Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas, According to which the Holy Prophet permitted giving away of something in charity on behalf of the deceased person describing it as beneficial for him.

According to Daraqutni a person said to the Holy Prophet: "I have been serving my parents while they were alive; what should I do now when they are dead?" The Holy Prophet replied; "This would also be their service if you offered the Prayer on their behalf along with your own Prayers, and observed the Fast on their behalf along with your own Fast." Another tradition in Daraqutni has been related from Hadrat `Ali according to which the Holy Prophet said: "If a person passing by the graveyard recites "Qul huwallah-u ahad" eleven times and gives away its reward for the dead, all the dead ones will be granted their due shares of the rewards. "

This large number of the traditions which support one another explicitly state that the transfer of the spiritual rewards is not only possible but rewards of all kinds of acts of worship and virtuous deeds can be sent and conveyed and in it there is no specification of any particular kind of acts and deeds. In this connection, however, four things should be understood well:

First, that the reward of that act only can be transferred, which may have been performed purely for the sake of Allah and according to the Shari'ah injunctions; otherwise obviously an act which is performed for the sake of another than Allah, or in contravention of the Shari 'ah injunctions, cannot even entitle its doer himself to any reward, nothing to say of its transfer to another person.

Secondly, the gift of the rewards will certainly reach those righteous persons who are staying as guests with Allah, but no rewards are expected to reach those culprits who are placed in confinement there. The gift can reach the guests of Allah but the criminals of Allah cannot be expected to receive it. If a person sends his rewards to him because of a misunderstanding, it will not go waste but instead of reaching the culprit it will return to the actual worker himself just like the money-order which returns to the sender in case it does not reach the one to whom it has been sent.

Thirdly, the transfer of the reward is possible but not the transfer of punishment. That is, it is possible that one may do a good deed and may willingly transfer its reward to the other and it reaches him, but it is not possible that one may commit a sin and transfer its punishment to the other and it reaches him,

The fourth thing is that a virtuous act s beneficial in two ways: First, on account of its those results which accrue to the soul and morality of the doer himself because of which he becomes worthy of a reward in the sight of Allah; second, on account of the reward which Allah grants him as a gift and favor. The transfer of the spiritual reward does not concern the first but only the second. This can be understood by an example. A person tries to attain proficiency in the art of wrestling by constant practice. The strength and skill thus gained is in any way specially meant for his own self; it cannot be transferred to another. Similarly, if he is attached to a royal court, and there is a stipend fixed for him as a wrestler, he alone will receive it and no one else. However, in respect of the prizes and gifts that his patron may like to grant him as an appreciation for his creditable performance, he may request that they may be given to his coach, or parents, or some other benefactor, on his behalf. The same is the case with the virtuous deeds: their spiritual benefits are not transferable and their rewards also cannot be transferred to another, but as for their rewards and gifts he can pray to Allah that these may be granted to a near and dear one, or a benefactor of his. That is why it is termed as isal thawab (conveying of spiritual rewards) and not as isal jaza' (conveying of material reward).

(2) Another form of a person's work being beneficial for another is that one should either do a virtuous deed on the desire or beckoning of another, or without his desire or beckoning, on his behalf, which, in fact, was obligatory for him to carry out, but which he was unable to carry out himself. In this regard, the Hanafi jurists say that the acts of worship are of three kinds: purely physical, e.g. the Prayer; purely monetary, e.g. the zakat; and the compound acts of bodily and monetary worship, e.g. Hajj. As for the first kind, nobody can act as an agent of another. As for the second kind, one can act as an agent of the other, e.g. the husband can pay the zakat due on the ornaments of the wife. As for the third kind, one can act as an agent of the other only in case the actual person on whose behalf the act is being performed, is permanently, and not just temporarily, unfit to carry out his obligation himself. For example, Hajj can be performed on behalf of another only in case the person concerned . is unable to go for Hajj himself nor-may have the hope that he would ever be able to perform it himself. The Malikis and the Shafe is also concur on, this, However, Imam Malik lays down the condition that if the father has willed that his son should perform Hajj after him, on his behalf, the son can perform Hajj on his father's behalf, otherwise not, But the traditions in this regard are very explicit. Whether the father has expressed the desire, or made a will or not, the son can perform Hajj on his behalf.

Ibn 'Abbas has related that a woman _from the tribe of Khath'am said to the Holy Prophet: "The command for Hajj has reached my father at a time when he has become very old: he cannot even sit on the camel's back. " The Holy Prophet replied: "You then may perform Hajj on his behalf. " (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmidi, Nasa'i). A tradition bearing on the same subject has also been related by Hadrat 'Ali. (Ahmad, Tirmidhi).

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Zabair has made mention of a tnan of the same tribe of Khath'am, who also put a similar question to the Holy Prophet concerning his aged father. The Holy Prophet asked: 'Are you his eldest son ?" He answered in the affirmative. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said "If your father had left

behind a debt and you paid it off, would it stand paid on his behalf?" He replied that it would. The Holy Prophet said: "Then you should likewise perform Hajj also on his behalf." (Ahmad, Nasa'i). Ibn 'Abbas relates that a woman from the tribe of Juhainah came to the Holy Prophet and said: "My mother had vowed to perform Hajj but she died before performing her vow. Now, can I perform Hajj on her behalf ?" The Holy Prophet replied: "If your mother had left behind a debt, would you not have paid it? Likewise, you should also discharge the vow made to Allah, and Allah has a greater right that the vows made to Him be performed." (Bukhari, Nasa'i). Bukhari and Musnad Ahmad contain another tradition to the effect that a man came and put the same question to the Holy Prophet concerning his sister as has been mentioned above, and the Holy Prophet gave him also the same answer.

These traditions provide a clear proof that so far as the compound acts of bodily and monetary worships are concerned, one can act on behalf of another. As for the purely bodily acts of worship, there are some Ahadith which prove the permissibility of acting on behalf of another in this kind of worship as well. For example, Ibn 'Abbas has related that a woman from the tribe of Juhainah asked the Holy Prophet: 'My mother had vowed to observe the Fast and she died without performing her vow. Now, can I observe the Fast on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Observe the Fast on her behalf." (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Abu Da'ud). And Hadrat Buraidah's tradition that a woman asked concerning her mother: "She had one month's (according to another tradition two months') Fasts to observe; can I observe those Fasts on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet said that she could." (Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud). And Hadrat 'A'ishah's tradition that the Holy Prophet said: ¦If a person dies and he had some Fasts to observe, his guardian should observe those Fasts on his behalf." (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad). In the tradition related by Bazzar the Holy Prophet's words are to the effect: "If his guardian may so like, he may observe those Fasts on his behalf). " On the basis of these very traditions the Ashab al- Hadith and Imam Auza'i and the Zahiris have formed the view that one is permitted to perform bodily acts of worship also on behalf of the other. But Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Shafe'i and Imam Zaid bin 'Ali have given the ruling that a fast cannot be observed on behalf of a dead person, and Imam Ahmad, Imam Laith and Ishaq bin Rahawaih opine that this can be done only in case the deceased person might have so vowed but might not have been able to perform his vow. Those who oppose this give the argument that the reporters of the Ahadith, which prove its permissibility, have themselves given their rulings against it. Ibn 'Abbas's ruling has been related by Nasa'i, thus: "No one should offer a Prayer or observe a Fast on behalf of another." And Hadrat 'A'ishah's ruling, according to 'Abdur Razzaq, is: "Do not observe the Fast on behalf of your dead ones; feed (the needy) instead." The same has been related from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar also by 'Abdur Razzaq that the Fast should not be observed on behalf of the deceased person. This shows that in the beginning it was permissible to perform acts of bodily worship on behalf of others, but the practice that became established in the end was that it was not permissible to do so; otherwise it was not possible that those who have reported these Ahadith from the Holy Prophet, should have themselves given rulings against them.

In this connection, it should be understood well that fulfillment of an obligation on behalf of another can be beneficial only to those people who have themselves been keen and desirous of fulfilling their

obligations and might have been unable to do so being rendered helpless by circumstances. But a person who deliberately shirked going for Hajj although he had the necessary means for it and had no feeling whatever of this obligation in his heart either, cannot be benefited even if several Hajj be performed on his behalf afterwards. This would be analogous to the case of a person who deliberately avoided paying his debts and had no intention to pay them till the last. Afterwards even if every penny is paid off on his behalf, he would remain a debtor in the sight of Allah. The payment of the debts by another can relieve only such a person who in his lifetime was desirous of paying off his debts but was unable to do so due to straitened circumstances.

39That is, “In the Hereafter the people's deeds shall be examined and judged in order to see what provisions they have brought with them. " As this sentence occurs immediately after the preceding sentence, it by itself indicates that the preceding sentence relates to the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter, and the view of those who present it as an economic principle relating to this world is not correct. To interpret a verse of the Qur'an in a way as is irrelevant to the context as well as clashes with the other ordinances of the Qur'an cannot be right.

40That is, 'Allah provides the means both for joy and for grief. He controls good and ill luck. There is no one else in the Universe, who may have anything to do with making or marring of destinies. "

41For explanation, see E.N.'s 27 to 30 of Surah Ar-Rum, E.N. 77 of Surah Ash-Shura.

42When this verse is read with the two preceding verses, the sequence by itself seems to provide the argument for the life-after-death also. The God Who has the power to give death and grant lift and the God Who brings about a creature like man from an insignificant sperm-drop, rather brings about two separate sexes - malt and female - from the same substance and by the same method of creation, cannot be helpless to resurrect man once again.

43Different meanings have been given by the lexicographers and commentators of the word aqna as used in the original. According to Qatadah, Ibn 'Abbas took it in the meaning of arda (pleased), and according to `Ikrimah in the meaning of qanna'a (satisfied). According to Imam Razi, whatever is given to a person over and above his need and requirement is iqna `. Abu `Ubaidah and several other lexicographers have expressed the view that aqua is derived from qunya-tun, which means lasting and secured property, e.g, the house, lands, gardens, cattle, etc. Ibn Zaid, however, has given quite a different meaning of it. He says that aqua here has been used in the sense of afqara (made penniless), and the verse means: He made whomever He pleased rich and whomever He pleased penniless.

44Shi ra is the brightest star in the heavens, which is also known by the names of Mirzam al- Jawza `, al-Kalb al-Akbar, al-Kalb al-Jabbar, Ash-Shi 'ra al-'Abur, etc. In English it is called Sirius, Dog Star and Canis Majoris. It is 23 tunes as luminous as the Sun, but as it shines over eight light-years away from the

earth, it appears to be smaller and less luminous than the Sun. The Egyptians worshiped it, for it made its appearance at about the time of the season when the annual floods were beginning in the Nile; the Egyptians believed that Sirius caused the Nile floods. The pagan Arabs also held the belief that this star influenced human destinies. That is why they worshiped it as a deity, and the Bani Khuza`ah, the neighboring tribe of the Quraish, were particularly well-known for being its devotees. What Allah says means: 'Your destinies are not made and controlled by Shira but by the Lord of Shi'ra.

45'Ad Ula signifies the ancient 'Ad to whom the Prophet Hud (peace be upon him) had been appointed a Prophet. When those people were inflicted with the torment in consequence of denying the Prophet Hud, the believers only escaped the punishment. Their descendants are called `Ad Ukhra, or the latter 'Ad, in history.

46'The subdued settlements": the settlements of the people of Lot, and "covered them that which covered them" probably imply the waters of the Dead Sea, which spread over their settlements after they had sunk underground, and cover the region even till this day.

47According to some commentators this sentence also is a part of the resume of the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses, and according to others it ended with Fa ghashsha-ha ma ghashsha, and with this begins a new theme. According to the context, however, the first view seems to be preferable, for the following words "This is a warning of the warnings already given," point out that the whole preceding passage is "of the warnings already given", which had been sent down in the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses.

48The word tatamara, as used in the Text, means both to doubt and to wrangle. The address is directed to every listener. To every person who may be listening to this discourse, it is being said: Even after witnessing what has been the fate in human history of denying the bounties of Allah and of wrangling with the Prophets concerning them, will you still commit the same folly? What the former peoples had doubted was whether the bounties and blessings they were enjoying in the world, had been bestowed by One God, or by other associates of His, or by no one, but had become available by themselves. On account of this they wrangled with the Prophets. The Prophets asserted that all these blessings had been granted to them by God, and by One God alone; therefore, they should be grateful to Him and should serve Him alone; but the people did not believe this and wrangled with the Prophets on this very count. Now, O man: "Don't you see in history what fate these nations met for entertaining this doubt and for their wrangling ? Will you entertain the same doubt and indulge in the same wrangling as proved disastrous for others?"

In this connection, one should also bear in mind that the 'Ad and the Thamud and the people of Noah had passed long before the Prophet Abraham, and the people of Lot had met with the torment during his own lifetime. Therefore, there can be no difficulty in regarding this passage as a part of the resume of the Prophet Abraham's Books.

49The words in the original are: Hadha nadhir-un-min-an-nudhur-il-ula. The commentators have expressed three points of view in the explanation of this sentence. First, that nadhir here implies the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace); second, that it implies the Qur'an; third, that it implies the fate of the peoples already destroyed, which has been referred to in the foregoing verses. In view of the context, we arc of the opinion that this last commentary is preferable.

50That is, "Do not be under the delusion that there is yet enough time for thinking and consideration; therefore, you may not give immediate and serious attention to these things and may not decide that you should accept them without further delay. Nay: no one among you knows how much of the respite of life is left to him. Any one of you can die at any time and the Last Hour can also take place suddenly. Therefore, do not think that the Hour of Judgment is yet far off. Whoever has any concern for the Hereafter, should mend his ways forthwith, for one may not have a chance to take a second breath after the present breath. "

51That is, when the Hour of Judgment does arrive, you will not be able to stop it, nor your deities other than Allah have the power to avert it. Allah alone can stop it but He will not.

52The word hadh-al-Hadith as used in the original, signifies the whole teaching that was . being presented in the Qur'an through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and "marvel" implies the marvel that man expresses on hearing a novel and incredible thing. The verse means this: "That to which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is inviting you is the same that you have already heard. Now, is it this very thing at which you marvel and feel alarmed, and express wonder as if something very strange and novel was being presented before you?"

53That is, "Instead of weeping at your ignorance and deviation you, on the contrary, are mocking, the Truth".

54Two meanings have been given of the word samidun by the lexicographers.

Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah and Abu.`Ubaidah, the grammarian, are of the view that in the Yarnanite tongue sumud means singing and playing, and the verse alludes that the disbelievers of Makkah, in order to suppress the recitation of the Qur'an and to divert the people's attention away from it, would start singing in a loud voice.

The other meaning of it given by lbn `Abbas and Mujahid is: `Sumud means bending down the head out of arrogance; when the disbelievers of Makkah passed by the Holy Prophet, they would pass by him angrily with their faces lifted up. " Raghib Isphahani in his Mafradat also has adopted the same meaning; accordingly, Qatadah has translated samidun into ghafilun and Said bin Jubair into mu'ridun.

55According to Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Shafe`i and many other scholars it is obligatory to perform a sajdah on the recitation of this verse. Although Imam Malik himself used to perform a sajdah here (as cited by Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-`Arabi in Ahkam al-Qur 'an), yet he held the view that it was not obligatory to perform a sajdah here, the basis of his view being this tradition of Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit: "I recited Surah an-Najm before the Holy Prophet, and he did not perfom a sajdah. ¦ (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i). But this Hadith does not negate the incumbency of the prostration here, for it is likely that the Holy Prophet did not perform the sajdah then due to some reason but might have performed it later. Other traditions on the subject are explicit that the prostration was always performed on this verse. Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Ibn `Abbas and Muttalib bin Abi Wada`ah have unanimously stated that when the Holy Prophet recited this Surah for the first time in the Ka`bah, he had prostrated himself and along with him the whole assembly of the believers and the disbelievers also had fallen down prostrate. (Bukhari, Ahmad, Nasa'i) Ibn 'Umar has reported that the Holy Prophet recited Surah an-Najm in the Prayer and prostrated himself and lay long in that state. (Baihaqi, Ibn Marduyah). Saburat al-Juhani states that Hadrat 'Umar recited Surah an-Najm in the Fajr Prayer and performed a sajdah, then stood up, recited Surah al-Zilzal and performed the ruku'. (Sa'id bin Mansur). Imam Malik himself has related this act of Hadrat Umar in his Mu'watta (Bab Ma Ja `fi Sajud al-Qar en).

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54. Surah Al Qamar (The Moon)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the very first verse *Wan shaqq al-Qamar*, thereby implying that it is a Surah in which the word al-Qamar has occurred.

Period of Revelation

The incident of the *shaqq-al-Qamar* (splitting of the moon) that has been mentioned in it, determines its period of revelation precisely. The traditionists and commentators are agreed that this incident took place at Mina in Makkah about five years before the Holy Prophet's *hijrah* to Madinah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In this Surah the disbelievers of Makkah have been warned for their stubbornness which they had adopted against the invitation of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The amazing and wonderful phenomenon of the splitting of the Moon was a manifest sign of the truth that the Resurrection, of which the Holy Prophet was giving them the news, could take place and that it had approached near at hand. The great sphere of the Moon had split into two distinct parts in front of their very eyes. The two parts had separated and receded so much apart from each other that to the on-lookers one part had appeared on one side of the mountain and the other on the other side of it. Then, in an instant the two had rejoined. This was a manifest proof of the truth that the system of the Universe was neither eternal nor immortal, it could be disrupted. Huge stars and Planets could split asunder, disintegrate, collide with each other, and everything that had been depicted in the Quran In connection with the description of the details of Resurrection, could happen. Not only this : it was also a portent that the disintegration of the system of the Universe had begun and the time was near when Resurrection would take place. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) invited the people's attention to this event only with this object in view and asked them to mark it and be a witness to it. But the disbelievers described it as a magical illusion add persisted in their denial. For this stubbornness they have been reproached in this Surah.

At the outset it has been said: "These people neither believe in the admonition, nor learn a lesson from history, nor affirm faith after witnessing manifest signs with their eyes. Now they would believe only when Resurrection has taken place and they would be rushing out of their graves towards the Summoner on that Day."

Then, the stories of the people of Noah and of 'Ad and Thamud and of the peoples of Lot and the Pharaoh have been related briefly and they have been reminded of the terrible punishments that these nations suffered when they belied and disregarded the warnings given by the Prophets of God. After the narration of each story the refrain that has been provided is : "This Qur'an is an easy means of admonition, which if a nation takes to heart and thereby takes the Right Way, the torment that descended on the former nations could be avoided. But it would indeed be a folly if instead of heeding the admonition through this easy means, one persisted in heedlessness and disbelieved until one was overtaken by the torment itself."

Likewise, after citing admonitory precedents from the history of the former nations, the disbelievers of Makkah have been addressed and warned to this effect: "If you too adopt the same attitude and conduct for which the other nations have already been punished, why will you not be punished for it?Are you in any way a superior people that you should be treated differently from others? Or, have you received a deed of amnesty that you will not be punished for the crime for which others have been punished?And if you feel elated at your great numbers, you will soon see that these very numbers of yours are put to rout (on the battlefield) and on the Day of Resurrection you will be dealt with even more severely."

In the end, the disbelievers have been told that Allah does not need to make lengthy preparations to bring about Resurrection. No sooner does He give a simple command for it than it will take place immediately. Like everything else the Universe and mankind also have a destiny. According to this destiny everything happens at its own appointed time. It cannot be so that whenever somebody gives a challenge, Resurrection is brought about in order to convince him. If you adopt rebellion because you do not see it coming, you will only be adding to your own distress and misfortune. For your record which is being prepared by Divine agents, has not left any misdeed of yours, great or small, unrecorded.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱقْتَرَبَتِ ٱلسَّاعَةُ وَٱنشَقَّ ٱلْقَمَرُ ﴿١﴾

وَإِن يَرَوْا۟ ءَايَةً يُعْرِضُوا۟ وَيَقُولُوا۟ سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ﴿٢﴾

وَكَذَّبُوا۟ وَٱتَّبَعُوٓا۟ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] The Hour of Resurrection has drawn near and the Moon has split asunder.[1] Yet whatever Sign these people may see they turn away and say, "This is current magic."[2] They have denied (this too) and followed only their own lusts.[3] Ultimately, every matter has to reach an appointed end.[4]

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَنۢبَآءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ ﴿٤﴾

حِكْمَةٌۢ بَٰلِغَةٌ ۖ فَمَا تُغْنِ ٱلنُّذُرُ ﴿٥﴾

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ ۘ يَوْمَ يَدْعُ ٱلدَّاعِ إِلَىٰ شَىْءٍ نُّكُرٍ ﴿٦﴾

خُشَّعًا أَبْصَٰرُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ ٱلْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُّنتَشِرٌ ﴿٧﴾

مُّهْطِعِينَ إِلَى ٱلدَّاعِ ۖ يَقُولُ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ هَٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَسِرٌ ﴿٨﴾

[4-8] There have already come to them narratives (of the former communities) containing enough deterrents to

restrain them from rebellion and profound wisdom as serves the purpose of admonition well, but warnings are of little avail with these people. So, O Prophet, turn away from them.[5] The Day the Caller shall call them to a most terrifying event,[6] the people shall rise out of their graves[7] with awestruck looks[8] as though they were scattered locusts. They will be rushing towards the Caller and the same disbelievers (who denied it in the world) shall say, "This indeed is a hard day!"

۞ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا۟ عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا۟ مَجْنُونٌ وَٱزْدُجِرَ ﴿٩﴾

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَغْلُوبٌ فَٱنتَصِرْ ﴿١٠﴾

فَفَتَحْنَآ أَبْوَٰبَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ بِمَآءٍ مُّنْهَمِرٍ ﴿١١﴾

وَفَجَّرْنَا ٱلْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَٱلْتَقَى ٱلْمَآءُ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ ﴿١٢﴾

وَحَمَلْنَٰهُ عَلَىٰ ذَاتِ أَلْوَٰحٍ وَدُسُرٍ ﴿١٣﴾

تَجْرِى بِأَعْيُنِنَا جَزَآءً لِّمَن كَانَ كُفِرَ ﴿١٤﴾

وَلَقَد تَّرَكْنَٰهَآ ءَايَةً فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٥﴾

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿١٦﴾

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

[9-17] Before them the people of Noah also denied.[9] They called Our servant a liar, and said, "He is a madman," and he was rebuked harshly.[10] At last, he called out to his Lord, saying," I am overcome: take now Thy vengeance." Then We opened the gates of heaven with torrential rain and We caused the earth to burst forth into springs,[11] and the waters met to fulfill the decreed end. And We bore Noah upon a thing made of planks and nails,[12] which floated under Our care. This was a vengeance for the sake of him who had been slighted.[13] And We left that Ark as a Sign.[14] Then, is there any who would take admonition? Just see how dreadful was My scourge and how true My warnings! We have made this Qur'an an easy means of admonition.[15] Then, is there any who would take admonition?

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿١٨﴾

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمِ نَحْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرٍّ ﴿١٩﴾

تَنزِعُ ٱلنَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ مُّنقَعِرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿٢١﴾

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

[18-22] 'Ad also denied. Then behold, how severe was My punishment and how true My warnings! We sent on them a raging wind on a day of continuous ill-luck,[16] which swept them off as though they were trunks of uprooted palm-trees. Then see how severe was My punishment and how true My warnings! We have made this Qur'an an easy means of admonition. Then, is there any who would take admonition?

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِٱلنُّذُرِ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَقَالُوٓاْ أَبَشَرًا مِّنَّا وَٰحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهُۥٓ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّفِى ضَلَٰلٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

أَءُلْقِىَ ٱلذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنۢ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مَّنِ ٱلْكَذَّابُ ٱلْأَشِرُ ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنَّا مُرْسِلُواْ ٱلنَّاقَةِ فِتْنَةً لَّهُمْ فَٱرْتَقِبْهُمْ وَٱصْطَبِرْ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَنَبِّئْهُمْ أَنَّ ٱلْمَآءَ قِسْمَةٌۢ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ كُلُّ شِرْبٍ مُّحْتَضَرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

فَنَـٰدَوْا۟ صَـٰحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَـٰطَىٰ فَعَقَرَ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِى وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٠﴾

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَٰحِدَةً فَكَانُوا۟ كَهَشِيمِ ٱلْمُحْتَظِرِ ﴿٣١﴾

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

[23-32] Thamud rejected the warnings, and said, "A solitary man he is from among ourselves. Shall we now follow him?[17] If we did so, we should indeed be gone astray and have committed folly. Was he the only person among us to have God's Reminder sent down to him? Nay, but he is an utter liar and a conceited person."[18] (We said to Our Messenger) Tomorrow they shall know who is an utter liar and a conceited person. We are sending the she-camel as a trial for them. Now watch with patience what end they meet. Tell them that the water will be divided between them and the she-camel, and each will have water on his own Turn."[19] At last, they called out to their companion, who took up the responsibility and killed her.[20] Then see how severe was My punishment and how true My warnings! We let loose on them a single blast and they became as the trampled twigs of the fence of a fold builder.[21] We have made this Qur'an an easy means of admonition. Then, is there any who would take admonition?

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍۭ بِٱلنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٣﴾

إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ حَاصِبًا إِلَّآ ءَالَ لُوطٖۖ نَّجَّيۡنَٰهُم بِسَحَرٖ
٣٤

نِّعۡمَةٗ مِّنۡ عِندِنَاۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجۡزِي مَن شَكَرَ ٣٥

وَلَقَدۡ أَنذَرَهُم بَطۡشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوۡاْ بِٱلنُّذُرِ ٣٦

وَلَقَدۡ رَٰوَدُوهُ عَن ضَيۡفِهِۦ فَطَمَسۡنَآ أَعۡيُنَهُمۡ فَذُوقُواْ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ٣٧

وَلَقَدۡ صَبَّحَهُم بُكۡرَةً عَذَابٞ مُّسۡتَقِرّٞ ٣٨

فَذُوقُواْ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ٣٩

وَلَقَدۡ يَسَّرۡنَا ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ لِلذِّكۡرِ فَهَلۡ مِن مُّدَّكِرٖ ٤٠

[33-40] Lot's people denied the warnings. We sent on them a wind charged with stones, which spared none but Lot's household, whom we saved in the last hours of the night through Our grace. Thus do We reward him who is

grateful. Lot did warn his people of Our scourge but they doubted all the warnings and paid no heed. Then they sough to prevent him from guarding his guests. Consequently, We blinded their eyes (and said), "Taste now My torment and My warnings!"[22] Early in the morning they were overtaken by a lasting torment. Taste now My torment and My warnings. We have made this Qur'an an easy means of admonition. Then, is there any who would take admonition?

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ ٱلنُّذُرُ ﴿٤١﴾

كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَأَخَذْنَـٰهُمْ أَخْذَ عَزِيزٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

أَكُفَّارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكُمْ أَمْ لَكُم بَرَآءَةٌ فِى ٱلزُّبُرِ ﴿٤٣﴾

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُّنتَصِرٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

سَيُهْزَمُ ٱلْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ ٱلدُّبُرَ ﴿٤٥﴾

بَلِ ٱلسَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَٱلسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَىٰ وَأَمَرُّ ﴿٤٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ فِى ضَلَـٰلٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي ٱلنَّارِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُوقُوا۟ مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[41-48] Are your disbelievers any better?[23] Or, is there any exemption for you in the Divine Books? Or, do they say, "We are a strong host: We shall defend ourselves?" Soon shall this host be put to rout and they will all show their backs.[24] But the promised time to deal with them is the Hour of Resurrection, a most grievous and bitter Hour! These wicked people are in fact involved in misunderstanding and folly. The Day they are dragged into the Fire, on their faces, it will be said to them, "Taste now the flame of Hell."

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقْنَٰهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَمَآ أَمْرُنَآ إِلَّا وَٰحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍۭ بِٱلْبَصَرِ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَآ أَشْيَاعَكُمْ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٥١﴾

وَكُلُّ شَىْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِى ٱلزُّبُرِ ﴿٥٢﴾

وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُّسْتَطَرٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

[49-53] We have created everything with a destiny,[25] and Our Command is but one Command, which takes effect in the twinkling of an eye.[26] We have destroyed many like you.[27] Then, is there any who would take admonition ? Whatever they have done is recorded in registers and everything, small or great, is written therein.[28]

إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَنَهَرٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

فِى مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِندَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

[54-55] Those who have avoided disobedience shall be among gardens and canals, in a place of true honor, in the Presence of a most Powerful King.

1That is, "The splitting of the Moon asunder is a portent that the Hour of Resurrection of which you are being foretold, has drawn near at hand, and the order of the Universe has begun to be disrupted. Moreover, the incident that a great sphere like the Moon's has split into two distinct parts, is a specific proof of the fact that Resurrection of which you are being forewarned can take place. Obviously, when the Moon can split, the earth also can split, the orbits of he stars and planets also can change and the whole system of the heavens also can be disturbed. There is nothing eternal and everlasting and stable here so that Resurrection may be improbable."

Some people have taken this sentence to mean: "The Moon will split. " Although according to Arabic usage it is possible to take this meaning, the context clearly rejects it. In the first place, if this were the meaning, the first sentence would become meaningless. If the Moon had not actually split at the time when this Revelation was made, but it was going to split some time in the future, it would be absurd to say on the basis of this that the Hour of Resurrection had approached near at hand. After all, how can an incident that is to take place in the future, be regarded as a sign of Resurrection's being near at hand, and how can such a testimony be put forward as a rational argument? Second, with this meaning in mind when we read the following verses, they appear to be altogether incoherent. The verses that follow clearly show that the people at that time had witnessed a sign that was a manifest portent of the possibility of Resurrection, but they rejected it as a magical illusion, and persisted in their belief that Resurrection was not possible. In this context, the words inshaqq-al-Qamar can be meaningful only if they are taken to mean: "The Moon split asunder." If they are taken to mean: "The Moon will split asunder," the whole following theme becomes disjointed. It will Took like this:

"The Hour of Resurrection has drawn near and the Moon will split asunder. Yet whatever sign these people may see they turn away and say: `This is current magic!' They have denied and followed only their own lusts. "

Therefore, the truth is that the incident of the splitting of the Moon is confirmed explicitly by the words of

the Qur'an and it is not dependent upon the traditions of the Hadith. However, the traditions supply its details, and one comes to know when and how it had taken place. These traditions have been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Abu `Uwanah, Abu Da'ud Tayalisi, `Abdur Razzaq, Ibn Jarir, Baihaqi, Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah, and Abu Nu'aim Tsfahani with many chains of transmitters on the authority of Hadrat `Ali, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat' Abdullah bin `Umar, Hadrat Hudhaifah, Hadrat Anas bin Malik and Hadrat Jubair bin Mut`im. Three of these authorities, viz, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud; Hadrat Hudhaifah, and Hadrat Jubair bin Mut`im, state that they were the eye-witnesses of this event; two of them cannot be its eye-witnesses, for this event took place before the birth of one (i.e. 'Abdullah bin `Abbas) and at a time when the other (i.e.. Anas bin Malik) was yet a child. But since both these scholars were Companions, obviously they must have reported this event after they had heard it from the aged Companions who had direct knowledge of it.

The information that one gathers from the various traditions is that this incident occurred about five years before the Hijrah. It was the 14th night of the lunar month; the Moon had just risen when it suddenly split and its two parts were seen on either side of the hill in front. Then after a moment or so they rejoined. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) at that time was at Mina. He told the people to mark it and be witnesses to it. The disbelievers said that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had worked magic on them; therefore, their eyes had been deceived. The other people said: "Mnhammad could have worked magic on us but not on all the people. Let the people from other places come: we shall ask them if they also had witnessed this incident. " When the people from other places came, they bore evidence that they also had witnessed the same phenomenon.

Some traditions which have been related from Hadrat Anas give rise to the misunderstanding that the incident of the splitting of the Moon had happened twice. But, in the first place, no one else from among the Companions has stated this; second, in some traditions of Hadrat Anas himself also the words are marratain (twice), and in sane firqatain and shaqqatain (two pieces); third, the Qur'an mentions only one incident of the Moon's splitting asunder. The correct view therefore is that this incident happened only once. As for the stories which are current among the people that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had matte a gesture towards the Moon and it split into two parts and that one part of the Moon entered the breast of the garment of the Holy Prophet and went out of the sleeve, have no basis whatever.

Here, the question arises: What was the real nature of this incident. Was it a miracle that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) performed on the demand of the disbelievers of Makkah as a proof of his Prophethood? Or, was it only an accident that occurred on the Moon by the power of Allah and the Holy Prophet had only called the peoples attention to it and warned them to mark it as a Sign of the possibility and nearness of Resurrection? A large group of the Muslim scholars regards it as among the miracles of the Holy Prophet and holds the view that it had been shown on the demand of the disbelievers. But this view is based only on somc of those traditions which have been related from Hadrat Anas. Apart from him no other Companion has stated this. According to Fath al Bari Ibn Hajar says: "Apart from the narration by Hadrat Anas, in no other narration of this story have I come across the theme that the

incident of the splitting of the Moon had taken place on the demand of the polytheists. (Bab Inshiqaq al-Qamar). Abu Nu'aim Isfahani has related a tradition on this subject in Dale il an-Nubuwwat, on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also, but it has a weak chain of transrmitters and none of the traditions that have been related with strong chains of tranamitters in the collections of Hadith on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, contains any mention of this. Furthermore, neither Hadrat Anas nor Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas was a contemporary of this incident. On the contrary, none of the Companions from among Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat Hudhaifah, Hadrat Jubair bin Mut`im, Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Umar, who were contemporaries of the incident, has stated that the pagans of Makkah had demanded a Sign of the Holy Prophet to testify to his Prophethood on which he might havc shown the miracle of the splitting of the Moon. Above all, the Qur'an itself also is presenting this event not as a Sign of the Prophethood but as a Sign of the nearness of Resurrection. However, this was indeed conspicuous proof of the Holy Prophet's truthfulness because it testified to the news that he was giving to the people of the coming of Resurrection.

The critics raise two kinds of objections against it. In the first place, they say it is impossible that a great sphere like the Moon should split asunder into two distinct parts, which should get hundreds of miles apart and then rejoin. Secondly, they say if it had so happened, it would be a well-known event in the world and would have found mention in the books of History and Astronomy. But, in fact, both these objections are flimsy. As for the discussion of its possibility, it could perhaps find credibility in the ancient days but on the basis of what man has cane to know in the present day about the structure of the planets, it can be said that it is just possible that a sphere may burst because of its internal volcanic action and its two parts may be thrown far apart by the mighty eruption, and then may rejoin under the magnetic force of their center. As for the second objection, it is flimsy because the event had taken place suddenly and lasted a short time only. It was not necessary that at that particular moment the world might be looking at the Moon. There was no explosion either that might have attracted the people's attention; there was no advance information of it that the people might be awaiting its occurrence and looking up at the sky. It could not also be seen everywhere on the earth but only in Arabia and the eastern (ands where the Moon had risen and was visible at that time. The taste and art of writing history also had not yet developed so that the people who might have witnessed it, should have made a record of it and then sane historian might have gathered the evidence and preserved it in some book of History. However, in the Histories of Malabar mention has been made of a native ruler who had witnessed this phenomenon that night. As for the books of Astronomy and Calendars, this event might have been mentioned in them only if the event had affected the movement of the Moon, its orbit and the times of its rising and setting. As no such thing happened, it did not attract the ancient astronomers' attention. The observatories also were not so developed that they might have taken notice of everything happening in the heavens and preserved a record of it.

2The words sihr-um mustamirr of the Text can have several meanings:

(1) That, God forbid, this magical illusion also is one of those magical performances that Muhammad

(upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has been performing day and night;

(2) that this certainly is a work of magic which has been performed with great expertise; and

(3) that just as other works of magic have passed, so will this also pass without leaving any lasting effect behind.

3That is, "They still persisted in the same decision that they had made of denying the Hereafter and have not changed their mind even after having witnessed this manifest Sign, mainly because it clashed with their desires of the flesh. "

4That is, "It cannot be so endlessly that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) should go on inviting you to the Truth while you persist in your falsehood stubbornly and his Truth and your falsehood should never be established. All affairs ultimately have to reach an appointed end. Likewise, inevitably this conflict between you and Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has also to reach an end. A time will certainly come when it will be clearly established that he had been in the right and you in the wrong throughout. Likewise, the worshipers of the Truth shall one day see the result of their worshiping the Truth and the worshipers of falsehood of their worshiping the falsehood."

5In other words, Leave them to themselves. When every effort has been made to make them understand the Truth in the most rational ways, when instances have been cited from history to show them the evil results of the denial of the Hereafter, when the dreadful fates suffered by the other nations in consequence of their rejecting the Prophetic messages have been brought to their notice and yet they are disinclined to give up their stubbornness, they should be left alone to gloat over their follies. Now, they would believe only when after death they arise from their graves to see with their own eyes that the Resurrection of which they were being forewarned and exhorted to adopt the truth, had actually Taken place

6Another meaning can be "an unknown thing", a thing which they never could imagine, of which they never had any concept and no idea whatever that it also could occur.

7"Graves" do not signify only those pits in the earth in which a person might have been properly buried, but he would rise up from wherever he had died, or from wherever his dust lay, on the call of the Caller to the plain of Resurrection.

8Literally: "Their looks will be downcast. "This can have several meanings:

(1) That they will appear tenor-stricken;

(2) that they will be reflecting disgrace and humiliation, for as soon as they arise out of their graves they would realize that it was indeed the same second life which they had been denying, for which they had made no preparation, and in which they would have to present themselves before their God as culprits; and

(3) that with awe-struck looks they would be watching the dreadful scenes before them, from which they would not be able to avert their eyes.

9That is, `They denied that the Hereafter has to take place when man will have to render an account of his deeds; they denied the Prophethood of the Prophet who was making his people aware of this truth; and they denied the teaching of the Prophet, which taught them what to believe and what creed and conduct they should adopt in order to pass the reckoning of the Hereafter."

10That is, "The people not only belied the Prophet but also branded him as a madman; they uttered threats against him, showered him with curses and abuses; and did whatever possibly they could to stop him from preaching the truth, and thus made life extremely difficult for him.

11That is, the earth so burst forth with springs at the Command of Allah that it was no longer earth but presented a scene of the springs all around.

12This signifies the Ark which the Prophet Noah had built under Allah's care and guidance even before the coming of the Flood.

13Literally: "This was a vengeance for the sake of him whose kufr had been committed." If kufr be taken in the sense of denial, it would mean: "Whose message had been denied and rejected; " and if it is taken in the meaning of ingratitude for a blessing, it would mean: 'Who was indeed a blessing for the people, but had been ungratefully rejected.'

14It may also mean: `We left this dreadful punishment as a sign of warning," but in our opinion the preferable meaning is that the Ark was left as a sign of warning. Its resting and existence on a high mountain continued to warn the later generations of the wrath of God for thousand of years and kept on reminding them how the people who had disobeyed God on this earth had met their down, and how the believers had been rescued from it. Imam Bukhari, Ibn Abi Hatim, 'Abdur Razzaq and Ibn Jarir have related traditions on the authority of Qatadah saying that at the time the Muslims conquered 'Iraq and al-Jazirah, this Ark still existed on Mount Judi (and according to a tradition, near the settlement of Baqirda), and the early Muslims had seen it. In the modern times also some people during their flights in the airplanes have sighted an Ark-like object on a peak in this region, which is suspected to be the Ark of Noah, and on the basis of the same expeditions have been sent from time to time to search it out. (For further details, see E.N. 47 of AI-A'raf, E.N. 46 of Hud, and E.N. 25 of AI-Ankabut).

15Some people have misconstrued the words Yassarnal-Qur an to mean that the Qur'an is an easy Book; no knowledge is required to understand it so much so that a person even without the knowledge of the Arabic language, can write a commentary on it, and can deduce any injunctions he likes from its verses independent of the Hadith and Islamic Law, whereas the context in which these words occur, indicates that they are meant to make the people realize this: "One means of the admonition are the dreadful torments that descended upon the rebellious nations, and the other means is this Qur'an, which guides you to the right path by argument and instruction. Obviously, this means of admonition is by far the easier one; then, why don't you take advantage of it and insist on meeting with the torment instead? It is indeed Allah's bounty that He has sent this Book through His Prophet and is warning you that the ways you are following lead only to destruction and your well-being lies only in following this way. This method of admonition has been adopted so that you are rescued even before you fall into the pit of destruction. Now, who could be more foolish than the one who does not believe in the admonition and realizes his error only after he has fallen into the pit?"

16That is, on a day the ill luck of which continued to rage for several days. In Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 16, the words are: fi ayyam in nahisat: "in a few ill-omened days," and in Surah Al-Haqqah: 7, it has been said: "This wind storm continued to rage for seven nights and eight days. "It is said that the day on which the storm started was Wednesday. From this the idea spread that Wednesday was a day of ill-luck, and no work should be started on this day. Some very weak traditions also have been cited to support this view, which have further strengthened the idea that this day is ill-omened. For example, there is Ibn Marduyah and Khatib al-Baghdadi's tradition that the last Wednesday of the month is ill-omened, the ill-omen of which is endless. Ibn Jauzi regards this tradition as fabricated and Ibn Rajab as unauthentic Hafiz Sakhavi; says that all the methods through which this tradition has been reported, are weak. Likewise, Tabarani's tradition ("Wednesday is a day of perpetual ill-luck") also has been declared as weak by the scholars of Hadith. In some other traditions one is also forbidden to start a journey, to do business transactions, to pare the nails, or to visit the sick on a Wednesday. They also say that leprosy starts on this day. But all these traditions are weak and these cannot be made the basis of any belief. The scholar Munawi says: 'To abandon Wednesday taking it as ill-omened and to entertain the astrologer's whims in this regard is forbidden, strictly forbidden, for all days belong to Allah; no day is beneficial by itself nor harmful." 'Allama Alusi says: 'All days are equal; Wednesday has no peculiarity about it. There is no hour in the night or day which might be good for one person and bad for another. It is Allah Who creates favorable conditions for some people and adverse for others.

17In other words, there were three reasons for their refusal to obey and follow the Prophet Salih:

(1) "He is a human being and not a super-human person so that we may regard him as superior to ourselves."

(2) "He is a member of our own nation: he is in no way superior to us."

(3) `He is a single man, one from among ourselves. He is not a prominent chief with a large following, or an army of soldiers. Or a host of attendants so that we may acknowledge his superiority." They wanted that a Prophet should either be a superman, or if he be a common man, he should not have been born in their own land and nation, but should have descended from above, or sent from another land, and if nothing else, he should at least have been a rich man, whose extraordinary splendor should make the people believe why Allah had selected him alone for the leadership of the nation. This same was the error of ignorance in which the disbelievers of Makkah were involved. They also refused to acknowledge the Prophet Muhammad (Upon Whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as a Prophet on the ground that he was a man who moved about in the streets like the common men, had been born among them only . the other day and now was claiming that God had appointed him as a Prophet.

18The word ashir of the original means a conceited, insolent person given to bragging of his own superiority over others.

19This explains the verse: "We are sending the she-camel as a trial for them." The trial was that suddenly a she-camel was produced before them and they were told that one day she would drink the water all by herself and the next. day they would be allowed to have water for themselves and their cattle. On the day of her turn neither would any of them himself come to any of the springs and wells to take water nor bring his cattle for watering. This challenge was given on behalf of the person about whom they themselves admitted that he had no army and no hosts to support him.

20These words by themselves indicate that the she-camel roamed at will in their settlements for along period of time. No one could dare approach a source of water on the day of her turn. At last, they called out to a haughty chief of theirs who was well known for his courage and boldness, and urged him to put an end to her Emboldened by the false encouragement he took up the responsibility and killed the she-camel. This clearly means that the people were very frightened. They felt that she had extraordinary power, and so they dared not touch her with an evil intention. That is why the killing of a mere she-camel especially when the Prophet who had presented her, did not possess any army that could be a deterrent for them. amounted to undertaking a dangerous and difficult task. (For further details. see E.N 58 of Surah AI-A'raf and E.N.'s 104. 105 of Surah AshShua'ra').

21The crushed and rotten bodies of the people of Thamud have been compared to the trampled and trodden twigs and pieces of bush lying around an enclosure for cattle.

22The details of this story have been given in Surah Hud: 77-83 and Surah AI-Hijr: 61-74 above, a resume of which is as follows:

When Allah decided to punish those people with a torment, He sent a few angels in the guise of handsome boys as guests in the house of the Prophet Lot. When the people saw such handsome guests

in Lot's house they rushed to it and demanded that they be handed over to them for tile gratification of their lust. The Prophet Lot implored them to desist from their evil intention, but they did not listen and tried to enter his house to take hold of the guests forcibly. At this stage suddenly their eyes were blinded. Then the angels told Lot that he and his Household should leave the city before dawn; then as soon as they had left a dreadful torment descended on the people. In the Bible also this event has been described. The words are: 'And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men (i.e. the angels) put forth their Hand and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the nun that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door." (Gen., 19: 9-11), "

23The address here is directed to the Quraish, as if to say; "When the other nation have been punished for adopting disbelief and showing stubbornness and denying the Truth, why would you not be punished if you adopted the same attitude and conduct ? For you are not a special people in any way."

24This is a specific prophecy that was made five years before the hijrah, saying that the hosts of the Quraish who waxed proud of their strength would soon be put to rout by the Muslims. At that time no one could imagine how such a revolution would take place in the near future. Such was the helplessness of the Muslims that a group of them had already left the country and taken refuge in Habash and the rest of the believers lay besieged in Shi'b Abi Talib, and were being starved by the Quraish boycott and siege. Under such conditions no one could imagine that within only the next seven years the tables were going to turn. The pupil of Hadrat 'Ahdullah bin 'Abbas, has related that Hadrat 'Umar used to say : "When this verse of Surah Al-Qamar was sent down. I wondered what hosts it is that would be routed. But when in the Battle of Badr the pagan Quraish were routed and they were fleeing from the battlefield, I saw the Messenger of Allah in his armor rushing forward and reciting this verse: Sa-yuhzam-al -jam'u yuwallun-ad-dubur Then only did I realize that this was the defeat that had been foretold." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim).

25That is, 'Nothing in the world has been created at random but with a purpose and destiny. A thing comes into being at an appointed time, takes a particular form and shape, develops to its fullest extent, survives for a certain period, and then decays and dies at an appointed time. Even according to this universal principle this world too has a destiny in accordance with which it is functioning till an appointed time and will come to an end at an appointed tune. It will neither come to an end a moment earlier than its appointed time of end nor survive a moment longer; it has neither existed since eternity nor will exist rill eternity, nor is it the plaything of a child which he may destroy as and when he likes."

26That is, 'We shall not have to make any lengthy preparations for bringing about Resurrection, nor will it take long to come. For no sooner will a Command be issued forth from Us than it will take place in the twinkling of an eve."

27That is, 'If you think that the world is not the Kingdom of a Wise and .lust God but the lawless empire of

a blind ruler, in which man may behave and conduct himself as he likes, without any fear of accountability, history is proof and an eye-opener for you, which shows that the nations that adopted such a way of life, have been sent to their doom, one after the other."

28That is, “These people should not be under the delusion that whatever they did in the world has become extinct; nay, they should know that full record of the deeds of every person, every group and every nation, lies preserved and it will be presented before them at the appropriate time."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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55. Surah Ar Rahman (The Most Merciful)

Name

This Surah is entitled Ar Rahman, the word with which it begins. This title, however, deeply relates to the subject matter of the Surah too, for in it, from the beginning to the end, the manifestations and fruits of Allah's attribute of mercy and grace have been mentioned.

Period of Revelation

The commentators generally hold the view that this is a Makki Surah, though according to some traditions which have been cited on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, Ikrimah and Qatadah, it was revealed at Madinah. But, firstly, there are also some other traditions from these very authorities, which contradict this view; secondly, its subject matter bears a closer resemblance with the Makki Surahs than with the Madani Surahs; rather it appears to belong to the very early Makkah period. However, there are several authentic traditions which testify that it had been revealed in Makkah itself many years before the *hijrah*.

Musnad Ahmad contains a tradition from Hadarat Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr (may Allah bless them both), to the effect: "I saw the Messenger of Allah offering his Prayers in the sacred precincts of the Ka'bah facing the corner in which the "Black Stone" is fixed. This relates to the time when the Divine Command, *fasda bi-ma tumar* ("So, proclaim publicly, O Prophet, what you are being commanded") had not yet been revealed. The polytheists at that time were hearing the words, *Fa-biayyi alaa'i Rabbi kuma tukadhdhi ban*, being recited by him in the Prayer." This shows than this Surah had been sent down even before Surah Al-Hijr.

Al-Bazzar, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Al- Mundhir, Daraqutni (in *Al Afrad*), Ibn Marduyah and Ibn Al Khatib (in *Al- Tarikh*) have related, on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Umar, that once the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited Surah Ar-Rahman himself, or heard it recited before him : then he said to the people: How is it that I am not hearing from you the kind of good answer that the jinn had given to their Lord?When the people asked what it was he replied: "As I recited the Divine Words, *Fa bi- ayyi alaa'i Rabbi-kuma tukadhdhiban*, the jinn in response would repeat the words *La bi shai'in min ni'mati Rabbi- na*

nukadhdhib: "We do not deny any of our Lord's blessings."

A similar theme has been related by Tirmidhi, Hakim and Hafiz Abu Bakr al-Bazzar from Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah. Their tradition contains these words: "When the people kept silent on hearing the Surah Ar-Rahman, the Holy Prophet said 'I recited this very Surah before the jinn in the night when they had gathered together to hear the Qur'an. They responded to it better than you have. As I recited the Divine Words, *Fa bi ayyi alaa'i Rabbikuma tukadhdhiban* ("O jinn and men, which blessings of your Lord will you deny?") they would respond to it, saying: O our Lord, do not deny any of your blessings Praise is for You alone'!"

This tradition indicates that on the occasion of the incident that bas been related in Surah Al Ahqaf(vv. 29- 32) of the jinn's hearing the Qur'an from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) he was reciting Surah Ar Rahman in the Prayer. This happened in the 10th year of the Prophethood when the Holy Prophet had halted at Makkah on his way back from Ta'if. Although in some other traditions it has been reported that the Holy Prophet did not know then that the jinn were hearing him recite the Qur'an, but afterwards Allah had informed him of this, it is not unreasonable to suppose that just as Allah had informed him of the jinn's hearing the Qur'an so also Allah Himself might have told him as to what answer they were giving on hearing Surah Ar Rahman.

These traditions only indicate that Surah Ar Rahman had been revealed even before Surahs Al-Hijr and Al-Ahqaf. Besides, we come across another tradition which shows that it is one of those Surahs which were the earliest Revelations at Makkah. Ibn Ishaq has related this on the authority of Hadrat Urwah bin Zubair: The Companions one day said to one another: "The Quraish have never heard any one recite the Qur'an publicly to them, and who would read out the Divine Word aloud to them Hadrat Abdullah bin Masud said that he would. The Companions expressed the apprehension that he might be subjected to a harsh treatment and said that it should better be done by a person of a powerful family, who would protect him if the Quraish tried to subject him to violence. Hadrat Abdullah said: 'Let me alone : my Protector is Allah.' So early next morning he went to the Ka'bah while the Quraish chiefs were sitting in their respective conferences. Hadrat Abdullah arrived at the Maqam (station of Abraham) and began to recite Surah Ar- Rahman raising his voice as he did so. The Quraish first tried for a while to understand what he was saying. Then,when they realized that it was the Word that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was representing as the Word of God, they fell upon him and began to hit him in the face. But Hadrat Abdullah was not deterred : he continued to receive the slaps and to read the Qur'an as long as he could, At last, when he returned with a swollen face, the Companions said that they apprehended the same. He replied: 'God's enemies were never so light for me as they were today. If you say I'll recite the Qur'an to them again tomorrow.' They all said, 'No, you have done enough; you have made them listen to what they didn't want to bear.'" (Ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p. 336).

Theme and Subject Matter

This is the only Surah of the Qur'an in which besides men the jinn also, who are the other creation of the earth endowed with freedom of will and action, have been directly addressed, and both men and jinn have been made to realize the wonders of Allah's power, His countless blessings, their own helplessness and accountability before Him, and have been warned of the evil consequences of His disobedience and made aware of the best results of His obedience. Although at several other places in the Qur'an there are clear pointers to show that like the men the

jinn too are a creation who have been endowed with freedom of will and action and are accountable, who have been granted the freedom of belief and unbelief, of obedience and disobedience, and among them too there are the believers and the unbelievers, the obedient and the rebellious, as among human beings, and among them too there exist such groups as have believed in the Prophets sent by God and in the Divine Books, this Surah clearly points out that the message of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Qur'an is meant both for men and for jinn and that his Prophethood is not restricted to human beings alone.

Although in the beginning of the Surah the address is directed only to human beings, for to them only belongs the vicegerency" of the earth, among them only have the Messengers of Allah been raised, and in their tongues only have the Divine Books been revealed, yet from verse 13 onward both the men and the jinn have been addressed and one and the same invitation has been extended to both.

The themes of the Surah have been couched in brief sentences in a specific sequence:

In vv. 1-4 it has been stated that the teaching of the Qur'an is from Allah Almighty and it is the very demand of His mercy that He should provide guidance to mankind through this teaching, for it is He Who has created man as a rational and intelligent being.

In vv. 5-6 it has been said that the whole system of the Universe is functioning under Allah's Sovereignty and everything in the earth and heavens is subject to His Command alone.

In vv. 7-9 another important truth that has been expressed is that Allah has established the entire system of the Universe precisely and equitably on justice, and the nature of this system requires that those who dwell in it also should adhere to justice within the bounds of their authority and should not disturb the balance.

In vv. 10-25 besides mentioning the wonders and excellences of Allah's might, references have been made to His those bounties from which the jinn and men are deriving benefit.

In vv.26-30 both the men and the jinn have been reminded of the truths that in this Universe no one except One God is immortal and imperishable, and there is none, from the lowest to the highest, who does not stand in need of God for his survival and other requirements. Whatever is happening here, from the earth to the heavens, is happening under His administration and control.

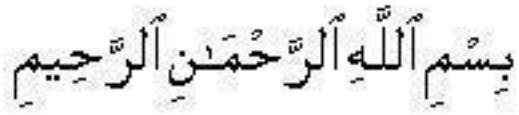
In vv. 31-36 both the groups have been warned that the time is fast approaching when they will be called to account, which they will not be able to avoid, for God's Kingdom is encircling them from every side; it is not in their power to flee it; if they are involved in the misunderstanding that they can, they may try to do so.

In vv. 37-38 it has been said that this accountability will be held on the Day of Resurrection.

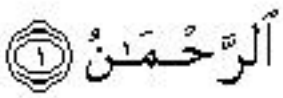
In vv. 39-45 the evil end of the guilty ones, from among men and jinn, who have been disobeying Allah in the world has been mentioned.

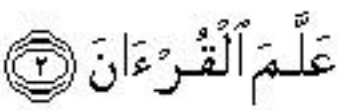
And from verse 46 to the end of the Surah mention has been made of those rewards and blessings which will be granted to the righteous men and jinn who have led pious lives in the world and lived with a clear understanding that they will have to appear before their Lord one day and render an account of their deeds and actions.

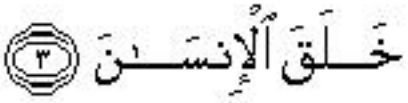
This whole discourse is couched in oratorical language. It is a spirited and eloquent address in the course of which after mentioning each of the wonders of Allah's great power, and each of the blessings bestowed by Him, and each of the manifestations of His Sovereignty and dominion, and each of the details of His punishment and rewards, the jinn and men have been over and over again questioned: "Which then of the bounties and favors of your Lord will you deny ?" Below we shall explain that *alaa* is a word with many shades of meaning, which has been used in different senses at different places in this discourse, and this question to the the jinn and men bears its own special meaning at every place according to the context.

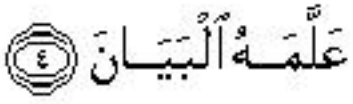


In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.









[1-4] The most Merciful (God) has taught this Qur'an.[1] He it is Who created man[2] and taught him speech.[3]

ٱلشَّمۡسُ وَٱلۡقَمَرُ بِحُسۡبَانٖ ٥

وَٱلنَّجۡمُ وَٱلشَّجَرُ يَسۡجُدَانِ ٦

وَٱلسَّمَآءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ ٱلۡمِيزَانَ ٧

أَلَّا تَطۡغَوۡاْ فِي ٱلۡمِيزَانِ ٨

وَأَقِيمُواْ ٱلۡوَزۡنَ بِٱلۡقِسۡطِ وَلَا تُخۡسِرُواْ ٱلۡمِيزَانَ ٩

[5-9] The sun and the moon adhere to a schedule,[4] and the stars[5] and the trees, all bow down in worship.[6] He raised the heaven high and set the balance.[7] Therefore, do not upset the balance: weigh with equity and do not give short weight.[8]

وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلۡأَنَامِ ١٠

فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٞ وَٱلنَّخۡلُ ذَاتُ ٱلۡأَكۡمَامِ ١١

وَٱلْحَبُّ ذُو ٱلْعَصْفِ وَٱلرَّيْحَانُ ﴿١٢﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٣﴾

[10-13] He[9] set the earth for all creatures,[10] with all kinds of tasty fruits in abundance and palm-trees with sheathed fruit, and a variety of corn with husk as well as grain.[11] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's blessings[12] will you deny?[13]

خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن صَلْصَٰلٍ كَٱلْفَخَّارِ ﴿١٤﴾

وَخَلَقَ ٱلْجَآنَّ مِن مَّارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ ﴿١٥﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٦﴾

[14-16] He created man from dry, rotten clay like the potter's,[14] and the jinn from the flame of fire.[15] So, O jinn and men; which wonders of your Lord's power[16] will you deny?

رَبُّ ٱلْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ ٱلْمَغْرِبَيْنِ ﴿١٧﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٨﴾

[17-18] Both the Easts and both the Wests. He is the Lord and Sustainer of all.[17] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers[18] will you deny?

مَرَجَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ ﴿١٩﴾

بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَّا يَبْغِيَانِ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢١﴾

يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا ٱللُّؤْلُؤُ وَٱلْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٣﴾

[19-23] He let loose the two seas that they may meet together. Yet there stands between them a barrier which they do not transgress.[19] So, O jinn and men, which manifestations of your Lord's power will you deny? From these seas come out pearls[20] and corals.[21] So, O jinn and men, which excellences of your Lord's power will you deny?[22]

وَلَهُ ٱلْجَوَارِ ٱلْمُنشَـَٔاتُ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ كَٱلْأَعْلَـٰمِ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَبِأَىِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٥﴾

[24-25] And His are the ships[23] raised up high like mountains in the sea. So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's bounties will you deny?[24]

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو ٱلْجَلَـٰلِ وَٱلْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾

فَبِأَىِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٨﴾

يَسْـَٔلُهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِى شَأْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَبِأَىِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٠﴾

[26-30] All[25] that exists on the earth shall perish. Only your Lord, possessed of majesty and honor, shall endure for ever. So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's excellences will you deny.[26] Whosoever is there in the earth and the

heavens, implores Him for its needs. Every moment He is in a new (state of) glory.[27] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's glories will you deny?[28]

سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ ٱلثَّقَلَانِ ﴿٣١﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٢﴾

يَٰمَعْشَرَ ٱلْجِنِّ وَٱلْإِنسِ إِنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَن تَنفُذُوا۟ مِنْ أَقْطَارِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنفُذُوا۟ ۚ لَا تَنفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَٰنٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٤﴾

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِّن نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنتَصِرَانِ ﴿٣٥﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٦﴾

[31-36] O you burdens of the earth,[29] We shall soon be free to call you to account.[30] (Then We shall see) which of your Lord's favors you deny.[31] O company of jinn and men! If you have the power to escape across the bounds of the earth and the heavens, then escape! You shall not escape, for it requires great power.[32] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers will you deny? (If you try to escape) a flame of fire and smoke[33] shall be let loose upon you, which you will not be able to withstand. O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers will you deny?

فَإِذَا ٱنشَقَّتِ ٱلسَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتۡ وَرۡدَةٗ كَٱلدِّهَانِ ﴿٣٧﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٨﴾

[37-38] Then (how will it be) when the heaven will burst and redden like red leather?[34] O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers will you (then) deny?[35]

فَيَوۡمَئِذٖ لَّا يُسۡـَٔلُ عَن ذَنۢبِهِۦٓ إِنسٞ وَلَا جَآنّٞ ﴿٣٩﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٠﴾

يُعۡرَفُ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ بِسِيمَٰهُمۡ فَيُؤۡخَذُ بِٱلنَّوَٰصِي وَٱلۡأَقۡدَامِ ﴿٤١﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٢﴾

هَٰذِهِۦ جَهَنَّمُ ٱلَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ ءَانٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٥﴾

[39-45] On that Day no man and no jinn will need be asked concerning his sin.[36] Then (it will be seen) which of your Lord's favors you deny.[37] The culprits there shall be recognized by their faces and they shall be seized by their forelock and by their feet and dragged. (Then) which of your Lord's powers will you deny? (At that time it will be said:) “This is the same Hell which the culprits were wont to deny.” They will wander to and fro between the same Hell and the hot boiling water.[38] Then, which of your Lord's powers will you deny?[39]

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٤٦﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٧﴾

ذَوَاتَآ أَفْنَانٍ ﴿٤٨﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٩﴾

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ ﴿٥٠﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥١﴾

فِيهِمَا مِن كُلِّ فَٰكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ ﴿٥٢﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٣﴾

[46-53] And for everyone who dreads to stand before his Lord[40] there are two gardens.[41] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?[42] Full of lush green branches. O which of your Lord's mercies will you deny? In both two springs of running water. O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? In both there will be two kinds of every fruit.[43] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?

مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍۭ بَطَآئِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۚ وَجَنَى ٱلْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٥﴾

فِيهِنَّ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَآنٌّ ﴿٥٦﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٧﴾

كَأَنَّهُنَّ ٱلْيَاقُوتُ وَٱلْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٩﴾

[54-59] The dwellers of Paradise shall be reclining on carpets lined with thick silk,[44] and the branches of the gardens will be hanging down (on them) with fruit. O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? Amidst these blessings will be those of bashful looks,[45] whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them.[46] O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny? As beautiful as rubies and pearls. O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny?

هَلْ جَزَآءُ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ إِلَّا ٱلْإِحْسَٰنُ ﴿٦٠﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦١﴾

وَمِن دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٦٢﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٣﴾

مُدْهَآمَّتَانِ ﴿٦٤﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٥﴾

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ ﴿٦٦﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٧﴾

فِيهِمَا فَـٰكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٩﴾

فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حِسَانٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧١﴾

حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِى ٱلْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٢﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧٣﴾

لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَآنٌّ ﴿٧٤﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧٥﴾

مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسَانٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧٧﴾

[60-77] Could the reward of goodness be anything but goodness?[47] Then, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's praiseworthy attributes will you deny?[48] And besides those two, there will be two other gardens.[49] O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny? Dark-green and well-watered.[50] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? In both two gushing springs. O which of your Lord's favors will you Deny ? In them plenty of fruit, and dates and pomegranates. O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? Amidst these blessings chaste and beautiful wives. O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny? Houris kept in their tents.[51] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? No man or jinn will have touched them before them. O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? They will be reclining on green cushions and fine, rich carpets.[52] O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny?

تَبَـٰرَكَ ٱسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِى ٱلْجَلَـٰلِ وَٱلْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٧٨﴾

[78] Full of blessings is the name of your Lord, Owner of Glory and Honor!

1That is, the teaching of this Qur'an is not the production of a man's mind but its Teacher is the Merciful God Himself. Here, there was no need to tell as to whom Allah had imparted this Qur'anic teaching for the people were hearing it from the tongue of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Therefore, the situation by itself made it evident that the teaching had been imparted to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

To begin the discourse with this sentence is meant,,first of all, to tell that the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) himself is not its author, but its Teacher is Allah Almighty. Furthermore, there is another object also to which the word Rahman (Merciful) is pointing. If the purpose was only to say that that teaching is from Allah, and not the production of the Prophet's mind, there was no need to use an attribute of Allah instead of His proper name, acid for that purpose any attribute from among the Divine attributes could have been adopted, But when, instead of saying that Allah, or the Creator, or the Providence, has taught this, it was said: 'The Merciful (Ar-Rahman) has taught this Qur'an,' it by itself gave the meaning that the revelation of the Qur'an for the guidance of mankind was nothing but Allah's mercy and grace, As He is most kind and Merciful to His creation, He did not like that He should leave them wandering in the darkness, and His mercy demanded that He should send down this Quran to bless them with the knowledge on which depends their right guidance and conduct in the world and their success and well-being in the Hereafter, "

2In other words, as Allah is the Creator of man, and it is the Creator's responsibility to provide guidance to His creation and show it the way by following which it may fulfill the object of its erection, the revelation of this Qur'anic teaching from Allah is not only the demand of Allah's mercifulness but also the necessary and natural demand of His being the Creator. Who else would provide guidance to the creation if not the Creator ? And if the Creator did not provide guidance, who else could? And what greater defect could there be for a creator that he should not teach his creation the method of fulfilling the object, for which it has been created? Thus, in fact, the arrangement and' provision of the teaching for man by Allah is not anything strange; it would be strange if no such arrangement had been made at all, Allah has not just left alone whatever He has created in the Universe, but has given it the most appropriate structure by which it may play its role in the system of nature and has taught it the method of playing that role effectively and successfully. Thus, each single hair and each single cell of man's own body has been born with the knowledge of how it has to carry out the task in the human body for which it has been created, Then, after all how could man himself remain deprived and independent of his Creator's teaching and guidance? This theme has been presented in the Qur'an at different places in different ways, In Surah Al-lail; 12, it has been said; "Indeed, it is for Us to toll the Way" in surah An-Nahl: 9, it is said Allah has taken upon Himself to show the Right Way, when there exist crooked ways too:12 In surah Ta Ha (vv: 47-50) it has been stated that when the Pharaoh heard the prophetic message from the Prophet Moses and asked who was his Lord who had sent him as a Messenger to him, the Prophet replied: "Our Lord is He Who has given a distinctive form to everything and then guided it aright. " That is, He has taught it the method by which it could carry out and fulfill the object of its creation in the system of existence. This is the reasoning by which an unbiased mind is satisfied that the coming of the Prophets and the Books from

Allah for the instruction of man is the very demand of nature.

3One meaning of the word bayan, as used in the original, is the expressing of one's own mind, i e. speaking and expressing one's thoughts and intentions. Its other meaning is to make distinction between things, which here signifies the distinction between good and evil, virtue and vice. According to those two meanings this brief sentence completes the above reasoning. Speech is the distinctive quality which distinguishes man from the animals and other earthly creatures, It is not merely the power of speech, but there are working behind It the faculties of reasoning and intellect, understanding and discernment, will and Judgment, and other mental powers without which man's power of speech could not operate at all. Therefore, speech is in fact an express symbol of man's being an intelligent being who has been endowed with freedom and authority, and when Allah has blessed man with this distinctive quality, evidently the nature of instruction for him also cannot be the same a: would be suitable for the guidance of other creatures. Likewise, another distinctive quality of vital Importance in man is that Allah has placed in him moral sense by virtue of which he can naturally distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood, Justice and injustice, right and wrong, and this intuition and sense does not leave him even when he degrades himself to the lowest state of error and ignorance. The Inevitable demand of these two distinctive qualities is that the method of instruction for man's conscious and voluntary life should be different from the innate, natural mode of instruction under which the fish has been taught to swim, the bird to fly, and the eye in the human body itself to wink and see, the ear to hear and the stomach to digest, Man in this sphere of his life himself recognizes the means like the teacher, the book, the school, the verbal and written instruction and reasoning and discussion as the modes of instruction, and does not regard the innate knowledge and intelligence as enough. Why should It then appear arrange that for fulfilling the responsibility that falls upon the Creator of educating man, He has made the Messenger and the Book the means of his education and instruction ? The mode of education has to suit the nature of the creation, And very rationally so; The "Qur'an" alone cart be the means of educating the creation that has been taught 'bayan"(speech) and not my other means that might salt the creatures which have not been taught the speech.

4That is, "It is a powerful law and unalterable system that binds the great planets together. Man is able to calculate and measure time, days, dates, and crops and seasons only because no change takes place in the rule that Has been laid down for the rising and setting of the sun and of its passing through different stages. The innumerable creatures found on the earth are staying alive only because the sun and the moon have been accurately and precisely placed at particular distances from the earth and any increase or decrease in this distance is made in the right measure, in a particular order; otherwise if their distance from the earth increased or decreased haphazardly, no one, could possibly survive here. Likewise, the perfect relationship and harmony that has been established between the movements of the moon round the earth and the sun, has made the moon a universal calendar, which announces the lunar date every night to the whole world with perfect regularity.

5The word used in the original is an-najm, the well-known meaning of which is the star; but in the Arabic

lexicon this word is also used for the plants and creepers which do not have a stem, e.g. vegetable, melons, water melons, etc. The commentators have disputed the sense in which this word has been used here. Ibn 'Abbas, Sa'id bin Jubair, Suddi, and Sufyan Thauri have taken it in the meaning of stemless vegetation, for just after it the word ash-shajar (the tree) has been used and this meaning is more relevant to it. On the contrary, Mujahid, Qatadah and Hasan Basri have expressed the opinion that an-najm here does not imply the plants of the earth, but the stars of the sky, for this is its well-known meaning. On hearing this word, the mind first turns to this very meaning, and the mention of the sun and the moon has been followed by the stars very naturally and relevantly. Though the majority of the commentators and translators have preferred the first meaning, and it cannot be held wrong either, we hold Hafiz Ibn Kathir's this opinion as sound that in view of both the language and the subject-matter the second meaning seems to be preferable. At another place in the Qur'an (AI-Hajj: 18) also mention has been made of the stars and the trees prostrating themselves, and there the word nujum (pl. of najm) cannot be taken in any other meaning than of the stars. The words of the verse are: Alam fara annallaha yasjudu lahu man fis sma wat-i wa man fil ardi wash-shamsu wal-qamaru walnujumu wal jibalu wash-shajaru wad-da wabbu wa kathir-um-min-annasi. . . . (AI-Hajj: 18). In this verse nujum (stars) have been mentioned along with shams (sun) and qamar (moon), and shajar (trees) along with mountains and animals and it has been said that they all bow down to Allah.

6That is, "The stars of the heavens and the trees of the earth, all are subject to Allah's Command and obedient to His Law. They cannot exceed the rule that has been set for them." What is meant to be impressed in these two verses is that the whole system of the Universe has been created by Allah and is functioning in His obedience. Nothing front the earth to the heavens is independent, nor functioning under another's godhead, nor has anyone any share in God's Kingdom, nor has anyone the position that it should be made a deity. All are servants and slaves: the Master is One Almighty Lord alone. Hence, Tauhid alone is the Truth which is being taught by this Qur'an. Apart from this, any one who is involved in polytheism and denial of God is, in fact, at war with the whole system of the Universe.

7Almost all the commentators have interpreted mizan (balance) to mean justice, and '...set the balance" to imply that Allah has established the entire system of the Universe on justice. Had there been no harmony and balance and justice established among the countless stars and planets moving in space, and the mighty forces working in this Universe, and the innumerable creatures and things found here, this life on earth would not have functioned even for a moment. Look at the creatures existing in the air and water and on land for millions and millions of years on this earth. They continue to exist only because full justice and balance has been established in the means and factors conducive to life; in case there occurs a slight imbalance of any kind, every tract of lift would become extinct.

8That is, "As you are living in a balanced Universe, whose entire system has been established on justice, you also should adhere to justice. For if you act unjustly within the sphere in which you have been given authority, and fail to render the rights of others, you would indeed be rebelling against the nature of the Universe; for the nature of this Universe does not admit of injustice and perversion and violation of the

rights. Not to speak of a major injustice, even if a person fraudulently deprives another of an ounce of something, by giving him short measure, he disturbs the balance of the entire Universe.-This is the second important part of the Qur'anic teaching that has been presented in these three verses. The first teaching is Tauhid and the second is justice. Thus, in a few brief sentences the people have been told what teaching has been brought by the Qur'an which the Merciful God has sent for the guidance of man."

9Now from here to verse 20, mention is being made of the blessing and bounties of God and of those manifestations of His might by which both man and jinn are benefiting, and whose natural and moral demand is that although they have the option to believe or not to believe, they should adopt the way of their Lord's service and obedience willingly by their own free choice.

10The word wade ` in the original means to compost, make, prepare, keep. and inscribe, and anam the creatures, which includes man and all other living things. According to Ibn 'Abbas, anam includes every thing which has a soul. Mujahid takes it in the meaning of the living creatures. Qatadah, Ibn Zaid and Sha'bi say that all living things are anam. Hasan Basri says that both the men and the jinn are included in its meaning. The same meanings have been~given by the lexicographers. This shows that the people who deduce from this verse the command of making land the state property, are in error. This is an ugly attempt to introduce alien theories forcibly into the Qur'an which arc neither supported by the words of the verse nor by the context. Anam is not used only for human society but it includes all other creatures of the earth as well, and setting of the earth for anam does not mean that it should be the common property of all. Besides, the context here also does not indicate that the object of the verse is to state some economic principle. This, in fact, is meant to impress the truth that Allah made and prepared this earth in such a way that it became a fit abode for every kind of living being. It has not become so by itself, but by the will and power of the Creator. He in His wisdom placed it at a suitable distance and created such conditions on it which made it possible for the different species to exist and stay alive on it. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 73, 74 of An-Naml, E.N.'s 29, 32 of Ya Sin, E.N.'s 90, 91 of Al-Mu'min, E.N.'s 11 to 13 of Ha Mim As-Sajdah, E.N.'s 7 to 10 of Az.Zukhruf, E.N. 7 of AI-Jathiyah).

11That is, grain for men and husk for the animals.

12The word alaa' in the refrain as repeated over and over again in the subsequent verses has been translated differently at different places. Therefore, it would be useful to understand at the outset how vast this word is in meaning and what different shades of meaning it contains.

The lexicographers and commentators generally have explained alaa' to mean "blessings" and "bounties". The translators also have given this same meaning of this word, and the same has been reported from Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah and Hasan Basri. The major argument that supports this meaning is the Holy Prophet's own statement that the jinn on hearing this verse being recited would respond to it, saying La bi-shai in-min-ni maatika Rabba-na nukadhdhib: "O our Lord, we do not deny any of Your

blessings." Therefore, we do not subscribe to the view of some present-day scholars, who say that alaa' is never used in the meaning of the blessing.

Another meaning of this word is power and wonders of power, or excellent manifestations of power. Ibn Jarir Tabari has reported that Ibn Zaid took the words fa-bi-ayyi alaa i Rabbi kuma in the meaning of fa bi-ayyi qudrat-Allah. Ibn Jarir himself has taken alaa' in the meaning of power and might in his commentary of vv. 37-38. Imam Razi also has made this observation in his commentary of vv.14-16: "These verses do not describe the blessings but the powers of Allah, and in the commentary of vv. 22-23, this; "These describe the wonders of power and not the blessings."

Its third meaning is virtue, praiseworthy qualities, and perfections. Though this meaning has not been mentioned by the lexicographers and commentators, this word has often been used in this meaning in Arabic poetry. (Examples omitted).

Thus, we have taken this word in its vastest meaning and translated it suitably keeping in view the context in which it occurs. However, at some places the word alaa ' may have several senses in one and the same place, but due to limitations of translation we have had to adopt only one meaning. For example, in this verse after making mention of the creation of the earth and of making the best arrangements for the supply of provisions to the creatures, it has been said: 'Which of the alaa' of your Lord will you deny?" Here, alaa' has not been used in the meaning of the blessings only but also in the meaning of the manifestations of Allah Almighty's power and His praiseworthy attributes. It is a wonder of His might that He fashioned this earth in such a marvelous manner that countless species of creatures live here and an endless variety of fruits and grain are grown on it. And it is due to His praiseworthy qualities that He not only created these creatures but also made arrangements for their sustenance and the supply of provisions for them; and the arrangements also so perfect that their food is not only nutritious but also pleasing to the taste and sight. In this connection, reference has been made to only one excellence of Allah Almighty's workmanship for the sake of example, viz., the creation of the date-palm fruit in sheaths. Keeping this one example in view one may consider what excellences of art have been devised and shown in the packing of banana, pomegranates, orange, coconut and other fruits, and how each of the different sorts of the grains and pulses which we so thoughtlessly cook and eat, are produced hotly packed and covered in ears and pods and clusters.

13"Denying" implies the several attitudes that the people adopt in respect of Allah Almighty's blessings and manifestations of His might and His praiseworthy attributes. For example, some people do not at all admit that the Creator of all things is Allah Almighty. They think that all this is a mere byproduct of the matter, or an accidental happening, which is un-related with any wisdom and skill and workmanship. This is open denial.

Some other people do admit that the Creator of these things is Allah, but regard others beside Him also as associates in Godhead: they render thanks to others for His blessings: they adore others although

they eat His provisions. This is another form of denial. Obviously, it would be the height of ingratitude if a person while admitting that a certain person had done him a favor rendered thanks to another, who had not in fact dent him that favor, for this act of his would be an express proof that he regarded the other person as his benefactor whom he was rendering the thanks.

There are still others. who acknowledge Allah alone as the Creator of all things and the Bestower of all blessings, but do not admit that they should obey the Commands of their Creator and Sustainer and follow His injunctions. This is another form of ingratitude and denial of the blessings, for the person who behaves so denies the right of the Bestower of the blessing although he acknowledges the blessing itself.

Some other people neither disavow the blessing nor deny the right of the Bestower of the blessing, but in practice there is no appreciable difference between their conduct and the conduct of a denier. This is not verbal denial but denial in practice.

14The order of the initial stages of the creation of man, as given at different places in the Qur'an seems to be as follows:

(1) Turab, i.e. earth or dust;

(2) Tin, i.e. clay made by mixing water with earth;

(3) tin-i-lazib: sticky clay, i.e. a clay which becomes sticky when left alone for a long time;

(4) hama in musnun, i.e. clay with a stink in it;

(5) salsal-im-min hems in masnun kalfakhkhar. i.e. the rotten clay which when dried becomes like baked pottery;

(6) bashar, i.e.. the one who was made from this last form of the earth, in whom Allah breathed of His Spirit, to whom the angels were commanded to bow down, and from whose species his mate was created;

(7) thumma ja ala nasla-hu min sulala-tin-min-ma 'in mahin: 'then spread his progeny by means of an extract of the nature of a despicable water', for which the word nutfah has been used at other places.

For these stages one may look up the following verses of the Qur'an in sequence: ka-melba/-i Adalla khalaqa-hu min turab (AI-'Imran : 59); bed's khalqal-insan-i min tin (As Sajdah: 7); Inna khalaq-na hum min tin-il-/azib (As-Saaffat: 11): the fourth and fifth stages have been described in the verse being explained, and the later stages in the following verses : Inni khaliq-un bashar an-nun tin. Faidha sa wwaitu-hu wa nafakhtu-fi -hi min-ruhi fa-qa ,u-lahu sajidin. (Suad : 71-72); khalaqa-kum min-nafs in

wahidatin wa khalaqa nun-ha zauja-ha wa baththa minhuma rijal-an kathir-an wa nisa-an. (An -Nisa':1) ; thumma Ja ala nasla-hu min sulata-tin-min mmaa'-in -mahin. (As-Sajdah: 8); fa-inna khalaq-na-kum min turabin thumma min nutfs-tin. (AI-Hajj:5).

15The words in the original are: mim-marij-im-min-nar. Nar signifies fire of a special nature and not the fire which is produced by burning wood or coal, and marij means a pure, smokeless flame. The verse means that just as the first man was created out of earth, then passing through various stages of creation, the clay model adopted the shape of a living man of flesh and blood, and then his progeny spread by means of the sperm-drop, so was the first jinn created from a pure flame of fire, or a fire free of smoke, and then the species of jinn spread from his progeny. The position of the first jinn among the jinn is the same as of Adam (peace be upon him) among human beings. After taking the shape of a living man, the body of Adam and the human beings born of his progeny retained no relationship with the dust from which. they were originally created. Though even now our body is entirely a compound of the earthly substances, these substances have taken the from of flesh and blood and after being made a living body it has become quite a different thing from a mere lump of clay. The same also is true of the jinn. Their being also is essentially fiery. But just as we are not a mere lump of earth, so also they arc not a mere flame of fire.

This verse proves two things. First, that the jinn are not simply spirit, but are material beings of a special nature, but since they have been composed of pure fiery substances, they remain invisible to human beings who have bean created of earthly substances. The same has been referred to in this verse: "Satan and his party see you from where you cannot see them." (AI-A`raf: 27) Likewise, the jinn's being fast-moving, their adopting different shapes and forms easily and their penetrating into different places imperceptibly where things made of earthly substances cannot penetrate, or if they do, their penetration becomes perceptible, all these things are possible and understandable only because they are essentially a fiery creation.

The other thing that we come to know from this verse is that the jinn are not only a creation of a wholly different nature from human beings, but the substance of their creation also is absolutely different from that of man, animal, vegetable and solid matter. This verse explicitly points out the error of the viewpoint of those people who regard the jinn as a kind of human beings. According to their interpretation, the meaning of creating man of the dust and the jinn of the fire is to describe the difference of the temperamental nature of the two kinds of the people; one kind of them are humble by nature, and they are men in the true sense, and the other kind of the people are wicked by nature and fiery in temper, who may better be called devils. This is, however, no commentary of the Qur'an but its distortion. In E.N. 14 above we have shown in detail how the Qur'an itself has fully described the meaning of creating man from the earth. After reading all these details, can a reasonable person understand that the object of all this is only to define the humility of the good men ? Moreover, how can a sound-minded person understand that the meaning of creating man of rotten, dry clay and the jinn of the flame of pure fire is the difference of the separate moral characteristics of the two individuals or groups with different

temperaments belonging to the same human species? (For further explanation, see E.N. 53 of Surah Adh-Dhariyat).

16Here, in view of the context, It is more appropriate to translate alaa' as 'wonders of power", but in this the aspect of the blessing is also present. Just as it is a wonderful manifestation of Allah's power to have brought into existence marvelous creatures like man from the dust and the jinn from the flame of fire, so for both these creatures this is a great blessing also that Allah not only granted them a body but gave each such a structure and endowed each with such powers and capabilities that they became able to perform unique works in the world. Though we do not know much about the jinn, man is present before us. Had he been given the body of a fish or a bird or a monkey along with the human brain, he could not have with that body used the mental powers to any advantage. Then, is it not a supreme blessing of Allah that He blessed man with the most suitable body also, so that he may exploit the mental powers granted to him efficiently? Consider the hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears, the tongue and the erect stature as against the intellect and reason, and the capabilities of workmanship and artistic skill, and one will feel that the Creator has provided a deep relationship and harmony between them without which the human body would have remained useless. Then, the same thing points out Allah's praiseworthy qualities too. How could the men and jinn of such quality and rank be brought into existence without knowledge, wisdom, mercy and a profound creative power ? For such miracles of creation cannot be performed by accidents and automatic blind and deaf laws of nature.

17'Both the Easts and both the Wests" may mean the two points of sunrise and the two points of sunset on the shortest day of winter and the longest day of summer as well as the easts and the wests of the two hemispheres of the earth. On the shortest day of winter the sun rises and sets making a small acute angle: on the contrary, on the longest day of summer-it rises and sets making a wide obtuse angle. Between them its points of rising and setting go on shifting every day, for which at another place in the Qur'an (AI-Ma'arij: 40) the words Rabbul-mashariq wal-magharib have been used. Likewise, at the time the sun rises in one hemisphere of the earth, it sets in the other hemisphere, thus producing two easts and two wests of the earth. There arc several meanings of calling Allah Lord of both the Easts and both the Wests. Firstly, that it is by His Command that the system of the rising and setting of the sun and their changing pattern during the year is functioning. Second, that Allah alone is the Master and Ruler of the earth and the sun; had they their own separate lords, this regular system of the rising and setting of the sun on the earth could not have functioned and continued to function permanently. Third, that the Master and Sustainer of both the Easts and both the Wests is One Allah alone; to Him belong the creations living between them. He alone is nourishing them, and it is for their sustenance that He has established this wise system of the rising and setting of the sun on the earth.

18Here also, although in view of the context, "power" seems to be a more conspicuous meaning of alaa', yet, besides, the aspect of "blessing" and 'praiseworthy qualities" also is present in it. It is a great blessing that Allah Almighty has prescribed the rule of the rising and setting of the sun, for by means of it the changes of the crops and seasons arc regulated with which countless interests of the men and animals

and vegetables are attached. Likewise, it is Allah's mercy and providence and wisdom that He has made these arrangements by His power to meet the respective needs and requirements of the creatures He has created on the earth.

19For explanation, see E. N . 68 of Surah Al-Furqan.

20According to Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah, Ibn Zaid and Dahhak (may Allah bless them), marjan implies small pearls, but according to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, this word is used for corals in Arabia.

21Literally: "From both these seas come out..." The objectors say that pearls and corals come out only from salt waters. How is it then that they are stated to come out from both the sweet and salt waters ? The answer is that the seas contain both the sweet and the salt waters; therefore, whether it is said that these things come out from the combination of both, or from both kinds of waters, it would be one and the same thing. And it may well be that further investigations might reveal that both these things originate in the sea at the place where springs of sweet water gush outs from the sea bed; and in their birth and development combination of both kinds of the water plays its part. Near Bahrain which has been famous for its pearl-fisheries for centuries, there exist springs of sweet water at the bottom of the Gulf.

22Here also though the aspect of power in alaa' is conspicuous, the aspect of the blessing and praiseworthy qualities also is not hidden. It is a blessings of God that these valuable things come out from the sea, and it is His Providence that for the satisfaction of the aesthetic taste of the creatures whom He had blessed with the taste for beauty and the lout and longing for adornment, He created all sorts of these beautiful things in His world.

23"His are the ships...": Ships became possible only by His power. It is He Who blessed man with the capability and skill that he may build ships for crossing the oceans; it is He Who created on the earth the material from which ships could be built; and it is He Who subjected water to the laws by which it became possible for the mountain-like ships to sail on the surface of the surging oceans.

24Here, the aspect of the blessing; and bounty is conspicuous in alaa', but the explanation given above shows that the aspect of power and good qualities also is present in it.

25From here to verse 30, the jinn and the men have been informed of two realities;

First, 'Neither you are immortal nor the provisions that you are enjoying in this world everlasting. Immortal and Everlasting is the Being of the High and Supreme God alone Whose greatness this Universe testifies, and by Whose grace and kindness you have been favored with these bounties. Now, if some one among you behaves arrogantly, it would be due to his own meanness. If a foolish person assumes haughtiness in his tiny sphere of authority, or becomes god of a sew helpless men who fall into his hand,

this farce would not last long. A godhead that lag: for a mere score or two score years in a corner of the earth whose size in this limitless Universe is not even equal to a pea seed, and then becomes a legend of the past, is not something of which one may feel proud and arrogant. "

The other important truth of which both these creations have been warned is: 'None of those whom you have set up as deities and removers of hardships and fulfiller: of needs, apart from Allah, whether they are angels or prophets or the moon and the sun, or some other creation, can fulfill any of your needs. These helpless creatures and things themselves stand in need of Allah's help for their needs and requirements. They themselves pray to Him for help; when they are not able to remove their own hardships how will they remove your hardships? Whatever Is happening In this limitless Universe, from the earth to the heavens, Is happening under rite Command of One God alone, No one else has any sham In His Godhead; no one therefore can influence anyone else's destiny In any way

26Here, as the context itself shows, the word alaa' has been used in the sense of excellences and perfections. Whoever of the mortal creatures is involved in vanity and self-arrogance and struts about thinking that his false godhead is everlasting, disavows Lord of the world's glory and majesty by his conduct, if not by his tongue. His pride and arrogance by itself is a denial of Allah Almighty's greatness and glory. Whatever claim he may make to an excellence by his tongue, or arrogate to himself such an excellence, it is indeed a disavowal of the rank and station of the real Possessor of excellences and perfections.

27That is, "He is continuously and endlessly functioning in this Universe and creating countless new things with new and yet new forms and designs and qualities, He is giving death to one and life to another, exalting one and debasing another, causing one to recover and another to remain ill, rescuing a drowning one and drowning a floating one. He is providing sustenance to countless creatures in a variety of ways, His world never stays In the same state: it is changing every moment and its Creator arranges it in a new state and fashion every time, which is different from every previous form and fashion and state."

28Here, alaa seems to have been treed in the sense of qualities and glories Every person who commits polytheism of any kind, in fact, disavows one or the other of Allah's attributes, A person's saying that such and such a saint has removed his disease, in fact, amounts to saying that Allah is not the Remover of disease and Restorer of health but the saint, Another one's saying that such and such a holy one has got him a job, in fact, amounts to saying that Allah is not the Sustainer and Lord but the particular holy person. Still another one's saying that his prayer has been answered at a particular shrine, in fact, amounts to saying that the command governing the world is not Allah's but the shrine's, In short, every polytheistic belief and utterance, in the final analysis, leads up to the disavowal of the Divine attributes. Polytheism is nothing but that one should ascribe the Divine attributes of being All-Hearing and AII-Seeing, Almighty and All-Powerful, etc.. to others than Allah, and should deny that Allah alone is the Possessor of all these attributes.

29Thaqalan is derived from thiql which means a burden, and thaqal is the burden loaded on a conveyance. Thaqalan (dual) therefore would mean: "two loaded burdens". Here this word refers to the jinn and then; who are both loaded on the earth. As the addressees here are those jinn and men who have turned away from the service and obedience of their Lord and Sustainer, they have been addressed as: "0 burdens of the earth," In other words, the Creator is warning these two unworthy groups of His creation, saying; "« you who have become a burden for My earth, I am soon going to take you to task,"

30This does not mean that Allah at this time is too busy to call the disobedient servants to account, but it means that Allah has arranged a special time-table according to which He will first bring into existence generation after generation of the jinn and men in the world till an appointed time, and will provide theist with an opportunity to work in this examination center of the world; then at a specific Hour the examination will be suddenly brought to a close, and all the jinn and men living at that time will be given death simultaneously. Then at another time which is preordained with Allah for calling the jinn and men to account, all the former and the latter generations of both the species will be resurrected and mustered at one and the same time. In view of this time-table the two species have been warned, as if to say: `We are yet busy with the work of the first period, and the time for the second period has not yet come, not to speak of embarking on the work of the third period. But you may rest assured. The time is fast approaching when We shall be free to take you to task." This lack of leisure does not mean that Allah is too occupied with one kind of work to attend to another kind of work. But its nature is analogous to the occupation of a person who has set a time-table for different sorts of the works and in respect of a work whose time has not yet arrived according to the time-table, he may say that he at the moment is not free for it.

31Here, alaa' can also be taken in the meaning of powers. In view of the context, each meaning seems to be appropriate in its own way. According to the first meaning, it would mean: "Today you are being ungrateful for Our blessings and are being treacherous and disloyal by adopting the different attitudes of disbelief, polytheism, atheism, sin and disobedience, but tomorrow when the time comes for accountability, We shall sec which of Our blessings you prove to be the result of a mere accident, or the fruit of your own ability, or manifestation of the kindness of a god or goddess or saint." In the second case, the meaning would be: `Today you are mocking the doctrine of Resurrection and the gathering together of all mankind and jinn on the Day of Judgment and the accountability and the Heaven and Hell, and are harboring the misunderstanding that such things are not at all possible, but when We gather you together for accountability and all that you deny today will appear before you, then We shall see which of Our powers you deny."

32“The earth and the heavens": the Universe or the Kingdom of God. The verse means to impress this: `It is not in your power to escape Allah's grasp. When the time for the accountability of which you are being foretold comes, you will be seized and brought before God in any case wherever you may be. To go out of God's reach you will have to flee from the Universe of God for which you do trot have the required power. If you feel that you have the power, then you may use that power if you so will. "

33The word shuwaz, as used in the original, means the pure, smokeless flame, and nuhas is the gross smoke without a flame. These two things, one after the other, will be let loose upon the men and jinn, when they try to escape the accountability of Allah.

34This refers to the Day of Resurrection. Bursting of the heavens implies loosening of the discipline of the heavens, scattering of the celestial bodies, upsetting of the system of the heavens. And the meaning of `reddening like red leather" is that during that great upheaval anyone who looks up towards the sky, will feel as though the entire heavens were on fire.

35That is, "Today you deem Resurrection impossible; you think Allah has no power to bring it about. But when it will have taken place and you see with your eyes all that you are being foretold, which of the powers of Allah will you then deny?

36This is being explained by the subsequent sentence: "The culprits there shall be recognized by their faces." It means that in that great assembly where all the former and the latter generations will have gathered together, there will be no need to ask as to who are the culprits, nor will any man or jinn need be asked whether he is a culprit or not. The dejected faces of the culprits, their terror-stricken eyes, their disturbed and alarmed countenances will themselves be enough to expose the secret that they are the culprits. When a crowd comprising both the guilty and the innocent people, is encircled by the police, the calm and tranquil of the innocent people and the bewildered and disturbed state of the guilty ones tell at one glance as to who in the crowd is the culprit and who is innocent. This general rule is in most cases belied in the world, because the worldly police do not enjoy the reputation of being fair and just, rather on many an occasion they have turned out to be more bothersome for the gentle and innocent people than for the culprits. Therefore, here it is possible that when encircled by the police the gentle and innocent people might become even more terror-stricken than the criminals, but in the Hereafter, when every noble person will have complete faith in the justice of Allah, bewilderment will afflict only those whose conscience will be conscious of their being the culprits themselves, and who on their very arrival in the Court of God will become certain of their doom, which they had regarded as impossible or doubtful in the world and so had been committing every heinous sin and crime.

37The real basis of the crime according to the Qur'an is that the servant who is benefiting by the Blessings of his Sustainer; should harbor the misunderstanding that the blessings have been bestowed by no one, but have reached him of their own accord, or that the blessings are not the gift of God but the fruit of his own ability or good fortune, or that they are the gift of God, but God has no right on His servants, or that God Himself has not done him those favors but some other being has got these done him. These are the wrong concepts on account of which man becomes independent of God and being free from His obedience and service performs acts which He has forbidden. and avoids acts which He has enjoined. Seen in this light every crime and every sin Is, in reality. o disavowal of the favors of Allah

whether a person denies them by the word of (mouth or not. But the person who, in fact, has no intention of the denial. but acknowledges the favors in the depths of his heart, commits an error occasionally because of human weakness, he shows repentance on it and tries to ovoid it. This saves him from being included among the deniers. Apart from this, all other culprits are, in fact, beliers of Allah's blessings and deniers of His favors. That is why it has been said: "When you will have been seized as culprits, then We shall see as to which of Our favors you deny." In Surah Takathur: 8 the same thing has been put thus: "On that Day you will certainly be culled to account for the blessings you had been granted." That is, it will be asked: Had We granted you these blessings or not ? Then, what attitude did you adopt towards your Benefactor, and in what ways did you use His Blessings?"

38That is, "In Hell they will feel oppressed with thirst again and again. and will rush towards the springs of water, but will find only boiling water, which will not satisfy their thirst, and they will thus continue to wander to and fro between Hell and the springs for ever and ever."

39That is, "Will you even at that time be able to deny that God can bring about Resurrection, can give you another life after death, can call you to account, and can also make this Hell in which you are suffering punishment today?"

40“Who dreads... Lord": who fears God in whatever he does in the world, and dreads his accountability before Him in the Hereafter. Whoever holds this belief will inevitably avoid serving the lusts of his self, will avoid following every path blindly, will distinguish between the truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, pure and impure, and the lawful and the unlawful, and will not turn away deliberately from following the Commands of God. This is the real ground for the reward that is being mentioned below.

41Jannat actually means a garden. At sane places in the Qur'an the entire world in which the righteous people will be kept, has boon called Jannat, as though the whole of it WAS a garden. And at others it has been said that they will have Jannat (Gardens) under which canals will be flowing. This means that that big Garden will comprise countless other gardens; and here precisely it has been stated that every pious man will be given two gardens in that big Garden, which will be particularly meant for him; it will have his own palaces in which he will live with his family and attendants like a king, and in it he will be provided with all that is being mentioned below.

42From here till the end, the word alaa ' has been used both for the blessings and forthe powers, and there is an aspect of the praiseworthy qualities too. in it. If we take the first meaning, the meaning of repeating the refrain in this context will be: "If you like to deny the blessings of Allah, you may do so. The righteous will certainly receive these blessings from their Lord." In the second case the meaning would be: "If you think it is impossible for Allah to create the Garden and bless His righteous servants with these bounties in it, you may think so. Allah certainly lass the power to do this work and He will surely accomplish it." According to the third meaning, it means: "You think that after having created this big

world Allah now doesn't bother whether a person behaves unjustly here or justly. works to promote the truth or falsehood, spreads evil or good: He will neither punish the oppressor nor redress the grievances of the oppressed, will neither appreciate good nor abhor evil. Then, as you think, He is helpless too. He can build the heavens and the earth but cannot prepare Hell for punishing the wicked and cannot make Heaven for rewarding the followers of the Truth. Thus. you may deny His praiseworthy attributes as you may, but tomorrow when He hurls the evildoers into Hell and blesses the worshipers of the truth in Heaven. will you even then be able to deny His these attributes?"

43This can have two meanings:

(1) "The fruits of the two gardens will have their own special flavors and tastes. In one garden he will find one kind of the fruit clustering on its branches, and in the other, another kind."

(2) 'In each garden there will be two kinds of fruit; one kind of the familiar fruit known and tasted in the world, though much superior to that found in the world, and the other kind of the rare fruit never imagined and tasted before."

44That is, "When their lining will be of such superior quality, you may imagine what will be the quality of the outer layer of the carpets."

45This is the real character of the woman: she should neither be shameless nor immodest, but should have modesty in her looks.

That is why Allah while making a mention of women among the blessings of Paradise has first of all praised their modesty and chastity and not their beauty and physical charms. Beautiful women can get together in mixed clubs and film studios and beauty contests where the select beautiful women only are admitted. but a person of low taste and mentality only can show any interest in them. No noble person can find any charm in the beauty that attracts every evil look and is ready to fall in every lap!

46This means that in the worldly life whether a woman died a spinster. or as the wife of somebody. or died young, or as an old woman, in the Hereafter when all the righteous women enter Paradise, they will be made young and virgins: and any of the women who is made a lift-partner of a righteous man, will not have been possessed by anyone before that husband, in Paradise.

This verse also shows that the righteous jinn too will enter Paradise like the righteous men. Men will have women from their own kind and the jinn their wives from their own kind: both the kinds will have their mates from their own particular kind. No person of one kind will be made a partner of a member of : mother kind with whom he cannot live as husband or wife naturally. The words of the verse "...whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them," do not mean that the women there will only be of

human species and they will not have been touched by any man or jinn before their husbands, but its real meaning is: In Paradise there will be women of both the jinn and the human species; they all will he modest and untouched: neither a jinn female will have been touched by a jinn male before her husband in Paradise, nor a human female will have been touched by a human male before her husband in Paradise.

47That is, "How, after all, is it possible that Allah should allow to go waste the sacrifices of those righteous servants and should deny them their rewards, who kept themselves subjected to restrictions throughout their lives for the sake of Allah, who avoided the unlawful and remained content with the lawful, who performed their duties faithfully and sincerely, rendered the rights of those to whom rights were due, and endured hardships against evil and upheld good?

48Obviously, the parson who is a denier of Paradise and its rewards, actually denies many of Allah Almighty's praiseworthy attributes. Even if he believes in Allah, he holds a bad opinion about Him In his view He is a perverse ruler in whose lawless kingdom doing good is an exercise in futility. He is either blind and deaf and is, therefore, wholly unaware as to who in his kingdom is making sacrifices of life, wealth and labor for His sake; or He is un-appreciative and cannot distinguish between good and evil; or. as he scents to think. He is helpless and powerless: He may be very appreciative of the good but is unable to reward the doer of it. That is why u has been said: 'When in the Hereafter good will be rewarded with good in front of your very eyes. will you even then disavow the praiseworthy attributes of your Lord?"

49The word dun as used in min dun-i-hima Jannatan. is employed in three different meanings in Arabic

(1) To be situated at a lower level than another thing;

(2) to be inferior to something of better and nobler quality; and

(3) to be over and above something else.

On account of this difference in meaning, one probable meaning of these words is that every dweller of Paradise will be given two more gardens besides the two previously mentioned; another probable meaning is that these two gardens will be inferior in quality and rank to both the first mentioned gardens: that is, the first two gardens will either be situated at a higher level than these two, or the first two gardens will be of a superior kind and these two of an inferior kind as compared to them. If the first probability is adopted, it would mean that these two additional gardens also will be for those dwellers of Paradise, who have been mentioned above, And in case the second probability is adopted, the meaning would be that the first two gardens will be for 'those nearest to Allah", and these two for "the people of the right hand." This second probability is strengthened by the two kinds of the righteous inert as mentioned in Surah AI-Waqi'ah. First, the foremost, who have also been called the "muqarrabun "; second, the people of the right hand, who have also been entitled "ashab al-maimanah "; and for both these separate

qualities of the two kinds of the gardens have been mentioned. Furthermore, this probability is also strengthened by the Hadith which Abu Bakr has related on the authority of his father, Hadrat Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, In this he says: The Holy Prophet said: 'Two jannats (gardens) will be for the foremost among the righteous (or the muqarrabin), in which the utensils and articles of decoration will be of gold, and two jannats for the followers (or the ashab al gamin), in which everything will be of silver," (Fath al-Bari, Kitab at-Tafsir: Surah Ar-Rahman).

50The word madhammatan has been used in praise of these gardens. Mudhamma is such luxuriant vegetation which because of its extreme luxuriance assumes a darkish hue.

51For the explanation of her see E. N's 28, 29 of Surah As-Saaffat and E.N. 42 of Surah Ad-Dukhan the tents probably will be similar to those pitched for the nobles and rich people in the public parks. Most probably the wives of the dwellers of Paradise will live with them in their palaces and in their parks there will be tents pitched here and there in which there will be the houris to entertain them. Our this presumption is based on this that in the foregoing verses beautiful and chase wives have been mentioned; now, here, mention of the houris signifies that they will be a different kind of women from the wives. This presumption is further strengthened by the Hadith which Hadrat Umm Salamah has reported. She says: 'I asked: O messenger of Allah, who are better: the women of the world or the houris! The Holy Prophet replied: The women of the world are superior to the houris in the same way as the outer layer of a garment is superior to its lining. I asked: On what grounds ? he replied: On the ground that the women have offered their Prayers, observed their Fasts, and performed other devotions." (Tabarani). This shows that the wives of the dwellers of Paradise will be the women who affirmed the faith in the world and left the world while they practiced good and right. They will enter Paradise in consequence of their faith and good deeds, and will deserve the blessings of Paradise on merit. They would either become the wives of their previous husbands of their own free will and choice. if they too happened to be dwellers of Paradise, or Allah will wed them to some other dweller of Paradise, if the two would like to live together as husband and wife. As for the houris they will not be entitled to dwell in Paradise as a result of any righteous deed of their own, but Allah will create them as young, beautiful women and bestow them also as a blessing among the other blessings on the dwellers of Paradise so that they may enjoy their companionship. But they will not in any case be creatures of the kind of the jinn and fairies, for man cannot cohabit with a kind other than his own. Therefore, most probably these would be those innocent girls who died immature, and whose parents did not deserve Paradise so that they could be admitted to Paradise with them as the children of their righteous torrents.

52The word abqari in the original is from abqar. the capital city of the jinn in the legends of the pre-Islamic Arabia. It was on that account that the Arabs called every fine and rare thing abqari as if it belonged to the fairyland and had no match in the material world. So much so that in their idiom the man who possessed extraordinary abilities and who performed wonderful works was also called abqari The English word genius also is spoken in the same sense and is also derived from genii which is a synonym of jinn. That is why the word abqari; has been used here to give an idea of the extraordinary exquisiteness of the

provisions of Paradise to the Arabs.

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56. Surah Al Waqia (The Inevitable Event)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-waqi`ah* of the very first verse.

Period of Revelation

According to the chronological order that Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas has given of the Surahs, first Surah Ta Ha was sent down, then Al-Waqi'ah and then Ash-Shu`ara'(Suyuti: *Al-Itqan*). The same sequence has been reported from Ikrimah (Baihaqi: *Dala'il an Nubuwwat*).

This is supported also by the story that Ibn Hisham has related from Ibn Ishaq about the affirmation of the Faith by Hadrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him). It says that when Hadarat Umar entered his sister's house, Surah Ta Ha was being recited. Hearing his voice the people of the house hid the pages of the Qur'an. Hadrat Umar first seized his brother-in-law and then his sister rose in defense of her husband, he hit her also and wounded her on the head. When Umar saw blood on his sister, he was sorry for what he had done, and said to her: "Show me the manuscript that you have concealed so that I may see what it contains." The sister said: "You are unclean because of your polytheism: *wa anna-hu la yamassu-ha ill-at-tahir*: "Only a clean person can touch it." So, Hadrat Umar rose and washed himself, and then took up the manuscript to read it. This shows that Sarah Al-Waqi'ah had been sent down by that time for it contains the verse: *La yamassu hu ill al mutahharun*; and it had been established historically that Hadrat Umar embraced Islam after the first migration to Habash, in the fifth year of the Prophethood.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is the Hereafter, *Tauhid* and refutation of the Makkan disbelievers' suspicions about the Qur'an. What they regarded as utterly incredible was that Resurrection would ever take place, then the entire system of the earth and heavens would be upset, and when all the dead would be resurrected and called to account, after which the righteous would be admitted to Paradise and the wicked cast into Hell. They regarded all this as imaginary, which

could not possibly happen in actual fact. In answer to this, it was said: "When the inevitable event will take place, there will be none to belie its happening, nor will anyone have the Power to avert it, nor prove it to, be an unreal happening. At that time all peoples will be divided into three classes: (1) The foremost in rank and position; (2) the common righteous people and (3) those who denied the Hereafter and persisted in disbelief and polytheism and major sins till the last." How these three classes of the people will be rewarded and punished has been described in detail in vv. 7-56.

Then, in vv. 57-74 arguments have been given, one after the other, to prove the truth of the two basic doctrines of Islam, which the disbelievers were refusing to accept, viz. the doctrines of *Tauhid* and the Hereafter. In these arguments, apart from every thing else that exists in the earth and heavens, man's attention has been drawn to his own body and to the food that he eats and to the water that he drinks and to the fire on which he cooks his food, and he has been invited to ponder the question : What right do you have to behave independently of, or serve any other than, the God Whose creative power has brought you into being, and Whose provisions sustain you And how can you entertain the idea that after having once brought you into existence He has become so helpless and powerless that He cannot recreate you once again even if he wills to?

Then, in vv. 75-82 their suspicions in respect of the Qur'an have been refuted and they have been made to realize how fortunate they are that instead of deriving any benefit from the great blessing that the Qur'an is, they are treating it with scant attention and have set only this share of theirs in it that they deny it. If one seriously considers this matchless argument that has been presented in two brief sentences about the truth of the Qur'an, one will find in it the same kind of firm and stable system as exists among the stars and planets of the Universe, and the same is the proof of the fact that its Author is the same Being Who has created the Universe. Then the disbelievers have been told that this Book is inscribed in that Writ of Destiny which is beyond the reach of the creatures, as if to say "You think it is brought down by the devils to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), whereas none but the pure angels has any access to the means by which it reaches Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) from the well guarded Tablet."

In conclusion, man has been warned, as if to say: "You may brad and boast as you like and may shut your eyes to the truths in your arrogance of independence, but death is enough to open your eyes. At death you become helpless: you cannot save your own parents; you cannot save your children; you cannot save your religious guided and beloved leaders. They all die in front of your vary eyes while you look on helplessly. If there is no supreme power ruling over you, and your this assumption is correct that you are all in all in the world, and there is no God, then why don't you restore to the dying person his soul?Just as you are helpless in this, so it is also beyond your power to stop Allah from calling the people to account and mete out rewards and punishments to them. You may or may not believe it, but every dying person will surely see his own end after death. If he belongs to those nearest to God, he will see the good end meant for them if he be from among the righteous, he will see the end prepared for the righteous; and if he be from among the deniers of the truth, he will see the end destined for the criminals.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ ٱلْوَاقِعَةُ ﴿١﴾

لَيْسَ لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ﴿٢﴾

خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ﴿٣﴾

إِذَا رُجَّتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ رَجًّا ﴿٤﴾

وَبُسَّتِ ٱلْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ﴿٥﴾

فَكَانَتْ هَبَآءً مُّنۢبَثًّا ﴿٦﴾

وَكُنتُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا ثَلَٰثَةً ﴿٧﴾

فَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَيْمَنَةِ ﴿٨﴾

وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْمَشْـَٔمَةِ ﴿٩﴾

وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿١١﴾

فِى جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿١٢﴾

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾

مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَيۡهَا مُتَقَٰبِلِينَ ١٦

[1-16] When the inevitable event happens, there shall be none to belie its happening.[1] It will be a calamity which will abase and exalt.[2] The earth shall be shaken all of a sudden,[3] and the mountains shall crumble and become as scattered dust. You, them, shall be divided into three classes.[4] People of the right hand.[5] Oh, how (fortunate) shall be the people of the right hand! And the people of the left hand.[6] Oh, how (unfortunate) shall be the people of the left hand! And the foremost shall still be the foremost.[7] They will be those nearest (to God). They shall abide in the Gardens of bliss. Most of them will be froth among the former people and a few from among those of latter day.[8] They will he reclining on jeweled couches facing each other.

يَطُوفُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وِلۡدَٰنٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ ١٧

بِأَكۡوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأۡسٖ مِّن مَّعِينٖ ١٨

لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنۡهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ ١٩

وَفَٰكِهَةٖ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ ٢٠

وَلَحۡمِ طَيۡرٖ مِّمَّا يَشۡتَهُونَ ٢١

وَحُورٌ عِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

كَأَمْثَٰلِ ٱللُّؤْلُوِ ٱلْمَكْنُونِ ﴿٢٣﴾

جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْثِيمًا ﴿٢٥﴾

إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَٰمًا سَلَٰمًا ﴿٢٦﴾

[17-26] Eternal youths[9] shall go round them briskly with brimful goblets and beakers and cups of wine from a flowing spring, which will neither cause them giddiness nor affect their sense.[10] And they shall present before them every kind of tasty fruit, whichever they may choose; and the flesh of fowls, whichever they may desire.[11] And for them there shall be beautiful-eyed houris, as lovely as well-guarded pearls.[12] All this they will receive in reward for what they had done in the world. There they shall neither hear vain talk nor sinful speech.[13] Whatever they hear shall be right and pure.[14]

وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْيَمِينِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾

فِى سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

وَظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَمَآءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ ﴿٣١﴾

وَفَٰكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

لَّا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

إِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَٰهُنَّ إِنشَآءً ﴿٣٥﴾

فَجَعَلْنَٰهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ﴿٣٦﴾

عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾

لِّأَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٣٨﴾

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ ٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

[27-40] And the people of the right hand. Oh, how fortunate will be the people of the right hand! They shall be among thornless lote-trees,[15] and piled up bananas, one upon the other, and outspread shade and ever flowing waters and abundant fruits[16] neither failing in supply nor forbidden, and in upraised couches. We shall create their wives anew and make them virgins,[17] lovers of their husbands[18] and of equal age.[19] All this is for the people of the right hand. A good number of them will be from among the former people and a good number also from among those of latter day.

وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلشِّمَالِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلشِّمَالِ ﴿٤١﴾

فِى سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَظِلٍّ مِّن يَحْمُومٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَبْلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَكَانُوا۟ يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى ٱلْحِنثِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَكَانُوا۟ يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَٰمًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

أَوَ ءَابَآؤُنَا ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ وَٱلْءَاخِرِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

لَمَجْمُوعُونَ إِلَىٰ مِيقَٰتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا ٱلضَّآلُّونَ ٱلْمُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

لَءَاكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنْهَا ٱلْبُطُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

فَشَٰرِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَشَٰرِبُونَ شُرْبَ ٱلْهِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾

هَٰذَا نُزُلُهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٥٦﴾

[41-56] And the people of the left hand. Oh, how unfortunate will be the people of the left hand! They will be in the scorching wind and the boiling waters and the shadow of black smoke, which will be neither cool nor refreshing. These will be the people who had lived in ease and comfort before meeting this fate. They persisted in heinous sin[20] and used to say, "What, when we are dead and become dust and bones, shall we be raised up again? And our forefathers too, who have gone before?" Say to them, "Surely, the former and the latter, all shall be gathered

together one day, the hour of which has already been appointed. Then, O deviators and deniers, you shall eat of the zaqqum-tree[21] and fill your bellies with it, and drink on top of that boiling water like the thirsty camel. This shall be the entertainment of the people of the left hand on the Day of Recompense.

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تُصَدِّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تُمْنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

ءَأَنتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُۥٓ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْخَٰلِقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

نَحْنُ قَدَّرْنَا بَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّبَدِّلَ أَمْثَٰلَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ فِى مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ ٱلنَّشْأَةَ ٱلْأُولَىٰ فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[57-62] We have created you.[22] Then why don't you confirm?[23] Have you ever considered the sperm drop that you emit? Is it you who create the child from it, or are We the Creators?[24] We have distributed death among you,[25] and We are not helpless that We may change your forms and create you in another form that you do not know.[26] You already know well your first creation. Why then you do not take heed?[27]

أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَحْرُثُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

ءَأَنتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُۥٓ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلزَّٰرِعُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَٰهُ حُطَٰمًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

إِنَّا لَمُغْرَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[63-67] Have you ever considered the seeds that you sow ? Is it you who cause them to grow into crops, or do We? [28] If We so pleased We could turn these crops into chaff, and you would then be left lamenting, "We have incurred penalties! Ah, we are undone!"

أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱلْمَآءَ ٱلَّذِى تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

ءَأَنتُمْ أَنزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْمُنزِلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

لَوۡ نَشَآءُ جَعَلۡنَٰهُ أُجَاجٗا فَلَوۡلَا تَشۡكُرُونَ ٧٠

[68-70] Have you ever seen (with open eyes) the water that you drink? Is it you who cause it to rain from the clouds, or do We?[29] If We so pleased We could make it salt.[30] Then why don't you be grateful?[31]

أَفَرَءَيۡتُمُ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِي تُورُونَ ٧١

ءَأَنتُمۡ أَنشَأۡتُمۡ شَجَرَتَهَآ أَمۡ نَحۡنُ ٱلۡمُنشِـُٔونَ ٧٢

نَحۡنُ جَعَلۡنَٰهَا تَذۡكِرَةٗ وَمَتَٰعٗا لِّلۡمُقۡوِينَ ٧٣

[71-73] Have you ever considered the fire that you kindle? Is it you who have created its tree,[32] or are We its Creator "We have made it a means of remembrance[33] and a provision of life for the needy.[34]

فَسَبِّحۡ بِٱسۡمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٧٤

[74] So, O Prophet, glorify the name of your Lord, the Supreme![35]

۞ فَلَآ أُقۡسِمُ بِمَوَٰقِعِ ٱلنُّجُومِ ٧٥

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَقَسَمٌ لَّوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾

إِنَّهُۥ لَقُرْءَانٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

فِى كِتَٰبٍ مَّكْنُونٍ ﴿٧٨﴾

لَّا يَمَسُّهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱلْمُطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

تَنزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

أَفَبِهَٰذَا ٱلْحَدِيثِ أَنتُم مُّدْهِنُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَتَجْعَلُونَ رِزْقَكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

[75-82] But nay![36] I swear by the positions of the stars-and it is a great oath, only if you knew it-that this is a glorious Qur'an,[37] inscribed in a well-guarded Book,[38] which none can touch but the purified.[39] This has been sent down by the Lord of the worlds. Then, do you regard this discourse as unworthy of serious attention?[40] And do you have in this blessing only this share that you deny it?[41]

فَلَوۡلَآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلۡحُلۡقُومَ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَأَنتُمۡ حِينَئِذٖ تَنظُرُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَنَحۡنُ أَقۡرَبُ إِلَيۡهِ مِنكُمۡ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

فَلَوۡلَآ إِن كُنتُمۡ غَيۡرَ مَدِينِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

تَرۡجِعُونَهَآ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

فَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

فَرَوۡحٞ وَرَيۡحَانٞ وَجَنَّتُ نَعِيمٖ ﴿٨٩﴾

وَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنۡ أَصۡحَٰبِ ٱلۡيَمِينِ ﴿٩٠﴾

فَسَلَـٰمٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَـٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٩١﴾

وَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

فَنُزُلٌ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿٩٣﴾

وَتَصْلِيَةُ جَحِيمٍ ﴿٩٤﴾

[83-94] If you think you are subject to nobody, and you deem you are right in thinking so, then why don't you restore to the dying person his soul when it has come up to the throat and you are helplessly watching that he is at the point of death? At that time We are closer to him than you, but you do not see Us. Then, if the dying person be of those nearest to Us, for him there is comfort and good provision and the blissful Garden. And if he be of the people of the right hand, he is greeted with "Peace be to you: You are of the people of the right!" And if he be of the deniers, gone astray, his entertainment is of boiling water and burning in Hell.

إِنَّ هَـٰذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ ٱلْيَقِينِ ﴿٩٥﴾

فَسَبِّحْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٩٦﴾

[95-96] All this is absolute truth. So, O Prophet, glorify the name of your Lord, the Supreme![42]

1Opening the discourse with this sentence by itself signifies that this is an answer to the objections that

were than being raised in the disbelievers conferences against Resurrection. This was the time when the people of Makkah had just begun to hear the invitation to Islam from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon be Allah's peace and blessing). In it what seemed most astonishing and remote from reason to them was that the entire system of the earth and heavens would one day be overturned and then another world would be set up in which all the dead, of the former and the latter generations, would be resurrected. Bewildered they would ask: `This is just impossible ! Where will this earth, these oceans, these mountains, this moon and sun go? How will the centuries-old dead bodies rise up to life ? How can one in his senses believe that there will be another life after death and there will be gardens of Paradise and the fire of Hell ?" Such were the misgivings that were being expressed at that time everywhere in Makkah. It was against this background that it was said: "When the inevitable event happens, there shall be no one to belie it. "

In this verse the word "wagi ah " (event) has been used for Resurrection, which nearly means the same thing as the English word 'inevitable', signifying thereby that it is something that must come to pass. Then, its happening has been described by the word "waqi ah, " which is used for the sudden occurrence of a disaster. Laisa li-waq'at-i-ha kadhibat-un can have two meanings:

(1) That it will not be possible that its occurrence be averted, or stopped, or turned back; or, in other words, there will be no power to make it appear as an unreal event; and

(2) that there will be no living being to tell the lie that the event has not taken place.

2Literally: "that which causes (something or somebody j to rise and to Fall. " Its one meaning can be that it will upset every order: it will turn things up-side-down. Another meaning also can be that it will exalt the lowly and bring low the high and mighty; that is, on its advent the decision as to who is noble and who is ignoble among the people will be made on quite a different basis. Those who posed as honorable people in the world, would become contemptible and those who were considered contemptible would become honorable.

3That is, it will not be a local earthquake that may occur in a restricted area, but it will shake the whole earth to its depths all of a sudden, and it will experience a tremendous jolt and tremors all through.

4Although the address apparently is directed to the people to whom this discourse was being recited, or who may read it or hear it read now, in fact the entire mankind is its addressee. All human beings who have been born since the first day of creation and will be born till the Day of Resurrection, will ultimately he divided into three classes.

5The word maintanah in ashab al-maimanah, in the original, stay have been derived from Yamin, which means the right hand, and also from yumn, which means good omen. If it is taken to be derived from

yamin, ashab almaimanah would mean: `those of the right hand." This, however, does not imply its lexical meaning, but it signifies the people of exalted rank and position. The Arabs regarded the right hand as a symbol of strength and eminence and honor, and therefore would seat a person whom they wished to do honor, on the right hand, in the assemblies. And if it is taken as derived from yumn, ashab almaimanah would mean fortunate and blessed people.

6The word mash 'amah in ashab al-mash'amah, in the original, is from shu'm which means misfortune, ill-luck and bad omen; in Arabic the left hand also is called shuma. The Arabs regarded shimal (the left hand) and shu'm (bad omen) as synonyms, the left hand being a symbol of weakness and indignity. If a bird flew left on the commencement of a journey, they would take it as a bad omen; if they made a person sit on their left, it meant they regarded him as a weak man. Therefore, ashab al-mash'amah implies ill-omened people, or those who would suffer disgrace and ignominy, and would be made to stand on the left side in the Court of Allah.

7Sabiqin (the Foremost) implies the people who excelled others in virtue and love of the truth and in good works and responded to the call of Allah and His Messenger before others. They were also in the forefront in their response to the call for Jihad, for expending their wealth for the sake of the needy and for public services, or for inviting others to virtue and truth, in short, for spreading the good and wiping out evil and making sacrifices and exerting themselves whenever there was need for it. On this very basis, in the Hereafter too, they will be placed in the forefront.

Thus, mankind, so to say, will be ranged in Allah's Court like this: On the right hand, there will be the righteous, on the left the wicked, and in the forefront (nearest in Divine Presence) the Sabiqin (the Foremost in Faith and good deeds). According to a Hadith reported by ,Hadrat `A'ishah the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) asked the people: "Do you know who, on the Day of Resurrection, will he the first to be accommodated under the Divine Shade ?" The people said Allah and His Messenger only had the best knowledge. Thereupon the Holy Prophet replied: "Those who were such that when the Truth was presented before them, they accepted it forthwith; when a right was asked of them, they discharged it gracefully; and their decision in respect of others was the same as in respect of their own selves." (Musnad Ahmad).

8The commentators have differed as to who are implied by the former And the latter people '`

One group of them has expressed the view that the "former people" were the communities that passed away since the time of the Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) till the time of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), and the ¦people of the latter day" those who will have lived in the world since the advent of the Holy Prophet till the Day of Resurrection. Accordingly the verse would mean: "The number of the Sabqin (the Foremost in Faith and good deeds) among the people who passed away during the thousands of years before the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) would be greater, and the number of those who would attain to the rank of

the Sabiqin among those people who have been born since the advent of the Holy Prophet, or will be born till the Day of Resurrection, will be less. "

The second group says that the former and the latter in this verse imply the former and the latter people of the Holy Prophet's own Ummah itself. That is, in his Ummah the people belonging to the earliest period were the former among whom the number of the Sabiqin will be greater, and the people of the later periods are the latter among whom the number of the Sabiqin will be smaller.

The third group holds the view that this- implies the former and the latter people of every Prophet's own Ummah. That is, there will be numerous Sabiqin among the earliest followers of every Prophet, but among his later followers their number will decrease. The words of the verse bear all the three meanings, and possibly all three ate implied, for there is no contradiction between them. Besides, they give another meaning also and that too is cornet: every early period of a Prophet's following the proportion of the Sabiqin in human population would be greater and in the later period less, for the number of the workers of good and right does not increase at the rate of increase of the human populations. They may be more numerous as against the Sabiqin of the earliest period. but on the whole their number as against the world population goes on becoming less and less.

9This implies boys who will ever remain boys and stay young. Hadrat 'AIi and Hadrat Hasan Basri say that these will be those children of the people, who died before reaching their maturity; therefore, they will neither have any good works to their credit for which they may be rewarded, nor any evil deeds for which they may be punished, But obviously, this could imply those people who would not deserve Paradise. For, as for the true believers, about them Allah has guaranteed in the Qur'an that their children will be joined with them in Paradise (At-Tur: 21). This is also supported by the Hadith, which Abu Da'ud Tayalisi, Tabarani and Bazzar have related on the authority of Hadrat Anas and Hadrat Samurah bin Jundub, according to which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said that the children of the polytheists will be attendants of the people of Paradise. (For further explanation, see E.N. 26 of As-Saaffat, E.N. 19 of At-tur).

10For explanation, see E. N . 27 of As-Saaffat, E. N . 22 of Surah Muhammad, E. N. 18 of At-Tur.

11For explanation, see E.N. 17 of Surah At-tur.

12For explanation, see E.N.'s 28, 29 of As-Saaffat, E.N. 42, of AdDukhan, E. N . 61 of Ar-Rahman.

13This is one of the major blessings of Paradise, which has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'an, viz. that in Paradise human ears will remain secure against idle and frivolous talk, lying, backbiting slander, invective, boasting and bragging, taunts and mockery, satire and sarcasm. It will not be a society of foul-mouthed, indecent people who will throw mud at each other, but a society of noble

and civilized people free of such frivolities. A person who has been blessed with some decency of manner and sense by Allah can very well feel what an agony it is in worldly life a hope of deliverance from which has been given to man in Paradise.

14Some commentators and translators have taken the words, illa gilan salam-an salama, to mean that in Paradise one will hear only the greeting of 'Peace, peace' on every side; the correct view, however, is that it implies healthy and wholesome speech, i.e. such speech as may be free of the vices and blemishes, faults and evils, that have been mentioned in the preceding sentence. Here the word salam has been used nearly in the same sense as the English word sane.

15That is, lote-trees without thorns on them. This will be a superior kind of the lote-tree to be only found in Paradise, and its fruit likewise will be much superior to that found in the world.

16The word !a maqtu ah of the Text means: This fruit will neither be seasonal that its supply may fail when the season is over, nor its production will cease as it happens in a garden after its fruits has been picked. But in Paradise every kind of fruit will remain available in abundance in every season and will continue to be produced and supplied no matter how much of it is consumed. And la mamnu'ah means that there will be no prohibition or hindrance in obtaining fruit as it is in the gardens of the world, nor will it be out of reach because of thorns or height.

17This signifies the virtuous women of the world, who will enter Paradise on the basis of their faith and good works. Allah will make them young no matter how aged they might have died in the world; will make them beautiful whether or not they were beautiful in the world; and will make them virgins whether they died virgins in the world or after bearing children. If their husbands also entered Paradise with them, they would be joined with them, otherwise Allah will wed them to another dweller in Paradise. This very explanation of this verse has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in several Ahadith. According to Shama il Tirmidhi, an old woman requested the Holy Prophet to pray for her admission to Paradise. The Holy Prophet replied: "No old woman will enter Paradise." Hearing this the woman went back crying. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said to the people: "Tell her that she will not enter Paradise as an old woman, for Allah says: `We shall create them anew and make them virgins'." Ibn Abi Hatim has related, on the authority of Hadrat Salamah bin Yazid, that he heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) explain this verse, thus: "This implies the women of the world; whether they died virgins or married." Tabarani contains a lengthy tradition related from Hadrat Umm Salamah according to which she asked the Holy Prophet the meaning of the several references in the Qur'an to the women of Paradise. In answer, he explained this very verse and said: "These are the women who died as aged and decayed women, with sticky eyes and gray hair; alter this old age Allah will again make them young and virgins." Hadrat Umm Salamah asked: "If a woman had several husbands in the world, one after the other, to whom will she belong in Paradise ?" The Holy Prophet replied "She will he asked to make her own choice, and she will choose the one who had the best moral character. She will say: O my Lord, make me his wife, for he was the best in his conduct and dealings with me. O Umm Salamah, good moral

conduct has carried off all the good of this world and the Hereafter." (For further explanation, see E.N. 51 of Surah Ar-Rahman).

18The word 'uruban is used for the best feminine qualities of the woman in Arabic. This signifies a woman who is graceful and elegant, well-mannered and eloquent, and brimful of feminine feelings, who loves her husband with all her heart, and whose husband also loves her with all his heart.

19This can have two meanings:

(1) That they will be of equal age with their husbands; and

(2) that they will be of equal age among themselves; i.e. all the women in Paradise will be of the same age and will eternally stay young.

Both these meanings may be correct at one and the same time, i.e. these women may be of equal age among themselves and their husbands also may be made of equal age with them. .According to a , Hadith, "When the dwellers of Paradise enter it, their bodies will be without hair, their mustaches will be just appearing, but will yet he beardless, they will be handsome and fair-complexioned, with sturdy bodies and collyrium- stained eyes; they will all be 33 years of age." (Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyat Abi Hurairah). Almost the same theme has been related in Tirmidhi by Hadrat Mu'adh bin Jabal and Hadrat Abu Sa`id Khudri also.

20That is, "Their prosperity had an adverse effect on them. Instead of being grateful to Allah Almighty, they had become deniers of His blessings. Lost in pleasure-seeking they had forgotten God and persisted in heinous sinning. "Heinous sinning" includes disbelief, polytheism and atheism as well as every grave sin of morality and conduct."

21For the explanation of zaqqum, sec E.N. 34 of As-Saaffat.

22The arguments from here to verse 74 provide the reasoning to prove both the doctrines of `Tauhid and of Hereafter rationally. For it was there two basic doctrines of the Holy Prophet's teaching that the people of Makkah were debating and objecting to at that time.

23That is, "Why don't you confine that We alone are your Lord and God and We have the power to create you once again?"

24In this brief sentence a very important question has been put before man. Apart from all other things in the world, if man only considers as to how he himself has come into being, he can then neither have any doubts left about the doctrine of Tauhid presented by the Qur'an nor about its doctrine of the Hereafter.

The process of man's own creation starts when the male has conveyed his sperm to the womb of the female. But the question is: Has the sperm by itself become endowed with the capability of producing a child, and necessarily a human child ? Or, has it been created by man himself, or, by another than God? And, is it in the power of the man, or of the woman, or of another agency in the world, to cause conception by this sperm? Then, who is responsible for the gradual formation and development of the fetus in the mother's womb, its shaping and molding into a unique child, the provision in a particular proportion of different mental and physical powers and qualities in each child, so that it develops into a unique person, except One God? Has another than God any role to play in this? Is it done by the parents themselves? Or, by a doctor? Or, by the prophets of saints, who were themselves created in this very way? Or, by the sun and the moon and the stars, which arc themselves subject to a law? Or, by nature, which is devoid of any knowledge, wisdom, will and authority? Then, is it also in the power of another than God to decide whether the child is to be a boy or a girl? Whether it is to be beautiful or ugly, strong or weak, blind and deaf and a cripple or sound bodied, intelligent or stupid? Then, is it another than God who decides as to people of what caliber, good or and are to be created in a particular nation at a particular time, who would cause its rise or fall? If a person is not obdurate and stubborn, he will himself realize that no rational answer can be given to these questions on the basis of polytheism and atheism. Their rational answer is only one and it is this Man is wholly and entirely the creation of God; and when the truth is this, what right has this man, the creation of God, to claim freedom and independence as against his Creator, or serve another beside Him?

As it is for Tauhid, so it is with regard to the Hereafter too. Man is created from a germ which cannot be seen without a powerful microscope. This gene combines in the darkness of the mother's body with the ovum (female germ) which is like itself an insignificant microscopic germ. Then by their combination a tiny living cell comes into being, which is the starting-point of human life. This cell also is too small to be seen without a microscope. Allah develops this insignificant cell in the mother's womb for nine months or so into a living human, and when its development and formation becomes complete, the mother's body itself pushes it out to raise a storm in the world. All human beings have been born into the world in this very way and are witnessing day and night this phenomenon of the birth of human beings like themselves. After this, only a foolish person could assert that the God Who is creating human beings in this way today would not be able to create the human beings created by Himself in some other way tomorrow.

25That is, "Like yow birth yow death too, is under Our control. We decide as to who is to die in the mother's womb itself, who is to die soon after birth, and who is to die at a later stage. No power in the world can cause death to a person before the time appointed for his death by Us, nor can keep him alive after it even for a moment. The dying ones die in big hospitals even before the eyes of eminent doctors; and the doctors themselves also die at their appointed time. Never bas anyone been able to know the time of death in advance, nor has anyone been able to avert the approaching death, nor to find out as to how and where and by what means will a certain person die."

26That is, "Just as We were not powerless to create you in your present form and appearance, so also

We are not powerless to change the method of your creation and bring you into being in another form and shape with another set of qualities and characteristics. Today the method We have adopted for your creation is that conception takes place by your sperm then you arc gradually form and developed in your mother's womb, and then you are brought out as a child. This method of creation also has been devised by Us. But this is not the only method apart from which We may not he knowing, or may not be able to adopt, any other method. On the Day of Resurrection We can create you in the form of the man of the same age at which you died. Today We have set one particular measure for your sight and hearing and other faculties. But this is not the only measure that We have for man, which We may not have the power to change. On the Day of Resurrection We shall change it absolutely; so much so that you will be able to see and hear things which you cannot see and cannot hear here. Today your skin and your limbs and your eyes do not possess the power of speech. But, it is We Who have given the tongue the power of speech; so We are not powerless to cause your every limb and every part of the skin of yow body to speak by Our command on the Day of Resurrection. Today you live up to a certain age and then die. Your this living and dying also is controlled by a law ordained by Us. Tomorrow We can make another law to control yow life under which you may never die. Today you can endure punishment only to a certain extent: you cannot survive if the punishment is increased beyond it. This rule also has been made by Us. Tomorrow We can make another rule for you Under which you will be able to suffer much severer punishments endlessly, and death would not come to you even if you were given the severest torment. Today you cannot imagine that an old man could return to youth, that he could never become ill, that a young man could never be old, and, that he could stay young for ever and ever. But youth here changes into old age according to the biological laws made by Us. Tomorrow We can make some other laws for your life under which every old man may become young as soon as he entered Paradise and stay young and healthy eternally.

27That is, "You already know how you were created in the first instance, how the sperm was transferred from the loins of the father by which you came into being, how you were nourished in the mother's womb, which was no less dark than the grave, and formed into a living human being, how an insignificant speak was developed and endowed with the heart and brain, eyes and ears, and hands and feet, and how it was blessed with the wonderful faculties of intellect and sense, knowledge and wisdom, workmanship and inventiveness, etc. Is this miracle in any way less wonderful than raising the dead back to life ? And when you are witnessing this wonderful miracle with your own eyes and are yourselves a living evidence of it in the world, why don't you then learn the lesson that the same God Who by His power is causing this miracle to take place day and night, can also cause the miracle of life after death, Resurrection and Hell and Heaven to take place by the same power?"

28The above question drew the people's attention to the truth that they have been developed and nourished by Allah Almighty and have come into being by His act of creation. Now this second question draws their attention to this important truth that the provisions which sustain them, are also created only by Allah for them, as if to say: "Just as in your own creation human effort has nothing more to do than that your father may cast the sperm in your mother, so in the supply of the provisions for you also human

effort has nothing more to do than that the farmer should sow the seed in the soil. The land in which cultivation is done, was not made by you. The power of growth to the soil was not granted by you. The substances in it that become the means of your food are not provided by you. The seed that you sow is not made capable for growth by you. The capability in every seed that from it should sprout up the tree of the same species of whose seed it is, has not been created by you. The process for changing this cultivation into blooming crops that is working under the soil and of arranging the required kind of weather and air and water above it does not owe anything in any way to your planning and skill. All this is the manifestation of Allah's power and providence. Then, when you have come into being only by His act of creation and are being sustained by His provision, how can you then have the right to pose yourself as independent of Him, or save another than Him as your deity?

Although apparently this verse reasons out Tauhid, yet if one considers its theme a little more deeply, one finds in it the argument for the Hereafter, too. The seed that is sown in the soil is by itself dead, but when the farmer buries it under the soil, Allah infuses it with plant life, which puts out sprouts and blooms into spring. Thus, these countless bodies are rising from the dead in front of our eyes daily. Is this miracle in any way loss wonderful so that a person may regard the other wonderful miracle of the life hereafter, which is being foretold by the Qur'an, as impossible?

29That is, "We have not only made arrangements of satisfying your hunger, but also of satisfying your thirst, This water that is even more essential for your life than bread has been arranged by Us, not by you The seas in the earth have been created by Us. It is the heat of Our sun that causes their water to evaporate, and it is Our winds that cause the vapors to rise. Then it is by Our power and wisdom that the vapors collect and form into clouds. Then, by Our command the clouds divide in a particular proportion and spread over different regions of the earth so that the share of the water appointed for a particular region, should reach it. And in the upper atmosphere also We bring about the cool that causes the vapors to change back into water We have not only brought you into being but are also busy making all these arrangements for your sustenance without which you could not survive at all. Then, when the fact is that you have come into being by Our act of creation, arc eating Our provisions and drinking Our water, where from have you got the right that you should pose to be independent of Us and serve another beside Us?"

30In this sentence an important manifestation of Allah's power and wisdom has been pointed out. Among the wonderful properties that Allah has created in water one property also is that no matter what different substances are dissolved in water, when it changes into vapor under the effect of heat, it leaves behind all adulterations and evaporates only with its original and actual component elements. Had it not possessed this property the dissolved substances also would have evaporated along with the water vapors. In this case the vapors that arise from the oceans would have contained the sea salt, which would have made the soil saline and uncultivable wherever it rained. Then, neither could man have survived by drinking that water, nor could it help grow any vegetation. Now, can a man possessed of any common sense claim that this wise property in water has come about by itself under some blind and deaf law of nature? This characteristic by virtue of which sweet, pure water is distilled from saltish seas and

falls as rain, and then serves as a source of water-supply and irrigation in the form of rivers, canals, springs and wells, provides a clear proof of the fact that the Providence has endowed water with this property thoughtfully and deliberately for the purpose that it may become a means of sustenance for His creatures. The creatures that could be sustained by salt water were created by Him in the sea and there they flourish and multiply. But the creatures that He created on the land and in the air, stood in need of sweet water for their sustenance and before making arrangement of the rainfall for its supply He created this property in water that at evaporation it should rise clear and free of everything dissolved in it.

31In other words, "Why do you commit this ingratitude in that some of you regard the rainfall as a favor of the gods, and some others think that the rising of the clouds from the sea and their raining as water is a natural cycle that is working by itself, and still others, while acknowledging it as a mercy and blessing of God, do not admit that God has any such right on them that they should bow to Him alone? How is it that while you derive so much benefit from this great blessing of Allah, in return you commit sins of disbelief and polytheism and disobedience of Him?"

32The tree here either implies the tree that supplies wood for lighting a fire, or the trees of markh and 'afar, green sticks of which were struck one against the other to produce sparks in ancient Arabia.

33Making the fire "a means of remembrance" means; "The fire by virtue of its quality of being kindled at, all times reminds man of his forgotten lesson that without it human life could not be any different from animal life. Because of the fire only did man learn to cook food for eating instead of eating it raw like the animals, and then new and ever new avenues to industry and invention went on opening up before him. Obviously, if God had not created the means of kindling the fire and the substances that could be kindled, man's inventive potentialities would have remained dormant. But the man has forgotten that his Creator is a wise Sustainer, Who created him with human capabilities on the one hand, and on the other, created such materials on the earth by which his these capabilities could become active and operative. If he is not lost in Heedlessness, the fire alone is enough to remind him of the favors and bounties of his Creator, which he is so freely enjoying in the world."

34The word muqwin in the original has been interpreted differently by the lexicographers. Some have taken it in the meaning of the travelers who have halted in the desert, some in the meaning of a hungry man, and some take it in the meaning of all those who derive benefit from the fire, whether it is the benefit of cooking food or of light or of heat.

35That is, "Mention His blessed name and proclaim that He is free from and far above the defects and faults and weaknesses that the pagans and polytheists ascribe to Him, and which underlie every creed of disbelief and every argument that is presented by the deniers of the Hereafter. "

36That is, "The truth is not what you seem to think it is." Here, the use of the word la (nay) before

swearing an oath by the Qur'an's being Allah's Revelation by itself shows that the oath has been sworn to refute certain objections that the disbelievers wen raising with regard to the Qur'an.

37"The positions of the stars" : the positions and phases and orbits of the stars and planets. The oath implies that just as the system of the celestial bodies is firm and stable, so also is this Divine Word firm and stable. The same God Who has coated that system has also sent down this Word. Just as there exists perfect. consistency and harmony among the countless stars and planets found in the countless galaxies of the Universe, whereas apparently they seem to be scattered, so also this Book presents a perfectly consistent, and systematic code of life in which detailed guidance has been given, on the basis of belief, about morals, modes of worship, civilization and culture, economic and social life, law and justice, peace and war, in short, about every aspect of human life, and there is nothing out of harmony with the other, whereas this system of thought has been expressed in scattered verses and discourses given on different occasions. Then, just as the system of the heavens set and planned by God is stable and unalterable, and does not ever admit of the slightest variation, so also are the truths and instructions given , in this Book stable and unalterable: no part of these can be changed or displaced in any way.

38This implies the well-guarded Tablet (leuh-mahfuz). For it the word Kitab maknun has been used, which means a writing kept hidden, i.e. a writing that is inaccessible to all. The Qur'an's having been inscribed in this well guarded Book means that before its being sent down to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) it lay inscribed in the Divine Writ of Destiny in which three is no possibility of any alteration or corruption taking place, for it is inaccessible to every kind of creation. The Meaning of the Qur'an.

39This is a refutation of the accusation that the disbelievers used to loud against the Qur'an. They regarded the Holy Prophet as a sorcerer and asserted that he was being inspired with the Word by the jinn and satans. An answer to it has been given at several places in the Qur'an, e.g. in Surah Ash-Shu'ara', where it has been said: "This (lucid Book) has not beer brought down by satans, nor does this work behoove them, nor arc they able to do it. They have indeed been kept out of its hearing." (vv. 210-212). The same theme has been expressed here, Saying: 'None but the purified can touch it." That is to say "Not to speak of its being brought down by the satans, or its being tampered within any way when it is being revealed, none but the pure angels can come anywhere near it when it is being revealed from the well-guarded Tablet (Lauh-mahfuz; : to the Prophet. " The word mutahharin has been used for the angels in the sense that Allah has kept them free of every kind of impure feeling and desire. This same commentary of this verse has been given by Anas bin Malik, Ibn 'Abbas, Sa'id bin Jubair, 'Ikrimah, Mujahid, Qatadah, Abul 'Aliyah, Suddi, Dahhak and Ibn Zaid, and the same also fits in with the context. For the context itself shows that after refuting the false concepts of the Makkan disbelievers about Tauhid and the Hereafter, now their false accusations against the Qur'an are being answered, and by swearing an oath by the positions of the stars, it is being stated that the Qur'an is an exalted Book, which is inscribed in the well-guarded Divine Writ, in which there is no possibility of any interference by any creation, and it is revealed to the Prophet in such a safe way that none but the pure angels can touch it.

Some commentators have taken la in this verse in the sense of prohibition, and have interpreted the verse to mean: "None who is unclean should touch it. " Although some other commentators take la in the sense of negation and interpret the verse to mean: "None but the clean and pure touch this Book," they express the opinion that this negation is a prohibition in the same way as the Holy Prophet's saying is a prohibition: "A Muslim is a brother of a Muslim: he does not treat him unjustly." Although in it, it has been said that a Muslim does not treat the other Muslim unjustly, you it enjoins that a Muslim is not to treat the other Muslim unjustly. Likewise, although in this verse it has been state that none but the clean and pure angels touch this Book, yet it enjoins that unless a person is purified, he should not touch it.

The fact, however, is that this commentary does not conform to the context of the verse. Independent of the context, one may take this meaning from its words, but if considered in the context in which the verse occurs, one does not sec any ground for saying that "None is to touch this Book except the clean and purified people. " For the addressees here are the disbelievers and they arc being told, as if to say: `This Book has been sent down by Allah Lord of the worlds. Therefore, your suspicion that the satans inspire the Prophet with it, is wrong. " What could be the occasion here to enunciate the Shari'ah injunction that no one should touch it without purification? The most that one could say in this regard is that although this verse has not been sent down to enjoin this command, yet the context points out that just as only the purified (mutahharin) can touch this Book in the presence of Allah, so in the world also the people who at least believe in its being Divine Word should avoid touching it in the impure and unclean state.

The following are the traditions that bear upon this subject:

(1) Imam Malik has related in Mu' atta this tradition on the authority of 'Abdullah bin Abi Bakr Muhammad bin 'Amr bin Hazm: "The written instructions that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had sent to the Yarnanite chiefs by the hand of 'Amr bin Hazm contained this instruction also: La yamass-ul Qur an a illa tahir-un. No one should touch the Qur'an except the pure one." This same thing has been related by Abu Da'ud from Imam Zuhri in the Traditions which are immediately traced to the Holy Prophet (marasil), saying that the writing that he had seen with Abu Bakr Muhammad bin 'Amr bin Hazm contained this instruction as well.

(2) The traditions from Hadrat 'Ali in which he says: 'Nothing prevented the Holy Prophet of Allah from reciting the Qur'an but the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse." (Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi).

(3) The tradition of Ibn 'Umar in which he states: "The Holy Messenger of Allah said: The menstruating woman and the one who is unclean on account of sexual intercourse should not read any portion of the Qur'an. " (Abu Da'ud. Tirmidhi).

(4) The tradition of Bukhari in which it has been said that the letter which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) sent to Heraclius, the Roman emperor, also contained this verse of the Qur'an: Ya ahl al-Kitab-

i to 'alau ila kalimat-in sawaa'un bainana wa baina-kum .. .

The views that have been related from the Holy Prophet's Companions and their immediate followers are as follows:

Salman, the Persian, saw no harm in reading the Qur'an without the ablutions, but even according to him touching the Qur'an with the hand in this state was not permissible. The same also was the view of Hadrat Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar. And Hadrat Hasan Basri and Ibrahim Nakha'i also regarded touching the Qur'an with the hand without the ablutions as disapproved, (AI-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur an)). The same has been reported from 'Ata', Ta'us, Sha'bi and Qasim bin Muhammad also. (Ibn Qudamah, Al-Mughni). However, according to all of them, reading the Qur'an without touching it with the hand, or reciting it from memory, was permissible even without the ablutions.

Hadrat 'Umar, Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat Hasan Basri. Hadrat Ibrahim Nakha'i and Imam Zuhri regarded reading the Qur'an in the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse and menstruation and bleeding after childbirth as disapproved. But Ibn 'Abbas held the view, and the same also was his practice, that one could recite from memory the portion of the Qur'an that one usually recited as one's daily practice. When Hadrat Sa'id bin al-Musayyab and Sa`id bin Jubair were asked about their view in this regard, they replied: "Is not the Qur'an preserved in the memory of such a person ? What then is the harm in reciting it ?" (AI-Mughni, .9l-Muhalla by Ibn Hazm).

The following are the viewpoints of the jurists on this subject:

The Hanafi viewpoint has been explained by Imam `Ala-'uddin al-Kashani in his Bada I as-Sana i, thus "lust as it is not permissible to offer the Prayer without the ablutions, so also it is not permissible to touch the Qur'an without the ablutions, However, if the Qur'an is in a cast or a cover, it may be touched. " According to some jurists, the case or cover implies the binding, and according to others, the bag or the envelope or the wrapper in which the Qur'an is kept and can also be taken out. Likewise, the books of the commentary also should not be touched without the ablutions, nor anything else in which a Qur'anic verse may have been written. However, the books of Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) may be touched although preferably they too may not be touched without the ablutions, for they also contain Qur'anic verses as part of argument and reasoning. Some Hanafi jurists hold the opinion that only that part of the Qur'an where the Text may have been written should not be touched without the ablutions. As for the margins there is no harm in touching it, whether they are blank or contain notes on the Text. The .correct thing, however, is that the margins also are a part of the Book and touching them amounts to touching the Book. As for reading the Qur'an, it is permissible without the ablutions. " In Fatawa 'Alamgiri children have been made an exception from this rule. The Qur'an can be given in the children's hand for teaching purposes whether they are in the state of ablutions or not..

The Shafi'i viewpoint has been stated by Imam Nawawi in Al-Minhaj, thus, "As it is for the Prayer and the

circumambulation of the Ka'bah, it is also forbidden to handle the Qur'an or to touch a leaf of it without the ablutions. Likewise, it is also forbidden w touch the binding of the Qur'an, and also a bag, or a bow containing the Qur'an, or a tablet on which a part of the Qur'an may have been written for instructional purposes. However, it is lawful to touch the baggage of a person containing the Qur'anic inscription. A child may touch the Qur'an without the ablutions, and a person without ablutions may turn over a leaf with a piece of wood, or something else, if he wants to read the Qur'an.

The Maliki position as stated in Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhahib al- Arbah is: They concur with the other jurists in this that the state of ablutions is a prerequisite for touching the Qur'an, but in the matter of imparting instruction in the Qur'an they make both the teacher and the taught an exception from the rule, and allow even a menstruating woman to touch the Qur'an if she is engaged in learning or teaching it. Ibn Qadamah has cited in Al-Mughni this saying of Imam Malik: Although reading the Qur'an in the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse is forbidden, the woman who is discharging the menses is permitted to read it, for she would forget her recitations if prohibited from reading the Qur'an for along time. The Hanbali viewpoint as stated by Ibn Qadamah is as follows: In the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse and menstruation and bleeding after childbirth it is not permissible to read the Qur'an or any complete verse of it. However, it is permissible to recite bismillah, al-hamdu-lillah, etc. for although these also are parts of one or the other verse, their recitation does not amount to recitation of the Qur'an. As for handling the Qur'an, it is not permissible in any case without the ablutions. However, one is not forbidden to touch a letter, or a book of Fiqh, or some other writing containing a Qur'anic verse. Likewise, one may handle even without the ablutions, something that contains the Qur'an. The state of ablutions is also no pre-requisite for .handling the books of exegesis. Furthermore, if a person who is not in the state of ablutions is required to handle the Qur'an under an immediate need, he may do so after purification with the dust (tayammum). " Al-Fiqh `alal-Madhahib al- `Arabah contains this ruling also of the Hanbali Fiqh: It is not right for the children to handle the Qur'an without ablutions even when receiving instruction in it, and it is the duty of their guardians to make them perform the ablutions before they give the Qur'an to them.

The Zahiri viewpoint is that reading the Qur'an and handling it is permissible under all conditions, whether one is without the ablutions, or unclean due to sexual intercourse, or even if the woman is menstruating. Ibn Hazm has discussed this question fully in Al-Muhalla (vol. 1, pp. 77-84) and given arguments for the validity of this viewpoint and has concluded that none of the conditions laid down by the jurists for reading the Qur'an and handling it, is supported by the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

40Literally, idhan (from which mudhinun of the Text is derived) means to treat something with contempt, to deny its due importance, to regard it as unworthy of serious attention, to hold it in light esteem.

41In his commentary of taj `aluna rizqa-kum, Imam Razi has expressed the view that probably the word rizq here means livelihood. Since the disbelieving Qaraish regarded the message of the Qur'an as harmful to their economic interests and feared that if it succeeded it would deprive them of their means of livelihood, the verse may also mean this: "You have made the denial of this Qur'an a question of your

economic interests, and for you the question of the right and wrong is of no consequence; the only thing of real importance in your sight is the bread for the sake of which you would least hesitate to oppose the truth and adhere to the falsehood."

42Hadrat `Uqbah bin `Amir Juhni relates that when this verse was sent down the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) commanded that the people put it in their ruku`, i.e. they should recite Subhana Rabbi -yal-`Azim in ruku ' position in the Prayer. And when the verse Sabbih-ismi-Rabb-i- kal-A'la was Sent down, he enjoined that they put it in their sajdah, i.e. they should recite Subhana Rabb-i -yal-a na in sajdah. (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, Hakim). This show that even the most minor details of the procedure enjoined by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) for the Prayer are derived from the allusions given in the Qur'an.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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57. Surah Al Hadid (The Iron)

Name

The Surah takes its title from the sentence, *Wa anzalna' l-hadida*, of verse 25.

Period of Revelation

This is unanimously a Madani Surah, and a study of its subject matter shows that it was probably sent down some time during the interval between the Battle of Uhud and the Truce of Hudaibiyah. This was the time when the tiny Islamic State of Madinah had been hemmed in by the disbelievers and the handful of the ill equipped Muslims were entrenched against the combined power of entire Arabia. In this state Islam not only stood in need of the sacrifice of Life from its followers, but it also needed monetary help and assistance. In this Surah a forceful appeal has been made for the same. This view is further strengthened by verse 10 in which Allah has addressed the believers to the effect "Those of you who would spend and fight after the victory can never be equal to those who have spent and fought before the victory." And the same is supported by the traditions that Ibn Marduyah has related on the authority of Hadrat Anas. In respect of the verse: *Alam ya'n-i lilladhina aamanu an takhsha'a qulubu-hum li-dhikrillah-i*, he says that 17 years after the commencement of the revelation of the Qur'an this verse was sent down to arouse the believers to action. Reckoned thus the period of the revelation of this Surah falls between the 4th and the 5th year after the *hijrah*.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of this Surah is to exhort the Muslims to spend in the cause of Allah. At the most critical juncture of the history of Islam when it was engaged in a life and death struggle against Arab paganism, this Surah was revealed to persuade the Muslim's to make monetary sacrifices in particular, and to make them realize that Islam did not merely consist in verbal affirmation and some outward practices but its essence and spirit is sincerity towards Allah and His Religion. The faith of the one who was devoid of this spirit and who regarded his own self and wealth as dearer to himself than Allah and His Religion, was hollow and therefore of little worth in the sight of Allah.

For this object, first the attributes of Allah Almighty have been mentioned so that the listeners may fully realize as to Who is addressing them. Then, the following themes have been expressed in sequence:

1. The inevitable demand of the Faith is that one should not shirk spending one's wealth for the sake of Allah. This would not only be contrary to the Faith but also wrong realistically. For the wealth indeed belongs to Allah, on which man has been given proprietary rights only as His vicegerent. Yesterday this wealth was in other people's possession today it is with one particular man, and tomorrow it will pass into some one else's hand. Ultimately, it will go back to Allah, Who is the inheritor of everything in the universe. Only that much of this wealth will be of any use to a man, which he spends in the cause of Allah during the period it is in his possession.

2. Although making sacrifices for the sake of Allah is commendable in any case, the true worth of these sacrifices is determined by the nature of the occasion. There is an occasion when the power of paganism is overwhelming and there is a danger that it might subdue and overcome Islam completely; there is another occasion when Islam is in a stronger position in its struggle against un-Islam and the believers are attaining victories. Both these states are not equal as regards their respective importance. Therefore, the sacrifices that are made in these different states would also not be equal. Those who sacrifice their lives and expend their wealth to further promote the cause of Islam when it is already strong cannot attain to the rank of those who struggled with their lives and their wealth to promote and uphold the cause of Islam when it was weak.

3. Whatever is spent for the cause of the Truth is a loan on Allah, and Allah will not only return it increasing it manifold but will also give from Himself the best reward for it.

4. In the Hereafter the Light shall be bestowed only on those believers who would have spent their wealth in the cause of Allah. As for the hypocrites who watched and served only their own interests in the world, and who least bothered whether the Truth or falsehood prevailed will be segregated from the believers in the Hereafter although they might have lived in close association with them in the world. They will be deprived of the Light, and they will be counted among the disbelievers.

5. The Muslims should not behave like those followers of the earlier Books, whose lives have been. spent in the worship of the world and whose hearts have become hardened due to negligence with the passage of time. He cannot be a believer whose heart does not melt at the remembrance of Allah and does not bow to the Truth sent down by Him.

6. The sincere upholders of the Truth and the true witnesses of the Faith in the sight of Allah are only those believers who spend their wealth in His way sincerely, without any desire of show.

7. The life of this world is only a short lived spring and a means of pride and show. Its sports and pastimes, its adornments and decorations, its pride of place, its wealth and possessions, for which the people try to vie with one another, are transient. Its likeness is of the crop which flourishes and blooms, then turns pale and then finally is reduced to chaff. The everlasting life is the life hereafter when results of great consequence will be announced. Therefore, if one has to vie with another for something, one should strive for Paradise.

8. Whatever good man meets with and whatever hardship he suffers in the world, are pre-ordained by Allah. A true believer is he who does not lose heart in affliction and is not puffed up with pride in good times. It is the character of a hypocrite and disbeliever that he is puffed up with pride when Allah favors him with His blessings, behaved boastfully and shows stinginess when called upon to spend in the cause of the same God Who blessed him, and also counsels others to be stingy like himself.

9. Allah sent His Messengers with clear signs and the Book and the Law of Justice so that the people may adhere to justice; besides, He sent down iron also so that power may be used to establish the Truth and vanquish falsehood. Thus, Allah likes to see as to who from among the people would rise to support and succor His true Religion even at the risk of their lives. These opportunities Allah has created for man's own advantage and development; otherwise Allah does not stand in need of others for His works.

10. Prophets came from Allah in the past, and by their preaching some people adopted the Right Path, but most of them persisted in wickedness. Then the Prophet Jesus came, whose teachings brought about many moral improvements in the lives of the people, but his community invented monasticism. Now Allah has sent the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings). Those who affirm faith in him and pass their life fearing Allah's accountability, will be given by Allah a double share of His mercy and He will bless them with the Light by which they will see and walk the straight path among the crooked paths met with at every step in the life of this world. Although the followers of the earlier revelation regard themselves as the monopolists of Allah's bounties, the fact remains that Allah Himself controls His bounties He may bless with these whomever He pleases.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١﴾

لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

﴿٢﴾

هُوَ ٱلۡأَوَّلُ وَٱلۡأٓخِرُ وَٱلظَّـٰهِرُ وَٱلۡبَاطِنُۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] All that there is in the heavens and the earth has glorified Allah[1] and He alone is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[2] To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth: He alone grants life and causes death and has power over everything. He is the First as well as the Last, the Manifest as well as the Hidden,[3] and He has knowledge of everything.

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسۡتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلۡعَرۡشِۚ
يَعۡلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا يَخۡرُجُ مِنۡهَا وَمَا يَنزِلُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا
يَعۡرُجُ فِيهَاۖ وَهُوَ مَعَكُمۡ أَيۡنَ مَا كُنتُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾

لَّهُۥ مُلۡكُ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرۡجَعُ ٱلۡأُمُورُ ﴿٥﴾

يُولِجُ ٱلَّيۡلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيۡلِۚ وَهُوَ عَلِيمُۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ
﴿٦﴾

[4-6] It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then ascended the Throne.[4] He knows whatever ever goes into the earth and whatever comes out of it, and whatever comes down from heaven and whatever goes up into it.[5] He is with you wherever you may be[6] and sees whatever you do. To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and all matters are referred to Him for decision It is He who causes the night to enter into the day and the day to enter into the night and He knows the hidden-most secrets of the hearts.

ءَامِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَأَنفِقُواْ مِمَّا جَعَلَكُم مُّسۡتَخۡلَفِينَ فِيهِۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ مِنكُمۡ وَأَنفَقُواْ لَهُمۡ أَجۡرٞ كَبِيرٞ ٧

وَمَا لَكُمۡ لَا تُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولُ يَدۡعُوكُمۡ لِتُؤۡمِنُواْ بِرَبِّكُمۡ وَقَدۡ أَخَذَ
مِيثَٰقَكُمۡ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ٨

هُوَ ٱلَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ عَلَىٰ عَبۡدِهِۦٓ ءَايَٰتِۭ بَيِّنَٰتٖ لِّيُخۡرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى
ٱلنُّورِۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُمۡ لَرَءُوفٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٩

وَمَا لَكُمۡ أَلَّا تُنفِقُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ
مِيرَٰثُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ لَا يَسۡتَوِي مِنكُم مَّنۡ أَنفَقَ مِن
قَبۡلِ ٱلۡفَتۡحِ وَقَٰتَلَۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَعۡظَمُ دَرَجَةٗ مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنفَقُواْ مِنۢ بَعۡدُ
وَقَٰتَلُواْۚ وَكُلّٗا وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ خَبِيرٞ ١٠

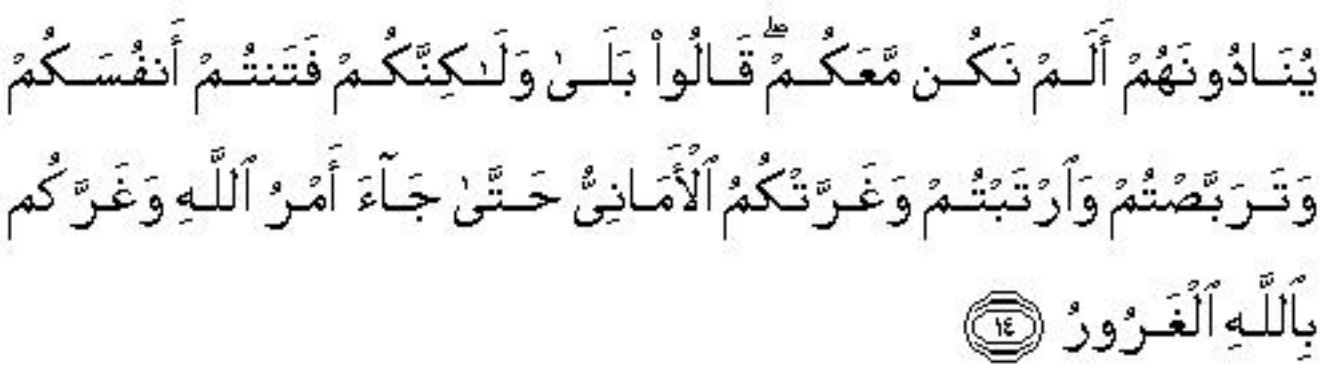
[7-10] Believe in Allah and His Messenger[7] and spend out[8] of what He has made you successor.[9] For those of you who will believe and expend of their wealth[10] there is a great reward What is the matter with you that you do not believe in Allah, whereas the Messenger is inviting you to believe in your Lord[11] and has taken a pact from you,[12] if

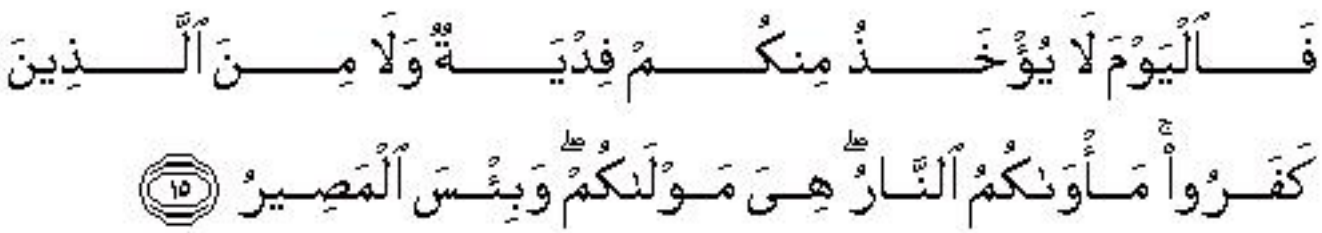
you are true believers? Allah it is Who is sending down clear Revelations to His servants that he may bring you out of the darknesses into the light. And the fact is that Allah is most Kind and Most Merciful to you. What is the matter with you that you do not spend in the Way of Allah, whereas Allah's is the inheritance of the heavens and the earth? [13] Those of you who will spend and fight after the victory can never be equal to those who have spent and fought before the victory. They are higher in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards, though Allah has made good promises to both.[14] Allah is well aware of whatever you do.[15]

مَّن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يُقۡرِضُ ٱللَّهَ قَرۡضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَٰعِفَهُۥ لَهُۥ
وَلَهُۥٓ أَجۡرٞ كَرِيمٞ ﴿١١﴾

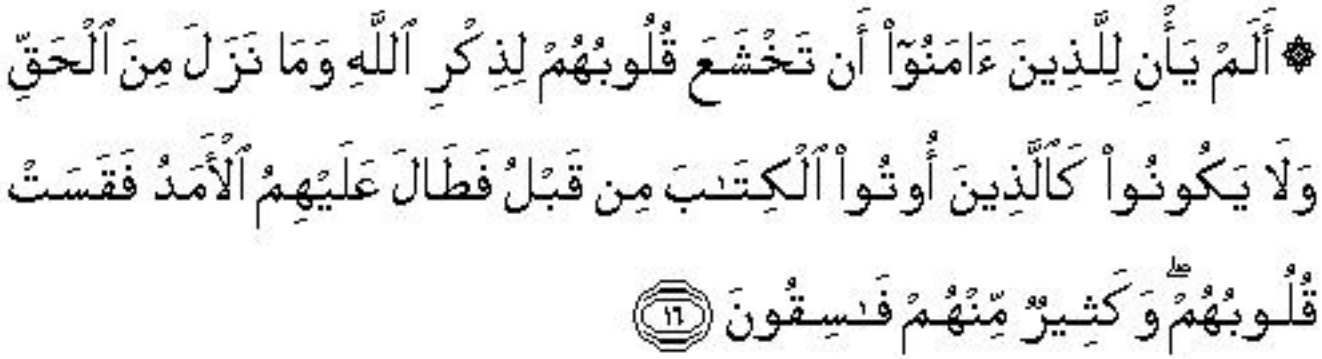
يَوۡمَ تَرَى ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنَٰتِ يَسۡعَىٰ نُورُهُم بَيۡنَ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَبِأَيۡمَٰنِهِم
بُشۡرَىٰكُمُ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ جَنَّٰتٞ تَجۡرِى مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَاۚ
ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢﴾

يَوۡمَ يَقُولُ ٱلۡمُنَٰفِقُونَ وَٱلۡمُنَٰفِقَٰتُ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱنظُرُونَا نَقۡتَبِسۡ مِن
نُّورِكُمۡ قِيلَ ٱرۡجِعُواْ وَرَآءَكُمۡ فَٱلۡتَمِسُواْ نُورٗا فَضُرِبَ بَيۡنَهُم بِسُورٖ لَّهُۥ
بَابُۢ بَاطِنُهُۥ فِيهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَةُ وَظَٰهِرُهُۥ مِن قِبَلِهِ ٱلۡعَذَابُ ﴿١٣﴾


يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ
وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانِيُّ حَتَّىٰ جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُم
بِاللَّهِ الْغَرُورُ ﴿١٤﴾


فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَلَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا ۚ مَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ ۖ هِيَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾

[11-15] Who is he who will give to Allah a loan? A good loan, so that Allah may return it manifold, and he shall have the best reward.[16] That Day when you see the believing men and women, with their light running on before them and on their right hand,[17] (it will be said to them:) "There is good news for you today!" There will be Gardens underneath which rivers will be flowing, in which they shall live for ever, This is the supreme success. On that Day the hypocrites, men and women, will say to the believers, "Look towards us awhile so that we may benefit by your light."[18] But it will be said to them, "Go away, seek your light elsewhere." Then a well shall be set up between them with a gate in it. Within the gate shall be mercy and outside of it torment.[19] They will cry out to the believers and say, "Were we not with you?"[20] The believers will reply, "Yes, but you led yourselves into temptation,[21] served the time,[22] entertained doubts,[23] and false hopes deluded you until Allah's Judgment came,[24] and the great deceiver[25] deceived you concerning Allah till the last moment. Therefore, no ransom shall be accepted from you today nor from those who disbelieved openly[26] Your abode is Hell: that will be your patron.[27] and this is an evil end."


۞ أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَن تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ
وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ
قُلُوبُهُمْ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

ٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحۡيِ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَاۚ قَدۡ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ ٱلۡأٓيَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمۡ

تَعۡقِلُونَ ١٧

[16-17] Has not the time yet arrived for the believers that their hearts should melt with the remembrance of Allah and should submit to the Truth sent down by Him,[28] and they should not be like those who were given the Book before them, and long ages passed over them and their hearts became hardened and today most of them are sinners?[29] Know it well that Allah gives life to the earth after its death. We have shown you the signs clearly: may .be that you use your common sense.[30]

إِنَّ ٱلۡمُصَّدِّقِينَ وَٱلۡمُصَّدِّقَٰتِ وَأَقۡرَضُواْ ٱللَّهَ قَرۡضًا حَسَنٗا يُضَٰعَفُ لَهُمۡ

وَلَهُمۡ أَجۡرٞ كَرِيمٞ ١٨

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦٓ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلصِّدِّيقُونَۖ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءُ

عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ لَهُمۡ أَجۡرُهُمۡ وَنُورُهُمۡۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَكَذَّبُواْ

بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡجَحِيمِ ١٩

[18-19] Surely those from among men and women who practice charity[31] and who have lent to Allah a good loan, shall be repaid manifold, and for them there is a generous reward. And those who have believed in Allah and His Messengers,[32] are indeed the most truthful[33] and the true witnesses[34] in the sight of their Lord. For them is their reward and their light.[35] As for those who have disbelieved and denied Our Revelations, they are the dwellers of Hell.

ٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّمَا ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا لَعِبٞ وَلَهۡوٞ وَزِينَةٞ وَتَفَاخُرُۢ بَيۡنَكُمۡ وَتَكَاثُرٞ
فِي ٱلۡأَمۡوَٰلِ وَٱلۡأَوۡلَٰدِۖ كَمَثَلِ غَيۡثٍ أَعۡجَبَ ٱلۡكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُۥ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَىٰهُ
مُصۡفَرّٗا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَٰمٗاۖ وَفِي ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ عَذَابٞ شَدِيدٞ وَمَغۡفِرَةٞ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَرِضۡوَٰنٞۚ وَمَا ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَآ إِلَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلۡغُرُورِ ٢٠

سَابِقُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرۡضُهَا كَعَرۡضِ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ
أُعِدَّتۡ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضۡلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤۡتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُۚ
وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلۡفَضۡلِ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٢١

[20-21] Know it well that the life of this world is nothing but a sport and pastime, and a show and boasting among yourselves and a rivalry in wealth and children. Its example is of vegetation after a shower of rain, which delighted the tillers, then the same ripens and you see it turn yellow, then it becomes straw. Contrary to this, in the life to come there is severe torment and forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure. The life of this world is nothing but illusion.[36] Therefore, strive in rivalry with one another[37] in hastening towards the Paradise the vastness of which is like the vastness of the heavens and earth,[38] prepared for those who have believed in Allah and His Messengers. This is Allah's bounty which He bestows on whomever He wills, and Allah's bounty is immense!

مَآ أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٖ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَا فِيٓ أَنفُسِكُمۡ إِلَّا فِي كِتَٰبٖ مِّن قَبۡلِ أَن
نَّبۡرَأَهَآۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٞ ٢٢

لِّكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا
ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبُخْلِ ۗ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ
ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٤﴾

[22-24] No affliction befalls in the earth or in your own selves, which We have not recorded in a Book[39] before bringing it into being.[40] This is an easy thing for Allah,[41] (This' is done so that) you are not disheartened over what you may lose nor feel exultant over what Allah may give you.[42] Allah does not love those who are arrogant and boastful, who are themselves stingy and also urge others to be stingy.[43] Now whosoever turns away (should know that) Allah is All-Sufficient and All-Praiseworthy.[44]

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ
لِيَقُومَ ٱلنَّاسُ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ وَأَنزَلْنَا ٱلْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَٰفِعُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥ وَرُسُلَهُۥ بِٱلْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

[25] We sent Our Messengers with clear signs and instructions and sent down with them the Book and the Balance so that the people may stand by justice.[45] And We sent down iron which has great strength and other benefits for men.[46] This has been done so that Allah may know who helps Him and His Messengers, unseen. Surely, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.[47]

وَلَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا نُوحًا وَإِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَجَعَلۡنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا ٱلنُّبُوَّةَ وَٱلۡكِتَٰبَۖ فَمِنۡهُم مُّهۡتَدٖۖ وَكَثِيرٞ مِّنۡهُمۡ فَٰسِقُونَ ٢٦

ثُمَّ قَفَّيۡنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَّيۡنَا بِعِيسَى ٱبۡنِ مَرۡيَمَ وَءَاتَيۡنَٰهُ ٱلۡإِنجِيلَ وَجَعَلۡنَا فِي قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُ رَأۡفَةٗ وَرَحۡمَةٗ وَرَهۡبَانِيَّةً ٱبۡتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبۡنَٰهَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ إِلَّا ٱبۡتِغَآءَ رِضۡوَٰنِ ٱللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوۡهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَاۖ فَـَٔاتَيۡنَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنۡهُمۡ أَجۡرَهُمۡۖ وَكَثِيرٞ مِّنۡهُمۡ فَٰسِقُونَ ٢٧

[26-27] We[48] sent Noah and Abraham and placed in the progeny of them both the Prophethood and the Book.[49] Then some of their descendants adopted guidance but many became transgressors.[50] After them We sent Our Messengers, one after the other and followed them with Jesus son of Mary and gave him the Gospel, and We put in the hearts of those who followed him, compassion and mercy,[51] but monasticism[52] they themselves invented. We did not prescribe it for them. They invented it themselves[53] in order to seek Allah's good will. But then they did not observe it as it should have been observed.[54] We gave those of them who had believed their rewards, but most of them are transgressors.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَءَامِنُواْ بِرَسُولِهِۦ يُؤۡتِكُمۡ كِفۡلَيۡنِ مِن رَّحۡمَتِهِۦ وَيَجۡعَل لَّكُمۡ نُورٗا تَمۡشُونَ بِهِۦ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ ٢٨

لِّئَلَّا يَعْلَمَ أَهْلُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ أَلَّا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ مِّن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَنَّ ٱلْفَضْلَ
بِيَدِ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٩﴾

[28-29] O you who have believed, fear Allah and believe in His Messenger (Muhammad, upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).[55] Allah will grant you a double portion of His mercy and will give you a light in which you will walk,[56] and will forgive your errors.[57] Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful. (You should adopt this way) so that the people of the Book may know that they do not have the sole right to Allah's bounty, and that Allah's bounty is in His own hand, which He bestows on whomsoever He wills, and Allah's bounty is infinite.

1That is, "It has always been so that everything in the universe has proclaimed the truth that its Creator and Sustainer is free from every blemish and defect, every weakness, error and evil. He is glorified in His essence, He is glorified in His attributes, He is glorified in His works as well as His commands whether they relate to the creation, or to the religious law for mankind. Here sabbaha has been used in the past tense; at other places yusabbihu has been used which includes both the present and the future tenses. This would signify that every particle in the universe has always been extolling the glory of its Creator and Sustainer in the past, is doing at present and will continue to do the same in the future for ever and ever."

2That is, not only is He All-Mighty and All-Wist, but the truth is that He afoot is All-Mighty and All-Wise. The word 'Aziz signifies a mighty and powerful Being Whose decrees cannot be prevented by any power in the world from being enforced, Whom no one can oppose and resist, Who has to be obeyed by every one whether one likes it or not, Whose rebel cannot escape His accountability and punishment in any way; and Hakim signifies that whatever He does He does it wisely. His creation, His administration and rule, His commands and guidance, all are based on wisdom. None of His works is tarnished by any tract of folly or ignorance.

There is another fine point here, which one should fully understand. Seldom in the Qur'an has Allah's attribute of `Aziz (All-Mighty) been accompanied by His attributes of being Qawi (Strong), Mugtadir (Powerful), Jabber (Omnipotent), Dhuntiqam (Avenger) and the like, which only signify His absolute power, and this has been so only in places where the context demanded that the wicked and disobedient be warned of Allah's relentless punishment. Apart from such few places, wherever the word 'Aziz has been used for Allah, it has everywhere been accompanied by one Or other of His attributes of being Hakim (Wise), Alim (Knower), Rahim (Merciful), Ghafur (Forgiving), Wahhab (Generous) and Hamid (Praiseworthy). The reason is that if a being who wields un-limited power is at the same time foolish, ignorant, un-forgiving as well as stingy and devoid of character, its power and authority cannot but lead to injustice and wickedness Thus, wherever injustice and wickedness is being committed in the world, it is

only because the one who wields authority over Others, is either using his power un-wisely and foolishly, or he is merciless and hardhearted, or evil-minded and wicked. Wherever power is coupled with these evil traits of character, no good can be expected to result. That is why in the Holy Qur'an Allah's attribute of `Aziz has necessarily been accompanied by His attributes of being All-Wise and Knowing, Compassionate and Forgiving, Praiseworthy and Generous, so that man may know that the God Who is ruling this universe has, on the' one hand, such absolute power that no one, from the earth to the heavens, can prevent His decrees from being enforced, but, on the other, He is also AII-Wise: His each decision is based on perfect wisdom; He is also AII-Knowing whatever decision He makes, it precisely according to knowledge; He is also Compassionate: He does not use infinite power mercilessly; He is Forgiving as well: He does not punish His creatures for trifling faults, but overlooks their errors; He is also Generous: He does not treat His subjects stingily, but liberally and benevolently; and He is also Praiseworthy: He combines in Himself all praiseworthy virtues and excellences.

The full importance of this statement of the Qur'an can be better understood by those people who are aware of the discussions of the philosophy of politics and law on the question of sovereignty. Sovereignty connotes that the one who possesses it should wield un-limited power: there should be no internal and external power to change or modify his decision or prevent it from being enforced, and none should have any alternative but to obey him. At the mere concept of this infinite and un-limited power, man's common-sense necessarily demands that whoever attains to such power, should be faultless and perfect in knowledge and wisdom, for if the one holding this power is ignorant, merciless and evil, his sovereignty will inevitably lead to wickedness and corruption. That is why the philosophers who regarded a single man, or a man-made institution, or an assembly of men as the holder of this power, have had to presume that he or it would be infallible. But obviously, neither can un limited sovereignty be actually attained by a human power, nor is it possible for a king, or a parliament, or a nation, or a party that it may use the sovereignty attained by it in a limited circle faultlessly and harmlessly. The reason is that the wisdom that is wholly free of every trace of folly, and the knowledge that fully comprehends all the related truths, is not at all possessed even by entire mankind, not to speak of its being attain d by an individual, or an institution, or a nation. Likewise, as long as man is man, his being wholly free of and above selfishness, sensuality, fear, greed, desires, prejudice and sentimental love, anger and hate is also not possible. If a person ponders over these truths, he will realize that the Qur'an is indeed presenting here a correct and perfect view of sovereignty. It says that no one except Allah in this universe is possessor of absolute power, and with this unlimited power He alone is faultless, All-Wise and All-Knowing, Compassionate and Forgiving, and Praiseworthy and Generous in His dealings with Hid subjects.

3That is, "When there was nothing, He was, and when there will be nothing, He will be. He is the most Manifest of all the manifest, for whatever manifests itself in the world, does 50 only by His attributes and His works and His light. And He is the Most Hidden of all the hidden, for not only do the senses fail to perceive Him but the intellect and thought and imagination also cannot attain to His essence and reality. The best commentary in this regard are the words of a supplication of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). which Imam Ahmad, Muslim, Tirmidhi, and Baihaqi have related on the

authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, and Hafiz Abu Ya'la Mosuli in his Musnad on the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah:

"Antal Awwal, fa-laisa qablaka shai'in; wa Antal Akhir fa-laisa ba 'daka shai 'in; wa Antal Zahir, fa-laisa fauqaka shai in; wa Anfal Batin, fa laisa dunaka shai'in. " "You alone are the First; none is before You; You alone are the Last: none is after You; You alone are the Exalted none is above You; You alone are the Hidden: none is more hidden than You. "

Here, the question arises: How does this accord with the immortality and eternal life of the dwellrs of Paradise and Hell mentioned in the Qur'an when Allah alone is the Last and Eternal? Its answer has been provided by the Qur'an itself: "Everything is perishable except Allah Himself." (Al-Qasas: 88). In other words no creature is immortal in its personal capacity; if a thing exists or continuous to exist, it does so because Allah keeps it so, and can exist only by His letting it exist; otherwise in its own capacity everything is perishable except Allah, Immortality in Heaven and Hell will not be bestowed upon somebody because he is immortal by himself, but because Allah will grant him eternal life. The same is true of the angels: they are not immortal by themselves. When Allah willed they came into existence, and will continue to exist only as long as Her wills.

4That is, He alone is the Creator of the universe as well as Its Ruler. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 41, 42 of AI-A'raf, E.N.4 of Yunus, E.N.'s 2 to 5 of Ar-Ra'd, E.N,'s 11 to 15 of Ha Mim As-Sajdah).

5In other words, He is not only the Knower of the wholes but also of the parts. He knows each seed that goes under the layers of the soil, each leaf and bud that comes out of the soil, each rain-drop that falls from the sky, and each molecule of the vapor that ascends from the seas and lakes to the sky. He is aware of every seed lying anywhere under the soil. That is how He causes it to split and sprout up and develop. He is aware of how much vapor has risen from each different place and where it has reached. That is how he collects it into cloud and distributes it and causes it to fall as rain in due measure on different place of the earth. The same is true of the details of everything that goes into the earth and comes out of it, and of everything that ascends to the sky and descends from it. If all this were not comprehended by Allah in His knowledge, it would not be possible for Him to plan and order each thing separately and to regulate and control it in a wise manner.

6That is, "Nowhere are you outside Allah's knowledge, His power, His rule, His management and administration. Allah knows wherever you are, whether in the earth, or the air, or the water, or in a secret place. Your being alive there is by itself a proof that Allah is providing for you in that very place. If yow heart is beating, if your lungs are breathing, if yow hearing and yow sight arc functioning, it is only because all parts of yow body are working under Allah's rule. And if death comes to you at any place; it comes because Allah takes a decision to stop providing for you and to recall you from the world."

7The addressees here are not the non-Muslims, but, as is borne out by the whole subsequent discourse, the Muslims who had affirmed the Faith and joined the ranks of the believers, but were not fulfilling the demands of the Faith and conducting themselves as true believers should. It is obvious that non-Muslims cannot be invited to affirm the Faith and then immediately asked to subscribe generously to the cause of Jihad for the sake of Allah, nor can they be told that whoever would fight and spend his wealth in the cause of Allah before the victory, would attain to a higher rank than him who would perform these services later, For, when a non-Muslim is invited to the Faith, the preliminary demands of it only are presented before him and not the-ultimate once, Therefore,. in view of the context, the meaning of saying "Believe in Allah and His messenger" here would be: "O people, who profess to have affirmed the Faith and have joined the ranks of the Muslims,. believe in Allah and Messenger sincerely and conduct yourselves as the true and sincere believers should. "

8Here, by spending is not implied spending on public welfare, but, as is clearly borne out by the words of verse 10, it implies subscribing to the cause of the war effort that was being waged at that time under the leadership of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) to uphold Islam against paganism. Two things, in particular, were such for which the Islamic Government at that time stood in great need of financial help. First, the war equipment; second, supporting and sustaining the oppressed Muslims, who, due to persecution by the disbelievers had emigrated, and were still emigrating, to Madinah from every corner of Arabia, The sincere Muslims were trying their best to render as much help as they could but meeting the entire expenses in this regard was much beyond their means and resources, and their this same spirit of sacrifice has been commended in vv. 10, 12, 18 and 19 below. But among the Muslims there were quite a number of well-to-do people, who were watching this struggle between Islam and paganism as mere spectators and had no feeling whatever that the faith they claimed to believe in imposed certain rights also on their life and wealth. This second kind of people are the addressees of this verse, They have been exhorted to believe sincerely, and to spend their wealth in the cause of Allah.

9This has two meanings and both are implied here. The first meaning is "The wealth that you possess is not, in fact, your personal property but has been givers to you by Allah. You are not its exclusive master and owner. Allah has given you proprietary right over it as His vicegerent. Therefore, you should have no hesitation in spending it in the service of the real Master. It is not for the vicegerent to withhold the Master's wealth from being spent for the Master's own sake.." The second: "Neither bas this wealth been with you since ever nor will it remain in your possession for ever, Yesterday it was in some other people's possession; then Allah made you their successor and entrusted it to you, A time will come when it will not remain with you but some other people will succeed you as its owners, Therefore, in this short-lived ownership, when you are its trustees, spend it in the cause of Allah so that in the Hereafter You may be rewarded for it permanently and eternally. This same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in a Hadith. Tirmidhi relates that once a goat was slaughtered in the Holy Prophet's house and its flesh was given away to the poor. When he came to the house and asked: "What remains of the goat?" Hadrat `A'ishah replied: "Nothing but a shoulder." Thereupon the Holy Prophet

remarked: "Nay, the whole goat but the shoulder !" That is, "Whatever has been given away for the sake of Allah, has, in fact, been saved. " According to another Hadith, a person asked: "O Messenger of Allah, what kind of charity brings the highest reward? He replied: That you should give away a thing In charity when you are hale and hearty: when you feel it could be saved and may like to invest it in the hope of earning more. Do not wait till death when you may say: Give this to so and so and that to so and so, for at that time the wealth has in any case to pass on to so and so. "(Bukhari, Muslim). According to still another Hadith, the Holy Prophet said: "Man says: `My wealth! My wealth!' whereas his own share in his wealth is no more than what he has eaten up, or worn away, or passed on in charity? Whatever remains will leave him and will be passed on to others. " (Muslim)

10Here again, expending wealth in the cause of Jihad has been regarded as an essential demand of the Faith and a proof of one's sincerity in it, as if to say: "The true and sincere believer is he who does not shirk spending wealth on such an occasion."

11That is, "You are adopting this unbelieving attitude and conduct at a time when the Messenger of Allah is present among you, and you are receiving the invitation to the Faith not through an indirect and remote means but directly through the Messenger of Allah himself."

12Some commentators have taken this pledge to imply the pledge of service to Allah, which had been taken at the beginning of creation from the future offspring of Adam (peace be upon him), and some others take it for the pledge with which man has been naturally endowed to serve and obey Allah. But the truth is that it implies the conscious pledge of obedience to Allah and His Messenger that every Muslim makes to his Lord by the affirmation of the Faith At another place in the Qur'an this same pledge has been referred to thus;

"Keep in mind the blessing Allah has bestowed upon you and do not forget the solemn covenant which He made with you (and which you confirmed), when you said: `We have heard and submitted.' Fear Allah for Allah knows the very secrets of the hearts," (Al-Ma'idah: 7)

Hadrat `Ubadah bin Samit relates: "The Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace and blessings) had made us pledge that we would listen and obey both in sound health and in ill health; would spend in the cause of Allah both in prosperity and in adversity would enjoin the good and forbid the evil; would proclaim the truth for the sake of Allah and would not fear the blame of any one in this regard." (Musnad Ahmad)

13This has two meanings:

(1) "Your wealth is not going to stay with you for ever. One day you will leave it behind; then Allah alone will inherit it. Thus the best thing would be that you should spend it yourself in the cause of Allah so that.

your reward for it is guaranteed with Allah. If you do not spend it yourself, it will in any case return to Allah, but then you will not be entitled to any reward from Him. "

(2) "You should have no fear of indigence and poverty when you spend it in the cause of Allah, because Allah for Whose sake you would spend your wealth, is the Owner of all the treasures of the heavens and the earth. He possessed not only what He has bestowed on you today but has much more to bestow on you tomorrow. " This same thing bas been expressed at another place, thus

"O Prophet, say to there: `My Lord gives abundantly to whomever of His servants He wills and sparingly to whomever He wills. Whatever you spend, He replenishes it by other provisions: He is the best of Providers'." (Saba: 39)

14That is, "Although both are entitled to the reward, yet the former are necessarily higher in rank than the latter, for they faced greater risks for the sake of Allah in difficult circumstances, which the latter not. They spent their wealth at a time when there appeared no remote chance of victory that would compensate for their expenditure, and they fought the disbelieves at a critical tune when there was an ever present apprehension that the enemy might overpower and crush the followers of Islam completely." Mujahid, Qatadah and Zaid bin Aslam, from among the commentators, say that the word “victory" in this verso has been used for the Conquest of Makkah, and `Amir Sha'bi says that it refers to the Truce of Hudaibiyah. The former view has been adopted by most of the commentators, and in support of the latter this tradition from Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri is presented: "During the time when the Truce of Hudaibiyah was concluded, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said to us: `In the near future there will appear the people, whose deeds will make you look upon your own deeds as mean and trifling, but even if one of them possessed a mountain of gold and he expended all of it in the cause of Allah, he would not attain to your spending two pounds, or even one pound of it." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduyah, Abu Nu'aim Isfahani). Further. more, it is also supported by the Hadith which Imam Ahmad has related on the authority of Hadrat Anas. He says: "Once a dispute arose between Hadrat Khalid bin Walid and Hadrat `Abdur Rahman bin `Auf, in the course of which Hadrat Khalid said w Hadrat `Abdur Rahman: "You people assume your superiority over us on account of your past services. ` When this thing came to the Holy Prophet's notice, he said: `By God in whose hand is my lift, even if you people spent gold equal (in weight) to Mount Uhud, or equal to other mountains, you would not attain to the deeds of these people." From this it is argued that in this verse "victory" refers to the Truce of Hudaibiyah, for Hadrat Khalid bin Walid had embraced Islam after this Truce and had participated in the Conquest of Makkah. However, whether "victory" in this particular case is taken to imply the Truce of Hudaibiyah or the Conquest of Makkah, in any case the verse does not mean that the distinction of the ranks is confined to this one victory alone, but as a general principle it shows that those who fight and spend in the cause of Islam at the time when disbelief and disbelievers appear to be dominant and Islam seems to have no remote chance of victory, are far superior in rank to those who make sacrifices after the conflict between Islam and paganism has been decided in favor of Islam."

15That is, "Allah does not bestow His favors blindly. Ho sees who has performed what deeds, under what kind of circumstances, and with what motive and then determines the rank and the reward of the deed of each person with full justice and awareness."

16How Generous and Beneficent is Allah that if a man spends the wealth granted by Himself in His way, He calls it a loan Himself, provided that it is a good loan, that is, a loan which in given with a pure intention, without any selfish motive of winning reputation and renown, or of doing favor to somebody, but only for the sake of Allah's approval and to win His good-will and rewards. Allah makes two promises in this regard:

(1) That He will repay it increasing it manifold; and

(2) that He will also give from Himself the best reward for it.

According to a Hadith reported by Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, when this verse was revealed and the people heard it from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), Hadrat Abud-Dahdah Ansari asked: "O Messenger of Allah, does Allah want a loan from us?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, O Abud-Dahdah," He said "Kindly show me your hand." The Holy Prophet extended his hand towards him. He took his hand in his own hand and said: "I give away my garden in loan to my Lord." Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud says that the garden had 600 date-palms and his own house also in which his family lived- Saying this to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) he went straight back home, and calling out to his wife said: "Come out, O mother of Dahdah, I have loaned this garden to my Lord." She replied: "Dahdah's father, you have made a good bargain!' and she immediately vacated and left the garden with her effects and children." (Ibn Abi Hatim). This incident throws light on the conduct of the sincere believers of that time, and from this one can also understand the kind of the "good loan" that Allah has promised to return increasing it manifold with a rich reward in addition.

17This and the following verses show that the Light on the Day of Judgment will be specifically meant for the righteous believers only. As for the disbelievers and the hypocrites and the wicked people, they will be wandering about in the darkness as they had been in the world. The light there will be the light of righteous deeds. The sincerity of the faith and the piety of the character and conduct will turn into light that will lend brightness to the personality of the virtuous. The brighter the deed the more luminous will be his person, and when he will walk towards Paradise, his light will be running forward before him. The best explanation of it is Qatadah's mursal tradition in which he says; "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) said: "The light of some one will be so .strong and sharp that it will be running on before him equal to the distance between Madinah and `Aden, of another equal to the distance between Madinah and San'a, and of another even less than that; to much so that there will be a believer whose light will Dot extend beyond his steps." (Ibn Jarir). In other words, the intensity of the light of a person will be proportionate to the extent of the good done and spread by him in the world, and the beams of his light will be running on before him in the Hereafter extending as far as his good will have extended in the

world.

Here, a question may arise in the mind of the reader "One can understand the meaning of their light running on before the believers but what does their light running on only on their right hand mean? Will there be darkness on their left side? The answer is: When a man is walking with a light on his right hand, his left side also will be bright, though the fact of the matter is that the light will be on his right hand. This has been explained by the Hadith, which Hadrat Abu Dharr and Abu Darda' have reported, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace;) said: "I shall recognize the righteous people of my Ummah by their light which will be running on before them and on their right and on their left." Hakim, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduyah).

18It means that when the believers will be going towards Paradise, the light will be before them, and the hypocrites will be stumbling about in the darkness behind. At that time they will call out to the believers, who lived with than together in the same Muslim society in the world, saying: "Look back towards us awhile so that we also may get some light."

19This means that the people of Paradise will enter it awhile this gate and the gate will then be closed. On one side of the gate there will be the blessings of Paradise and on the other the torment of Hell. For the hypocrites it will not be possible to cross the barrier that will stand between them and Paradise.

20That is, "Did we not live with you together in the same Muslim society? Did we not affirm the Faith? Did we not offer the Prayers along with you and observe the Fast and perform the Hajj and pay the Zakat? Did we not sit with you in your assemblies and were we not bound in marriage ties and kinship with you? Then, how is it that we have been separated from you today?"

21That is In spite of your claim to be Muslims, you never believed like true and ,sincere Muslims and remained suspended between belief and unbelief. You still had your interests attached to disbelief and the disbelievers and you never gave yourselves up wholly to Islam."

22Tarabbus (from which tarabbastum of the Text is derived) means to wait and tarry for an opportunity. When a person is unable to decide which of the two alternative ways he should choose but stands and waits to consider which way should be more favorable for him to follow, he is involved in tarabbus. The hypocrites, had adopted the same attitude during the critical time of the conflict between Islam and un-Islam. Neither were they siding with disbelief openly nor were spending their energy to support and help Islam with full conviction. They were sitting on the fence, waiting to set which party in the conflict became dominant, so that if it was Islam they may join it on the basis of their affirmation of the faith, and if it was unbelief they may side -with its supporters taking advantage of their neutral position in the conflict.

23This implies different kinds of doubts that a hypocrite suffers from, and the same also are the actual

causes of his hypocrisy. He doubts the existence of God, the Prophethood of the Prophet, the Qur'an's being Allah's book, the Hereafter, its accountability, and its rewards and punishments, and he doubts whether the conflict between the Truth and falsehood is real, or a mere delusion; as for himself he considers the only truth to be that one should enjoy lift and its pleasures to the full, For unless a person is involved in such doubts he can never be a hypocrite.

24This can have two meanings:

(1) "Until death came to him, you could not shed this delusion till the last moment"; and

(2) "that Islam became dominant, while you looked on unconcerned."

25That is, Satan.

26This clearly shows that in the Hereafter the hypocrites will be doomed to the same fate as the disbelievers.

27The words hiya maula kum (Hell is your maula) can have two meanings:

(1) "That Hell is the only proper place for you"; and

(2) "that you never took Allah as your maula (friend, patron) so that He may look after you; now Hell only is your maula; therefore, Hell now will look after you "

28Here again, the word "believers" is general, but it does not apply to all the Muslims; it refers to those particular Muslims who had professed the faith verbally and joined the followers of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) though their hearts were devoid of any concern for Islam. They were watching that the pagan forces were bent upon wiping out Islam; they had encircled the handful of Muslims from all sides, who were being made the target of persecution everywhere in Arabia, and thus oppressed the Muslims were fleeing to Madinah empty-handed for refuge; the sincere Muslims were extending to them whatever economic help they could; yet they were, at the same time, engaged in a life and-death struggle with the enemy. But, in spite of this, these people who professed the faith were not being moved at all. So, here, they are being put to shame. as if to say: "What kind of believers are you? At this critical juncture for Islam, is it not yet time that your hearts should melt at the mention of Allah and be filled with the spirit of sacrifice for the sake of His Religion? Can the believers be such that they may 'have no feeling for Islam when it is confronted with hard times, that they may sit un-concerned when they are summoned in the name of Allah, that the hearts may neither tremble out of fear of Allah nor bow to His Command when He Himself should make an appeal for contributions in the Book sent down by Him, declaring it as a loan on Himself and plainly telling that the one who would regard his wealth as dearer

than the cause of the true Faith would be a hypocrite and not a believer?"

29That is, "The Jews and Christians seem to have lost fervor and degenerated spiritually and morally hundreds of years after the passing away of their Prophets; but have you already become so depraved that while the Prophet is still present among you, and the Book of God is still being revealed, and not much time has passed over you since you affirmed the Faith, and you have started behaving like the Jews and Christians who have reached this state through centuries of playing and tempering with the Book of Allah and its verses?"

30The point contained here should be well understood, At several places in the Qur'an the Prophethood and the revelation of the Book have been compared to the rainfall, for the effects produced by them on humanity are precisely like those produced by rain on the soil. Just as the dead earth swells and blooms as soon -as it receives a shower of rain, so it is with the dead humanity in a country where a Prophet is raised through Allah's mercy and Revelation begins to be sent down to him. It starts revealing those virtues which lay hidden and suppressed for ages; it starts manifesting from within itself excellent morals and good deeds and virtues of every kind. Allusion has been made to this truth here so as to open the eyes of the Muslims of the weak faith and to make them ponder their state. The way humanity was being reformed by the blessed rainfall of the Prophethood and Revelation and the way it was being richly and generously blessed in every way was not a remote story for them. They were observing it themselves in the pious and righteous society of the Companions and experiencing it day and night around them. Polytheism with all its evils was present before them while the virtues and good things emanating from Islam also were blooming and flourishing before their eyes. Therefore, they did not need to be told any details. An allusion was enough to the effect, "The signs of how Allah grants life to the dead earth through the rainfall of His mercy have been shown to you; now you should use your common sense and consider it for yourself as to what benefit you arc deriving from this blessing."

31Sadagah, as an Islamic term, is the charity given sincerely and with a pure intention only with a view to seek Allah's good pleasure without making any show of it, and without the intention of doing any favor to the recipient. The donor should give it only because he has a true feeling of the service of his Lord. The word is derived from sidq; therefore, sadaqat(sincerity) is of its essence. No charity and no expending of the wealth can be a sadaqah unless it springs from a sincere and pure motive of spending only for the sake of Allah.

32Here, the believers imply those people of true faith whose attitude and conduct was absolutely different from that of the people of weak faith and the false claimants to Islam, and who were at that time vying with one another in making monetary sacrifices and were struggling with their lives in the cause of the true Faith.

33Siddiq (most truthful) is the superlative from sidq; however, one should clearly understand that sidq Is

not merely a statement conforming to the truth, but a statement which is not only true in itself but its Bayer also upholds it as a truth sincerely. For instance, if a person says that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is Allah's Messenger, this is by itself precisely according to 'the truth for the Holy Prophet is truly Allah's Messenger, but the person would be true in his statement only if he also believed and upheld him as Allah's Messenger. Therefore, a thing would be sidq if what was said was in conformity with the truth as well as with the Bayer's own conscience. Likewise, sidq also contains the sense of faithfulness, sincerity and practical righteousness. Sadiq-ul-wa d would be the person who kept his promise practically, who never broke it. Sadiq (true friend) would be he who did full justice to friendship in the time of need, and who never proved faithless to any, body in any way. In war, sadiq fil-qital (true soldier) would be the one who fought with all his heart and body and established his valor practically. Thus, sidq in essence implies that one's deed should fully conform to one's word. The one who acts contrary to his word cannot be Sadiq. On that very basis, the one who preaches one thing and acts contrary to it, is regarded as a false preacher. With this meaning of sidq and sadiq in view one can fully appreciate the meaning of the superlative sadiq. It would inevitably imply a righteous person who is free from every impurity, who has never swerved from the truth and piety, who could never be expected to say anything against his conscience. who believed in whatever he believed with full sincerity and remained faithful to it under all circumstances, and who has practically proved that he is a true believer in the full sense of the word. (For further explanation, see E.N. 99 of An-Nisa).

34The early commentators have differed about the explanation of this verse. Ibn 'Abbas, Masruq, Dahhak, Muqatil bin Hayyan and others say that the previous sentence ended with humsssiddiqun; and wash-shuhada'-u `inda Rabbihim la-hum ajru-hum wa nuru-hum is a separate and independent sentence According to this explanation, the translation of the sentence would be: "Those who have believed in Allah and His Messenger, are indeed the most truthful (as siddiqun); as for the true witnesses (ash-shuhada), they will have their reward and their light from their Lord. " Contrary to this, Mujahid and several other commentators regard this whole expression as one sentence. According to them the translation would be that which we have given in the text above. The two commentaries differ because the first group has taken the word Shahid in the meaning of the martyr in the way of Allah. and seeing that every believer is not a shahid in this sense, has taken wash-shuhada'-u `inda Rabbi-him as a separate sentence. But the other group takes shahid in the meaning of the witness of the Truth, and not in the sense of the martyr, and in this sense every believer is a shahid. We are of the opinion that this second commentary is preferable and this is

"Thus have We made you a community of the 'Golden Mean' so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind and the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you." (AI-Baqarah; 143).

"Allah had called you "Muslims" before this ant has called you (by the same name) in this (Qur'an) also so that the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you and you may be witnesses in regard to the rest of mankind." (Al-Hajj: 78)

In a Hadith, Hadrat Bara' bin 'Azib has related that he heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) say: ¦The believers of my Ummah are shahid (the witnesses); then he recited this very verse of Surah AI-Hadid. " (Ibn Jarir). Ibn Marduyah has related on the authority of Hadrat Abu ad-Darda' the tradition that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "The one who emigrates from a land in order to save his life and his faith from temptation, is recorded as a Siddiq (most truthful), and when he dies, Allah takes his soul as a shahid (true witness). Then aftar this, the Holy Prophet recited this very verse. " (For 'the explanation of this meaning of shahadat, see E:N. 144 of AI-Baqarah, E.N 99 of An-Nisa', E.N. 82 of Al-Ahzab).

35That is, "Each one of them will receive the reward and the light of the measure and degree he deserves. They will all get their own respective rewards and lights, and their shares have already been reserved for them."

36To understand this theme fully one should keep the following verses of the Qur'an in mind: Imran; 14-15, Yunus: 24-25, Ibrahim: 18, AI-Kahf: 45-46, An-Nur: 39. In all those verses the truth that has been impressed on the mind is: The life of this world is a temporary life: its spring as well as its autumn is temporary, Them is much here to allure man. but this, in fact, consists of base and insignificant things which man because of his shallowness of mind regards as great and splendid and is deluded into thinking that in attaining them lies supreme success, The truth however is that the highest benefits and means of pleasure and enjoyment that one can possibly attain in the world, arc indeed bast and insignificant and confined to a few years of temporary life, and can be destroyed by just one turn of fate. Contrary to this, the lift hereafter is a splendid and eternal life: its benefits are great and permanent and its losses too are great and permanent. The one who attains Allah's forgiveness and His goodwill there, will indeed have attained the everlasting bliss beside which the whole wealth of the world and its kingdom become pale and insignificant. And the one who is seized in God's torment there, will come to know that he had made a bad bargain even if he had attained all that he regarded as great and splendid in the world.

37Musabagat (from which sabiqu of the original is derived) means to compete and vie with each other in order to excel. The meaning is: "Give up your rivalries with one another for amassing wealth, and pleasures and benefits, of the world and instead make the forgiveness of your Lord and Paradise the object of your struggle and rivalries."

38Some commentators have taken the word ard in 'arduha ka- 'ard-is- sama '-i wal-ard in the sense of breadth, but actually this word has been used here in the meaning of spaciousness and extensiveness. In Arabic the word ard is not only used for breadth, as a counterpart of length, but also for spaciousness, as it has been used in Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 51: fa-dhu du'a in 'arid: "Then he is full of wordy supplications." Besides, one should also understand that the object here is not to foretell the area or extent of Paradise, but to give an idea of its vastness and extensiveness. Here its vastness has been described as the vastness of the heaven and earth, and in Surah . AI-'Imran it has been said: "Hasten to follow the path

that leads to your Lord's forgiveness and to Paradise whose vastness is that of the universe, which has been prepared for the righteous '" (v. 133) When both these verses are read together, one gets the idea that the; gardens and palaces man will receive in Paradise will only serve as his dwelling-place t but the entire universe will be his home He will not be restricted to one place as be is in this world, where just for reaching the Moon, his nearest neighbor in space, he has had to struggle hard for years and expend excessive resources only to overcome the difficulties of a short journey. There the whole universe will be accessible to him: he will be able to see whatever he would desire from his station and be able to visit whichever place he would like easily.

39"A Book": the Writ of destiny,

40Here, "it" may be referring to the affliction as well as to the earth, or the self of man, or in view of the context, to all the creatures.

41That is, it is not at all difficult for Allah to pre-ordain the destiny of each and every one of His creatures.

42In order to understand why this has been said in that context, one should keep in mind the conditions through which the Muslims were passing at the time this Surah was revealed. 'An ever present danger of attack by the enemy, battles in quick succession, a state of constant siege, hardships caused by economic boycott by the disbelievers, persecution of the converts to Islam everywhere in Arabia, these were the conditions that the Muslims were confronted with at that time. The disbelievers looked upon these as a proof of the Muslims having been forsaken and rejected, and the hypocrites took these as a confirmation of their own suspicions and doubts. As for the sincere Muslims, they were facing these bravely and resolutely, yet the excess of hardship and suffering would sometimes become trying even for them. So, the Muslims are being consoled, as if to say: "No affliction, God forbid, has befallen you without the knowledge of your Lord. Whatever you are experiencing is according to the pre-ordained scheme of Allah, which is already recorded in the Writ of destiny. And you are being made to pass through these trials and tribulations for the sake of your own training for the great service that Allah wills to take from you. If you are made to attain to success without passing through these hardships, weaknesses will remain in your character due to which you will neither be able to digest power and authority nor withstand the tempests and furies of falsehood."

43The allusion is to the trait of character that everyone could experience among the hypocrites in the Muslim society itself. As regards the outward affirmation of the Faith, they could not be distinguished from the true Muslims. But owing to lack of sincerity they were not receiving the sort of training that was being given to the sincere Muslims. Therefore, the little prosperity and leadership that they were enjoying in an ordinary town of Arabia, was causing them to be swollen with pride. As for their stinginess, not only were they fhcmsc1vee unwilling to give away a penny in the cause of God Whom they professed to believe in

and the Messenger whom they professed to follow and the Faith which they professed to have accepted, but tried to prevent others also from making any contribution, for, they thought, it was a useless cause. Obviously, if there had been no trials and tribulations, these worthless people, who were of no use to Allah, could not be separated from the sincere and worthy believers, and without weeding them out a mixed crowd of sincere and insincere Muslims could not be entrusted with the high office of leadership of the world, the great blessings of which the world subsequently witnessed in the rightly-guided Caliphate.

44That is, "Even if after hearing these words of admonition a person does not adopt the way of sincerity, faithfulness and sacrifice for the sake of Allah and His Religion, and wishes to persist in his stubbornness, which Allah disapproves, then Allah has no use for him, for Allah is All-Sufficient and Independent of His creatures: He does not stand in need of their help in any way. And He is All-Praiseworthy: people of good qualities only are acceptable to Him; people of evil character cannot be entitled to receive any favor from Him."

45In this brief sentence the whole essence of the mission of the Prophets bas been compressed, which one should clearly understand. It says that all the Messengers who came to the world from Allah, brought three things:

(1) Bauuomatat: manifest signs which clearly showed that they were really Allah's Messengers, and were not impostors; convincing arguments which made it evident that what they tore presenting as Truth was really the Truth, and what they condemned as falsehood was really falsehood clear instructions which told without any ambiguity what was the. right way for the people in respect of beliefs, morals, acts of worship and dealings, which they should adopt, and what were the wrong ways which they should shun and avoid.

(2) Kitab: the Book which contained all the teachings required for the guidance of man so that people may turn to it for enlightenment.

(3) Mizan: the Criterion of truth and falsehood which may precisely indicate, like a balance, the golden mean between t40 extremes in matters of thought, morals and dealings.

The object for which the Prophets were sent with these three things was that man's conduct in the world and the system of human life, individually as well as collectively, should be established with justice. On the in hand, every man should precisely know the rights of God, the rights of his self and the rights of all . these people with whom we may have to deal in any way, and should fulfill them faithfully; and, on the other, the system of collective life should be built on such principles as should eliminate every kind of injustice from society, should safeguard every aspect of civilization and social life against extremism, should establish correct balance and equity in all spheres of collective life, so that all elements of society should receive their rights equitably and fulfill their obligations and duties responsibly. In other words, the object of sending the prophets was to establish individual as well as collective justice They wanted to

establish justice in the personal lift of each individual so as w bring about poise and equilibrium in his mind, his character, his conduct and his dealings. They also wanted to establish the whole system of human society on justice so that both the individual and the society should assist and cooperate with each other in their spiritual, moral and material well-being instead of being a hindrance and obstacle.

46Sending down iron means creating iron in the earth just as in Az-Zumar:6 it has been said: "He Scat down for you eight heads of cattle, male and female." As whatever exists in the earth, has come hero by Allah's command, and has not appeared by itself, its being created has been expressed in the Qur'an as its being sent down.

The mention of "sending down iron which has great strength and other benefits for men" immediately after stating the object of the mission of the Prophets by itself indicates that by iron here is meant political and military power. Thus the verse means: "Allah did not raise His Prophets in the world just to present a scheme for the establishment of justice, but it was also a part of their mission to endeavor to enforce it practically, to collect necessary power to establish justice in all spheres of life, to punish those who might disrupt it and to break the power of those who might resist it. "

47That is, "Allah does not need this help because He is weak and cannot use His power to accomplish this work, but He has adopted this method for the trial of men: man can advance on the way of his progress and well-being only by passing through this trial. Allah indeed has the power w subdue all the disbelievers by one command whenever He wills and give to His Messengers complete dominance over them, but in that case the believers in the Messengers would have - nothing to do for which they should become entitled to rewards. That is why Allah instead of accomplishing this mission through His dominant power adopted the method of sending His Messengers to human beings with the Signs and the Book and the Criterion, and enjoined them to present the way of justice before the people and exhort them to refrain and desist from wickedness sad injustice At the same time He gave us full option to accept the message of the Messengers or to reject it. He summoned those who accepted the invitation to come forward and help Him and His Messengers to establish justice, and to exert their utmost against those the were bent upon retaining the unjust system. Thus, Allah wants to see who among us reject: the invitation to justice, who exert with their lives in order to retain injustice as against justice, who shirk: supporting struggling for the cause of the message of justice after they have accepted it, and who stake their lives and their possessions for the sake of unseen God to help the truth become dominant in the world. Only for those who emerge successful in this test will avenues to fixture progress be opened up. "

48Now it is being told what corruptions appeared among those who believed in the Prophets who came to the world before the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) with the Signs and the Book and the Criterion.

49That is, whichever Messenger came with Allah's Book, was from the progeny of the Prophet Noah and, after him, from the progeny of the Prophet Abraham.

50“Became transgressors" became disobedient.

51The words in the Text are rafat and rahmat, which are almost synonymous: But when they are used together, rafat implies the compassion that a person feels on seeing another person in pain and distress, and rahmat is the feeling under which be tries to- help him. As the Prophet Jesus was highly compassionate and merciful towards the people, his this trait of character deeply influenced his disciples: therefore, they treated the people with pity and sympathy by and served them with all their heart and soul.

52The root rahb (from which rabaniyyat or ruhbaniyyat is derived) means fear; thus rahbaniyyat means a mode of life which reflects fear and terror, and ruhbaniyyat means the mode of life of the terrified. As a term it implies a person's abandoning the world out of fear (whether it is the fear of somebody's tyranny, or far of the worldly temptations and distractions, or fear of one's personal weaknesses) and taking refuge in the jungles and mountains, or living alone as a hermit.

53The words in the original can have two meanings:

(1) "That We did not enjoin monasticism rahbanit) upon them: We enjoined upon them only the seeking of Allah's good pleasure:" and

(2) that monasticism was not enjoined by Us: they of their own accord enjoined it on themselves, to seek Allah's good pleasure." In both cases this verse makes it explicit that monasticism is an unIslamic creed, and it has never been part of the true Faith. The same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet thus: "There is no monasticism in Islam." (Musnad Ahmed). In another Hadith the Holy Prophet said: "The monasticism of this Ummah is to fight in the way of Allah." (Musnad Ahmed Musnad'Abi Ya'la That is, he way for this Ummah to attain to spiritual piety lies not in abandoning the world but in fighting in Allah's way: this Ummah does not flee to the jungles and mountains out of fear of temptations and distractions but counteracts them by resort to fighting in Allah's way. According to a tradition related both by Bukhari and by Muslim, one of the Companions said that he would keep up Prayers throughout the night; another said that he would fast perpetually without ever observing a break; and a third one said the he would never marry and would have nothing to do with women. When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) came to know of what they had resolved, he said: 'By God, I fear Allah the most and remain conscious of Him at all times; yet my way is that I observe the fast as well as break it; I keep up the Prayer during the night as well as have sleep; and I marry the women also. The one who does not follow my way, does not belong to me " Hadrat Anas says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) used to say: "Do not be- hard and severe to yourselves lest Allah should be hard and severe to you. A community had adopted this way of severity towards itself; then Allah also seized it in severity. Look, the remainder of them are found in the monasteries and churches. " (Abu Da 'ud).

54That is, they were involved in a double error: first, they imposed on themselves the restrictions which Allah had not imposed; second, They did not observe in the right spirit the restrictions that they had imposed upon themselves with a view to attain to Allah's goodwill, and conducted themselves in a way as to earn Allah's wrath instead of His good pleasure.

To understand this theme fully we should have a look at the history of Christian Monasticism.

Until 200 years after the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) the Christian Church knew no monasticism. Its germs, however, were found in Christianity from the very beginning. To look upon asceticism as a moral ideal and to regard celibacy as superior to matrimonial and mundane life is the basis of monasticism. Both these existed in Christianity from the beginning. Owing to the sanctification of celibacy in particular, it was considered undesirable for those the performed religious services in the church to marry, have children and be involved in domestic chores; so much so that by the 3rd century monasticism began to spread like an epidemic in Christiandom. Historically, it had three main causes!

First, sensuality, immorality and worship of the world had so permeated the ancient polytheistic society that in their zeal to counteract it the Christian scholars adopted the extremist way instead of the way of moderation. They so stressed chastity that the relationship between man and woman by itself came to be looked upon as filthy, even if it was within marriage. They reacted so violently to mammonism that to possess property of any kind ultimately was considered a sin for a religious person and to live like a poor man and ascetic the criterion of moral excellence. Likewise, in their reaction to the sensualism of the polytheistic society they touched the other extreme. They made withdrawal from pleasure and all material comforts, self denial and curbing of the desires the object of morality and regarded torturing the body by different sorts of harsh discipline as the climax and proof of a person's spirituality.

Secondly, when Christianity started achieving successes and spreading rapidly among the common people, the Church in its zeal to attract more and more adherents went on imbibing every evil that was prevalent in society. Thus, saint-worship replaced the ancient deities. Images of Christ and Mary began to be worshiped instead of the idols of Horus and Isis. Chrismas took the place of Saturnalia. Christian monks began to practice every kind of occult art like curing the sick by amulets and magic incantations, taking omens and fortune-telling, driving out spirits, etc. as were prevalent in ancient days. Likewise, since the common people looked upon a dirty and naked person who lived in a cave or den as a holy and godly man, this very concept of saintlihood became prevalent in the Christian Church, and legends of their miraculous powers began to abound in the memoirs of the Christian saints.

Thirdly, the Christians possessed no detailed law and definite traditions and practices to determine the bounds of religion. They had given up Mosaic Law and the Gospel by itself afforded no perfect code of guidance. Therefore, the Christian doctors went on permitting every kind of innovation to enter the religion partly under the influence of alien philosophies, customs and practices and partly under their

personal preference and whim. Monasticism was one such innovation. Christian scholars and doctors of law took its philosophy and rules and practices from the Buddhist monks, Hindu Yogis and ascetics, Egyptian Anchorites, Iranian Manicheans, and the followers of Plato and Plotinus, and made the same the means ant methods of attaining self-purification, spiritual loftiness and nearness to Allah. Those who committed this error were not ordinary men. From the 3rd to the 7th century (i.e.. till about the time the Qur'an began to be revealed) the religious personalities who were recognized as the foremost scholars and religious guides and leaders of Christendom, both in the East and in the West,-St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Bazianzus, St. Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine St. Benedict, St. Gregory the Great-all were monks themselves and great upholders of monasticism. It was under their influence that monasticism became popular in the Church.

Historically, monasticism among the Christians started from Egypt. Its founder was St. Anthony (A.D. 250 -350) who is regarded as the father of Christian Monasticism. He set up the first monastery at Pispir (now Der al Memum) in the Fayum. Later he established another monastery on the coast of the Rod Sea, which is now called Der Mar Antonius The basic cults of Christian Monasticism are derived from his writings and instructions. After this beginning the monastic movements spread like a f flood in Egypt and monasteries for monks and nuns were set up everywhere in the land in some of which lived three thousand monks at a time. In 325 another ascetic, pachomius, appeared in Egypt, who founded ten major monasteries and nunneries for the monks and nuns. The monastic movement then began to spread in Palestine and Syria and different countries of Africa and Europe. The Christian Church in the beginning experienced some confusion in connection with monasticism, for although it recognized abandonment of the world, celibacy and voluntary poverty as an ideal of spiritual life, yet it could not declare marriage, producing children and possessing property or money to be sinful as the monks did. Subsequently, under the influence of holy men like St. Athanasius (d. 373), St. Basil (d. 379), St. Augustine (d. 430) and Gregory the Great (d. 609) many of the monastic rules became part and parcel of the Church.

This monastic innovation has some characteristics which are briefly as follows:

Inflicting pain on the body by severe exercises and novel methods. In this thing every monk tried to surpass the other. The achievements of these holy men as related in the memoirs of the Christian saints are to this effect: St. Macarius of Alexandria constantly carried on himself a weight of 80 pounds. For six months he slept in a swamp while poisonous flies preyed on his naked body. His disciple, St. Eusebius, even surpassed his master in suffering severities and rigours. He moved about carrying a weight of 150 pounds, and lay in a dry well for three years. St. Saba ate the maize that would start stinking having. been soaked in water for a whole Month. St. Bassarion lay in thorny bushes for 40 days and did not rest his back on the ground for 40 years. St. Pachomius passed 15 years of his life, and according to another tradition 50 years, without rating his back on the round St. John remained standing in worship for three years during which he neither sat nor (ay down; he would only recline at times against a rock. His food consisted of the offering that was brought for him every Sunday. St. Simeon Styiltes (390-449) who is counted among the most illustrious Christian saints, used to observe an un-broken 40 days fast and

smiling. Owing to such concepts the bond of marriage between man and woman came to be looked upon as filthy. A monk was forbidden even to look at a woman, not to speak of marriage, and was required to abandon his wife if he was married. As for men it was also impressed on the women that if they wished to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, they should shun marriage and remain spinsters and if they were married, they should separate from their husbands. St. Jerome, the distinguished Christian scholar, ruled that the woman who remained a spinster as a nun for the sake of Christ, was the bride of Christ, and her mother was the mother-in-law of Christ, i.e. God. Elsewhere St. Jerome says: "To cut asunder the bond of marriage with the ax of chastity is the primary duty of the true devotee of God. " The first impact these teachings had on a Christian man or Christian woman, under religious fervor, was that his or her married life was ruined. And since there was no provision for divorce or separation in Christianity, the husband and the wife would separate from each other while they remained bound in wed-lock. St. Nilus was father of two children. When he came under the spell of monasticism, he immediately separated from his wife. St. Ammon, on the first night of his marriage, gave his bride a sermon on the filthiness of the marriage bond and then the two between themselves decided to keep aloof from each other throughout life. St. Abraham abandoned his wife on the very first night of marriage. The same was done by St. Alexis. The memoirs of the Christian saints are full of such incidents.

The Church continued to resist in one way or the other these extremist concepts for three centuries. In those days it was not required of a priest to be single and unmarried. If he was married before being appointed a minister, he could keep his wife. However, he was forbidden to marry after his appointment. Moreover, a person could not be appointed a minister if he had married a widow, or a divorced woman, or had two wives, or possessed a concubine. Gradually, by the 4th century, the concept became firm that for a married person it was odious to perform religious services in the Church. The Council of Gengra (A. D. 362) was the last one in which such ideas wen held as anti-religious, but a little lour in 386, Roman Synod counseled the priests to avoid marriage relations and the following year Pope Siricius decreed that the priest who married, or continued to have sex relations with his wife if already married should be dismissed from office. Illustrious scholars like St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine upheld this decision most fervently, and after a little resistance it became fully enforced in the Western Church. In this period several councils were convened to consider the complaints to the effect that the people who were already marred were having "illicit" relations with their wives even after their appointment to perform religious duties. Consequently, with a view to reform them, rules were made to the effect that they should sleep in the open, should never meet their wives in private, and should meet them only in the presence of at (cast two other men. St. Gregory has made mention of a wonderful priest who did not have any relation with his wife for 40 years, and when the woman approached him at his death-bed, he rebuked her, saying: 'Woman. keep away !"

The most painful and pathetic chapter of ascetic monasticism is that it cut asunder man's relations with his parents, with his brothers and sisters, and even his children For the Christian saints love of the parents for son, love of the brothers and sisters for brother and love of the children for father also was sinful. They believed it was necessary for man to break off all those relations for the sake of spiritual

progress. In the biographies of the Christian saints one comes across highly pathetic and heart-rending incidents. A monk, St. Evagrius, had been undergoing severe exercises in the desert for many years. Suddenly one day letters reached him from his father and mother, who were passing their days in great agony without him. The saint, fearing that the letters might arouse feelings of human love in his heart, cast the letters immediately into the fire, without even opening them. The mother and sister of St. Theodorus came to the monastery where he was staying, with recommendatory letters from many priests, and desired to have only a glimpse of him, but the saint refused to come out before them. St. Marcus' mother went to the monastery to sec him. She somehow obtained the abbot's permission for it and requested him to order her son to come out before her, but the son was adamant to her prayers. At last, be implemented the abbot's orders by appearing before his mother disguised and with closed eyes. Thus, neither was the mother able to recognize her son, nor the son saw his mother. Another saint, St. Poemen ant his six brothers lived in a desert monastery of Egypt. Years later their old mother came to know of their whereabouts and went to sec them in the monastery. As soon as the brothers saw their mother coming, they hurried into their cell and shut the door. The mother started crying and wailing outside saying: "I have traveled in this old age from a distant place only to have a glimpse of you. There will be no harm if only I see you. Am I not your mother ?" But the saints did not open the door and told the mother that they would meet her in the next world. Even more painful and piteous is the story of St. Simeon Stylites, who left his parents and remained away from them without any trace of his where abouts for 27 years. The father died of grief. When the fame of the son's piety and holiness spread the mother, who was still living in agony, came to know of his whereabouts. She came to the monastery to see him but women were not allowed to enter. She prayed that either the son should call her in, or he should himself conic out to let her have a glimpse of him, but "the saint" before Easter every year. Once he kept standing on one leg for a whole year. Often he would leave his monastery and retire to a well. Later he got a 60 foot high pillar erected near Antioch, which was three feet wide at the top and railed round. He spent the last 30 years of his life on this pillar and remained permanently exposed to the elements. His disciples carried food to him by ladder and removed his filth. He had even tied himself to the pillar by a string, which cut into his flesh; when the flesh became rotten, it bred worms; whenever a worm fell out, he would restore it to the sore, saying: "Eat what God has given you." Crowds of pilgrims flocked to him from far and near. When he died the Christian world proclaimed that he was the best model of a Christian saint.

The memoirs of the Christian saints of this period are full of such instances. One particular saint had the characteristic that he observed silence for 30 years: he was never seen speaking. Another had tied himself to a rock; another roamed the jungles and lived on grass; another moved about carrying a heavy load; another kept his limbs and body tied in fetters and chains; some saints lived in the dens of beasts, or in dry wells, or in old graves; and some others remained naked and concealed their private parts under long hair and would crawl on the ground. After death the bones of the illustrious saints were preserved in monastery. I saw a full library decked with such bones in St. Catherine's monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai. There were skulls and foot-bones and hand bones arranged separately. A glass-case contained the whole skeleton of a saint.

Their second characteristic was that they were dirty and strictly cleanliness and bodily care. Washing or applying water to the body was regarded as opposed to God-worship, for according to them purification of the body was tantamount to pollution of the soul. St. Athanasius has faithfully described this virtue of St. Anthony that he never washed his feet during life. St. Abraham from the day he entered Christianity neither washed his face nor feet for 50 years. A famous nun Virgin Sylvia, never allowed any part of her body except the fingers to become wet with water throughout life It is said of 130 nuns of 8 convent that they never washed their feet and would shudder with horror at a mere reference to bath.

Monasticism practically forbade married life and ruthlessly discarded the institution of marriage. All religious writings of the 4th and 5th centuries are replete with the thought that celibacy is the highest moral virtue, and chastity meant that one should strictly abstain from sexual relation even if it was between husband and wife. The perfection of a pure spiritual life lay in complete self-denial, with no desire for physical pleasure. It was . necessary to suppress any carnal desire because it strengthened animality. For them pleasure and sin were synonymous so much so that being happy was regarded as being forgetful of God. St. Basil forbade even laughing refused to oblige her. The woman lay at the entrance for three days and three nights and at last breathed her last in the same state. Then the holy man emerged from his seclusion, mourned his mother's death and prayed for her forgiveness.

In the same harsh way these saints treated their sisters and children. There is the story of Mutius, a prosperous man by all means. Drawn out suddenly by the religious impulse, he took his 8-year-old son and went to a monastery. But for the sake of his progress to holiness it was necessary that he should give up love of his son. Therefore, first the son was separated from him Then the innocent child was subjected to harsh treatment before his very eyes and he watched it patiently. Then, the abbot of the monastery ordered him to go and Cast the child into the river. He became ready even for this; then right at the time when he was going to throw the child into the river, the monks saved the child's life. then it was admitted that he had actually attained to the rank of a holy man.

The viewpoint of Christian monasticism in these matters was that the one who sought love of God, should break off all relations of human love that bound him in the world to his parents, his brothers and sisters and his children. St. Jerome says, "Even if your nephew clings to you with his hands round your neck; even if your mother calls you back in the name of having suckled you; even if your father obstructs your way and lies down before you, you should hasten out to the banner of the cross, trampling the body of your father, without shedding a tear. Ruthlessness in this mater is piety itself." St. Gregory writes, "A young monk who could not give up love of his parents, left the monastery one night in order to pay them a visit. God punished him for this error, for as soon as he returned to the monastery, he died. His body was buried in the grave but the earth did not accept it. He was placed in the grave again and again, and the earth threw him out every time. At last, St. Benedict placed a sacred offering on his chest, and then the grave accepted him." Of a nun it is said that for three days after her death, she remained subject to a torment because she had not been able to cleanse her heart of her mother's lout. About a saint it is written that he never treated anyone harshly except his relatives.

Their practice of meting out ruthless, cruel and harsh treatment to their nearest relatives, made their human feeling dead, with the result that they would treat with utmost enmity those with whom they had any religious differences. By the beginning of the 4th century, 80 to 90 religious sects had arisen in Christianity. St. Augustine has made mention of 88 sects of his own time, each of which regarded the other with extreme hatred. And the fire of this hatred also was fanned by the monks, who were always in the forefront to hahtt and destroy the opponent sects by their machinations. Alexandria was a great center of this sectarian conflict.

There, in the beginning the Bishop of the Arian sect attacked the Athanasius party. Virgin nuns were dragged out of their convents, stripped naked and beaten with thorny branches and branded in order to make them give up their creed. Then, when the Roman Catholics came to power in Egypt, they treated the Arian' sect likewise; so much so that according to the prevalent view Arius himself also was poisoned. Once on the same city of Alexandria the monks of St.' Cyril created a turmoil They seized a nun of the opponent sect and took her into their church; they killed her, backed her body to pieces, and cast it into the fire. Rome was not any different from this. In 366, at the death of Pope Liberius, two sects nominated their respective candidates for papacy; this resulted in great bloodshed; so much so that in one day 137 dead bodies were taken out from one church.

Side by side with this retreat from the world and life of seclusion and poverty, wealth of the world also was amassed most avariciously. By the beginning of the 5th century the condition was that the bishop of Rome lived in his palace like kings, and when his conveyance emerged in the city, it would be as stately and splendid as of the emperor himself. St. Jerome complains of the conditions of his time (later part of the 4th century) saying that the feast hosted by many of the bishops out-classed the feasts of the governors. The flow of wealth to monasteries and churches had assumed the proportions of a deluge by the beginning of the 7th century (the age of the revelation of the Qur'an). It had been deeply impressed on the minds that a person who happened to commit a grave sin could be redeemed only by making an offering at a saint's shrine, or a sacrifice at the altar of a church or monastery. Then the same world and its luxuries and comforts abstention from which was the mark of distinction of the monks, lay at their feet. The factor which, in particular, caused this decline was that when the common people developed extreme reverence for the monks because of their undergoing severe exercises of self-discipline and self-denial, hosts of world seeking people also donned the monk's garments and entered their ranks. Then under the garb of feigned poverty they turned acquisition of worldly wealth and possessions into a flourishing business.

In the matter of chastity also monasticism was repeatedly defeated in its fight against nature and defeated well and proper. In the monasteries some exercises of self-mortification were such as required the monks and nuns to live together in one and the same place, and they had often to pass the night in the same bed in their enthusiasm for more and more temptations. St. Evagarius, the well-known monk, has praised the self-control acquired by the Palestinian monks, saying: "They had mastered their passion

so completely that although they bathed with the women together, looked at their bodice, touched them, even embraced them, yet they remained invincible to nature." Although bathing was an odious thing in monasticism, such baths were also taken for the sake of exercise in self-control. At last, about the same Palestine, St. Gregory of Nyssa (d. 396) writes that it bas become a center of wickedness and immorality. Human nature avenges itself on those who fight it. Monasticism fought it and ultimately fell in the pit of immorality the story of which is a most shameful blot on the religious history of the 8th to 11th centuries. An Italian bishop of the 10th century writes: "If the penal law for misconduct is practically enforced against those who perform religious services in the church, none would escape punishment except the boys, and if the law to remove illegitimate children from religious services was also enforced, there might perhaps be left no boy among the attendants of the church. " Books of the medieval authors are replete with the complaints that the nunneries had become houses of prostitution. Within their four walls newborn babies were being massacred; the priests and religious attendants of the church had developed illicit connections even with forbidden relatives; the crime of the unnatural act had spread like an epidemic in the monasteries; and the practice of confession had become a means of immorality in the churches.

From these details one can fully appreciate what corruption of Christianity is the Qur'an alluding to when it says: "The Christians themselves invented monasticism, but they did not observe it as it should have been observed."

55The commentators differ in the explanation of this verse, One group says that the address here is directed to the people who believed in the Prophet Jesus. It is being said to them, "Believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) now; for this you will be given a double reward, one reward for believing in the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) and the other reward for believing in the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). The second group says that the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) are being addressed. They are being admonished to the effect: "Do not rest content with your verbal affirmation of the Faith only, but you should believe sincerely and truly For this you will be given . a double reward: one reward for giving up disbelief and turning to Islam, and the second reward for believing sincerely in Islam and remaining steadfast to it. "The first commentary is supported by vv. 52-S4 of Surah AI-Qasas, and furthermore by the tradition reported by Hadrat Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, according to which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "There are three men who will get a double reward, one of them is a person from among the followers of the earlier Books who believed in this earlier Prophet and then believed in the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace)." (BukhAri Muslim). The second commentary is supported by verse 37 of Surah Saba, which says that the righteous believers will have a double reward. From the point of view of argument both the commentaries are equally weighty. However, considering the theme that follows, one feels that the second commentary is more in keeping with the context here; and in fact the whole theme of this Surah, from beginning to end, supports this very commentary. From the beginning of this Surah- the addressees are the people who had entered Islam after affirming the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet and it is they whom the Surah invites to believe sincerely and truly and not merely verbally with the tongue.

56That is, "He will bless you with such a light of knowledge and vision in the world by which you will be able clearly distinguish at every step the straight way of Islam from the crooked paths of ignorance in different matters of life, and in the Hereafter He will grant you the Light that has been mentioned in verse 12 above.'

57That is, "He will forgive you your errors that you may happen to commit due to human weaknesses in spite of your sincere efforts to fulfill the demands of the Faith, and will also forgive those sins of yours that you had committed in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance."

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58. Surah Al Mujadilah (The Pleading Woman)

Name

This Surah is entitled *Al Mujadalah* as well as *Al Mujadilah*, the title being derived from the word *tujadiluka* of the very first verse. As at the outset mention has been made of the woman who pleaded with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) the case of *zihar* pronounced by her husband and urged him to suggest a way out of the difficult situation in order to save her and, her children's life from ruin, and Allah has described her pleading by the word "*mujadalah*", the Surah came to be known by this very title. If it is read as "*mujadalah*",it would mean "pleading and arguing", and if it is read as "*mujadilah*", it would mean "the woman who pleaded and argued."

Period of Revelation

There is no tradition to tell as to when this incident of pleading and arguing took place, but there is a hint in the subject matter of the Surah on the basis of which it can be said with certainty that it happened some time after the battle of the Trench (Shawwal, 5 A. H.). In Surah Al-Ahzab, Allah while negating that an adopted son could be one's real son, had just said this and no more; "And Allah has not made those of your wives whom you divorce by *zihar* your mothers." But in that Surah there was nothing to the effect that to divorce a wife by *zihar* was a sin or a crime, nor anything about the legal injunction concerning it. Contrary to it, in this Surah the whole law relating to *zihar* has been laid down, which shows that these detailed injunctions were sent down some time after the brief reference to it in Surah Al- Ahzab.

Subject Matter and Topics

In this Surah instructions have been given to the Muslims about the different problems that confronted them at that time.

From the beginning of the Surah to verse 6 legal injunctions about *zihar* have been given, along with which the Muslims have been strictly warned that it is contrary to their profession of the Faith that they should still persist in

the practices of ignorance after they have accepted Islam, that they should break the bounds set by Allah, or refuse to abide by them, or that they should make their own rules and regulations contradictory to them. For this there is not only the punishment of disgrace and humiliation in the world but in the Hereafter too there will be strict accountability for it.

In vv. 7-10 the hypocrites have been taken to task for their secret whisperings and consultations by which they conspired and intrigued against the "Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), and because of their hidden malice and grudge greeted him, like the Jews, in a manner as to wish him ill instead of well. In this connection, the Muslims have been consoled, as if to say: "These whisperings of the hypocrites can do no harm to you; therefore, you should go on doing your duty with full trust in Allah". Besides, they have also been taught this moral lesson:"The true believers, when they talk secretly together, do not talk of sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger if they have to talk secretly together they should talk of goodness and piety."

In vv. 11-13 the Muslims have been taught certain manners of social behavior and given instructions to eradicate certain social evils which were prevalent among the people then as they are today. If some people are sitting in an assembly, and more people arrive, they do not show even the courtesy as to squeeze in so as to make room for others, with the result that the new-comers have to keep standing, or to sit in the door-way, or to go back, or seeing that there is enough room yet start jumping over the people's heads to find room for themselves. This often used to be experienced in the Holy Prophet's assemblies. Therefore, Allah gave the instruction, as if to say:"Do not behave selfishly and narrow mindedly in your assemblies but do accommodate the new-comers also with an open heart."

Likewise, another vice found among the people is that when they go on a visit to somebody (an important person, in particular), they prolong their sitting and do not at all mind that encroaching upon his time unduly would cause him hardship. Then, if he tells them to leave, they mind it; if he himself rises up from their assembly, they complain of his lack of manners; if he tells them indirectly that he has some other business also to attend to, for which he needs time, they turn a deaf ear to his request. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself also had to experience such misconduct of the people, who in their earnestness to benefit by his teaching did not at all see that they were wasting his precious time so badly needed for other important works. At last, Allah in order to eradicate this bad manner, enjoined that when the people are asked to rise up from an assembly, they should rise up and disperse.

Another vice prevalent among the people was that each person wished to have secret counsel individually with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) without any real need, or would like that he should approach him during an assembly and whisper something to him. This was not only embarrassing for the Holy Prophet but also annoying for the people who sat in the assembly. That is why Allah imposed the restriction that anyone who wanted to consult him in private, should first give away something in charity. The object was that the people should be warned of this bad manner and made to give it up. Thus, the restriction was kept in force for a short while, and when the people had corrected their behavior, it was withdrawn.

From verse 14 to the end of the Surah members of the Muslim society, which was a mixture of the sincere Muslims and the hypocrites and the waverers, have been told plainly as to what is the criterion of sincerity in Islam. One kind of Muslims are those who are friends with the enemies of Islam: they do not hesitate for the sake of their interests to

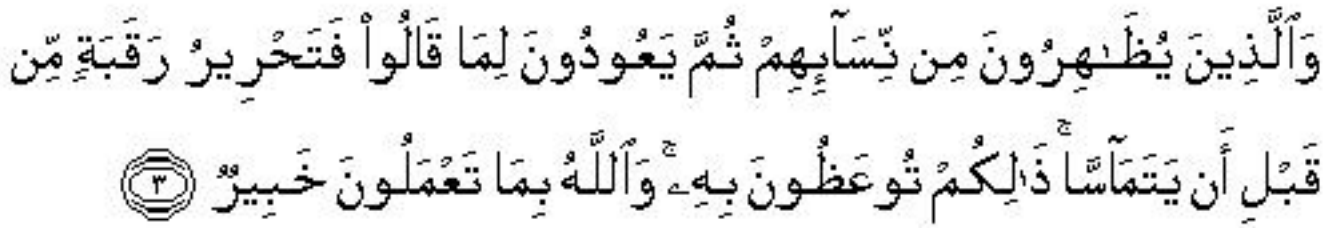
be treacherous to the religion which they profess to believe in; they spread all sorts of doubts and suspicions against Islam and prevent the people from adopting the Way of Allah. But since they are part of the Muslim community their false profession of Faith serves them as a cover and shield. The second kind of Muslims are those who, in the matter of Allah's Religion, do not care even for their own father, brother, children, and family, to say nothing of others. They do not cherish any feeling of love for the person who is an enemy of God and His Messenger and His Religion. Allah in these verses has explicitly stated that the people of the first kind, in fact, belong to Satan's party however hard they may try to convince others of their Islam by swearing oaths. And the honor of belonging to Allah's party is possessed only by the Muslims of the second kind. They alone are the true Muslims: they alone will attain to true success, and with them alone is Allah well pleased.

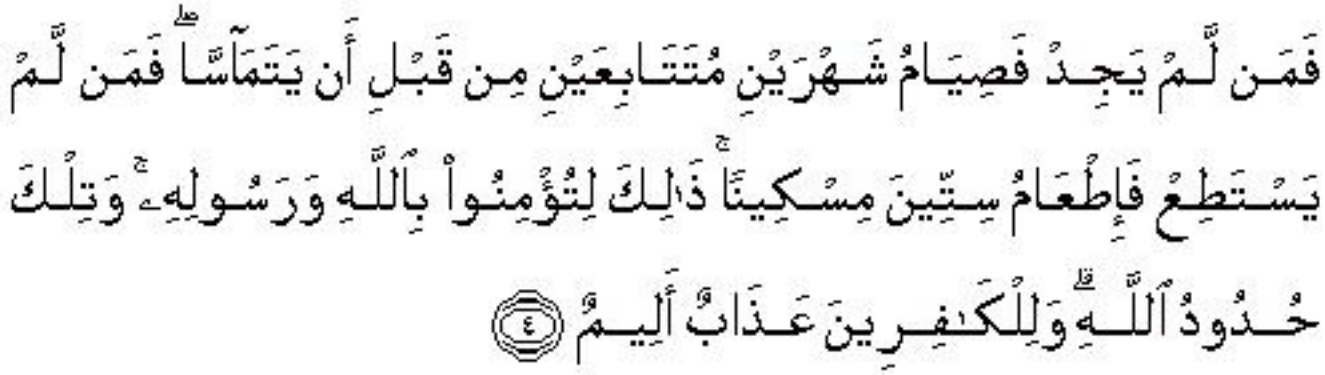
بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

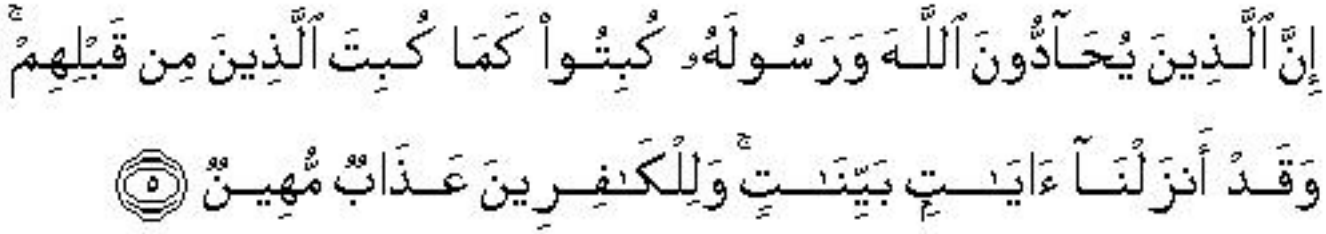
قَدْ سَمِعَ ٱللَّهُ قَوْلَ ٱلَّتِى تُجَٰدِلُكَ فِى زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِىٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱللَّهُ
يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَآ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ يُظَٰهِرُونَ مِنكُم مِّن نِّسَآئِهِم مَّا هُنَّ أُمَّهَٰتِهِمْ ۖ إِنْ أُمَّهَٰتُهُمْ إِلَّا ٱلَّٰٓـِٔى
وَلَدْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنكَرًا مِّنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُورٌ
﴿٢﴾





[1-4] Allah[1] has indeed heard the words of the woman who is pleading with you concerning her husband and is making her complaint to Allah. Allah is hearing your mutual conversation.[2] He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. Those of you who put away their wives by zihar[3] (should know that) their wives are not their mothers. Their mothers are only those who gave them birth.[4] They utter a monstrous thing and a lie.[5] And Allah is All-Pardoning, All Forgiving.[6] Those[7] who pronounce zihar with regard to their wives, then wish to go back on what they had said,[8] shall have to free a slave before the two touch each other. This you are advised to do,[9] and Allah is well aware of whatever you do.[10] And the one who does not find a slave, should fast two successive months before the two touch each other. And the one who is ' unable to do even this, should feed sixty needy ones.[11]



يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوٓا۟ ۚ أَحْصَىٰهُ ٱللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ

عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٦﴾

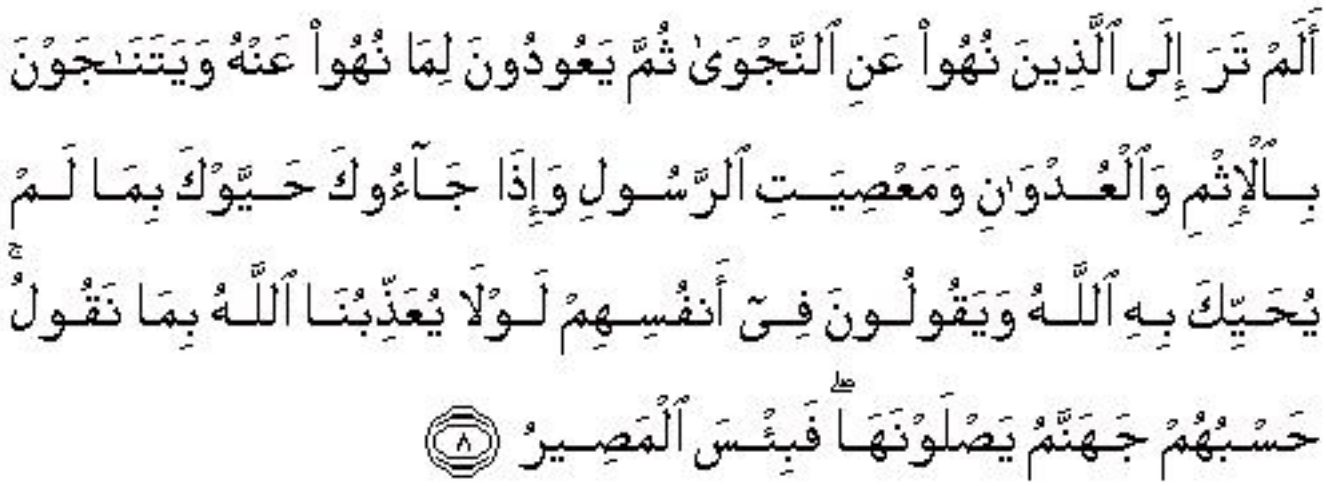
[5-6] This is being enjoined so that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger.[12] These are the bounds set by Allah and for the disbelievers there is a painful punishment.[13] Those who oppose Allah and His Messenger[14] shall be abased as were those before them.[15] We have sent down clear Revelations, and for the disbelievers there is a disgraceful torment.[16] (This torment shall be meted out) on the Day when Allah will raise up all of them again, and will tell them what they had done. They have forgotten it but Allah has kept a' full record of all their deeds,[17] and Allah is witness over everything.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَىٰ

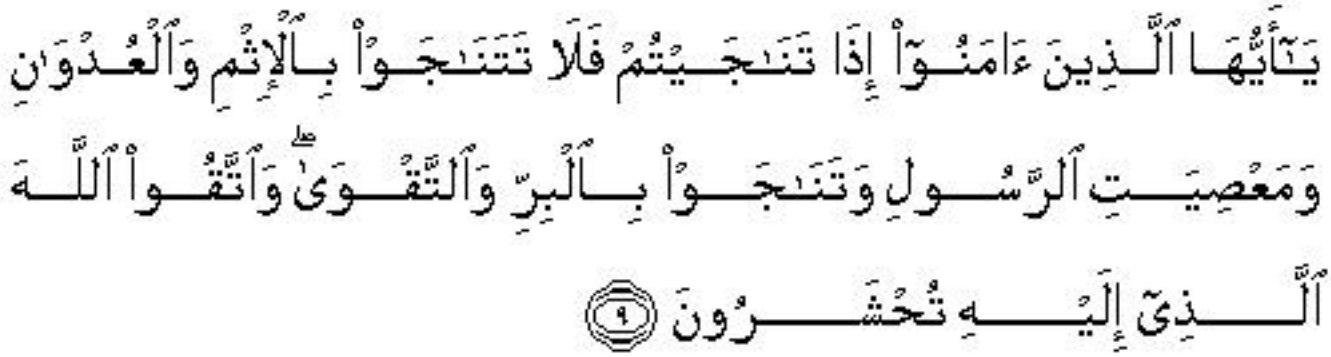
ثَلَٰثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَآ أَدْنَىٰ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَآ

أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا۟ ۖ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ

ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾


أَلَمۡ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ نُهُواْ عَنِ ٱلنَّجۡوَىٰ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا نُهُواْ عَنۡهُ وَيَتَنَٰجَوۡنَ
بِٱلۡإِثۡمِ وَٱلۡعُدۡوَٰنِ وَمَعۡصِيَتِ ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِذَا جَآءُوكَ حَيَّوۡكَ بِمَا لَمۡ
يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ ٱللَّهُ وَيَقُولُونَ فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمۡ لَوۡلَا يُعَذِّبُنَا ٱللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُۚ
حَسۡبُهُمۡ جَهَنَّمُ يَصۡلَوۡنَهَاۖ فَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ٨

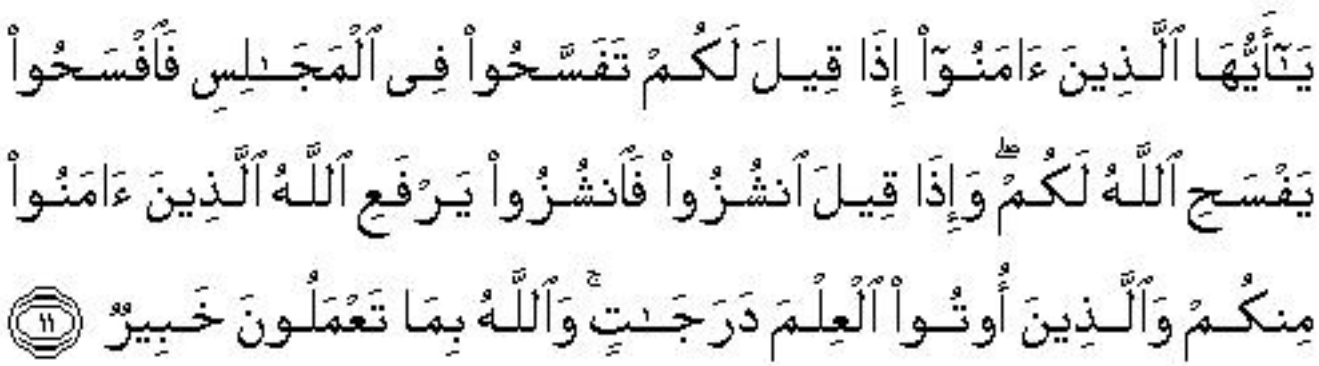
[7-8] Are you not aware[18] that Allah has the knowledge of everything in the heavens and the earth? It cannot be that three men whisper together and Allah is not the fourth of them or five men whisper together and Allah is not the sixth of than.[19] Whether they are fewer than this or more, Allah is with them wherever they are.[20] Then, on the Day of Resurrection, He will tell them what they have done. Allah has the knowledge of everything. Have you not seen those who were forbidden to hold secret consultations, yet they persist in what they were forbidden?[21] They converse secretly together of sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger. And when they come to you, they greet you in a way in which Allah has not greeted you,[22] and say to themselves, "Why does Allah not punish us for what we say?"[23] Hell is enough for them they will become its fuel. What an evil end!


يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا تَنَٰجَيۡتُمۡ فَلَا تَتَنَٰجَوۡاْ بِٱلۡإِثۡمِ وَٱلۡعُدۡوَٰنِ
وَمَعۡصِيَتِ ٱلرَّسُولِ وَتَنَٰجَوۡاْ بِٱلۡبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقۡوَىٰۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ
ٱلَّذِيٓ إِلَيۡهِ تُحۡشَرُونَ ٩

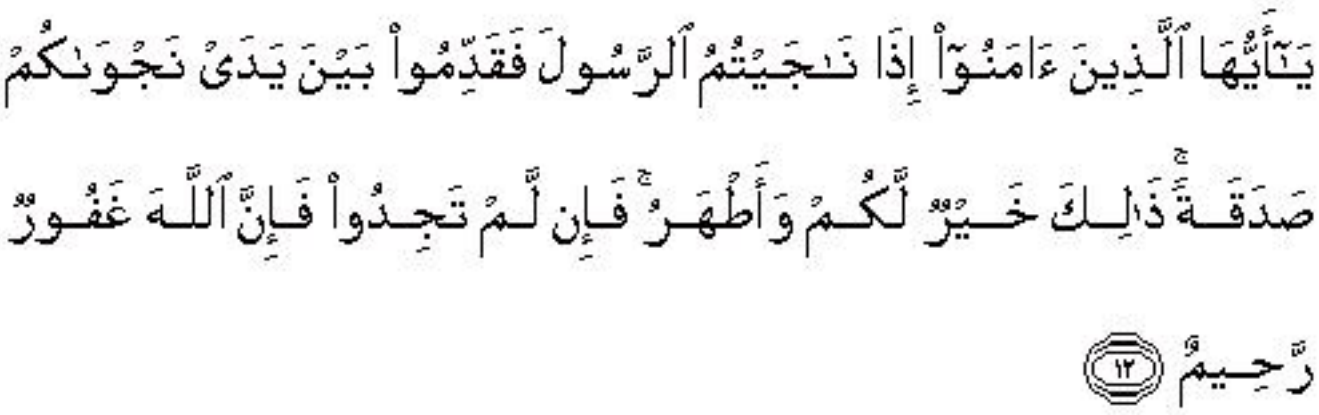

إِنَّمَا ٱلنَّجۡوَىٰ مِنَ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِ لِيَحۡزُنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَلَيۡسَ بِضَآرِّهِمۡ شَيۡـٔٗا إِلَّا
بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ١٠

[9-10] O you who have believed, when you talk secretly together, then do not talk of sin and transgression and

disobedience to the Messenger but talk of virtue and piety, and fear that God, before Whom you shall all be mustered together.[24] Conspiring secretly is the work of Satan. This is done in order to cause grief to the believers, whereas it cannot harm than at all unless it be by Allah's leave. And let the believers put their trust in Allah alone.[25]



[11] O you who have believed, when you are told to make room in your assemblies, you should make room: Allah will make room for you.[26] And when you are told to rise up, you should rise up.[27] Those of you who have believed and have been granted knowledge, Allah will exalt them in ranks[28] and Allah is well aware of whatever you do.



[12] O you who have believed, when you consult the Messenger in private, you should give something in charity before your consultation.[29] This is better for you and purer, However, if you do not have the means to give charity, Allah is indeed All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.

ءَأَشْفَقْتُمْ أَن تُقَدِّمُوا۟ بَيْنَ يَدَىْ نَجْوَىٰكُمْ صَدَقَٰتٍ ۚ فَإِذْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا۟ وَتَابَ
ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

[13] Are you afraid that before your consultation in private, you will have to give charity? Well, if you do not do so, and Allah has forgiven you this-then establish the Salat and practice the Zakat regularly and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah is aware of whatever you do.[30]

۞ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ قَوْمًا غَضِبَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مَّا هُم مِّنكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ
وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى ٱلْكَذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٦﴾

لَّن تُغْنِىَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَٰلُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

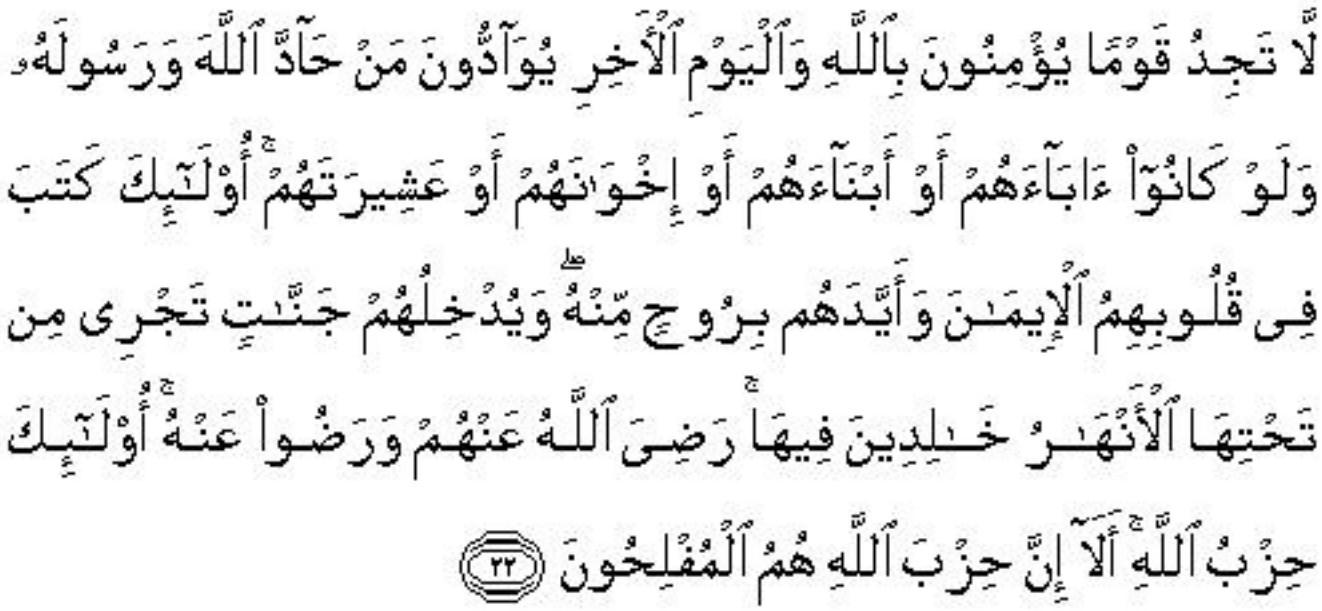
يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُۥ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ ۖ وَيَحْسَبُونَ
أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلْكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

ٱسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ ذِكْرَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۚ أَلَآ
إِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُحَآدُّونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ فِى ٱلْأَذَلِّينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا۠ وَرُسُلِىٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢١﴾

[14-21] Have you not seen those who have taken as friends a people who are under Allah's wrath?[31] They are neither yours nor theirs,[32] and they swear to a falsehood knowingly.[33] Allah has prepared a severe torment for them. Evil are the deeds they are doing! They have made their oaths a covering under which they debar others from the Way of Allah.[34] For this they shall have a disgraceful torment. Neither shall their riches avail them anything to protect them from Allah nor their children. They are the fellows of Hell in which they shall live for ever. The Day Allah raises them up all, they shall swear to Him as they swear to you,[35] thinking that their oaths will avail them something. Know it well that they are utter liars. Satan has overpowered them and has caused them to forget God's remembrance. They are of Satan's party. Know it well that those of Satan's party indeed are the real losers. Surely the most abject of the creatures are those who resist Allah and His Messenger. Allah has written down: "I and My Messengers shall most certainly prevail."[36] Allah is All-Powerful and All-Mighty.



لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ يُوَآدُّونَ مَنْ حَآدَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ
وَلَوْ كَانُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَتَبَ
فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
حِزْبُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[22] You will never find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who have opposed Allah and His Messenger, even though they be their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kinsfolk.[37] They are those in whose hearts Allah has inscribed faith and has strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. He will admit them to such Gardens underneath which rivers will be flowing, to dwell there in for ever. Allah is well pleased with them and they with Allah. They are of Allah's party. Know it well that those of Allah's party alone are truly successful!

1Here, hearing does not merely imply hearing a complaint but also redressing the grievances

2The translators generally have translated these sentences in the past tense, which tends to give the meaning that the woman had left after relating her complaint and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) some time later might have received this Revelation. That is why Allah has said: We indeed heard what the woman said, who was pleading with you and complaining to Us, and We were at that time hearing the conversation of both of you." But in most of the traditions that have been reported in the Hadith about this incident, it has been stated that right at the rime when the woman was relating the zihar pronounced by her husband and complaining to the Holy Prophet to the effect that if she was separated from her husband, she and her children would be ruined, the state of receiving Revelation appeared on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and these verse's were sent down. On this basis we have preferred rendering these sentences in the present tense.

The lady concerning whom these verses were sent down was Khaulah bint-Tha`labah of the Khazraj tribe, and her husband, Aus bin Samit Ansari, was brother of Hadrat `Ubadah bin Samit, the chief of the Aus tribe. The story of the zihar upon her is related in detail below. What is worth mentioning here is that the incident of the lady's complaint being heard by Allah Almighty and the coming down of the Divine command immediately to redress her grievance was an event that earned her a place of honor and esteem among the Companions. Ibn Abi Hatim and Baihaqi have related that once Hadrat `Umar was on

his way out with some companions. On the way he came across a woman, who stopped him; he immediately stopped and listened to what she had to say patiently with his head bent down, and did not move till she had finished. One of the companions said: 'O Commander of the Faithful, you held back the Quraish chiefs for so long for the sake of this old woman!" Hadrat `Umar said: "Do you know who she is? She is Khaulah bint-Tha'labah, the lady whose complaint was heard at the seventh heaven. By God! even if she had kept me standing till the night, I would have kept standing; I would only have excused myself at the Prayer times." Ibn `Abdul Barr has related in Al-Isti ab this tradition from Qatadah: "When Hadrat `Umar came across this lady, on the way, he greeted her. After answering his greeting, she said, "Hey, O `Umar, there was a time when I saw you at the `Ukaz, festival. Then you were called `Umair. You tended goats with the shepherd's staff in your hand. Then, not very long after this, you began to be called `Umar. Then a time came when the people began addressing you as Commander of the Faithful. So, fear Allah with regard to your subjects, and remember that the one who fears Allah's punishment, for him the stranger also is like a close kinsman, and the one who fears death, may well lose that very thing which he wants to save.' At this, jarud 'Abdi, who was accompanying Hadrat `Umar, said: O woman, you have talked insolently to the Commander of the Faithful. " Thereupon Hadrat `Umar said: Let her say whatever she has to say. Do you know who she is?-She was heard at the seventh heaven. So, she deserves to be heard longer and with greater attention by 'Umar." Imam Bukhari also has related briefly a story resembling this in his History.

3Among the Arabs it often so happened that during a family quarrel, the husband in the heat of the moment would say to his wife: Ant-i alayya ka-zahr-i ammi which literally means: "You are for me as the back of my mother." But its real meaning is: "To have sexual relations with you would be like having sexual relations with my mother. " Such words are still uttered by the foolish people, who, as the result of a family quarrel, declare the wife to be like their mother, or sister, or daughter, and make her unlawful for themselves like the prohibited women. This is called zihar. Zahr in Arabic is metaphorically used for riding and mounting. Thus, the conveyance is called zahr, because man rides on its back. As this word was employed in order to make the wife unlawful the formula was termed 'zihar". In the pre-Islamic days this was looked upon as tantamount to the pronouncement of divorce, even of greater effect than that, for they took it to mean that the husband was not only severing his marital relations with his wife but was also declaring her to be unlawful for himself like his mother. On this very basis, the Arabs thought reunion could be possible after a divorce but it was impossible after zihar.

4This is Allah's first decision concerning zihar It means that if a person shamelessly compares the wife to his mother, his this utterance does not make his wife his mother, nor is she endowed with the sanctity that the mother enjoys. The mother's being mother is an actual fact, for she has given birth to the man. On this very ground, she is eternally sacred and prohibited. Now, how will the woman who has not given him birth become his mother simply by a word of mouth, and how will sanctity and prohibition be established for her by reason, morality and law which, by virtue of this actual fact, is only reserved for the mother who gave birth? Thus, Allah by this condemnation abolished the custom of the pre-Islamic ignorance according to which the marriage contract between the husband pronouncing zihar and the wife

stood dissolved and she became absolutely forbidden for him like the mother

5That is, "'To liken the wife to the mother is, in the first place, an absurd and shameful thing which no noble person should ever think of, not to speak of uttering it with the tongue. Secondly, it is also a falsehood, for if the one who says such a thing is giving the news that his wife has now become his mother for him, he is uttering falsehood, and if he is declaring that he has henceforth bestowed on his wife the sanctity of the mother, even then his claim is false, for God has not given him the authority that he may treat a woman as his wife as long as he likes and then start treating her as his mother as and when he likes. The lawgiver is Allah Almighty, not he, and Allah has included in the order of motherhood the grandmothers, both paternal and maternal, mother-in-law, foster mother and the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) along with the woman who gave birth. Nobody has the right to include of his own whim another woman in this order, not to speak of the woman who has been his wife. This gives the second legal injunction. To pronounce zihar is a grave sin and forbidden act, the violation of which deserves to be punished.

6That is, Such an utterance actually deserves to be punished much more severely, but it is Allah's kindness that He has, firstly, abolished the custom of ignorance and saved your family life from utter ruin, and secondly, has prescribed the lightest punishment for the culprits. And His supreme kindness is that the punishment too, is not any form of physical torture or imprisonment, but a few acts of worship and virtue, which arc meant to reform you and help spread good in your society. In this connection, one should also understand that the acts of worship that have been prescribed by Islam as expiations for certain crimes and sins are neither mere punishments that they may be without the spirit of worship, nor mere acts of worship that they m. y entail no pain and suffering of the punishment. Hut both the aspects have been combined in them so that the culprit may experience pain as well as expiate his sin by means of performing a virtue and act of worship.

7From here begins the statement of the legal injunctions concerning zihar. To understand this, it is necessary that one should keep in mind the incidents of zihar that took place in the time of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), for the code of law pertaining to zihar is derived from the verses and the judgments that the Holy Prophet gave after the revelation of these verses in the cases of zihar brought before him.

According to Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, the first case of zihar in Islam was the one relating to Aus bin Samit Ansari, on whose wife Khaulah's complaint Allah sent down these verse:. Although the details of this case that the traditionists have cited from several reporters contain minor differences, yet the elements of legal import and significance are almost agreed upon. A resume of these traditions is as follows:

Hadrat Aus bin Samit had grown a little peevish in old age and according to Some traditions, had also developed an ailment resembling insanity. The reporters have described it by the word lamam which is

not exactly madness in Arabic but a state resembling it. In this state he had also pronounced zihar on his wife several times before, but in Islam this was the first occasion that he pronounced it as the result of a quarrel with her. Thereupon, his wife appeared before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and relating the whole story to him, said: "O Messenger of Allah: Is there any way out of this situation that could save me and my children from ruin?" The Holy Prophet's reply has been reported in different words by different reporters. In some traditions the words are to the effect: "No command has been given to me so far in this regard," and in some others the words are: "In my opinion you have become unlawful to him," and in still others: "You arc unlawful to him." At this, she began to cry and complain and told the Holy Prophet over and over again that her husband had not pronounced the words of divorce; therefore, he should suggest a way by which she and her children and her old husband's life could be saved from ruin. But the Holy Prophet gave her the same reply every time. In the meantime he underwent the state of receiving revelation and these verses were revealed. After this, he said to her (and according to other traditions, he called her husband and told him) to free a slave. When they expressed their inability to do so, he said that the husband would have to observe two months' fast consecutively. She said: "Aus is such a man that unless he eats and drinks three times a day, his sight starts failing him. " The Holy Prophet said, "Then, you will have to feed 60 poor people. " They submitted that they did not have the means for that unless they were helped out by him. Thereupon the Holy Prophet gave them food articles that could suffice 60 men for two meals. Different quantities of it have been mentioned in different traditions. According to some traditions Hadrat Khaulah herself gave to her husband food articles equal in quantity to those given by the Holy Prophet so that he may perform the expiation. (Ibn Jarir, Musnad Ahmad Abu Da'ud, Ibn Abi Hatim).

The second incident of zihar relates to Salamah bin Sakhr Bayadi. He had a somewhat abnormal appetite for sex. When the fasting month of Ramadan came, he, fearing that he might lose self-control in daytime in the state of fasting, pronounced zihar on his wife till the end of Ramadan. Hut he could not adhere to his pledge and went in to his wife one night. Penitent he appeared before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and told him what he had done. He told him to release a slave. He said he had no one else beside his wife, whom he could release. The Holy Prophet then told him to observe two months' consecutive fast. He replied that it was during obligatory fasting itself that he had been unable to control himself and had become involved in trouble. The Holy Prophet then said that he should feed 60 poor people, He replied that they were poor themselves and had gone to bed at night without food. Thereupon the Holy Prophet got him a sufficient quantity of food articles from the collector of the zihar of Bani Zurayq so that he may feed 60 persons and may also save some thing for his children. (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud. Tirmadhi

The third incident that has been related without any reference to the name is that a man pronounced zihar on his wife and then had sexual intercourse with her even before making the expiation Then, when he came to the Holy Prophet to ask for the legal verdict, he commanded him to abstain from her till he had made the expiation. (Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa i Ibn Majah).

The fourth incident is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself heard a man calling his wife as sister. Thereupon he said to him angrily: "Is she your sister?" But he did not regard it as zihar,. (Abu Da'ud).

These four are the reliable incidents that have been related in the Hadith through authentic channels, and through them only can one adequately understand the Qur'anic injunctions that have been laid down in the following verses.

8Literally: "that they return to that which they said," but in view of the Arabic language and idiom great differences have occurred in determining the meaning of these words:

Their one meaning can be: "If they repeat the words of zihar after they have uttered them once. " The Zahiriyyah and Bukair bin al-Ashajj and Yahya bin Ziyad al-Farm' hold this very view, and a saying from `Ata' bin Abi Rabah also has been reported in support of the same. According to-them, the pronouncement of zihar once is forgiven; however, if a person repeats it, he becomes liable to make the expiation. Hut this commentary is expressly wrong for two reasons: first, that Allah has condemned zihar as an absurd thing and a falsehood and then prescribed a penalty for it. Now, it is not conceivable that if a man utters falsehood or absurdities once he should be excused and if he utters it the second time he should make himself liable to punishment. The second reason of its being wrong is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) never asked the man pronouncing zihrir whether he had pronounced it once or twice.

Its second meaning is "If the people who were used to uttering zihar in the pre Islamic days of ignorance, repeat it in Islam, they will incur this punishment." This would mean that zihar should by itself be liable to punishment, and who ever utters the words of zihar for his wife, should become liable to make the expiation whether he may divorce the wife after it, or his wife may die; or he may have no intention of resuming conjugal relations with his wife. This view is hold by Ta-us Mujahid, Sha'bi, Zuhri, Sufyan Thauri and Qatadah from among the jurists They say that if the woman dies after the zihar, the husband cannot inherit her unless he made: the expiation.

The third meaning is: "If after uttering the words of zihar the man may wish to go back on his words and makr amends for what he said " In other words, 'ada lima gala means that the man revoked what he had said.

The fourth meaning is: "If the man may wish to make lawful what he had made unlawful for himself by pronouncing the zihar " In ocher words, it would mean that the person who had made a thing unlawful for himself has now returned to make it lawful views.

Most of the jurists have preferred and adopted one of these last two

9In other words: "This you are being enjoined for your own correction and admonition so that the members of Muslim society may give up this evil custom of ignorance and none of you may commit this folly. If you have to quarrel with your wife, you may quarrel with her like good people; if you intend to divorce her, then you should divorce her gracefully. It is absurd that you should compare her to your mother and sister whenever you have a quarrel with her. "

10That is, "Allah will certainly know, even if nobody else does, if a person pronounces zihar, and then quietly resumes normal conjugal relations with his wife without first atoning for the offense. Such people cannot in any way escape Allah's punishment. "

11This is the Divine commandment in respect of zihar. The following arc the details of the law that the Jurists of Islam have derived from the words of this verse, the judgments of the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and the general principles of Islam.

(1) This law of zahir abrogates the Arabian custom of ignorance according to which the marriage contract stood annulled and the woman became permanently forbidden to the husband. Likewise, this law annuls all those laws and customs which regard zihar as a meaningless custom, which is of no legal effect, and permit man to continue having marital relations with his wife as usual even after having compared her to his mother and other prohibited relations. For in the sight of Islam the sanctity of the mother and other prohibited relations is not such an ordinary thing that a man may even think of the comparison between them and his wife, not W speak of uttering it with the tongue. Between the two extremes the position adopted by the Islamic law in this regard is based on three principles: (a) That the marriage contract is not annulled by zihar, but the woman continues to be the husband's wife as usual, (b) that the woman becomes only temporarily prohibited to the man by zihar, and (c) that this prohibition operates till the time that the husband makes the expiation, and that the expiation only can remove the prohibition

(2) As for the person pronouncing zihar, it is agreed that the zihar of that husband is only reliable, who is of sound mind and mature age and pronounces the words of zihar in his right senses; the zihar of the child or of the insane person is not reliable. Moreover, the zihar of the person who might not be in his right senses at the time of pronouncing its words is also not reliable, e.g. if he mutters words during sleep, or is senseless, due to any reason. However, the jurists have differed on the following points:

(a) About -the person who pronounces zihar in the state of intoxication a great majority of them including the four Imams have given the verdict that since he has intentionally used the intoxicant, his zihar, like his divorce, will be regarded as valid legally, for he has undergone this state deliberately. However, if he has taken a medicine on account of illness and has been intoxicated, or has been compelled to take wine in intense thirst in order to save life, his zihar and divorce pronounced in that state will not be enforced. This very view is held by the Hanafis and the Shafe`is and the Hanbalis and the same also was the view commonly held by the Companions of the Holy Prophet. Contrary to it, Hadrat `Uthman held the view that the zihar and divorce pronounced in the state of intoxication are not reliable. Imam Tahawi and Karkhi from among the Hanafis hold this view as preferable and a statement of Imam Shafa' i also supports it. According to the MalikIs the zihar pronounced in the state of intoxication will be reliable in case the person concerned has not wholly lost his senses, but talks sensibly and

coherently and knows what he is saying.

(b) According to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Malik, only the zihar of the husband who is a Muslim is reliable. These injunctions do not apply to the non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic state, for the Qur'anic words: Alladhina yazahiruna minkum: "those from among you who put away their wives by zihar, have been addressed to the Muslims, and the fasting, which is one of the three kinds of the expiations prescribed in the Qur'an, obviously cannot be applicable to the non-Muslim subjects. According to Imam Shafe`i and Imam Ahmad, these injunctions will be applicable both to the Muslims and to the non-Muslims; however, there is no fasting for the non-Muslim subject: he may only free a slave or feed 60 poor.

(c) Can a woman also, like a man, pronounce zihar? For instance will it be zihar if she says to her husband: `You are for me as my father, or I am for you like your mother? " The four Imams say that this is not zihar and , the legal injunctions of zihar do not apply to it at all. For the Qur'an in express words has laid down these injunctions in respect of the cases , where the husbands pronounce zihar on their wives, and the authority to pronounce zihar, can be held only by him who holds the authority to pronounce divorce. Just as the Shari'ah not given the woman the power to divorce the husband, so also it has not given her the power to make her own self unlawful to her husband. This same is the view of Sufyan Thauri, Ishaq bin Rahawaiyh, Abu Thaur and Laith bin Sa'd. They regard such a pronouncement by a woman as meaningless and without effect Imam Abu Yusuf. says that though this is not ,zihar, it will entail for the woman the atonement of the oath, for the pronouncement of such words by the woman means that she has sworn not to have marital relations with her husband. This same is the view of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal as cited by Ibn Qadamah. Imam Auza'i says that if before marriage the woman said that if she marred a particular man he would be for her as her father, it would be .zihar, and if she says such a thing after marriage it would be in the nature of an oath, which would entail the atonement for the oath. Contrary to it, Hasan Basri, Zuhri, Ibrahim Nakha'i and Hasan bin Ziyad Lu'lu'i say that this is zihar and will entail the expiation prescribed for zihar by the woman; however, the woman will not have the right to prevent the husband from coming in to her before making the expiation. Ibrahim Nakha`i has cited this incident in support of this view. Mus'ab, son of Hadrat Zubair, sent a proposal of marriage to 'A'ishah bint Talhah. She turned down the proposal, saying: "If I marred him, he would be for me as the back of my father (huwa `alayya ka-zahr-i abi). " After some time, she became willing to marry him. When the jurists of Madinah were asked for their ruling on it, many jurists including several Companions of the Holy Prophet ruled that 'A'ishah would have to make an expiation for the zihar. After citing this incident Ibrahim Nakha'i has expressed his own opinion, saying that if 'A'ishah had said this thing after the marriage it would not have entailed the expiation. But since she said this before marriage when she had the option to marry, or not to marry, the expiation became obligatory on her.

(3) The excuse of a sensible and mature person, who pronounces the express words of zihar in his full senses, cannot be acceptable that he uttered the words in a state of anger, or in jest, or in lout, or that he had no intention of the zihar. However, in respect of the.words which are not express in this regard, and which can give different meanings, the injunction will vary according to their nature. Below we shall tell what words of zihar arc express and what words are not express.

(4) It is agreed upon by all that zihar can be pronounced on the woman who is a wedded wife of the man. However, there is a difference of opinion whether zihar can be pronounced on the other woman also or not. In

this matter, the following are the different viewpoints:

The Hanafis say that if a man says to the other woman: "If I marry you, you will be for me as the back of my mother," then whenever he marries her, he will not be allowed to touch her without first making the expiation. This same is the verdict of Hadrat 'Umar. During his caliphate a man said such words to a woman and afterwards married her. Hadrat 'Umar ruled that he would have to make the expiation for the zihar.

The Malikis and the Hanbalis also have expressed the same opinion, and they add this to it: If the woman was not specified, but the man said words to the effect that all women were for him like that, then whichever woman he married, he would have to make the expiation before touching her. The same is the opinion of Sa'id bin al-Musayyab, 'Urwah bin Zubair, 'Ata' bin Abi Rabah, Hasan Basri and Ishaq bin Rahawaiyh.

The Shafe'is say that zihar before marriage is meaningless. Ibn 'Abbas and Qatadah also hold the same opinion.

(5) Can zihar be pronounced for a fixed term? The Hanafis and the Shafe`is say that if a man has pronounced zihar for a certain period of time, he will have to make the expiation if he touches the wife before the expiry of that time; however, the zihar will become ineffective when the time has elapsed. Its argument is the incident concerning Salamah bin Sakhr Bayadi, who had pronounced zihar upon his wifc for the month of Ramadan, and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) did not tell him that the fixation of the time limit was meaningless. On the contrary, Imam Malik and Ibn Abi Laila say that whenever zihar is pronounced it will be for ever and the specification of time will be of no effect, for the prohibition that has occurred cannot become void of its own accord on the expiry of the time.

(6) If the zihar is conditional, expiation will become incumbent whenever the condition is violated. For instance, if a man says to his wife: "If I enter the houses you will be to me as the back of my mother," then whenever he enters his house, it will be unlawful for him to touch his wife without first making-the expiation.

(7) In case the words of zihar, are repeated several times to a wife, the Hanafis ant the Shafe`is say that whether this is done in one sitting or in several sittings, it will entail as many expiations as the number of the times the word were repeated, unless the man might have repeated the words only to stress what he had said before. Contrary to this, Imam Malik and lmam Ahmad bin Hanbal say that no matter how often the wards are repeated, it will entail only one expiation. The same is the view of Sha`bi, Ta'us, `Ata` bin Abi Rabah Hasan Basri and Auza`i (may Allah show mercy to all of them). Hadrat 'All's ruling is that if the repetition is made in one sitting, there will be only one expiation, and if in different sittings, then there will be as many expiations as the number of the sittings in which the repetition was made. The same is the view of Qatadah ant 'Amr bin Dinar.

(8) If zihar is pronounced upon two or more wives simultaneously in one and the same set of words, e.g. if addressing them the husband says: “You are to me as the back of my mother," the Hanafis and the Shafe`is say that separate expiations will have to be made to make each of them lawful. The same is the opinion of Hadrat `Umar, Hadrat `Ali, `Urwah bin Zubair, Ta'us, `Ata, Hasan Basri, Ibrahim Nakha`i, Sufyan Thauri and Ibn Shihab Zuhri. Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad say that in this case one and the same expiation will suffice for all. Rabi`ah, Auza`i, Ishaq bin Riihawaiyh and Abu Thaur also have expressed the same opinion.

(9) It is agreed upon by all that if a man repeats zihar, again after making expiation for it once, the wife will not be lawful to him unless he makes another expiation

(10) Although it is sinful, according to the four Imams, to establish marital relations with the wife before malting the expiation, and the man should ask for Allah's forgiveness for it, and should refrain from repeating such a thing, yet it will entail only one expiation. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had exhorted the people who had committed such an offense in his time to implore Allah for forgiveness and not to touch the wife unless they had made the expiation, but he did not enjoin any additional expiation besides the expiation for zihar Hadrat `Amr bin `As, Qabisah bin Dhu'aib, Sa'id bin Jubair, Zuhri and Qatadah say that it will entail two expiations, and Hasan Basri and Ibrahim Nakha'i have given the opinion that this will entail three expiations, Probably the Ahadith in which the Holy Prophet gave his ruling on this matter did not reach these scholars.

(11) As to comparison of the wife to whom would be zihar, the jurists have expressed different views:

'Amir Sha'bi says that her comparison to the mother only is zihar, and the Zahiriyyah say that her comparison only to the mother's back is zihar, for the injunction dces not supply to anything else. No section of the Islamic jurists, however; agrees with them in this regard, for the reason given by the Qur'an of the wife's comparison to the mother being sinful is that it is absurd and a lie. Now, obviously comparison of the wife to the women whose sanctity is just like the mother's would be as absurd as it is in the case of the mother Therefore, there is no reason why the commandment in that case should not be the same as in the can of the comparison to the mother.

The Hanafis say that in this command are included all those women, who are permanently prohibited to man on the basis of lineage, fosterage, or marital relationship, but the women who may only be temporarily prohibited and can become lawful at any time, are not included in this, e.g. the wife's sister, her maternal and paternal aunts, or another woman, who is not the men's wedded wife. It will be zihar if comparison is made with such a part of the permanently prohibited woman's body as is forbidden for men to look at. However, it will not be ,zihar if comparison is made of the wife's hand, foot, head, hair, tooth, etc. to the back of a permanently prohibited woman, or of the wife to her head, hand, foot, etc. for it is not unlawful to look at these parts of the mother's or sister's body. Likewise, to say to the wife: "Your hand is like my mother's hand, or your foot is like my mother's foot," is not zihar.

The Shafe`is say that in this command are included only those women, who were, and are, permanently prohibited, i.e. mother, sister, daughter etc. but this does not include those women, who may have been lawful at some time, e.g.. the foster-mother, foster-sister, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or those who may become lawful at nay time, e.g. the wife's the wife's sister. Apart from these temporarily prohibited women, it will be zihar to compare the wife to such parts of the permanently prohibited woman's body as are not normally mentioned out of reverence and respect, As for those parts which are mentioned out of reverence and respect, it will be zihar to make a comparison with them only in case this is done with the intention of zihar; for instance, if a man says to his wife: "Your are to me like my mother's eye or life, or like my mother's hand, foot or belly," or he compares the wife's belly, or breast, with the mother's belly, or breast, or says that the wife's head, back or hand is to him as his mother," it will be zihar if said with the intention of zihar and reverence if said with the intention of reverence.

The Malikis say that to compare the wife to any of the prohibited women is zihar. so much so that even if a man says to his wife, "You are to me like the back of such and such other woman," it. would be zihar . Furthermore, they say that it would be zihar to compare any part of the mother's body, or of an eternally prohibited woman's body, to the wife, or to any part of the wife's body, without any condition that the parts thus compared be such as may look at any part of the mother's body as he looks at the wife's.

The Hanbalis include in this command all those women, who may be eternally prohibited, though they may have been lawful before, e.g. the mother-in law, or foster-mother. As for the women who may become lawful at any time later (e.g. the wife's sister), Imam Ahmad's one statement concerning them is that comparison to them is not zihar . Moreover, according to the Hanbalis to compare any part of the wife's body to any part of the prohibited woman's comes under ,zihar. However, the non-permanent parts like the hair, nails, teeth, etc. are excluded from this command.

(12) 'The jurists are agreed that to say to the wife: "You are to me like the back of my mother," is expressly zihar, for the Arabs used this very formula for zihar, and the Qur'anic command also was sent down only concerning this. However, the jurists have disputed as to which of the other words are such as clearly come under zihar, and which are such whose amounting or not amounting to zihar will be dependent upon the speake's intention.

With the Hanafis the express words of zihar are those in which a lawful woman (the wife) may have been clearly compared to an unlawful woman (i.e. any woman from among the eternally prohibited women), or compared to such part of the body which is forbidden for a man to look at, like saying: "You are to me like the belly or the thigh of my mother, or of such and such prohibited woman. " Apart from these, the other words are disputed. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, if the man says: "You are forbidden to me like the back of my mother," it is expressly zihar, but according to Imams Abu Yusuf and Muhammad it would be zihar if there was the intention of zihar and divorce if there was the intention of divorce, The view generally held by-the Hanafis is that if the man says: "You arc as my mother, or like my mother," it is zihar if said with the intention of zihar and irrevocable divorce if said with the intention of divorce, and meaningless if there was no such intention at all However, according to Imam Muhammad this is express zihar. If the man calls his wife his mother or sister or daughter, it is an absurdity upon which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had expressed great anger, but he did not regard it as zihar. If the man says "You are forbidden to me like my mother", it would be zihar if said with the intention of zihar and divorce if said with the intention of divorce, and zihar if there was no intention at all. If he says: "You are to me like my mother, or as my mother," his intention will be questioned: if he said this out of respect and reverence, it would be respect and reverence, if with the intention of divorce, it would be divorce: if there was no intention whatever, it would be meaningless according to Imam Abu Hanifah, but would entail the atonement of the oath, though not of zihar according to Imam Abu Yusuf and would be zihar according to Imam Muhammad.

With the Shafe'is the express words of zihar are that a man should say to his wife: "You are to me, or with me, or for me, like the back of my mother, or you are like the back of my mother, or your body, or your self, is to me like the body or self of my mother. " Apart from these, in respect of all other words the decision will be dependent on the speaker's intention

According to the Hanbalis, every such word by which a man may have compared his wife, or a part from among the permanent parts of her body, to a prohibited woman, or to a part from among the permanent parts of the prohibited woman's body clearly, would be regarded as express in the matter of zihar

The Malikis' viewpoint also is almost the same. However, in the details they have given different rulings For instance, according to them, a man's saying to his wife: "You are to me as my mother, or like my mother," is zihar, if said with the intention, of zihar, divorce if said with the intention of divorce, and zihar if there was no intention at all. According to the Hanbalis, it may be regarded only as ,zihar provided there was the intention. If a man says to his wife: "You are my mother," this is zIhar according to the MalikIs, but according to the Hanbalis it would be zihar if said in a state of anger on account of a quarrel, and it would not be zihar if it was said out of lout and affection, although it is wrong. If a man says: "You have divorce on you: you are like my mother," according to the Hanbalis this is divorce, not zihar, and if he says: "You arc like my mother: you have divorce on you," both zihar and divorce will take place. To say: you are forbidden to me as the back of my mother," is zihar according to both the Malikis and the Hanbalis, whether the words were said with the intention of divorce, or without any intention.

In this discussion about the words of zihar one should clearly understand that aII the disputes of the jurists in this regard relate to the words and usage of the Arabic language. Obviously the people who speak other languages will neither pronounce zihar in Arabic nor will utter an exact and accurate translation of the Arabic words and sentences at the time they pronounce zihar. Therefore, if one has to decide whether a word or a sentence comes under the definition of zihar, or not, one should not examine it from the point of view of its being an exact translation of the words given by the jurists, but one should only see whether the speaker had compared his wife in the sexual context clearly to any of the women in the prohibited degrees, or whether there was the probability of other meanings also in his words. Its most conspicuous example is the Arabic sentence itself about which all the jurists and commentators are agreed that this very sentence was used for zihar in Arabic, i.e. Ant-i alayya ka-zahr-i ummi("You are to me like the back of my mother"). Probably in no other language of the world can the man pronouncing zihar use words that may be a literal translation of this Arabic sentence. However, he can certainly use words of his own language, which may have precisely the same meaning for which an Arab used this sentence. The meaning of this sentence was: "To have sexual intercourse"with you would be like having sexual intercourse with my mother," or as some foolish person might say to his wife: "If I come in to you, I would be going in to my mother."

(13) In the Holy Qur'an what has been mentioned as entailing the expiation is not the mere zihar but one's and (returning) after the zihar. That is, if a man only pronounces the zihar and does not `return", he does not incur any expiation. Now, the question is: What is this and {returning) that entails the expiation? In this regard, the jurists have held the following viewpoints:

The Hanafis say that and is the intention to have the sexual intercourse, but it does not mean that the mere intention should entail the expiation; so much so that the man may have to make the expiation even if he does not take any practical step after the intention. But its correct meaning is that the man who wishes to remove the prohibition that he had imposed on him by by pronouncing zihar of severing marital relations with his wife, should first make the expiation, for this prohibition cannot be removed without the expiation.

Three statements have been cited from Imam Malik in this regard, but his most well known and authentic statement, according to the MalikIs, is in full agreement with the Hanafi view point, as stated above. He says that what the man had made unlawful for himself by zihar was the sexual relation with his wife. Now, and means that he should return to establish the same relation with her.

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal's view as cited by Ibn Qadamah is almost the same as of the two Imams as noted above. He says that after the zihar expiation has necessarily to be made to make the sexual intercourse law ful. The man who wants to make it lawful after having pronounced zihar, in fact, wants to return from the prohibition. Therefore, ho has been enjoined to make the expiation before making it lawful for himself, precisely like the man who wants to make the other woman lawful for himself and has to marry her before she could be lawful for him.

Imam Shafe`is viewpoint is quite different. He says that a man's keeping his wife as usual and detaining her in wedlock as before after having pronounced zihar, is aud, for as soon as he pronounced zihar he in fact, forbade himself to keep her as wife. Therefore, if he did not divorce her immediately on pronouncing zihar and kept her back for so long that he could utter the words of divorce, he committed and and the expiation became incumbent upon him. This means that if after pronouncing zIhar the man did not pronounce divorce in the next breath, expiation would become incumbent, whether after wards he might decide not to keep the woman as wife and might have no intention of having marital relations with her. So much so that even if he divorced his wife after a few moments' thought, according to Imam Shafe`i, he would still have to make the expiation.

(14) The Qur'anic injunction is that the pronounces of zihar must make the expiation before the two (the husband and the wife) "touch" each other. All the four Imams are agreed that according to this verse not only is the sexual intercourse prohibited before the expiation but it is also prohibited that the husband touch the wife in any way. The Shafe'i's regard' only touching with desist as prohibited. The Hanbalis regard every kind of pleasure-seeking as forbidden; and the Malikis regard even casting of the look at the wife's body for the sake of pleasure as unlawful. According to them only casting of the look at the face and hands is an exception.

(15) If after zihar a man divorces his wife, he cannot touch her without first making the expiation in case it is a revocable divorce. If it is an irrevocable divorce, and he re-marries her, he still will have to make the expiation before he could touch her. So much so that even if he has divorced her thrice, and the woman after marrying another man becomes a widow, or is divorced, and then the pronounces of zihar re-marries her, she will not be lawful to him unless he first makes the expiation. For he has forbidden her to himself by comparing her to his mother or other prohibited woman, and. this prohibition cannot be removed without the expiation. All the four Imams agree about this.

(16) It is incumbent upon the woman that she should not allow the husband who has pronounced zihar on her to touch her until he makes the expiation. And since the marital relationship is a right of the woman of which the husband has deprived her by zihar, she can go to the court of law if he does not make the expiation. The court will compel the husband to make the expiation to remove the barrier ht has raised between himself and her. And if he does not comply, the court can award him lashes or imprisonment or both. This also is agreed upon by all the four schools of law. However, the difference is that in the Hanafi Fiqh this is the only way out for the woman; if the court does not help her out of the situation, she will remain suspended under zihar indefinitely. For zihar

does not dissolve the marriage contract, it only forbids the husband to have marital relations with the wife. According to the Malikl school if the husband pronounces zihar and keeps the wife suspended with a vices to punish her, the law of ila' will be applied against him, which means that he cannot keep her suspended for more than four months. (For the law of ila, ste E.N.'s 245 to 247 of Al-Baqarah). According to the Shafe'is, although in zihar the law of ila' can be applied only if the husband might have pronounced zihar for a specific period, which does not exceed four months, yet since according to them the expiation becomes incumbent upon the husband from the very moment he keeps back the woman as wife, it is not possible that he may keep her suspended for along period indefinitely.

(17) The express commandment of the Qur'an and the Sunnah is that the first expiation for zihar is to free a slave. If a man cannot afford this, he can expiate by fasting two months consecutively; and if he cannot do even this, then he can feed 60 poor. But if a man cannot expiate in any of the three ways, he will have to wait till he has the means to act in one or the other way, because the Shari'ah has not prescribed any other form of expiation. However, the sunnah confirms that such a person should be helped out so that he can make the third kind Of the expiation. The Holy Prophet helped such people out of the public treasury, who were caught in this awkward situation by a mistake of their own, and were helpless to expiate in any of the three prescribed ways.

(18) The Qur'an enjoins to release a neck (raqabah) as expiation, which applies both to a male and a female slave, and there is no restriction of the age in it. It would be sufficient to release a suckling child who may be in the state of slavery. However, the jurists have disputed whether both the believing and the unbelieving slaves can be released, or whether only the believing slave will have to be released. the Hanafis and the Zahiriyyah say that it is enough to release a slave, whether a believer or an unbeliever, as expiation for zihar for the Qur an only mentions raqabah (the neck); it does not say that it has to be a believer. On the contrary; the Shafe'is, the MalikIs and the Hanbalis impost the condition that it has to be a believing slave. They have held this injunction as analogous to the other expiations in which release of raqabah has been made conditional upon his being a believer.

(19) If the pronouncer of zihar cannot afford to release a slave, the Qur'an enjoins him to fast for two successive months before the two can touch each other. As for the details of acting on this Divine Command, the viewpoints of the different juristic schools are as follows:

(a) AII are agreed that the months imply the lunar months. If fasting is begun with the sighting of the new moon,. one will have to complete two months' un-interrupted fasting. If fasting is begun on another date in the month, according to the Hanafis and the Hanbalis, one will have to fast for 60 days consecutively; and according to the Shafe'is, one will observe a total of 30 fasts in the first and the third months and observe the whole of the middle lunar month, whether it is of 29 days or 30 days.

(b) The Hanafis and the Shafe'is say that fasting should be begun at a time when within the next two months there should neither fall the month of Ramadan nor the two `Id days, nor the day of sacrifice, nor the Tashriq days (10th to 13th of Dhil-Hajj) for the observance of the Ramadan fast and its abandonment on the `Id days and the day of Sacrifice ant Tashriq days, in the course of the expiation fasting, would break the succession of the fasting, and the pronouncer of zihar would have to start fasting afresh. The Hanbalis say that observance of the

Ramadan fast and its abandonment on the forbidden days do not break the succession.

(c) In the course of the two months whether one abandons a fast on account of a valid excuse, or without a valid excuse, in both cases the succession will break according to the Hanafis and the Shafe`is, and one will have to start fasting afresh. The same is the opinion of Imam Muhammad Baqir, Ibrahim Nahka`i, Sa'id bin Jubair, and Sufyan Thauri. According to Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad, fasting can be abandoned on account of illness or a journey and this does not break the succession; however, succession does break if the fast is abandoned without a valid reason. Their reasoning is that the nature of the expiation fast is not obligatory as of the Ramadan fast: when that fast can be abandoned on account of an excuse, there is no reason why this cannot be. The same is the viewpoint of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hasan Basri, `Ata' bin Abi Rabah, Sa`id bin al-Masayyab, 'Amr bin Dinar, Sha`bi, Ta'us, Mujahid, Ishaq bin Rahawaiyh, Abu Ubaid and Abu Thaur.

(d) If the man commits sexual intercourse with the wife undo zihar within the two months of fasting, according to all the Imams, the succession will break, and he will have to begin fasting anew, for he has been enjoined to fast for two successive months before he could touch the wife.

(20) According to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the third kind of expiation (feeding the 60 poor) can be made only by him who does not have the power to make the second expiation (fasting for two months successively). The . details of acting on this command as worked out by the jurists are as follows:

(a) According to all the four Imams, being powerless to observe the fast means that one should either he powerless due to old age, or due to illness, or due to the reason that one may not be able to abstain from sexual intercourse for two successive months, and may become impatient at any time in the course of fasting. The validity of aII these three excuses is confirmed by the Ahadith that have been cited in connection with the cases of Aus bin Samit Ansari and Salamah bin Sakhr Bayadi. However, about illness there is a little difference of opinion among the jurists. The Hanafis say that the excuse of illness will be valid only in case there is no hope of recovery, or there is the fear that the disease may worsen on account of fasting. The Shafe`is say that if fasting is likely to cause a severe hardship by which the man may feel the danger of its being interrupted, this excuse also can be valid. The Malikis say that if the man strongly feels that he will be able to observe the fast in the future, he may wait till then, and if he has no such feeling, he should feed the poor. The Hanbalis say that the apprehension that the disease will worsen by fasting is a sufficient excuse for not fasting.

(b) Food can be given only to those poor people whose maintenance is not the obligatory responsibility of the man concerned.

(c) The Hanafis say that food can be given to both the Muslim and the nonMuslim subjects of the Islamic State, but not to the belligerent disbelievers and to those who have been given protection. The MMalikis, the Shafe`is and the Hanbalis say that the Muslim needy ones only can be fed.

(d) There is full agreement that feeding implies to feed two times a day to fill. However, there is a difference of opinion about the meaning of feeding. The Hanafis say that it is equally valid to feed with cooked food two times a day or to give away grain sufficient to meet the food requirements of a needy person two times a day, For the

Qur'an has used the word it am, which means both to provide food and to feed. But the Malikis, the Shafe`is and the Hanbalis do not regard feeding with cooked food as correct; they think it is necessary to give away grain. In case grain is given, there is full agreement that the grain should be the staple food in the city or area, and all the poor people should be given it equally .

(e) According to the Hanafis, it is also valid if one and the same poor person is fed or given food for 60 days, though it is not cornet to give him food for 60 days on one and the same day. However, the other three schools do not think it is valid to provide food to one and the same poor man; it is necessary to give food to 60 persons. It is not permissible in any of the four school to provide food to 60 men at one time and to another 60 at another time.

(f) This also is not permissible according to any of the four schools that one may fast for 30 days and then feed 30 poor ones, for two different expiations cannot be combined. If one has to fast one should fast for two months successively, and if one has to feed, one should feed 60 poor once.

(g) Although in connection with the expiation of feeding the Qur'an' does not use words to the effect that this expiation also should be made before the husband and the wife can touch each other yet the context demands that this restriction will apply to this third kind of expiation as well. That is why the four Imams do not regard it as permissible that the man should go to his wife during the time the expiation of feeding is being performed. However, the difference i6 that according to the Hanbalis the man who commits this offense, will have to feed the poor afresh, but the Hanafis show leniency, for in respect of this third expiation there-is no mention of "before the two touch each other" in the Qur'an, and this provides a basis for the concession.

12"So that you may believe": "So that you may adopt the attitude of a true and sincere believer. " Obviously, the addressees of this verse are not the pagans and polytheists, but the Muslims who had already affirmed the Faith To tell them after reciting before them a Shari'ah injunction: "This is being enjoined so that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger," clearly signifies that the conduct of the person who continues to follow the traditional law of paganism even after hearing the, Divine command would be contradictory to his profession of the Faith. It is not the character of a believer that when Allah and His Messenger have prescribed a law for him in some matter of life, he should set it aside and follow some other law of the world, or go on following his own whites and desires.

13Here "disbeliever" does not imply the denier of Allah and His Messenger, but the person who adopts the attitude and conduct of a disbeliever even after affirming faith in Allah and His Messenger. In other words, it means: `This, in fact, is a characteristic of the disbelievers that even after hearing the Command of Allah and His Messenger, they should go on following their own whims, and continue to practice the customs of ignorance, for a true and sincere believer would never adopt such an attitude. The same thing has been said in Surah AI-`Imran after enjoining the imperative duty of Hajj: "And the one who disbelieves (i.e. does not obey this commandment), then Allah is Self-Sufficient and does not stand in need of anyone in the worlds." (v. 97) At neither place has the word "kufr" been used in the sense that whoever continues to have marital relations with the wife after zihar without making the expiation, or

thinks that divorce has taken place by the mere pronouncement of zihar on the wife, or does not go to perform Hajj, in spite of the means, should be declared an apostate and disbeliever by the religious court and regarded as excommunicated by the Muslims. But it means that in the sight of Allah such people as may reject His Commandments by word or deed, or may at least bother to know as to what bounds their Lord has set for them, what He has forbidden and what He has enjoined, what He has made lawful and what unlawful, arc not counted among the believers.

14"Those who oppose . . . " : Those who do not recognize the bounds set by Allah and instead set some other bounds for themselves. Ibn Jarir Tabari has given this commentary of this verse: "That is, the people who resist Allah with regard to the bounds and duties enjoined by Him, and set for themselves some other bounds instead of the bounds set by Him." Baidawi; has given this commentary of it: "That is, they show hostility towards and dispute with Allah and His Messenger, or set other bounds for themselves than the bounds set by them, or adopt the bounds set by others. " Alusi in his Ruh Al-Ma `ani has concurred with Baidawi in this commentary and cited the statement of Shaikh-ul-Islam Sa`dullah Chalpi to the effect: "In this verse a threat has been held out to those kings and evil rulers who have framed many such rules as are opposed to the bounds set by the Shari ah, and called tjem law." Here, `Allama Alusi has dwelt upon the constitutional status (i.e, constitutional from the Islamic viewpoint) of the man made laws as against the Shari ah laws and concluded thus:

"There can be no doubt in the disbelief of the person who regards this law as commendable and superior to the Shari ah and says that it is wiser and better suited to the genius of the people. And when the Shari ah injunction in a particular matter is pointed out to him, he is angry, as we have seen some of those who are under the curse of Allah. "

15The word used in the original is kabt, which means to disgrace, to destroy, to curse, to drive off, to push out, to debase. What is meant to be said is that the communities of the former Prophets who resisted Allah and His Messenger and rebelled against His Commandments have already gone to their doom. Now those from among the Muslims who adopt the same attitude in life will also meet with the same evil end. Whenever the people made their own laws contradictory to Divine Law, or adopted laws made by others, they were deprived of Allah's bounty and grace, with the result that their lives were filled with deviations, immoralities and moral and social evils, which caused them to be ultimately degraded and humiliated oven in this world. If the same error now is committed by the community of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), there is no reason why it should continue to be regarded with favor by Allah and He may go on protecting it from a disgraceful destruction for ever and ever. Allah had neither any ill will against the communities of His former Messengers nor has He any special connection with the community of this Messenger.

16A little consideration of the context shows that here two punishments of this attitude have been mentioned:

(1) Kabt, i.e. debasement and humiliation of this world; and

(2) adhab muhin, i.e. a disgraceful torment that they will suffer in the Hereafter.

17That is, their having forgotten their own attitude and conduct does not mean that it is dead and forgotten altogether. For them the disobedience of God and resistance to His Commands may be an ordinary matter which they may forget easily once they have indulged in it and may not even regard it as anything objectionable, which they should have avoided, yet in the sight of God it is no ordinary matter at all. With Him every misdeed of theirs has been noted down, His Register contains a full record of every deed done by a person, of when and where it was done, what was his own reaction to it, what were its consequences and how far and in what forms did they appear and spread in the world.

18From here to verse 10 continuously the hypocrites have been taken to task for the attitude they had adopted in the Muslim society. Although apparently they were a part of the Muslim community, secretly they were a separate group from the believers, Whenever the Muslims saw them, they found them whispering secretly together. That is hew they conspired and made all sorts of plans in order to create rifts in the ranks of the Muslims, and to cause alarm and spread mischief among them.

19The question may arise Why have three and five been mentioned here instead of two and three? Why has two, and then four, been left out? The commentators have given many answers to this question but in our opinion the correct answer is that this style has been adopted for maintaining the literary beauty of. the Qur'iin. Without this the style would have suffered from blemishes. Therefore, after making mention of three and five whisperers the gap has been ,filled up in the following sentence by saying: whether the whisperers are fewer than three, or more than five, in any case Allah is always with them.

20This Allah's being associated with them is, in fact, in the sense of Allah's being All-Knowing and All-Aware, All-Hearing and All-Seeing, and His being absolute in power, and not in the sense that Allah, God forbid, is a person who is secretly and invisibly present among the five persons as their sixth associate. This, in fact, is meant to make the people realize that they may be holding secret counsels in safe and hidden places and may be able to conceal their plans from the world but they cannot keep them concealed from Allah, that they may escape from every power of the world, but they cannot escape the grasp of Allah.

21This shows that before the revelation of this verse the Holy Prophet (upon whom by Allah's peace) had forbidden the people this practice. Yet when they did not desist, Allah directly sent down this verse containing His warning and wrath for such people.

22This was the common practice of the Jews and the hypocrites. According to several traditions, some Jews came before the Holy Prophet (upon be Allah's peace) and said: "As-sam alaika ya abul-Qasim. "

That is, they pronounced as-sam `alaika in such a manner as to give the impression that they had said as-salam alaika (peace be on you), which is the Islamic way of greeting. But actually they had said "Sam ", which means death. In response the Holy Prophet said: "wa alaikum. "Hadrat `A'ishah retorted: "May death visit you and the curse of Allah!" The Holy Prophet warned her, saying: " `A'ishah, Allah does not like abusive language," She submitted: "Didn't you hear, O Messenger of Allah what they said?" The Holy Prophet replied: "And didn't you hear what reply I gave? I said: and the same upon you." (Bukhiiri, Muslim, Ibn Jarir Ibn Abi Hatim). Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbiis has stated that both the Jews and the hypocrites had adopted this very way of greeting. (Ibn Jarir).

23That is, they regarded it as a proof of the Holy Prophet's not being a Messenger. They thought that if he had been a true Messenger, they would be punished by a torment as soon as they greeted him in that way. Since there was not torment while they were greeting him day and night like that, he was not a Messenger of Allah.

24This shows that najwa (talking secretly together) by itself is not forbidden, but it s being lawful or unlawful depends upon the character of the people who hold secret consultations and upon the circumstances under which such consultations are held, and upon nature of the consultations themselves, If the people whose sincerity, righteousness and purity of character arc well known, arc seen talking secretly together, nobody would have any misgiving that they were planning mischief. On the contrary, the whispering and secret consultations of the people who are notorious for their evil and wicked character, product in every mind. the suspicion that they arc engaged in a new conspiracy. Likewise, if a couple of persons talk for some time together on some matter secretly, it is not objectionable, but if some people have formed themselves into a gang and constantly engaged in a whispering campaign against the Muslim community, this would indeed be a prelude to some mischief. If nothing else, it would at least stir up divisions among the Muslims. Above all, the thing that decides whether najwa (secret counsel) is lawful or unlawful is the nature of the things talked of it. If two men hold a secret counsel in order to bring a dispute the an end, and to restore a person's right, or to bring a dispute an end, or to restore a person's right, or to promote a good cause, it is no evil, but rather and act of virtue, On the contrary, if the same secret counsel between two men is held with a view to creating mischief, or usurping the rights of . others, or committing a sin, obviously the object itself would be evil and the secret counsel about it evil added to evil.

In this connection, the teaching given by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) of social etiquette is: "When three men are sitting together, no two of them should whisper to each other, for this would cause anguish to the third. " (Bukhari, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad Thirmidhi Adu Da'ud). In another Hadith, the Holy Prophet said: "Two men should not whisper together, without the leave of the third, for this would cause him anguish. " (Muslim). This objectionable sort of whispering also applies to the cast when two of the three men start talking in a language which is not understood by the third, and even more objectionable would be that during their whispering they should look towards the third person or gesticulate in a manner as to suggest that he is the topic of discussion between them.

25This has been said so that if a Muslim watches some other people whispering, which causes him the doubt that it is directed against him, he should not feel so offended as to start planning a counter-attack on the basis of mere suspicion, or begin to nourish grief, or malice, or undue concern in his heart. He should understand that no one can harm him except by Allah's leave. This conviction would inspire him with such confidence that he would feel delivered of many a useless worry and imaginary danger and leaving the wicked to themselves would remain engaged in peacefully doing his duty. The believer who has trust in Allah is neither a faint-hearted person, whose peace of mind could be ruined by every doubt and suspicions nor so shallow and mean-minded as would lose his cool when confronted by the evildoers and start behaving in an unjust manner himself.

26This has been explained in the Introduction to the Surah above. Some commentators regard this Command as restricted to the assemblies of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). But as pointed out by Imam Malik, the correct view is that this is a general instruction for the assemblies held by the Muslims. One of the rules of etiquette taught by Allah and His Messenger to the Muslims is that when they arc sitting in an assembly and some more people arrive, they should have the courtesy to accommodate the new-comers and should squeeze in together as far as possible to make room for them to sit. The new-comers also should have the courtesy not to press in forcibly and make others rise up in order to take their place. In the Hadith Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and Hadrat Abu Hurairah have reported that the Holy Prophet said: Nobody should make another person rise up so as to take his place, but you should yourself make room for others. " (Musnad Ahmad Bukhari Muslim). And Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr bin 'As reports that the Holy Prophet said: "It is not lawful for a person that he should forcibly press in between two men except by their leave." (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da 'ud, Tirmidhi).

27'Abdur Rahman bin Zaid bin Aslam has stated that the people used to prolong their sitting in the Holy Prophet's assemblies and tried to sit till the end. This caused him inconvenience and discomfort as well as hindrance in his daily chores. At this Allah sent down this Command, teaching the people the etiquette: `When you are told to rise up froth the assembly, you should rise up and disperse." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

28That is, "You should not think that if in the Holy Prophet's assembly you had to sit a little farther away from him for the sake of making room for others, you would be reduced in rank or if you were asked to rise up and disperse from the assembly, you were disgraced. The real means of exaltation of ranks is faith and knowledge, and not an opportunity to sit nearest to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in his assembly and sit the longest. If a person happened to sit nearer to him, it does not mean that he became exalted in rank, for the high ranks belong only to those who have attained to the wealth of knowledge and faith. Likewise, the person who prolonged his sitting with the Holy Prophet only to cause him inconvenience and discomfort, in fact, displayed lack of good manners. His there sitting near him for a long ;time will not exalt him in rank in any way. Far higher and exalted in rank in the sight of Allah is he who attained to taste faith and knowledge and imbibed the morals that should belong to a believer.

29According to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, this Command was sent down because the Muslims had started requesting the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) for private counsel much too frequently; and this put him to great inconvenience. At last, Allah willed to relieve His Prophet of this burden.. (Ibn Jarir). Zaid. bin Aslam says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) would never turn down the request of anyone, who wanted to consult him in private. Whoever desired to have private counsel with him, he would oblige him Often it so happened that the people would ask for private counsel in matters in which there was no real need. This was the time when all of Arabia was engaged in war against Madinah. Sometimes after a person had made such a request, Satan would whisper into the ears of the people the idea that he had brought to the Holy Prophet the news of invasion by such and such tribes, and this would cause rumors to spread in Madinah. On the other hand, this would give the hypocrites an opportunity to say that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) was a credulous person, who listened to and believed in whatever anyone told him. Because of this Allah imposed the restriction that anyone who wanted to have private counsel with the Prophet should first give away something in charity. (Ibn 'Arabi: Ahkam al-Qur an). Qatadah says that some people talked to the Holy Prophet in private in order to show their superiority to others.

Hadrat 'Ali says when this was enjoined the Holy Prophet asked him, What should be the quantity of the charity? Should it be one dinar? I said: This is more than the people can afford. The Holy Prophet then asked: Should it be half a dinar? I said: This too is too much. Then he asked what it should be. I said . Gold equal to a barley grain. The Holy Prophet remarked: Your advice is for too little! " (Ibn Jarir, Tirmidhi, Musnad Abu ya'la). In another tradition Hadrat `Ali says: "This is a verse of the Qur'an which no one acted upon except me. As soon as it was enjoined, I offered the charity and consulted the Holy Prophet about a problem. " (Ibn Jarir, Hakim, lbn al-Mundhi, `Abd bin Humaid).

30This second Command was sent down some time after the first Command, and it concealed the injunction of giving something in charity. However, there is a difference of opinion as to how long the injunction remained in force. Qatadah says it remained in force for less than a day and then was abrogated. Muqatil bin Hayyan says that it remained in force for ten days; and this is the longest period of its life mentioned in any tradition.

31The allusion is to the Jews of Madinah whom the hypocrites had taken for friends.

32That is, they are neither sincere in their connections with the believers, nor with the Jews: their relations with both are based on selfish interests.

33"A falsehood": that they have believed in and have accepted Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as their guide and leader and are faithful to Islam and the Muslims.

34That is on the one hand, they swear oaths to their faith and fidelity to make the Muslims believe that they belong to them, and on the other, they sow doubts and suspicions against Islam and the followers of Islam and the Prophet of Islam in the hearts of the people, so that they should turn away from Islam in disgust taking their word to be a true inside picture of Islam, coming from the 'Muslims" themselves.

35That is, "Not being content with swearing oaths before the people in this world, they will swear false oaths also before Allah Himself in the Hereafter, for falsehood and fraud has become second nature with them, which they wilt not give up even after death."

36For explanation, see E.N. 93 of Surah As-Saaffat.

37Two things have been stated in this verse: first, a matter of principle, and the second, a statement of fact. The matter of principle is that faith in the true Religion and love of the opponents of the Religion are contradictory things, which cannot conceivably co-exist in one and the same place. It is absolutely impossible that love of the Faith and love of the enemies of Allah and His Messenger should co-exist in one and the same heart, just as a person's love for himself and his love for his enemy cannot co-exist in his heart simultaneously This is as if to say: 'If you sec a person who professes the Faith as well as keeps relations of love with the opponents of Islam, you should never be involved in the misunderstanding that he might perhaps be true in his profession in spite of his this attitude and conduct. Likewise, the people who have established relations with Islam and the opponents of Islam simultaneously, should themselves also consider their position well and see what they actually are. Are they believers or hypocrites? And what actually they want to be to they want to live as believers or as hypocrites? If they have any righteousness left in them. and any feeling that from the. moral viewpoint hypocrisy is the meanest and most abject attitude for man, they should give up their attempt to ride in two boats simultaneously. Faith wants them to be decisive. If they want to remain believers, they should sever and sacrifice all those connections that clash with their relationship with Islam; if they hold another relation dearer to themselves than the relationship with Islam, then they should better give up their false profession of Islam.

Here, Allah has not just stated the principle but has also presented the actual fact as a model before those who professed the Faith. The true believers had in actual fact severed all connections that clashed with their relationship with Allah's Religion. This had been witnessed by entire Arabia in the' battles of Badr and Uhud. The emigrants from Makkah had fought against their own tribe and closest kinsmen only for the sake of Allah and His Religion. Hadrat Abu `Ubaidah killed his father, 'Abdullah bin al-jarrah. Hadrat Mus`ab bin `Umair killed his brother, 'Ubaid bin `Umair; Hadrat Umar killed his maternal uncle, 'As bin Hisham bin Mughirah; Hadrat 'Abu Bakr became ready to fight his son 'Abdur Rahman Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat Hamzah and Hadrat 'Ubaidah bin al-Harith killed 'Utbah, Shaibah and Walid bin `Utbah, who were their close kinsmen. About the prisoners of war captured at Badr, Hadrat 'Umar gave the opinion that they should all be put to the sword, and proposed that a relative should kill a relative. In the same battle of Badr when Hadrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair saw that an Ansari Muslim had captured his real brother, Abu 'Aziz bin `Umair, and was tying him, he shouted out to him, saying: "Tie him tight: his mother is a rich woman.

She will pay you a large ransom." Abu 'Aziz said: `You are a brother and say this?' Hadrat Mus'ab replied: "Not you, but this Ansari Muslim is my brother now, who has captured you. " In the same battle of Badr Abul ' As. , the son-in-law of the Holy Prophet (upon whom he Allah's peace), was taken a prisoner and was shown no special favor any different from the other prisoners on account of his relationship with the Holy Prophet. Thus, the world was made a witness to the actual tact and shown the character of the sincere Muslims and their profound relationship with Allah and His Messenger.

Dailami has related this invocation of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) on the authority of Hadrat Mu'adh: "Alla-humma la taj al li-fajir-in (and according to another tradition, il-fasiq-in) 'alayya yadan wa la ni mata fa -yuwadda-hu qalbi fa-inni wajad-tu fima uhitu ilayya la tajidu qaum-an yu minuna billahi wal-yaum il-akhir-i yuwaaddiuaa man haadd-Allahs wa Rasulahu: "O God, let not the wicked (and according to another tradition, the sinful) do me a favor because of which I may have love for him in my heart, for in the Revelation sent down by You, I have also found this: 'You will never find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger'."

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59. Surah Al Hashr (The Banishment)

Name

The Surah derives its name from the mention of the word *al-hashr* in verse thereby implying that it is the Surah in which the word *al-hashr* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

Bukhari and *Muslim* contain a tradition from Hadrat Sa'id bin Jubair to the effect "When I asked Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas about Surah Al-Hashr, he replied that it was sent down concerning the battle against the Bani an-Nadir just as Surah Al-Anfal was sent down concerning the Battle of Badr. In another tradition from Hadrat Sa'id bin Jubair, the words cited from Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) are: *Qul: Surah an-Nadir*: Say, it is Surah an-Nadir." The same thing has been related also from Mujahid, Qatadah, Zuhri, Ibn Zaid, Yazid bin Ruman, Muhammad bin Ishaq and others. They are unanimous that the followers of the Book whose banishment has been mentioned in it, imply the Bani an-Nadir. Yazid bin Ruman, Mujahid and Muhammad bin Ishaq have stated that this whole Surah, from beginning to end, came down concerning this very battle.

As for the question as to when this battle took place, Imam Zuhri has stated on the authority of Urwah bin Zubair that it took place six months after the Battle of Badr. However, Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hisham and Baladhuri regard it as an event of Rabi' al-Awwal, A. H. 4, and the same is correct. For all traditions agree that this battle took place after the incident of Bi'r Ma'unah, and historically also it is well known that the incident of Bir Ma'unah occurred after the Battle of Uhud and not before it.

Historical Background

In order to understand the subject matter of this Surah well, it is necessary to have a look at the history of the Madinah and Hejaz Jews, for without it one cannot know precisely the real causes of the Holy Prophet's dealing with their different tribes the way he did.

No authentic history of the Arabian Jews exists in the world. They have not left any writing of their own in the form of a book or a tablet which might throw light on their past, nor have the Jewish historians and writers of the non-Arab world made any mention of them, the reason being that after their settlement in the Arabian peninsula they had detached themselves from the main body of the nation, and the Jews of the world did not count them as among themselves. For they had given up Hebrew culture and language, even the names, and adopted Arabism instead. In the tablets that have been unearthed in the archaeological research in the Hejaz no trace of the Jews is found before the first century of the Christian era, except for a few Jewish names. Therefore, the history of the Arabian Jews is based mostly on the verbal traditions prevalent among the Arabs most of which bad been spread by the Jews themselves.

The Jews of the Hejaz claimed that they had come to settle in Arabia during the last stage of the life of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him). They said that the Prophet Moses had dispatched an army to expel the Amalekites from the land of Yathrib and had commanded it not to spare even a single soul of that tribe. The Israelite army carried out the Prophet's command, but spared the life of a handsome prince of the Amalekite king and returned with him to Palestine. By that time the Prophet Moses had passed sway. His successors took great exception to what the army had done, for by sparing the life of an Amalekite it had clearly disobeyed the Prophet and violated the Mosaic law. Consequently, they excluded the army from their community, and it had to return to Yathrib and settle there for ever.(*Kitab al-Aghani*, vol. xix, p. 94). Thus the Jews claimed that they had been living in Yathrib since about 1200 B.C. But, this had in fact no historical basis and probably the Jews had invented this story in order to overawe the Arabs into believing that they were of noble lineage and the original inhabitants of the land.

The second Jewish immigration, according to the Jews, took, place in 587 BC. when Nebuchadnezzer, the king of Babylon, destroyed Jerusalem and dispersed the Jews throughout the world. The Arab Jews said that several of their tribes at that time had come to settle in Wadi al-Qura, Taima, and Yathrib.(Al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*). But this too has no historical basis. By this also they might have wanted to prove that they were the original settlers of the area.

As a matter of fact, what is established is that when in A. D. 70 the Romans massacred the Jews in Palestine, and then in A. D. 132 expelled them from that land, many of the Jewish tribes fled to find an asylum in the Hejaz, a territory that was contiguous to Palestine in the south. There, they settled wherever they found water springs and greenery, and then by intrigue and through money lending business gradually occupied the fertile lands. Ailah, Maqna, Tabuk, Taima, Wadi al Qura, Fadak and Khaiber came under their control in that very period, and Bani Quraizah, Bani al-Nadir, Bani Bahdal, and Bani Qainuqa also came in the same period and occupied Yathrib.

Among the tribes that settled in Yathrib the Bani al Nadir and the Bani Quraizah were more prominent for they belonged to the Cohen or priest class. They were looked upon as of noble descent and enjoyed religious leadership among their co- religionists. When they came to settle in Madinah there were some other tribes living there before, whom they subdued and became practically the owners of this green and fertile land. About three centuries later, in A. D. 450 or 451, the great flood of Yemen occurred which has been mentioned in vv. 16-17 of Surah Saba above. As a result of this different tribes of the people of Saba were compelled to leave Yemen and disperse in different parts of Arabia. Thus, the Bani Ghassan went to settle in Syria, Bani Lakhm in Hirah (Iraq), Bani Khuzaah between Jeddah and Makkah and the Aus and the Khazraj went to settle in Yathrib. As Yathrib was under Jewish domination, they at first did not allow the Aus and the Khazraj to gain a footing and the two Arab tribes had to settle

on lands that had not yet been brought under cultivation, where they could hardly produce just enough to enable them to survive. At last, one of their chiefs went to Syria to ask for the assistance of their Ghassanide brothers; he brought an army from there and broke the power of the Jews. Thus, the Aus and the Khazraj were able to gain complete dominance over Yathrib, with the result that two of the major Jewish tribes, Bani an-Nadir and Bani Quraizaha were forced to take quarters outside the city. Since the third tribe, Bani Qainuqa, was not on friendly terms with the other two tribes, it stayed inside the city as usual, but had to seek protection of the Khazraj tribe. As a counter measure to this Bani an Nadir and Bani Quraizah took protection of the Aus tribe so that they could live in peace in the suburbs of Yathrib.

Before the Holy Prophet's arrival at Madinah until his emigration the following were the main features of the Jews position in Hejaz in general and in Yathrib in particular:

1. In the matter of language, dress, civilization and way of life they had completely adopted Arabism, even their names had become Arabian. Of the 12 Jewish tribes that had settled in Hejaz, none except the Bani Zaura retained its Hebrew name. Except for a few scattered scholars none knew Hebrew. In fact, there is nothing in the poetry of the Jewish poets of the pre-Islamic days to distinguish it from the poetry of the Arab poets in language, ideas and themes. They even inter-married with the Arabs. In fact, nothing distinguished them from the common Arabs except religion. Notwithstanding this, they had not lost their identity among the Arabs and had kept their Jewish prejudice alive most ardently and jealously. They had adopted superficial Arabism because they could not survive in Arabia without it.

2. Because of this Arabism the western orientalists have been misled into thinking that perhaps they were not really Israelites but Arabs who had embraced Judaism, or that at least majority of them consisted of the Arab Jews. But there is no historical proof to show that the Jews ever engaged in any proselytizing activities in Hejaz, or their rabbis invited the Arabs to embrace Judaism like the Christian priests and missionaries. On the contrary, we see that they prided themselves upon their Israelite descent and racial prejudices. They called the Arabs the Gentiles, which did not mean illiterate or uneducated but savage and uncivilized people. They believed that the Gentiles did not possess any human rights; these were only reserved for the Israelites, and therefore, it was lawful and right for the Israelites to defraud them of their properties by every fair and foul means. Apart from the Arab chiefs, they did not consider the common Arabs fit enough to have equal status with them even if they entered Judaism. No historical proof is available, nor is there any evidence in the Arabian traditions, that some Arab tribe or prominent clan might have accepted Judaism. However, mention has been made of some individuals, who had become Jews. The Jews, however, were more interested in their trade and business than in the preaching of their religion. That is why Judaism did not spread as a religion and creed in Hejaz but remained only as a mark of pride and distinction of a few Israelite tribes. The Jewish rabbis, however, had a flourishing business in granting amulets and charms, fortune telling and sorcery, because of which they were held in great awe by the Arabs for their "knowledge" and practical wisdom.

3. Economically they were much stronger than the Arabs. Since they bad emigrated from more civilized and culturally advanced countries of Palestine and Syria, they knew many such arts as were unknown to the Arabs; they also enjoyed trade relations with the outside world. Hence, they had captured the business of

importing grain in Yathrib and the upper Hejaz and exporting dried dates to other countries. Poultry farming and fishing also were mostly under their controls They were good at cloth weaving too. They had also set up wine shops here and there, where they sold wine which they imported from Syria. The Bani Qainuqa generally practiced crafts such as that of the goldsmith, blacksmith and vessel maker. In all these occupations, trade and business these Jews earned exorbitant profits, but their chief occupation was trading in money lending in which they had ensnared the Arabs of the surrounding areas. More particularly the chiefs and elders of the Arab tribes who were given to a life of pomp, bragging and boasting on the strength of borrowed money were deeply indebted to them. They lent money on high rates of interest and then would charge compound interest, which one could hardly clear off once one was involved in it. Thus, they had rendered the Arabs economically hollow, but it had naturally induced a deep rooted hatred among the common Arabs against the Jews.

4. The demand of their trade and economic interests was that they should neither estrange one Arab tribe by befriending another, nor take part in their mutual wars. But, on the other hand, it was also in their interests, that they should not allow the Arabs to be united and should keep them fighting and entrenched against each other, for they knew that whenever the Arab tribes united, they would not allow them to remain in possession of their 1large properties, gardens and fertile lands, which they had come to own through their profiteering and money lending business. Furthermore, each of their tribes also had to enter into alliance with one or another powerful Arab tribe for the sake of its own protection so that no other powerful tribe should overawe it by its might. Because of this they had not only to take part in the mutual wars of the Arabs but they often had to go to war in support of the Arab tribe to which their tribe was tied in alliance against another Jewish tribe which was allied to the enemy tribe. In Yathrib the Bani Quraizah and the Bani an-Nadir were the allies of the Aus while the Bani Qainuqa of the Khazraj. A little before the Holy Prophet's emigration, these Jewish tribes had confronted each other in support of their respective allies in the bloody war that took place between the Aus and the Khazraj at Buath.

Such were the conditions when Islam came to Madinah, and ultimately an Islamic State came into existence after the Holy Prophet's (upon whom be Allah's peace) arrival there. One of the first things that he accomplished soon after establishing this state was unification of the Aus and the Khazraj and the Emigrants into a brotherhood, and the second was that he concluded a treaty between the Muslims and the Jews on definite conditions, in which it was pledged that neither party would encroach on the rights of the other, and both would unite in a joint defense against the external enemies. Some important clauses of this treaty are as follows, which clearly show what the Jews and the Muslims had pledged to adhere to in their mutual relationship:

"The Jews must bear their expenses and the Muslims their expenses. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation, and loyalty is a protection against treachery. They shall sincerely wish one another well. Their relations will be governed by piety and recognition of the rights of others, and not by sin and wrongdoing. The wronged must be helped. The Jews must pay with the believers so long as the war lasts. Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document. If any dispute or controversy likely to cause trouble should arise, it must be referred to God and to Muhammad the Apostle of God; Quraish and their helpers shall not be given protection. The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib; Every one shall be responsible for the defense of the portion to which he belongs" (*Ibn Hisham*, vol. ii, pp. 147 to 150).

This was on absolute and definitive covenant to the conditions of which the Jews themselves had agreed. But not very long after this they began to show hostility towards the Holy Prophet of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace) and Islam and the Muslims, and their hostility and perverseness went on increasing day by day. Its main causes were three:

First, they envisaged the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) merely as a chief of his people, who should be content to have concluded a political agreement with them and should only concern himself with the worldly interests of his group. But they found that he was extending an invitation to belief in Allah and the Prophethood and the Book (which also included belief in their own Prophets and scriptures), and was urging the people to give up disobedience of Allah and adopt obedience to the Divine Commands and abide by the moral laws of their own prophets. This they could not put up with. They feared that if this universal ideological movement gained momentum it would destroy their rigid religiosity and wipe out their racial nationhood.

Second, when they saw that the Aus and the Khazraj and the Emigrants were uniting into a brotherhood and the people from the Arab tribes of the surrounding areas, who entered Islam, were also joining this Islamic Brotherhood of Madinah and forming a religious community, they feared that the selfish policy that they had been following of sowing discord between the Arab tribes for the promotion of their own well being and interests for centuries, would not work in the new system, but they would face a united front of the Arabs against which their intrigues and machinations would not succeed.

Third, the work that the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's 'peace) was carrying out of reforming the society and civilization included putting an end to all unlawful methods" in business and mutual dealings. More than that; he had declared taking and giving of interest also as impure and unlawful earning. This caused them the fear that if his rule became established in Arabia, he would declare interest legally forbidden, and in this they saw their own economic disaster and death.

For these reasons they made resistance and opposition to the Holy Prophet their national ideal. They would never hesitate to employ any trick and machination, any device and cunning, to harm him. They spread every kind of falsehood so as to cause distrust against him in the people's minds. They created every kind of doubt, suspicion and misgiving in the hearts of the new converts so as to turn them back from Islam. They would make false profession of Islam and then would turn apostate so that it may engender more and more misunderstandings among the people against Islam and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). They would conspire with the hypocrites to create mischief and would cooperate with every group and tribe hostile to Islam. They would create rifts between the Muslims and would do whatever they could to stir them up to mutual feuds and fighting. The people of the Aus and the Khazraj tribes were their special target, with whom they had been allied for centuries. Making mention of the war of Buath before them they would remind them of their previous enmities so that they might again resort to the sword against each other and shatter their bond of fraternity into which Islam had bound them. They would resort to every kind of deceit and fraud in order to harm the Muslims economically. Whenever one of those with whom that had business dealings, would accept Islam, they would do whatever they could to cause him financial loss. If he owed them something they would worry and harass him by making repeated demands, and if they owed him something, they would withhold the payment and would publicly say that at the time the bargain was made he professed a different religion, and since he had changed his religion, they were no longer

under any obligation towards him. Several instances of this nature have been cited in the explanation of verse 75 of Surah Al Imran given in the commentaries by Tabari, Nisaburi, Tabrisi and in *Ruh al Ma'ani*.

They had adopted this hostile attitude against the covenant even before the Battle of Badr. But when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the Muslims won a decisive victory over the Quraish at Badr, they were filled with grief and anguish, malice and anger. They were in fact anticipating that in that war the powerful Quraish would deal a death blow to the Muslims. That is why even before the news of the Islamic victory reached Madinah they had begun to spread the rumor that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had fallen a martyr and the Muslims had been routed, and the Quraish army under Abu Jahl was advancing on Madinah. But when the battle was decided against their hopes and wishes, they burst with anger and grief. Ka'b bin Ashraf, the chief of the Bani an-Nadir, cried out:"By God, if Muhammad has actually killed these nobles of Arabia, the earth's belly would be better for us than its back." Then he went to Makkah and incited the people to vengeance by writing and reciting provocative elegies for the Quraish chiefs killed at Badr. Then he returned to Madinah and composed lyrical verses of an insulting nature about the Muslim women. At last, enraged with his mischief, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) sent Muhammad bin Maslamah Ansari in Rabi al-Awwal, A. H. 3, and had him slain. (*Ibn Sad, Ibn Hisham, Tabari*).

The first Jewish tribe which, after the Battle of Badr, openly and collectively broke their covenant were the Bani Qainuqa. They lived in a locality inside the city of Madinah. As they practiced the crafts of the goldsmith, blacksmith and vessel maker, the people of Madinah had to visit their shops fairly frequently. They were proud of their bravery and valor. Being blacksmiths by profession even their children were well armed, and they could instantly muster 700 fighting men from among themselves. They were also arrogantly aware that they enjoyed relations of confederacy with the Khazraj and Abdullah bin Ubbay, the chief of the, Khazraj, was their chief supporter. At the victory of Badr, they became so provoked that they began to trouble and harass the Muslims and their women in particular, who visited their shops. By and by things came to such a pass that one day a Muslim woman was stripped naked publicly in their bazaar. This led to a brawl in which a Muslim and a Jew were killed. Thereupon the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself visited their locality, got them together and counseled them on decent conduct. But the reply that they gave was; "O Muhammad, you perhaps think we are like the Quraish. They did not know fighting; therefore, you overpowered them. But when you come in contact with us, you will see how men fight." This was in clear words a declaration of war. Consequently, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) laid siege to their quarters towards the end of Shawwal (and according to some others, of Dhi Qa'dah) A. H. 2. The siege had hardly lasted for a fortnight when they surrendered and all their fighting men were tied and taken prisoners. Now Abdullah bin Ubayy came up in support of them and insisted that they should be pardoned. The Holy Prophet conceded his request and decided that the Bani Qainuqa would be exiled from Madinah leaving their properties, armor and tools of trade behind. (*Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hisham, Tarikh Tabari*).

For some time after these punitive measures (i. e. the banishment of the Qainuqa and killing of Ka'b bin Ashraf the Jews remained so terror stricken that they did not dare commit any further mischief. But later when in Shawwal, A. H. 3, the Quraish in order to avenge themselves for the defeat at Badr, marched against Madinah with great preparations, and the Jews saw that only a thousand men had marched out with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) as against three thousand men of the Quraish, and even they were deserted by 300 hypocrites who returned to Madinah, they committed the first and open breach of the treaty by refusing to join the Holy Prophet in

the defense of the city although they were bound to it. Then, when in the Battle of Uhud the Muslims suffered reverses, they were further emboldened. So much so that the Bani an-Nadir made a secret plan to kill the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) though the plan failed before it could be executed. According to the details, after the incident of Bi'r Maunah (Safar, A. H. 4) Amr bin Umayyah Damri slew by mistake two men of the Bani Amir in retaliation, who actually belonged to a tribe which was allied to the Muslims, but Amr had mistaken them for the men of the enemy. Because of this mistake their blood money became obligatory on the Muslims. Since the Bani an-Nadir were also a party in the alliance with the Bani Amir, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) went to their clan along with some of his Companions to ask for their help in paying the blood money. Outwardly they agreed to contribute, as he wished, but secretly they plotted that a person should go up to the top of the house by whose wall the Holy Prophet was sitting and drop a rock on him to kill him. But before they could execute their plan, he was informed in time and be immediately got up and returned to Madinah.

Now there was no question of showing them any further concession. The Holy Prophet at once sent to them the ultimatum that the treachery they had meditated against him had come to his knowledge; therefore, they were to leave Madinah within ten days; if anyone of them was found staying behind in their quarters, he would be put to the sword. Meanwhile Abdullah bin Ubayy sent them the message that he would help them with two thousand men and that the Bani Quraizah and Bani Ghatafan also would come to their aid; therefore, they should stand firm and should not go. On this false assurance they responded to the Holy Prophet's ultimatum saying that they would not leave Madinah and he could do whatever was in his power. Consequently, in Rabi' al-Awwal, A. H. 4, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) laid siege to them, and after a few days of the siege (which according to some traditions were 6 and according to others 15 days) they agreed to leave Madinah on the condition that they could retain all their property which they could carry on thee camels, except the armor. Thus, Madinah was rid of this second mischievous tribe of Jews. Only two of the Bani an-Nadir became Muslims and stayed behind. Others went to Syria and Khaiber.

This is the event that has been discussed in this Surah.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of the Surah as stated above, is an appraisal of the battle against the Bani an Nadir. In this, on the whole, four things have been discussed.

1. In the first four verses the world has been, admonished to take heed of the fate that had just befallen the Bani an-Nadir. A major tribe which was as strong in numbers as the Muslims, whose people boasted of far more wealth and possession who were by no means ill equipped militarily and whose forts were well fortified could not stand siege even for a few Days, and expressed their readiness to accept banishment from their centuries old, well established settlement even though not a single man from among them was slain. Allah says that this happened not because of any power possessed by the Muslims but because the Jews had tried to resist and fight Allah and His Messenger, and those who dare to resist the power of Allah, always meet with the same fate.

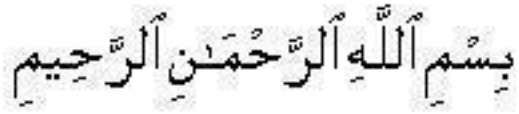
2. In verse 5, the rule of the law of war that has been enunciated is: the destruction caused in the enemy

territory for military purposes does not come under "spreading mischief in the earth."

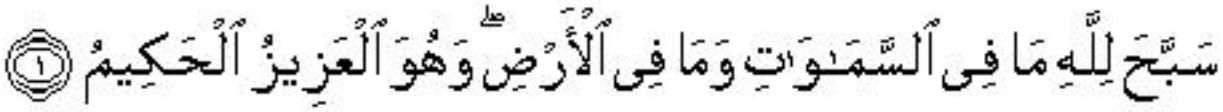
3. In vv 6-10 it has been stated how the lands and properties which come under the control of the Islamic State as a result of war or peace terms, are to be managed. As it was the first ever occasion that the Muslims took control of a conquered territory, the law concerning it was laid down for their guidance.

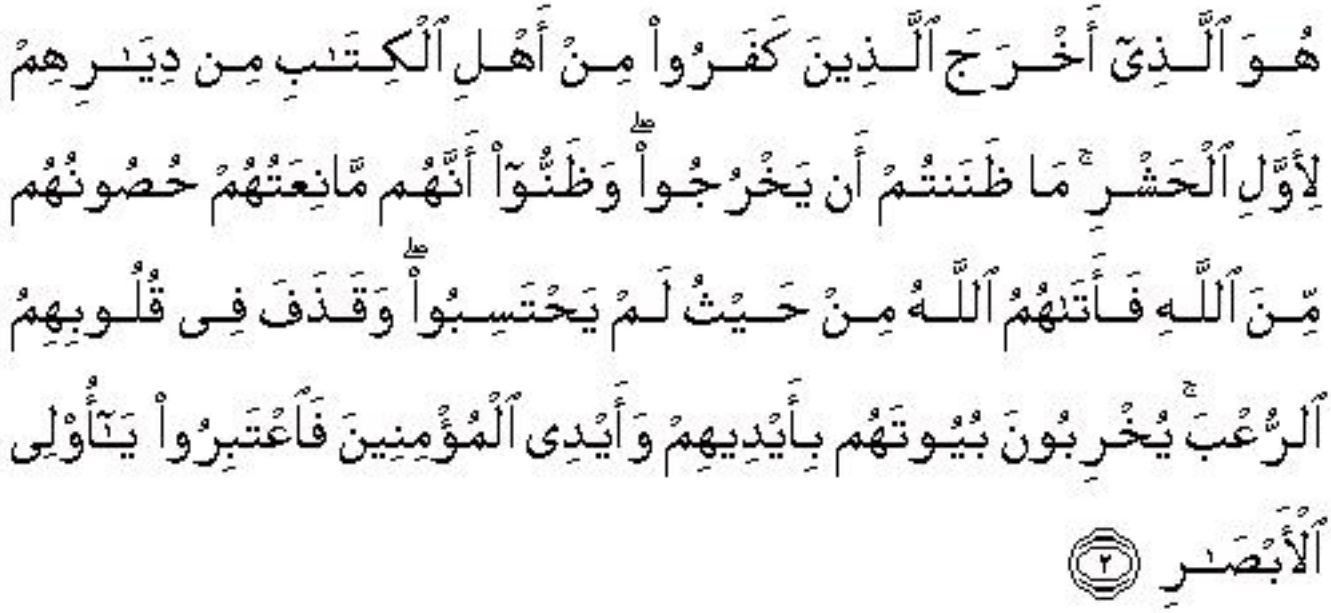
4. In vv. 11-17 the attitude that the hypocrites had adopted on the occasion of the battle against the Bani an-Nadir has been reviewed and the causes underlying it have been pointed out.

5. The whole of the last section (vv. 18-24) is an admonition for all those people who had professed to have affirmed the faith and joined the Muslim community, but were devoid of the true spirit of the faith. In it they have been told what is the real demand of the Faith, what is the real difference between piety and wickedness, what is the place and importance of the Quran which they professed to believe in, and what are the attributes of God in Whom they claimed to have believed.

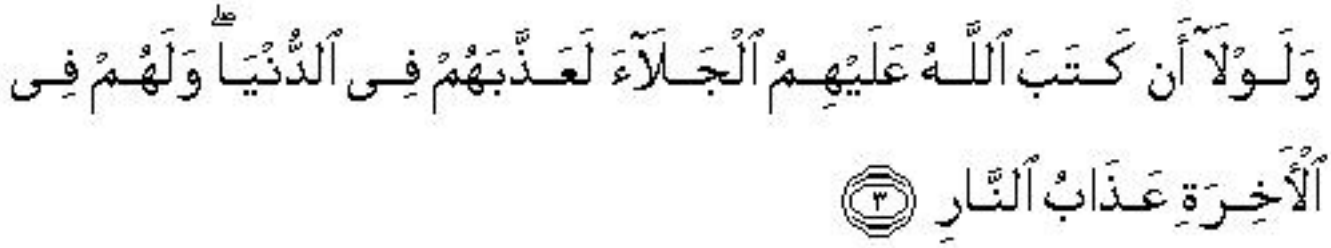


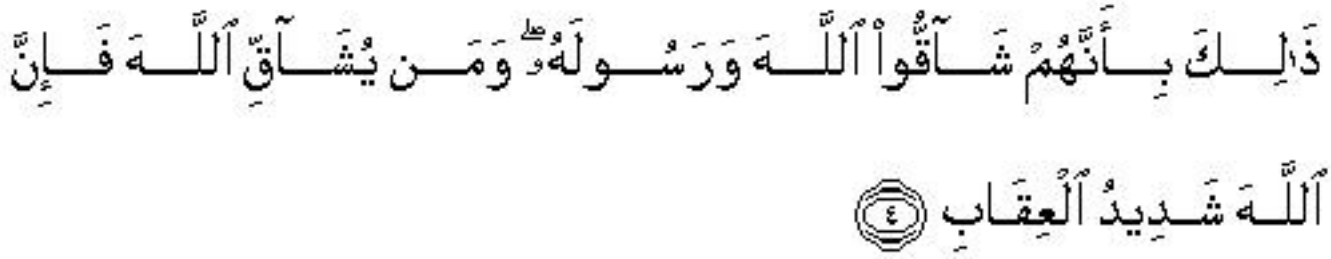
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.





[1-2] All that there is in the heavens and the earth has glorified only Allah, for He alone is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[1] He it is Who drove the disbelievers from among the people of the Book out of their houses[2] at the very first assault.[3] You did not think that they would ever go out, and they too on their part were thinking that their fortresses would protect them from Allah,[4] but Allah came upon them whence they had little expected.[5] He cast terror into their hearts with the result that they were destroying their dwellings by their own hands as well as by the hands of the believers.[6] So, take heed, O you who have eyes to see![7]





[3-4] Had Allah not decreed banishment for them, He would have chastised them in this world,[8] and in the Hereafter there certainly awaits :hem the torment of the Fire. All this happened because they resisted Allah and His

Messenger, and whoever resists Allah (should know that) Allah is stern in inflicting punishment.

مَا قَطَعْتُم مِّن لِّينَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَآئِمَةً عَلَىٰٓ أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِيُخْزِىَ
ٱلْفَـٰسِقِينَ ﴿٥﴾

[5] Whatever palm trees you cut down, or whatever you left standing upon their roots, it was only by Allah's leave.[9] And (Allah gave the leave) in order to disgrace the transgressors.[10]

وَمَآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْهُمْ فَمَآ أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ
خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُۥ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾

مَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِى
ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَـٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ كَىْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةًۢ
بَيْنَ ٱلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ
فَٱنتَهُوا۟ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿٧﴾

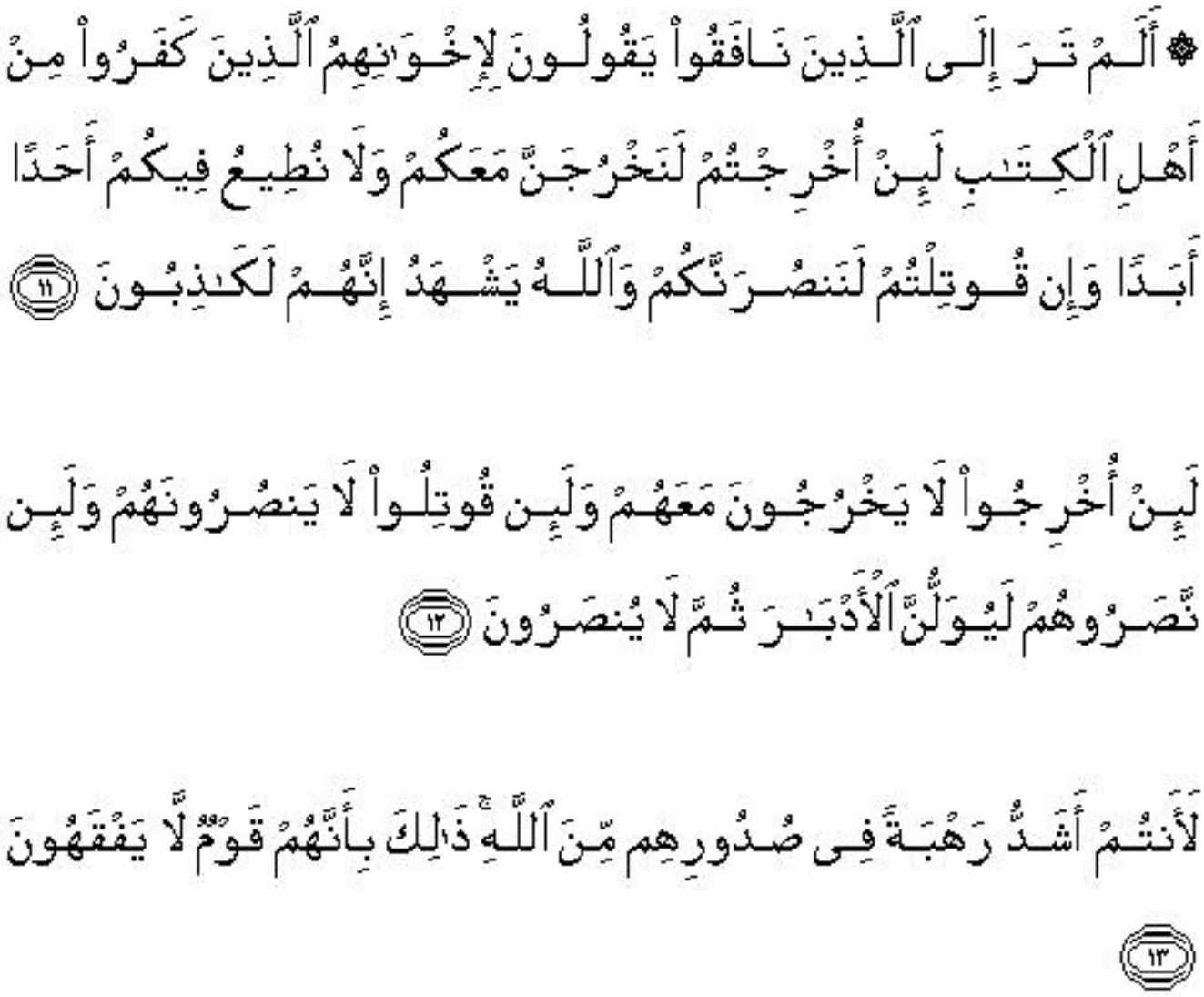
لِلْفُقَرَآءِ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ
فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنًا وَيَنصُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
ٱلصَّٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَٱلْإِيمَٰنَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ
هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِى صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً
مِّمَّآ أُوتُوا۟ وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَن يُوقَ
شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ جَآءُو مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَٰنِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا
بِٱلْإِيمَٰنِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِى قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

[6-10] And the properties that Allah took out from their possession and restored to His Messenger,[11] are not such that you might have rushed your horses and camels upon them, but Allah gives His Messengers authority over whomever He wills, and Allah has power over everything.[12] Whatever Allah restored to His Messenger from the people of the settlements, belongs to Allah and the Messenger and the kinsfolk and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarers,[13] so that it does not remain circulating among your rich people only.[14] Take whatever the Messenger gives you and refrain from whatever he forbids you. Fear Allah, for Allah is stern in inflicting punishment.[15] (Moreover, the properties) are for those poor emigrants who have been expelled from their homes and their

possessions.[16] They seek Allah's bounty and His goodwill, and are ever ready to succor Allah and His Messenger. They indeed are the truthful. (And it is also for those) who believed eve before the arrival of the emigrants and were staying in the Abode of Migration.[17] They love those who have migrated to them and entertain no desire in their hearts for what is given to them and prefer others to themselves even though they may be needy.[18] The fact is that those who are saved from the greed of their own hearts, ale truly successful.[19] (And it is also for those) who come after them,[20] who say, "Our Lord, forgive us , and forgive all our brothers who embraced the Faith before us, and do not place in our hearts any malice towards the believers. Our Lord, You are very Kind and Compassionate."[21]


۞ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ نَافَقُواْ يَقُولُونَ لِإِخْوَٰنِهِمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنْ
أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نُطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا
أَبَدًا وَإِن قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنصُرَنَّكُمْ وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾

لَئِنْ أُخْرِجُواْ لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِن قُوتِلُواْ لَا يَنصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَئِن
نَّصَرُوهُمْ لَيُوَلُّنَّ ٱلْأَدْبَٰرَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

لَأَنتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ
﴿١٣﴾

لَا يُقَٰتِلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِى قُرًى مُّحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِن وَرَآءِ جُدُرٍ ۚ
بَأْسُهُم بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ ۚ تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا
يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا ۖ ذَاقُوا۟ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

كَمَثَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ ٱكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكَ
إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

فَكَانَ عَٰقِبَتَهُمَآ أَنَّهُمَا فِى ٱلنَّارِ خَٰلِدَيْنِ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ
﴿١٧﴾

[11-17] Have[22] you not seen those who have adopted the attitude of hypocrisy? They say to their brothers who have disbelieved from among the people of the Book, "If you are driven out, we shall go forth with you, and we shall never listen to anyone in your respect, and if war is waged against you, we shall help you. " But Allah is witness that they are utter liars. If they are driven out, these people will never go forth with them, and if war is waged against them, they will never help them. And even if they help them, they will turn their backs, and then will get no help from anywhere. In their hearts there is greater dread of you than of Allah,[23] because they are a people devoid of understanding.[24] They will never fight you in a body (in the open field); if at all they fight, they will fight in fortified strongholds, or from behind walls. They are very intense in mutual enmity. You think that they are united, whereas their hearts are divided.[25] This is because they are a people devoid of sense. They are even like those who have tasted, a short while before them, the evil consequences of their deeds,[26] and there awaits them a painful torment.

They are like Satan who orders man to disbelieve, and when man has disbelieved, he says: "I have nothing to do with you; I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds."[27] The end of both will be that they shall go to Hell for ever, and that is the recompense of the wrongdoers.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلۡتَنظُرۡ نَفۡسٞ مَّا قَدَّمَتۡ لِغَدٖۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرُۢ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ ١٨

وَلَا تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ نَسُواْ ٱللَّهَ فَأَنسَىٰهُمۡ أَنفُسَهُمۡۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡفَٰسِقُونَ ١٩

لَا يَسۡتَوِيٓ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ وَأَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡجَنَّةِۚ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ هُمُ ٱلۡفَآئِزُونَ ٢٠

[18-20] O you[28] who have believed, fear Allah, and let everyone consider well what he has forwarded for the morrow.[29] Fear Allah, for Allah . is well aware of all that you do. Do not be like those who forgot Allah, and Allah caused them to forget their own selves.[30] They indeed are the transgressors The dwellers of Hell and the dwellers of Paradise cannot be alike. The dwellers of Paradise alone are truly successful.

لَوۡ أَنزَلۡنَا هَٰذَا ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٖ لَّرَأَيۡتَهُۥ خَٰشِعٗا مُّتَصَدِّعٗا مِّنۡ خَشۡيَةِ ٱللَّهِۚ وَتِلۡكَ ٱلۡأَمۡثَٰلُ نَضۡرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ٢١

[21] Had We sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbling itself and splitting asunder

from the fear of Allah.[31] We present these parables before the people so that they may reflect (on themselves).

هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ۖ هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾

هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْقُدُّوسُ ٱلسَّلَٰمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ ٱلْمُهَيْمِنُ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْجَبَّارُ ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

هُوَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخَٰلِقُ ٱلْبَارِئُ ٱلْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

[22-24] He[32] is Allah besides Whom there is no god.[33] He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen.[34] He is the Compassionate and the Merciful.[35] He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god. He is the Sovereign,[36] the Holy,[37] the Source of safety,[38] the Giver of peace,[39] the Guardian,[40] the All-Mighty,[41] the Enforcer of His decrees,[42] and the ever Supreme.[43] Exalted is Allah alone Who is the Planner of Creation,[44] its Enforcer and its Fashioner.[45] His are the excellent names.[46] Whatever is there in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him.[47] and He is the All-Mighty and the All-Wise.[48]

1For explanation, see E.N.'s 1, 2 of Surah Al-Hadid. The object of this introductory sentence before making an appraisal of the banishment of the Ban; an-Nadir is to prepare the mind to understand the truth that the fate this powerful tribe met was not the result of the power of the Muslims but a manifestation of the power of Allah.

2Here, the reader should understand one thing at the outset so as to avoid any confusion about the banishment of the Bani an-Nadir. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had concluded a formal written treaty with the Bani an-Nadir. They had not broken this agreement as such that it should

have become void But the reason why they were attacked was that after making different kinds of minor violations of it, they at last committed such an offense which amounted to the breach of trust. That is, they plotted to kill the leader of the other party to the treaty, i. e. the Islamic State of Madinah. The plot became exposed, and when the were accused of breaking the agreement they could not deny it Thereupon, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) told them either to leave Madinah or to be ready for a war. This notice was in accordance with this injunction of the Qur'an: "If you ever fear treachery from any people, throw their treaty openly before them. " (AI-Anfal: 58) That is why Allah is describing their exile as His own action, for it was precisely in accordance with Divine Law. In other words, they were not expelled by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the Muslims but by Allah Himself. The other reason why Allah has described their exile as His own action, has been stated in the following verses.

3The word hashr in the Text means to gather the scattered individuals to gather or to take out scattered individuals after mustering them together. Thus, the words li-awwal-il-hashr mean: with the first hashr or on the occasion of the first hashr. As for the question, what is implied by the first hashr here, the commentators have disputed it. According to one group it implies the banishment of the Bani an-Nadir from Madinah, and this has been described as their first hashr in the sense that their second hashr took place in the time of Hadrat `Umar, when the Jews and the Christians were expelled from the Arabian peninsula, and the final hashr will take place on the Day of Resurrection. According to the second group it implies the gathering of the Muslim army together to fight the Bani an-Nadir; and li-awwal-il-hashr means that as soon as the Muslims had gathered together to fight them, and no blood yet had been shed, they, by the manifestation of Allah's power, offered to be banished from Madinah of their own accord. In other words, these words have been used here in the meaning of "at the very first assault". Shah Waliullah has translated it "at the first gathering of the army". Shah 'Abdul Qadir has translated it "at the first mustering." In our opinion this translation very nearly gives the meaning of these words.

4To understand this one should keep in mind the fact that the Bani anNadir had been well established here for centuries. They lived in compact populations outside Madinah without any lien element. Their settlement was well fortified, which had fortified houses as are generally built in feud-ridden tribal areas. Then heir numerical strength also equaled that of the Muslims, and inside Madinah itself many of the hypocrites were their supporters..Therefore, the. Muslims could never expect that they would, even without fighting, be so unnerved by the siege as to leave their homes willingly. likewise, the Bani an-Nadir also could not have imagined that some power would compel them to leave their homes within six days, Although the Bani Qainuqa' had been expelled before them, and their false pride of valor had proved to be of no avail, they lived in a locality inside Madinah and did not have any separate fortified settlement; therefore, the Bani an-Nadir thought that their inability to withstand the Muslims was not exceptionable, Contrary to this, in view of their own fortified settlement and strongholds they could not imagine that some power could turn them out so easily. That is why when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) served a notice on them to leave Madinah within ten days, they boldly retorted, saying: We are not going to quit: you may do whatever you please."

Here, the question arises: On what basis has Allah said: 'They were thinking that their fortresses would save them from Allah'. Did the Bani an-Nadir really know that they were not facing Muhammad bin `Abdullah (upon whom be Allah's peace) but Allah? And did they, in spite of knowing this, think that their fortresses would save them from Allah? .This is a question which would confound every such person who does not know the psychology of the Jewish people and their centuries-old traditions. As regards the common men, no one can imagine that despite their knowing consciously that they were facing Allah, they would Entertain the false hope that their forts and weapons would save them from Allah. Therefore, an ignorant person would interpret the Divine Word, saying that the Bani an-Nadir in view of the strength of their forts were apparently involved in the misunderstanding that they would remain safe from the Holy Prophet's attack, but in reality they were fighting Allah and from Him their forts could not save them. But the fact is that the Jews in this world are a strange people, who have been knowingly fighting Allah: they killed the Prophets of Allah knowing them to be His Prophets, and they declared boastfully and arrogantly that they had killed the Prophets of Allah. Their traditions say that their great Patriarch, the prophet Jacob, wrestled with Allah throughout the night and Allah could not throw him even till daybreak. .Then, when at daybreak Allah asked Jacob to let Him go, Jacob replied that he would not let Him go until He blessed him. Allah asked him his name, and he answer `Jacob Allah said that his name would no longer be Jacob, but Israel, "because you strove with God and with men, and prevailed." (See Gen. 32: 25-29 in the latest Jewish translation; The Scriptures Scriptures, published by the Jewish Publication Society of America 1954). In the Christian translation of the Bible too this subject has been rendered likewise. In the footnote of the Jewish translation, "Israel" has been explained as: He who striveth with God. " In the Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature the meaning given of Israel" by the Christian scholars is: "Wrestler with God." Then in Hosea (O.T.) the Prophet Jacob has been praised thus: "By his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed. " (Ch. 12: 3-4). Now, obviously, the people of Israel are the children of the same Prophet Israel who, according to their faith, had striven with God and wrestled with Him. For them it is not at all difficult that they should stand firm and fight even God. On this very basis, they, even according to their own profession, killed the Prophets of God, and under the same false pride they put the Prophet Jesus on the cross and bragged: "We have killed Jesus Christ, son of Mary, Messenger of Allah. " Therefore, it was not against their traditions that they fought Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) despite their knowledge that he was Allah's Messenger. If not their common people, their rabbis and learned men knew full well that he was the Messenger of Allah. The Qur'an itself contains several evidences to this effect. (For instance, see E:N.'s 79, 95 of Al-Baqarah, E. N.'s 190, 191 of An-Nisa, E.N.'s 70, 73 of As-Saaffat).

5Allah's coming down upon them does not mean that Allah was staying in another place whence He attacked them. But this is a metaphoric expression. The object is to give the idea that while facing Allah they were thinking that Allah could chastise them only by bringing an army against them from the front and they were confident that they would resist that force by their fortifications, But Allah attacked them from whence they had not thought it possible; and this was that He made than weak and broke their power of resistance from within after which neither their weapons nor their strongholds could help them.

6That is, The destruction occurred in two ways: from outside the Muslims besieged them and started demolishing their fortifications, and from within, first they raised obstacles of stone and wood to stop the Muslims from advancing, and for this purpose broke their own houses for the material; then, when they became certain that they would have to vacate the place, they started pulling down their houses, which they had so fondly built and decorated, with their own hands, so as to render them useless for the Muslims Later, when they settled peace with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) on the condition that they would be spared their lives but would have the permission to carry away whatever they could, except the weapons and armor, they started removing the frames of the doors and windows, even pegs; so much so that some people removed the beams and wooden ceilings, which they put upon the back of their camels and left."

7There are many lessons which one can learn from this event, which have been alluded to in this brief but eloquent sentence These Jews were none other but the followers of the former Prophets: they believed in God, in the Book, in the former Prophets and the Hereafter. Accordingly, they were the former Muslims. But when they turned their back on religion and morality and adopted open hostility to the truth only for the sake of their selfish desires and worldly motives and interests, and showed scant regard for their treaties and agreements, Allah's grace was turned away from them, otherwise Allah had no personal enmity with than. Therefore, first of all, the Muslims themselves have been admonished to heed their fate and Learn a lesson from it, lest they too should start behaving as if they were the beloved children of God, as the Jews did, and should be involved in the misunderstanding that their being included among the followers of the Last Prophet of God would by itself guarantee for them Allah's bounty and His support, apart from which they were not bound to adhere to any demand of religion and morality. Besides, those people of the world also have been asked to learn a lesson from this event, who oppose the truth consciously, and then place reliance upon their wealth and power, their means and resources, thinking that these would save them from the Divine punishment. The Jews of Madinah were not unaware that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had not risen for the supremacy of a people or tribe, but he was presenting an ideological invitation the addressees of which were all men, and every man, no matter what race or country he belonged to, could join his Ummah by accepting the invitation, without discrimination or distinction. They were themselves witnessing that Bilal of Habash, Suhaib of Rome, and Salman of Persia enjoyed the same position and status in the Muslim community as was enjoyed by the people of the Holy Prophet's own house. Therefore, they were not feeling any danger that the Quraish and the Aus and the Khazrij would gain an upper hand over them. Nor were they unaware that the ideological invitation that he was presenting was precisely the same as their own Prophets had been presenting. The Holy Prophet never put forward the claim that he had come with a new religion, unknown to the people, and that the people should give up their former religion and accept his religion ' instead. But what he claimed was that the religion being presented by him was the same that the Prophets of God had been preaching and presenting since the beginning of creation. And from their Torah they could themselves confirm that it was actually the same religion, the principles of which were not any different from the principles of the religion of the Prophets. On the same basis they

were told in the Qur'an: Affirm faith in the teaching sent down by Me, which confirms the teaching that you already possess, and you should not be its first deniers." They were also witnessing what character and morals the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) possessed, and what revolution had taken place in the lives of those who had accepted his message. For a long time the Ansar of Madinah had been their closest neighbors. They knew what kind of people they had been before embracing Islam and what they became after their conversion to Islam. Thus, they were well aware of the invitation, of the inviter and of the results of accepting the invitation. But in spite of witnessing and knowing all this, only on account of their racial prejudice and worldly interests, they expended all their energy against the message of truth about which there was no room for doubt at least in their minds. After such an obvious and open hostility to the truth they expected that their strongholds would save them from Allah, whereas the whole human history bears evidence that the one who is resisted by the power of God, cannot save and protect himself by any weapon, means or device.

8"Would have chastised them in the world": world have caused them to be annihilated. That is, had they fought instead of surrendering to save their lives, they would have been completely wiped out. Their men would have perished in the war and their womenfolk and children would have been taken prisoners and there would be no one to have them ransomed.

9The reference is to the fact that the Muslims cut down or burnt many of the palm-trees that stood in the oases around the settlement of the Bani an Nadir in order to facilitate the siege, However, they left those trees standing which did not obstruct the military operations. At this the hypocrites of Madinah and the Bani Quraizah, and the Bani an-Nadir themselves, raised a clamor, saying that, on the one hand, Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) prohibited spreading disorder in the world, but, on the other, fruit trees were being cut down by his command, which amounted to spreading disorder in the world. At this Al-Hashr Allah ,sent down the Command: 'Whatever trees you cut down, or whatever you left standing, your neither act was unlawful, but it had Allah's permission." The legal injunction that is derived from this verse is that the destruction caused for the sake of military operations does not come under "spreading disorder in the world. " But spreading disorder in the world is that an army under the fit of war hysteria .should intrude into the enemy territory and start destroying the crops, cattle. gardens, houses and everything in its way without any reason. In this matter. the general instruction is the same which Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq gave while dispatching the Muslim army to Syria: "Do not cut down fruit trees; do not destroy crops; do not ravage the settlements." This was precisely in accordance with the Qur'anic teaching, which condemns those who spread chaos; 'When they get power they direct all their efforts towards spreading corruption in the land, destroying harvests and killing people." (Al-Baqarah: 205). But the specific command in respect of the war exigencies is that if destruction is necessary for military operations against the enemy, it is lawful. Thus, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud has given this explanation in the commentary of this verse: 'The Muslims had cut down only those trees of the Bani an-Nadir that stood on the battlefield. " (Tafsir Nisaburi). Some of the Muslim jurists have overlooked this aspect of the matter and expressed the opinion that the permissibility of cutting the trees of the Bani an-Nadir was confined only to that particular event. It does not make it generally permissible that whenever

war necessitates trees of the enemy be cut down and burnt. Imam Auza'i, Laith and Abu Thaur hold this same opinion. But the majority of the jurists hold the view that for the sake of important military operations it is permissible. However, this is not permissible for the purpose of mere destruction and pillage.

One may ask: This verse of the Qur'an could satisfy the Muslims, but how could those who did not accept the Qur'an as Divine Word be satisfied at this reply to their objection that both acts were permissible as they had Allah's permission for it? The answer is: This verse of the Qur'an was sent down to satisfy only the Muslims; it was not sent down to satisfy the disbelievers. Since due to the objection of the Jews and the hypocrites, or due to their own thinking, they had been involved in the misgiving whether they were guilty of spreading disorder in the earth, Allah gave them the satisfaction that both the acts, cutting down some trees to facilitate the siege and leaving some other trees standing which did not obstruct the siege, were in accordance with Divine Law.

The traditionists in their traditions have disputed the point whether the order to cut and burn the trees had been given by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace himself, or whether the Muslims had done it of their own accord, and then later asked the Holy Prophet about its legal aspect. Hadrat Abdullah bin 'Umar has reported that the Holy Prophet himself had ordered it. (Bukhari, Muslim , Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir). The same also has been reported by Yazid bin. Ruman (Ibn Jarir). On the contrary, Mujahid and Qatadah say that the Muslims had on their own cut down the trees; then a dispute arose among them whether what they had done was permissible or not. Some said it was permissible and some said it was not. At last Allah sent down this verse and approved the act of both. (Ibn Jarir). The same thing is supported by a tradition of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas: 'The Muslims were confused because Some of them had cut the trees and others had not; therefore, they wanted to ask the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) as to who would be rewarded for the act and who would be punished.' (Nasa i). Those of the jurists who have preferred the first tradition give the argument that this was the Holy Prophet's personal judgment, which was later ratified by revelation from Allah, and this a proof of the fact that in matters where no Divine Command existed, the Holy Prophet used to follow his personal judgment. On the other hand, those jurists who have preferred the second tradition, argue that the two groups of the Muslims had adopted two different views on the basis of their own personal judgments and Allah ratified both. Therefore, if the learned men arrive at different conclusions by judicious exercise of their personal judgment, then although their opinions might differ, they would all be correct in the Divine Shari ah.

10That is, "Allah willed that they should be disgraced if you cut down the trees and also if you left them standing." In the first case, they were disgraced when they saw that the trees of the gardens which they had planted with their own hands and which they had owned since ages, were being cut down before their very eyes and they were watching it helplessly. Even an ordinary peasant and gardener cannot tolerate another's misappropriation or intrusion into his field or garden. He would protect his field or garden at the risk of his life if somebody tried to destroy it in his presence. For if he cannot prevent destruction of his property, it would be a sign of his extreme humiliation and weakness. But here a whole tribe, which had been living at this place fearlessly and boldly for centuries, was watching helplessly that

its neighbors had invaded its gardens and were destroying the trees while it could do nothing. After this even if they stayed on in Madinah they would have lived in disgrace and humility. In the second case, they were disgraced when on leaving Madinah they saw that the lush green gardens which had been in their possession till the previous day were now passing into the possession of the Muslims. Had they the power they would have laid waste the entire gardens by their own hands SO that not a single whole tree passed into the hands of the Muslims. But in their helplessness they left the city, despaired and grief-stricken, leaving everything intact behind.

11From here to the end of verse 10, Allah explains how the lands and properties that were restored to the Islamic State after the exile of the Ban; an- Nadir, are to be managed and administered. As it was the first occasion that a land was conquered and included in the Islamic territory, and many more lands were destined to be conquered in the future, the law governing the conquered lands was enunciated at the outset. Here, a note-worthy point is that Allah at this place has used the words: Ma af'-Allahu ala Rasuli-hi min-hum "whatever Allah restored to His Messenger from them." These words clearly imply that the rebels of Allah Almighty are not entitled to own the earth and things existing on it. If they have become their owners and are appropriating them, their ownership and appropriation of these things is, in fact, in the nature of usurpation of a master's property by a dishonest servant. The real right of these properties is that these should be spent and used in the service and obedience of their real Master, Allah, Lord of the worlds, according to His will, and their this use is possible only through the agency of the righteous believers. Therefore, the true position of the properties which pass from the ownership of the disbelievers into the hands of the Muslims as the result of a lawful war, is that their real Owner has withdrawn them from His disobedient and disloyal servants, and restored them to His obedient and loyal servants. That is why, in the terminology of the Islamic Law such properties have been described as Fai (restored properties).

12That is, "The restoration of these properties to the Muslims is not the result of the effort of the actual fighting army so that the army on that basis may have the right that the properties may be distributed among the soldiers, but its real nature is that Allah by His bounty has given dominance to His Messengers and the system that they represent over them. In other words, the passing of these properties into the Muslims' hands is not the direct result of the effort and struggle of the fighting army, but the result of the total strength that Allah has bestowed on His Messenger and his community and the system established by him Therefore, these properties are quite different in nature from the spoils of war and so cannot be distributed among the soldiers as such.

Thus, the Shari ah has made a distinction between ghanimah (spoils of war) and fai (restored properties). The injunction :n respect of the ghanimah has been given in surah AI-Anfal: 41, and it is this "It should be divided in five parts, four parts of which be distributed among the fighting army and the fifth deposited in the Public Treasury (Bait al-Mal), and expended on the items mentioned in the verse." As for the fai, the injunction is that it should not be distributed among the army, but it should be reserved for the items of expenditure being stated in the following verse. The distinction between the two has been made plain by

the words: "You have not rushed your horses and camels on them," which imply the military operations. Thus, the properties which are taken as a direct result of such operations are the ghnimah and those which arc not the result of these operations are the fai. The distinction between ghanimah and tai that has been mentioned in this verse, has been explained in greater detail by the juristis of Islam. Ghanimah are only those transferable properties which are taken from the enemy during military action; other things than these, e.g. lands, houses and other transferable and nontransferable properties of the enemy, are excluded from the definition of ghanimah and are fai. The source of this explanation is the letter that Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) had written to Hadrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas after the conquest of 'Iraq. In that letter he wrote: "Distribute the properties and goods which the soldiers of the army collected and brought to your camp among the Muslims who participated in the war, and leave the lands and the canals with those who work on them so that the proceeds thereof are used for the salaries of the Muslims." (Abu Yusuf. Kitab al-Kharaj, p. 24; Abu 'Ubaid, Kitab al-Amwal, p. 59; Yahya bin Adam, Kitab al-Kharaj, pp. 27-28, 48). On this very basis, Hadrat Hasan Basri says: "Whatever is taken from the enemy camp, is the right of those who won victory over it? and the lands are for the Muslims." Yahya bin Adam, p. 27). And Imam Abu Yusuf says: “Whatever the Muslims take from the enemy troops, and whatever goods and arms and cattle they collect and bring to their camp, is ghanimah; from this one-fifth will be deducted and the rest distributed among the soldiers." (Kitab al-Kharaj, p. 18). The same is the opinion of Yahya bin Adam, which he has expressed in his Kitab al-Kharaj (p. 27). Even more than this, what makes the distinction between ghanimah and fai clearer is that after the Battle of Nahawand when the ghanimah had been distributed and the conquered lands had been included in the Islamic State. a man named Sa'ib bin Aqra' found two bags of jewels outside the fort. He was confused whether it was the ghanimah which should be distributed in the army, or the fai which should be deposited in the Bait al-Mal Consequently, he came to Madinah and put the matter before Hadrat 'Umar, who decided that it should be sold and the price deposited in the Bait-al-Mal. From this it becomes clear that ghanimah are only those transferable properties which are taken by the soldiers during the war. After the war is over, the transferable properties also, like the nontransferable properties, become fai. Imam Abu 'Ubaid relates this event and says: "The properties that arc seized from the enemy by the use of force, when the war is still in progress, are ghanimah and what is taken after the war is over, when the territory has become Dar al-Islam (abode of Islam), is fai, which should be reserved for the common people of the dar al-Islam; the law of the one-fifth (khums) will not be applicable to it. " (Kitab al-Amwal p. 254).

After defining ghanimah thus, the rest of the properties, wealth and lands, which pass from the disbelievers' ownership to the Muslims may be divided into two main kinds first those which are taken as a result of actual fighting fanwatan in Fiqh terminology); second, those which are taken by the Muslims as a result of the peace terms whether peace is concluded because of the pressure of the military power of the Muslims, or their dread and awe, and in this are also included all those properties which pass into the Muslims' ownership in every other way than as a result of actual fighting The differences that have arisen among the jurists of Islam have been only concerning the first kind of the properties in order to determine their correct legal position, for they do not come under 'those upon which you have not rushed your horses and camels." As regards the second kind of the properties, all agree that they are fai, for the

Qur'an has explicitly laid down the injunction about them. Below we shall discuss in detail the legal position of the first kind of the properties.

13In the preceding verse what was pointed out was why these properties should not be distributed among the fighting army like the spoils, and why the legal injunction concerning them is different from that concerning the spoils Now in this verse it is being stated as to who are entitled to have a share in these properties.

The first share in these is of Allah and His Messenger. The detail of how the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) acted on this injunction has been related by Malik bin Aus bin al-Hadathan on the authority of Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), thus: The Holy Prophet used to take from it necessary expenses for himself and his family and the rest he used to spend on arranging arms and conveyances for Jihad. (Bukhari Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Da 'ud, Tirmadhi Nasa i and others). After the passing away of the Holy Prophet this share was transferred to the Public Treasury of the Muslims so that it is spent in the service of the mission which Allah had entrusted to His Messenger. Imam Shafa' i is reported to have expressed the opinion that the share which was specifically meant for the Holy Prophet's person (upon whom be Allah's peace), is for his caliph after him, for the Holy Prophet was entitled to it on the basis of his office of leadership and not on the basis of the office of Apostleship. But the view of the. majority of the Shafe'i jurists in this matter is the same as of the other jurists, viz. that this share now is reserved for the religious and collective welfare of the Muslims, and not for any particular. person.

The second share is of the kinsfolk, and this implies the kinsfolk of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), i.e. the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib. This share was set aside so that, besides meeting his own and his family's requirements, the Holy Prophet could also fulfill his obligations towards those of his relatives who stood in need of his help, or whom he felt like helping. ,After the death of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) this ceased to be a separate and independent source, because like the right; of the orphans and the wayfarers and the indigent among the Muslims, looking after the rights of the needy among the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib also became the responsibility of the Public Treasury. However, they were treated as superior to others in so far as they had no share in the zakat. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas has related that in the time of Hadrat Abu Bakr and 'Umar and 'Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them), the first two shares were dropped and only the remaining three shares (i.e. those for the orphans and the indigent and the wayfarers) were kept as of those entitled to fai Then Hadrat `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) also acted on the same in his time, Muhammad bin Ishaq has related on the authority of Imam Muhammad Baqir that although Hadrat 'Ali's personal opinion was the same as of the people of his house (that this share should be given to the relatives of the Holy Prophet), he did not think that he should act against the practice of Abu Bakr and `Umar. Hasan bin Muhammad bin Hanafiyah says that after the Holy Prophet a difference of opinion arose about these two shares (i.e. the share of the Holy Prophet and the share of his relatives). Some people said that the first share should go to the Holy Prophet's caliph, some said that the second share should go to the relatives of the Holy Prophet, and still others said that the second share should be given

to the relatives of the caliph. At last, a consensus was reached that both the shares be spent on the requirements of Jihad 'Ata' bin Sa'ib says that Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul `Aziz in his time had started sending the share of the Holy Prophet and the share of the relatives to the Bani Hashim. The opinion of Imam Abu Hanifah and of most of the Hanafi jurists is that in this matter the same practice is cornet as was., being followed in the time of the righteous Caliphs. (Abu Yusuf, Kitab al-Kharaj pp. 19-21). Imam Share'i's opinion is that both the rich and the needy from among the people whose being descended from the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib is confirmed, or is well known, can be given shares from fai. (Mughni al-Muhtaj). The Hanafis say that only their needy people can be helped from this; however, their right to this is greater than that of others. (Ruh al-Ma'ani). According to Imam Malik, there is no restriction on the government in this matter. It can spend on any head that it deems fit and proper, but the better course is that it should give preference to the people of the Holy Prophet's house. (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi ala-sh-Sharh-al-Kabir).

About the remaining three shares there is no dispute among the jurists. However, the difference between Imam Shafe'i and the other Imams is that according to Imam Shafe'i the total properties of fai are to be divided into five equal parts one part of which is to be spent on the above-mentioned heads in such a way that one-fifth of it is spent on the common benefits of the Muslims, one-fifth on the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib, one-fifth on the orphans, one-fifth on the indigent and one-fifth on the wayfarers. However, Imam Malik, Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Ahmad do not concur with this division. Their opinion is that the whole of fai is for the welfare and common benefit of the Muslims. (Mughni al-Muhtaj).

14This is one of the most important verses of the Qur'an, which lays down the basic principle of the economic policy of the Islamic community and government. Wealth should circulate among the whole community and not only among the rich lest the rich should go on becoming richer day by day and the poor poorer. This policy has not merely been enunciated in the Qur'an, but for the same objective the Qur'an has forbidden interest, made the zakat obligatory, enjoined that khums (one-fifth) be deducted from the booty, exhorted the Muslims to practice voluntary charity, has proposed such forms of different kinds of atonements that the flow of wealth is turned towards the poor classes of society, and has made such a law of inheritance that the wealth left by every deceased person spreads among the largest circle of the people. Apart from this, stinginess has been condemned and generosity commended as a noble moral quality, the well-to-do people have been told that in their wealth there is a definite share of the beggar and the indigent, which they must discharge not as charity but as the right of the concerned people, and the law enjoined in respect of a major source of revenue of the Islamic government (i.e. far) is that its one portion must necessarily be spent on supporting the poor classes of society. In this connection, it should also be borne in mind that there are two main sources of the revenue of the Islamic government: zakat and fai. The zakat is charged from the Muslims on their total extra capital, cattle, wealth, trade goods and agricultural produce, which is over and above the minimum exemption limit (nisab), and most of it is reserved for the poor. And fai comprises all the revenues including jizyah and taxes which are received from the non-Muslims; a major part of these also is set aside for the poor, This gives a clear hint to the effect that an Islamic government should manage its revenues and expenditure

and the financial and economic affairs of the country on the whole in such a manner that the wealthy and influential people are not allowed to have their monopoly over the means and resources of wealth, and the flow of wealth is neither turned from the poor to the rich nor it should remain circulating only among the rich.

15In view of the context the verse means: "Accept without question whatever decision the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) gives about the management of the properties of the Bani an-Nadir, and likewise about the distribution of fai properties and goods afterwards. One should take whatever the Prophet gives him, and the one whom he does not give anything, should neither protest nor demand it But since the words of the Command arc general, its application is not restricted to the distribution of the Jai properties and goods only, but its intention is that in all matters the Muslims should obey the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). This intention of the Command becomes all the more clear when we consider that as against "whatever the Messenger gives you" the words used are "whatever he forbids you" and not "what. ever he does not give you. " If the object of the Command were restricted to call obedience to the distribution offal properties and goods .only, then as against "whatever he gives you" the words should have been "whatever he does not give you. " The use of the forbidding or restraining words in this context by itself shows that the object of the Command is to enjoin obedience to the Holy Prophet in whatever he commands and forbids. The same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself. According to Hadrat Abu Hurairah he said: "When I command you to do a thing, do it as far as you can; and when I forbid you to do a thing, restrain from it." (Bukhari, Muslim). About Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud it has been related that once during a speech he said: "Allah has cursed the woman who practices such and such a fashion." Thereupon a woman approached him and asked, "Where from have you derived this thing? For I have not seen such a thing anywhere in the Book of Allah." Hadrat `Abdullah replied, "Had you studied the Book of Allah, you would certainly have found it therein. Have you not read the verse: Ma ata-kum ar-Rasulu fa-khudu hu wa ma naha-kum `anhu fantahu: "Take whatever the Messenger gives you, and refrain from whatever he forbids you. " When she said that she had read this verse, Hadrat `Abdullah said: "So the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has forbidden this act, and has given the news that Allah has cursed the women who practice it. " The woman agreed that she had understood the Command. (Bukhari Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Musnad Ibn abi Hatim,).

16This implies those people who at `that time had been expelled from Makkah and other parts of Arabia only because they had embraced Islam. Before the conquest of the territory of the Ban; an-Nadir these emigrants had no permanent means of sustenance. Therefore. it was commanded that in the properties which were then taken, and in the fai properties which are taken in future there is also a share of these people along with the common poor people and the orphans and the wayfarers. With these properties all such people should be helped, who are forced to emigrate for the cause of Allah and His Messenger to the abode of Islam. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) distributed a part of the properties taken from the Bani an-Nadir among the Emigrants and the oases which the Ansar had set aside for the support and maintenance of their emigrant brothers were returned to them. But it is not

correct to think that the Emigrants had this share in the fai only at that time. In fact, the intention of the verse is to point out that till Resurrection it is the duty of the Islamic government of the country to settle the people who are exiled and compelled to take refuge in it because of being Muslims and to enable them to stand on their feet economically; and it should spend on this head also from the fai properties besides the zakat funds.

17This implies the Ansar. In other words, not only arc the Emigrants entitled to fai but those Muslims also are entitled to receive their share from it, who were already living in the abode of Islam (Madinah).

18This is in praise of the Ansar, the Muslims of Madinah. When the Emigrants came from Makkah and other places to their city, they offered their gardens and oases to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) with the request that he distribute them among their emigrant brethren-in-faith. The Holy Prophet said: "These people do not know gardening: they have come from a region where there are no gardens. Could it not be that you (the Ansar) continue to work in the gardens and oases and make the Emigrants partners in the produce? The Ansar submitted: `We have heard and obeyed'." (Bukhari, Ibn Jarir). Thereupon the Emigrants said: "We have never seen any people so self-sacrificing as the Ansar, for they would work and labour and make us partners in the produce. We think they would thus be entitled to all spiritual rewards. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "Nay, as long as you would praise them and pray for their well-being, you also would get your rewards. " (Musnad Ahmad). Then, when the territory of the Bani an-Nadir was taken, the Holy Prophet made this proposal to the Ansar: "Now one way of managing it is that your properties and the gardens and the oases left by the Jews be combined together and then the whole distributed among you and the Emigrants." the second way is that you take back your properties, and the lands vacated by the Jews be distributed among the Emigrants. " The Ansar said: "Sir, you may please distribute these evacuee properties among the Emigrants and may give them of our properties also as you please. " At this Hadrat Abu Bakr cried out: "May Allah reward you, O assembly of the Ansar, with the best of everything!" (Yahya bin Adam. Baladhuri). Thus, with the willing consent of the Ansar the properties left by the Jews were distributed only among the Emigrants, and from among the Ansar only Hadrat Abu Dujanah, Hadrat Sahl bin Hunaif and (according to some) Hadrat Harith bin as-Simmah were given shares, for they were poor people. (Baladhuri. Ibn Hisham Ruh al-Ma ani. The same self-sacrificing spirit was shown by the Ansar when the territory of Bahrain was annexed to the Islamic State. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) wished that the conquered lands of that territory be given to the Ansar, but they submitted: "We would not take any share from it unless a similar share was given to ow emigrant brothers." (Yahya bin Adam). Allah has praised the Ansar for this-very spirit of self-sacrifice.

19The word used here means "are saved" and not "were safe", for without Allah's help and succor no one can attain to the wealth of the heart (liberal-mindedness) by his own power and effort. This is a blessing of God, which one can attain only by God's bounty and grace The word shuhh is used for stinginess and miserliness in Arabic. But when this word is attributed to the self of matt it becomes synonymous with narrow-mindedness, niggardliness, meanspiritedness and small-heartedness, and not mete stinginess: it

is rather the root cause of stinginess itself. Because of this very quality man avoids acknowledging even the good qualities of another, not to speak of recognizing his rights and discharging them. He wants that he alone should gather up everything in the world, and no one else should have anything of it. He never feels content with his own right. but usurps the rights of others, or at least wants to have for himself all that is good in the world and should not leave anything for others. On this very basis one's being saved from this evil has been described in the Qur'an as a guarantee for success. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has counted it among the most evil qualities of man which are the root cause of corruption and mischief. Hadrat Jabir bin `Abdullah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Avoid shuhh for it was shuhh which ruined the people before you. It incited them to shed each other's blood and make the sacred and forbidden things of others lawful for themselves. " (Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Baihaqi, Bukhari in Al-Adab). The tradition of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar contains the following words: "It led them to commit wickedness and they committed it; it commanded them to commit sins and they committed sin; it urged them to break off all connections with the kindred and they broke off all connections with them. " (Musnad Ahmad, Abu De ud Nasa i). Hadrat Abu Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet said. "Faith and shuhh of the self cannot combine in one and the same heart. " (Ibn Abi Shaibah, Nasa '% Baihaqi in Shu ab al-Iman, Hakim). Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri has stated that the Holy Prophet said: "Two of the qualities are such that they cannot combine in a Muslim: stinginess and misbehaviour." (Abu Da'ud. Tirmidhi Bukhari in AI-Adab)- It is as a result of t us very teaching of Islam that, apart from individuals, the Muslim people as a nation are still the most generous and liberal. minded people in the world. There are millions and millions of Muslims living side by side with those non-Muslim people from among whom they sprung who have become proverbial for their narrow-mindedness and miserliness. The clear distinction existing between the two peoples in respect of liberal-mindedness and miserliness cannot be explained in any other way than that it is the moral teaching of Islam that has made the Muslims so large-hearted and liberal-minded.

20In the injunctions laid down up to here, it has been ruled that; in the fai properties there are the rights of Allah and His Messenger and the Messenger's relatives an the orphans and the indigent and the wayfarers and the Emigrants and the Ansar and of the Muslim generations which will be born till the Day of Resurrection. It is this important legal ruling of the Qur'an in the light of which Hadrat 'Umar(may Allah be pleased with him) introduced the new system in respect of the lands and properties of the conquered territories of 'Iraq, Syria and Egypt and of the possessions of the previous governments and rulers of those countries. When these countries were conquered; some of the distinguished Companions among whom were included prominent men like Hadrat Zubair, Hadrat Bilal, Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf and Hadrat Salman Farsi, insisted that these should be distributed among the armies who had fought and conquered them. They thought that those properties did not come under "those upon which you have not rushed your horses and camels," but the Muslims had conquered them by rushing their horses and camels on them. Therefore, except for those cities and territories which surnndcred without the war, all the rest of the conquered (ands came under ghanimah for which the legal command is that one fifth of the lands and the people be given to the Public Treasury and the remaining four parts be distributed among the soldiers. But this opinion was not correct on the ground that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had not distributed the lands and the people of any territory conquered by fighting in his time after the deduction of one-fifth, like the booty. Two of the most conspicuous precedents of his time

were the conquest of Makkah and the conquest of Khaiber. Of these he handed over Makkah intact to its inhabitants. As for Khaiber, according to Hadrat Bushair bin Yasar, he divided it into 36 parts, of which he set aside 18 parts for collective benefits and requirements of the Muslims and distributed the remaining 18 among the army. (Abu Da'ud, Baihaqi, Abi 'Ubaid: Kitab al-Amwal; Yahya bin Adam: Kitab al-Kharj Baladhuri: Futuh al-Buldan; Ibn Human: Fath al-Qadir). This action of the Holy Prophet made it clear that the command in respect of the conquered lands, even if they might have been taken by fighting, is not the same as of the ghanimah otherwise he would never have given the whole of Makkah intact to the people of Makkah, and would have set aside exactly one-half of the properties of Khaiber for the common benefits of the Muslims instead of deducting its one-fifth for the Public Treasury. Thus, what was established on the basis of the Sunnah was: In respect of the territories conquered by fighting the ruler of the Muslims has the authority that he may take any decision that he dreams fit keeping in view the conditions of the time. He can distribute them if he so likes but if a territory has an unusual nature and importance, as Makkah had, he can also treat its inhabitants with favour, as the Holy Prophet treated the people of Makkah.

But as the conquests had not yet become common in the Holy Prophet's time and separate injunctions in respect of the different kinds of conquered territories had not yet become clearly known to the people, so when big countries were annexed to Islam in the tune of Hadrat 'Umar, the Companions were faced with the problem whether the territories conquered by force were in the nature of ghanimah or fat. After the conquest of Egypt Hadrat Zubair demanded: "Distribute this, whole land just as the Holy Prophet had distributed Khaiber. " (Abu 'Ubaid). About the conquered territories of Syria and 'Iraq, Hadrat Bilal insisted: "Distribute aII the lands among the fighting forces just as the spoils are distributed. '(Abu Yusuf, Kitab al-Kharaj On the other hand, Hadrat 'AIi gave this opinion: "Leave these lands in possession of the peasants so that they continue to remain a source of income for the Muslims." (Abu Yusuf, Abu 'Ubaid,). Likewise, the opinion of Hadrat Mu'adh bin Jabal was; "If you distributed these lands, evil consequences would occur. Because of this distribution large properties will pass into the hands of those few people, who have conquered them. Then, when these people pass away and their properties pass on to their heirs and there is left only one woman or only one man from among them, nothing might remain for the future generations to meet their needs and even to meet the expenses of safeguarding the frontiers of the Islamic State. Therefore, you should so settle things that the interests both of the present and of the future generations are equally safeguarded." (Abu `Ubaid, p. 59; Fath al-Bari, vol. vi, p. 138). Hadrat `Umar calculated and found that if the territories of `Iraq were distributed, each individual would receive two or three peasants on the average as his share, (Abu Yusuf. Abu 'Ubaid). Thereupon he arrived at the judicious conclusion that those territories should not be distributed. Thus, the replies that he gave to those who demanded their distribution, were as follows:

“Do you want that for the people who come afterwards there should remain nothing?" (Abu 'Ubaid).

"What will happen of the Muslims who cane afterwards when they find that the land along with its peasants has been distributed and the people have inherited their forefathers? This is not at all just. " (Abu Yusuf)

"What will be left for the Muslims who cant after you? I am afraid if I distribute it, you would fight among yourselves over water. " (Abu Yusuf)

“Had I no thought for those who would come afterwards, I would distribute every territory that I conquered just as the Messenger of AIIah had distributed Khaiber." (Bukhari Muwatta, Abu 'Ubaid),

"Nay: this is the real estate. I will withhold it so that the needs and requirements of the conquering forces and of the common Muslims continue to be met by it." (Abu 'Ubaid).

But the people were not satisfied with these replies, and they started saying that he was being unjust. At last, Hadrat 'Umar convened a meeting of the consultative body of the Companions and put the matter before it. Here are some of the sentences of the speech that he made on this occasion: "I have given you this trouble so that you may join me in shouldering the trust that has been put in me for governing your affairs. I am one of you, and you are the people who affirm the truth today. Everyone of you has the option to agree to or differ from what I say. I do not wish that you should follow my desire. You have the Book of Allah, which states the whole truth. By God, if I have said something which I want to enforce, I have no object in view except the truth. You have heard those who think that I am being unjust to them and want to deprive them of their rights, whereas I seek Allah's refuge that I should commit an injustice. It would be vicious on my part if I withheld from them something which actually belonged to them and gave it to another. But I can see that no other land after the land of the Chosroe is going to fall. Allah has given the properties of the Persians and their lands and their peasants in our possession. I have distributed the booty taken by our armies among them after the deduction of the khums (one fifth), and am thinking of distributing the rest which yet remains. But as for the lands my opinion is that I should not distribute them and their peasants, but should levy revenue on the lands and jizyah on the peasants, which they should always pay, and this should be the fai for the common Muslims and their children and the armies of today and for the generations yet to come. Don't you see that we need the troops who should be appointed to protect these our frontiers? Don't you see that in territories like Syria, AI-Jazirah, Kufah, Basra, Egypt we should station our troops, and they should be regularly for their services? So, if I distribute these lands along with their peasants, how shall we meet these expenses?"

The debate went on for two or three days. Hadrat `Uthman Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat Talhah, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar and others concurred with Hadrat 'Umar, but nothing could be decided. At last, Hadrat `Umar rose and said: "I have found an argument in the Book of Allah, which is decisive in this matter. Then, he recited these very verses of Surah AI-Hashr from Ma afaa'Allahu to Rabbana innaka Ra uf. ur-Rahim, and argued: "The people of this day only are not entitled to receive a share in these properties bestowed by Allah, but AIlah has joined with them also those people who will come after them. Then, how can it be that we should distribute the fai properties which are meant for all, only among the conquerors and leave nothing for the later generations? Moreover, Allah says: '...so that this wealth does not remain circulating among your rich people only.' But if distribute it among the conquerors, it will remain circulating only among your rich and nothing would be left for others. " This argument satisfied everybody and consensus was reached that all the conquered territories should be declared fai for the common benefits of the Muslims, which should be left with those who work on those lands and they should be put under revenue and jizyah. (Abu Yusuf Kitab al-Kharaj, pp. 23-27, 35; AI-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur'an).

Accordingly, the real position of the conquered lands that came to be established was that the Muslim people in their collective capacity are their owners; the people who were already working on them would be recognized as cultivators on behalf of the Muslim people; they would continue to pay the prescribed revenue to the Islamic

government on those lands, their rights as cultivators would pass from generation to generation as heritage, and they would even be allowed to sill those rights, but they will not be the real owners of the land, but its real owners will be the Muslim community. Imam Abu `Ubaid in his Kitab al-Amwal has stated this legal position, thus:

"Hadrat `Umar left the lands of the territory of `Iraq in the hands of its people; he levied tax on their lands and jizyah per head on the people." (p. 57).

When the head of the Islamic government leaves the lands in the hands of the people of the conquered territories, they would be allowed to pass the lands on as heritage and would also be allowed to sell them. " (P. 84).

In the time of `Umar bin `Abdul `Aziz, Sha'bi was asked: "Is there a treaty with the people of the territory of `Iraq." He replied: "There is no treaty, but when the revenue was accepted from them, it amounted to a treaty with them. " (Abu `Ubaid, p. 49; Abu Yusuf, p. 28).

In the time of Hadrat `Umar, `Utbah bin Furqad purchased a piece of land by the Euphrates. Hadrat `Umar asked him from whom he had purchased the land. He replied that he had purchased it from its owners. Hadrat `Umar said: "Its owners are these people, i. e. the Emigrants and the Ansar. " Thus, `Umar held the opinion that the real owners of those lands were the Muslims. (Abu `Ubaid, p. 74).

Accordingly, the properties of the conquered countries which were declared as the collective property of the Muslims were the following:

(1) Those lands and territories which come under the control of the Islamic government in consequence of a peace treaty.

(2) The ransom or revenue or jizyah which the people of a territory may have agreed to pay, without fighting, in order to seek refuge from the Muslims,

(3) Those lands and properties which the owners might have abandoned and fled.

(4) The properties the owners of which were slain and no survivor was left to own them.

(5) The lands which were not under any ownership previously.

(6) The lands which wen already in the ownership of the people, but were left with their previous owners and they were put under jizyah and revenue,

(7) Estates of the previous ruling dynasties.

(8) Properties of the previous governments.

(For details, see Bada-i as-Sanai, vol. vii, pp. 116-118; Yahya bin Adam Kitab aI-Kharaj. pp. 22, 64; Mughni al-Muhtaj, vol. iii, p. 93; Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi ala-sh-Sharah al-Kabir, vol. ii, p. 190; Ghayat al-Muntaha, vol. i, pp. 467-471).

Since these properties were declared as fai with the consensus of the Canpanions, the jurists of Islam also have agreed in principle on their being regarded as fai. However, they have differed in certain matters, the details of which arc briefly as follows:

The Hanafis say that as regards the lands of the conquered territories the Islamic government (Imam in juristic terminology has the option that it may distribute them among the forces of conquest after deduction of the khums (onefifth), or may leave them with the former owners and put the owners under jizyah and the lands under revenue. In this case the land will be regarded as a 'legacy for the Muslims. (Badai' as-Sanai AI-Jassas, Ahkam al- Qur'an; Sharah al-Anayah al al-Hedayah; Fath al-Qadir). The same view has `Abdullah bin Mubarak cited for Imam Sufyan Thauri. (Yahya bin Adam; Abu 'Ubaid, Kitab a!-Amwal).

The Malikis say that as soon as the lands have been conquered they automatically become a legacy for- the Muslims. It does not need the Imam's ruling or the willingness of the Muslim soldiers to declare them a legacy. Besides, the well known view among the Malikis is that not only the lands but the houses and buildings of the conquered territories also are, as a matter of fact, a legacy for the Muslims. However, the Islamic government will not charge the rent for them. (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi)

The Hanbalis agree with the Hanafis that the Imam has the option to distribute the lands among the soldiers or to declare them as a legacy for the Muslims, and with the Malikis that although the houses of the conquered territories are included the legacy, no rent will be levied on them. (GhayatalMuntaha which is a collection of the legal rulings of the Hanbali School of juristic thought and a source book for legal rulings since the 10th century).

The Shafe'i I viewpoint is that all the transferable properties of the conquered territory are ghanimah, and all the non-transferable properties (lands, houses, etc.) fai. (Mughni al-Muhtaj).

Some jurists have expressed the opinion the if the Imam wants to declare the lands of the territory taken by fighting as a legacy for the Muslims, he must first obtain the willingness of the conquering forces. For this they cite this argument: Hadrat 'Umar, before the conquest of Iraq, had promised Jarir bin 'Abdullah al-Banali, the people of whose tribe constituted one-fourth of the army, which fought the Battle of Qadisiyah, that they would be given one-fourth of the conquered territory. Thus, they retained this territory for two or three years. Then Hadrat 'Umar said to them: "Had I not been responsible and answerable in the matter of division, I would have left with you whatever has been given to you. But now I see that the people have grown in numbers; therefore, my opinion is that you return it to the common people." Hadrat Jarir acceded to this, and Hadrat 'Umar gave him SO dinars as a prize. (Abu Yusuf, Kitab al-Kharaj; Abu 'Ubaid, Kitab al-Amwal From this they argue that Hadrat 'Umar had decided to declare the conquered territories as a legacy for the Muslims only after obtaining the willingness of the conquerors. But the majority of the jurists do not admit this argument, For in respect of all the conquered territories no such willingness of the conquerors ever was taken. Only in the case of Hadrat Jarir bin 'Abdullah this was done because Hadrat `Umar had made a promise with him prior to any collective decision

about the conquered lands. Therefore, he had to obtain his willingness only in order to be free from the obligation of the promise. This cannot be cited as a general law.

Another section of the jurists says that even after declaring the lands as a legacy the government retains the option that it may redistribute the lands among the conquerors. For this they argue from this tradition: Once Hadrat 'AII said to the people in an address: "Had not there been the apprehension that you would fight among yourselves, I would have distributed the suburban lands among you." (Abu Yusuf, Kitab al-Kharaj; Abu `Ubaid, Kitab al-Amwal). But the majority of jurists do not admit this argument either. They are unanimous that when the people of the conquered territory have once been allowed to retain their lands and put under jizyah and revenue, the decision can never be changed later. As for the tradition attributed to Hadrat 'Ali Abu Bakr al-Jassas has discussed it at length in his Ahkam al-Qur an and proved it to be not authentic.

21In this verse although the real object is only to pouts out that in fai not only the people of the present generation but .he Muslims of the later periods and their future generations also have a share, yet, besides, the Muslims have also been taught an important moral lesson that they should never have any malice against other Muslims in their hearts, and they should continue to pray for the forgiveness of the Muslims who have gone before them instead of cursing and abusing them. The bond that binds the Muslims together is that of a common Faith. If a person values his Faith as the most important thing in his heart, inevitably he would be a well-wisher of all those people who are his brethren-in faith. He can have ill-will and malice and hatred towards them in his heart only when the value of the Faith decreases in his sight and he starts valuing other things more. Therefore, it is the requirement of Faith that a believer's heart should be free from every trace of malice and hatred against the other believers. In this matter the best lesson is given by a Hadith which Nasa'i has related from Hadrat Anas. According to him, once it so happened that for three days continuously the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) declared in his assembly that a person was going to appear before them who belonged to the dwellers of Paradise, and every time it would be a certain person from among the Ansar. At this Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Amr bin `As became curious as to what deeds the person concerned performed on the basis of which the Holy Prophet had repeatedly given the good news of his admission to Paradise. Thus, he made an excuse and spent three consecutive nights in his house to see how he performed his worship, but during the night he did not sec any thing unusual. At last, he asked him directly as to what special acts and devotions he performed on the basis of which the Holy Prophet had given the great good news about him. He replied: °You have seen how I perform my worship, but there is one thing which might have carved me this reward: I do not harbor any malice or evil design against any Muslim, nor fuel jealous of him on account of any good that Allah might have bestowed on him."

This does not mean that if a Muslim finds an error in another Muslim's word or deed, he should avoid calling it an error. Faith does not demand this. Rut to describe an error as a mistake on the basis of an argument and to state it to be so in a polite and decent manner is one thing and harbor malice and hatred and resort to invective and abuse quite another. It is wrong if one resorts to this in respect of one's contemporaries, but worse if one resorted to this in respect of the dead people of the past. For the person indulging in such a thing would be a most filthy person for he is not even inclined to forgive the dead. And the worst would be that a person should resort to invective and abuse in respect of those illustrious people who had done full justice to the Holy Prophet's companionship in a period full of extreme tribulations and hardships and had struggled with their lives to spread the light of Islam in the world and enabled us today to be blessed with the Faith. One can hold and opinion if one

thinks that such and such party of them was in the right and such and such in the wrong in its viewpoint in the differences that arose between them, and can even express his opinion in a reasonable and decent way, but to resort to exaggeration in support of one party so that the heart is filled with spite and hatred against the other is an evil which no God-fearing person would commit. Those who indulge in such a thing against the clear teaching of the Qur'an, generally present the excuse that the Qur'an forbids to bear malice towards the believers and the ones towards whom they bear the malice were not believers but hypocrites. But this allegation is even worse than the sin in defense of which the excuse is presented. For these very verses of the Qur'an in the context of which Allah has taught the Muslims of the later generations not to bear malice towards the Muslims who have gone before them and to pray for their forgiveness, arc sufficient to refute this allegation. In these verses three groups have been mentioned, one after the other, who are entitled to receive a share in far. the Emigrants, the Ansar and the Muslims coming after them; and the Muslims of the later periods have been enjoined that they should pray for the forgiveness of the Muslims who had embraced the Faith before them. Obviously, in this context those who had embraced the Faith before them could not be any other than the Emigrants and the Ansar. Then Allah in vv. 11-17 of this Surah Al Hashr itself has. also told us who were the hypocrites. This makes it absolutely clear that the hypocrites were the people who had encouraged the Jews on the occasion of the battle of the Bani an-Nadir; as against them, the believers were those who were on the side of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in this battle. After this, can a Muslim who has any fear of God in his heart, have the boldness to deny the Faith of the people to whose Faith Allah Himself has borne the testimony

Imam Malik and Imam Ahmed arguing from this verse, have expressed ' the opinion that there is no share in fai for the people who malign the Companions of the Holy Prophet. (Ibn al-Arabi, Ahkam al-Quran; Ghayat al-Muntaha). But the Hanafis and the Shafe'is have not concurred with this, the reason being that Allah while declaring the three groups to be entitled to fai, has praised a conspicuous quality of each group but none of these qualities is a condition which may determine whether a group should or should not be given a share in fai. About the Emigrants it has been said: "They seek Allah's bounty and His goodwill, and are ever ready to succor Allah and His Messenger." This does not mean that an Emigrant who lacks this quality, is not entitled to have a share in fai. About the Ansar it has been said: "They love those who have migrated to them and entertain no desire in their hearts for what is given to them and prefer others about themselves even though they be needy themselves. " This also does not mean that a member of the Amar who has no love for the Emigrants and who is desirous of getting for himself what is being given to them, has no share in fai. Therefore, the quality of the third group that "they pray for the forgiveness of those who embraced the Faith before them and they pray that they should not have any malice in their hearts towards any other believer", is also no condition to make one entitled to fai, but this is in praise of a good quality and an instruction as to what should be the attitude of the believers towards the other believers and especially in respect of those believers who have gone before them.

22From the style of this whole section (vv. 11-17) it appears that it was revealed at the time when the Holy Prophet (upon who n be Allah's peace) had served a notice on the Bani an-Nadir to leave Madinah within ten days, but had not yet laid siege to their quarters. As has been mentioned about, when the Holy Prophet save the notice to the Bani an-Nadir, 'Abdullah bin Ubayy and other leaders of the hypocrites of Madinah sent them a message to the effect that they would come to their aid with two thousand men, and that the Bani Quraizah and the Bani Ghatafan also would rise in their support; therefore, they should stand firm and should never surrender to the Muslims. For if the Muslims waged a war against hem, they

would fight them from their side; and if they expelled hem, they also would go out with them. Thereupon Allah sent own these verses, Thus, chronologically this section is an earlier revelation and the first section a later revelation, when the Bani an-Nadir had actually been driven out of Madinah. But in the Qur'an the order of the two passages has been reversed for the reason that the subject matter of the first section is of greater importance

23That is, "The reason why they dare not face you openly in the field is not that they are Muslim: and have fear of God in their hearts and are afraid that despite their claim to the Faith when they come out to help the disbelievers as against the believers, they will be held accountable before God. But what actually restrains them froth facing you is that when they see your profound love and spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion for Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and the great unity and concord in your rattles, they become dispirited. They a now full well that although you are few in number the spirit of martyrdom which has turned each single individual among you into a gallant warrior and the organization which has molded you into a solid body, will crush them also along with the Jews when they c]ash with you in the battlefield. Here one should bear in mind the fact that if a person harbors the fear of another than God in his heart, it is in fact a negation of the fear of God. Obviously. the person who considers one of the dangers as lesser and the other greater, pays no heed to the first but does whatever b e can to safeguard himself against the greater danger."

24A great truth has been expressed in this brief sentence. A person who has sense knows that the real power to be feared is the power of Allah and not the power of men. Therefore, he will avoid every such thing as may call for the punishment of Allah, whether there is any human power to call him to account for it or not, and he will come out to accomplish any duty which Allah has enjoined on him, whether he is opposed and hindered by all the powers of the world. But a man, who has no sense, determines his attitude and conduct in view of the human powers, instead of Allah's power, in all matters of lift, because Allah's power for him is imperceptible and human powers arc perceptible. If he avoids something. he will avoid it, not because of the fear of Allah's punishment for it, but because of a human power, which may be there to take him to task. And if he does something he will do is not because Allah has enjoined it, but because some human power has ordered or approved of it, and will reward hi for it. This very distinction between intelligence and folly, in fact, distinguishes the character and conduct of a believer from that of an unbeliever.

25This refers to the second weakness of the hypocrites. The first weakness was that they were cowardly: they feared the men instead of fearing God and had no higher aim of lift before them like the believers, which might impel them to fight for it even at the cost of life. And their second weakness was that they had no common tic between them except hypocrisy, which might unite them together into a strong band. The only thing that had brought them together was that they were all feeling highly upset at the flourishing leadership and rulership of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). who was an outsider in their city, and at the warm reception and help which their own compatriots the Ansar were giving the Emigrants. Because of this jealousy they wanted them to join hands together and in conspiracy

with the enemies of Islam of the surrounding areas should somehow put an end to this alien power and authority. But apart from this negative objective there was no positive common aim to unify them. Each of their chiefs had his own separate band: each craved for his own leadership; no one was sincere to the other; but each bore such jealousy and malice for the other that they could neither forget their mutual enmities nor desist from harming the other fatally even while facing those whom they regarded as their common enemy.

Thus, at the outset, even before the battle against the Bani an-Nadir took place, Allah analyzed the internal state of the hypocrites and informed the Muslims that there was no real danger from their side; therefore, they should not feel alarmed- at the rumors that when they lay siege to the Bani an-Nadir, the leaders of the hypocrites would attack them from the rear with two thousand men, and also bring the Bani Quraizah and the Bani Ghatafan along against them. AII this was empty boasting which would be exposed at the very beginning of the trial.

26The allusion is to the disbelievers of the Quraish and the Jewish clan of the Bani Qrainuqa who had been defeated by a handful of ill-equipped Muslims in spite of their larger numbers and superior equipment, due mainly to these weaknesses

27That is, "These hypocrites are treating the Bani an-Nadir in much the same way as Satan treats men. Today they are urging them to stand firm and go forth and clash with the Muslims making them believe that they would come to their aid, but when they actually clash with the Muslims, they would renounce their pledges and promises and would never even look back to see their fate. The same way does Satan treat every disbeliever, and a similar treatment had he given to the disbelieving Quraish at Badr, as has been mentioned in Surah al-Anfal: 48 above. First. he incited them with false hopes and brought them out to confront the Muslims, saying: `Today no one can overcome you, for I am with you." But when the two forces met in battle, he took to his heels, saying: "I have nothing to do with you. I see that which you cannot see. Indeed, I fear Allah."

28It is a rule of the Qur'iin that whenever the hypocritical Muslims are taken to task for their hypocrisy, they are given admonition also so that whoever of them has some life left in his conscience, may feel remorse for his conduct and attitude and may make an effort, out of the fear of Allah, to come out of the pit into which his worship of the self has thrown him. This whole section (vv, 18-24) consists of such admonition.

29"For the morrow": for the Hereafter. That is, this whole worldly life is "today", whose "tomorrow" is the Day of Resurrection, which is going to follow it. Adopting this style Allah has, in a wise manner, made man understand the truth that just as that person is highly foolish, who gambles away his all for the enjoyment of today and does not realize whether tomorrow he would be left with anything to eat and a place of shelter or not, so is that person also only working for his own doom, who is too absorbed in making; his world to pay heed to the Hereafter, whereas the Hereafter is to follow this world just as today

is to be followed by tomorrow, and there he would find nothing if he has sent nothing ahead for the morrow. Besides, the other wise point here is that every person has been appointed his own censor. Unless a person develops in himself the sense of what is good for him and what is evil, he cannot appreciate whether what he is doing will make his future in the Hereafter or mar it. And when this sense becomes active in himself, he will have to calculate and see for himself whether the way in which he is expending his time, his wealth, his energies and capabilities leads to Heaven or Hell. To do so is in his own interest; for if he does not do so he will ruin his own future itself.

30That is, forgetfulness of God inevitably leads to forgetfulness of one's own self. When man forgets that he is slave to the Almighty, he will inevitably form a wrong view of his position in the world, and his whole life will go wrong because of this basic error. Likewise, when he forgets that he is slave to nobody except Allah, he does not serve the one whose slave actually he is not. This also is a grave and all-pervading misunderstanding, which corrupts his whole life. Man's real position in the world is that of a slave; he is not free and self-sufficient; and he is slave of only One God, and is no one else's slave beside Him. The person who, in not know this truth, does not in fact know himself. And the person who in spite of knowing this, forgets it at any moment, may commit an act at that very moment, which a disbeliever, or a polytheist or a man forgetful of God only would commit. Man's remaining firm and steadfast on the right path entirely depends on his remembering God at all times. For as soon as he, becomes heedless of Him. he becomes heedless of himself and this very heedlessness turns him into sinfulness.

31The parable means that if a huge creation like a mountain had the sense and knowledge that it had been made responsible and accountable, like man, before Allah Almighty, for its deeds, it would have trembled from the fear of it. But how heedless, senseless and thoughtless is the man, who understands the Qur'an, and has known the whole truth through it, yet he is neither seized by any fear not feels worried as to what answer he would make to his God about the responsibilities that have been placed on him. On the contrary when be reads the Qur'an, or hears it read, he remains. go un-moved as if he were a lifeless and senseless stone, which is not supposed to hear and see and understand anything. (For further explanation, see E.N. 120 of Surah Al-Ahzab)

32These verses explain what kind of God He is, and what are His attributes, Who has sent this Qur'an to you, Who has placed these responsibilities on you, and before Whom you have to render an account of your deeds in the end. This mention of the Divine attributes immediately after the above theme automatically gives man the feeling that he has not to deal with an ordinary being but with Almighty Allah Who has such and such attributes. Here, one should also understand that although in the Qur'an the attributes of Allah Almighty have been stated in a unique way, which gives a clear concept of the Divine Bing there are two places where the attributes of Allah have been mentioned in a most comprehensive way, in the Verse of the Throne (Al-Baqarah: 255) and in these verses of Surah Al-Hashr.

33That is, He is the One besides Whom none else has the rank, position, attributes and powers of

Godhead so that he may be worshiped and served as god.

34That is, He knows whatever is hidden from the creatures as well as whatever is known and visible to them. Nothing of this universe is unknown to Him. He directly knows whatever has happened in the past, whatever exists at present and whatever will happen in the future : He does not stand in need of any means or medium of knowledge.

35That is, He alone is the Being Whose mercy is limitless, which covers the whole universe and blesses and benefits everything a it. None else in the world is the bearer of such all-pervading, infinite mercy. The mercy of every other being, characterized by the ability of mercy, is partial and limited, and that quality too is not essentially its own, but bestowed by the Creator for a specific need and purpose. He has created the quality of mercy for some other creature. He has created it in order to make one creature a-means for the development and well-being of the other creature. This by itself is a proof that Allah's Mercy is infinite.

36The word used in the original is al-Malik, which means at He alone is the real Sovereign. Moreover, the word al-Malik its general sense also gives the meaning that He is King of the tire universe and not of a particular region or of a specific country. His Sovereignty and rule comprehends the entire universe.

He is Master of everything. Everything submits itself to His command and power and authority, and there is nothing to delimit His Sovereignty. At different places in the Qur'an all aspects of Allah's Sovereignty, have been presented and explained fully.

"Whoever exist in the heavens and the earth are He servants; all arc obedient to Him." (Ar-Burn: 26).

"He administers the affairs of the world from the heavens to the earth. " (As-Sajdah: 5)

"To Him belongs the dominion of the earth and the heavens, and all matters are referred to Him for decision." (AI-Hadid: 5).

"He has no partner in His sovereignty." (Al-Furqan: 2).

"In His hand is the absolute control of everything." (Ya Sin: 83).

"Doer of whatever He wills." (AI-Buruj: 16).

"He is accountable to none for what He does, but all others are accountable (to Him).'" (Al-Anbiyii': 23).

"Allah rules and there is none to reverse His decrees." (Ar-Ra'd: 41).

"The Being Who gives protection while none can give protection against Him." (Al-Mu'min: 88).

"Say: O Allah, Sovereign of the Kingdom, Thou bestows kingdom on whomever Thou wilt, and Thou takes it away from whomever Thou wilt. Thou exalts whomever Thou wilt and Thou abases whomever Thou wilt. AII that is good is in Thy power; indeed Thou hast full power over all things." (Al-i-Imran: 26).

These explanations make it abundantly clear that Allah is not King in some limited or metaphoric sense but He is real King in the most perfect and complete sense of sovereignty. As a matter of fact, if sovereignty in its true sense is at all found somewhere, it is found only in Allah's Kingship. Apart from this, wherever it is claimed to be, whether in the person of a king or dictator, or in a class or group or family, or in sonic nation, he or it possesses no sovereignty at all, for sovereignty is not a gift, which may at one time be granted and at another time withdrawn, which may be in danger of being usurped, the establishment and existence of which may be temporary and temporal, and the sphere of power and authority of which may be circumscribed and restricted by many other conflicting powers.

37Quddus is a superlative. It means that Allah is far exalted that He should have a fault or defect or demerit: He is the purest Being, no evil can be imagined about Him. Here, one should clearly understand that the attribute of holiness is a foremost accompaniment of sovereignty. Man's intellect and nature refuse to believe that a being who is the bearer of sovereignty may be mischievous, ill behaved, ill-natured, who may be characterized with these base qualities from whose power and authority his subjects might be in danger of suffering evil instead of being blessed with good. That is why wherever man thinks sovereignty is centered, he assumes holiness also to be there, even if it is not there, for absolute sovereignty is inconceivable without holiness. But. obviously, there is no real Sovereign except Allah, Who is holy, nor can there be. Whether it is monarchy, or sovereignty of the people, or dictatorship of the socialist system, or some other form of human rule in any case holiness for it is inconceivable.

38The word as-Salam as used in the original means peace and Secure, Allah's being called as-Salam means that He is peace and safety personified. He is far exalted that some calamity or weakness or defect should befall Him, or His Perfection should suffer a decline or blemish.

39The word at-Mu min is derived from amn, which means to secure from fear, and Mu'min is one who provides security to others. Allah ha: been called Mn'min in the sense that He provides security to His creatures. His creatures arc secure from the fear that He would ever wrong them, or deprive them of their rights, or allow their rewards to go to waste, or would violate the promises He has made with them. Then, since no object has been mentioned with this subject, but the epithet of al-Mu'min has been used absolutely, it automatically gives the meaning that His security comprehends the entire universe and all that it contains.

40The word al-Muhaimin has three meanings:

(1) The Guardian and Protector;

(2) the Observer who sees what everyone does; and

(3) the Being Who has taken up the responsibility to fulfill the needs and requirements of the people.

Here also, since the word al-Muhaimin has been used absolutely, and no object has been mentioned of this subject, therefore, it by itself gives the implied meaning that He is guarding and protecting all creatures, is watching the acts and deeds of everyone, and has taken up the responsibility of sustaining and providing for every creature in the universe with its needs and requirements.

41Al-'Aziz: such an Almighty Being against Whom no one may dare raise his head, no one may have the power to resist His decrees, before Whom . everyone may be helpless and powerless.

42The word al-Jabbar as used in the original is derived from jabr which means setting something right by use of power, reforming something by force. Allah has been called jabbar in the sense that He sets the system of His universe right by the use of power and enforces His will, which is wholly based on wisdom. by force. Moreover, the word jabber also contains the meaning of greatness; and glory. Thus, a palm-tree which is too tall for the people to pluck its fruit is called jabber In Arabic. Likewise, an act which is grand and glorious is called amal jabbar.

43The word al-Mutakabbir has two meanings.

(1) The one who is not actually great but poses as great, and

(2) the one who is actually great and sets himself up as such.

Whether it is man or Satan, or some other creature, since greatness does not, in actual fact, belong to it, its posing itself as great and claiming superiority over others is, a false claim and a vice. Contrary to this, Allah Almighty is truly Great and greatness actually belongs to Him, and' everything in the universe is low and insignificant as against Him; therefore, His being Great and setting Himself up as Great is no false claim but an actual reality; it is not an evil quality but a virtue and excellence, which no one else has but Allah.

44That is, those who regard a creature as an associate in His powers, authority, attributes, or in His Being, in fact, utter a grave falsehood, for Allah is far exalted that anybody or anything should be an associate with Him in any sense.

45That is, the whole world and everything in it, from the initial plan of its creation till its coming into existence in its final, finished form, is entirely Allah's work of creation. Nothing has come into existence by itself nor come about accidentally, nor has anyone else the least share in its creation and development. Here, Allah's act of creation has been described in three separate stages, which take place one after the other. First is the stage of khalq, which means to ordain, or to plan. It is like an engineer's conceiving the design of a building, which he intends to build for a specific purpose and draws out its detailed diagram and model The second stage is bar', which actually means to separate, to cut, to split asunder. The Creator has been called bari' in the sense that He enforces the plan He has conceived and brings out the thing from non-existence into existence. It is Analogous to the engineer's putting marks on the ground of the full measurements of the building according to the plan, digging the foundations, raising the walls and completing all the practical preliminaries of the construction work. The third stage is taswir, which means to give shape; here it implies giving something its final complete shape. In all these three stages there is no resemblance whatever between Allah's work and human works. None of human plans is such as may not have been derived from previous models and plans. But each of Allah's plans is, unique and His own original creation. Whatever man makes, he makes it by combining the substances created by Allah. He does not bring anything from nonexistence into existence, but composes and constructs by different methods whatever is present and available. Contrary to this, Allah has brought everything from non-existence into creation, and the substance itself of which He has made the universe is created by Him. Likewise, in the matter of giving shape also man is not the inventor but an imitator, and only a poor imitator. The real Maker of forms and shapes is Allah, Who has given a unique and matchless shape to every species and individual and has never repeated exactly the same shape or from.

46Names imply the adjectives, and "His are the excellent names" means that those adjectives which indicate or express some kind of defect are not appropriate for Him. He should be remembered by those names which express His attributes of Perfection. In the Qur'an these beautiful names of Allah have been mentioned here and there, and in the Hadith 99 names of that Exalted and Pure Being have been enumerated which Timidhi and Ibn Majah have related on the authority pf Hadrat Abu Hurairah. If one studies these names as mentioned in the Qur'an and the Hadith carefully, the can easily understand what words would be appropriate ant suitable if one has to remember Allah in another language.

47That is, "Everything proclaims .with the tongue, or otherwise, that its Creator is free frown every fault and defect, weakness and error."

48For explanation, see E.N. 2 of Surah Al-Hadid.

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60. Surah Al Mumtahina (The Woman Under Questioning)

Name

In verse 10 of this Surah it has been enjoined that the women who emigrate to *dar al-Islam* (the Islamic State) and claim to be Muslims, should be examined hence the title *Al-Mumtahinah*. The word is pronounced both as *mumtahinah* and as *mumtahanah*, the meaning according to the first pronunciation being "the Surah which examines", and according to the second, "the woman who is examined."

Period of Revelation

The Surah deals with two incidents, the time of the occurrence of which is well known historically. The first relates to Hadrat Hatib bin Abz Balta'a, who, a little before the conquest of Makkah, had sent a secret letter to the Quraish chiefs informing them of the Holy Prophet's intention to attack them. The second relates to the Muslim women, who had started emigrating from Makkah to Madinah, after the conclusion of the Truce of Hudaibiyah, and the problem arose whether they also were to be returned to the disbelievers, like the Muslim men, according to the conditions of the Truce. The mention of these two things absolutely determines that this Surah came down during the interval between the Truce of Hudaibiyah and the Conquest of Makkah. Besides, there is a third thing also that has been mentioned at the end of the Surah to the effect; What should the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) make the women to pledge when they come to take the oath of allegiance before him as believers?About this part also the guess is that this too was sent down some time before the conquest of Makkah, for after this conquest a large number of the Quraish women, like their men, were going to enter Islam simultaneously and had to be administered the oath of allegiance collectively.

Theme and Topics

This Surah has three parts;

The first part consists of vv. 1-9, and the concluding verse 13 also relates to it. In this strong exception has been taken to the act of Hadrat Hatib bin Abi Balta'a in that he had tried to inform the enemy of a very important war

secret of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) only for the sake of safe guarding his family. This would have caused great bloodshed at the conquest of Makkah had it not been made ineffective in time. It would have cost the Muslims many precious lives; many of the Quraish would have been killed, who were to render great services to Islam afterward; the gains which were to accrue from conquering Makkah peacefully would have been lost, and all these serious losses would have resulted only because one of the Muslims had wanted to safeguard his family from the dangers of war. Administering a severe warning at this blunder Allah has taught the believers the lesson that no believer should, under any circumstances and for any motive, have relations of love and friendship with the disbelievers, who are actively hostile to Islam, and a believer should refrain from everything which might be helpful to them in the conflict between Islam and disbelief. However, there is no harm in dealing kindly and justly with those disbelievers, who may not be practically engaged in hostile activities against Islam and persecution of the Muslims.

The second part consists of vv. 10-11. In this a social problem has been settled, which was agitating the minds at that time. There were many Muslim women in Makkah, whose husbands were pagans, but they were emigrating and reaching Madinah somehow. Likewise, there were many Muslim men in Madinah, whose wives were pagans and had been left behind in Makkah. The question arose whether the marriage bond between them continued to be valid or not. Allah settled this problem for ever, saying that the pagan husband is not lawful for the Muslim women, nor the pagan wife lawful for the Muslim husband. This decision leads to very important legal consequences, which we shall explain in our notes below.

The third section consists of verse 12, in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has been instructed to ask the women who accept Islam to pledge that they would refrain from the major evils that were prevalent among the womenfolk of the pre-Islamic Arab society, and to promise that they would henceforth follow the ways of goodness which the Messenger of Allah may enjoin.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّخِذُواْ عَدُوِّى وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ
تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِٱلْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُواْ بِمَا جَآءَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْحَقِّ يُخْرِجُونَ
ٱلرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَن تُؤْمِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ جِهَٰدًا
فِى سَبِيلِى وَٱبْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِى تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِم بِٱلْمَوَدَّةِ وَأَنَا۠ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَآ أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَآ أَعْلَنتُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْهُ مِنكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١﴾

إِن يَثْقَفُوكُمْ يَكُونُواْ لَكُمْ أَعْدَآءً وَيَبْسُطُوٓاْ إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَأَلْسِنَتَهُم
بِٱلسُّوٓءِ وَوَدُّواْ لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٢﴾

لَن تَنفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُكُمْ ۚ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] O you[1] who have believed, if you have come out (from your homes and emigrated) in order to fight in My way and to seek My goodwill, then do not make friends with My enemies and your enemies. You show them friendship even though they have refused to believe in the Truth that has come to you, while they drive out the Messenger and you away only because you believe in Allah, your Lord. You send them friendly messages secretly, whereas I know full well whatever you do secretly and whatever you do openly. Whoever from among you does so, has indeed gone astray from the right way. If these people overcome you, they will be enemies to you and will use their hands and their tongues to harm you. They wish that you should turn unbelievers somehow.[2] On the Day of Resurrection neither will your relationships avail you anything nor your children.[3] Allah on that Day shall cause separation between you,[4] and He is Seer of whatever you do.[5]

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَٱلَّذِينَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لِقَوْمِهِمْ
إِنَّا بُرَءَٰٓؤُا۟ مِنكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا
بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ٱلْعَدَٰوَةُ وَٱلْبَغْضَآءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّىٰ تُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَحْدَهُۥٓ
إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَمَآ أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ ۖ
رَّبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤﴾

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

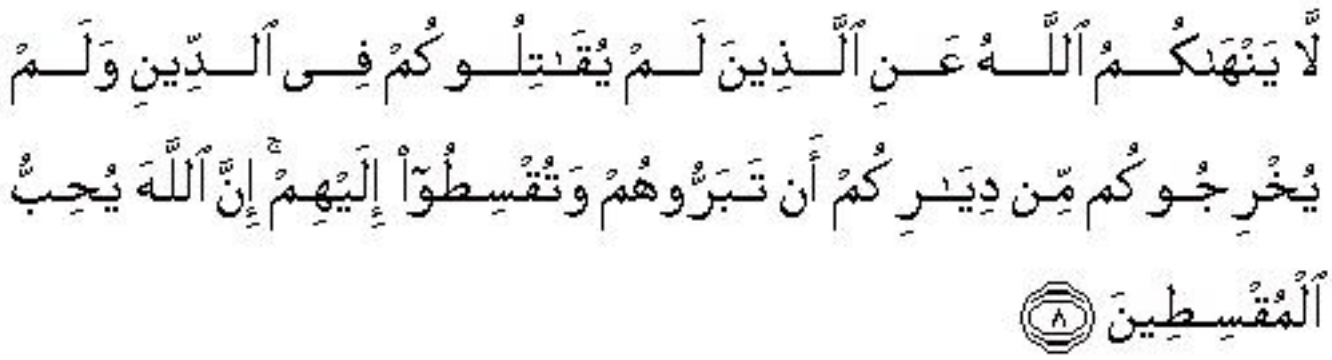
[4-5] There is indeed an excellent example for you in Abraham and his Companions when they said to their people plainly: "We have nothing to do with you and your gods whom you worship instead of Allah. We renounce you[6] and there has arisen between us and you enmity and hatred for ever, until you believe in Allah, the One." But Abraham's saying this to his father (is excepted); "I shall certainly pray for your forgiveness, though I have no power to get anything for you from Allah."[7] (And the prayer of Abraham and his companions was:) "O our Lord, in you alone have we put our trust and to You alone have we turned and to You we shall return finally. O our Lord: make us not a test and trial for those who have disbelieved,[8] and O our Lord, pardon us our errors. You indeed are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."

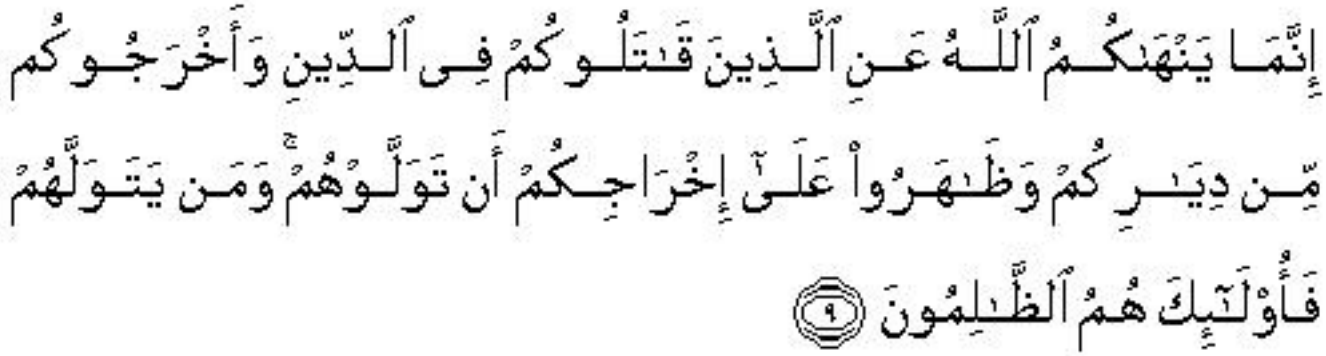
لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْءَاخِرَ ۚ وَمَن
يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦﴾

[6] There is certainly in the conduct of those people an excellent example for you and for every such person who is hopeful of Allah and the last Day.[9] But whoever turns away from this (should know that) Allah is All-Sufficient and Self-Praiseworthy.[10]

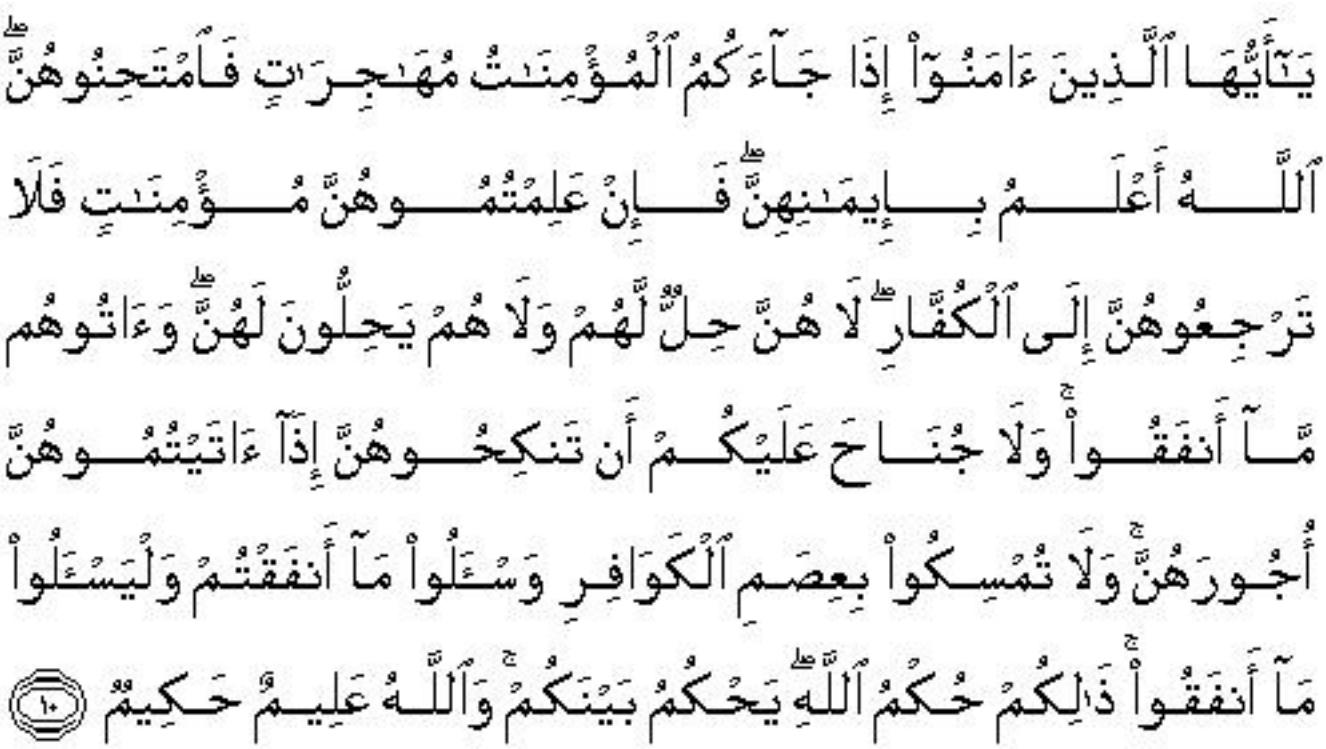


[7] It may well be that Allah will place love between you and those whose enmity you have now earned.[11] Allah is All-Powerful, and He is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.



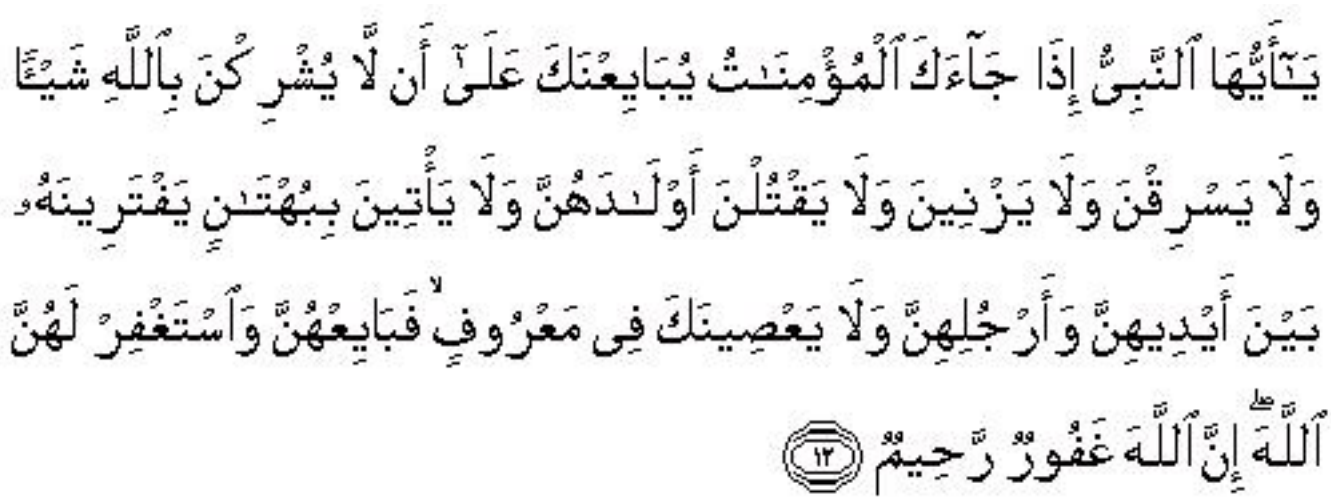


[8-9] Allah does not forbid you to treat kindly and act equitably towards those who have neither fought you in the matter of religion nor driven you out of your homes. Indeed Allah loves the just.[12] He only forbids you to take for friends those who fought you in the matter of religion, and drove you out of your homes, and cooperated with others in your expulsion. Those who take them for friends are indeed the wrongdoers.[13]

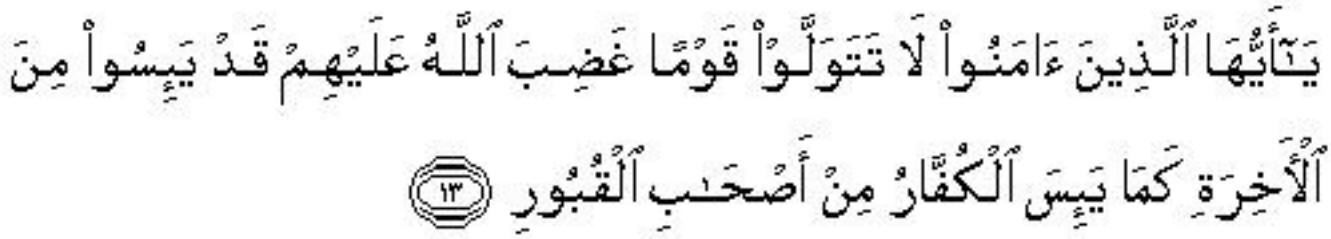

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا جَآءَكُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ مُهَٰجِرَٰتٍ فَٱمْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۖ
ٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَٰنِهِنَّ ۖ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَٰتٍ فَلَا
تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى ٱلْكُفَّارِ ۖ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ ۖ وَءَاتُوهُم
مَّآ أَنفَقُواْ ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَن تَنكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَآ ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
أُجُورَهُنَّ ۚ وَلَا تُمْسِكُواْ بِعِصَمِ ٱلْكَوَافِرِ وَسْـَٔلُواْ مَآ أَنفَقْتُمْ وَلْيَسْـَٔلُواْ
مَآ أَنفَقُواْ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ حُكْمُ ٱللَّهِ ۖ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

وَإِن فَاتَكُمْ شَىْءٌ مِّنْ أَزْوَٰجِكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْكُفَّارِ فَعَاقَبْتُمْ
فَـَٔاتُواْ ٱلَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتْ أَزْوَٰجُهُم مِّثْلَ مَآ أَنفَقُواْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنتُم
بِهِۦ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

[10-11] O you who have believed, when the believing women come to you as emigrants, examine and test (their faith), although Allah only knows best the truth of their faith. Then, when you find them to be true believers, do not return them to the disbelievers.[14] Neither are they lawful for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful for them. Return to their disbelieving husbands the dowers that they had given them; and there is no blame on you if you marry them when you have paid them their dowers.[15] And you also should not hold back unbelieving women in marriage. Ask for the dowers that you had given to your unbelieving wives, and let the disbelievers ask for the dowers that they had given to their Muslim wives.[16] This is Allah's command: He judges between you, and He is All-Knowing, All-Wise. And if you do not get back from the disbelievers a part of the dower of your disbelieving wives, and then your turn comes, pay to the people whose wives have been left on the other side an amount equivalent to the dowers given by them.[17] And fear that Allah in Whom you have believed.



[12] O Prophet, when the believing women come to you to take the oath of allegiance,[18] and pledge that they would neither associate anything with Allah, nor steal[19] nor commit adultery nor child murder,[20] nor bring a calumny forged between their own hands and feet,[21] nor disobey you in what is good,[22] accept their allegiance[23] and pray for their forgiveness. Surely Allah is All-Forgiving! All Merciful.



[13] O you who have believed, do not make friends with those whom Allah has condemned, who have despaired of the Hereafter just as the disbelievers, who are lying in the graves, have despaired.[24]

1It would be appropriate to give at the outset the details of the incident concerning which these verses were sent down so that the subject that follows is understood easily. The commentators are agreed, and Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, 'Urwah bin Zubair and others also have unanimously reported, that these verses were revealed at the time when a letter of Hadrat Hatib bin Abi Balta'a to the pagans of Makkah was intercepted.

It so happened that, when the Quraish broke the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) started making preparations for an invasion of Makkah, but he did not tell anyone, except a few close Companions, what was the goal of the expedition. By chance at about the same time a woman arrived from Makkah, who had been a slave-girl of the Bani 'Abdul Muttalib, and then after her freedom had adopted singing as her profession. She complained of poverty to the Holy Prophet and requested for financial help. The Holy Prophet appealed to the Bani 'Abdul Muttalib and the Bani al-Muttalib and

satisfied her need. When she was about to leave for Makkah, Hadrat Hatib bin Abi Balta'a met her and quietly gave her a letter addressed to some of the Makkah chiefs and paid her ten dinars so that she kept the secret and carried the letter to the addressees secretly. When she had just left Madinah, Allah informed the Holy Prophet (Upon whom be Allah's peace) of it. So the Holy Prophet immediately sent Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat Zubair and Hadrat Miqdad bin Aswad after her with the instruction: "Make haste: At Raudah khaki (12 miles from Madinah on the road to Makkah) you will meet a woman, who carries a letter from Hatib to the pagans of Makkah Seize that letter by any means you like. If she delivers the letter willingly, let her go; if she refuses to deliver it, kill her." When these Companions reached the place, they found the woman there They demanded the letter from her. She replied that she had a letter. They searched her but could find no letter. At last, they told her to deliver the letter, otherwise they would strip her and search her. When she saw that there was no way of escape, she took out the letter from her hair-plait and delivered it to them, and they brought it to the Holy Prophet. When the letter was opened and read it was found to contain information to the Quraish that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was making preparations to attack them. (In different traditions different wordings of the letter have been reported but the purport of all is one and the same). The Holy Prophet asked Hadrat Hatib what induced him to act thus. He replied: "Sir, do not make haste in this matter of mine. I have not done this because I have become a disbeliever or an apostate, and have started preferring disbelief to Islam. But the truth is that my near and dear ones are still in Makkah. I do not belong to the tribe of the Quraish, but had settled there under the guardianship of some of them. The families of the Emigrants, which are still in Makkah, will be defended and protected by their tribes and clans, but 1 have no tribe, which could give protection to my family. Therefore, I sent this letter in order to keep the Quraish under obligation so that they did not harm my children. " (According to Hadrat Hatib's .son `Abdur Rahman, Hadrat Habit had his children and brother still in Makkah at that time, and according to Hadrat Hatib's own report his mother also was there). Hearing what Hatib had to say, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said to the people: "Hatib has told you the truth. " That is, the real motive of his action was this and not any treachery against Islam or any intention to support disbelief. Hadrat `Umar rose and said: "Permit me, O Messenger of Allah, that I should cut off this hypocrite's head: he has been treacherous to Allah and His Messenger and the Muslims." The Holy Prophet said: "This man has participated in the Battle of Badr: You may not know, O `Umar, Allah may have looked favorably at the people of Badr and said: "Do as you please, I have forgiven you. " (The words in the last sentence are different in different traditions. In some these are to the effect: "I have granted you forgiveness"; in some other: I am your Forgiver"; and in still an other: "I will forgive you.") Hearing this Hadrat 'Umar wept and said: "Allah and His Messenger have the best knowledge. " This is a resume of those many traditions which Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Timidhi Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir Tabari, Ibn Hisham, Ibn Hibban and Ibn Abi Hatim have related on the authority of several reliable transmitters. The most authentic of these is the tradition which Hadrat `Ali's secretary, 'Ubaidullah bin Abu Rafi', heard from Hadrat `Ali himself, and from him Hadrat 'Ali's grandson, Hasan bin Muhammad bin Hanafiyah, heard and conveyed to the later reporters. In none of these there is .any mention that Hadrat Hatib was pardoned when he presented this excuse. But there is no hint either to show that he was awarded some punishment. That is why the Muslim scholars have concluded that Hadrat Hatib's excuse was accepted and he was pardoned.

2Although what has been said up to here, and what follows in this regard, was sent down in connection with the incident relating to Hadrat Hatib, Allah, instead of dwelling on his case only, has given the believers this lesson for ever and ever: "It is contrary to the profession of the Faith that a person should act, out of any motive or reason, in a way detrimental to the interests of Islam and subservient to the interests of disbelief when a conflict is going on between Islam and disbelief and some people have adopted a hostile attitude towards the Muslims only because they are Muslims. Even if a person be wholly free from any ill-will against Islam and acts thus not with an evil intention but for the sake of a dire personal need, the act anyhow is unbecoming of a believer, and whoever acts thus strays from the right way."

3The allusion is to Hadrat Hatib. As he had acted thus only in order to ensure that his mother and brother and children remained safe in the event of a war, it is being said: "The relations for whose sake you have committed this grave error, will not save you on the Day of Resurrection. No one will dare come forward in the Court of Allah and say: `Our father, or our son, or our brother had committed this sin for ow sake; therefore, we may be punished instead of him. At that time everyone will be worried only about himself, and weighed down with the anxiety of somehow saving himself from the consequences of his own acts, not to speak of being ready to take the burden of another's sins on his head," This thing has been expressed in clearer words at several other places in the Qur'an. At one place it has boon said: "To save oneself froth the torment of that Day, the culprit will wish to give his children, his wife, his brother, his kinsfolk, who gave him shelter, and all the people of the earth, in ransom that this device might rescue him." (Al-Ma'arij -11-14). At another place: “On the Day man shall flee froth his brother and his mother and his father and his wife and his children. Each one of them, on that Day, shall have enough to occupy him so as to make him heedless of others." ('Abasa: 34-37).

4That is, "All worldly relationships and bonds of lout and friendship shall be rendered void in the Hereafter. The people will not be judged as groups and parties and families, but every person will have to present himself as an individual and render his own account only. Therefore, no one in the world should commit a wrong for the sake of a relationship or friendship or fraternity, for he will himself have to face all its consequences, and no one else will become a partner in a matter of his personal responsibility."

5The following conclusions arc deduced from the details of the cast of Hadrat Hatib, as mentioned above, and the verses which were sent down in this connection:

(1) Whatever the motive of the person, it was in itself an act of espionage, and a very dangerous kind of espionage on a critical occasion. The enemy, who was absolutely unaware, had been informed of the immanent attack from Madinah. Then it was not a case based on suspicion but a letter written by the concerned person himself had been intercepted, after which no other proof of the guilt was required. These were not peace but war time conditions; yet the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) did not place Hadrat Hatib in confinement without giving-him a chance of self-defense: This chance also was

not given him in private but publicly before the people. This makes it manifest that there is no room in Islam for such, laws and regulations under which the ruler may have the right in any case to imprison a person only on the basis of his own knowledge or suspicion. Islam also does not recognize the method of trying a person secretly in secret.

(2) Hadrat Hatib was not only one of the Emigrants but also a participant in the Battle of Badr, and enjoyed a distinguished place among the Companions. But despite this a serious crime happened to be committed by him and Allah took him to task for this in the Qur'an as is evident from the above verses. In the Hadith too, his case has been narrated in detail and among the commentators also there may be none who has not made a reference to it. These arc some of the evidences which prove that the Companions were not innocent. They also could commit errors because of human weaknesses, and errors happened to be committed by them practically. The teaching of regarding them with respect and reverence that Allah and His Messenger have given, does not at all require that if one of them happened to commit an error, it should not be mentioned, for evidently, if this were their demand, neither would Allah have mentioned them in His Book, nor the Companions and their successors and the traditionists and the commentators would have related their details in their traditions and books.

(3) The view that Hadrat `Umar expressed in the case of Hadrat Hatib concerned the apparent aspect of the act. His reasoning was that the act was clearly in the nature of treachery to Allah and His Messenger and the Muslims; therefore, Hatib was a hypocrite and deserved to be put to death. But the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) rejected his viewpoint and explained the viewpoint of the Islamic Shari'ah, saying: "Decision should not be given only on the outward form of the act but it should also be seen what evidence is given by the past lift and general character of the person, who happens to commit the act and the circumstances under which he commits it. The act, no doubt, smacked of espionage, but did the attitude of the person concerned towards Islam and the followers of Islam until then indicate that he could do such a thing with the intention of treachery to Allah and His Messenger and the Muslims? He was one of those who had emigrated for the sake of the Faith. Could he have made such a sacrifice without sincerity? He fought in a critical battle like Badr for the sake of his Faith when the Muslims were facing an enemy much better equipped and three times their number, Could the sincerity of such a person be doubted? Or, could it be believed that he had the slightest inclination towards the Quraish? He was telling the plain truth that his family at Makkah did not enjoy the protection of any tribe or clan, which the families of the other Emigrants enjoyed; therefore, he acted thus during war time only in order to safeguard his children from the persecution of the disbelievers. The facts confirmed that he did not really belong to any tribe at Makkah and this too was known that his family members were still back at Makkah. Therefore, there was no reason why his statement should be taken as false and the opinion formed that his actual motive was not this but the intention of treachery. No doubt, for a sincere Muslim even with a good intention it was not lawful that he should inform the enemy of the military plans of the Muslims only for the sake of his personal interests, yet there is a great difference between the error of a sincere Muslim and the treachery of a hypocrite. Both cannot be awarded the same punishment only on the basis of the similarity between their acts. This was the Holy Prophet's decision in this case, and Allah confirmed it in

the verses of Surah Al Mumtahinah. A careful study of the above three verses will show that in these Allah has certainly reprimanded Hatib, but it is a kind of a reprimand administered to a believer and not the one administered to a hypocrite. Moreover, no penalty, or physical punishment was awarded to him, but he was administered a severe rebuke publicly and lot off, which meant that in a Muslim society even a blot on the honor of a guilty believer and his falling into disrepute also was a very severe punishment.

(4) About the great merit of tile Companions who fought at Badr, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: You may not know Allah might have looked favorably at tilt people of Badr and said: 'Do as you please, I have forgiven you'." This does not moan that the Companions of Badr were forgiven each and . every sin and they were at liberty to commit whatever sin and crime they pleased, for forgiveness had already been guaranteed to them This was neither meant by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) nor the Companions ever understood it in this meaning, nor any Canpartion of Badr after hearing this good news ever thought that he was free to commit any sin, nor ever any rule was made on the basis of this in the Islamic Shari'ah that if a Companion of Badr happened to commit a sin, he should not be given ally punishment for it. As a matter of fact, if one considers the circumstances under which this was said and the words that the Holy Prophet used on this occasion carefully, one can clearly understand the meaning to be this: "It would not be anything impossible if in view of the great and meritorious services that the Companions rendered at Badr out of sincerity and devotion and at the very risk of their lives for the sake of Allah and His Religion, Allah might have forgiven all their former and latter sins mercifully. Therefore, you should not suspect such a Companion of treachery and hypocrisy, and should accept the excuse that he himself is presenting for his crime."

(5) From the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet's sayings it also becomes evident that a Muslim's being involved in espionage for the disbelievers by itself is not a sufficient basis for the conclusion that he has become an apostate, or is devoid of the Faith, or is a hypocrite. For reaching such a conclusion if there arc some other circumstances and evidences, it would be a different thing; otherwise by itself this act is only a crime, not a sign of disbelief.

(6) From these verses of the Qur'an it also becomes evident that for a Muslim it is in no case permissible that he should spy for the disbelievers, no matter how gravely his own life and property, or that of his near and dear ones, might be endangered.

(7) When Hadrat `Umar asked for the Holy Prophet's permission to put Hadrat Hatib to death for the crime of espionage, the Holy Prophet did not say that the crime was not punishable with -death, but declined permission on the ground that Hatib's being a Companion of Badr was an express proof of his being sincere, and the statement given by him was correct that be had acted thus not out of any good wishes for the enemies but for the sake of safeguarding his family from any possible persecution to death. From this one section of the jurists has argued that the general law in respect of a Muslim spy is that he should be put to death, unless there are very weighty-reasons for awarding him a lesser punishment or a mere reprimand. But the jurists have disputed this question. Imam Shafe'i and some

other jurists hold the view that the Muslim spy is punishable, but not with death. Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Auza'i maintain that he will be subjected to corporal punishment and long imprisonment. Imam Malik says that he will be put to death, but the Malik; jurists hold different views on this question. Ash'hab says that the Muslim ruler has vast powers in this matter. He can exercise his judgment keeping in view the circumstances of the crime and the culprit and award him any punishment. A saying of Imam Malik and Ibn al-Qasim also is to the same effect. Ibn al Majishun and `Abdul Malik bin Habib say that if the culprit is a habitual spy, he should be put to death. Ibn Wahb says that the punishment of the spy is death, but if he repents of spying, he may be pardoned. Sahnun says that one cannot know whether his repentance is genuine or deceptive; therefore, he should be put to death. There is a saying of Ibn al-Qasim also in support of this. And Asbagh says that the belligerent spy is punishable with death, but the Muslim or dhimmi spy should be given corporal punishment instead of the death sentence, unless he be helping the enemies openly as against the Muslims. (Ibn al-`Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur'an; 'Umdat al-Qari; Fath al-Bari.)

(8) The Hadith that has been cited above also permits that for the investigation of the crime not only the male but the female accused also can be stripped if so required. Although Hadrat `Ali, Hadrat Zubair and Hadrat Miqdad had not stripped the woman, yet they had threatened her that if she did not produce the letter, they would strip and search her.. Obviously, if it were not lawful, the three illustrious Companions could not have threatened her thus. And one can understand that they must have reported the story of their expedition on their return to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah s peace). Had he expressed his displeasure, it must have been reported. That is why the jurists have held it as permissible. ('Umdat al-Qari).

6That is, "We reject you: we neither consider you to be in the right nor your religion. " The inevitable demand of the faith in Allah is denial of taghut (Satan): "Whoever rejects taghut and believes in Allah has taken a firm support that never gives way." (Al-Baqarah: 256).

7In other words, it means: "Though there is an excellent example for you in Abraham's conduct in that he expressed disapproval of his pagan people and broke off all connections with them, yet his promise to pray for the forgiveness of his pagan father and then carrying it out practically is not worth following, for the believers should not have even this much relationship of love and sympathy with the disbelievers. In At-Taubah: 113, Allah has clearly warned: "It does not behoove the Prophet and those who have believed that they should pray for the forgiveness of the polytheists even though they be near kinsmen. " Thus, no Muslim is allowed to pray for the forgiveness of his unbelieving kinsmen on the basis of the argument that the Prophet Abraham had done so. As for the question, why did the Prophet Abraham pray thus, and did he carry out his promise practically? the answer has been provided by the Qur'an in full detail. When his father expelled him from the house, he had said on his departure: "I bid you farewell: I will pray to my Lord for your forgiveness." (maryam: 47). On the basis of this very promise he prayed for him twice. One prayer is contained in Surah Ibrahim: 41: "Lord, forgive me and my parents and the believers on the Day when reckoning will be hold. " And the second prayer is in Surah Ash Shua'ra 86: "Forgive my father, for

indeed he is from among those who have strayed and do not disgrace the an the Day when the people will be raised back to life." But afterwards when he realized that the father for whose forgiveness he was praying, wan an enemy of Allah, he excused himself from it and broke off even this relationship of love and sympathy with him:

"As regards the prayer of Abraham for his father, it was only to fulfill a promise he bad made to him, but when he realized that he was an enemy of Allah, he disowned him. The fact is that Abraham was a tender-hearted, God fearing and forbearing man (At-Taubah: 114).

A study of these verses make: the principle manifest that only that act of the prophets worthy of following, which they persistently practiced till the end. As regards those acts which they themselves gave up, or which Allah restrained them from practicing or which were forbidden in the Divine Shari ah, they are not worth following, and no one showed follow such acts of theirs on the basis of the argument that that was such and such a prophet's practice.

Here, another question also arises, which may create confusion in some minds. In the verse under discussion, the saying of the Prophet Abraham which Allah has declared as not worth following, has two parts. The first part is that he said to his father: "I will pray for your forgiveness," and the second: `I have no power to get anything for you from Allah. " Of these the first thing's not being a worthy examples to be. followed is understandable, but, what is wrong with the second thing that that too has been made an exception from being an example worthily of imitation, whereas it by itself is a truth? The answer is that the saying of the Prophet Abraham has been included in the exception for the reason that when a person after making a promise with another to do something, says that it is riot in his power to do anything beyond that for him, it automatically gives the meaning that if it were in his power to do anything further for him, he would have done that too for his sake. This makes his relationship of sympathy with the other person even more manifest. On that very basis this second part of the saying of the Prophet Abraham also deserved to be included in the exception, although its subject was true in so far as it does not lit even in the power of a Prophet to have a person forgiven by Allah. 'Allama Alusi also in his Ruh al-Ma ani has given this same answer to this question.

8There are several ways in which the believers can become a cause of trial for the disbelievers, for which every believer should seek Allah's refuge. For example,

(1) the disbelievers may gain in upper hand over them and consider it a proof of their being in the right and the believers being in the wrong; otherwise it could not be that in spite of Allah's good pleasure that they claim to enjoy, the disbelievers would have been able to gain an upper hand over them;

(2) the persecution of the believers by the disbelievers may become unbearable with the result that they may yield to them and abandon their Faith and moral values this would subject the believers to public ridicule and would provide the disbelievers with an opportunity to humiliate and debase than and their

religion:

(3) in spite of being the standard-bearers of the true Faith the believers may lose their moral superiority that should accrue to them as believers. and the people have the same defects and deficiencies in their character as are commonly found in an un-Islamic community: this would give the disbelievers an opportunity to say that the Faith of the believers was in no way superior to their disbelief. (For further details sec E.N. 8.3 of Surah Yunus).

9"Who is hopeful Or Allah and the Last Day": who expects that one Day he will have to present himself before Allah and is hopeful that Allah will treat him benevolently and help him attain to success in the Hereafter.

10That is, "Allah has be need of such believers, who profess to believe in His Religion as well as maintain friendly relations with His enemies. He is Self Sufficient: His Godhead does not require that they should acknowledge Him as God. He is Self-Praiseworthy, i.e.'His being praiseworthy is not dependent on the people's praising and glorifying Him. , If they affirm the faith, they faith, they do so not for any good of Allah, but for their own good: and they cannot gain anything from their affirmation of the faith until they break off all connections of love and friendship with the enemies of Allah as the Prophet Abraham and his companions did."

11Although the true believers were following the exhortation to sever their connections with the unbelieving kinsmen patiently, yet Allah knew how hard it was to break off one's connections with one's parents, brothers and sisters and near relations. Therefore, Allah consoled them with the hope that a time would soon come when their same relations would become Muslims and their today's enmity would again change into love tomorrow. When this thing was said no one could understand how this would happen. But hardly a few weeks had passed after the revelation of these verses when Makkah fell and the people of Quraish began to enter Islam in large numbers, and the Muslims witnessed with their own eyes how the hope they were given materialized.

12Here a doubt may arise in the minds. It is all right to treat the disbelievers, who are not hostile, kindly, but should only they be treated unjustly? And should the disbelievers, who arc hostile, be treated unjustly? The answer is that in this context, the word justice, in fact, has been used in a special sense. It means: "Justice demands that you should not be hostile to those who are not hostile to you, for it is not justice to treat the enemy and the non-enemy alike. You have every right to adopt a stem attitude towards those who persecuted you for embracing Islam and compelled you to leave yew homes and pursued you even after your expulsion. But as for those who were not partners in persecuting you, you should treat them well and should fulfill the right they have on you because of blood and other relationships. "

13The instructions to sever relations with the disbelievers given in the preceding verses, could cause the

people the misunderstanding that this was because of their being the disbelievers. Therefore, in these verses it has been made clear that its actual cause is not their disbelief but their hostility to Islam and their tyrannical treatment of the followers of Islam. The Muslims, therefore, should distinguish between the hostile disbeliever and the non-hostile disbeliever, and should treat those disbelievers well who have never treated them evilly. Its best explanation is the incident that took place between Hadrat Asma', daughter of Abu Bakr, and her disbelieving mother. A wife of Hadrat Abu Bakr's was Qutaylah bint 'Abdul `Uzza, who wax a disbeliever and had remained behind in Makkah after the migration. Hadrat Asma' had been born of her. After the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah when the traffic opened between Makkah and Madinah, she came to Madinah to see her daughter and also brought sane gifts. Hadrat Asma' herself has related that she went to the Holy Prophet and asked: "Should I see my mother? And can I treat her as a daughter should treat her mother?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, treat her as your mother. " (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim). Hadrat Asma's son, 'Abdullah bin Zubair, has given further details of this incident. He says that Hadrat Asma' in the beginning had refused to see her mother. Then, when she received Allah and His Messenger's permission she met her. (Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim). This by itself leads to the conclusion that a Muslim's serving his unbelieving parents and his helping his unbelieving brothers and sisters and relatives is permissible when they are not hostile to Islam; Likewise one can spend one s charities also on the indigent among the dhimmis (Al-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur'an; Ruh al-Ma ani)

14The background of this injunction is that after the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah, in the beginning, the Muslim men started fleeing Makkah and arriving at Madinah and they were sent back according to the terms of the treaty. Then the Muslim women started arriving and, first of all, Umm Kulthum Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait emigrated to Madinah, The disbelievers invoked the treaty and demanded return, ands two brothers of Umm Kulthum, Walid bin `Uqbah and 'Amarah bin `Uqbah, came to Madinah to take her back. At this the question arose whether the treaty of Hudaibiyah applied to the women as well. Allah has answered this very question here, saying: "If they are Muslims, and it is ascertained that they have emigrated only for the sake of the Faith and for no other motive, they are not to be returned "

Here, a complication has arisen on account of the narration of the Hadith from the viewpoint of the meaning and content, and it must be resolved. The traditions that are found in the Ahadith about the conditions of the treaty of Hudaibiyah are mostly traditions narrated from the viewpoint of the meaning and purport, About the condition under discussion the words in the different traditions are different. In same the words are to the effect: "Whoever reaches us from you, we will not return hira, but whoever reaches you from us, you shall return. " In some others the words arc to the effect: "Whoever of his Companions comes to the Messenger of Allah without the permission of his guardian, he will send him back." And in still another the words are: "Whoever,from the Quraish goes to Muhammad without the permission of his guardian, he will return him to Quraish. " The style of these traditions by itself shows that this condition of the treaty has not been reported in the actual words of the treaty, but the reporters have reported its purport in their own words. But since most of the traditions arc of the same nature, the commentators and traditionists generally have understood that the treaty was general, which applied to

both men and women, and the women too were to be returned according to it. Later, when this injunction of the Qur'an that the believing women were not to be returned, came to their knowledge, they interpreted it to mean that Allah in this verse had decided to break the treaty in so far as it related to the believing women But this was not an ordinary thing which should be accepted so easily. If the treaty was general, without any exception in respect of men and women, it could not be lawful for one party to amend it unilaterally and change a part of it by itself. And even if such a thing happened, it is strange that the Quraish did not protest against it, whereas they remained on the lookout for an opportunity to raise objections against everything that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the Muslims did. Had they found that the Holy Prophet had committed a breach of the treaty conditions, they would have raised a loud clamor. But we do not find any trace of it in any tradition that they took an exception to this ruling of the Qur'an. Had this question been carefully considered the problem could have been resolved by reference to the actual words of the treaty. But many people paid no attention they it; if some scholars (e.g Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabi) did pay any attention, they did not hesitate to say that the reason why the Quraish did not raise any objection was that Allah had miraculously scaled their mouths in this matter. It is strange how these scholars felt satisfied at this explanation.

The fact of the matter is that this condition of the peace treaty had been proposed by the disbelieving Quraish, and not by the Muslims, and the words that Suhail bin 'Amr, their representative, had-got included in the treaty were: "And that whichever man (rajul) cornea to you from us, even if he be on your religion, you will return him to us." These words of the treaty have been reproduced in Bukhari (Kitab ash-Shurut: Bab ash-Shurut fil-Jihad wal-Masalahah) through authentic channels. It may be that Suhail used the word rajul in the meaning of a person, but this might be the meaning he had in his mind. The word written in the treaty was rajul, which is used for a full-grown man in Arabic. That is why when the brothers of Umm Kulthum bint 'Uqbah came to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and demanded her return, (according to Imam Zuhri's tradition) the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) refused return her, saying: "The condition was about the men, not the women. " (Ibn al- Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur an; Loam Razi, Tafsir Kabir) Until then the people of Quraish themselves were under the delusion that the treaty applied to all kinds of emigrants, men or women; But when the Holy Prophet drew their attention to these words of the treaty, they were struck dumb and had to accept this decision.

According to this condition of the treaty the Muslims had the right to decline return of any woman who emigrated from Makkah to Madinah, for any reason whatever. But Islam was interested only in safeguarding the believing omen and not to make the holy city of Madinah a place of refuge for every kind of female fugitive. Therefore, Allah enjoined: "Ascertain by examination the faith of the women who emigrated to you and profess to have believed; and when it is fully ascertained that they have emigrated with genuine faith, and no other motive, do not return them." Thus, the procedure adopted for carrying out this Command was was that the women who emigrated were questioned whether they believed in the oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and had emigrated only for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, and not out of any worldly consideration, e.g. hatred of the husband, or love of somebody in Madinah, or some other worldly motive. Only those women who gave

satisfactory answers to these questions were detained, others were sent back. (Ibn Jarir on the authority of Iba `Abbas, Qatadah, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Ibn Zaid).

In this verse a basic principle of the Law of Evidence also bas been stated and its further clarification has been made by the procedure that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had prescribed for implementing it, The verse enjoins three things:

(1) Examine the faith of the emigrating women who present themselves as believers;

(2) Allah alone knows the truth about their faith; the Muslims have no means to find out whether they have really believed or not; and

(3) when it has been ascertained that they are believers, they are not to be returned.

Then, in accordance with this injunction, the method that the Holy Prophet prescribed for examining and ascertaining the faith of the women was that the statement given by them on oath should be relied on and it should be made sure after necessary examination that they had no other motive of emigration than the Faith. First, it gives the principle that for taking decision on different matters it is not necessary for the court to have direct knowledge of the truth; for the court only that knowledge is sufficient which is obtained through evidence. Second, the statement given by a person on oath will be regarded as reliable until it is proved to be false by a clear evidence. Third, whatever declaration a person himself may make about his creed and faith, will be accepted and no search will be made into finding out,whether what he states actually constitutes his faith or not, unless there is a clear indication to the contrary. And fourth, in the personal affairs of a person, which no one else can know, his own statement will be trusted. e.g. in the matters of divorce and the waiting period (iddat) the woman's own statement about her menstrual course and state of purity will be regarded as reliable, whether it is true or false. According to these very rules, in the science of the Hadith also, those traditions will be accepted, the apparent state of whose reporters testifies to their being righteous, unless, of course, there are other circumstances which forbid the acceptance of a particular tradition.

15This means that a Muslim who wants to marry any of these women should pay a fresh dower and marry her. The dowers to he repaid to their unbelieving husbands will not be considered their dowers.

16Four very important injunctions have been, laid down in these verses, which relate both to the family law of Islam and to the international law.

First, that the woman who becomes a Muslim is no longer lawful for her unbelieving husband nor her unbelieving husband is lawful for her.

Second, that the marriage of the married woman who becomes a Muslim and emigrates from the abode

of disbelief (dar al-kufr to the abode of Islam (dar al-Islam) is automatically annulled, and any Muslim who likes can marry her after paying her dower.

Third, that it is not lawful for a man who becomes a Muslim to retain his wife in wedlock if she likes to remain an infidel.

Fourth that if there exist relations of peace between the abode of disbelief and the abode of Islam, the Islamic government should try to settle the question of the return of dowers with the non-Muslim government, thus: The dowers of the married women of the disbelievers, who become Muslims and emigrate to the abode of Islam, should be returned by the Muslims, and the dowers of the unbelieving married women of the Muslims. who are left behind is the abode of disbelief, should be got back from the disbelievers.

The historical background of these injunctions is as follows: In the beginning of Islam, there were many such men, who accepted Islam but their wives did not become Muslim, and there were many such women who became Muslim but their husbands did not accept Islam. Abul-'As, the husband of Zainab, a daughter of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), was a non-Muslim and he remained non-Muslim for several years. In the early period no command had been given to the effect that the pagan husband was unlawful for the Muslim wife and the pagan wife was unlawful for the Muslim husband. Therefore, the marital relations continued to exist between them, Even after the migration for several years, it so happened that many women became Muslim and emigrated Madinah while their pagan husbands remained in the abode of disbelief. Likewise, many Muslim men emigrated and their pagan wives were left in the abode of disbelief. But in spite of this their marriage continued. This was creating complications for the women in particular, for the men could marry other women, but this was not possible for the women. Until their marriage with their previous husbands was dissolved, they could not remarry. After the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah when these verses came down, they annulled the previous marriage between the Muslims and the pagans, and laid down an absolute and clear law for guidance in future. The jurists of Islam have codified this law under four major heads:

First, the case when both the man and the wife are in the abode of Islam and one of them becomes a Muslim and the of her remains an infidel.

Second, the case when both the man and the wife are in the abode of disbelief, and one of them becomes a Muslim and the other remains an infidel.

Third, the cast when one of the spouses becomes a Muslim and emigrates to the abode of Islam and the other remains an infidel in the abode of disbelief.

Fourth, the case when either of the Muslim spouses becomes an apostate.

Below we give the viewpoints of the jurists with regard to a 11 the four cases separately:

(1) In the first case, if the husband has accepted Islam and' his wife is a Christian or a Jewess, and she remains faithful to her religion, their marriage will endure, for it is permissible for a Muslim to have a wife who is a follower of the earlier scriptures. This is agreed upon by all jurists.

And if the wife of the man who has accepted Islam, is not a follower of the 'earlier Books, and she adheres to her Faith, the Hanafis say that Islam will be presented before her; if she accepts it, the marriage will endure; if she refuses to accept it, separation will be effected between them. In this case, if consummation between them had taken place, the woman will be entitled to the dower; if there was no consummation, she will not be entitled to any dower, for separation has been caused because of her refusal. (Al-Mabsut; Hedayah; Fath al-Qadir). Imam Shafe'i and Imam Ahmad say that if the spouses did not have had consummation, the woman would be outside wedlock as soon as the man accepted Islam, and if consummation had taken place; the woman will remain in wedlock till three menstruations. During this period if she accepts Islam of her own tree wills the marriage will continue, otherwise it will become void automatically as soon as she is free from her third menstrual course. Imam Shafei also adds that it is not right to present Islam before the woman an the basis of the pledge of non-interference in religion that the dhimmis have been given by the Muslims. But this, in fact, is a weak argument for interference in the dhimmi woman's rcligion would be if she was compelled to accept Islam. It is no interference to tell her that if she accepted Islam, she would continue to be her husband's wife, otherwise she would be separated from him. In Hadrat Ali's time there has been a precedent of this nature An Iraqi landowner who was a Majusi by religion accepted Islam and his wife remained an unbeliever, Hadrat 'Ali presented Islam before her, and when she refused to accept it, he effected separation between them. (Al-Mabsut). Imam Malik says that if consummation has not taken place, the unbelieving wife would forthwith cease to be the wife as soon as the man embraced Islam, and if consummation has taken place, Islam would be presented before the woman, and in case she refuses to accept it. separation will result. (Ibn Qudamah, Al-Mughni).

And if Islam has been accepted by the woman and the man remains an infidel. whether he is a follower of an earlier scripture or a non-follower, the Hanafis say that Islam will be presented before the husband whether consummation between them has taken place or not. If he accepts it, the woman will continue to be his wife; if he rejects it the qadi will effect separation between them. So long as the man does not refuse to accept Islam, the woman will remain his wife, but he will not have the right to have sexual relations with her. In case the husband refuses, separation will become effective just like an irrevocable divorce. If consummation has not taken place before this, the woman will be entitled to half the dower, and if it has taken place, the woman will be entitled to full dower as well as maintenance during the waiting period (iddat). (Al-Mabsut; Hedayah; Fath at-Qadir). According to Imam Shafe`i, marriage will dissolve as soon as the woman accepted Islam in case consummation has not taken place, and in case it has taken place, the woman will continue to be the man's wife till the end of the waiting period. If in the mean-time he accepts Islam, marriage will remain valid, otherwise separation will take place as soon as

the waiting period comes to an end. But in the case of the man also Imam Shafe'i has expressed the same opinion as he has expressed about the woman as cited above. That is, it is not right to present Islam before him. But this is a weak opinion. In the time of Hadrat 'Umar, on several occasions, the woman accepted Islam and the man was invited to Islam; when he refused to accept it, separation was effected between the spouses There is, for examples the case of the wife of a Christian of the Bani Taghlib, which was brought before him. Hadrat `Umar said to the man, "Accept Islam, otherwise I will effect separation between you two." He declined, and the Caliph enforced the decree. The case of a newly converted lady of Bahz al-Malik was sent to him. In her case too he ordered that Islam be presented before her husband; if he accepts it well and good, otherwise separation be effected between them. These incidents had happened in front of the Companions and no dispute or difference of opinion has been reported. (Al-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur an; Al Mabsut; Fath al-Qadir). Imam Malik's opinion in this connection is that if the woman becomes a Muslim before the consummation of marriage Islam should be presented before the husband; if he accepts it, well and 'good; otherwise separation should be effected forthwith. An!? if consummation has taken place, and the woman has accepted Islam afterwards, she will have to wait till the end of the waiting period. If the husband accepts Islam in the meantime, marriage will continue otherwise separation will take place as soon as the waiting period expires. A saying of Imam Ahmad is in support of Imam Shafe'i. His other saying is to the effect that the event of the difference of religion between the spouses will in any case lead to immediate separation, whether consummation between them has taken place or not. (Al-Mughni).

(2) If in dar al-kufr (abode of disbelief) the woman becomes a Muslim and the man remains an infidel, or the man becomes a Muslim and the wife (who neither is Christian nor Jew but is follower of a non-revealed religion) remains an infidel the Hanafi viewpoint is that separation will not take place, whether consummation between them has taken place or not, until the woman completes three menstrual courses, or until she passes three months in case she is non-menstruating. If in the meantime the other spouse is also converted, marriage will remain valid, otherwise separation will take place on the expiry of the term. Imam Shafe'i, in this case also, distinguishes between the occurrence of consummation and its nonoccurence He maintains that if there was no consummation, separation would occur immediately on the event of the difference of religion between the spouses. And if the difference of religion has occurred after the consummation, marriage will continue valid until the end of the waiting period. If in the meantime the other spouse does not accept Islam, marriage will dissolve as soon as the waiting period comes to an end. (Al Mabsut, Fath al-Qadir, Al-Jassas Ahkam al-Qur an).

In case where along with the difference of religion between the spouses the separation of abode also takes place, i.e. one of them remains an infidel in daral-kufr(the non-Muslim state) and the other emigrates to dar al-Islam (the Islamic state), the Hanafi viewpoint is that marriage between them will automatically dissolve. If the emigrant is the woman, she has the right to remarry immediately; she does not have to observe any waiting period. However, her husband will have to abstain from sexual intercourse until after she has discharged the menses once; and if she is pregnant, even then marriage can be contracted, but the husband must abstain from cohabitation until after the delivery. Imam

Muhammad and Imam Abu Yusuf have differed from Imam Abu Hanifah in this. They say that the woman has to observe the waiting period; and if she is pregnant, she cannot contract marriage before the delivery. (Al-Mabsut; Hedayah; AI-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur'an). Imam Shafe.'i, Imam Ahmad and Imam Malik maintain that the separation of abode has nothing to do with this, for the real thing is only the deference of religion. If this difference takes place between the spouses, the injunctions to govern this are the same as those which govern it in case such a difference takes place between the spouses in the Islamic state (AI-Mughni). Imam Shafe`i along with his above-cited opinion has also expressed the view that if the emigrant Muslim woman has emigrated after a quarrel with her infide I husband, with the intention of dissolving his marital right, an immediate separation will take place not on the basis of the separation of abode (ikhtilaf dar) but on the basis of her this intention. (Al-Mabsut' Hedayah).

But a careful consideration of the Qur'anic verse under discussion clearly shows that in this matter the most sound opinion is the one that Imam Abu Hanifah has expressed. Allah has sent down this verse concerning the believing women who emigrated and about them He has said that they are no longer lawful for the pagan husbands whom they have left behind in dar al-k-kufr, and has allowed the Muslims of the Islamic state to marry them after they have paid them the dowers. On the other hand, the emigrant Muslims have been addressed and enjoined not to keep those of their pagan wives in wedlock, who are left is dar al-kufr, and to ask of the disbelievers the dowers that they had given to those women. Obviously, these injunctions do not pertain only to the difference of religion, but it is the difference of abode that has given these injunctions this particular form. If on account of migration the marriages of the Muslim women with. their pagan husbands had not become dissolved, how could the Muslims be permitted to marry them, and .that too in a way that the permission does not contain any reference to the observance of the waiting period by them? Likewise, if even after the revelation of the Command, "and you also should not hold back unbelieving women in marriage the pagan wives of the Muslim emigrants had continued to be their wives, they also would have been commanded to divorce them. But there is no reference here to this either. No doubt, it is correct that after the revelation of this verse, Hadrat `Umar and Hadrat Talhah and some other Emigrants had divorced their wives, but this is no proof that such a thing was at all necessary, and their severing of the marital relationship with those wives depended on their pronouncing divorce on them, and if they had not pronounced the divorce, the wives would have continued to be their legal wives.

In response to this, three events of the Holy Prophet's time are quoted as precedents, which are regarded as a proof that even after the revelation these verses the Holy prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), in spite of the separation of abode, allowed the marriage relationship to continue between the believing and the unbelieving spouses. The first event is this, a little before the conquest of Makkah, Abu Sufyan visited the Islamic army at Marr az-Zahran (present Wadi Fatimah) and accepted Islam, and his wife, Hind, remained a pagan in Makkah. Then Hind accepted Islam after the conquest of Makkah, and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) ruled that their previous marriage would continue to be valid. The second event is that after the conquest of Makkah, `Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl and Hakim bin Hizam fled Makkah and in their absence the wives of both became Muslims Then they sought the Holy Prophet's protection for

their husbands and went and brought them back. Both the men come before the Holy Prophet and accepted Islam and in their case too he held their previous marriages as valid. The third event relates to the Holy Prophet's own daughter, Hadrat Zainab, who emigrated to Madinah and her husband, Abul-'As, was left an infidel in Makkah. About him Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah contain a tradition on the authority of Ibn `Abbas, saying that he came to Madinah in A.H. 8 and became a Muslim, and the Holy Prophet allowed his daughter to continue in marriage with him, without renewal of marriage. But the first two of these events, in fact, do not come under the definition of the difference of abode. For the difference of abode does not mean a person's .temporarily leaving one place for another, or his fleeting to another place, but the difference takes place only in case a person emigrates from one place and settles down in another place and the difference of nationality takes place between him and his wife. As for the event relating to Hadrat Zainab (may Allah bless her), there arc two traditions, one related on the authority of Ibn `Abbas, as referred to above, and the other related by Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin `As. In this second tradition it has been stated that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) allowed his daughter to continue as the wife of Abul-'As after renewal of the marriage, and with a fresh dower. Thus, in the first place, this precedent, due to the difference in reporting, no longer remains a definite argument with those who deny the legal effect of the separation of abode. Secondly, if they insist on the authenticity of Ibn `Abbas's tradition, it contradicts their own viewpoint. For, according to their viewpoint, the marriage of the spouses between whom difference of religion takes place and who have consummated their marriage remains valid only until three menstruations. In the meantime if the other party also accepts Islam the marriage continues to be valid, otherwise it dissolves automatically as soon as the third menstrual course starts. But in the case of Hadrat Zainab from which they take their argument, the difference of religion between the spouses had taken place several years earlier. Abul-'As had affirmed the faith six years after Hadrat Zainab's emigration, and at least two years before his conversion to Islam the injunction had been revealed' in the Qur'an, according to which the Muslim woman had been forbidden for the pagans.

(4) The fourth case is of apostasy. Its one form is that both the husband and the wife should become apostates together, and the other that one of them becomes an apostate and the other remains a Muslim.

If both the husband and the wife become apostates together, the Shafe'is and the Hanbalis say that their marriage contracted in Islam will dissolve immediately if this happened before consummation, and after the lapse of the waiting period if it happened after consummation. On the contrary, the Hanafis hold the view that. although according to common sense their marriage should dissolve, yet in the time of Hadrat Abu Bakr, when thousands of people became apostates, and then again became Muslims, the Companions did not direct anyone to renew the marriage; therefore, we accept this unanimous decision of the ('companions and admit, contrary to common sense, that in case both the husband and the wife become apostates together, their ' marriages do not dissolve."(AIMabsut; Hedayah; Fath al-Qadir Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhahib al- Arba'h).

If the husband becomes an apostate and the wife continues to be Muslim, according to the Hanafis and

the Malikis, the marriage will dissolve immediately, whether this happens before consummation or after it. But the Shafe'is and the Hanbalis in this connection make a distinction between the two states. If it happens before consummation, the marriage will dissolved immediately, and if it happens after consummation it will endure till the end of the waiting period, In the meantime ii' the person returns to Islam, marriage will continue to hold good, otherwise, on the expiry of the waiting period, it will be deemed to have dissolved since he became an apostate. That is, the woman will not have to observe another waiting period afresh. All the four jurists are agreed that if this happened before consummation, the woman would be entitled to half the dower, and if after consummation to full dower.

And if the woman became an apostate, the old ruling of the Hanafis was that in this case too. marriage would dissolve immediately. But later the scholars of Balkh and Samarkand gave the ruling that in case the woman becomes an apostate, separation does not take place immediately; and by this their object was to discourage the women from adopting this course in order to get rid of their husbands. The Malikis' verdict is somewhat similar. They say that if circumstances testify that the woman adopted this course only as a pretence to win separation from the husband, separation will not take place. The Shafe'is and the Hanbalis say that in case of the woman's turning an apostate too, the law is the same as in case of the husband's turning an apostate. That is, if she became an apostate before consummation, marriage would dissolve immediately and if after consummation, Marriage will endure till the end of the waiting period. If conversion takes place in the meantime marriage will continue to hold good, otherwise it will be deemed to have dissolved since the time of apostasy. There is consensus with regard to the dower. If the woman became an apostate, before consummation she would not be entitled to any dower, and if she adopted apostasy after consummation, she would be entitled to full dower. (AI-Mabsut.' Hedayah; Fath al-Qadlr, AI Mughni; Al-Fiqh alal-Madhahib al-Arb ah).

17This thing had two alternatives and the verse applies to both. First, with the disbelievers with whom the Muslims had treaty relations, they wanted to settle the matter, thus: "We shall return the dowers of the women who have emigrated to us, and you will return the dowers of the pagan wives of our men) who have been left on your side." But the disbelievers did not agree to this. However, according to Imam Zuhri, the Muslims, in obedience to the Divine Command became ready to return the dowers of the women who were left behind with the pagans in Makkah, but the pagans refused to return the dowers of the women who had emigrated to the Muslims in Madinah. Thereupon Allah enjoined that the dowers of the emigrant women, which were to be returned to the pagans, should be collected together in Madinah instead of sending these to pagans; then from these collections disbursements should be made to those to whom the dowers were due from the pagans according to what was due to them.

The second alternative was that there were several converts to Islam, who had emigrated to the abode of Islam from the territories of the disbelievers with whom the Muslims had no treaty relations, leaving their pagan wives behind. Likewise, some women also had become converts and emigrated, leaving their pagan husbands behind. About them it was decreed that the matter should be settled in the abode of Islam itself on the bargain basis. That is, when the dowers were not being returned by the disbelievers, no dowers should be returned to them Instead, the dower of the woman who had emigrated to the abode of Islam, should be paid to the person, whose

wife had been left with the disbelievers.

But in case the account could not be settled equitably thus, and the amount of the dower due on behalf of the disbelieving wives of Muslims, who were left in the abode of disbelief, exceeded the amount of the dowers of the Muslim women who had emigrated, it was en joined that the deficiency be made up from the spoils that the Muslims took in the wars against the disbelievers. Ibn 'Abbas has related that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) would command that the loss of the person who did not receive his share of the dower be made up from the spoils. (Ibn Jarir). This same view has been adopted by 'Ata', Mujahid, Zuhri, Masruq Ibrahim Nakha'i, Qatadah, Muqatil and Dahhak. All these scholars say, that the people whose dowers are left with the disbelievers, should be paid these from the collective spoils taken from the enemy. That is, before the booty is distributed, the dead dowers of the people should be paid and then the distribution made in which these people too should be given their equal shares along with the other soldiers. Some jurists say that the loss of such people can be made up not only from the spoils but even from the fai properties But a large section of the scholars does not subscribe to this view.

18As we have explained above, this verse was sent down some time before the conquest of Makkah. After the conquest the Quraish stated coming to the Holy Prophet in large numbers to take the oath of allegiance. From the men he took the oath himself on Mount Safa, As for the woman he appointed Hadrat 'Umar to administer the oath to them on his behalf and to ask them to pledge that they would refrain from the things mentioned in this verse. (Ibn Jarir, on the authority Of Ibn 'Abbas; Ibn Abi Hatim, on the authority of Qatadah). Then. on his return to Madinah he ordered the Muslim women of Madinah to be gathered together in a house and he sent Hadrat Umar to take the oath from them. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Marduyah, Bazzar, Ibn Hibban, on the authority of Umm 'Atiyyah Ansariah). On the 'Id day also, after his address to men, he went to the assembly of women and in his sermon to than he recited this verse and asked them to pledge that they would refrain from the things mentioned in it. (Bukhari on the authority of Ibn `Abbas's tradition). Apart from these occasions. at different other tithes also, the women came before the Holy Prophet individually as well as collectively to take the oath of allegiance, as mentioned in several Ahadith.

19In Makkah, when the oath of allegiance was being administered, Hind bint `Utbah. wife of Abu Sufyan, asked the Holy Prophet its explanation and said: "Messenger of Allah, Abu Sufyan is rather stingy. Will it be sinful if I take out something from his wealth without his permission to meet my own and my children's needs?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Nay, but only, lastly and lawfully; i.e. take only that much as may actually suffice for your needs." (Ibn al--'Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur'an).

20This also includes abortion, whether it is abortion of the legitimate or of the illegitimate fetus.

21This implies two kinds of calumny:

(1) a woman's accusing other women of having illicit relations with other men and her spreading such

stories among the people, for the women are generally prone to spreading such things; and

(2) a woman's delivering a child by somebody else and making her husband believe that it is his. Abu Da'ud has related a tradition from Abu Hurairah saying that he heard the Holy Prophet say: "The woman who brings such a child into a family as does not actually belong to it, has no connection with Allah, and Allah will never admit her to Paradise."

22In this brief sentence two important points of the law have been stated:

First, that obedience even to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah s peace) has boon restricted to "in what is good", although about the Holy Prophet no one could imagine that he would order somebody to do an evil From this it automatically follows that no one in the world can be obeyed outside the bounds of Divine law. For when obedience to Allah's Messenger-himself is conditional upon "in what is good". who else can have a position to demand unconditional obedience and require the people to obey and follow each of his commands laws, rules or customs, which are opposed to the law of Allah? The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has stated this principle, thus: "There is no obedience in the disobedience of Allah; obedience is only in what is good and right." (Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i). Our great doctors have derived this very theme from this verse, Hadrat 'Abdur Rehman bin Zaid bin Aslam says:

"Allah has not said that they should not disobey you (the Holy Prophet) but that they should not disobey you in what is good.

Then, when Allah Almighty has made obedience even to the Holy Prophet himself conditional upon this, how can another person have the right that he should be obeyed in anything but what is good?" (Ibn Jarir).

Imam Abu Bakr al-Jassas writes:

"Allah knew that His Prophet never enjoined anything but what was good. Still He restricted obedience to him only in what is good, so that no one ever may find a provision to obey the kings when they enjoined something outside the obedience of Allah. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has said: 'He who obeys a creature in disobedience to the Creator, Allah appoints the. same c creature over him in power' . " (Ahkam al-Qur an).

'Allama Alusi says:

"This command refutes the view of those ignorant people who think that obedience to the ruler is absolutely necessary. Allah has restricted even obedience to His Messenger only in what is good, whereas the Messenger never enjoins anything but what is good. This is meant to warn the people that obedience to no one is lawful in disobedience to the Creator. " (Ruh al-Ma ani).

Thus, this command in fact, is the foundation stone of the rule of law in Islam. The rule is that anything which is opposed to the law of Islam is a crime, and no one has the right to enjoin any such thing on any one. Anyone who enjoins anything against the law, is a culprit; and the one who obeys such a command is . also a culprit. No subordinate can escape the punishment on the basis of the excuse that his superior officer had ordered him to do something which was a crime in the law.

The other thing which has great legal import is that in this verse after enjoining five prohibitions only one positive command has been given, namely that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) will be obeyed in all good things. As for the evils, the major evils in which women of the pre-Islamic days were generally involved, have been mentioned and a pledge taken from them to refrain from them. But as for the good works, they have neither been mentioned nor any pledge taken to observe them. The only pledge that has been taken is that they will have to obey the Holy Prophet in every good work that he enjoins. Now obviously, if the good works be only those which Allah Almighty has enjoined in the Qur'an,. the pledge should have been to the effect: "You will not disobey Allah," or "You will not disobey the injunctions of the Qur'an." But when the pledge taken was to the effect: "You will not disobey any good work that is enjoined by the Messenger of Allah", it automatically leads to the conclusion that the Holy Prophet has been given vast powers for the reformation of society, and it is obligatory to obey all his commands, whether they are found in the Qur'an or not.

On the basis of this very legal authority the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) asked the women to pledge that they would refrain from all those evils which were prevalent among the women of . he Arabian society at that time, and gave several such commands as have not been mentioned in the Qur'an. One may study the following Ahadith in this connection

Ibn 'Abbas, Umm Salamah, Umm `Atiyyah Ansariah and others have reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) while administering the oath of allegiance to the women asked them to pledge that they would refrain from mourning over the dead. These traditions have been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i and Ibn Jarir.

A tradition reported by Ibn `Abbas contains this detail: "The Holy Prophet appointed Hadrat `Umar to administer the oath of allegiance to the women and commanded that he should forbid them to mourn over the dead, for in the days of pre-Islamic ignorance women used to tear their clothes and hair, scratched their faces and bewailed in aloud voice." (Ibn Jarir).

Zaid bin Aslam has reported that the Holy Prophet white administering the oath of allegiance forbade the women to scratch their faces tear their garments, bewail and sing verses while mourning over the dead. (Ibn Jarir). Another tradition bearing on the same subject has been reported by Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir from a woman who was among the women taking the oath of allegiance.

Qatadah and Hasan Basri (may Allah bless them) say that one of the things that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had made the women to pledge also was that they would refain from talking with the other men freely. Ibn 'Abbas has explained it in a tradition, thus: "That they would not talk with the other men in private." Qatadah has further explained it thus: hearing this command Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf said; `O Messenger of Allah. sometimes it so happens that we are not present in the house and somebody comes to see us.' The Holy Prophet replied: 'I do not mean this. "That is, the woman is not forbidden to tell the visitor that the master of the house is not present." (These traditions have been cited by Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim).

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As has reported another tradition from Umaimah bint-Rugaiqah, maternal aunt of Hadrat Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her), saying: "The Holy Prophet made me to pledge that I would neither bewail the dead nor display myself like the women of the pre-Islamic paganism." (Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir).

Salmah bint Qais, a maternal aunt of the Holy Prophet, says: “I went before the Holy Prophet with some other women of the Ansar to take the oath of allegiance. He made us to pledge that we would abstain from the things mentioned in this verse, and then said: `Do not defraud your husbands.' When we were about to leave, a woman said to me: `Go and ask the Holy Prophet what is meant by defrauding the husbands?' When I went and asked the explanation, he replied: 'This that you should defraud him of his money and expend it on others." (Musnad Ahmad).

Umm 'Atiyyah says: "The Holy Prophet after administering to us the oath commanded us that we would attend the `Id congregational prayers, but the Friday prayer is not obligatory for us, and he forbade us to follow the bier." (Ibn Jarir).

The people who think that the constitutional powers and authority that the Holy Prophet possessed emanated from his position as a ruler instead of his position as a Messenger of Allah, and say that since he was also the ruler at the time, whatever commands he gave in that capacity were only meant to be obeyed during his time, say an absurd thing. Consider the Holy Prophet's commands and instructions that we have cited above. If these instructions given by him for the reformation of the woman had emanated only from his position as a ruler how could these reforms then be introduced and enforced among the women of the Muslim society of the entire world for ever? Which ruler has there been in the world, who might have had the position that a command issued by him just once for a reform might have become enforced in the Muslim society everywhere in the world for ever? (For further explanation, see E. N . 15 of Surah Al-Hashr).

23Several authentic Ahadith show that in the Holy Prophet's time the procedure of administering the oath of allegiance to the women was different from that to the men. For the men the procedure was that the ones pledging allegiance would give their hand in the hand of the Holy Prophet and take the oath. As for the women; the Holy Prophet never took any woman's hand in his own hand, but adopted different other

methods. In this connection, the following traditions have been reported:

Hadrat 'A'ishah says: "By God, in connection with the oath of allegiance the Holy Prophet's hand never touched any other woman's hand. While administering the oath of allegiance to a woman, he would only say to her: 'I have accepted your allegiance' ." (Bukhari, Ibn Jarir).

Umaimah bint Ruqaiqah has stated: "I along with some other women went before the Holy Prophet to pledge allegiance, and ho made us to pledge according to this verse of the Qur'iin. When we said: `We will not disobey you in what is good and right', he said: 'As far as it is in your power.' We submitted: `Allah and His Messenger are more kind to us than we could be to ourselves.' Then we said: 'O Messenger of Allah, stretch your hand so that we may pledge allegiance.' He replied: 'I do not shake hands with women: I only make them take the pledge. So he made us to pledge." In another tradition she has stated: "The Holy Prophet did not take the hand of any of us in his own hand. " (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim).

Abu Da'ud, in Marasi, has related this from Sha'bi: "While administering the oath of allegiance to the women, a sheet of cloth was stretched towards the Holy Prophet, which he took in his hand and said: `I do not take the woman's hand in my hand'." This same subject has been related by Ibn Abi Hatim from Sha'bi, by 'Abdur Razzaq from Ibrahim Nakha`i and by Sa'id bin Mansur from Qais bin Abi Hazim.

Ibn Ishaq, in Maghazi has related this from Aban bin Salih.: "The Holy Prophet would put his hand in a vessel full of water and then the woman also would put her hand in the same vessel. " In Bukhari, a tradition from `Abdullah bin 'Abbas is to the effect: "After giving the Eid congregational sermon, the Holy Prophet went through the rows of the then to the place where the women were sitting. There, in his address, he recited this verse of the Qur'an, then asked the women: `Do you promise to act according to it?' A woman from the assembly replied: `Yes, O Messenger of Allah'.

In a tradition related by Ibn Hibban, Ibn Jarir, Bazzar and others, Umm 'Atiyyah Ansariah has stated this: "The Holy Prophet extended his hand from outside the house and we extended our hands from inside the house. " But this does not prove that the women might have shaken hands with the Holy Prophet, for Hadrat Umm `Atiyyah has not made any mention of the shaking of hands. Probably on this occasion for the purpose of taking the pledge the Holy Prophet might have extended his hand from outside and the women their hands from inside the house towards him without any of their hands touching his.

24The words in the original can have two meanings:

First, that they have despaired of their well-being and rewards in the Hereafter just as the deniers of the life-after-death have despaired of the resurrection of their near and dear ones, who are dead and gone into the graves. This meaning has been given by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas and Hadrat Hasan Basri, Qatadah and Dahak (may Allah bless them).

The second meaning can be: They have despaired of the mercy and forgiveness of the Hereafter just as the disbelievers, who are lying in the graves, have despaired of every good, for they are certain of their being involved in the punishment. This meaning has been related from Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud and from Mujahid, 'Ikrimah, Ibn Zaid, Kalbi, Muqatil, Mansur (may Allah bless them all).

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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61. Surah As Saff (The Ranks)

Name

The Surah derives its name from the sentence *yuqatiluna fi sabil-i- hlsaff-an* of verse 4; thereby implying that it is a Surah in which the word *saff* occurred.

Period of Revelation

It could not be known from any reliable tradition, but a study of its subject-matter shows that this Surah probably was sent down in the period closely following the Battle of Uhud, for by reading between the lines perceives a clear description of the conditions that prevailed in that period.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to exhort the Muslims to adopt sincerity in Faith and to struggle with their lives in the cause of Allah. It is addressed to the Muslims with weak faith as well as those who had entered Islam with a false profession of the Faith and also those who were sincere in their profession. Some verses are addressed to the first two groups, some only to the hypocrites, and some only to the sincere Muslims. The style itself shows where one particular group has been addressed and where the other.

At the outset the believers have been warned to the effect; "Allah indeed hates those people who say one thing and do another, and He indeed loves. those who fight in the cause of the Truth, standing like a solid structure, against the enemies of Allah."'

In vv. 5-7 the people of the Holy Prophet's community have been warned that their attitude towards their Messenger and their Religion should not be like the attitude that the Israelites had adopted towards the Prophets Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them). In spite of acknowledging the Prophet Moses as a Messenger of God they continued to malign him as long as he lived, and in spite of witnessing clear signs from the Prophet Jesus they denied him without any hesitation. Consequently, the Israelites became perverse, incapable of benefiting from divine guidance.

This is certainly not an enviable state which another nation should imitate.

Then, in vv. 8-9 a proclamation has been made with the challenge:"The Jews and the Christians, and the hypocrites, who are conspiring with them, may try however hard they may to extinguish this Light of Allah, it will shine forth and spread in the world in all its fullness, and the Religion brought by the true Messenger of Allah shall prevail over every other religion however hateful it may be to the pagans and polytheists.

In vv. 10-13, the believers have been told that the way to success both here and in the Hereafter is only one: that they should believe in Allah and His Messenger sincerely and should exert their utmost in Allah's Way with their selves and their wealth. As a reward for this they will earn immunity from Allah's punishment, forgiveness of their sins and the eternal Paradise in the Hereafter, and will be blessed with Allah's good pleasure, succor and victory in the world.

In conclusion, the believers have been exhorted to' the effect that just as the disciples of the Prophet Jesus had helped him in the cause of Allah, so should they also become "helpers of Allah", so that they too are blessed with the same kind of good pleasure and approval of Allah as had been the believers before them against the disbelievers.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١﴾

[1] Whatever is in the heavens and the earth has glorified Allah, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[1]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾

كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقَـٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِهِۦ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُم بُنْيَـٰنٌ مَّرْصُوصٌ

٤

[2-4] O you who have believed, why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is in the sight of Allah that you should say that which you do not do.[2] Allah indeed loves those who fight in His Way in ranks as though they were a solid wall.[3]

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦ يَـٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تُؤْذُونَنِى وَقَد تَّعْلَمُونَ أَنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوٓا۟ أَزَاغَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَـٰسِقِينَ

٥

[5] And remember what Moses had said to his people: "O my people, why do you hurt me even though you know full well that I am indeed a messenger sent to you by Allah?"[4] So, when they adopted perverseness, Allah caused their hearts to become perverse: Allah does not guide the transgressors.[5]

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَـٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّى رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِى ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتِ قَالُوا۟ هَـٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

٦

[6] And remember[6] what Jesus, son of Mary, had said: "O children of Israel, I am indeed a Messenger sent to you

by Allah, confirming the Torah which has come before me[7] and giving the good news of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad."[8]

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعَىٰٓ إِلَى ٱلْإِسْلَٰمِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا
يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧﴾

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِـُٔوا۟ نُورَ ٱللَّهِ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَٱللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِۦ
وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ
وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[7-9] Yet when he came to then with clear Signs, they said, "This is plain magic."[9] Now, who could be more wicked than he who forges falsehoods against Allah [10] even though he is being invited towards Islam (submission to Allah)? [11] Allah does not guide such wrongdoers. They seek to blow out Allah's Light with their mouths, but Allah has decreed that He shall perfect His Light, much as the disbelievers may dislike it.[12] He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the Guidance and the Religion of truth that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, much as the polytheists may dislike it.[13]

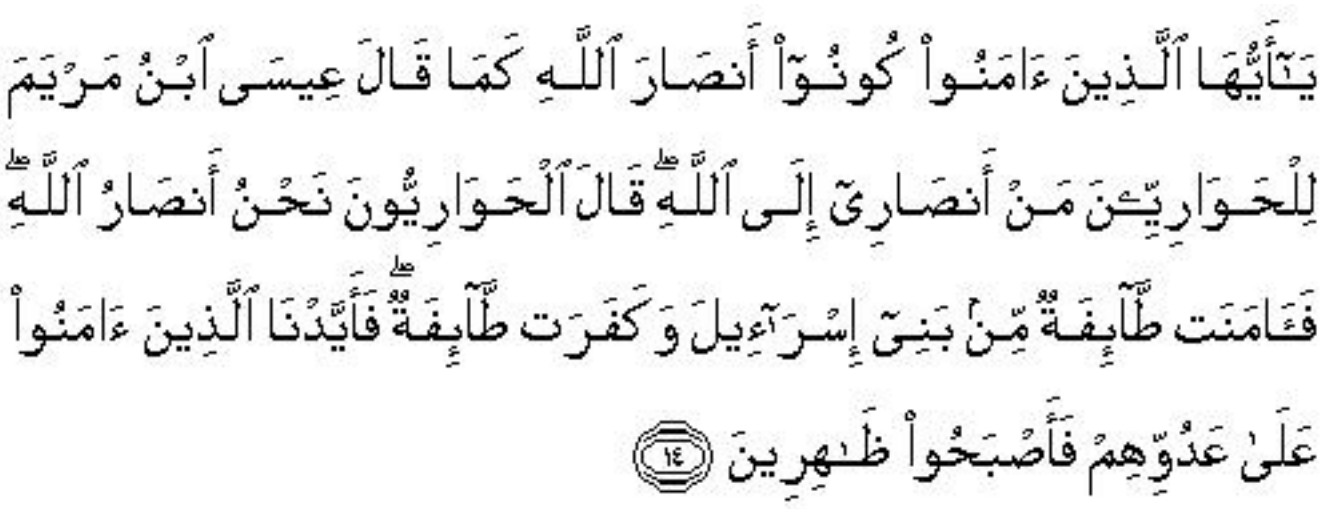
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَٰرَةٍ تُنجِيكُم
مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَتُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ
ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ
ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢﴾

وَأُخْرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَا ۖ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

[10-13] O you who have believed, shall I tell you of a bargain[14] that will save you from a painful torment? It is that you should believe in Allah and His Messenger,[15] and should exert your utmost in Allah's Way with your wealth and your selves. This would be best for you if you only knew.[16] Allah will forgive you your sins and admit you into Gardens underneath which canals flow, and will give you excellent abodes in Gardens of Eternity. This indeed is the supreme success.[17] And He will give you the other thing too, that you desire. Allah's succor and victory near at hand![18] Give to the believers, O Prophet, the good news of this.



[14] O you who have believed! Be helpers of Allah even as Jesus, son of Mary, had said to the disciples,[19] "Who will be my helpers (in calling) towards Allah?" and the disciples had answered,"We are helpers of Allah."[20] Then, some of the children of Israel believed and others disbelieved. So We aided the believers against their enemies, and they alone became triumphant.[21]

1This is a brief introduction to this discourse. For its explanation, see E.N.'s 1,2 of Surah Al-Hadid. The discourse has been opened with this introduction so that before hearing or reading what is going to follow, one may well understand that Allah is free from and far above this that the functioning of His Godhead should depend on someone s faith and another one's help and sacrifices. If He exhorts the believers to adopt sincerity in Faith and urges them to exert their utmost for the success and victory of the Truth, that is for the sake of their own good; otherwise the will of Allah is accomplished by His own power and by His own design, whether somebody makes no effort at all towards its implementation, and whether the whole world joins together to frustrate and resist it stubbornly.

2One meaning of this passage is general as is apparent from its words. It has a special meaning also, which becomes evident when this verse is read along with the verse that follows. The first meaning is that there should be complete agreement between a true Muslim's word and deed: he should carry into effect whatever he says, and when he has no intention of doing it, or has no power for it, he should not say it. To say one thing and do another is one of the most hideous characteristics of man, in the sight of Allah. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has explained that a person's being characterized by this quality is a sign that he is not a believer but a hypocrite. According to a .Hadith he said;

"The hypocrite has three signs even if he offered the Prayer and observed the Fast, and professed to be a Muslim: That then he spoke he lied; when he made a promise, he broke it; and when he was entrusted with something, he proved dishonest. " (Bukhari, Muslim) .

In another Hadith he said:

"Four characteristics are such that the one who has all the four, is a hypocrite through and through, and the one who has one of these, has one characteristic of hypocrisy in him until he gives it up: that when he is entrusted with something, he proves dishonest; when he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he quarrels he crosses all limits of morality and decency." (Bukhari, Muslim).

The jurists of Islam have almost unanimously held the view that if a person makes a pledge to Allah (e.g.. vows to do some thing), or enters an agreement with others, or promised somebody to do something, it is obligatory for him to fulfil it, unless the thing he has promised is by itself sinful. If it is sinful, he should not observe or carry out the agreement or promise, but should expiate its violation as mentioned in Surah AI-Ma'idah: 89 above. (AI-Jassas and Ibn al'Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur-an an).

This much for the general meaning of these verses. As for their special meaning, it becomes obvious when these are read along with the verse that follows. The object is to reprove those people who talked much and made tall promises to fight and lay down their lives in the cause of Islam, but when the time came of their test and trial, they fled the battlefield. The people of weak faith have been taken to task for this weakness at several places in the Qur'an. For instance, in Surah An-Nisa': 77, it has been said: "Have you also marked those to whom if was said, 'Withhold your hands (a while from war) and establish the salat and pay the zakat. Now that they have been commanded to fight, some of them fear the people as they should fear Allah, or even more than that. They say: 'Our Lord, why have You prescribed fighting for us? Why have You not given us further respite?" And in Surah Muhammad: 20: "Those who have believed, were saying, 'Why is not a Surah sent down (to enjoin fighting)?' But when a decisive Surah was sent down in which fighting had been mentioned, you saw those in whose hearts was a disease, looking towards you like the one under the shadow of death.' On the occasion of the Battle of Uhud in particular, the weaknesses to which allusions have been made continuously from verse 121 to verse 171 of Surah Al-'Imran became all the more conspicuous and visible.

The commentators while explaining the background of the revelation of these verses have mentioned the different forms of the weaknesses to which exception has been taken here. Ibn 'Abbas says that before the fighting was proscribed, there were some people among the Muslims who said: "Would that we could know the act that is most lovable in the sight of Allah, so that we would perform the same." But when they were told that it was fighting in the cause of Allah, it became most difficult for them to carry out their promise. Muqatil bin Hayyan has stated that in the Battle of Uhud these very people were put to the test, and they abandoned the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and fled Ibn Zaid says that many of the people made the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) believe that they would go out with him to fact the enemy whenever it was so required, but when the time of the test came their promises proved false. Qatadah and Dahhak say that if some people did take pan in the battle, they accomplished nothing. but on their return from the battlefield they boasted and bragged, saying. "We put up a brave fight and we achieved such and such a victory." It is such people who have been rebuked by Allah in these verses.

3First, it shows that only those believers are blessed with Allah's good pleasure and approval, who are prepared to fight in His way, disregarding every kind of danger. Secondly, that Allah likes an army which has three characteristics: (1) It fights in Allah's way with full understanding, and does not fight for a cause disapproved by Allah; (2) it is not indisciplined, but is well-organized and well-arrayed for battle; and (3) it offers stiff resistance to the enemy as though it were "a solid cemented structure" . Then, this last quality is by itself highly meaningful. No army can stand in the battle array like a "solid structure unless it has the following characteristics.

(1) Complete agreement in the faith and the objective, which should smite soldiers and officers in a well-knit body.

(2) Confidence in one another sincerity, which cannot be created unless everybody is genuinely sincere in his aim and free from impure motives; otherwise the severe test of war will not allow anyone's insincerity to remain hidden, and whcn confidence is lost, the members of the army start suspecting instead of trusting one another.

(3) A high standard of morality without which neither can the officers and soldiers of the army have love and respect for each other, nor can they remain immune foam mutual clashes and conflicts.

(4) Love of the common objective and a firm resolve to achieve it, which should inspire, the whole army with an invincible spirit of gallantry, devotion and self sacrifice, so that it may actually face the enemy like a solid cemented structure in the battle field.

Such were the foundations on which a powerful military organization was raised under the leadership of the Holy Prophet upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Mighty power of the day clashed with it and were annihilated; no power of the world then could dare face it for centuries.

4At several places in the Qur'an details have been given of how the Israelites in spite of acknowledging the Prophet Moses as a Prophet of God and their own benefactor maligned him and proved disloyal to him. For this see Al Baqarah: 51,55,60, 67-71 An-Nisa': 153; AI-Ma'idah: 20-26; AI-A'raf: 138-141; 148-151; Ta Ha: 86-98. In the Bible too, the Jewish history written by the Jews themselves is replete with such events; for instance, sec Exodus, 5: 20-21, 14: 11- 12, 16: 2-3, 17: 3-4; Numbers, 11: 1-15, 14: 1-10, ch.l6, 20: 1-5. Here, allusion to these events is meant to warn the Muslims that they should not adopt the same attitude towards their Prophet as the Israelites had adopted towards their Prophet: otherwise they would meet the same fate as was met by the Israelites.

5That is, it is not Allah's way to force the people to follow the right way of guidance if they are bent upon following the crooked ways of sin and disobedience. From this it automatically follows that the deviation of a person or nation is not initiated by Allah but by the person or the nation itself. But the law of Allah is that He provides means of deviation only for the one who chooses deviation, so that be may go astray

into whatever alleys he may like. Allah has granted man the freedom of choice. Now it is for every man and for every group of men to decide whether he or it wants to obey their Lord, or not, and whether he or it chooses the right way for it or one of the crooked ways. There is no compulsion from Allah in this choice. If somebody chooses the way of obedience and guidance, Allah does not push him forcibly towards deviation and disobedience; and if somebody is resolved to follow disobedience instead of the way of righteousness, it is not Allah's way to make him adopt the way of obedience and guidance forcibly. But this also is the truth that the person who chooses a particular way for himself, cannot follow it practically unless Allah provides for him the ways and means and creates for him the conditions which are necessary for following it. This is Allah's grace and favor" without which no one's efforts can be meaningful and productive. Now, if a person is not at all interested in seeking Allah's grace for righteousness, but seeks His grace for adopting evil, he is given the same. And when he receives the grace for doing evil. he becomes temperamentally perverse accordingly and the course of his action and effort goes on becoming crooked until at last the capability to do and accept good in him is gradually lost and destroyed. This is what is meant by, when they adopted perverseness, Allah caused their hearts to become perverse." In this state it is against the law of Allah that the one who wants to adopt deviation, and is actively and earnestly engaged in seeking it, and is expending all one's thought and energy to move further and further on towards it, should be forcibly turned towards guidance, for such an action would negate the object of the test and .trial, for which man has been granted the freedom of choice in the world. For if a man adopts righteousness through such guidance, there is no reason why he should be entitled to any reward whatever. Rather in such a case, the one who was not guided forcibly and was left in deviation on that account, should not be subjected to any punishment, for the responsibility for his deviation would lie on Allah, and at the time of his accountability in the Hereafter, he could present the argument: `When there existed the rule of granting guidance forcibly in the world, why was I deprived of that favor?" This is the meaning of the words: "Allah does not guide the transgressors." That is, Allah does not grant the favor of adopting the way of obedience to those, who have chosen the way of sin and disobedience for themselves of their own free will.

6This relates to the second disobedience of the children of Israel. The first disobedience they committed in the beginning of their great era of power and prosperity, and this second towards the very end of it, after which they came under the wrath and curse of God for ever and ever. The object of relating these two events here is to warn the Muslims of the consequences of adopting the attitude of disobedience towards their Prophet as the Israelites had adopted towards their Prophet.

7This sentence has three meanings and all three are correct:

(1) "That I have not brought any new religion, but the same religion that the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had brought. I have not come to repudiate the Torah, but to confirm it just as the Messengers of God have always been confirming the Messengers who came before them. Therefore, there is no reason why you should hesitate to acknowledge my apostleship. "

(2) "I answer to the good news that is there in the Torah about my advent. Therefore, instead of opposing me you should receive, and welcome me as the one whose coming had been foretold by the former Prophets."

(3) The Third meaning becomes obvious when the sentence is read along with the sentence which follows it and it is this: "I confirm the good news given by the Torah about the coming of Allah's Messenger, named Ahmad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), and give the good news of his coming myself." According to this third meaning. this saying of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) alludes to the good news which the Prophet Moses (peace be on him) had given to his people about the advent of the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace). In it he says:

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken- I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." (Deut. 18: 15-19).

This is an express prophecy of the Torah, which applies to none but the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). In it the Prophet Moses is conveying to his people this direction of Allah: "I will raise up for you a Prophet from among your brethren". Obviously, the "brethren" of a nation cannot be a tribe or a family of the nation itself, but another nation to which it is related racially. If it had implied the coming of a Prophet from among the children of Israel themselves, the words would have been to the effect: ¦I shall raise up a Prophet for you from among yourselves." Hence, the "brethren of the Israelites' can inevitably imply the Ishmaelites, who are their relatives by lineage, being the children of the Prophet Abraham (peace be on him). Moreover, no Israelite Prophet can correspond to this prophecy for the reason also that not one but many Prophets appeared among the Israelites after the prophet Moses and the Bible is replete with their history.

The other thing foretold in the prophecy is that the Prophet to be raised up would be `like into the Prophet Moses". This obviously does not imply that he would resemble the Prophet Moses in physical features or circumstances of life, for in this respect no individual can ever be like another individual; it also does not mean the resemblance in the characteristics of Prophethood, for this characteristic is common to all those _Prophets, who came after the Prophet Moses. Therefore. no Prophet can have this quality that he should be like unto him in this characteristic Thus, resemblance in these two aspects becomes out of the question. The only aspect of resemblance on the basis of which the peculiarity of a Prophet of the future becomes understandable is that that Prophet should be a bearer of Divine Law like the Prophet Moses. And this peculiarity is found in none but the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and

blessings), for all the Prophets who appeared before him among the Israelites were the followers of the Law of Moses; none of them had brought a permanent Divine Law of his own.

This interpretation is further strengthened by these words of the prophecy. 'According to all that thou (i.e. the Israelites) desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord thy God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto them, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth." In this passage Horeb means the mountain on which the Prophet Moses had received the Divine Law first of all, and the prayer that the Israelites made was: "If we are given a Divine Law in the further, it should not be given us under the dreadful conditions like those which were created at the foot of Mt. Horeb while giving us the Law." These conditions have been mentioned both in the Qur'an and in the Bible. (See Al-Baqarah: 55, 56, 63; Al-A'raf: 155, 171. Bible: Exodus, 19: 17- 18). In answer to it, the Prophet Moses tells the Israelites; 'Allah has granted your prayer. Ho says that He will raise up a Prophet for you, in whose mouth He will put His own words." That is, at the time of bestowing the Dew Divine Law, He will not create the dreadful conditions which were created at the foot of Mt. Horeb. Instead of that, Divine Words will be put in the mouth of the Prophet who would be appointed to that office, ant he will recite those Words before the people. A study of this explanation leaves no room for the doubt that the prophecy applies to another than the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). Only he after the Prophet Moses has been granted an enduring and permanent Divine Law. At its bestowal no assembly of the people was called as was called of the Israelites at the foot of Mt. Horeb, and no such conditions were created during the) time it was bestowed as were created in their case there.

8This is a very important verse of the Qur'an, which has been subjected to severe adverse criticism as well as treated with the worst kind of criminal dishonesty by the opponents of Islam, for it says that the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) had given the good news of the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) by name. Therefore, it is necessary that we study and discuss it in some detail.

(1) In this Verse the name mentioned of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) is Ahmad. Ahmad has two meanings: the one who gives the highest praise to Allah, and the one who is most highly praised by others, or the one who is most worthy of praise among men. Authentic traditions confirm that this too was a well known name of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). Muslim and Abu Da'ud Tayalisi have related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Musa al-Ash'ari that the Holy Prophet said: "I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, and I am the Assembler. .. " Other traditions on the subject have been related by Imam Malik, Bukhari, Muslim, Darimi, Tirmidhi, and Nasa'i from Hadrat Jubair bin Mut'im, This name of the Holy Prophet was well known among the Companions as is borne out by the poetry of Hadrat Hassan bin Thabit.

It is also confirmed by history that the sacred name of the Holy Prophet was not only Muhammad but also Ahmad. Arabic literature bears evidence that nobody in Arabia had been named Ahmad before the Holy Prophet, and after him innumerable people have been named Ahmad in the world. This is the greatest proof that since his Prophethood this name has been most well known among the people of his community. Had it not been a name

of the Holy Prophet, to which Ahmad's slavery did the parents, who named their children 'Ghulam Ahmad", assign them?

(2) The Gospel of St. John bears evidence that at the advent of the Prophet Jesus Christ, the Israelites were awaiting the appearance of three persons: of the Christ, of Elias (i.e. the second coming of the Prophet Elias) and of 'that prophet".

In the words of the Gospel:

"And this is the record of John (the Prophet John: Yahya) when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And ho confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him What then? Art thou Elias? And be saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness! Make straight the way of the Lord as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptize thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?" (John, 1: 19-25)

These words expressly show that the Israelites were awaiting another Prophet besides the Prophet Christ and the Prophet Elias, and he was not the Prophet John. The belief about the coming of that Prophet was so well known and well established among the Israelites that a mere reference to him as "that prophet" was enough to call attention to him without any need to add: "The one who has been foretold in the Torah. " Furthermore, it also shows that the advent of the prophet to whom they were referring was absolutely confirmed, for when these questions were asked of the Prophet John, he did not say that no other prophet was to come and therefore the questions were irrelevant.

Consider now the predictions that have been cited in the Gospel of St. John from chapter 14 to chapter 16 continuously:

'And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him: but ye know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you. " (14: 16-17)

'These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. " (14: 25-26)

'Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. " (14: 30)

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me." (15: 26)

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not

come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. " (16: 7)

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. AII things that the Father hath are mine: ' therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. " (16: 12 15)

(4) In order to determine the exact meaning of these passages one should first know that the language spoken by the Prophet Jesus and his contemporary Palestinians was a dialect of the Aramaic language, called Syriac. More than 200 years before the birth of Jesus when the Seleucides came to power Hebrew bad become extinct in this territory and been replaced by Syriac. Although under the influence of the Seleucide and then the Roman empires, Grace also had reached this area, it remained confined only to that class of the people, who after having access to the higher government circles, or in order to seek access to them, had become deeply Hellenized. The Common Palestinians used a particular dialect of Syriac, the accents and pronunciations and idioms of which were different from the Syriac spoken in and around Damascus. The common people of the country were wholly unaware of Greek. So much so that when in A.D. 70 the Roman Genera(Titus, after taking Jerusalem, addressed the citizens in Greek, he had to be translated into Syriac, This makes it evident that whatever the Prophet Jesus spoke to his disciples must necessarily be only in Syriac.

Secondly, one should know that all the four Gospels contained In the Bible were written by the reek-speaking Christians, who had entered Christianity after the Prophet Jesus. The traditions of the sayings and acts of the Prophet Jesus reached them through the Syriac speaking Christians not in the written form but as oral traditions, and they translated these Syriac traditions into their own language and incorporated them in their books. None of the extant Gospels was written before 70; the Gospel of St. John was compiled n century after the Prophet Jesus probably in Ephesus, a city in Asia Minor. Moreover, no original copy even of these Gospels in Greek, in which these were originally written, exists. None of the Greek manuscripts that have been discovered and collected from here and there and which all belong to the period before the inventions of printing dates before the 4th century. Therefore, it is difficult to say what changes might have taken place in these during the first three centuries What makes it particularly doubtful is that the Christians have been regarding it as quite lawful to romper with their Gospels intentionally as and when they liked. The author of the article "Bible" in Encyclopedia Britannica (Ed. 19731 writes:

“The main source of the evidence and of the variations are the manuscripts of the N.T., dating from the and to the 10th century or even later. In the process of copying, these manuscripts underwent the revisions that necessitate textual criticism. Some of these revisions were unintentional, as the scribe skipped a word or a line or as he mistook one character for another. Other revisions came from the desire of the scribe to harmonize the text of one Gospel with another or of one Testament with the other; or from his pious wish to "correct" or clarify the text at another point. But now that variations in the text exist, collection of the manuscripts is a difficult task."

Under such conditions as these, it is very difficult to say with absolute certainty that the sayings of the Prophet

Jesus (peace be on him) found in the Gospels, have been preserved, reproduced and cited faithfully and accurately, and that no change has taken place anywhere.

The third and a very vital point is that even after the conquest by the Muslims, for about three centuries, the Palestine Christians retained Syriac, which was not replaced by Arabic until the 9th century A.D. The information that the Muslim scholars of the first three centuries obtained through the Syriac speaking Christians about the Christian traditions, should be more authentic and reliable than the information of those people whom it reached through translation after translation from Syriac into Greek and then from Greek into Latin. For there were greater chances of the original Syriac words spoken by the Prophet Jesus remaining preserved with the Palestinian Christians than with others.

(5) Keeping these un-deniable historical facts in mind let us consider the fact that in the passages cited from St. John's Gospel above, the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) is giving the news about one coming after him, about whom he says: "He will be `the prince of this world' (Sarwar `Alam) "he shall abide with you for ever," "he will guide you into all truth," and “he shall testify of me" (i.e. of Jesus himself). By interpolating words like "the Holy Ghost" and "the Spirit of truth", `in the passages of St. John. every effort hag been made to corrupt the real meaning, but despite that if these passages are read carefully, one can clearly see that the one whose coming has been foretold, will not be a spirit but a man, and an extraordinary man, whose teaching will be universal, all pervasive and enduring till the Last Day. For this particular person the word 'Madadgar" (helper) has been used in the Urdu translation, and the Greek word used in St John's original Gospel, according to the Christians, was Peracletus. But the Christian scholars themselves have been faced with great difficulties in determining its meaning. In the original Greek Paraclete has several meanings: to call to a particular place, to call for help, to warn, to tempt and incite, to implore and pray. Moreover, in Hellenic sense, it gives these meanings: to console, to give satisfaction, to encourage. Wherever this word has been used in the Bible, it does pot fit in well with the context anywhere. Origen has translated it Consolateor at some places and Deprecator at others. But the other commentators have rejected both these translations, for in the first place these are not correct according to Greek grammar; second, these meanings do not go well with context wherever this word has occurred in the passages. Some other translators have translated it Teacher, but this meaning too, cannot be derived from the Greek usage, Tertullian and Augustine have preferred the word Advocate, and some other scholars have adopted words like Assistant, Comforter, Cosoler, etc. (See Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature under "Peracletus").

(6) Now, it is interesting to note that in Greek itself there is another word periclytos, which means "the Praised One". This word is exactly synonymous with `Muhammad". In pronunciation it closely resembles Peracletus. It cannot be a remote possibility that the Christians who have been used to making alterations in their religious books as and when they liked, might have effected e little variation in the spelling of this word in the prophecy related by St. John when they saw that it went against their set belief and creed. The original Greek Gospel composed by St. John does not exist either; therefore it is not possible to check which of the two words had actually been used in it.

(7) But the decision is not solely dependent on this as to which word had St. John actually used in Greek, for in any case that too was, a translation and the Prophet Jesus language, as we have explained above, was Palestinian Syriac. Therefore, the word that he might have used in his good news must necessarily be a Syriac

word. Fortunately, we find that original Syriac word in the Life of Muhammad by Ibn Hisham. Along with that we also come to know its synonymous Greek word from the same book. Ibn Hisham, on the authority of Ibn Ishaq, has reproduced the complete translation of 15: 23-27 and of 16:1 of the Gospel according to yuhannus (Yuhanna: John), and has used the Syriac word Munhamanna instead of the Greek Paraclete. Then, Ibn Ishaq or Ibn Hisham has explained it this: The Munhamanna in Syriac means Muhammad and in Greek the Peracletus. (Ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p. 248).

Now, historically, the Historical of the common Palestinian Christians until the 9th century A.D. was Syriac. This land was included in the Islamic territories in the first half of the 7th century. Ibn Ishaq died in 768 A.D. and Ibn Hisham in 828 A.D. This means that in the time of both the Palestinian Christians spoke Syriac, and for neither it was difficult to have contacts with the Christian subjects of their country. Moreover, in those days there also lived hundreds of thousands of Greek speaking Christians in the Islamic territories. Therefore, It was also not difficult for them to find out which particular word of Greek was synonymous with a certain word of Syriac. Now, if in the translation reproduced by Ibn Ishaq the Syriac word Munhamanna has been used, and Ibn Ishaq or Ibn Hisham has explained that its Arabic equivalent is Muhammad and Greek Peracletus, there remains no room for the doubt that the Prophet Jesus had given the good news of the coming of the Holy Prophet himself by name. Along with that it also becomes known that in the Greek Gospel of John the word actually used was Periclytos. which the Christian scholars changed into Peracletus at some later time.

(8) Even an older historical evidence in this connection is the following tradition from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud:

'When the Negus summoned the Emigrants from Makkah to his court and heard the teachings of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) from Hadrat Ja'far bin Abi Talib, he said; “God bless you and him from whom you have come! I bear witness that he is Messenger of Allah, and he is the same one whose mention we find in the Gospel, and the same one good news about whom had been given by Jesus son of Mary.” (Musnad Ahmad This has been related in Hadih from Hadrat Ja'far himself and also from Hadrat Umm Salamah. This not only proves that in the beginning of the 7th century the Negus knew that the Prophet Jesus had foretold the coming of a Prophet, but also that a clear pointer to 'that prophet" existed in the Gospel on the basis of which the Negus did not take long to from the opinion that the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) was that prophet. However, from this tradition one cannot know whether the source of information with the Negus about the good news given by the Prophet Jesus was this same Gospel of St. John, or whether there existed some other means also at that time for this information.

(9) The truth is that the four Gospels which the Christian Church has recognized as Canonical are neither an authentic means of knowing the Prophet Jesus Prophecies about the Holy Prophet nor are they a reliable source for knowing the correct biography and the original teachings of the Prophet Jesus himself, but by far the more trust-worthy means for this is the Gospel of Barnabas which the Church has declared as heretical and apocryphal. The Christians have done whatever they could to conceal it, and it remained lost to the world for centuries. In the 16th century only one copy of its Italian translation existed in the library of Pope Sixtus V, and no one was allowed to read it. In the beginning of the 18th century it came into the hands of one John Toland. Then, changing different hands it found its way in 1738 into the Imperial Library of Vienna, In 1907 an English translation of this Italian manuscript was printed at the Clarendon Press, Oxford, but probably soon after its

printing the Christian world realized that the book cut at the very root of the Faith which was attributed to the Prophet Jesus. Therefore, its printed copies were destroyed somehow, and then it never went into print any more. Another copy of it, a Spanish translation from the Italian manuscript, existed in the 18th century, which has been mentioned by George Sale in his Preface and Preliminary Discourse to the English translation of the Qur'an. This too was made to disappear, and no trace of it exists anywhere today. j had a chance to see a copy of the English translation published from Oxford and I have read it word by word. I feel that it is indeed a great blessing of which the Christians have kept themselves deprived only out of prejudice and stubbornness.

Wherever this Gospel is mentioned in Christian literature, it ill condemned as a forged Gospel, which perhaps some Muslim has composed and ascribed to Barnabas. But this is a great falsehood which has been uttered only for the reason that it contains at several places clear prophecies about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). In the first place, a perusal of this Gospel shows that it could not have been written by a Muslim. Secondly, had it been written by a Muslim, it would have spread extensively among the Muslims and the writings of the Islamic scholars would have contained plentiful references to it. On the contrary. the Muslims had no knowledge of its existence before George Sale wrote his Preliminary Discourse to his translation of the Qur'an. No mention of any kind is found of the Gospel of Barnabas in the books of the Muslim writers like Tabari, Yaqubi, Mas'udi, Al-Benrni, Ibn Hazm and others, who were fully conversant with Christian literature when they discuss Christianity The best catalogs of the books found in the libraries of the Islamic world were Al-Fihrist of Ibn an-Nadim and Kashfas-Zunnun of Haji-Khalifah, and these too are without any mention of it. No Muslim scholar before the 19th century has ever mentioned the name of the Gospel of Barnabas, The third and most important argument to refute the claim that the Gospel has been written by a Muslim is that about 75 years before the birth of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), In the time of Pogo Gelasius I, the list prepared of canonical books, which were banned for reading by a Papal decree also included the Gospel of Barnabas (Evangelium Barnabe). The question is: Who was the Muslim at that time, who forged this Gospel? The Christian scholars themselves have admitted that the Gospel of Barnabas remained prevalent in Syria, Spain, Egypt, etc. during the early days of Christianity for a long time and that it was banned as heretical in the 6th century.

(10) Before we reproduce the good news given by the Prophet Jesus about the advent of the Holy Prophet from this Gospel, it would be useful to Introduce it briefly so that the reader may know its importance and also understand why the Christians are so angry with it.

None of the writers of the four Gospels which have been included in the Bible as authentic and canonical, was a companion of the Prophet Jesus, and none of them has either made the claim that the information recorded by him in his Gospel was obtained from the companions of the Prophet Jesus, They have, in fact, made no mention of the sources from which they obtained their information, which could show whether the reporter himself witnessed the events and heard the sayings that he was describing or whether they reached him through one or more than one transmitters. On the contrary, the author of the Gospel of Barnabas states that he is one of the original twelve disciples of Jesus, that he followed Jesus from the beginning till the end, and that he is recording the events that be witnessed with his own eyes and the sayings that he heard with his own ears. Not only this. In the end of the Book he says that on his departure from the world the Prophet Jesus had made him responsible for removing the prevalent misunderstandings about himself and for informing the world of the correct events.

Who was this Barnabas? In the Acts of the Apostles a person so named is very frequently mentioned. He came of a Jewish family of Cyprus. He has been praised for his services in connection with the preaching of Christianity and rendering help and assistance to the followers of the Christ. But nowhere has it been told as to when ho embraced Christianity; his name does not either appear in the list of the twelve original disciples, which has been given in the three Gospels. Therefore, one cannot say that the author of this Gospel is the same Barnabas or some other person. The list of the disciples given by Barnabas differs from the one given by Matthew and Mark only in two names: Thomas instead of whom Barnabas has given his own name and Simon the Canaanite instead of whom he has named Judas son of Jacob. In the Gospel of Luke this second name is also there. Therefore, it would be correct to assume that some time later only in order to exclude Barnabas from the disciples the name of Thomas was included so as to be rid of his Gospel. To effect such changes in their scriptures has never been anything unlawful with the Christian scholars.

If one goes through the Gospel with an unbiased mind and compares it with the four Gospels of the New Testament, one cannot help feeling that it is far superior to them. In it the events of the life of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) have been described in much greater detail, in a manner as though somebody was actually witnessing what was happening and was himself a partner in those events. As against the incoherent stories of the four Gospels this historical account is more coherent. From it one can fully well understand the series of events unfolding themselves. In it the teachings of the Prophet Jesus have been given in a clearer, more effective and expanded form than in the other Gospels. The themes of the Unity of God, refutation of polytheism, attributes of God, essence of worship and morality have been presented in a most forceful, rational and exhaustive way. In the other Gospels one does not find even a fraction of the instructive parables which clothe the themes This Gospel also shows in much greater detail what wist methods the Prophet Jesus used for the teaching and training of his disciples. Anyone who has any acquaintance with the language, style and temperament of the Prophet Jesus will be compelled to admit after a perusal of this Gospel that it is not a fictitious document, which might have been forged in a later period. But the truth is that in it the Prophet Jesus appears before us in his true grandeur and glory much more conspicuously than anywhere in the four canonical Gospels. In it there is no trace of those contradictions which abound in the four Gospels in respect of his different sayings.

In the Gospel of Barnabas the life of the Prophet Jesus and his teachings are found precisely according to the life and teachings of a Prophet of God. He presents himself as a Prophet, and confirms all the former Prophets and Books. He clearly states that there is no other means of knowing the truth except through the teachings of the Prophets, and the one who abandons the Prophets, in fact, abandons God. He presents the doctrines of the Unity of God, Prophethood, and the Hereafter precisely as taught by all the Prophets. He exhorts the people to perform the Prayer, observe the Fast and pay the Zakat. The description that Barnabas has given of his Prayers at a number of places shows that the times he observed for his Prayers were the same times of Fajr (Dawn), Zuhr (Early afternoon), `Asr (Late afternoon), Maghrib, 'Isha (Late Evening) and Tahajjud (Before Dawn), and he always performed his ablutions before the Prayer.. He acknowledged David and Solomon as the Prophets, although the Jews and Christians have excluded them from the list of the Prophets. He regarded the Prophet Ishmael as the intended victim of the sacrifice, and he makes a Jewish rabbi admit that the intended victim was indeed the Prophet Ishmael, and not the Prophet Isaac, as the Israelites have made the people believe. His teachings about the Hereafter, Resurrection, Hell and Heaven arc about the same as given in the Qur'an.

(11) The reason why the Christians have become opponents of the Gospel of Barnabas is not that it contains clear and definite good news about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) at several places, for they had rejected this Gospel even before his birth To understand the real cause of their anger a little further discussion is needed.

The earliest followers of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) believed him only as a Prophet, followed the Mosaic Law, did not detach themselves from the other Israelites in the matter of beliefs, religious in junctions and rites of worship, and differed from the Jews only in that they had affirmed faith in the Prophet Jesus as the Messiah (the Christ) whereas the Jews had refused to acknowledge him as the Messiah. Later, when St. Paul entered this community, he started preaching and proclaiming this religion also to the Romans and the Greeks as well as other non-Jewish and non-Israelite communities.

For this purpose he invented an altogether new religion, the beliefs, doctrines and injunctions of which were entirely different from those taught by the Prophet Jesus. This man had never met the Prophet Jesus but was a bitter enemy of him during his lifetime, and even remained an enemy of his followers for several years after him. Then, when he entered his community and started inventing a new religion, he did not cite any saying of Jesus as his authority but based everything on his own inspiration. The only object before him while framing the new religion was to make it acceptable to the gentile world. He declared .that a Christian was free from all restrictions of the Jewish Law. He abolished all restrictions of the lawful and the unlawful in food. He repudiated the circumcision, which was particularly disagreeable to the non-Jewish world. So much so that he innovated the doctrine of the divinity of Christ and his being son of God and the Atonement for the original sin of mankind by dying on the Cross, for it immensely suited the polytheistic taste of the common man. The early followers of Christ resisted these innovations, but the flood gate opened by St. Paul caused a huge multitude of the non-Jewish Christians to enter this religion against whom the handful of we Christians could not stand for long. However, until about the end of the 3rd century A.D. there were still many people who denied the divinity of Christ. But in the beginning of the 4th century (in 325 A.D.) the Nicaea Council recognized the Pauline doctrines and admitted them as the basis of Christianity. Then the Roman Empire itself turned Christian and in the reign of Emperor Theodosius Christianity became the start religion. Consequently, all the books that clashed with this doctrine were declared as heretical, and only those books were held as canonical which agreed with it. In 367 A. D. for the first time a collection of reliable and accepted books was issued by an epistle of Athanaseus, which was ratified in 382 A.D. in a meeting under Pope Damasius. Towards the end of the 5th century Pope Gelasius confirming this collection as authentic also issued a list of the books which were "spurious", whereas no Christian scholar has ever made the c]aim that any of the Pauline doctrines which were made the criterion foe declaring certain religious books as authentic and others as not authentic, had been taught by the Prophet Jesus himself. More than that, even in the Gospels which are admitted to the canonical collection no saying of the Prophet Jesus himself is recorded, which may confirm these doctrines.

The Gospel of Barnabas was included among the rejected books because it clashed with this official creed. Its author at the outset states that the object of his Gospel is:

"To reform the ideas of those who, being deceived of Satan, under presence of piety, are preaching most impious doctrine, calling Jesus son of God, repudiating the circumcision ordained of God for ever, and permitting every unclean meat; among whom also Paul hath been deceived."

He says that during the lifetime of Jesus, first of all the polytheistic Roman soldiers witnessing his miracles started calling him God and son of God. Then this epidemic infected the common Israelites also. At this Jesus was much grieved and upset. He repudiated this false belief about himself repeatedly and cursed those who spoke thus of him. Then he sent his disciples throughout Judea to refute it and blessed them also with the ability to work the sate miracles which issued from himself, so that the people be made to give up the false idea that the one who performed those miracles was God or son of God. In this connection he reproduces the full discourses of the Prophet Jesus in which he repudiated this false belief and tells how upset he was at the circulation of this mischief. Moreover, he strongly refutes the Pauline doctrine that Christ died on the Cross. He narrates as an eye-witness that when Judas Iscariot took money from the high priest and brought soldiers to have Jesus arrested, four angels at Allah Almighty's command carried him away and Judas was so changed in speech and in face as to be like Jesus. Thus, it was he who was put on the cross and not Jesus. Thus, this Gospel cuts at the root of Pauline Christianity and ratifies what the Qur'an says in this regard, whereas 115 years before the revelation of the Qur'an, the Christian priests had rejected it on account of these very assertion.

(12) The above discussion makes it abundantly clear that the Gospel of Barnabas is, in fact, a more reliable Gospel than the so-called canonical Gospels. It represents the Prophet Jesus' teachings and the events and deeds of his life and his sayings correctly; it s the Christian people's own misfortune that they have lolly only because of their stubbornness the opportunity they were given to correct their beliefs and to know the real teachings of the Prophet Jesus. Now we can quote with full satisfaction the glad tidings about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), which Barnabas has reported from the Prophet Jesus. In these glad tidings at some places the Prophet Jesus mentions the Holy Prophet by name, at some he calls him Rasul-Allah (Messenger of AIIah), at some he uses the word "Messiah" for him, at some "Admirable", and at other places employs sentences which give the same meaning as: La-ilaha-ll-Allah, Muhammad ar-Rasul-Allah. It is difficult for us to reproduce all pieces of the good news here, for they are scattered throughout the book in different wordings and in different contexts. We reproduce below only a few of them as specimen:

"For all the prophets, that are one hundred and forty-four thousand, whom God hath sent into the world have spoken darkly. But after me shall come the Splendour of all the prophets and holy ones, and shall shed light upon the darkness of all that the Prophets have said, because he is the messenger of God." (Ch. 17)

"The Levites and the scribes said: `If thou be not the Messiah nor Elijah, or any prophet, wherefore dost thou preach new doctrine, and make thyself of more account than the Messiah?' Jesus answered: 'The miracles which God worketh by my hands show that I speak that which God willeth; nor indeed do I make myself to be accounted as him of whom ye speak. For I am not worthy to unloose the ties of the hosen or the latchets of the shoes of the messenger of God whom ye call "Messiah", who was made before me, and shall come after me, and shall bring the word of truth, so that this faith shall have no end. " (Ch. 42)

"Verily I say unto you, that every prophet when he is come hath borne to one nation only the mark of the mercy of God. And so their words were not extended save to that people to which they were sent. But the messenger of God, when he shall come, God shall give to him as it were the-seal of his hand, insomuch that he shall carry salvation and mercy to all the nations of the world that shall receive his doctrine. He shall come with power upon

the ungodly, and shall destroy idolatry, insomuch that he shall make Satan confounded." Continuing his speech with the disciples, the Prophet Jesus makes it clear that he will be born of the Ishmaelites, (Ch.43)

"I therefore say unto you that the messenger of God is a splendor that shall give gladness to nearly all that God hath made, for ho is adorned with the spirit of understanding and of counsel the spirit of wisdom and might, the spirit of fear and love, the spirit of prudence and temperance; he is adorned with the spirit of charity and mercy, the spirit of justice and piety, the spirit of gentleness and patience, which he hath received from God three times more than he hath given to all his creatures. O blessed time, when he shall come to the world 1 Believe me that L have seen him and have done him reverence, even as every prophet hath seen him: seeing that of his spirit God giveth to them prophecy. And when I saw him my soul was filled with consolation, saying: `O Muhammad God be with thee, and may he make me worthy to untie thy shoe latchet, for obtaining this I shall be a great prophet and holy one of God." (44)

"Jesus answered: `Let not your heart be troubled, neither be ye fearful: for I have not created you, but God our creator who hath created you will protect you. As for me, I am now come w the world to prepare the way for the messenger of God, who shall bring salvation to the world. But beware that ye be not deceived, for many false prophets shall come, who shall take my words and contaminate my gospel.' Then said Andrew: `Master, tell us some sign, that we may know him.' Jesus answered: `He will not come in your time, but will come some years after you, when my gospel shall be annulled, insomuch that there shall be scarcely thirty faithful. At that time God will have mercy on the world, and so he will send his messenger, over whose head will rest a white cloud, whereby he shall be known of one elect of God, and shall be by him manifested to the world. He shall come with great power against the ungodly, and shall destroy idolatry upon the earth and it rejoiceth me because that through him our God shall be known and glorified, and I shall be known to be true; and he will execute vengeance against those who shall say that I am more than man.... He shall come with truth more clear than that of all the prophets." (Ch. 72)

"For the promise of God was made in Jerusalem, in the temple of Solomon, and not elsewhere. But believe me, a time will come that God will give his mercy in another city, and in every place it will be possible to worship him in truth. And God in every place will have accepted true prayer with mercy ... I am indeed sent to the house of Israel as a prophet of salvation; but after me shall come the Messiah, sent of God to all the world; for whom God hath made the world. And then through all the world will God be worshiped, and mercy received. " (Ch. 82)

"Jesus answered: `As God liveth, in whose presence my soul standeth, I am not the Messiah whom all the tribes of the earth expect, even as God promised to our father Abraham, saying: `In thy seed will I bless all the tubes of the earth.' (Gen. 22; 18) But when God shall take me away from the world, Satan will raise again this accursed sedition; by making the impious believe that I am God and son of God, whence my words and my doctrine shall be contaminated, insomuch that scarcely shall there remain thirty faithful ones: whereupon God will have mercy upon the world, and will send his messenger for whom he hath made all things; who shall come from the south with power, and shall destroy the idols with the idolaters; who shall take away the dominion from Satan which he hath over men. He shall bring with him the mercy of God for salvation of them that shall believe in him, and blessed is he who shall believe his words." (Ch. 96)

"The priest asked: `After the coming of the messenger of God, shall other prophets come?` Jesus answered: `There shall not come after him true prophets sent by God, but there shall come a great number of false prophets, whereat I sorrow, For Satan shall raise them up by the just judgment of God, and they shall hide themselves undo the pretext of my gospel: " (Ch. 97) anointing him with oil, but somebody's being appointed by God had become synonymous with being a messiah. For instance, in I Kings, it has been said that God commanded "the Prophet Elijah to anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphet of Abelmehola shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room." (19: 1516). None of these was anointed with oil. Their being commissioned by God amounted to their being anointed. Thus, according to the Israelite concept the word messiah was, in fact, synonymous with being "commissioned by God", and in this very meaning had the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) used this word for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). For an explanation of the Israelite meaning of the word "messiah", see "Messiah" in Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature).

9The word sehr here does not mean magic but deception and fraud, which is also a well known meaning of this word in Arabic. Thus, the verse means: "When the Prophet whose coming had been foretold by the Prophet Jesus came with the clear signs of his prophethood, the Israelites and the followers of Jesus, declared his claim to Prophet hood to be a deception and fraud."

10"... forges ... against Allah": declares the Prophet sent by Allah to be a false prophet and regards the Revelations of Allah to His Prophet as forged by the Prophet himself.

11That is, there could be no greater in justice than that besides calling a true Prophet a false prophet, one should start hurling abuses on him and employing all sorts of lies and false allegations and slanders to defeat his mission although the Prophet is calling him to Allah's worship and His obedience.

12One should bear in mind that these verses were sent down in A.H. 3 after the Battle of Uhud, when Islam was confined only to the city of Madinah, the Muslims were only a few thousands in number, and entire Arabia was bent upon wiping out this religion. The defeat that the Muslims had suffered at Uhud, had sullied their image of power and the tribes of the surrounding areas had been emboldened. Under such conditions it was said: "No one will succeed in blowing out this Light of Allah, but it will shine forth in all fullness and spread throughout the world." This was a clear prediction which literally came true. Who could know apart from Allah at that time what was the future of Islam? Human eyes could only see that it was a flickering candle and violent winds were blowing to put it out for ever.

13"The mushriks ": those who combine the service of others with the service of Allah and mix other religions in the Religion of Allah; who are not prepared to see that the entire system of lift is established on the obedience and guidance of One God; who insist that they will worship any deity they like and base

"Then said the priest: 'How shall the Messiah be called, and what sign shall reveal his coming? "Jesus answered: `The name of the Messiah is admirable, ,for God himself gave him the name when he had

created his soul, and placed it in a celestial splendor. God said: `Wait Muhammad; for thy sake I will to create paradise, the world, and a great multitude of creatures whereof I make thee a present, insomuch that whoso shall bless thee shall be blessed, and whose shall curse thee shall be accursed, When I shall send thee into the world, I shall send thee as my messenger of salvation, and thy word shall be true, insomuch that heaven and earth shall fail, but thy faith shall newer fail. Muhammad is his blessed name' (Ch. 97)

Barnabas writes that on one occasion Jesus spoke to his disciples and said that one of them (who was to be Judas Iscariot) would sell him to the enemies for 30 pieces of gold. Then said:

"Whereupon I am sure that who shall sell me, be slain in my name, for that God shall take me up from the earth, and shall change the appearance of the traitor so that every one shall believe him to be me; nevertheless when he dieth an evil death, I shall abide in that dishonor for a long time in the world But when Mohammad shall come, the sacred messenger of God, that infamy shall be taken away. And this shall God do because I have confessed the truth of the Messiah, who shall give me this reward that I shall be known to be alive and to be a stranger to that death of infamy.' (Ch. 1: 12)

(To the disciples Jesus said:) "Verily I say unto you that if the truth had not been erased from the book of Moses, God would not have given to David our father the second. And if the book of David had not been contaminated, God would not have committed the Gospel to me; seeing that the Lord our God is unchangeable, and hath spoken but one message to a]l men. Wherefore, when the messenger of God shall come, he shall come to cleanse away all where with the ungodly have contaminated my book.' (Ch.124)

In these clear and comprehensive prophecies there are only three things which at first sight appear to be doubtful. First, that in these and in several other passages of the Gospel of Barnabas the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) has denied his own self being the Messiah. Second, that not only in these but at many other places also in this Gospel the Holy Messenger's actual name "Muhammad" has been mentioned, whereas this is not the way the Prophets make prophecies: they do not mention the actual name of the one coming in the future. Third, that in these the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has been called the Messiah

The answer to the first objection is that not only in the Gospel of Barnabas but in the Gospel according to Luke also it is mentioned that the Prophet Jesus had forbidden his disciples to call him the Christ (the Messiah). The words in Luke are: "He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God. And he strictly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing." (9: 20-21) Probably the reason was that about the Messiah whom the Israelites were awaiting, they thought he would subdue the enemies of truth by the sword. Therefore, the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) said that he was not that Messiah but he would come after him.

The answer to the second objection is that no doubt in the extant Italian translation of Barnabas the Holy Prophet's name has been written as "Mohamed", but no one knows through how many different languages has this book reached the Italian. Obviously, the original Gospel of Barnabas must be in Syriac, because that was the language of Jesus and his companions. If the original book were extant, it could be seen what name of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was written in it. Now what one can assume is that originally the Prophet Jesus must have used the word Munhamanna as we have explained above by citing Ibn Ishaq's reference to St. John's Gospel. Then different translators may have translated it in their own languages. Later, probably some translator seeing that the name given in the prophecy was exactly synonymous with the word "Mohamed" may have written this very sacred name of the Holy Prophet. Therefore, the mere appearance of this name only is not enough to give rise to the doubt that the entire Gospel of Barnabas has been forged by a Muslim.

The answer to the third objection is that the word "Messiah" is an Israelite technical term, which has bets used in the Qur'an particularly for the Prophet Jesus for the reason that the Jews had denied his being the Messiah; otherwise it- is neither a Qur'anic term nor has it been used anywhere in the Qur'an in the meaning of the Israelite term, Therefore, if the Prophet Jesus used the word Messiah for the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and the Qur'an has not used this word for him, it is not right to conclude that the Gospel of Barnabas ascribes something to him which the Qur'an denies. In fact, it was customary with the Israelites that when somebody or something was set aside for a sacred cause, the person or thing was anointed with the holy oil on the head and consecrated. This anointing with the oil was called mesh in Hebrew, and the one thus anointed messiah " Utensils were likewise anointed and set aside for use in the house of worship. The priests also were anointed when they were appointed to priesthood. The kings and the prophets too were anointed when they were designated to kingship or prophethood by God. Thus, according to the Bible, there have been many messiahs in the history of the Israelites. The Prophet Aaron was a messiah as a priest, Moses as a priest and a prophet, Saul as a king, David as a king and a prophet, Melchizedek as a king and a priest, and AI-Yas'a (Elisha) was a messiah as a prophet. Later, it was no longer regarded as necessary to appoint a person by their beliefs and morals and civilization on any philosophy and doctrine they please, As against the ways of such people, it is being said that the Messenger of Allah has not been sent to make a compromise with than, but' with the object that he .should cause the Guidance and Religion of Truth which he has brought from Allah to prevail over all religion, i.e. every aspect of the way of life. This mission he has to accomplish in any case whether the disbelievers and polytheists like it or not, and whoever they support it or resist it. This declaration has been made in the Qur'an at two other places about, in Surah At Taubah: 33 and Surah Al-Fath: 28. Here it has been re-iterated for the third time. (For further explanation, see E.N. 32 of At-Taubah and E.N. 51 of Al-Fath).

14A bargain is something in which a person employs his wealth, time, labor and talent in order to earn a profit. In the same sense the Faith and Jihad in the cause of Allah have ban called a bargain, as if to say: If you exert all your powers and expend all your resources in the way of Allah, you will get the profits that are being mentioned in the following verses. This same theme has been expressed in At-Taubah: in in

another way. (See E.N. 106 of At-Taubah).

15When the believers are asked to believe, it automatically gives the meaning that they should become sincere Muslims: they should not rest content with oral profession of the Faith but should be ready and willing to make every sacrifice in the cause of their Faith.

16That is, this bargain is far superior for them to every worldly bargain.

17The actual profits of the bargain that they will attain in the eternal lift of the Hereafter are:

(1) Immunity from the punishment of Allah;

(2) forgiveness of sins; and

(3) entry into the Paradise the blessings of which are eternal and everlasting.

18Although victory and success in the world is a great blessing of Allah, yet for the believer the thing of real importance is not this but the success of the Hereafter. That is why the gain of the worldly life has been mentioned as second and the result accruing in the Hereafter first.

19For the companions of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) the word `Disciples" generally has been used in the Bible, but later the term "apostle" became prevalent for them among the Christians, and in the sense that they were God's apostles, but in the sense that the Prophet Jesus used to send them to different parts of Palestine as his preachers. Among the Jews this word was already in use for those who were sent to collect subscriptions for the Temple. However, the Qur'anic term "hawari" is better than both the Christian terms. The essence of this word is hur, which means whiteness. The washer man is called hawari because he whitens clothes by washing them. A pure and un-adulterated thing is also called hawari . The flour from which bran has been sifted is known as huwwara. In this very meaning this word is used for a sincere friend and an unselfish supporter. Ibn Sayyidah says: "Anyone who exaggerates in helping another is his hawari." (Lisan al-'Arab).

20This is the last place in the Holy Qur'an where those who exert themselves in calling the people to Allah's Religion and to cause it to become dominant over disbelief, have been called helpers of Allah. Before this, this very theme has been expressed in Al-'Imran: 52, Al-Hajj: 40, Muhammad: 7, Al-Hadid25 and Al-Hashr: 8 above, and we have explained these verses in E.N. 50 of Al Imran, E.N. 84 of Al-Hajj, E. N. 12 of Muhammad, E.N. 47 of Al-Hadid.

Moreover, in E. N . 9 of Surah Muhammad also light has been thrown on an aspect of this question. In spite of this some people seem to have the confusion that when Allah Almighty is All-Powerful, Self-

Sufficient, and Independent of the help of all His creatures, how then can a man be a helper of Allah? To remove this confusion we shall further explain this point here.

In fact, these people have not been called helpers of Allah for the reason that Allah, Lord of the worlds, (God forbid) stood in need of any help from some of His creatures, but because in the sphere of life in which Allah Himself has granted man freedom of belief and disbelief, obedience and disobedience, He does not will to make the people His believers and obedient servants by means of His power and might. Instead, He adopts the method of admonition and instruction to show them the right way through His Prophets and Books. The one who accepts this admonition and instruction willingly is a Mu'min, the one who submits practically to His Commands, is a Muslim and devout God-worshiper, the one who adopts an attitude of God-consciousness is a Muttaqi, the one who vies with others for good works is a Muhsin, and over and above this, the one who starts working for the reformation of the people by means of the same method of admonition and instruction and for establishing the system of Allah's obedience instead of disbelief and wickedness, is declared by Allah as His own helper, as has been mentioned in clear words at several places in the verses cited above. If the object were to designate such people as helpers of Allah's Religion and not of Allah, the words would have been ansar-u din Allah and not ansar-Allah, yansuruna din-Allah and not yansurun-Allah, intansuruna din-Allah and not in-iansurun-Allah. When in order to convey and express a theme; Allah has adopted one and the same style at several places, successively, it proves conclusively that the actual object is to designate these people as helpers of Allah. But this "helpfulness", God forbid, is not in the sense that these people fulfill some need of Allah for which He requires their help, but it is in the sense that these people participate in the cause which Allah wills to accomplish through His Prophets and His Books instead of His great power and might.

21Those who disbelieved in Jesus Christ are the Jews, and those who believed in him are the Christians as well as the Muslims, and Allah granted both these domination over the disbelievers of Christ. This is meant to requires the Muslims that just as the believers of Christ have dominated over his disbelievers in the past, so will the believers of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) prevail over his disbelievers.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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62. Surah Al Jumuah (The Friday Congregation)

Name

It is derived from the sentence *idha nudiya-lis-salat-imin-yaum-il- Jumu'ati* of verse 9. Although in this Surah injunctions about the Friday congregational Prayer also have been given, yet "*Jumu'ah*" is not the title of its subject-matter as a whole, but this name too, like the names of other Surahs, is only a symbolic title.

Period of Revelation

The period of the revelation of the first section (vv. 1-8) is A. H. 7, and probably it was sent down, on the occasion of the conquest of Khaiber or soon after it. Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i and Ibn Jarir have related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah that he and other Companions were sitting in the Holy Prophet's assembly when these verses were revealed. About Abu Hurairah it is confirmed historically that he entered Islam after the truce of Hudaibiyah and before the conquest of Khaiber, and Khaiber was conquered, according to Ibn Hisham, in Muharram, and, according to Ibn Sa`d, in Jamadi al-Awwal, A.H. 7. Thus presumably Allah might have sent down these verses, addressing the Jews, when their last stronghold had fallen to the Muslims, or these might have been revealed when, seeing the fate of Khaiber, all the Jewish settlements of northern Hijaz had surrendered to the Islamic government.

The second section (vv. 9-11) was sent down shortly after the emigration, for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had established the Friday congregational Prayer on the 5th day after his arrival at Madinah. The incident that has been referred to in the last verse of this section must have occurred at a time when the people had not yet received full training in the etiquette of religious congregations.

Theme and Subject Matter

As we have explained above, the two sections of this Surah were sent down in two different periods. That is why their themes as well as their audiences are different. Although there is a kind of harmony between them on account of which they have been put together in one Surah, yet we should understand their themes separately before we consider the question of their harmony.

The first section was sent down at a time when all Jewish efforts to obstruct the message of Islam during the past six years had failed. First. in Madinah as many as three of their powerful tribes had done whatever they could to frustrate the mission of the Holy Prophet, with the result that one of the tribes was completely exterminated and the other two were exiled. Then by intrigue and conspiracy they brought many of the Arab tribes together to advance on Madinah, but in the Battle of the Trench they were all repulsed. After this, Khaiber had become their stronghold, where a large number of the Jews expelled from Madinah also had taken refuge. At the time these verses were revealed, that too was taken without any extraordinary effort, and the Jews at their own request agreed to live there as tenants of the Muslims. After this final defeat the Jewish power in Arabia came to an end. Then, Wad-il-Qura, Fadak, Taima', Tabuk, all surrendered one after the other, so much so that all Arabian Jews became subdued to the same Islam which they were not prepared to tolerate before. This was the occasion when Allah Almighty once again addressed them in this Surah, and probably this was the last and final address that was directed to them in the Qur'an. In this they have been reminded of three things:

1. "You refused to believe in this Messenger only because he was born among a people whom you contemptuously call the "gentiles." You were under the false delusion that the Messenger must necessarily belong to your own community. You seemed to have been convinced that anyone who claimed to be a prophet from outside your community, must be an impostor, for this office had been reserved for your race, and a messenger could never be raised among the "gentiles." But among the same gentiles Allah has raised a Messenger who is reciting His Book in front of your very eyes, is purifying souls, and showing the Right Way to the people whose misdeeds are well known to you. This is Allah's bounty, which He may bestow on anyone He may please. You have no monopoly over it so that He may bestow it over whomever you may please and may withhold it from whomever you may desire it to be withheld".

2. "You had been made bearers of the Torah, but you did not understand your responsibility for it nor discharged it as you should have. You are like the donkey which is loaded with books, and which does not know what burden it is bearing. Rather you are worse than the donkey, for the donkey is devoid of sense, but you are intelligent. You not only shirk your responsibility of being bearers of Allah's revelations deliberately, Yet, you are under the delusion that you are Allah's favorites and the blessing of apostleship has been reserved for you alone. More than that, you seem to entertain the notion that whether you fulfill the demands of Allah's message or not, Allah In any case is bound not to make any other than you the bearer of His message."

3. "If you really were Allah's favorites and you were sure of having a p!ace of honor and high rank reserved with Him, you would not have feared death so much as to prefer a life of disgrace to death. It is only because of this fear of death that you have suffered humiliation after humiliation during the past few years. Your this condition is by itself a proof that you are fully conscious of your misdeeds, and your conscience is aware that if you die with these misdeeds, you will meet with a greater disgrace before Allah in the Hereafter than in this world."

This is the subject-matter of the first section. The second section that was sent down many years later, was appended to this Surah because in it Allah has bestowed Friday on the Muslims as against the Sabbath of the

Jews, and Allah wanted to warn the Muslims not to treat their Friday as the Jews had treated their Sabbath. This section was sent down on an occasion when a trade caravan arrived in Madinah right at the time of the Friday congregational service and hearing its din and drum the audience, except for 12 men, left the Prophet's Mosque and rushed out to the caravan, although the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) at that time was delivering the Sermon. Thereupon it was enjoined that after the call is sounded for the Friday Prayer all trade and business and other occupations become forbidden. The believers should then suspend every kind of transaction and hasten to the remembrance of Allah. However, when the Prayer is over, they have the right to disperse in the land to resume their normal occupations. This section could be made an independent Surah in view of the commandments that it contains about the congregational service on Friday, and could also be included in some other Surah, but, instead, it has been included here particularly in the verses in which the Jews have been warned of the causes of their evil end. Its wisdom in our opinion is the same as we have explained above.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْمَلِكِ ٱلْقُدُّوسِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ﴿١﴾

[1] Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah-the Sovereign, the Holy, the All-Mighty and the All-Wise![1]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى بَعَثَ فِى ٱلْأُمِّيِّۦنَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢﴾

وَءَاخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِمْ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣﴾

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ

﴿٤﴾

[2-4] He it is Who has raised a Messenger among the gentiles[2] from among themselves, who recites to them His Revelations, purifies them and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom,[3] whereas before this they were indeed lost in manifest error.[4] And (the advent or the Messenger) is also for those others who have not yet joined them.[5] Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.[6] This is Allah's bounty; He bestows it on whomever He wills, and Allah is the Owner of supreme bounty.

مَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ ٱلْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًۢا ۚ بِئْسَ مَثَلُ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٥﴾

[5] The example of those who were entrusted with the burden of the Torah, and yet they failed to bear its burden,[7] is of a donkey[8] laden with books. Even worse is the example of those who have treated Allah's Revelations as false.[9] Allah does not guide such wrongdoers.

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوٓا۟ إِن زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ لِلَّهِ مِن دُونِ ٱلنَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا۟ ٱلْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٦﴾

وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُۥٓ أَبَدًۢا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧﴾

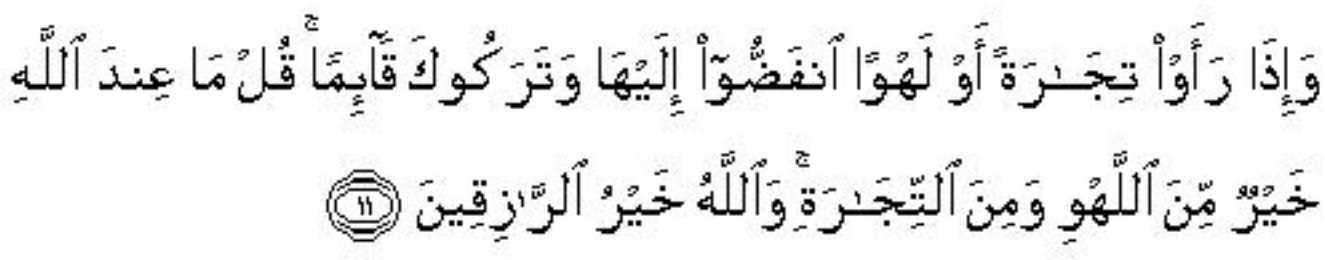
قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْمَوْتَ ٱلَّذِى تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ مُلَٰقِيكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَٰلِمِ
ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

[6-8] Say to them, "O you who have become Jews.[10] If you claim that you alone are Allah's favorites,[11] apart from all other people, then you should Song for death if you be truthful.[12] But they will never wish for it because of the misdeeds they have committed,[13] and Allah knows full well these wrongdoers. Say to them, "The death from which you flee will certainly overtake you. Then you will be presented before Him, Who is the Knower of the hidden and the open, and He will tell you what you had been doing."

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا نُودِىَ لِلصَّلَوٰةِ مِن يَوْمِ ٱلْجُمُعَةِ فَٱسْعَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ
ٱللَّهِ وَذَرُوا۟ ٱلْبَيْعَ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةُ فَٱنتَشِرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟
ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

[9-10] O you who have believed, when the call is made to the Prayer on Friday,[14] hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off your trading.[15] This is better for you only if you knew. Then, when the Prayer is over, disperse in the land and seek Allah's bounty,[16] and remember Allah much.[17] Perhaps you may achieve success.[18]



[11] And when they saw some merchandise and sport they broke off to it and left you standing.[19] Say to them, "That which is with Allah is far better than sport and business,[20] and Allah is the best of all providers."[21]

1For explanation, sec E.N.'s 1, 2 of Surah AI-Hadid, and E.N.'s 36, 37, 41 of Surah AI-Hashr above. This introduction bears a deep relevance to the theme that follows. In spite of the fact that the Jews of Arabia were witnessing clear signs of Prophethood in the person of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his high character and works and in spite of the clear good news given by the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) in the Torah, which only applied to him, they were denying him only because they did not want to acknowledge the prophet hood of a person who did not belong to their own community and race. They openly proclaimed that they would believe only in that which had come to them, and would not accept any teaching, which came through a non-Israelite prophet, even if it was from God. For this attitude in the following verses they have been reproved. Hence the reason for beginning the discourse with the introductory sentence. First, it says that everything in the universe is glorifying Allah; that is, the entire universe testifies that Allah is free from all those faults and weaknesses because of which the Jews have formed the concept of their racial superiority. He is not related to anyone: He has nothing to do with favoritism: He treats all His creatures with equal justice, mercy and care. No particular race and nation is His favorite so that He may be bound to bless it whatever it may do; and He is not prejudiced against any race or nation so that He may deprive it of His bounties even if it possesses all the good qualities. Then, it says that He is the Sovereign; that is, no worldly power can restrict His authority and powers, as if to say: "You, O Jews, are His servants and subjects. 'It is not for you to decide whom He should appoint His Messenger, and whom He should not, for your guidance. " Then it says that He is Holy; that is, HE is far exalted and glorified that His judgments may be mistaken. Human judgments may have mistakes but His decrees are perfect. In the end, two more attributes of Allah have been mentioned: that He is All-Mighty, i.e. none can fight Him and win and that He is All-Wist, i.e. whatever He does, it is always the very demand of wisdom, and His plans and designs are so well-planned that none in the world can hinder and frustrate them.

2Here the word ummi (gentile) has been used as a Jewish term and there is a subtlety in it. The verse means: "The All-Mighty and All-Wise Allah has raised a Messenger among the Arabs whom the Jews contemptuously consider the gentiles and much below themselves, The Messenger has not risen of his own wish and will, but has been raised by Him Who is the Sovereign of the universe, Who is All-Mighty and All-Wise, Whose power can be resisted and opposed only to one's own loss and peril.

One should know that the word ummi has occurred in the Qur'an at several places but in different meanings at different places. At one place it has been used for the people who do not possess any revealed scripture, which they may he following, as AI-'Imran: 20, where it 'has been said: "Ask those who possess the Book and those who do not possess (umnris); 'Have you accepted Islam`"" Here, the ummis imply the Arab polytheists, and they have been regarded as a separate class from the followers of the Book, i.e. the Jews and the Christians. At another place, it has been used for the illiterate people among the Jews and Christians, who are ignorant of the Book of Allah, as in Al-Baqarah: 78: "Among the Jews there are some illiterate people (ummis) who have no knowledge of the Book but are guided by mere conjecture and guess-work. " At still another place, this word has been used purely as a Jewish term, which implies all the non-Jewish people, as in Al-'Imran: 75: (The actual cause of this dishonesty of theirs is that they say:) We are not to be called to account for out behavior towards the non-Jews (ummis) This third meaning of ummi is implied in the verse tinder discussion. It is a synonym of the Hebrew word goyim, which has been translated gentiles in the English Bible and implies all the non-Jewish or the non-Israelite people of the world.

But the real significance of this Jewish term cannot be understood only by this explanation of it. The Hebrew word goyim originally was used only in the meaning of a nation, but gradually the Jews reserved it first for the nation other then themselves, then they gave it the special meaning that all the nations other than the Jews were un-civilized, irreligious, unclean and contemptible; so much so that in its connotations of hatred and contempt this word even surpassed the Greek term 'barbarian' which they used for all the non-Greeks. In rabbinical literature, goyim are such contemptible people, who cannot be considered human, who cannot be made companions in a journey, who cannot be saved even if one of them is drowning. The Jews believed that the Messiah of the future would destroy all the goyim and burn them to annihilation. (For further explanation, see E.N. 64 of Al-'Imran).

3These characteristics of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be piece) have been mentioned at four places in the Qur'an and everywhere with a different object. These have been mentioned in AI-Baqarah: t29 to tell the Arabs that the mission of the Prophet, which they were regarding as a calamity and affliction for themselves, was indeed a great blessing for which the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them) had been praying for their children. In Al-Baqarah: 151 these have been mentioned to exhort the Muslims to recognize the true worth of the Holy Prophet and to derive full benefit from the blessing which they had been granted in the form of his Apostleship. These have been reiterated in AI 'Imran: 164 to make the hypocrites and the people of weak faith realize what great favor Allah had done them by raising His Messenger among them, and how foolish they were in not appreciating this. Now, here in this Surah these have been repeated for the fourth time with the object to tell the Jews: 'The mission that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessing) is performing in front of you, is evidently the mission of a Messenger. He is reciting the Revelations of Allah, the language, themes and style of which testify that these arc indeed Divine Revelations. He is purifying and reforming the lives of the people, cleansing their morals and habits And dealings of every evil element, and adorning them with the finest moral qualities. This is the same task which all the Prophets before him have been performing. Then he

does not rest content only with the recitation of the Revelations, but he is making the people understand the real aim of the Divine Book by word and deed and by the practical model of his life and imparting to them the wisdom and knowledge which none but the Prophets have imparted so far. This very character and way of life and practical model is the conspicuous characteristic of the Prophets by which they are recognized. Then how stubborn you arc that you refuse to recognize and believe in the Messenger whose truth is manifestly proved by his wonderful works only because Allah has not raised him among you but among the people whom you call the ummis (gentiles).

4This is another proof of the Holy Prophet's Prophethood, which has been presented to open eyes of the Jews. These people had been living in Arabia for centuries and no aspect of the religious, moral, social and cultural life of the Arabs was hidden from them. Referring to the state of their previous life it is being said: "You are an eye-witness of the revolution that has taken place in the lift of this nation within a few years under the guidance and leadership of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). You arc fully aware of the condition in which these people were involved before embracing Islam: you arc also aware of their transformation afterwards, and you arc also witnessing the condition of those people of this very nation, who have not yet embraced Islam, Is the clear and manifest difference which even a blind man can perceive not enough to convince you that this revolution can be brought about by none but a Prophet?”

5That is, the Prophethood of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is not restricted only to the Arabs but is meant for other nations and races as well, who have not yet joined the believers, but are going to be born till the Last Day. The word minhum (of them) in the original can have two meanings:

(1) "That those other people will be of the ummis i.e. the non-Isaelite nations of the world;" and

(2) "that they will be believers in Muhammad (upon whom be Allah s peace and blessings), though they have not yet joined the believers, but will join them later on. " Thus, this verse is one of those verses which explicitly state that the Message of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) is meant for all mankind for ever. The other places where this theme has o occurred in the Qur'an are: AI-'Imran: 19, Al-A'raf: 158, Al-Anbiya': 107, AI-Furqan: 1, Saba 28. (For further explanation, see EN 47 of Surah Saba).

6That is, it is a manifestation of Allah's own power and wisdom that among an un-civilized, , un-lettered people He has raised a great Prophet, whose teachings arc so revolutionary and contain such eternal and universal principles as can provide a sound basis for the whole of mankind to be a single unified community, which can obtain guidance from those principles for ever. An impostor, however hard he may have tried, could not have attained this position and rank. Not to speak of a backward people like the Arabs; even the most intelligent and talented man of the most advanced nation of the world cannot have the power that he may revolutionist a nation so completely, and then give such comprehensive principles to the world that all mankind may follow it as one community and be able to run a universal and all-

pervasive system of one way of life and one civilization for ever. This is a miracle which has taken place only by Allah's power, and only Allah on the basis of His wisdom has chosen the person, the country and the nation for it.

7This sentence has two meanings, a general meaning and a special meaning. The general meaning is that the people who were entrusted with the knowledge and practice of the Torah and with the responsibility of guiding the world according to it, neither understood this responsibility nor discharged it as they should have. The special meaning is Being the bearers of the Torah these people should have been fore-most to join hands with the Messenger, good news about whose advent had been already given in the Torah, but, instead, they have been in the forefront to oppose him and have thus failed to fulfill the demand of the teaching of the Torah.

8That is, just as a donkey loaded with books does not know what it is loaded with, so are these people loaded with the Torah and they do not know what this Book was sent for and what are its demands.

9That is, they are even worst than a donkey, who is without sense and therefore excusable. But these people have intelligence they read and teach the Torah and are fully aware of its meaning Yet they are turning away from its guidance and refusing willfully to acknowledge and believe in the Prophet who even according to the Torah teaches the truth. They are guilty not because of ignorance but because of denying Allah's Revelation deliberately.

10This point is noteworthy. It has not been said: "O Jews". but "O you who have became Jews, or who have adopted Judaism", the reason being that the way of life brought by the Prophet Moses (peace be on him) and the Prophets after and before him, was Islam itself. None of those Prophets was a Jew, nor bad Judaism been born in their time, but Judaism as such came into being much later. It is ascribed to the tribe which descended from Judah, the fourth son of the Prophet Jacob (peace be upon him). When after the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) his kingdom broke into two parts, this tribe became ruler over the state which came to be known as Judea. The other tribes of the Israelites established their separate state which became famous as Samaria. Then Assyria not only destroyed Samaria but also wiped out those Israelite tribes which had founded that state. After that only the decedents of Judah besides those of Benjamin remained. Who because of the predominance of the descendants of Judah, began to be called the "Jews". Judaism is the name of the framework of the doctrines, customs, and religious rules and regulations which the priests, rabbis and learned men of this race prepared according to their own ideas, theories and trends for many centuries. This framework started being shaped in the 4th century B. C. and continued to develop till the 5th century A.D. It contains a very small element of the Divine guidance brought by the Messengers of Allah, and even that element has been corrupted That is why at many places in the Qur'an they have been addressed as alladhina hadu "O you who have become Jews". All of these were not the Israelites but there were among them also converts who had embraced Judaism. .Whenever in the Qur'an the children of Israel have been addressed, the words are: "O children

of Israel", and where the followers of Judaism have been addressed, the words are; alladhina hadu "O you who have become Jews" .

11At several places in the Qur'an their claim has been described in detail, as in Al Baqarah: 111: "They say: none shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew', in AI-Baqarah: 80: "The fire of Hell is not going to touch us, and even if it does at all, it will be only for a few days', and in Al-Ma'idah: 18: "We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones." Sane such claims are also found in the books of the Jews themselves The world at least knows that they regard themselves as the chosen people of God, and cherish the false notion that Cod has a special relationship with them, which is not shared by any other human group or class.

12This has been stated for the second time in the Qur'an, addressing the Jews First, in Al-Baqarah: 94-96, it was said: "Say to them: If the abode of the Hereafter with Allah is exclusively reserved for you and Trot for the rest of mankind, then you should long for death, if you are sincere in your claim. Believe it that they will never wish for it, for (they arc fully aware of) what they have sent before them for the Hereafter. And Allah knows well the mentality of the transgressors. You will find that of all mankind, they are the greediest for life; any they are even greedier than the idolaters. Each one of them longs to have a life of a thousand years, but a long life can by no means remove them away from the Doom, for Allah is watching whatever they are doing." Now the same thing has been repeated here. But this is not a mere repetition. In the verses of Al-Baqarah, it was said when no war had yet take place between the Muslims and the Jews. In this Surah it was reiterated at the time when after several battles their power in Arabia had been finally and absolutely, crushed. These battles and their results proved by experience and observation that what had been said in AI-Baqarah was correct. In Madinah and Khaiber the Jewish strength was much superior to that of the Muslims both in numbers and in resources. Then they had the pagans of Arabia and the hypocrites of Madinah also as their allies who were bent upon wiping out the Muslims. But in spite of this great disparity in numbers the Muslims overwhelmed the Jews mainly because they were least afraid of dying for the cause of Allah; they were rather fond of it, and would enter the battlefield fully prepared to embrace death. For they believed that they were fighting in the way of God and had complete faith that the one who fell martyr in His way would be blessed with Paradise. Contrary to this, the Jews were not prepared to fight and lay down their life for any cause, neither the cause of God, nor the cause of their nation nor for their own self, properties and honor. They only loved to live, in whatever way or fashion it be. This had made them cowardly.

13In other words, their Right from death is not without a reason. Whatever they may say, their consciences arc fully aware of how they are behaving towards Allah and His Religion and what consequences can he expected of the misdeeds they arc committing in the world. That is why-they were afraid to appear at the Court of God."

14Three things in this sentence are particularly noteworthy:

(1) That it contains mention of the call to the Prayer;

(2) that the mention is of the call to such a Prayer as has to be performed particularly only on Fridays; and

(3) that these things have not been mentioned so as to suggest that the call is to be made for the Prayer and a particular Prayer is to be performed on Friday, but the style and context clearly show that the call to the Prayer and the particular Prayer were both already being performed and practiced on Friday.

The people, however were being negligent in that on hearing the call to the Prayer they would not hasten to it but would remain occupied in their worldly activities and trade and business transactions. Therefore, Allah sent down this verse to make the people realize and appreciate the importance of the call and the Prayer and to exhort them to hasten to perform it as a duty. If these three things are considered deeply, they prove this truth absolutely that Allah conjoined on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) certain Commands which were not revealed in the Qur'an, and these Commands too wen as obligatory as those revealed in the (Qur'an itself. The call to the Prayer is the same adhan which is being called the world over five times daily in every mosque. But neither its words have been stated anywhere in the Qur'an nor the method of calling the people to the Prayer has been taught. Its method was prescribed by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). The Qur'an has only confirmed it twice, here and in AI-Ma'idah: 58. Like wise, this particular Prayer of Friday, which the Muslims of the whole world are performing today has neither been enjoined in the Qur'an nor its time and method of performance described anywhere. This me hod too was prescribed by' the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), and this verse of the Qur'an was sent down only to stress its importance and obligatory nature. In spite of this express argument anyone who claims that the Shari ah commandments are only those which have been stated in the Qur'an, is not in fact a denier of the Sunnah but of the Qur'an itself.

Before proceeding further, Iet us understand a few other things also about Jumu-uh (the Friday congregational Prayer):

(1) Jumu'ah is an Islamic term. In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance the Arabs called it the 'Arabah Day. In Islam when it was declared as a congregational day of the Muslims, it was re-named Jumu ah. Although according to the historians, Ka`b bin Luayy, or Qusayy bin Kilab, also had used this name for this day, for he used to hold an assembly of Quraish on this day (Fath-al-Bati), yet by this practice the ancient name did not change, and the common Arabs continued to call it the 'Arabah Day. The real change took place when Islam gave it this new name.

(2) Before Islam, setting aside of a day in the week for worship and regarding it as an emblem of the community was prevalent among the followers of the earlier scriptures. Among the Jews the Sabbath (Saturday) had been fixed for this purpose, because on this day Allah had delivered the children of Israel from the bondage of the Pharaoh. In order to distinguish themselves from the Jews the Christians took

Sunday as their distinctive emblem. Although it had neither been enjoined by the Prophet Jesus nor mentioned anywhere in the Gospel, yet the Christians believe that after his death on the Cross the Prophet Jesus had risen from the grave on this day and ascended to heaven. On this very basis the later Christians ordained it as the day of worship, and then in 321 A.D. the Roman Empire instituted it as a holiday by decree. In order to distinguish its community from both these communities, Islam adopted Friday as the day of collective worship as against Saturday and Sunday.

(3) It is known from the tradition reported by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud and Hadrat Abu Mas'ud Ansari that the Friday congregational Prayer had been enjoined on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be-peace some time) before the Hijrah in Makkah itself. But at that time he could not act on it, for in Makkah it was not possible to perform any worship collectively. Therefore, he sent a written instruction to the people who had emigrated to Madinah before him that they should establish the Friday congregational Prayer there. Thus, Hadrat Mus`ab bin `Umair, the leader of the earliest emigrants, offered the first Friday Prayer at Madinah with 12 followers. (Tabarani, Daraqutni). Hadrat Ka`b bin Malik and Ibn Sirin have reported that even before this the Muslims of Madinah had decided mutually, on their own initiative, that they would hold a collective service on one day in the week. For this purpose they had selected Friday as against the Sabbath of the Jews and Sunday of the Christians, and the first Friday Prayer was led by Hadrat Asad bin Zurarah at the place of Bani Bayadah and 40 Muslims participated in it. (Musnad Ahmad Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, `Abd bin Humaid, 'Abdur Razzaq, Baihaqi). This shows that the Islamic taste and trend at that time was itself demanding that there should be a day on which maximum number of Muslims should gather together and worship collectively. And this also was a demand of the Islam itself that it should be a day other than Saturday and Sunday so that the symbol of the Muslim community should be distinctive from the emblems of the Jewish and the Christian communities. This was a wonderful manifestation of the Islamic trends and tastes of the Holy Prophet's Companions that many a time it so happened that even before a thing was enjoined their taste proclaimed that the spirit of Islam demanded its introduction.

(4) The establishment of the Friday congregational Prayer was one of the earliest things that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did after his emigration to Madinah. After leaving Makkah he reached Quba' on Monday and stayed there for four days. On the fifth day, which was a Friday, he preceded to Madinah. On the way at the place of Bani Salim bin `Auf tim came for the Friday Prayer and he performed the first Friday congregational Prayer at this very place. (Ibn Hisham).

(5) The time appointed by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) for this Prayer was after the declining of the sun, the same time which is for the Zuhr Prayer. The written instruction that he had sent to Hadrat Mus'ab bin `Umair before the hijrah was: "Seek nearness to Allah by means of two rakahs of the Prayer when the sun declines after midday on Friday. " (Daraqutni). This same instruction he gave orally after hijrah as well as practically led the Friday Prayer at the same time. Traditions on this Subject have been related on the authority of Hadrat Anas, Hadrat Salamah bin Akwa', Hadrat Zubair bin al-`Awwam, Hadrat Sahl bin Sa'd, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, Hadrat `Ammar bin Yasr and Hadrat Bilal in

the collection of Hadith, saying that the Holy Prophet used to perform the Friday Prayer after the declining of the sun: (Musnad Ahmad Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi).

(6) This also is confirmed by his practice that on this day the Holy Prophet led the Friday congregational Prayer instead of the Zuhr Prayer, and this Prayer consisted of two rak ahs and he gave the Sermon before it. This was the only difference between the Friday Prayer and the Zuhr Prayer on other days. Hadrat `Umar says: "According to the command enjoined by the tongue of your Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) the traveler's Prayer consists of two rak ahs, the Fajr Prayer consists of two rakahs, and the Friday Prayer consists of two rak ahs. This is the complete, not the shortened, Prayer, and the Friday Prayer has been shortened only because of the Sermon."

(7) The call to the Prayer that has been mentioned here, implies the call that is made just before the Sermon. and not the call that is made much before the Sermon to announce that the prayer time has begun. There is a tradition in the Hadith from Hadrat Sa'ib bin Yazid to the effect that in the time of the Holy Prophet there used to be only one call that was made after the Imam (leader in Prayer) had taken his seat on the pulpit. The same practice also continued in the time of Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Umar. When population increased in the time of Hadrat 'Uthman, he ordered another call to be made in the bazaar of Madinah at his house, Az-Zaura'. (Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Tabarani).

15In this Command "remembrance" implies the Friday Sermon, for the first thing that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) used to do after the call was to deliver the Sermon, and the Prayer he led always after delivering the sermon Hadrat Abu Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "The angels on Friday go on writing down the names of the people as they arrive. Then, when the Imam comes out to deliver the Sermon, they stop writing the names and turn their attention to the remembrance (i.e. the Sermon)," (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i). This Hadith also shows that the remembrance implies the Sermon. The exhortation of the Qur'an itself points to the same thing. First, it says: "Hasten to the remembrance of Allah"; then a little below it says: "Then, when the Prayer is over, disperse in the land. " This shows that on Friday the order of the service is that first there is the remembrance of Allah and then the Prayer. The commentators are also agreed that remembrance either implies the Sermon, or the Sermon and the Prayer both.

Using the word "dhikr-Allah " for the Sermon by itself gives the meaning chat it should contain themes relevant to the remembrance of Allah; for instance, praising and glorifying .Allah, imploring Him to bless His Messenger, exhorting and instructing the audience to obey His Commands and follow His Shari Ah, commending His pious and righteous servants, etc. On this very basis, Zamakhshari writes in al-kashshaf 'Praising the wicked and tyrannical rules in the Friday Sermon, or mentioning their names and praying for them, has nothing to do with the remembrance of Allah; this would be the remembrance of Satan.

Hasten to the remembrance of Allah" does not mean that one should come to the mosque running, but it means that one should make haste for it. The commentators are also agreed on this very meaning.

"Hastening" according to them means that on hearing the call one should immediately start making. preparations to attend the mosque. The Hadith even forbids coming to the mosque for the Prayer muting. Hadrat Abu Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "When the Prayer has begun, one should conic walking to it with calm and dignity, and not running. Then, one should join in whatever remains of the Prayer, and should make up whatever one has missed independently later. " (Sihah; Sittah Hadrat Abu Qatadah Ansari says: "Once we were offering the Prayer under the leadership of the Holy Prophet when suddenly we heard some people coming to join the Prayer running. When the Prayer was concluded, the Holy Prophet asked: What was the noise about? They replied; We came running for the Prayer. The Holy Prophet said; Don't do that: whenever you come for the Prayer, come with calm and dignity. Join behind the Imam in whatever remains of the Prayer, and make up whatever you have missed independently." (Bukhari, Muslim) 'Leave off your trading" also includes every other worldly activity and business which prevent one from getting ready for the Prayer with full attention and care. "Buying and selling" has been particularly forbidden, for commerce flourished on Fridays. People from the surrounding areas gathered together at a central place, the merchants also arrived with their merchandise, and the people became occupied in buying the necessities of daily use The prohibition however is not restricted only to buying and selling, but it applies to all other occupations as well. And since Allah has forbidden these, jurists of Islam are agreed that after the call has been sounded for the Friday Prayer all forms of trade, business and worldly occupation become forbidden.

This Command absolutely confirms the obligatory nature of the Friday Prayer. In the first place, the exhortation to hasten for it after one has heard the call, is by itself a proof of its being obligatory. Then, the prohibition of a lawful thing like trade and business at the time of the Prayer also shows that it is obligatory in nature Moreover, the elimination of the obligatory Zuhr Prayer on Friday and its being replaced by the Friday Prayer, is a clear proof that it is obligatory in nature. For an obligatory duty becomes eliminated only when the duty replacing it is more important. This very thing has been supported in many Hadiths, in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) exhorted the Muslims in most emphatic words to attend the Friday Prayer and has declared it in clear words to be obligatory. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud has reported that the Holy Prophet said: 'I feel I should ask somebody to stand in my place to Iced the Prayer, and I myself should go and set fire to the houses of the people who do not come for the Prayer. " (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari). Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar say: "We heard the Holy Prophet say this ' in the Friday Sermon, The people should refrain from giving up the Friday Prayer; otherwise Allah will seal up hearts and they will become totally heedless." (Musnad Ahmad, Muslim, Nasa'i). From the traditions reported by Hadrat Abu al-Ja'd Damri, Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Abi Aufa from the Holy Prophet one comes to know that Allah seals ½p the heart of the person who abandons three Friday Prayers, one after the other, without a genuine reason and lawful excuse. Rather in one tradition the words arc to the effect: "Allah turns the heart of such a one into the heart of a hypocrite." (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Nasa`i, Tirmidhi Ibn Majah Darimi, Hakim, Ibn Hibban, Bazzar, Tabarani in al-Kabir. Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah says that the Holy Prophet said: "From today till Resurrection the Friday Prayer is obligatory on you. Allah will neither bless nor set right the condition of the one who abandons it

disregarding it or considering it an ordinary thing. Note it well: the Prayer of such a one will be no, prayer at all, his zakat will be no zakat at all, his Hajj no Hajj, his fasting no fasting, and no good done by him will be good, until he repents. Then, for the one who repents, Allah is Most Forgiving." (Ibn Majah, Bazzar). Another tradition, which is very close in meaning to this, has been cited by Tabarani in Auset from Ibn 'Umar, Furthemore there arc many traditions in which the Holy Prophet has declared the Friday Prayer as obligatory in clear words. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As has related that the Holy Prophet said: 'The Friday Prayer is obligatory on every person who hears the call to it." (Abu Da'ud Daraqutni). Jabir bin 'Abdullah and Abu Sa'id Khudri say that he said in a Sermon: "Know that Allah has enjoined the Friday Prayer as a duty on you (Baihaqi). However, He has exempted the women, children, slaves, the sick and the travellers from this duty. Hadrat Hafsah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Attendance at the Friday Prayer is obligatory on every adult male." (Nasa'i). Hadrat Tariq bin Shihab's tradition contains this saying of the Holy Prophet: "The Friday congregational Prayer is obligatory on every Muslim except the slave, women, children and the sick." (Abu Da'ud, Hakim). In the tradition of Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah, his words are to the effect: "Friday Prayer is obligatory on the person who believes in Allah and the Last Day unless it is a woman, or a traveler, or a slave, or a sick man." (Daraqutni, Baihaqi). On account of these very exhortations of the Qur'an and the Hadith. the entire Ummah is agreed that the Friday congregational Prayer is of obligatory nature.

16"This does not mean that after the Friday is over, it is obligatory to go in search of livelihood. but it only implies permission. As it was ordered to stop all worldly business as soon as the call was made for the Prayer, so it is allowed that after the Prayer is over, the people may dispose and resume or pursue whatever occupation or business they may like. It is just like the prohibition of hunting in the state of ihram, but after ihram is put off, one is told to hunt. (AI-Ma'idah: 2). That does not mean that one must hunt, but that one may hunt if one so likes. Or, for instance. in Surah An-Nisa', permission to marry more than one wife has been given, saying: "Marry two or three or four women whom you 'choose. " Here, although the verb is in the imperative mood, no one has taken it in the meaning of a command This gives the principle that the imperative form of the verb does not always imply an obligation or command it sometimes implies the permission and sometimes exercise of choice or preference. The context determines where it implies the command, where the permission and where Allah's approval of the act, and not that the act is obligatory. Immediately after this very sentence itself, it has been said: "And remember Allah much. " Here also the verb is in the imperative mood, but obviously it implies exercise of one's choice and not that it is a duty or compulsion.

Here, another thing worthy of mention is that although in the Qur'an Friday has not been declared a public holiday like the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday, yet no one can deny that Friday is a symbol of the Muslim community precisely in the same way as Saturday is a Jewish and Sunday a Christian symbol. And if declaring a day in the week a public holiday be a cultural necessity, then just as the Jews naturally select Saturday for it and the Christians Sunday, so a Muslim (if he has any Islamic feeling) will necessarily select only Friday for this purpose. The Christians did not even hesitate to impose their Sunday on some other countries where Christian population was negligible. When the Jews

established their state in Palestine, the first thing they did was to announce Saturday as the weekly holiday instead of Sunday. In prepartitioned India one conspicuous distinction between British India and the Muslim states was that in one part of the country Sunday was observed as a closed holiday and in the other Friday. However, where the Muslims lack Islamic values, they hold to Sunday even after attaining to sovereign power as we see in Pakistan. In case of excessive westernization Friday is replaced by Sunday as the weekly holiday as was done by Mustafa Kamal in Turkey.

17"Remember Allah much": "Do not forget Allah even when you are otherwise occupied; but remember Him under all circumstances and remain conscious of Him at ail times." (For explanation, see E.N. 63 of Surah Al-Ahzab)

18At several places in the Qur'an, after giving an-instruction or an admonition, or a command words to the effect: perhaps, you achieve success" or 'perhaps you may be shown mercy" have been used. The use of 'perhaps" on such occasions does not mean that Allah, God forbid, is entertaining a doubt, but it is in fact a royal style of address. It is just like a kindly master's giving out hope to his servants to continue doing their best so that they may achieve and win the desired goal and reward, It contains a subtle promise which fills the servant with hope and he carries out his duties and obligations with enthusiasm.

As the Commands pertaining to the Friday congregational prayer come to an end here, it would be useful to give a resume of the injunctions that the four schools of juristic thought have derived from the Qur'an, the Hadih, traditions of the Companions of the Holy Prophet and the general principles of Islam.

According to the Hanafi school of thought, the time for the Friday Prayer is the same as for Zuhr Prayer. The Friday Prayer can neither be held before it nor after it. Business and trade become forbidden with the first call to the Prayer and not with the second call which is made after the Imam has taken his place on the pulpit, for the words of the Qur'an in this regard are explicit and definite. Therefore, whichever call is made for the Friday Prayer after the declining of the sun when the Prayer time begins, the people should stop conducting business on hearing it. However, if a person has made a bargain at that time, it will not be void, but will only be a sin. The Friday Prayer cannot be held in every settlement but only in the misr Jami which has been defined as a large town or city, where there arc market places, adequate security arrangements, and which has large enough population so that if all the people upon whom attendance at the Friday Prayer is obligatory, gather together, they should be too many for the principal mosque to hold. The people who live outside the city will have to offer the Prayer in the city only in case the call to the Prayer reaches them, or if they live within six miles of the city. The Prayer may not necessarily be held in the mosque; it may also be held in the open field and also on a ground which is outside the city but a part of it. The Friday Prayer can be validly held only in a place where any and every person may come to attend it without any hindrance. It will not be valid if it is held in a restricted place where every person is not allowed to join in no matter how many people may gather together. For the Prayer to be valid there should at least be three men (according to Imam Abu Hanifah beside the Imam, or two men including the Imam (according to Imams Abu Yusuf and Mohammad), upon whom it is obligatory to attend the Friday Prayer. A person will be exempt from the Prayer if he is on a journey, or is so ill that he cannot walk to attend it, or is disabled of both the legs, or is blind (but according to Imam Abu Yusuf and Imam Muhammad, a blind person will be exempt from the Prayer duty only in case he does not find a man who can take him along for

the Prayer), or he apprehends a danger to he life and honor, or an unbearable financial loss from a tyrant, or It is raining heavily and there is slush and rainwater on the way, or he is a. prisoner, For the prisoner and the disabled, it is undesirable that they should perform the Zuhr Prayer on Friday In congregation. For those also who have missed the Friday Prayer it is undesirable to perform the Zuhr Prayer collectively, The sermon is one of the pre-requisites of the Friday Prayer to be valid, for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) never performed the Friday Prayer without the Sermon; the Sermon must necessarily precede the prayer, and there should be two Sermons. From the time the Imam steps towards the pulpit for the sermon, every kind of speech becomes forbidden till he brings it to an end; no prayer may be performed during it, whether one can hear the Imam at the place where one is sitting or not. (Hedayah, Al-Fath ul-Qadir; al-Jassas: Ahkam al-Qur'an; AI-Fiqh alai-Madhahib al-Arb'ah; 'Umdat al-Qari).

According to the Shafe'is the time of the Friday Prayer is the same as of the Zuhr Prayer. Trade and business become forbidden and hastening to the remembrance of Allah becomes obligatory from the time the second call is sounded, i.e. the call which is sounded after the Imam has taken his place on the pulpit. However, if A person carries out a transaction at this time, it does not become void. The Friday Prayer can be held in every such settlement among the permanent residents of which there are 40 such men upon whom it is incumbent to perform the Prayer. Attendance at the Friday Prayer is obligatory for, those people of the suburbs whom the call may reach The Friday service must be held within the bounds of the settlement, but it may not necessarily be held in the mosque. Thus, it is not obligatory for nomadic peoples who live in tents, in the desert. For the Prayer to be valid there should at least be 40 such men including the Imam in the congregation upon whom the Prayer is incumbent. A person would be exempt from the Prayer if he is on a journey, or intends to stay at a place for four or less than four days provided that the journey is lawful, or he is old or sick and cannot go to attend the Prayer even by a conveyance, or is blind and does not find a man . who can take him along for the Prayer, or apprehends danger to lift or property or honor, or is a prisoner provided that this imprisonment has not been caused by his own crime. There should be two sermons before the Prayer. Although it is according to the Sunnah to sit quiet during the sermon, yet speech is not forbidden. For the person who is sitting close to the Imam so that he can hear the sermon, speech is disapproved, but he can respond to a greeting, and can recite prayer on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) aloud when he hears his name being mentioned. (Mughni al-Muhtaj Al-Fiqh alal-Madhahib al-Arb'ah).

According to the Malikis, the Friday Prayer time begins from the declining of the sun and lasts till such time in the evening that the Sermon and the Prayer can be concluded before sunset. Business transactions become forbidden and hastening becomes obligatory with the second call. If a transaction takes place after it, it would be void and sinful. The Friday Prayer can be held in the settlements, residents of which live in permanent houses and do not migrate in the summer or the winter, and whose needs and requirements are met in the same settlements, and who can defend themselves on the basis of their strength. In temporary dwelling places the Friday 'Prayer cannot be established even though many people may be staying there and staying for long periods. Attendance at the Prayer is obligatory for the people who live within- three miles of the settlement where the Prayer is held. The Prayer can be held only in the mosque, which is inside the settlement or adjoining it, and the building of which is not inferior to the houses of the common residents of the place. Some Malikis have also imposed the condition that the mosque should be roofed, and arrangements for offering collective Prayer five times daily should also exist in it However, the better known view of the Malikis is that for the Prayer to be valid the mosque's being roofed is no pre-requisite. The Friday Prayer can also be held in a mosque which has been

built only for the Friday Prayer and no arrangements exist in it for the five daily Prayers. For the Prayer to be valid there must at least be 12 other men, apart from the Imam, in the congregation upon whom the Friday Prayer is incumbent. A person would be exempt from it if he is on a journey, or intends to stay for Less than four days at a place during the journey, or is so ill that he cannot come to the mosque, or has an ailing mother or father, or wife, or child, or he is nursing a stranger who has nobody else to nurse him, or has a close relative who is seriously ill, or at the point of death, or apprehends an unbearable loss to property, or a danger to his life or honor, or is hiding from fear of imprisonment, or punishment, provided that he is a wronged and oppressed person, or it is raining heavily and there is slush and rainwater on the way, or the weather is oppressive due to excessive heat or cold. The Prayer has to be preceded by two Sermons; so much so that if the Sermon is given after the Prayer, the Prayer has to be repeated, and the Sermons must necessarily be delivered inside the mosque. It is forbidden to offer a voluntary Prayer after the Imam has stepped towards the pulpit, land to talk when the Sermon has begun, even if one is not hearing it, However, if the Imam indulges in meaningless and absurd things in the Sermon, or uses abusive language for a person who does not deserve it, or starts praising a, person for whom praise is unlawful, or starts reciting something irrelevant to the Sermon, the people have the right to protest. Furthermore, it is reprehensible that a prayer be made in the Sermon for the temporal ruler, unless the Imam apprehends danger to his life. The Imam must necessarily be the same person who leads the Prayer; if another person than the one who gave the Sermon led the Prayer it would be void. (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi ila-sh-Sharh al-Kabir,' Ibn 'Arabi, .4hkam al-Qur an; Al-Fiqh alal-Madhahib al-'Arb ah).

According to the Hanbalis, the Friday Prayer time begins when the sun has risen about a spear's length high and lasts till the beginning of the 'Asr Prayer time in the afternoon, but performing the Prayer before the declining of the sun is just permissible but after it obligatory and meritorious. Business transactions become forbidden and hastening to the Prayer becomes obligatory with the second call, A transaction contracted after it has no effect in the law. The Prayer can be held only at a place where 40 men on whom the Friday Prayer is incumbent have permanently settled in houses (and not in tents) and are not nomadic tribesmen. For this purpose, it will not make any difference if the houses of the settlement or its different parts are scattered or compact; if their combination is called by one name, it will be one settlement even if its different parts are miles apart. Attendance at the Prayer will be obligatory for the people who live within three miles of the settlement. The congregation should consist of 40 men including the Imam. The Prayer may not necessarily be performed in the mosque; it may be performed in the open as well. A person will be exempt from it if he is on a journey and intend to stay in the settlement for four or less than four days, or is so ill that he cannot come to the mosque even by a conveyance, or is blind unless he can grope his way to the mosque; (it is not obligatory for the blind man to come for the Prayer with another man's help), or he is prevented by extreme weather or heavy rain or slush and rainwater, or he is hiding to escape persecution or apprehends danger to life or honor, or fears an unbearable financial loss, The Prayer should be preceded by two Sermons. The person who is sitting so close to the Imam that he can hear him, is forbidden speech; however, the one sitting far away, who cannot hear the Sermon, can speak. The people have to sit quiet during the Sermon whether the person delivering the Sermon is a just man or an unjust man. If Eid falls on a Friday, the people who have performed the Eid Prayer will be exempt from the Friday Prayer. In this matter, the viewpoint of the Hanbalis is different from that of the other three Imams. (Ghayat al-Muntaha; AI-Fiqh alal-Madhahib al-Arb ah),

All jurists are agreed that if the person upon whom the Friday Prayer is not incumbent, joins in the Prayer, his Prayer would be valid, and he would be absolved from the Zuhr Prayer.

19This is the incident because of which the commandments pertaining to the Friday congregational Prayer have been enjoined in the preceding verses. Its narrative as related in the collections of Hadith, on the authority of Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Hadrat Abu Malik, and Hasan Basri, Ibn Zaid, Qatadah and Muqatil bin Hayyan is as follows: A trade caravan from Syria arrived in Madinah right at the time of the Friday Prayer and its people started playing their drums to announce their arrival. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) at that time was delivering the Sermon, Hearing the drum the people in the congregation became impatient and rushed out towards Baqi where the caravan had halted, except for 12 men. The most authentic tradition in this narrative is of Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah, which has been related by Imam Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abu 'Uwanah, 'Abd bin Humaid, Abu Ya'la and others through reliable channels. The only diversity is that in some traditions it is stated that the incident took place when the Prayer was in progress; in others that it happened when the Holy Prophet was delivering the Sermon. However, what appears to be correct when the tradition of Hadrat Jabir and those of others are read together is that it happened during the Sermon. Where Hadrat Jabir says that it happened during the Friday Prayer, he in fact has used the word Friday Prayer for the combination of the Sermon and the Prayer. According to the tradition of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, seven women had remained behind with 12 men. (Ibn Marduyah). Qatadah says that one woman remained with 12 men, (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim). According to the tradition of Daraqutni 40 individuals remmained, of `Abd bin Humaid 7 individuals and of Farra 8 individuals. But all these are weak traditions. The tradition of Qatadah that sack a thing happened thrice is also weak. (Ibn Jarir) The authentic tradition in this regard is of Hadrat Jabir, according to which the number of those who remained behind is stated to be 12. Apart from one tradition of Qatadah, all traditions of the other Companions and their followers agree that this happened only once. When read together different traditions about those who remained behind show that they included Hadrat Abu Bakr, Hadrat 'Umar, Hadrat 'Uthman, Hadrat 'Ali, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat 'Ammar bin Yasir, Hadrat Salim (slave of Hudhaifah) and Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah. The tradition related by Hafiz Abu Ya`la from Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah says that when the people rushed out like that and only 12 Companions were left behind, the Holy Prophet addressed them, saying: "By Him in Whose hand is my life, if all of you had left, and none had remained behind, this valley would have overflowed with fire. " A theme resembling this has been cited by Ibn Marduyah from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas and by Ibn Jarir from Qatadah.

The Shiite scholars have used this incident also for taunting and finding fault with the Companions. They say that abandoning the Sermon and the Prayer by such a large number of the Companions for the sake of worldly gain and amusement is a proof that they preferred the world to the Hereafter. But this is a misplaced objection that can be raised only if one keeps ones eyes closed to realities. As a matter of fact, this incident took place just after the migration. At that time, on the one hand, the collective training of the Companions was in the initial stages, and on the other, the disbelievers of Makkah had subjected the people of Madinah to a strict economic blockade because of which necessities of lift had become scarce in the city. Hadrat Hasan Basri says that the people at time were starving and the prices had risen abnormally high. (Ibn Jarir). Under such conditions when a trade caravan arrived, the people rushed out

to buy things of daily need lest these were sold out before the Prayer was concluded. This was a weakness and error which became suddenly manifest due to insufficient training and severity of the conditions. But whoever sees the sacrifices made by the Companions for the cause of Islam afterwards and sees what piety and righteousness they displayed in the matter of worship and dedication and dealings can never dare bring against them the allegation that they preferred the world to the Hereafter unless he himself bears malice against the Companions.

However, just as this incident does not support the critics of the Canpanions of the Holy Prophet, so it also does not support the ideas of those people who cherish exaggerated notions about them and claim that they never committed any error, or if they committed some, it should not be mentioned, for making mention of their error and' calling it an error is derogatory and it reduces one's reverence and respect for them, and its mention goes against the verses of the Qur'an and the Hadith, which state that the Companions arc Allah's favorite people and have already been forgiven all their errors and mistakes. All this is exaggeration for which there is no basis in the Qur'an and he ,Hadith. Here, everyone can see for himself that Allah Himself has mentioned the error that happened to have been committed by a large number of the Companions, in the Book that will be read by the entire Ummah till Resurrection, and in the same Book which speaks of their having been forgiven and being chosen people of Allah. Then in the books of the Hadith and Commentary also details of this error have been described by all scholars, from the Companions to the major scholars among the followers of the Sunnah. Does it mean that Allah has made this mention in order to destroy the reverence for the same Companions whose reverence and esteem He wants to instill in all our hearts? And does it mean that the Companions and their followers and the traditionists and commentators have mentioned these details of this incident because they were unaware of the religious aspect of the matter which these zealots show and describe? And have the people who read Surah AI-Jumu 'ah and study its commentary really lost reverence and esteem for the Companions from their hearts? If the answer to each of these questions is in the negative, and it is surely in the negative, then all those exaggerated ideas and notions, which some people express and show in regard to the reverence of the Holy Prophet's Companions, arc erroneous.

The truth is that the Companions of the Holy Prophet were not supernormal beings: they were only human born in this very world. Whatever they attained, they attained through the persistent training imparted by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) over many years. The method of this training as we learn from the Qur'an and the Hadith was; Whenever a weakness appeared in them, Allah and His Messenger turned immediate attention to it, and a program of education and training was established to overcome and eradicate it. In the matter of this very Friday Prayer we see that when the incident of the trade caravan occurred, Allah sent down this section of the verses of Surah AI-Jumu'ah to administer warning and teach the etiquette of the Friday Service. Along with this the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) impressed on the people the importance of the obligatory nature of the Service continuously in his Sermons as explained in E.N. 15 above. All these instructions are found in the Hadith in clear words. Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri says that the Holy Prophet said: "Every Muslim must have full bath on Friday, should clean his teeth, put on the best available clothes, and use perfume if

possible." (Musnad Ahmad Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i). Hadrat Salman Farsi says that the Holy Prophet said: "The Muslim who has bath on Friday, cleans and purifies himself as far as possible, applies oil to his hair, or uses perfume if available, and comes to the mosque and takes his place without disturbing others, then offers the (voluntary) Prayer that Allah has destined for him, then listens quietly when the Imam speaks, he will have his sins and errors committed since the previous Friday forgiven. " (Bukhari, Musnad Ahmad). Traditions containing almost the same theme have been reported by Hadrat Abu Ayub An'ati, Hadrat Abu Hurairah and Hadrat Nubaishat alHudhali also from the Holy Prophet. (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi Tabarani). Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas says that the Holy Prophet said: "The person who speaks when the Imam is delivering the sermon, is like the donkey loaded with books, and the person who tells him to keep quiet has also rendered his own Prayer void. " (Musnad Ahmad Hadrat Abu Huraira'. says that the Holy Prophet said: "If on Friday during the sermon you said to a person, 'keep quiet,' you too behaved wrong." (Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud). Traditions closely resembling this have been related by Imam Ahmad Abu Da'ud and Tabarani from Hadrat `Ali and Hadrat Abu ad-Darda'. To the person delivering the sermon also the Holy Prophet instructed that he should not deliver a lengthy sermon to try the people's patience. His own practice on Friday was that he gave brief Sermons and Ied short Prayers. Hadrat Jabir bin Samurah says that the Holy Prophet would never give a lengthy Sermon: he was always very brief." (Abu Da'ud). Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Abi Aufa says: "The Holy Prophet's sermon used to be shorter than the Prayer, and the Prayer a little longer than the sermon." (Nasa'i), According to Hadrat Ammar bin Yasir, the Holy Prophet said: "The prolongation of the Prayer and the brevity of the sermon are a sign that the Imam has deep insight in religion" (Musnad Ahmad, Muslim Almost the same theme has Bazzar related from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud. All this shows how the Holy Prophet taught the people the etiquette of the Friday congregational Service till it began w be performed in the unique manner unknown in the congregational worship of any other people in the world.

20This sentence by itself shows what was the nature of the error committed by the Companions. God forbid, if it had been due to any weakness of the faith, or due to giving the world preference over the Hereafter, Allah's wrath and displeasure and reprimand would have been much severer. But since there was no such weakness, and whatever happened was only due to insufficient training, Allah first taught the people the coquette of the Friday Service, then, after pointing out the error, promised them that the reward they would get with Allah for listening to the Sermon and performing the Prayer would be much greater than worldly gains and amusements.

21That is, "Allah is by far the best of all those providers who become a means of providing sustenance in the world, though only metaphorically." Sentences such as this have occurred at several places in the Qur'an, At some places Allah has been called "the best of Creators," at others "the best of Forgivers", "the best of Rulers", "the best of those who show mercy", or "the best of Helpers". At all these places the reference of providing, creating, forgiving, showing mercy and offering help to the creatures is metaphorical, and to Allah real. It means that Allah is the best Provider, Creator, Forgiver, Helper and Bestower of Mercy of all those who appear to be giving you wages and means of sustenance, or who

appear to be making things by their skill and workmanship, or who seem to be pardoning the errors of others, or showing mercy and helping other in this world.

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63. Surah Al Munafiqoon (The Hypocrites)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the sentence *Idha jaa kal-munafiquna* of verse 1. This is the name of the Surah as well as the title of its subject matter, for in it a review has been made of the conduct and attitude of the hypocrites themselves.

Period of Revelation

As we shall explain below this Surah was sent down either during the Holy Prophet's return journey from his campaign against Bani al- Mustaliq, or immediately after his arrival back at Madinah, and we have established by argument and research in the Introduction to Surah An-Nur that the campaign against Bani al-Mustaliq had taken place in Sha'ban A. H. 6:Thus, the date of the revelation of this Surah is determined precisely.

Historical Background

Before we mention the particular incident about which this Surah was sent down, it is necessary to have a look at the history of the hypocrites of Madinah, for the incident that occurred on this occasion was not a chance happening but had a whole series of events behind it, which ultimately led up to it.

Before the Holy Prophet's emigration to Madinah the tribes of the Aus and the Khazraj, fed up with their mutual rivalries and civil wars, had almost agreed on the leadership of one man and were making preparations to crown him their king. This was Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul, the chief of the Khazraj. Muhammad bin Ishaq has stated that among the people of Khazraj his authority was never contested and never had the Aus and the Khazraj rallied to one man before this. (Ibn Hisham, vol. II, p. 234)

Such were the conditions when the voice of Islam reached Madinah and the influential people of both the tribes started becoming Muslims. When before the Emigration, invitation was being extended to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah'> peace) to come to Madinah, Hadarat Abbas bin Ubadah bin Nadlah Ansari wanted to defer this

invitation for the reason that Abdullah bin Ubayy also might join in the declaration of allegiance and invitation to the Holy Prophet, so that Madinah might become the center of Islam by common consent. But the delegation that arrived in Makkah to declare their allegiance did not give any importance to the proposal of Abbas bin Ubadah, and a11 its members, who included 75 men from both the tribes, became ready to invite the Holy Prophet in the face of every danger.(lbn Hisham, vol. II, P. 89). We have given the details of this event in the Introduction to Surah Al-Anfal.

Then, when the Holy Prophet arrived in Madinah, Islam had so deeply penetrated every house of the Ansar that Abdullah bin Ubayy became helpless and did not see any other way to save his leadership than to become a Muslim himself. So, he entered Islam along with many of his followers from among the chiefs and leaders of both the tribes although their hearts were burning with rage from within. Ibn Ubayy in particular was filled with grief, for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had deprived him of his kingship. For several years his hypocritical faith and grief of being deprived of his kingdom manifested itself in different ways. On the one hand, when on Fridays the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) took his seat to deliver the Sermon, Abdullah bin Ubayy would stand up and say "O people, the Messenger of Allah is present among you, by whom Allah has honored you; therefore, you should support him and listen to what he says and obey him." (Ibn Hisham, vol. III, p. 111). On the other, his hypocrisy was being exposed day by day and the true Muslims were realizing that he and his followers bore great malice against Islam, the Holy Prophet and the Muslims.

Once when the Holy Prophet was passing on the way Abdullah bin Ubayy spoke to him in harsh words. When the Holy Prophet complained of it to Hadrat Sa'd bin Ubadah; he said:"O Messenger of Allah, don't be hard on him, for when Allah sent you to us we were making a diadem to crown him, and, by God, he thinks that you have robbed him of his kingdom." (Ibn Hisham vol: II, pp. 237-238).

After the Battle of Badr when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) invaded the Jewish tribe of Bani Qainuqa on their breaking the agreement and un provoked revolt, this man stood up in support of them, and holding the Holy Prophet by his armor, said:"These 700 fighters have been helping and protecting me against every enemy; would you cut them down in one morning?By God, I will not leave you until you pardon my clients." (Ibn Hisham, vol. III, pp. 5l- 52).

On the occasion of the Battle of Uhud this man committed open treachery and withdrew from the battlefield with 300 of his companions. One should note that at this critical moment when he so acted, the Quraish had marched upon Madinah with 3,000 troops and the Holy Prophet had marched out with only 1,000 men to resist them. Of these 1,000 this hypocrite broke away with 300 men and the Holy Prophet was left with only 700 men to meet 3,000 troops of the enemy in the field.

After this incident the common Muslims of Madinah came to realize fully that he was certainly a hypocrite and his those Companions also were found who were his associates in hypocrisy. That is why when on the very first Friday, after the Battle of Uhud, this man stood up as usual to make a speech before the Holy Prophet's Sermon, the people pulled at his garment, saying "Sit down you are not worthy to say such things." That was the first occasion in Madinah when this man was publicly disgraced. Thereupon he was so filled with rage that he left the mosque jumping over the heads of the people. At the door of the Mosque some of the Ansar said to him, "What are you

doing?Go back and ask the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) to pray for your forgiveness." He retorted "I do not, want him to pray for my forgiveness." (Ibn Hisham, vol. III, p. 111).

Then in A. H. 4 the Battle of Bani an-Nadir took place. On this occasion he and his companions supported the enemies of Islam even more openly. On the one side, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his devoted Companions were preparing for war against their enemy, the Jews, and on the other, these hypocrites were secretly sending messages to the Jews to the effect: "Stand firm we are with you: if you are attacked, we will help you, and if you are driven out, we too will go out with you." The secret of this intrigue was exposed by Allah Himself, as has been explained in Surah Al-Hashr: 11-17 above.

But in spite of being so exposed the reason why the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was still treating him kindly was that he had a large band of the hypocrites behind him. Many of the chiefs of both the Aus and the Khazraj were his supporters. At least a third of the population of Madinah consisted of his companions, as became manifest on the occasion of the Battle of Uhud. Under such conditions it was not prudent to wage a war with these internal enemies combined with the external enemies. On this very account, in spite of being fully aware of their hypocrisy the Holy Prophet continued to deal with them according to their apparent profession of faith for a long time. On the other hand, these people too neither possessed the power nor the courage to fight the believers openly as disbelievers, or to join hands with an invader and face them in the battlefield. Apparently they were a strong hand but inwardly they had the weakness which Allah has vividly portrayed in Surah Al-Hashr: 12-14. Therefore; they thought their well being lay only in posing as Muslims. They came to the mosque, offered the prayers gave away the *zakat*, and would make tall oral claims to the faith, which the true Muslims never felt the need to do. They would offer a thousand justifications for each of their hypocritical acts by which they would try to deceive their compatriots, the Ansar, into believing that they were with them. By these designs they were not only saving themselves from the disadvantages which could naturally accrue if they separated themselves from the Ansar brotherhood, but also taking advantage of the opportunities to make mischief which were available to them as members of the Muslim brotherhood.

These were the causes which enabled Abdullah bin Ubayy and like minded hypocrites to get an opportunity to accompany the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in his campaign against the Bani al-Mustaliq, and they simultaneously engineered two great mischiefs which could shatter the Muslim unity to pieces. However, by virtue of the wonderful training in discipline that the Muslim; had received through the pure teaching of the Quran and the companionship of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) both mischiefs were stopped in time, and the hypocrites themselves were disgraced instead. One of these was the mischief that has been mentioned in Surah An-Nur above, and the other which has been mentioned in this Surah.

This incident has been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Nasai, Tirmidhi, Baihaqi, Tabari, Ibn Marduyah, Abdur Razzaq, lbn Jarir Tabari, Ibn Sa'd and Muhammad bin Ishaq through many reliable channels. In some traditions the expedition in which it took place has not been named, and in others it has been connected with the Battle of Tabuk. But the authorities on the battles fought by the Holy Prophet and history are agreed that this incident took place on the occasion of the campaign against the Bani al- Mustaliq. The following seems to he the real story when all the traditions are read together.

When after crushing down the power of Bani al- Mustaliq the Islamic army had made a halt in the settlement at the well of al Muraisi. Suddenly a dispute arose between two men on taking water from the well; One of them was Jehjah bin Masud Ghifari, a servant of Hadrat Umar appointed to lead his horse. The other was Sinan bin Wabar al-Juhani, whose tribe was an ally of a clan of the Khazraj. Harsh words between them led to fighting and Jehjah kicked Sinan, which the Ansar, on account of their ancient Yamanite tradition, took as a great insult and disgrace. At this Sinan called out the men of Ansar and Jehjah the Emigrants for help. Hearing about the quarrel Ibn Ubayy started inciting and calling the men of the Aus and the Khazraj to come out and help their ally. From the other side some Emigrants also came out. The dispute might have led to a fight between the Ansar and the Muhajirin themselves at the very place where they had just fought an enemy tribe jointly and crushing it had halted in its own territory. But hearing the noise the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) emerged and said :"what is this call of paganism? What have you to do with such a call? Leave it, it is a dirty thing." Thereupon the leading men of the two sides met and settled the dispute; Sinan pardoned Jehjah and peace was restored.

After this every person whose heart was disaffected came to Abdullah bin Ubayy and they all said to him, "Until now we had our hopes attached to you and you were protecting us, but now it seems you have become a helper of these paupers against us. Ibn Ubayy was already enraged: These words made him burst out, thus: "This is what you have done to yourselves. You have given these people shelter in your country, and have divided your property among them. So much so that they have now become our rivals. Nothing so fits us and the paupers of Quraish(or the Companions of Muhammad) as the ancient saying 'Feed your dog to fatten it and it will devour you.' If you hold back your property from them, they would go elsewhere. By God, when we return to Madinah, the honorable ones will drive out from it the mean ones."

Zaid bin Arqam, a young boy, also happened to be present in the assembly at that time. He heard this and mentioned it before his uncle, and his uncle who was one of the Ansar chiefs went to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and told him the whole story. The Holy Prophet called Zaid and asked him what had happened and he repeated every word of what he had heard. The Holy Prophet said, "Zaid, you are perhaps displeased with Ibn Ubayy; you might have been mistaken in hearing; you. might have imagined Ibn Ubayy said this." But Zaid was sure and firm. He said, "No, I swear by God I have heard him say this and that." Thereupon the Holy Prophet called Ibn Ubayy, and he came and swore that he had not said any such thing. The people of the Ansar also said "Sir, a boy says this: he might have been mistaken in what he heard Ibn Ubayy is a venerable old man and our chief. Do not believe what a boy says against him." The elderly people of the tribe reproved Zaid also, who became depressed and held his peace. But the Holy Prophet knew Zaid as well as Abdullah bin Ubayy. Therefore, he fully understood what had actually happened.

When Hadrat Umar came to know of this, he came to the Holy Prophet and said:"Please allow me to put this hypocrite to the sword. Or, if you do not think it is fit to give me the permission you may tell Muadh bin Jabal, or Abbad bin Bishr, or Sad bin Mu'adh, or Muhammad bin Maslamah from among the Ansar, to go and kill him."But the Holy Prophet said: "No, the people will say Muhammad kills his own Companions." After this he ordered the people to set off immediately, although it was at a time when the Holy Prophet was not accustomed to travel. The forced march continued for 30 hours at a stretch so that the people became exhausted. Then he halted, and as soon as they touched the ground they fell asleep. This he did to distract their minds from what had happened at the well of al-Muraisi. On the way, Hadrat Usaid bin Hudair, an Ansar chief, met the Holy Prophet, and said:"O Messenger of Allah, today you ordered the people to set off at a time which was disagreeable for traveling, a thing you have never

done before."The Holy Prophet replied: "Have you. not heard of what your friend said?" When he asked who he meant, the Holy Prophet replied:Abdullah bin Ubayy. He asked what he had said. The Holy Prophet answered: "He has asserted that when he returns to Madinah the honorable ones will drive out from it the mean ones. He answered : "By God, O Messenger of Allah, you are the honorable one and he is the mean one; you will drive him out whenever you want to."

By and by the news spread among the Ansar soldiers and it enraged them against Ibn Ubayy. The people advised him to go to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and request for his forgiveness, but he retorted : "You asked me to believe in him, and I believed in him; you asked me to pay the zakat on my property, and I paid the zakat too; now the only thing left is that I should bow down to Muhammad."This further enraged the believing Ansar and everyone' started reproaching and cursing him roughly. When the caravan was about to enter Madinah, Abullah, the son of Abdullah bin Ubayy, stood before his father with a drawn out sword, and said: "You had said that when you reached Madinah, the honorable ones would drive out the mean ones. Now, you will know who is honorable you or Allah and His Messenger. By God, you cannot enter Madinah until the Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace) permits you to enter." At this Ibn Ubayy cried out: "O people of Khazraj, look, my own son is preventing me from entering Madinah." The people conveyed this news to the Holy Prophet, and he said : "Tell Abdullah to let his father come home."Abdullah said, "If this is the Holy Prophet's order, then you may enter."Thereupon the Holy Prophet said to Hadrat Umar: "Now what do you think, Umar? Had you killed him on the day when you asked my permission to kill him, many people would have trembled with rage. Today if I order them to kill him, they will kill him immediately."Hadrat Umar replied "By God, I realize there was greater wisdom behind what the Apostle of Allah said than what I said.'"

These were the circumstances under which this Surah was sent down most probably after the Holy Prophet's return to Madinah.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِذَا جَآءَكَ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقُونَ قَالُوا۟ نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ ۘ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ
لَرَسُولُهُۥ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١﴾

ٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ أَيۡمَٰنَهُمۡ جُنَّةٗ فَصَدُّواْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّهُمۡ سَآءَ مَا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ

٢

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ ءَامَنُواْ ثُمَّ كَفَرُواْ فَطُبِعَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمۡ فَهُمۡ لَا يَفۡقَهُونَ

٣

[1-3] O Prophet, when the hypocrites come to you, they say, "We bear witness that you are indeed Allah's Messenger." Yes, Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger, but Allah bears witness that these Hypocrites are utter liars.[1] They have made their oaths as a shield[2] and so they hinder themselves and others from the Way of Allah.[3] Evil indeed are the deeds that they do. This is because they believed and then they disbelieved. Therefore, a seal has been set on their hearts, and so they do not understand anything.[4]

۞ وَإِذَا رَأَيۡتَهُمۡ تُعۡجِبُكَ أَجۡسَامُهُمۡۖ وَإِن يَقُولُواْ تَسۡمَعۡ لِقَوۡلِهِمۡۖ كَأَنَّهُمۡ خُشُبٞ مُّسَنَّدَةٞۖ يَحۡسَبُونَ كُلَّ صَيۡحَةٍ عَلَيۡهِمۡۚ هُمُ ٱلۡعَدُوُّ فَٱحۡذَرۡهُمۡۚ قَٰتَلَهُمُ ٱللَّهُۖ أَنَّىٰ يُؤۡفَكُونَ

٤

[4] And when you see them, their figures would look marvelous; when they speak you would love to listen to what they say.[5] But in reality they are like blocks of timber propped up against a wall.[6] They deem every shout to be directed against them.[7] They are the real enemies,[8] so beware of them.[9] May Allah destroy them![10] How are they being perverted?[11]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ لَوَّوْا۟ رُءُوسَهُمْ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ
يَصُدُّونَ وَهُم مُّسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ لَن يَغْفِرَ
ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ﴿٦﴾

[5-6] And when it is said to them, "Come, the Messenger of Allah will pray for your forgiveness," they shake their heads and you see them turning away with arrogance.[12] O Prophet, whether you pray for their forgiveness, or not, it is the same for them. Allah shall never forgive them,[13] for Allah does not guide the transgressors.[14]

هُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ لَا تُنفِقُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَنْ عِندَ رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ
حَتَّىٰ يَنفَضُّوا۟ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ خَزَآئِنُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا
يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٧﴾

يَقُولُونَ لَئِن رَّجَعْنَآ إِلَى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ لَيُخْرِجَنَّ ٱلْأَعَزُّ مِنْهَا ٱلْأَذَلَّ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْعِزَّةُ
وَلِرَسُولِهِۦ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾

[7-8] They are the same people who say, "Do not spend anything on the Companions of the Prophet so that they disperse," though Allah is the Owner of the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites do not understand. They say, "When we return to Madinah, the honorable ones shall drive out from it the mean ones"[15]

although honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger and the believers,[16] but the hypocrites do not know.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تُلۡهِكُمۡ أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُكُمۡ عَن ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ وَمَن
يَفۡعَلۡ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡخَٰسِرُونَ ٩

وَأَنفِقُواْ مِن مَّا رَزَقۡنَٰكُم مِّن قَبۡلِ أَن يَأۡتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ ٱلۡمَوۡتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ
لَوۡلَآ أَخَّرۡتَنِيٓ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ قَرِيبٖ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ١٠

وَلَن يُؤَخِّرَ ٱللَّهُ نَفۡسًا إِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهَاۚ وَٱللَّهُ خَبِيرُۢ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ ١١

[9-11] O you[17] who have believed, let not your possessions and your children distract you from the remembrance of Allah."[18] Those who do so shall indeed be the losers. Spend from the provisions that We have given you before death should come to any of you and then he should say, "O my Lord, why did You not reprieve me awhile that I should have given in charity and become of the righteous?" But Allah does not at all reprieve a person when his term comes to an end, and Allah is well aware of what you do.

1That is, "Although the thing they. are uttering with the tongue is true by itself, it does not reflect their belief. Therefore they lie when they say that they bear witness that you are a Messenger of Allah." Here, one should clearly understand that an evidence or witness is composed of two things: first, the actual thing to which one bears the witness; second, the concerned person's own belief about the thing to which he bears the witness, Now, if the thing by itself is true and the belief of the bearer of witness also corresponds to what he says, he will be truthful in every respect. And if the thing in itself is false; but the beater of the witness believes it to be right and true, he will be regarded as truthful in one way, for he is truthful in expressing his belief, and liar in another way, for the thing he is bearing witness to is by itself false. Contrary to this, if the thing by itself is true but the belief of the bearer of the witness is opposed to it, he will be regarded as truthful because he is testifying to the right thing, and a liar because his own belief is contrary to what he is saying with the tongue. For instance, if a Believer states that Islam is a taste religion, he is truthful in every respect, but if a Jew, while he is steadfast in his Judaism, states the

same thing, he would be stating the right thing but his evidence would be regarded as false, for he is testifying against his faith and belief. And if he calls it a false religion, he would be uttering a false thing but he would be beating a true witness according to his belief.

2That is, they use the oaths that they swear to convince others of their Islam and faith as a shield to save themselves from the wrath of the Muslims so that they do not treat them as they treat their open enemies.

These oaths may imply the oaths which they usually swear to convince others of their faith as well as those which they swore when they were caught committing some hypocritical act, and also those oaths which 'Abdullah bin Ubayy had sworn to contradict the report given by Hadrat Zaid bin Arqam. Besides these, there is another probability that Allah might have regarded this statement of theirs as an oath: "We bear witness that you are Allah's Messenger." This last probability has given rise to a dispute among the jurists, namely: If a person states something with the words: "I bear witness," will it be regarded as an oath or not? Imam Abu Hanifah and his companions (except Imam Zufar), Imam Sufyan Thauri and Imam Auza'i regard it as an oath (Yamin in the Shari'ah terminology). Imam Zufar says that it is not an oath. Two sayings from Imam Malik have been reported in this connection: first" that it is an oath absolutely, and second, that if while saying: "I bear witness," his intention was to say: “My God, I bear witness," or "I bear witness before God," it would he a statement on oath, otherwise not. Imam Shafe'i says: 'Even if the person says the words: "I bear witness before God." it would not be a statement made on oath, unless he uttered these words with the intention of swearing an oath," (AI-Jassas_, Ahkam al-Qur an; Ibn al'.Arabi. Ahkam al-Qur an).

3The verb sadd in Arabic is transitive as well as intransitive. Therefore, saddu 'an sabil-Allah means; "They turn away from the Way of Allah," as well as: 'they turn others away from the Way of Allah." According to the first meaning the verse would 'mean: "By means of these oaths they first plant themselves firmly among the Muslims and then invent ways to escape fulfilling demands of the faith and to avoid obedience to Allah and His Messenger. " According to the second meaning it would mean: "They use their false oaths as a cover for committing evil deeds. Posing as Muslims they weaken the Muslim community from within: find out the secrets of the Muslims and convey these to their enemies, create doubts about Islam among the non-Muslims and use such devices for inspiring the simple Muslims with evil suggestions which a hypocrite in the guise of a Muslim only could do, for an open enemy of Islam cannot use them.

4In this verse "believing" means professing the faith in order to be counted among Muslims, and 'disbelieving" means not to believe sincerely and to persist in disbelief as usual. The verse means to say that when they, after due thought, decided to adopt this hypocritical attitude instead of adopting either belief or disbelief plainly, Allah caused a seal to be set on their hearts and deprived them of the grace to adopt the attitude and conduct of a true, sincere and noble person. Now, their power of understanding has been lost, their moral sense has become dead, and while following this way they never even feel that their habit of always telling lies, their deceitful behavior and the ever present contradictions between their

word and deed is a wretched state in which they have involved themselves.

This is one of those verses in which the meaning of ';causing a seal to be set on the heart of somebody by Allah" has been made clear. These people did not become hypocrites because Allah .had set a seal on their hearts; so faith did not enter them, and they became hypocrites under compulsion. But, in fact, Allah set a seal on their hearts only when they decided to persist in disbelief in spite of professing the faith outwardly. Then, they were deprived of the capacity to believe sincerely and of the grace of the moral attitude resulting from it. and were helped to persist in the hypocrisy and hypocritical morals, which they had chosen to adopt for themselves.

5Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas has stated that 'Abdullah bin Ubayy was a strongly built, healthy, handsome and smooth-tongued person, and the same was the case with most of his companions. They were all the nobles of Madinah. When they came to sit in the Holy Prophet's assembly, they would sit reclining on cushions against the walls and would talk agreeably and convincingly. From their outward appearance and manner of speech no one could imagine that those honorable people of the city would be so wretched and degraded in their character.

6That is, "Those who sit reclining on cushions against the walls, are not but but pieces of timber. Comparing them to timber is meant to imply that they are devoid of the moral sense which is the essence of humanity Then by comparing them to blocks of timber propped up against the wall, it has also been pointed out that they are absolutely worthless, for the timber would be useful only when it has been utilized in making of a ceiling, or a door frame, or a piece of furniture. A block of timber that has just been placed against a wall serves no useful purpose at all."

7This brief sentence portrays the state of their guilty conscience. Since they fully well knew what game of hypocrisy they were playing tinder the screen of their superficial faith, they always remained in a state of alarm, thinking as to when the secret of their treason might be exposed, or the believers might feel disgusted with their evil deeds and machinations and take them co task for them. If ever a cry was raised anywhere in the city, or a noise was heard; they immediately grew alarmed and thought it was directed against themselves.

8In other words, these hidden enemies are more dangerous than the open enemies.

9That is, "Do not be deceived by their outward appearances. Beware of them, for they can deceive you at any moment. "

10This is not a curse but a declaration of the verdict about them by Allah that they have become worthy of His punishment and He will certainly inflict His punishment on them. It is also possible that Allah may not have used these words in their literal sense but in the meaning of a curse and condemnation

according to Arabic idiom.

11It has not been pointed out as to who perverts them from belief to hypocrisy. This by itself makes it clear that there is not one but many factors responsible for their perversion. There is Satan, there are their evil friends, and there are their own selfish motives. Someone's wife or children become his motive, and someone is driven to perversion by the evil ones in his society, or by jealousy, spite and pride.

12That is, they not only refuse to come to the Messenger to seek forgiveness, but also on hearing the invitation they shake their heads with arrogance and pride, and remain adamant, thinking that it would be disgraceful for them to approach the Messenger to seek forgiveness. This is a clear sign that they are not believers.

13This thing was reiterated in Surah At-Taubah, which was sent down three years after Surah Al-Mtutafiqun, even in stronger words. In that Surah Allah, while addressing the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said this about the hypocrites: 'O Prophet (it will be all the same) whether you beg forgiveness for them or not, for Allah will not forgive them even if you beg forgiveness for them seventy times. This is because they have disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and Allah does not show guidance to the wrongdoers." (At Taubah: 80). A little further on in that Surah it was again said: 'And never perform the funeral prayer for anyone of them who dies nor stand at his grave, for they have denied Allah and His Messenger and died while they were transgressors. " (At-Taubah: 84)

14Two things have been stated in this verse. First, that the prayer of forgiveness can be beneficial only for those who are guided aright. Let alone a common man, even if Allah's Messenger himself prays for the forgiveness of the person, who has turned away from guidance and adopted the way of sin and transgression instead of obedience, he cannot be forgiven. Second, that it is not Allah's way to bless with guidance those who do not seek His guidance. If a person himself turns away from Allah's guidance, rather shakes his head with arrogance and rejects the invitation when he is called towards guidance, Allah has no need that He should go after him with His guidance and implore him to come to the right path.

15Hadrat Zaid bin Arqam says: "When I reported these words of Abdullah bin Ubayy to the Holy Prophet, and 'Abdullah bin Ubayy came and disowned them on oath, the elderly people of the Ansar, and even my own uncle, reproved me for this; so much so that I felt that the Holy Prophet also had mistaken me for a liar and 'Abdullah bin Ubayy for a truthful person. This caused me great anguish and grief. Then, when these verses were revealed, the Holy Prophet call-d me, and taking hold of my car, said: "The boy's ear was truthful Allah has himself testified to what it had heard." (Ibn Jarir. In Tirmidhi also there is a tradition on the same subject).

16That is, "All honor belongs to Allah in virtue of His essence, to the Prophet in virtue of his Prophethood,

and to the Believers in virtue of their faith. As for the disbelievers and the wicked people and the hypocrites, they have no share whatever in the real, true honor. "

17Now a word of admonition is being addressed to all those people, who have entered Islam, whether they are true and sincere believers, or those who profess the faith merely verbally. As we have explained at several places above. the words alladhina amanu in the Qur'an are sometimes used to address the true believers and sometimes to address the hypocrites, for they profess the faith only with the tongue, and sometimes to address the Muslims of all kinds in general The context itself shows which group is the audience at a particular place.

18The mention of the possessions and the children, in particular, has been made, for man mostly turns away from the demands of the faith for the sake of their well-being and interests and becomes involved in hypocrisy, weakness of faith, or wickedness and disobedience; otherwise it implies everything of the world that allures and absorbs man so completely that he becomes heedless of the remembrance of God. This heedlessness in respect of the remembrance of God is indeed the root cause of all evil. If man only remembers that he is not free but the servant of One God, and that God is fully aware of all his actions and deeds, and he will by held accountable one day before Him for all his actions and deeds, he would never be involved in any deviation and wickedness, and if ever he commits an error due to a human weakness, he will immediately rectify it as soon as he comes to realize his wrongdoing and repent.

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64. Surah At Taghabun (Mutual Loss and Gain)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the sentence *Dhalika yaum-ut taghabun* of verse 9, thereby implying that it is the Surah in which the word *at taghabun* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

Muqatil and Kalbi say that it was partly revealed at Makkah and partly at Madinah. Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas and Ata bin Yasar say that vv. 1-13 were revealed at Makkah and vv. 14-18 at Madinah. But the majority of commentators regard the whole of the surah as a Madinan Revelation. Although there is no internal evidence to help determine its exact period of revelation, yet a study of its subject matter shows that it might probably have been sent down at an early stage at Madinah. That is why it partly resembles the Makkah surahs and partly the Madinan Surahs.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of this surah is invitation to the Faith and obedience (to Allah) and the teaching of good morals. The sequence followed is that the first four verses are addressed to all men; verses 5-10 to those men, who do not believe in the invitation of the Qur'an; and verses 11-18 to those who accept and believe in this invitation.

In the verses addressed to all men, they have been made aware in a few brief sentences of the four fundamental truths:

First, that the universe in which they live is not Godless, but its Creator, Master and Ruler is an All Powerful God, and everything in it testifies to His being most Perfect and absolutely faultless.

Second, that the universe is not without purpose and wisdom, but its Creator has created it with truth no one should be under the delusion that it is a mock show, which began without a purpose and will come to an end without a

purpose.

Third, that the excellent form that God has created you with and the choice that He has given you to choose between belief and unbelief is not a useless and meaningless activity so that it may be of no consequence whether you choose belief or unbelief. In fact, God is watching as to how you exercise your choice.

Fourth, that you have not been created irresponsible and un-answerable. You have to return ultimately to your Creator, and have to meet the Being who is aware of everything in the universe, from Whom nothing is hidden, to Whom even the innermost thoughts of the minds are known.

After stating these four fundamental truths about the Universe and Man, the address turns to the people who adopted the way of unbelief, and their attention is drawn to a phenomenon which has persisted throughout human history, namely that nation after nation has arisen and ultimately gone to its doom. Man by his intellect and reason has been explaining this phenomenon in a thousand ways, but Allah tells the real truth and declares that the fundamental causes of the destruction of the nations were only two:

First, that they refused to believe in the Messengers whom He sent for their guidance, with the result that Allah too left them to themselves, and they invented their own philosophies of life and went on groping their way from one error to another.

Second, that they also, rejected the doctrine of Hereafter, and thought this worldly life to be an end in itself, and that there was no life hereafter when they would have to render an account of their deeds before God. This corrupted their whole attitude towards life, and their impure morals and character so polluted the world that eventually the scourge of God itself had to descend and eliminate them from the scene.

After stating these two instructive truths of human history, the deniers of the message of Truth have been admonished to wake up and believe in Allah, His Messenger and the Light of Guidance that Allah has sent in the form of the Qur'an if they want to avoid the fate met by the former peoples. Besides, they have been warned that the Day shall eventually come when all the former and the latter generations will be collected at one place and the fraud and embezzlement committed by each will be exposed before all mankind. Then the fate of each man will be decided finally on the basis as to who had adopted the path of the Faith and righteousness and who had followed the way of disbelief and denial of the Truth. The first group shalt deserve eternal Paradise and the second shall be doomed to everlasting Hell.

Then, addressing those who adopt the way of the Faith, a few important instructions have been given:

First, that whatever affliction befalls a person in the world, it befalls him by Allah's leave. Whoever in this state of affliction remains steadfast to the Faith, Allah blesses his heart with guidance; otherwise although the affliction of the one who in confusion or bewilderment turns away from the path of the Faith, cannot be averted except by Allah's leave, yet he becomes involved in another, the greatest affliction of all, namely that his heart is deprived of the guidance of Allah.

Secondly, that the believer is not required to affirm the faith with the tongue only, but after the affirmation of the Faith he should practically obey Allah and His Messenger. If he turns away from obedience he would himself be responsible for his loss, for the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace) has become absolved from the responsibility after having delivered the message of Truth.

Thirdly, that the believer should place his trust in Allah alone and not in his own power or some other power of the world.

Fourthly, that the worldly goods and children are a great trial and temptation for the believer, for it is their love which generally distracts man from the path of faith and obedience. Therefore, the believers have to beware some of their children, and wives lest they become robbers for them on the Way of God directly or indirectly; and they should spend their wealth for the sake of God so that their self remains safe against the temptations of Satan.

Fifthly, that every man is responsible only to the extent of his power and ability. Allah does not demand that man should exert himself beyond his power and ability. However, the believer should try his best to live in fear of God as far as possible, and should see that he does not transgress the bounds set by Allah in his speech, conduct and dealings through his own negligence.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ لَهُ ٱلْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ ٱلْحَمْدُ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ
كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ فَمِنكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَمِنكُم مُّؤْمِنٌ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ
﴿٢﴾

خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمۡ فَأَحۡسَنَ صُوَرَكُمۡۖ وَإِلَيۡهِ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ٣

يَعۡلَمُ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَيَعۡلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّونَ وَمَا تُعۡلِنُونَۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمُۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ٤

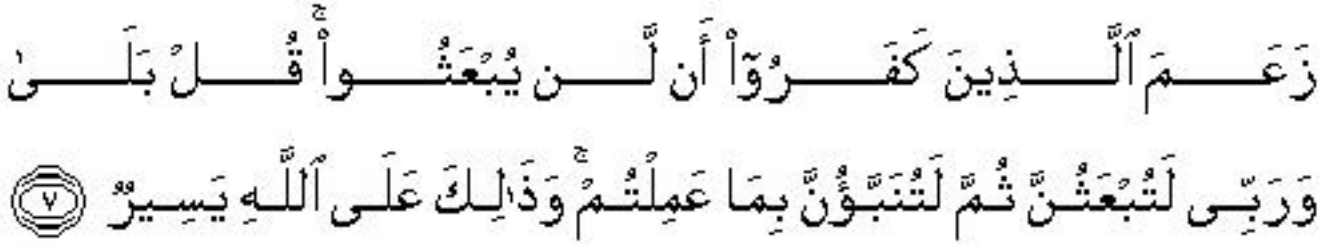
[1-4] Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is glorifying Allah.[1] His is the Sovereignty[2] and His the Praise[3] and He has power over all.[4] He it is Who created you; yet some of you are disbelievers and some are believers,[5] and Allah sees whatever you do.[6] He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth and has shaped you, and shaped you well, and to Him you have to return in the end.[7] He has the knowledge of everything in the heavens and the earth: He knows whatever you hide and whatever you reveal,[8] and He knows the very secrets of the hearts.[9]

أَلَمۡ يَأۡتِكُمۡ نَبَؤُاْ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِن قَبۡلُ فَذَاقُواْ وَبَالَ أَمۡرِهِمۡ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٞ ٥

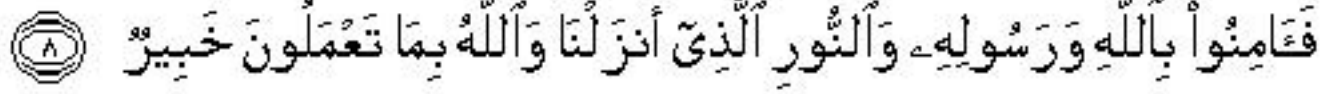
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُۥ كَانَت تَّأۡتِيهِمۡ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ فَقَالُوٓاْ أَبَشَرٞ يَهۡدُونَنَا فَكَفَرُواْ وَتَوَلَّواْ وَّٱسۡتَغۡنَى ٱللَّهُۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٞ ٦

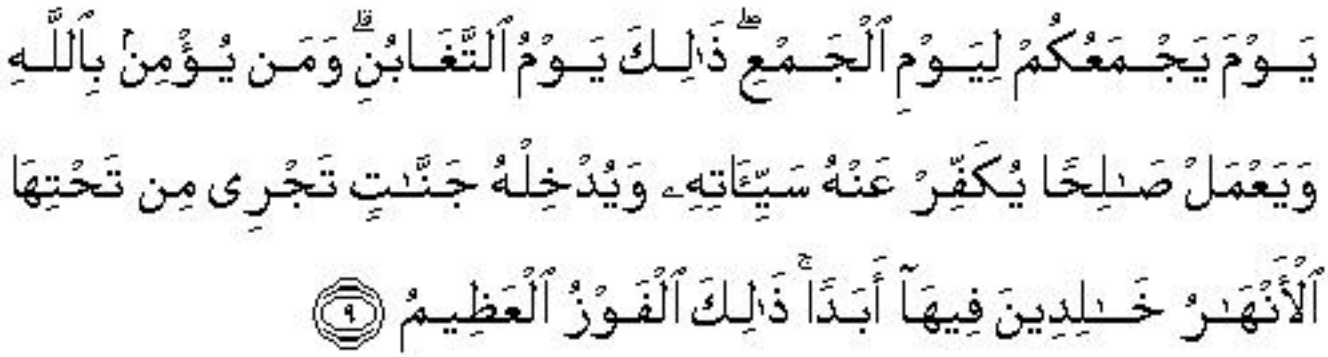
[5-6] Has not the news reached you of those who had disbelieved before this, and then tasted the evil results of their deeds? And in the Hereafter there awaits them a painful torment.[10] They deserved this fate because their Messengers came to them with clear Signs,[11] but they said, "Shall mere human beings show us guidance?"[12] So

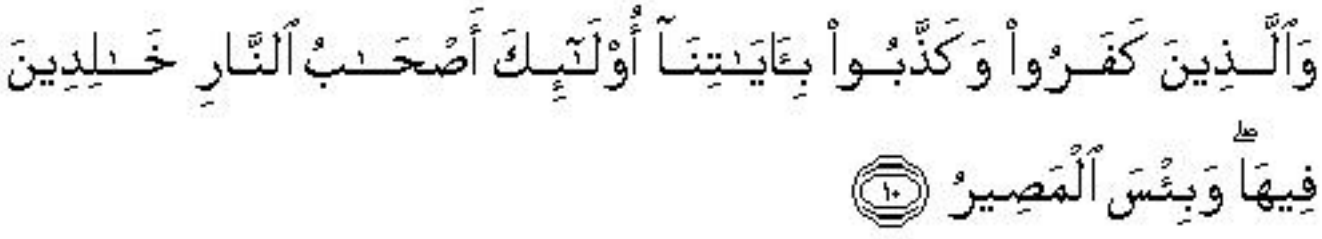
they refused to believe and turned away; then Allah also became indifferent to them, and Allah is indeed Independent and worthy of all praise.[13]


زَعَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَن لَّن يُبۡعَثُواْۚ قُلۡ بَلَىٰ
وَرَبِّي لَتُبۡعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلۡتُمۡۚ وَذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٞ ٧

[7] The disbelievers assert that they shall never be raised up from death.[14] Say to them, "Nay, by my Lord! You shall certainly be raised up.[15] Then certainly you shall be told what you have done (in the world),[16] and this is an easy thing for Allah to do."[17]

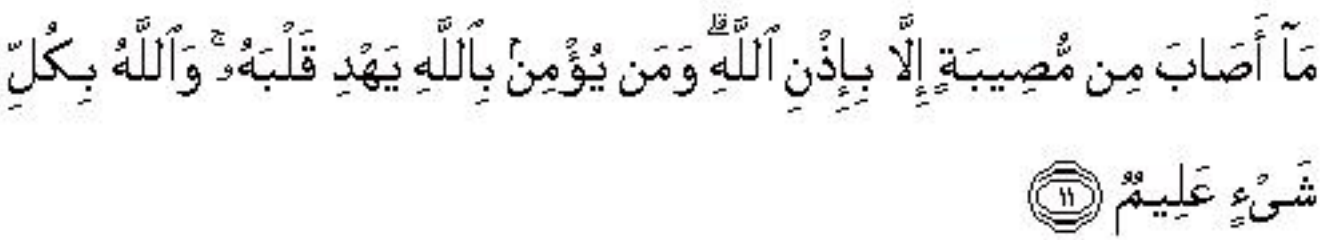

فَـَٔامِنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَٱلنُّورِ ٱلَّذِيٓ أَنزَلۡنَاۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ خَبِيرٞ ٨

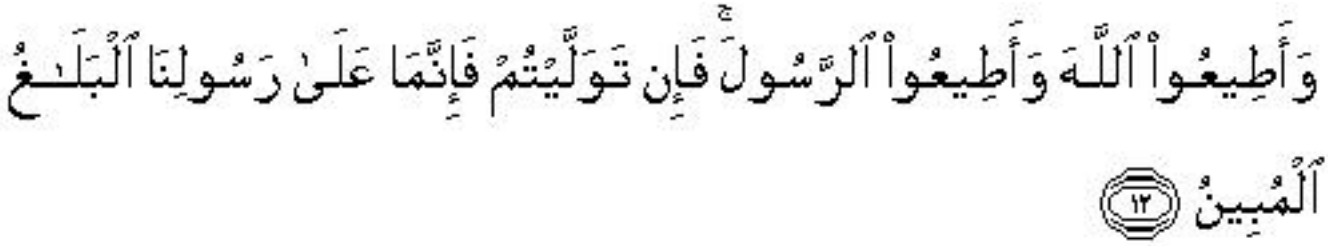

يَوۡمَ يَجۡمَعُكُمۡ لِيَوۡمِ ٱلۡجَمۡعِۖ ذَٰلِكَ يَوۡمُ ٱلتَّغَابُنِۗ وَمَن يُؤۡمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ
وَيَعۡمَلۡ صَٰلِحٗا يُكَفِّرۡ عَنۡهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِۦ وَيُدۡخِلۡهُ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا
ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدٗاۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ٩

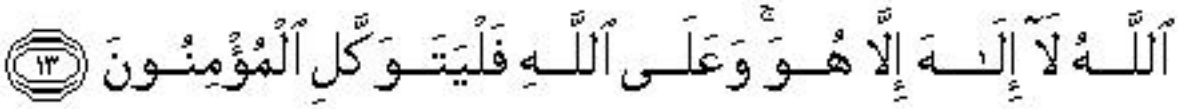

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَكَذَّبُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَاۖ وَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ١٠

[8-10] Therefore, believe in Allah and His Messenger and in the Light that We have sent down.[18] Allah is aware of whatever you do. (You shall know this) when He will gather you together on the Day of Gathering.[19] That will be a Day of mutual Loss and Gain[20] among the people. Whoever believes in Allah and does good works,[21] Allah shall

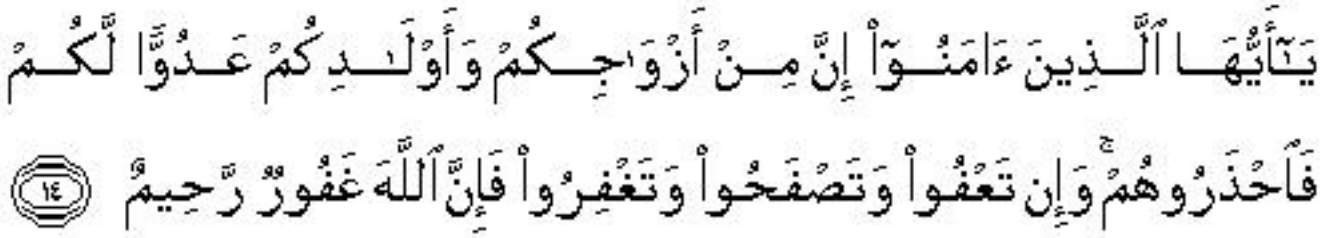
shake off his sins and will admit him into Gardens, underneath which canals will be flowing, to dwell therein for ever. This is the supreme success! And those who disbelieve and treat Our Revelations as false,[22] shall be the inhabitants of Hell to dwell therein for ever, and that is a most evil abode!


مَآ أَصَابَ مِن مُّصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُۥ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ
شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾


وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ
ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿١٢﴾


ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

[11-13] No affliction[23] can ever befall except by Allah's permission[24] Whoever believes in Allah, Allah guides his heart,[25] and Allah has knowledge of everything.[26] Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away from obedience (you should know that the only responsibility of Our Messenger is to convey the Truth clearly and plainly[27] Allah is He beside Whom there is no god. Therefore, in Allah alone should the believers place their trust.[28]


يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَٰجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَّكُمْ
فَٱحْذَرُوهُمْ ۚ وَإِن تَعْفُوا۟ وَتَصْفَحُوا۟ وَتَغْفِرُوا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

إِنَّمَآ أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ وَأَوۡلَٰدُكُمۡ فِتۡنَةٞۚ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجۡرٌ عَظِيمٞ ١٥

فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا ٱسۡتَطَعۡتُمۡ وَٱسۡمَعُواْ وَأَطِيعُواْ وَأَنفِقُواْ خَيۡرٗا لِّأَنفُسِكُمۡۗ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفۡسِهِۦ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحُونَ ١٦

إِن تُقۡرِضُواْ ٱللَّهَ قَرۡضٗا حَسَنٗا يُضَٰعِفۡهُ لَكُمۡ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ١٧

عَٰلِمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ ٱلۡعَزِيزُ ٱلۡحَكِيمُ ١٨

[14-18] O you who have believed, some among your wives and your children are your enemies: beware of them. And if you pardon and overlook and forgive, Allah is surely All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.[29] Your worldly possessions and your children are but a trial, and it is Allah with Whom there are rich rewards.[30] Therefore, fear Allah as far as you can,[31] and listen and obey and spend your wealth : this is for your own good. And those who are saved from the greed of their own hearts, are truly successful.[32] If you lend to Allah a goodly loan, He will pay you back manifold[33] and will forgive you your faults. Allah is Appreciative and Forbearing.[34] He knows the open and the hidden. He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

1For explanation, see E.N. I of the commentary on Surah AI-Hadid. A study of the following theme by itself shows why the discourse has ban begun with this sentence. What has been stated below about the Universe and Man is that Allah alone is their Creator, Master, Ruler, and He has not made this universe without purpose and wisdom, that Man has not been created and left irresponsible, so that he may act as he may please, and there should be nobody to call him to account, and that the Ruler of this universe is not a care-free and ignorant king so that he may have no knowledge of what is happening in his kingdom. The best introduction to this theme could be the same as has been couched in this brief sentence. In

view of the context, the introduction means: In whichever direction you may turn your gaze, from the earth to the limitless vastnesses of the heavens, you will clearly see that everything from a particle to the great galaxies not only testifies to the existence of God but also bears evidence that its God is free from every defect every weakness and error. Had them been the least probability of a defect or fault, weakness or deficiency, in His essence and attributes, in His acts and decrees, this perfect and wise system could not have come into being at all, nor continue to function so consistently and immutably from eternity to eternity.

2That is, "The Kingdom of the universe solely belongs to Him. He has not just created it and left it alone after giving it the initial push, but He alone is actually ruling over it every moment. No one else has any role or share whatever in this rule and sovereignty. If others possess temporarily and on a limited scale some powers of ownership or rule somewhere in the universe, these are not their personal powers, which they might have acquired by virtue of their own power, but these have been granted to them by Allah. They possess these powers as long as Allah wills, and they can be withdrawn as and when He so desires."

3In other words; He alone is worthy of all praise. Whatever other being has any praiseworthy quality, it has ban granted by Allah. And if hamd (praise) be taken in the sense of shukr (thankfulness), the meaning would be: In reality Allah alone is worthy of being thanked, for all. good things in the world have been created by Him, and He alone is the teal Benefactor of all kinds of creation. When we thank another being for favor, we thank it for the reason that Allah conveyed His blessing thought it or him to us, otherwise neither the being itself is the creator of the blessing nor could it convey the blessing to you without Allah's permission and help.

4That is, "He is the possessor of absolute power: He can do whatever. He wills, there is no power to restrain or limit His Omnipotence.

5It has four meanings and all arc correct in their respective places:

First, that "He alone is your Creator, yet some of you deny His being the Creator and others acknowledge this truth. " This meaning becomes obvious when the first and the second sentences arc read together.

Second. that "He Himself has created you with the nature that if you choose to adopt unbelief, you may do so, and if you choose to affirm belief, you may do so. He has not compelled you to either accept or reject the Faith therefore, you yourselves arc responsible for your adopting belief or unbelief." This meaning is confirmed by the following sentence: "Allah sees whatever you do." That is, By giving you this choice He has put you to the test, and He is watching how you exercise this choice."

The third meaning is. "He had created you with a sound, wholesome nature, which demanded that you

should all adopt the way of the Faith, yet some of you adopted unbelief, which was opposed to the nature and purpose of their creation, and some of you adopted the way of the Faith, which was in conformity with their nature This theme becomes obvious when this verse is read along with verse 30 of Surah Ar-Rum which says: "Set your face sincerely and truly towards Faith, and be steadfast on the Nature whereupon Allah has created mankind. There can be no alteration in the Nature made by Allah. This is the right and true Faith.' And this very theme is explained by several Ahadith in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has repeatedly stated that every man has been created on true human nature; then polytheism and deviation befall him from outside (For futher explanation, see E.N.'s 42 to 47 of the commentary of Surah Ar-Rum) Here, it may he pointed out that no Divine Book has ever presented the concept of man's being a sinner by birth, which Christianity has embraced as its fundamental doctrine for 1,500 years. Recently even Catholic scholars themselves have started expressing the view that there is no basis for this doctrine in the Bible. The famous German biblical scholar Rev. Herbert Haag, writes in his book, Is Original Sin in Scripture "Among the earliest Christians, at least till the 3rd century A.D., there existed no such creed that man was a sinner by birth, and when this idea started spreading among the people, the Christian scholars continued to contradict it for two centuries. At last in the 5th century A.D. St Augustine by the power of his logic made this idea a part of the fundamental beliefs of Christianity: 'Mankind is heir to the original sin committed by Adam, and there is no way to salvation for man except through the Atonement made by Christ."

The fourth meaning is: "Only Allah brought you into existence from nonexistence: you were not, then you became. This was such a simple thing that if you had thought over it seriously and seen that life is the actual blessing through which you are benefiting by the other blessings in the world, none of you would have adopted the attitude of disbelief and rebellion against your Creator. But some of you did not give it due thought, or thought wrongly, and adopted the way of disbelief, and some others adopted the same way of belief and faith which was the very demand of correct thinking.

6In this sentence "seeing" does not merely mean to see, but it automatically gives the meaning that man will be rewarded or punished according to his actions and deeds. It is just like a master's taking a person into service and then telling him: "I shall sec how you perform your duties," which implies: "If you perform your duties well, I shall reward you fully; otherwise I shall call you to account for your negligence."

7In this verse three things have been stated in their sequence, which are well connected logically:

First, it has been said that Allah has created this universe with the truth. When the word "with the truth" is spoken for a news, it means a true news; when it is spoken for a command, it means a command based on justice; when it is spoken for a statement, it means a correct statement; and when it is used for an act, it implies an act which is wise, reasonable and useful. Now, khalq (to create) is an act; therefore, to say that the universe has been created with the truth, would inevitably mean that the universe has not been created for fun but it is a serious work of a Wise Creator: everything in it has a rational object and purpose, and the element of its being purposeful is so evident that if a sensible person understands the

nature of a thing well, it cannot be difficult for him to know the rational and wise purpose for which it has been created. All of modern science testifies that whenever man has succeeded in understanding the true nature of a thing by careful thought, research and investigation, he has also come to know eventually the purpose and object of its creation, and this understanding of its purpose has led him to countless inventions which are now being used in civilized human life. This could not be possible, had this universe been the plaything of a carefree person, devoid of any wisdom and purpose. (For further explanation, see E.N. 46 of AlAn-am, E.N. 11 of Yunus, E.N. 26 of Ibrahim, E.N. 46 of Ati-Nahl, E.N.'s 15, 16 of Al-Anbiya, E.N. 102 of Al-Mu'nunun, E.N. 75 of Al-'Ankabut, E.N. 6 of Ar-Rum, E.N. 34 of Ad-Dukhan, B.N. 28 of AI-Jathiyah).

Secondly, it has been said that in this universe Allah has created man in the best shape. Shape here does not imply only man's fact but his whole bodily structure; it also inclusions all those powers and abilities which man has been granted to function in this world. In both these aspects man has been given the best shape and form among the creatures of the earth, and on the same basis he has become worthy to rule over all the universe. He has been given an erect stature he has been given most appropriate feet to walk on; he has given most suitable hands to work with; he has been given such senses and organs to acquire knowledge by which he obtains every kind of information; he has been given a powerful mind to think and understand and deduce results from the body of acquired information; he has been given a moral sense and a power of discrimination by which he distinguishes between good and evil, right and wrong; he has been given the power of decision by using which he selects his own course of action, and decides as to where he should employ his efforts and where he should not. He has even been given the freedom that he may acknowledge his ('rector and serve Him if he so likes and reject Him if he pleases, or may make whomever he likes his gods, or rebel even against Him Whom he regards as his God. Along with all these capabilities and powers Allah has granted him the authority to appropriate everything created by Him, and he is practically using this authority in the world. (For further explanation, see E.N. 91 of Al-Mu'min).

The third thing which logically follows from the first two. as explained above has been stated in the third sentence of the verse "To Him you have to return in the end.' Obviously, when a creature endowed with power and authority has been created in a wise and purposeful system of the universe, wisdom does not require that he should be left to live irresponsibly in the world, but it necessarily requires that that creature should be accountable to the Being Who has granted it this position and rank and blessed it with these powers; 'Returning" in this verse does not merely mean to return but to return for accountability. In the following verses it has been explained that this return will not be in this life but into the second life after death, and its right time will he when all mankind will be resurrected and gathered together simultaneously for accountability, and in consequence of the accountability man will be rewarded or punished on the ground whether he had used the powers given him by God in the right way or the wrong way. As for the question, why cannot this accountability be held in the present lift of the world? and why is its right time only the second lift after death'? and why is it necessary that this accountability be held only when all mankind has passed away from this world, and all the former and the latter generations have

been resurrected and gathered together simultaneously? If man only uses his common sense a little, he can understand that all this is perfectly rational as well as the very demand of wisdom and reason that accountability should be held in the second lift and of all mankind together. The first reason is that man is accountable for his whole life-work. Therefore, the right time of his accountability should necessarily be when his life-work has come to an end. The sccond reason is that man is responsible for all those effects and influences which he produces by his acts on the lives of others, and those influences and effects do not come to an end with his death but continue to influence others till ages after him Therefore, true accountability call he held only when the life-work of entire mankind has come to an end and all the former and the latter generations are gathered together simultaneously for accountability. (For further explanation, see E.N. 30 of Al-,A'raf. E.N.'s 10, 11 of Yunus E.N. 105 of Hud E.N. 35 of An-Nahl, E.N. 9 of AI-Hajj, E.N. 27 of An.Naml, E.N.'s 5,6 of Ar-Rum, E.N.'s 29, 30 of Suad, E.N. 80 of AI-Mu'min, E.N.'s 27 to 29 of Al-Jathiyah)

8Another translation can be: "Whatever you do secretly and whatever openly."

9That is, "He is aware not only of those acts of man, which come to the notice of the people but He knows also those acts which remain hidden from them. Moreover, He does not only see the superficial form of the acts, but also knows what intention and purpose underlay each act of man and with what motive and aim he did whatever he did- This is such a truth that if man ponders over it seriously, he can fully well understand that justice can be done only in the Hereafter, and only in God's Court can real justice be possibly done. Man's own intellect itself demands that man must be punished for each of his crimes. But everyone knows that in the world most of the crimes remain hidden. or the culprit escapes punishment because of insufficient evidence, or even if the crime becomes revealed, the culprit is so influential and powerful that he cannot be punished. Then the intellect of man also requires that man should not be punished only because his behavior resembles a criminal act, but it should be ascertained that he has committed the act intentionally and deliberately and at the time he committed it, he was acting as a responsible agent, his intention in actual fact was to commit the crime, and he knew that what he was doing was a crime. That is why the worldly courts inquire into these things when they decide the cases, and regard such an inquiry as a demand of the rule of justice. Burt is there any means available in the world by which these things may be precisely ascertained beyond every shadow of doubt? Considered from this viewpoint, this verse also bears a deep logical relevance to Allah Almighty's saying: e has created the earth and the heavens with Truth." The necessary demand of creating them with Truth is that perfect justice should prevail in this universe. Such justice can be established only when every act of a responsible man may not only remain concealed from the eyes of the one administering justice but the intention with which a person performed and act also should not remain hidden from him. And obviously, there cannot be any being, apart from the Creator of the universe, who can administer such justice, Now, if a person denies Allah and the Hereafter, he in fact, asserts that we humans live in a universe which is devoid of justice, which is rather a place where justice cannot possibly be done. The person whose intellect, mind and conscience feel satisfied at such an assumption would be a shameless creature if be thought he was bing progressive and rationalistic and those people antiquated and

retrogressive who accept a highly rational concept about the universe, which the Qur'an presents.

10That is, "The evil that they tasted in the world in consequence of their misdeeds was neither the real punishment of their crimes nor the full punishment. The real and full punishment they have yet to suffer in the Hereafter. However, the people can learn a lesson from the torment that visited them. They can see how the nations which adopted an attitude of unbelief against their Lord, went an degenerating and consequently met with an evil and disgraceful end." (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 5, 6 of Al-A'raf, E. N. 105 of Hud).

11The word bayyinet as used in the original has a vast meaning. Bayyin (sing. of bayyinat) in Arabic is something which is very clear and manifest. Saying about the Prophets that they came with bayyinat gives the meaning that firstly, they brought such manifest signs as bore clear testimony to their having been appointed by Allah; secondly, they presented whatever they presented with rational and clear arguments; thirdly, there was no ambiguity in their teaching; they clearly explained what was the truth and what was falsehood. what was lawful and what was unlawful, what path man should follow and what he should avoid.

12This was then the foremost and basic cause of their degeneration and ruin Mankind could not have known the right course of action in the world unless their Creator gave them the correct knowledge, and there could be no practical means of bestowing such knowledge by the Creator unless He blessed some of the human beings with the knowledge and entrusted them with the duty to convey it to other human beings. For this purpose He sent the Prophets with the manifest Signs bayyinat) so that there was-no reasonable ground for the people to doubt their being on the truth. But the people refused to believe that a human being could be a Messenger of God. Then, obviously there could be no other way for them to receive guidance. (For further explanation, see E.N. 11 of Surah Ya Sin). In this connection, however, a strange manifestation of the ignorance and folly of human beings is seen. They have in fact, never shown any hesitation in accepting the guidance of men, so much so that they have carried out gods of wood and stone according to their guidance, they have made human beings themselves God, the incarnation of God, even son of God. and they have adopted such strange viewpoints by following the guidance of their mis-leaders blindly, which ruined human civilization and morals altogether. But when the Messengers of God came to them with the truth, and they presented the pure Truth before them without any selfish motive, they said, "Shall mere human beings show us guidance?" This amounted to saying that if a human begin misled them, they would follow his guidance willingly, but if he showed the right path to them, his guidance was not acceptable.

13That is, when they treated the guidance sent down by Allah with indifference, then Allah also became indifferent to them and did not care what pit they fell in. Allah did not stand in need of their acknowledging Him God to sustain and support His Godhead. Nor was He in need of their worship, nor of their praise and adoration. He, in fact, willed to show them the right path only for their own good and well-being. But when they turned away from it, Allah also became heedless of them. Then, neither He gave them

guidance, nor remained responsible for their protection, nor saved them from being afflicted with calamities, nor prevented them from bringing about their own ruin for they themselves were not keen for His guidance and help.

14That is, "This was the second basic error in which the deniers of the Truth have been involved in every age, and which has ultimately brought about their ruin. Although no denier of the Hereafter ever had any means of knowing, nor has he today, nor will he have in the future, that there is no life after death, vet these ignorant people have always asserted the same thing, whereas there neither exists any intellectual basis for denying the Hereafter with absolute certainty nor any scientific basis for it.

15This is the third place where Allah Almighty has instructed His Prophet to tell the people by swearing an oath by his Lord that such a thing shall certainly happen. First, in Surah Yunus, it was said: "They ask: Is what you say really true Tel! them: Yes, by my Lord, it is absolutely true and you have no power to avert it.;(v. 53). Then, in Surah Saba, it was said: "The disbelievers say: How is it that Resurrection is not overtaking us? Say, by my Lord, it will surely overtake you.' (v. 3)

Here, the question arises: What difference does it make for a disbeliever in the Hereafter whether you give him the news of its coming by swearing an oath or without swearing an oath? when he does not believe in it at all, will he believe in it only because you arc asserting this on oath? The answer is: In the first place, the addressees of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah s peace) were the people, who knew from their personal knowledge and experience that he had never uttered a lie in his life. Therefore, even if they might have forged the most shameless slander against him with their tongue, yet in their hearts they could never conceive that a truthful man like him could say a thing on oath by Allah of which he himself was not convinced by knowledge and experience. Secondly, the Holy Prophet did not only present the doctrine of the Hereafter but also gave highly rational Arguments for it. What distinguishes a Prophet from others is that the arguments, however strong and cogent, that others may give for the Hereafter, can at the most make the listener admit that the occurrence of the Hereafter is more reasonable and probable than its absence. On the contrary, a Prophet stands at A notch higher level than a philosopher. His real position is not that be has arrived at the conclusion of the necessity of the Hereafter by the exercise of reason But his real position is that he has the knowledge that the Hereafter shall occur and says with conviction that it shall surely occur. Therefore, only a Prophet can swear an oath to declare this but not a philosopher. Then, faith in the Hereafter can be generated only by a 'Prophet's statement; the reasoning of a philosopher does not have the power to induce even himself to adopt it as his religious creed on the basis of his own argument, not to speak of another person. if the philosopher is really correct, he cannot go beyond 'should be or ought to be;' only a Prophet can assert with conviction that a thing "is and certainly is."

16This is the purpose for which the children of Adam will be resurrected; this also contains the answer to the question: what is the special need for it? If one keeps in view what has been discussed concerning vv. 1.4 above, one can easily understand that in this universe, which has been created with the truth, it

would be highly unreasonable to imagine about man who has been given freedom to choose either belief or unbelief, who has been granted authority to appropriate many of the things in this universe, and who after choosing the way of belief or unbelief has accomplished much good or done evil on his own responsibility by making the right or the wrong use of his authority during his life, that when he has done all this , the good done by the virtuous and the evil committed by the criminal one should neither bear any fruit, nor should there be any time when his deeds and actions should be subjected to security The person who asserts such an irrational thing inevitably commits one of the two absurdities: either he thinks that although this universe is based on wisdom, yet a creature like man, who has been endowed with authority, has been created and left irresponsible here; or he thinks that this universe is a random creation devoid of the wisdom of a Wise Creator. In the first place, he makes a contradictory statement, for the existence of an irresponsible creature, endowed with authority. in a universe based on wisdom, is clearly against justice and wisdom. In the second case, he cannot give any rational being like man should come into being in a haphazardly created, foolish universe, and how he conceived the idea of justice. Only a stubborn person could uphold the belief that folly could generate wisdom and injustice justice, or the one who has become a mental patient because of his obsession for hair splitting.

17This is the second argument for the Hereafter. The first argument was for its necessity and this second is for its possibility. Obviously, when God could create such a grand and wonderful system of the universe without any difficulty and when He could create human beings in the world in the first instance, it cannot be difficult for Him to resurrect the same human beings and summon them before Himself for the purpose of accountability.

18That is, "When this is the truth and the whole human history testifies that the real cause of the destruction of the nations has been their disbelieving the Messengers and their denial of the Hereafter, then they should not insist on meeting the same doom by following their example, but should believe in the guidance presented by Allah and His Messenger and the Qur'an." Here, as the context itself shows, by "the Light that We have sent down", means the Qur'an Just as light itself is clearly seen and reveals everything that was hidden in darkness around it, so is the Qur'an a Light whose being based on the truth is self-evident ; in its Light man can solve and understand every problem that he cannot solve and understand exclusively by means of his own knowledge and intellect Anyone who has the Light can clearly see the straight path of Truth out of the countless, crooked paths of thought and action, and can follow the Straight Path throughout life in such a way that at every step he can know where the crooked by-paths are misleading and where the pitfalls of destruction are situated on the way, and what is the path of safety and security among them.

19"The Day of Gathering": the Resurrection, when all human beings horn in the world from the beginning of creation till the Last Day will be gathered together simultaneously. This theme has been fully explained in the Qur'an at several places; e.g. in Surah Hud it has been said: "That will be the Day when all the people shall gather together and will witness everything that will happen there." (v 103) And in Surah Al-Waqi'ah: "Say to them; Surely, the former and the latter, all shall be gathered together one day, the hour

of which has already been appointed." (v. 50).

20The word yaum-ut-taghabun as used in the original is too vast in meaning to be explained in a word, or even a sentence, of any other language. Of all the names of the Resurrection that occur in the Qur'an, this name probably i5 the most meaningful Therefore, a little explanation is necessary to understand its meaning.

Taghabun is from ghabn, which can be pronounced both as ghabn and as ghaban. Ghabn is mostly used concerning commercial and business transactions and ghaban concerning opinion. Lexically, it has other meanings also, e.g. heedlessness, forgetfulness, a person's being deprived of his share, a man's harming another inadvertently in business or mutual dealing, etc.

The derivative taghabun implies the occurrence of ghabn between two or more persons. Thus, taghabun al-qaum means some people's treating others fraudulently. or a person's harming another person and the other's being harmed and damaged by him, or one's taking away the share of another and the other's being deprived of his share, or a person's incurring loss in business and another's gaining a profit, or some people's proving heedless or weak-minded in comparison to others.

Now consider that in this verse it has been said about the Resurrection: 'That will be a Day of taghabun (mutual loss and gain) among the people." These words automatically givc the meaning that in the world taghabun is a common thing, but this taghabun is superficial and deceptive, not the real and factual taghabun the real taghabun will take place on the Day of Resurrection. There it will become manifest as to who actually incurred the loss and who actually earned the profits, who actually was deceived and who proved to be prudent and sensible. who actually had invested all his life capital in a wrong bargain and become bankrupt and who had invested all his energies and abilities. wealth and time, in a good bargain and earned all the benefits and gains. which the former also could have earned had he not been deceived in understanding the truth about the world.

The commentators while explaining the meaning of Yawn-ut-taghabun have given several meanings of it, which are all correct, and throw light on different aspects of its meaning. Some commentators have explained that on that Day the dwellers of Paradise will take away that share of the dwellers of Hell which they would have had in Paradise had they done good deeds in the world as did the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell will take away that share of the people of Paradise, which they would have had in Hell had they done evil deeds is the world. This is supported by a Hadith, which Bukhari has rdated in kitab ar-Riqaq. on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet said: 'Whoever goes to Paradise will be shown the place which he would have had in Hell had he done evil deeds in the world so that he may give more and more thanks to God; and whoever goes to Hell will be shown the place which he would have had in Paradise had he done good deeds in the world so that he may feel more and more remorseful."

Some other commentators say that on that Day the wronged one will take away so many of the good deeds done by the wrongdoer as may be a suitable compensation for the wrong suffered, or the wrongdoer will be equal in weight with his usurped rights. For on the Day of Resurrection man will not possess any wealth which he they give to make up for the wrong done, there the only commodity worth exchange will be one's conduct. Therefore, whoever had wronged another in the world, will have to make up for the wrong done by surrendering some of his own good deeds in his favor, or by taking some of his sins on himself and suffering the punishment for them. This theme also has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in Ahadith. In Bukhari (Kitab ar-Riqaq) a tradition has been related from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet said: "Whoever bears a burden of a wrong done to his brothel, should compensate him for it here, for in the Hereafter no one will have any wealth or money for compensation. There, some of his good deeds will he taken from him and given away to the wronged person, or if he did not have enough good deeds, some of the sins of the wronged person will be transferred to him." Likewise, in Musnad Ahmad there is a tradition from Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah bin Unais. sag that the Holy Prophet said: "No dweller of Paradise will enter Paradise and no dweller of Hell will enter Hell until he will have compensated the other person for the wrong done to him so much so that one will have to compensate even for a slap given to another person. We asked; How will this compensation be made when on Resurrection we shall be naked and penniless? The Holy Prophet replied:Compensation will he made by means of the good deeds and the evil deeds." In Muslim and Musnad Ahmad there is a tradition from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet upon whom by Allah's peace) once asked the people sitting in his assembly; "Do you know who is poor? The people replied: He who has nothing to possess The Holy Prophet said: In my Ummah the poor is he who appeared before his God on the Day of Resurrection with his acts of the Prayer and the Fast and the payment of the zakat the while he had abused some one, usurped the property of another, and shed blood or hit still another. Then his good deeds were taken away and given over to each of the wronged and when nothing was left of his good deeds to make compensation. sonic of the sins of each wronged one were transferred to him and he was east into Hell." In another Hadith which Muslim and Abu Da'ud have related on the authority of Hadrat. Buraidah, the Holy Prophet said:"If in the absence from home of a soldier for the cause of Allah, a person treats his wife and the people of his house treacherously. the person would be made to stand before the soldier on the Day of Resurrection, and the latter would be asked to take away whatever he liked from his good deeds. Saying this the Holy Prophet turned to us and said Then what do you say? That is, what do you think he would leave with him?"

Some other commentators say that tile word taghabun is mostly used concerning commerce and business, and in the Holy Qur'an at several places the attitude that the believer and the unbeliever adopt in their worldly lives has been compared to trade and commerce. If the believer giving up disobedience adopts obedience and invests his life and wealth and effort for the cause of God. he is giving up a bad bargain and investing his capital in a business which will fetch him much gain and profit in the end. On the contrary, if an unbeliever abandons the way of obedience and invests his entire capital in the way of disobedience to God, he in fact, is a trader who has purchased deviation for guidance, and will incur loss in the end. The gain and the loss of to both will become manifest on the Day of Resurrection. It may well

so happen in the world that the believer appears to be the loser and the disbeliever the gainer But in the Hereafter they will see who actually had made the right bargain and who the wrong bargain This theme has occurred at many places in the Qur'an,e.g. in AI-Baqarah 16, 175, 207 Al- Imran 77,177 An-Nisa' 74; At-Taubah 111 An-Nahl95, Fatir 29, As-Saff 10.

Yet another from of taghabun is that in the world the people go on cooperating with one another in unbelief and sin, injustice and wickedness, with full peace of mind with the confidence that they are enjoying full mutual love and friendship. The mutual intrigues and comradeship of the members of wicked Families immoral guides and their followers, gangs of thieves and robbers alliances of corrupt and unjust officers and officials, groups of dishonest traders, industrialists and land owners, groups established to spread deviation, error and mischief, and nations and governments which support and uphold injustice and wickedness in the world, is based on the same confidence. The individuals belonging to each of these groups harbor the impression that they are good companions of one another and their mutual cooperation is proving very successful But when these people reach the Hereafter, they will suddenly wake up to the realization that they had been grievously mistaken and deceived. Each one of them would feel that the one whom he considered his best father brother wife husband child, friend, companion, leader, guide disciple or supporter and helper, had been, in fact, his worst enemy. Every kind of relationship and friendship and bond of love and reverence will change into enmity. They will all abuse and curse each other and each one will desire that maximum responsibility of his crimes be laid an the other and will strive to get him severely punished. This theme also has occurred at many places in the Qur'an, e.g. in AI-Baqrah: 167, AI-A'raf: 37 to 39, Ibrahim 21-22; AI-Mu'minum: 101, Al-'Ankabut: 12,13. 25; Luqman: 33, AI-Ahzab: 67,68; Saba: 31 to 33; Fatir 18: As-Saaffat: 27 to 3: Suad: 59 to 61: Ha Mim: As-Sajdah: 29; Az-Zukhruf; 67; Ad-Dukhan; 41; AI-Ma'arij; 10 to 14: 'Abasa 34 to 3.

21Believing in Allah does not merely imply believing that Allah exists but believing in Him in the way Allah Himself has taught through His Messenger and His Book. This belief by itself includes belief in Apostleship and belief in the Book. Likewise a good act also does not imply every such act as man may himself have adopted considering it a good act. or following a man-made criterion of morality, but it implies the righteous act that is in accordance with the Law sent down by God. Therefore no one should have the misunderstanding that believing in Allah and doing good deeds, without the medium of the Messenger and the Book will lead to the results being mentioned below. Whoever studies the Qur'an carefully cannot remain unaware that according to it no such belief is genuine belief in Allah and no such act is righteous at all.

22These words by themselves make manifest the meaning of unbelief(Kufr). Unbelief is nothing but denying the verse of Allah's Book to be Divine Revelation rejecting the truths expressed therein and refusing to follow and obey the commandments given in them; its results are those being mentioned below.

23The discourse now turns to the believers. While reading this passage one should keep in mind the fact

that at the time when these verses were revealed. Muslims were passing through great hardships After years of persecution at Makkah they had left their home and emigrated to Madinah, where the sincere Muslims who had given them refuge had been doubly burdened. On the one hand, they had to support and sustain hundreds of the emigrants who were coming to them from different parts of Arabia; on the other they had become the target of the persecution and enmity of the enemies of Islam of entire Arabia.

24This same theme has also occurred in AI-Hadid: 22-23 above and we have explained it in E.N.'s 39 to 42 of the commentary of the Surah 'The same circumstances under which this thing was said there and the same object for which it was said underlie the verses here as well. This means that afflictions and hardships do not descend of themselves, nor has anyone in the world the power to cause an affliction to descend on anyone he may like by his own authority. AII calamities wholly depend on Allah's leave: He may allow an affliction to descend upon someone or may disallow it, And Allah's leave in any cast is based on one or other wisdom, directed to some ultimate good, which man neither knows, nor can understand.

25That is, "It is only belief in Allah which keeps man on the right path even in the face of an onslaught of afflictions and does not let him waver under the most trying circumstances. The one whose heart is devoid of belief either looks upon afflictions as a result of mere chance, or thinks they are brought or prevented by worldly powers, or considers them to be the work of such imaginary powers which human superstition regards as potent in bringing good and causing evil, or believes that God is the real Doer of everything but does not believe so truly and sincerely, In all these different cases mart degenerates. He endures the affliction. but then yields and bows to every false god, accepts, every humiliation, is ready to do any mean thing and commit any wrong act he does not hesitate to abuse God, even commit suicide. On the contrary, the heart of the person who knows and believes sincerely that everything is in the hand of Allah, that He alone in the Master and Ruler of the universe that only by His permission can an affliction befall and only by His command can it be averted, is blessed by Allah with the grace of patience and submission and of acquiescing in Divine will, and is granted the power to face every circumstance with determination and courage. Even under the most straitened circumstances the candle of the hope of Allah's bounty lights up his way and no affliction, however severe and trying, can dishearten him as to cause him to swerve from the right path, or how to falsehood, or invoke others than Allah for the redress of his grievances. Thus, every affliction opens up for him a new door to well-being and happiness and no affliction remains an affliction for him in actual fact but becomes in final result and analysis a blessing in disguise, for whether he falls a victim to it. or passes through if safely, in each case he emerges successful from the trial set him by his Lord. This same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in a Hadith which has been reported unanimously by all the reporters, saying: `Strange is the affair of the believer! Whatever Allah decrees for him is good for him: when an affliction befalls him, he endures it patiently, and this proves good for him; when he is blessed with prosperity, he thanks his Lord, and this too proves good for him. Such a good fortune only falls to the lot of a believer."

26In this context this has two meanings: first, that Allah knows who really believes and what is the

measure of his belief. So, on the basis of His knowledge He grants guidance only to that heart, which has belief in it, and grants it guidance precisely in accordance with the measure of belief. Another meaning also can be: that Allah is not unaware of the condition of His believing servants. He has not left them alone after having invited them to faith and subjected them at the same time to severe trials and temptations of the world. He knows exactly what hardships a believer is passing through in the world, and under what circumstances he is fulfilling the demands of his faith. Therefore, "O believers, you should rest assured that whatever affliction descends upon you by Allah's leave, in Allah's knowledge it must be directed to some ultimate good, which must be for your own well-being, for Allah is well-wisher of His believing servants: He does not will to subject them to afflictions and hardships without good reason."

27In view of the context, it means: "Whatever the circumstances. good or bad. you should remain steadfast to obedience to Allah and His Messenger. But if under the pressure of hardships you turned away from obedience, you would only harm your own selves. The only responsibility of Our Messenger was to guide you to the right path, which the Messenger has fulfilled in the best way possible."

28That is, "All Divine powers belong to Allah alone. No one else has any power to make or mar your destiny. He alone cat bring about a good time and He alone can avert a bad time. Therefore, whoever believes sincerely that Allah is One, has absolutely no other choice than to place his full trust in Him and to continue doing his duty as a believer with the conviction that goodness and well being only lie in the way that Allah has shown him. If he attains to success in this way, it will only he by Allah's help and leave; there is no other helper. And if he encounters difficulties, hardships, dangers and disasters in this way, Allah alone will rescue him, for there is no other rescuer beside Him."

29This verse has two meanings.

According to the first meaning, it applies to most of those difficulties, which are encountered by many believing men from their wives and the women from their husbands and the parents from their children in following the way of God. It seldom so happens in the world that a man has a wife and a wife a husband, who are full companions and helpers of each other in the matter of faith and righteousness, and that both may also have such children as may be the comfort of their eyes as regards faith and deeds, morals and conduct. Hut generally it so happens that if the husband is righteous and honest, the wife and children look upon his honesty and piety and righteousness as a misfortune for themselves, and want that the husband and the father should earn Hell for their sake, and giving up the distinction between the lawful and the unlawful should provide means of luxury and enjoyment, sin and vice, for them in every passable way. On the contrary, many a time a pious believing woman happens to have a husband, Who does not at all approve her obedience to the Laws of God, and the children too, following in the footsteps of the father, make the wife of the mother miserable by their deviation and evil deeds. Then, particularly, when during the conflict between Islam and unbelief a man's faith demands that he should suffer losses for the sake of Allah and this Religion, run risks, emigrate from the country or even endanger his life by joining the war against unbelief, the greatest hindrance in his way are the people of his own household.

The second meaning relates to those special circumstances which most of the Muslims were facing at the time these verses were sent down. and today also they are faced by every person who embraces Islam in a non-Muslim society. At that dine in Makkah and in other parts of Arabia a situation that was commonly being experienced was that a man would embrace Islam, but his wife and children would not only be disinclined to accept it but would try their best to press him to give up Islam Arid similar were the situations encountered by the women, the alone embraced Islam in their families,

Addressing the believers who may be confronted with either situation, three things have been impressed:

First, they have been warned as if to say: "Although front the worldly point of view. these are the dearest relations of man yet from the religious point of view, they arc .`your enemies." This enmity may he for the reason that they hinder you from good and induce you to do evil, or that they restrain you from belief and pull you towards unbelief, or that their sympathies are with he unbelievers. and through you if they ever come to know any of the war secrets of the Muslims, they convey it to the enemies of Islam. Owing to these the nature and quality of enmity may vary, but in any case it is enmity; and if you hold your faith dearer to your heart, you should regard them as your enemies. In their love you should never forget that between you and them there stands the barrier of belief and unbelief, or of obedience and disobedience."

Then, it is said: "Beware of them." That is, "You should not ruin your eternal life for the sake of their worldly life. Let not their love so overwhelm you that they become a hindrance for you in your relationship with Allah and His Messenger and your loyalty to Islam. Do not place such reliance on them that the secrets of the Muslim community should come to their notice and through them reach your enemies only by your negligence and carelessness. This Is the Fame thing of which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has warned the Muslims in a Hadith: `A person will be brought up on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be proclaimed: `His wife and children ate up all his good deeds'."

In the end, it is said: "If you pardon and overlook and forgive, Allah is surely AII-Forgiving, All-Merciful. " It means: "You are being made aware of their enmity so that you may beware of them and do your best to save your faith from them, This warning does not, however, mean that you should treat your wife and children harshly, or strain your relations with them so as w make your own and their domestic lift miserable and wretched For if you did so, two of the disadvantages would obviously result: first, it may close down every avenue to the reformation of the wife and children for ever; second, it may give rise to suspicions and misgivings against Islam in the society and the people around may form the impression that a Muslim turns unduly rigid and ill-tempered for his own children in his own house as soon as he has embraced Islam.

In this connection, one should also keep in mind that in the beginning when the people became Muslims, they encountered a special difficulty if their parents were unbelievers. They would press their children to give up the new Faith. They would face another difficulty when their wives and children (or in case of

women, their husbands and children) persisted unbelief and would force them to abandon the Faith of Truth. About the first difficulty, instruction was given in Al-Ankabut: 8 and Luqman; 14-15, saying: "Treat your parents well but if they press you to join with Me another about whom you have no knowledge, do not obey them at all " About the second difficulty the Instruction has been given here, saying: "You must try to save your faith from your children and family members but do not treat them harshly, but rather politely and leniently." (For further explanation, see At-Taubah: 23-24; E N. 37 of Al-Mujadalah, E.N.'s 1 to 3 of Al-Mumtahanah; E.N. 18 of Munafiqun).

30For explanation, sec E.N. 23 of Surah Al-Anfal. Here one should also keep in view the Holy Prophet's saying which Tabarani has related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Malik al-Ash'ari, saying: "Your real enemy is not he whom if you kill there is success for you, and if he kills you, there is Paradise for you; but your real enemy may b your own child who is born of your own loins, or the wealth of which you are the owner." That is why here us well as in Al-Anfal: 28, Allah says: If you save yourselves from the temptation and allurements of worldly possessions and Children and succeed in keeping love of them subject to the love of Allah, there are rich rewards for you with Allah.

31At another place in the Qur'an it has been said: "Fear Allah as He should actually be feared." (Al-'Imran: 102). At still another place: “Allah does not burden any one with a responsibility heavier than he can bear." (Al-Baqarah: 286) And here: "Fear Allah as far as you can." When these three verses are read together it appears that the first verse sets an ideal which every believer should try to attain. The second verse lays down the principle that no one has been required to exert himself. beyond his power and ability, for in Allah's Religion one has been made responsible only for what is within one's power and ability. This verse enjoins every believer to try to attain piety and consciousness of God as far as he can. He should carry out His Commands and avoid His disobedience as best as he possibly can. For if he shows laxity in this regard, he will not be able to escape punishment. However, one will not be held accountable for what was beyond one's power (and Allah alone can decide best what was really beyond a person's power and ability).

32For explanation, see E.N. 19 of Al-Hashr.

33For explanation, see E.N. 267 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 33 of Al Ma'idah, E,N. 16 of Al-Hadid.

34For explanation, see E.N.'s 52, 59 of Fatir; E.N.42 of Ash-Shura.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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65. Surah At Talaq (Divorce)

Name

At-Talaq is not only the name of this Surah but also the title of its subject matter, for it contains commandments about *Talaq* (divorce) itself. Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud has described it as *Surah an-Nisa al-qusra* also, i.e. the shorter Surah an-Nisa.

Period of Revelation

Hadrat Abdullah bin Masud has Pointed out, and the internal evidence of the subject matter of the Surah confirms the same, that it must have been sent down after those verses of surah Al-Baqarah in which commandments concerning divorce were given for the first time. Although it is difficult to determine precisely what is its exact date of revelation, yet the traditions in any case indicate that when the people started making errors in understanding the commandments of Surah Al-Baqarah, and practically also they began to commit mistakes, Allah sent down these instructions for their correction.

Theme and Subject Matter

In order to understand the commandments of this Surah, it would be useful to refresh one's memory about the instructions which have been given in the Qur'an concerning divorce and the waiting period (*Iddat*) above.

"Divorce may be pronounced twice; then the wife may either be kept back in fairness or allowed to separate in fairness." (Al Baqarah 229)

"And the divorced women (after the pronouncement of the divorce) must wait for three monthly courses... and their husbands are fully entitled to take them back (as their wives) during this waiting period, if they desire reconciliation." (Al Baqarah 228)

"Then, if the husband divorces his wife (for the third time), she shall not remain lawful for him after this divorce,

unless she marries another husband..." (Al-Baqarah : 230)

"When you marry the believing women, and then divorce them before you have touched them, they do not have to fulfill a waiting period, the completion of which you may demand of them." (Al-Ahzab : 49)

"And if those of you who die, leave wives behind, the women should abstain (from marriage) for four months and ten days." (Al-Baqarah 234)

The rules prescribed in these verses were as follows:

1. A man can pronounce at the most three divorces on his wife.

2. In case the husband has pronounced one or two divorces he is entitled to keep the woman back as wife within the waiting period and if after the expiry of the waiting period the two desire to re-marry, they can re-marry there is no condition of legalization (*tahlil*). But if the husband has pronounced three divorces, he forfeits his right to keep her as his wife within the waiting. period, and they cannot re-marry unless the woman re-marries another husband and he subsequently divorces her of his own free will.

3. The waiting period of the woman, who menstruates and marriage with whom has been consummated, is that she should pass three monthly courses. The waiting period in case of one or two divorces is that the woman is still the legal wife of the husband and he can keep her back as his wife within the waiting period. But if the husband has pronounced three divorces, this waiting period cannot be taken advantage of for the purpose of reconciliation, but it is only meant to restrain the woman from re-marrying another person before it comes to an end.

4. There is no waiting. period for the woman, marriage with whom has not been consummated, and who is divorced even before she is touched. She can re-marry, if she likes, immediately after the divorce.

5. The waiting period of the woman whose husband dies, is four months and ten days.

Here, one should understand well that Surah At-Talaq was not sent down to annul any of these rules or amend it, but it was sent down for two purposes;

First, that the man who has been given the right to pronounce divorce should be taught such judicious methods of using this right as do not lead to separation, as far as possible however, if separation does take place, it should only be in case all possibilities of mutual reconciliation have been exhausted. For in the Divine Law provision for divorce has been made only as an unavoidable necessity; otherwise Allah does not approve that the marriage relationship that has been established between a man and a woman should ever break. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has said "Allah has not made lawful anything more hateful in His sight than divorce." (Abu Daud). And: "Of all the things permitted by the Law, the most hateful in the sight of Allah is the divorce, (Abu Daud)

The second object was to complement this section of the family law of Islam by supplying answers to the questions

that had remained after the revelation of the commandments in Surah Al-Baqarah. So, answers have been supplied to the following questions:What would be the waiting period of the women, marriage with whom has been consummated and who no longer menstruate, or those who have not yet menstruated, in case they are divorced? What would be the waiting period of the woman, who is pregnant, or the woman whose husband dies, if she is divorced?And what arrangements would be made for the maintenance and lodging of the different categories of divorced women, and for the fosterage of the child whose parents have separated on account of a divorce?

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

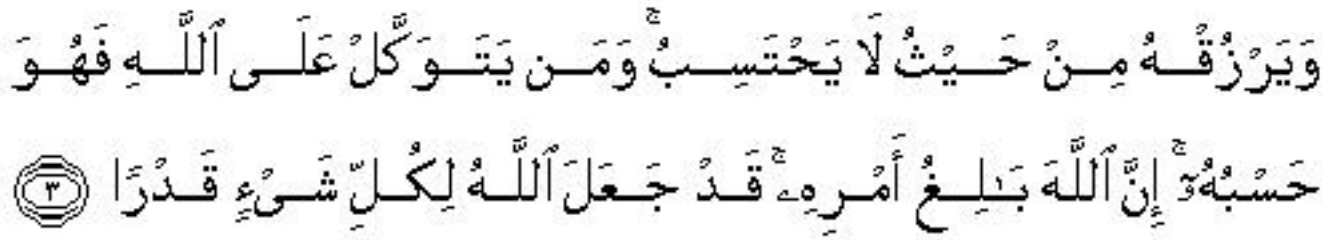
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ ٱلنِّسَآءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعِدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُواْ
ٱلْعِدَّةَ ۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ ۖ لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنۢ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّآ
أَن يَأْتِينَ بِفَٰحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ ٱللَّهِ
فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُۥ ۚ لَا تَدْرِى لَعَلَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ أَمْرًا
١

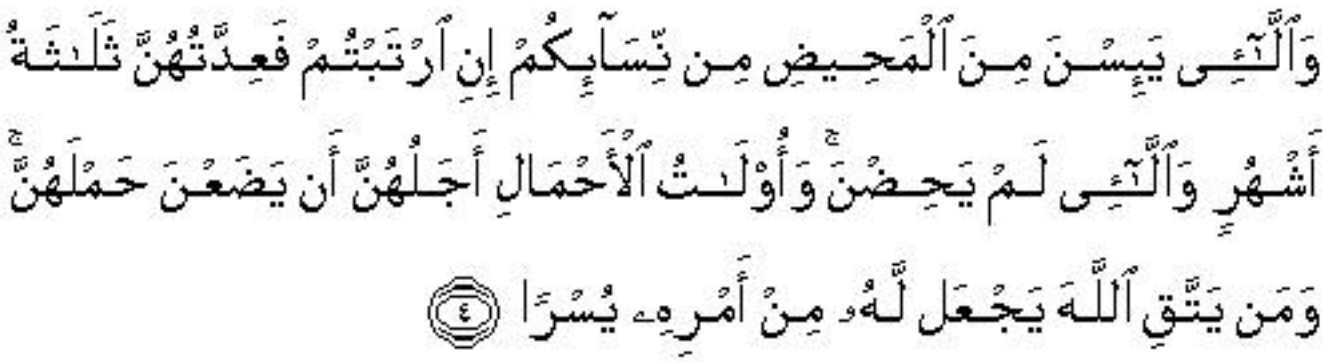
فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَأَشْهِدُواْ
ذَوَىْ عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُواْ ٱلشَّهَٰدَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُوعَظُ بِهِۦ مَن كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ
بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُۥ مَخْرَجًا ۝٢

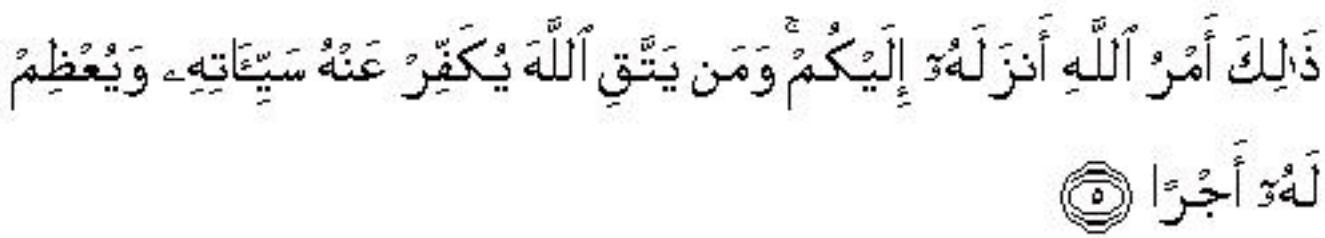
[1-2] O Prophet, when you (and the believers) divorce women, divorce them for their prescribed waiting-periods,[1]

and count the waiting-period accurately,[2] and fear Allah, you Lord. And do not turn them out of their houses (during the waiting-period), not should they themselves leave them,[3] except in case they commit an open. indecency.[4] These are the bounds prescribed by Allah and whoever transgresses Allah's bounds will wrong his own self. You do not know: Allah may after this bring about a situation (of reconciliation).[5] Then when they have reached the end of their (waiting) periods either retain them (in wedlock) in a fair manner or part with them in a fair manner,[6] and call to witness two just men from among yourselves,[7] and (O witnesses) bear witness equitably for the sake of Allah.



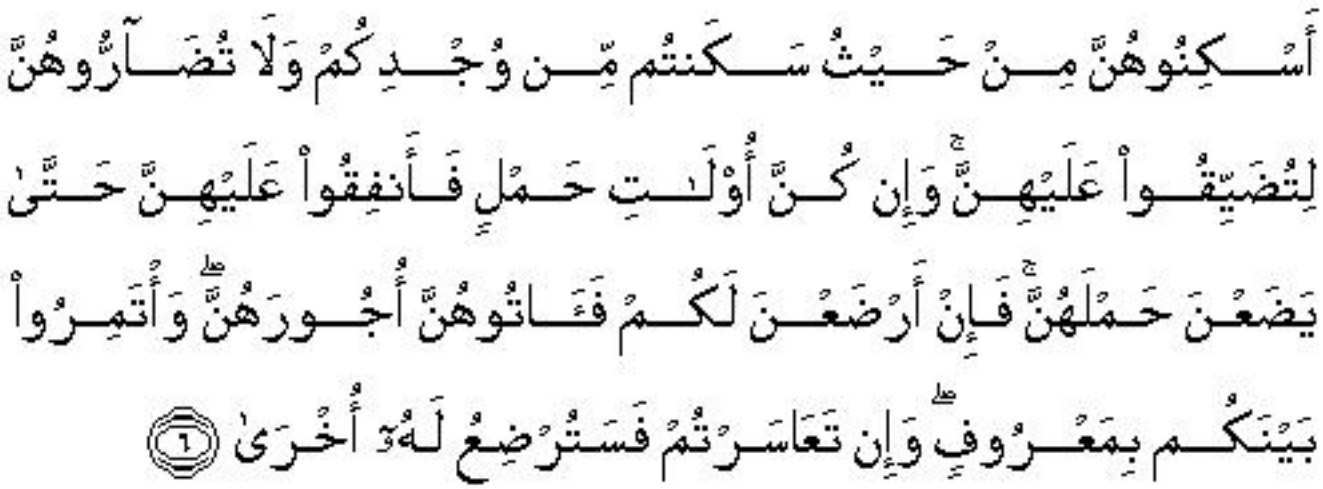
[3] With this you are admonished, (and) whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day.[8] Whosoever fears Allah in whatever he does, Allah will open for him away out of the difficulties[9] and will provide for him from whence he could little imagine.[10] And whoever trusts in Allah, He is enough for him. Allah brings His decrees to fulfillment.[11] Allah has appointed a destiny for everything.



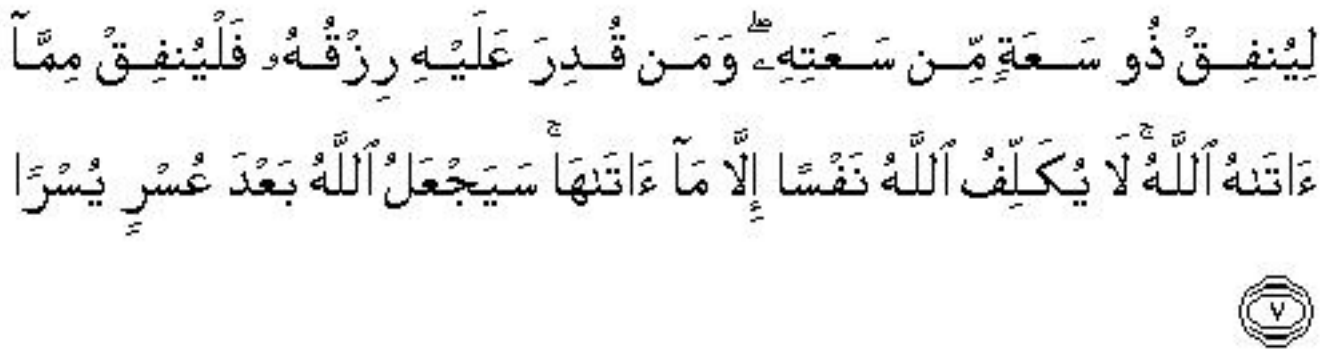


[4-5] And if you are in doubt about those of your women who have despaired of menstruation, (you should know that) their waiting period is three months,[12] and the same applies to those who have not menstruated as yet.[13] As far as pregnant women, their period ends when they deliver the burden.[14] Whoever fears Allah, He makes his course

easy for him. This is Allah's Command which He has sent down to you. Whoever fears Allah, Allah will remove his evils from him and will enhance his rewards.[15]



[6] Lodge them (in the waiting-period) where you yourselves live, according to your means, and do not harass them so as to straiten them.[16]



[7] And if they are pregnant, spend on them until they deliver their burden.[17] Then if they suckle (the child) for you, give them their wages, and settle the question of wages) fairly by mutual consultation.[18] But if you created difficulties for each other (concerning the question of wages). then another woman would suckle the child.[19] Let the rich man spend according to his means and let the one whose means are restricted, spend out of what Allah has given him. Allah does not burden anyone with more than what He has given him. It may u-ell be that Allah brings about ease after hardship.

وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِۦ
فَحَاسَبْنَٰهَا حِسَابًا شَدِيدًا وَعَذَّبْنَٰهَا عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا ﴿٨﴾

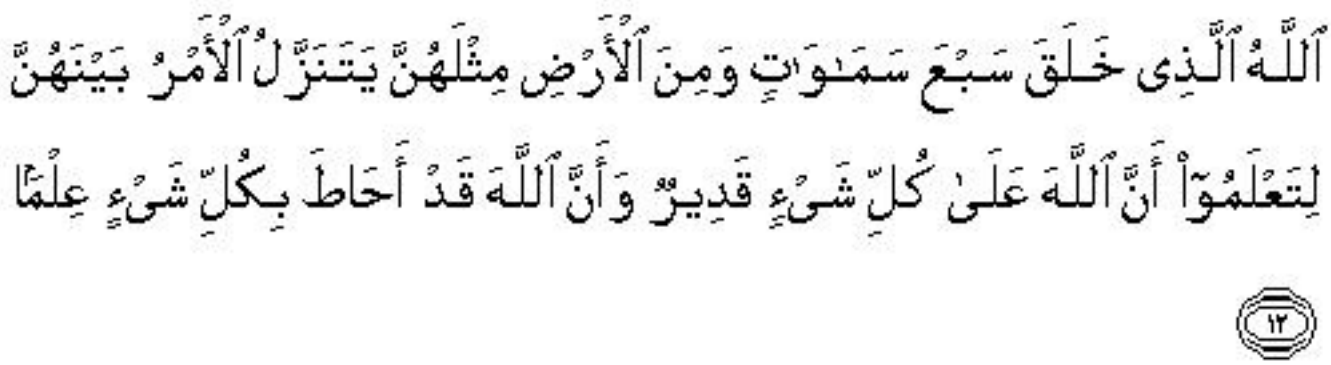
فَذَاقَتْ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهَا وَكَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ أَمْرِهَا خُسْرًا ﴿٩﴾

أَعَدَّ ٱللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَٰٓأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ قَدْ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴿١٠﴾

رَّسُولًا يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ مُبَيِّنَٰتٍ لِّيُخْرِجَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا
يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ قَدْ أَحْسَنَ
ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ رِزْقًا ﴿١١﴾

[8-11] Many a settlement[20] has rebelled against the commandments of its Lord and His Messengers, and We called it to stern account and punished it severely. They tasted the evil results of their misdeeds and consequently they have nothing but ' loss in store for them. Allah has prepared from them a severe torment (in the Hereafter). So fear Allah. O you then of understanding, who have believed. Allah has sent down to you an Admonition, a Messenger[21] who recites to you Allah's Revelations containing clear guidance, so that he may bring those who have believed and done good deeds out of darknesses into light.[22] Whoever believes in Allah and does good deeds, Allah shall admit him into Gardens underneath which canals will be flowing. They shall live therein for ever. Allah has prepared for

such a one an excellent provision.



[12] Allah is He Who created seven heavens and of the earth also their like.[23] His Command descends among them. (This you are being told) so that you may know that Allah has power over everything, and that Allah's knowledge encompasses all.

1That is, "O believers, you should not make undue haste in the Matter of pronouncing divorce: your minor family quarrels should not so incite you that you should pronounce the final divorce in a fit of anger and there remains no chance for reconciliation. However When you have to divorce your wives, you should divorce them for their prescribed waiting-period." Pronouncing divorce for the waiting period has two meanings and both are implied here.

First. That "you should divorce them at a them when their waiting-period can begin. " This thing has already been prescribed in Al-Baqarah: 228 above. The waiting-period of the married woman who menstruates is three monthly courses after the pronouncement of divorce. If this commandment is kept in view the only appropriate time of pronouncing divorce that the waiting period may duly begin is when she is not in her courses, for he waiting-period cannot begin from the course during which she ma have been divorced, and divorcing her in that state would mean that, contrary to the Divine Command, her waiting-period should extend to four courses instead of three courses. Furthermore, this commandment also demands that the woman should not he divorced in the period-of purity during which the husband may have had sexual intercourse with her. For in this case, at the time divorce is pronounced neither the husband nor the wife can know whether he has conceived in consequence of the intercourse or not. Because of this neither the waiting-period can begin on the hypothesis that this would be reckoned in view of the succeeding monthly courses, nor on the hypothesis that this would be the waiting-period of a pregnant woman. So, this commandment lays down two rules simultaneously: first, that divorce should not be pronounced during menstruation; second, that divorce may be pronounced either in the period of purity during which there was no sexual intercourse with the woman, or in the state when the woman's being pregnant was known. A little consideration of the matter will show that the restrictions imposed on the pronouncement of divorce are for good reasons. The reason for imposing the restriction on the pronounce meant of divorce during menstruation is that in this state the husband and the wife are somewhat estranged from each other because of the prohibition of sexual intercourse in this start; and from the medical viewpoint also it is confirmed that the woman is not temperamentally normal during the courses. Therefore, if a quarrel starts between them in this state, both the husband and the wife would be helpless to an extent to put an end to it, and

if the matter is deferred till the woman is free from her courses, there is the possibility that the woman also may return to her normal temperamental state and the mutual attraction that nature has placed between them also may work and reunite them. Likewise, the reason for prohibiting the pronouncement of divorce during the purity period in which sexual intercourse may have taken place, is that if in consequence of it conception takes place, it can neither be known to the husband nor to the wife. Therefore, it cannot be a suitable time for pronouncing the divorce. If the man comes to know that conception has taken place, he would think a hundred times before deciding finally whether he should pronounce divorce or not on the woman who carries his child in her womb. The woman also in view of the future of her child would try her best to remove the causes of her husband's displeasure. ,But if a decision is taken blindly, in undue haste, and then it is known that conception had taken place, both will regret it later.

This is the first meaning "divorcing for the prescribed waiting-period", which applies only to those women marriage with whom has been consummated, who menstruate and may possibly conceive. As for its second meaning it is this: "If you have to divorce your wives, you should divorce them till the expiry of their waiting-period". That is "Do not pronounce three divorces all at once leading to permanent separation, but pronounce one, or at the most two divorces, and wait till the end of the waiting-period, so that there remains some chance for reconciliation for you at any time during this period." According to this meaning; this commandment is also useful in respect of those woman marriage with whom has been consummated and who menstruate as well as of those who no longer menstruate, or those who have not yet menstruated, or those whose pregnancy at the time of the pronouncement of divorce is known. If this Divine Command is rightly followed, no one will regret after having pronounced divorce, for if divorce is pronounced in this way, there remains room for reconciliation within the waiting. period, and even after the expiry of the waiting-period the possibility remains that the separated husband and wife may remarry if they wish reconciliation.

This same meaning of talliqu-hunna Ii- iddat-i hinna (divorce them for their prescribed waiting-period") has been given by the earliest commentators. Ibn 'Abbas has given this commentary of it: "One should not pronounce divorce during menstruation nor in the period of purity (tuhr) during which the husband may have had sexual intercourse. But one should leave the wife alone till she attains purity after the course; then one may pronounce a single divorce on her. In this case even if there is no reconciliation and the waiting-period expires, she would be separated by the single divorce." (Ibn Jarir)

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud says:

Divorce for the waiting-period means that one should pronounce the divorce in the woman s state of purity without having had an intercourse with her. " The same commentary has been reported from Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar, `Ata', Mujahid, Maimun bin Mahran, Muqatil bin Hayyan, and Dahhak (may Allah bless them all) (Ibn Kathir). Ikrimah has explained it thus: `One may pronounce the divorce in the state when the woman's being pregnantt is known, and not when one has had sexual intercourse with her and it is not known whether she has conceived or not." (Ibn Kathir) Both Hadrat Hasan Basri and Ibn Sirin say: `Divorce should be pronounced during the state of purity without having had sexual intercourse. or when the woman's being pregnant becomes known. " (Ibn Jarir)

The intention of this verse was best explained by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself on the occasion when Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar had divorced his wife while she was discharging the menses .. The, details of thin incident have been reported in almost all collections of Hadith and the same. in fact. are the source of the law in this connection. It so happened that when Hadrat `Abdullah divorced hi: wife while she was menstruating, Hadrat Umar came before the Holy Prophet and mentioned it to him. The Holy Prophet expressed great displeasure and said: Command him to take her back and keep her as his wife till she is purified, that she again menstruates and is again Purified: then if he so desires he may divorce her in her state of purity without having any sexual intercourse with her. This is the waiting-period which Allah Almighty has prescribed for the divorce of women." In a tradition the words are to the effect: "Either one may pronounce the divorce in the woman's state of purity without having a sexual intercourse, or in the state when her being pregnant becomes fully known".

The intention of this verse is further explained by a few other Ahadith which have been reported from the Holy prophet (upon wham be Allah's peace) and some of the major Companions. Nasa'i has related that the Holy Prophet was informed that a person had pronounced three divorces on his wife in one sitting. He stood up in anger and said: “Are the people playing with the Book of Allah, although I am present among you?" Seeing the Holy Prophet's extreme anger on this occasion, a person asked: “Should I not go and kill the man?"

Abdur Razzaq has reported about Hadrat `Ubadah bin as-Samit that his father pronounced one thousand divorces on his wife. He went before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and asked his ruling on it. The Holy Prophet said: “By the three divorces the woman stood separated from him along with Allah': disobedience, and 997 pronouncement remained as acts of injustice and sin, for which Allah might punish him if He so willed and forgive him if He so willed."

In the details of the incident concerning Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar, which have been related in Daraqutni and Ibn Abi Shaibah, another thing also is that when the Holy Prophet commanded Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar to take his wife back, he asked: Had I pronounced three divorces on her, could I have taken her back even then? The Holy Prophet replied: No, she would have stood separated from you, and this would have been an act of sin." In another tradition the Holy Prophet's words are to the effect: “Had you done this, you would have committed disobedience of your Lord while your wife would have been separated from you.”

The legal rulings reported from the Companions in this regard are also in complete conformity with the Holy Prophet's injunctions. According to a tradition in Mu'watta, a person came to Hadrat 'Abdullah.bin Mas'ud and said: "I have pronounced eight divorces on my wife. Ibn Mas`ud asked: What legal opinion have you been given in this regard? He said: I have been told that the woman stands separated from me. Ibn Mas`ud said: The people have said the right thing: the legal position is the same as they have told you."

'Abdur Razzaq has related from 'Alqamah that a person said to Ibn Mas'ud: "I have pronounced 99 divorces on my wife He said: Three divorces separate her from you; the rest are (acts of sin) excesses. "

Waki' bin al-Jarrah in his sunah has reported this very viewpoint of both Hadrat 'Uthman and Hadrat 'Ali. A person came to Hadrat `Uthman and said: "I have pronounced a thousand divorces on my wife-'. He replied:

"She stood separated from you by three divorces." When a similar problem was presented before Hadrat `Ali he replied; `By three divorces she stood separated from you. You may distribute the rest of your pronouncements on the rest of your wives if you so like."

Abu Da'ud and Ibn Jarir have related, with a little variation in wording, a tradition from Mujahid, saying: "While I was sitting with Ibn Abbas, a person came and said: `I have pronounced three divorces on my wife.' Ibn 'Abbas heard it but kept silent for so long that I thought he was perhaps going to return his wife to him. Then he said: “One of you first commits the folly of pronouncing the divorces; then he comes and says: O Ibn `Abbas, O Ibn `Abbas! whereas Allah has said that whoever fears Him in whatever he does, He will open a way for him out of the difficulties. You did not fear Allah; now I do not find any way for you: you have disobeyed your Lord, and your wife stands separated from you.”

Another tradition, which also has been reported from Mujahid and related with a little variation in wording in mu'watta and Tefsir by Ibn Jarir, says: “A person pronounced a hundred divorces on his wife; then he asked Ibn 'Abbas for his opinion. He replied: 'By three divorces she stood separated from you. With the other 97 you made a Jest of the Revelations of Allah!" This is according to Mu'watta. According to Ibn Jarir the words of Ibn `Abbas were to the effect: “You disobeyed your Lord, and your wife stood separated from you, and you did not fear Allah that He might open a way for you out of the difficulty."

Imam Tahavi has related that a man came to Ibn `Abbas and said: 'My uncle has pronounced three divorces on his wife. He replied: Your uncle has disobeyed Allah and committed a sin and followed Satan. Now, Allah has left no way open for him out of the difficulty."

According to a tradition in Mu'watta and Abu Da'ud, a man pronounced three divorces on his wife before the consummation of marriage; then desired to remarry her, and came out to know the legal aspect of the matter. The reporter of the Hadith, Muhammad bin lyas bin Bukair, says: 'I accompanied him to Ibn `Abbas and Abu Hurairah. The reply each one gave was: 'You have let slip from your hand whatever opportunity was there for you'." Zamakhshari has stated in al-Kashshaf that Hadrat `Umar used to beat the man who would pronounce three divorces on his wife (at one and the same time) and then would enforce his divorces.

Sa'id bin Mansur has related this very thing from Hadrat Anas on sound authority. In this connection. the general opinion of the Companions. which Ibn Abi Shaibah and Imam Muhammad have related from Ibrahim Nakha'i (may Allah bless them) was: "The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) approved of this method that one may pronounce a single divorce on the wife and leave her alone till she completes three monthly courses." These are the words of Ibn Abi Shaibah. The words of Imam Muhammad are to the effect: '`The approved method with them was that in the matter of divorce one should not exceed one divorce tilt the waiting-period is completed."

The detailed law that the jurists of Islam have compiled with the help of these Ahadith and traditions in the light of the above mentioned Qur'anic verse, is as follows:

(1) The Hanafis regard divorce as of three kinds: Ahsan. hasan, and bid'i. The ahsan form of divorce is that one

may pronounce only one divorce on one's wife during a tuhr (purity) period in which one must refrain from sexual intercourse and leave the wife to complete her waiting-period. The hasan form of divorce is that one may pronounce one divorce in each period of purity: in this case pronouncement of three: divorces, one each in three periods of purity, . is also not against the Shari'ah, although the best approved method is to pronounce only one divorce and leave the wife to complete her waiting-period. The bid form of divorce is that one must pronounce three divorces in a single sitting, or pronounce three divorces at different times during the same period of purity, or pronounce divorce during menstruation, or pronounce it in the period of purity during which one has had a sexual intercourse. Of these whichever course one may adopt one will be guilty a sin, This is the law in respect of the woman Marriage with whom has been consummated and who has regular courses. As for the woman marriage with whom has not been consummated, she can be divorced both in the state of purity and during menstruation, and this is according to the Sunnah. And if the woman is such a one marriage with whom has been consummated who no longer menstruates, or the one who has not yet menstruated, she can be divorced even after the sexual intercourse„for there is no chance of her being pregnant. And if the woman is pregnant, she also can be divorced after the sexual intercourse, for her pregnancy is already established. But the method of pronouncing divorce on these women according to the Sunnah, is that the divorce may be pronounced at the interval of one month in each case. However, the ahsan method is that only one divorce may be pronounced and the woman left to complete her waiting period. (Hedayah, fath alQadir, Ahkam al-Qur an (AI-Jassas), `Umdat al-Qari).

According to Imam Malik also divorce is of three kinds . Sunni, bid'i makruh and bid'i haram. The divorce according to the Sunnah is that a single divorce be pronounced on the woman marriage with whom has been consummated and who menstruates, during her state of purity without having had sexual intercourse, and the woman be left to complete her waiting-period. The bid'i makrnh form is that divorce be pronounced in the period-of purity during which one may have had sexual intercourse, or more divorces than one be pronounced in the period of purity while there was no sexual intercourse, or three divorces be pronounced, one each in separate periods of purity within the waiting-period, or three divorces be pronounced all at once. And bid i haram is that divorce be pronounced during menstruation. (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi alal-Sharh-al-Kabir Ibn aI- Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur an).

The authentic viewpoint of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal which is generally agreed upon by the Hanbalis is: The approved method (i.e. the one according to the Sunnah) of divorcing a wife marriage with whom has been consummated and who menstruates is that a single divorce be pronounced on her in her period of purity without having had sexual intercourse with her, and then she be left to complete her waiting-period. But if she is giver three divorces, one each in three separate periods of purity or three divorces in one and the same period of purity, or divorced thrice at once, or divorced during the courses, or divorced in the period of purity during which the husband has had sexual intercourse and her being pregnant is not known, all these would be disapproved and forbidden forms of divorce. But if the woman is such that marriage with her has been consummated but who no longer menstruates, or such who has not yet menstruated, or is pregnant, in her case there is neither any difference of approved and disapproved with regard to time nor with regard to the number of divorces pronounced. (Al-Insaf fi Ma'rifat-ar-Rajih min al-Khilaf 'ala Madhhab Ahmad bin Hanbal).

According to Imam Shafe'i, in the matter of divorce the difference between the approved (i.e.. according to the Sunnah) and the reprehensible (i.e. against the Sunnah) forms of divorce is only with regard to time and not with

regard to number That is, to pronounce divorce on a woman marriage with whom has been consummated and who menstruates, during menstruation or to pronounce divorce on a Ovarian, who can conceive, during such a period of purity in which the husband has had sexual intercourse with her and the woman's pregnancy is unknown, is disapproved and forbidden. As for the number, whether three divorces are pronounced at one time, or pronounced in the same period of purity, or pronounced in separate periods of purity, they are not against the Sunnah in any case. In case the woman is such that marriage with her has not been consummated, or the one who no longer menstruates, or the one who has not yet menstruated, or the one whose being pregnant is known, there is no difference between the approved and the disapproved forms of divorce. (Mughni al-Muhtaj)

(2) A divorce being irregular, reprehensible, forbidden, or sinful with the four Imams does not mean that it does not have effect. According to all the four Sunni Schools, whether a divorce is pronounced during menstruation, or thrice at once, or pronounced in the period of purity during which the husband has had sexual intercourse and the woman's being pregnant is unknown, or pronounced in a manner disapproved by an Imam, in any case it does become effective, although the pronounce commits an act of sin. But some other scholars differ in this regard from the four Imams.

Sa'i bin al-Musayyab and some other immediate followers of the Companions say that the divorce of the person who pronounces it during menstruation, or pronounces it thrice at one time, does not take place at all. The same is the opinion of the Imamiah sect of the Shi`as. The basis of this opinion is that since this form of divorce is forbidden and utterly irregular, it is ineffective, whereas the AhadIth that we have cited above, clearly show that when Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Umar divorced his wife during menstruation, the Holy Prophet commanded him to take her back; had the divorce not taken effect at all, the command to take the wife back would have been meaningless. And this also confirmed by many Ahadith that the Holy Prophet and the major Companions considered the pronounce of more divorces than one at one time sinful but did not regard his divorce as ineffective.

Ta'us and 'Ikrimah say that only one divorce takes place if divorce is pronounced thrice at once, and this very view has been adopted by Imam Ibn Taimiyyah. The source of his this opinion is that Abu as-Sahba' asked Ibn 'Abbas: 'Don't you know that in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and Hadrat Abu Bakr and in the early period of Hadrat 'Umar a triple divorce was considered a single divorce? He replied: Yes." (Bukhari, Muslim). .And in Muslim, Abu Da'ud and Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Abbas's this statement has been cited: "In the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and Hadrat Abu Bakr and during the first two years of the caliphate of Hadrat `Umar a triple divorce was considered a single divorce. Then Hadrat `Umar expressed the view: As the people have started acting hasty in a matter in which they had been advised to act judiciously and prudently, why should we not enforce this practice? So, he enforced It."

But this view is not acceptable for several reasons. In the first place, according to several traditions lbn `Abbas's own ruling was against it, as we have explained above. Secondly, it is contrary to those Ahadith also, which have been reported from tire Holy Prophet upon whom be peace) and the major Companions, in which the ruling given about the pronounce of a threefold divorce at one time is that all his three divorces become effective. These Ahadith also have been cited above Thirdly, from Ibn `Abbas's own tradition itself it becomes evident that Hadrat `Umar had publicly enforced the triple divorce in the assembly of the Companions, but neither then nor after it the Companions ever expressed any difference of opinion. Now, can it be conceived that Hadrat `Umar could decide

an issue against the Sunnah? And could the Companions also accept his decision without protest? Furthermore, in the story concerning Rukanah bin `Abd-i Yazib, a tradition has been related by Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Imam Shafe`i, Darimi and Hakim, saying that when Rukanah pronounced three divorces on his wife in one and the same sitting, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) asked him to state on oath whether his intention was to pronounce one divorce only, (That is, the two subsequent divorces were pronounced only to lay emphasis on the first divorce; the triple divorce was not intended to create separation permanently). And when he stated this on oath, the Holy Prophet gave him the right to take his wife back. `This brings out the truth of the matter as to what kind of divorces were considered a single divorce in the earliest period of Islam. On this very basis, the interpreters of the Hadith have explained the tradition of Ibn 'Abbas thus: As in the early period of Islam deceit and fraud in religious matters was almost unknown among the people, the statement of the pronouncer of a triple divorce was admitted that his real intention was to pronounce only a single divorce, and the two subsequent divorces had been pronounced only for the sake of emphasis. But when Hadrat `Umar saw that the people first pronounced three divorces in haste and then presented the excuse of pronouncing them only for the sake of emphasis, he refused to accept this excuse. Imam Nawawi and Imam Subki regard this as the beat interpretation of the tradition from Ibn `Abbas, Finally, there is disagreement in the traditions of Abu aa-Sahba' himself, which he has related concerning the saying of Ibn `Abbas. Muslim, Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i have related from this same Abu as-Sahba' another tradition; saying that on an inquiry by him. Ibn `Abbas said: ` When a person pronounced a threefold divorce on his wife before consummation of marriage, it was considered a single divorce in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and Hadrat Abu Bakr and in the early period of Hadrat 'Umar," Thus, one and the same reporter has reported from Ibn 'Abbas traditions containing two divergent themes and this diversity weakens both the traditions.

(3) As the Holy Prophet had commanded the pronouncer of the divorce during menstruation to take his wife back, the dispute has arisen among the jurists as to what is the exact sense of this command Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Shafe'i, Imam Ahmad, Imam Auza'i, Ibn Abi Laila, Ishaq bin Rahawaih and Abu Thaur say that such a person would be commanded to take his wife back, but would not be compelled to do so. ('Umdat alQari). The Hanafi viewpoint as stated in Hedayah is that in this case taking the wife back is not only preferable but also obligatory. In Mughni al-Muhtaj' the Shafe'i viewpoint has been stated to be that the approved (i.e. One according to Sunnah method for the one who has pronounced divorces during menstruation, but has not pronounced a triple divorce, is that he should take his wife back, and should refrain from pronouncing divorce in the following period of purity, but should pronounce it, if he so likes, in the period of purity when the wife has become fret from her next menstrual course and attained purity, so that his revocation of the divorce pronounced during menstruation is not taken in jest. The Hanbali viewpoint as presented in Al-Insaf is that in this state it is preferable for the pronounce of divorce to take his wife back. But Imam Malik and his companions say that pronouncement of divorce during menstruation is a cognizable offense. Whether the woman makes a demand or not, it is in any case the duty of the ruler that if such an act of some one is brought to his notice, he must compel the person to take his wife back and should continue to press him till the end of the waiting-period; and if he refuses to take her back. he should imprison him; if he still refuses, he should beat him; and if he still does not accede, the ruler should give his own decision, saying: "I return your wife to you. " And the ruler's this decision would be effective after which it would be lawful for the man to have sexual intercourse with the woman, whether he intends to take her back or not, for the ruler's intention represents his intention. (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi). The Malikis also say that if the person, who has taken his wife back willingly or unwillingly, after divorcing her during menstruation, has made up his mind to repudiate her, the preferable method for him is that he should refrain from

divorcing her in the period of purity following the menstruation during which he divorced her, but should divorce her in the period of purity following the next menstruation The prohibition to pronounce divorce in the period of purity following the menstruation in which divorce was pronounced, has been enjoined so that the return of the pronouncer during menstruation does not remain merely oral, but he should have sexual intercourse with the woman during the period of purity. Then, since the pronouncement of divorce in the period of purity in which sexual intercourse has taken place is prohibited, the right time for pronouncing it is the following period of purity only. (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi).

(4) As to the question: Till when has the pronouncer of one revocable divorce the power to take his wife back? difference of opinion has arisen among the jurists and this difference has occurred on the question: What do the words thalathata quti'-in or AI-Baqarah: 228 imply: three menstruation or three periods of purity? According to Imam Shafe`i and Malik, qara implies a period of purity, and this view is held on the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah, Ibn 'Umar and Zaid bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with them). The Hanafi viewpoint is that qara implies menstruation and the same is the authentic viewpoint of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal too. This view is based on the authority of all the four rightly-guided Caliphs, Abdullah bin Mas'ud, `Abdullah bin 'Abbas, Ubayy bin Ka'b, Mu'adh bin Jabal, Abu ad-Darda', 'Ubadah bin as-Samit and Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with them). Imam Muhammad in his Mu'watta has cited a saying of Sha`bi, saying that he met thirteen of the Holy Prophet's Companions and they all held this same opinion, and this very view was adopted by many of the immediate followers of the Companions also.

On account of this difference of opinion, according to the Shafe`is and the Malikis, the waiting period of the woman comes to an end as soon as she enters the third menstruation, and the man's power to take her back -is terminated. And if the divorce has been pronounced during menstruation, this menstruation will not be counted towards the waiting-period but the waiting-period will come to an end as soon as the woman enters the fourth menstruation. (Mughni al-Muhtaj; Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi). The Hanafi; viewpoint is that if the menstrual discharge in the third menstruation stops after ten days, the waiting-period of the woman will cane to an end with it whether she takes purification bath or not; and if the discharge ceases within less than ten days, the waiting-period will not come to an end until the woman has taken her purification bath, or until a Prayer time has passed. In case water is not available, according to Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Abu Yusuf, the man's right to return to her will be terminated, when she has performed her Prayer with tayammum (purification with dust), and, according to Imam Muhammad, as soon as she has performed tayammwn itself. (Hedayah). Imam Ahmad's authentic viewpoint which is held by the majority of the Hanbalis is that as long as the woman does not have her purification bath after the third menstruation, the man's right to return to her will remain. (Al-Insaf).

(5) As for the question that is the method of taking the wife back? the jurists are agreed that the person, who has pronounced a revocable divorce on his wife, can return to her whenever he likes before the expiration of the waiting-period, whether the woman is desirous of this or not, for the Qur'an says: "Their husbands are best entitled to take them back as their wives during this waiting-period." (AI-Baqarah: 228). From this it can automatically be concluded that until the expiry of the waiting-period, the marriage tie remains intact and the husbands can take them back before they are separated absolutely and finally In other words, taking the wife back does not mean renewal of marriage for which the woman's consent may be necessary. After being unanimous so far, the jurists about different opinions about the method of taking the wife back.

According to the Shafe'is, return can take place only by the oral word, not by conduct. If the husband does not say with the tongue that he has taken the wife back, no act of intercourse or intimacy even if performed with the intention of resuming marital relationship, will be considered resumption of the relationship. Rather in this case seeking of every kind of enjoyment. from the woman is unlawful even if it is without lust. But there is no bar on having sexual intercourse with the woman, who has been divorced revocable, for the scholars are not agreed on its being unlawful. However, the one who believes in its being unlawful will be punishable. Furthermore, according to the Shafe'i viewpoint, it is in any case. incumbent to pay a proper or customary dower (makr Mithal) in case the husband has intercourse with the wife whom he had divorced revocable, whether after it he takes her back orally or not. (Mughni a/-Muhtaj).

The Malikis say that return can be effected both orally and by conduct. If for the purpose of resumption by word of mouth the husband uses express words, the resumption will take place whether he intended it or not; even if he uttered express words of resumption in jest, these words would amount to return and resumption. But if the words are not express, they would be considered resumption of relationship only in case they were pronounced with the intention of resumption. As for resumption by conduct, no act whether it is an act of intimacy or sexual intercourse, can be considered resumption as long as it has not been performed with the intention of the resumption of marital relation. (Hashiyah adDusuqi; Ibn `Arabi; Ahkam al-Qur an).

As for resumption of relationship by the word of mouth, the Hanafi and the Hanbali viewpoint is the same as the Malikl. As for resumption by conduct, the ruling of both the Schools, contrary to the Malikis, is that if the husband performs sexual intercourse with the woman whom he has divorced revocable within the waiting-period, it would by itself amount to resumption whether there was the intention of resumption or not. However, the difference between the viewpoints of the two Schools is that according to the Hanafis every act of intimacy amounts to resumption even if it is of a lesser degree than sexual intercourse; whereas the Hanbalis do not regard a mere act of intimacy as resumption of marital relationship. (Hedayah, Fath al-Qadir, `Umdat al-Qari Al Insaf)

(6) As for the consequences of talaq as-Sunnah (regular form of divorce according to the Sunnah) and ,talaq al-bid i (irregular form of divorce) the difference is this: In case one or two divorces have been pronounced, the divorced woman and her former husband can re-marry by mutual consent even if the waiting-period has expired. But if a man has pronounced three divorces, resumption of marital relation is neither possible within the waiting-period, nor after the expiry of the waiting period, unless, however, the woman marries another person, the marriage is duly contracted and consummated, and then either the second husband divorces her or dies; then if the woman and her former husband wish to re-marry by mutual consent, they can do so. In most collections of the AhadIth a tradition has been reported on sound authority, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was asked: "A man pronounced three divorces on his wife, then the woman married another man and the two had privacy but there was no intercourse; then he divorced her. Now, can this woman re-marry her former husband? The Holy Prophet replied: "No, unless her second husband has enjoyed her just as her first husband had enjoyed her." As for the pre-arranged marriage (tahlil) which is meant to legalize the woman for her former husband, so that she would marry another man, who would divorce her after having had sexual intercourse with her, this is invalid according to Imam Abu Yusuf, and according to Imam Abu Hanifah, the woman would become lawful for her former husband by this ceremony but such a thing is reprehensible to the extent of being unlawful. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "AIIah has cursed both the legaliser (Muhallil) and the one for whom legalization is performed

(mnhallil lahu). "(Tirmidhi, Nasa'i) Hadrat 'Uqbah bin 'Amir says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) asked his Companions: "Should I not tell you as to who is a hired bull?" The Companions said that he should. He said: "It is he who performs tahlil (legalization of marriage) Allah's curse falls both on the muhalil (legalizer) and on the muhallal lahu (the one for whose sake marriage is legalized)." (Ibn Majah, Daraqutni).

2This Command is addressed to the men as well as the women and the people of their families. It means: "Do not treat divorce lightly; it is a grave matter, which gives birth to many legal questions for the man, the woman, their children and the people of their house Therefore, when divorce is pronounced, its time and date should be remembered and also the state in which divorce was pronounced on the woman; one should keep an accurate account of when the waiting period started, and when it would expire. On this reckoning will depend the determination of the following questions: Till when has the husband the power to take the wife back? Till when has he to keep her in the house? Till when is he bound to maintain her? Till when will he inherit the woman ant the woman him? When will the woman be separated from him finally and obtain the right to remarry? And if this matter takes the shape of a law-suit, the court also in order to arrive at the correct decision, will need to know the correct date and time of pronouncing the divorce and the woman's state at the time, for without this information, it cannot give the right decision on the questions arising from the divorce in respect of the women who have been enjoyed, or not, pregnant, or not, who menstruate, or no longer menstruate, and who have been divorced revocably or irrevocably.

3That is, " Neither should the man turn out the woman in anger, nor the woman herself should leave the house in anger and haste. The house is hers during the waiting-period, and both the man and the wife should live together so that advantage may be taken if there is any chance of reconciliation. If the divorce is revocable, the husband may at any time be inclined towards the wife, and the wife also may try to win the husband's pleasure by removing the causes of dispute and difference. If both stay together in the same house, there may appear many an occasion for reconciliation during the three months„ or the three menstrual periods, or till child birth in case of pregnancy. But if the man turns her out in angry haste, or the woman returns to her parents imprudently, chances of reconciliation diminish, and the divorce generally leads to permanent separation. That is why the jurists have even suggested that in case of a revocable divorce the woman should during her waiting-period adorn herself so as to attract the husband. (Hedayah; AI-Insaf).

The jurists are agreed that the revocably divorced woman has a right to lodging and maintenance during the waiting-period, and it is not lawful for the woman to leave the house without the husband's permission, nor is it lawful for the husband to turn her out of the house. If the husband turns her out he will be guilty of an act of sin and if the woman leaves of her own accord, she will not only commit a sin but will also forfeit her right to lodging and maintenance.

4Several meanings of this have been given by different jurists. Hadrat Hasan Basri,'Amir Sha'bi, Zaid bin Aslam, Dahhak, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Ibn Zaid, Hammed and Laith say that it implies adultery. Ibn 'Abbas says that it implies abusive language that the woman may continue to use against the husband and the people of his house even after the divorce, during the waiting-period. Qatadah says that it implies the woman's disobedient to her husband; that is, if the wife has been divorced because of her disobedience she may continue to be disobedience to her husband even during the waiting-period. 'Abdullah bin `Umar, Suddi, Ibn as-Sa'ib and

Ibrahim Nakha'i say that this implies the woman's leaving the house of herself. That is, in their opinion the woman's leaving the house in the waiting-period by itself amounts to committing an open indecency, and the command: 'Nor should they themselves leave the house except in case they commit an open indecency," is an admonition of this nature: 'Do not abuse others except in case you wish to be known as a discourteous person." According to the first three of these four viewpoints, "except in case" is related with "Do not turn them out of their houses," and the sentence means that if they are guilty of immorality or of using invectives or of disobedience, it would he lawful to turn them out of the houses. and according to the fourth view, it is related with "nor should they themselves leave their houses," and it means that if they leave their houses they would be guilty of open indecency.

5Both these sentences refute the viewpoint of those who hold that divorce does not take place at all if it is pronounced during menstruation or thrice at once, and also the view of those who think that a triple divorce amounts to a single divorce. The question arises . If an irregular (bid i) divorce does not take place, or a triple divorce amounts to a single revocable divorce, what then is the aced of saying: "Whoever transgresses the bounds set by Allah (i.e. the method taught by the Sunnah), would wrong his own self; and you do not know Allah may after this bring about a situation of reconciliation?" These two things would be meaningful only in case pronouncement of divorce against the method taught by the Sunnah should be harmful for which one may have to regret later. and the pronouncement of a triple divorce at once may not leave any room for reconciliation; otherwise, obviously by pronouncing a divorce which does not take effect at all one does not transgress the bounds set by Allah, which may be regarded as wronging one's own self, and after a divorce which is in any cast only revocable there does remain room for reconciliation; thus, there would be no need to say: "Allah may after this bring about a situation of re-conciliation."

Here, one should again understand well the mutual relationship between vv. 228-230 of Al-Baqarah and these verses of Surah At-Talaq. In Surah AI Baqarah the number of divorces laid down is three of which after pronouncing the first two one retains the right to take one's wife back and the right to re-marry her in cast the wailing-period has expired, without resort to legalization (tahlil), and if divorce is pronounced for the third time the husband forfeits both these rights. These verses of Surah At-Talaq were not sent down to amend or cancel this rule but to teach the people how to use wisely the powers that they have been given to divorce their wives, which if used rightly could save homes from ruin, could protect the husband from remorse if he had pronounced a divorce. could provide him maximum opportunities for reconciliation, and even if separation had taken place, could show him a way to reunite in marriage as a last resort if the couple so desired Hut if a person happens to use these powers unwisely, in a wrong way, he could only be wronging his own self and wasting all opportunities for making amends. It is just like a father's giving three hundred rupees in his son's possession and telling him to spend the amount as he may like; then advising him to the effect; "Spend the money given to you carefully, at the right place, and piece meal, so that you may benefit by it fully; otherwise if you expend it unwisely and carelessly in wrong places, or expend the whole of it at once, you will incur losses, and then I would not give you any more." This advice would be meaningless it the father did not give the amount in the son's possession at all, so that if he had wanted to spend it in a wrong place, he should be powerless to spend it, or if he had wanted to spend the whole amount, he could only take out a part of it while the rest lay safe with him in any case. If the condition be such, there could obviously be no need for this kind of advice.

6That is, "In case you have pronounced one or two revocable divorces, you should take a decision before the expiry of the waiting-period whether you would keep the wife in wedlock or send her away. If you decide to keep her, then you should keep her with honor and dignity and not with a view to tormenting and harassing her and getting another opportunity to prolong her waiting-period by divorcing her once again; and if you decide to part with her, then you should part with her gracefully, without indulging in any quarrel or vilification; if you still owe her the dower, or a part of it, pay it off, and give her something in addition also at her departure according to your means, as has been enjoined in Al-Baqarah: 241. (For further explanation, see E.N. 86 of Al-Ahzab).

7Ibn 'Abbas says that this implies calling to witness two men both at divorce and at reconciliation. (Ibn Jarir). Hadrat `Imran bin Husain was asked: "A man divorced his wife and then took her back, but he neither called anybody to witness pronouncement of the divorce nor resumption of the relation." He replied: “You pronounced the divorce against the Sunnah and you took your wife back against the Sunnah. You should call to witness men both at divorce and at resumption of relation, and you should not commit this mistake again." (Abu Da'ud, Iba Majah). But the four Sunni Imams are agreed that to call men to witness the divorce and the resumption and separation is no condition for these acts to be valid, so that if there was no witness, neither divorce should take place nor resumption should be valid nor separation. But this condition has been enjoined so that the parties may not deny any of the facts later and in case there was a dispute the matter might be settled easily and any suspicions and doubts might also be removed. This Command is just like the Command "Have witnesses in case of commercial transactions." (Al-Baqarat: 282). This does not mean that it is obligatory to have witnesses at business transactions, and if there was no witness, the transaction would be invalid; but this is a wise instruction which has been given to prevent disputes and it is good to follow it. Likewise, in the case of divorce and resumption also although a person's act and conduct would be legally valid even without the witnesses yet caution demands that whatever is done, it should be witnessed, simultaneously or later, by two just men.

8These words clearly show that the instructions given above are in the nature of advice and not law. If a man pronounces divorce against the approved method as explained above, or fails to reckon the waiting-period accurately. or expels the wife from the house without a good reason, or returns to her at the end of the waiting-period only to harass her, or sends her away after a quarrel, or fails to call the men to witness the divorce, reconciliation, or separation, if will not affect the legal effects of divorce or reconciliation or separation at all. However, his acting against Allah's advice would be a proof that his heart was devoid of the taste faith in Allah and the Last Day. That is why he adopted a course which a true believer would never adopt.

9The context itself shows that here "fearing Allah in whatever one does" means to pronounce divorce in accordance with the approved method taught by the Sunnah to reckon the waiting-period accurately, to avoid turning the wife out of the house, to take the wife back if one decides to keep her, at the expiry of the waiting-period with the intention of keeping her equitably and to send her away in a fair manner if one decides to part with her, and to call two just men to witness the divorce, reconciliation or separation, as the case be. In respect of this, Allah says that whoever acts in fear of Him, He will open for him a way out of the difficulties This automatically gives the meaning That whoever does not fear Allah in these matters, will create for himself such complications and difficulties from which he will find no way out.

A study of these words clearly shows that the view of those who hold that the irregular (bid i) form of divorce does not take place at all, and of those who regard a triple divorce pronounced at once or during the same period of purity as a single divorce, is not correct. For if an irregular form of divorce does not take place at all, it does not create any complication from which one may have to find a way out; and if only a single divorce takes place when one has pronounced three divorces at once, then also there arises no need for a person to seek a way out of a difficulty or complication.

10It means: "Keeping the divorced wife in the house during the waiting period, to maintain her and to pay her the dower, or something in addition, at departure certainly burdens a man financially. To spend on a woman whom one has already decided to send away because of strained relations will surely be irksome, and if the man is also poor, this expenditure will further pinch him. But a man who fears Allah, should endure all this gracefully. Allah is not niggardly as the people are. If a person spends his wealth in accordance with His law, He will provide for him in a manner beyond all expectations."

11That is, there is no power that can prevent Allah's decree from enforcement.

12This is in respect of the women who no longer menstruation and have reached menopause because of age. Their waiting-period will be reckoned from the day divorce was pronounced on them and three months imply three lunar months. If divorce was pronounced at the commencement of the lunar month. it is agreed that the waiting-period will be reckoned with regard to the sighting of the new moon; and if it was pronounced somewhere in the middle of the month, according to Imam Abu Hanifah, three months will have to be completed reckoning each month of 30 days. (Badai' as-Sami).

As for the women whose courses are irregular due to sonic reason, the jurists have held different opinions:

Hadrat Sa'id bin al-Musayyab says that Hadrat `Umar ruled: "If the woman who has been divorced stops having menses after having them once or twice after the divorce, she will wait for 9 months. If signs of pregnancy appear, well and good, otherwise after the passage of 9 months, she should observe the waiting-period of three additional months. Then she would be lawful for marriage to another person.

Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah and `Ikrimah say that the waiting-period of the woman who has not menstruated for a year, is three months.

Ta'us says that the waiting-period of the woman who menstruates once in a year, is three menstruations. This very opinion has been reported from Hadrat 'Uthman, Hadrat 'Ali and Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit.

Imam Malik relates that a person Habban by name divorced his wife during the period when she was suckling her child. A year passed on it, but she did not have the menses. Then the man died. The

divorced wife laid claim to inheritance. The case came before Hadrat `Uthman. He consulted with Hadrat 'Ali and Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit, and gave the decision that the woman was an heiress. The argument given was that the woman was neither of those women a who might have despaired of menstruation, nor of those girls who may not have menstruated yet: therefore, up till the husband's death she was on the menses she had discharged last, and had still to pass her waiting-period.

The Hanafis say that the waiting-period of the woman, who no longer menstruates, which may not be on account of menopause so that there may be no hope of her having it later will either be reckoned from the menstruation if she has it in the future, or in accordance with the age at which women generally reach menopause, and after attaining that age she will pass three months of the waitingperiod in order to be released from the marriage bond. The same opinion is held by Imam Shafe'i. Imam Thauri and Imam Laith, and the same also is the view of Hadrat 'Umar Hadrat 'Uthman and Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit.

Imam Malik has adopted the view of Hadrat 'Umar and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas and it is this: The woman will first pass nine months. If she does not have her menses during thin period, she will pass three months of the waiting-period like like the woman who has despaired of menstruation, Ibn al-Qasim explaining the viewpoint of Imam Malik says: The period of nine months will be reckoned from the day she became free from the previous menstrual discharge and not from the day divorce was pronounced on her. (All these have been taken from al-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur'an and al-Kasani, Badai as-Sana`i).

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal says that if the woman whose waiting-period started from menstruation despairs of menstruation during the waiting-period, she will be required to pass the waiting-period of the menopausal woman and not of the women who menstruate regularly. And if she stops menstruating and the cause of the cessation is unknown, she will first pass nine months in the doubt of pregnancy, and then will have to complete three months of the waiting-period, And if the cause of the cessation of the menses becomes known, e.g. a disease, or suckling, or some other cause, she will lie in the waiting-period till the tithe that either she starts having the menses again so that the waiting-period may be reckoned in accordance with the courses, or she reaches menopause and may pass the waiting-period of the menopausal woman. (Al-Insaf).

13They may not have menstruated as yet either because of young age, or delayed menstrual discharge as it happens in the case of some women, or because of no discharge at all throughout life which, though rare, may also be the case. In any case, the waiting-period of such a woman is the same as of the woman, who has stopped menstruation, that is three months from the time divorce was pronounced.

Here, one should bear in mind the fact that according to the explanations given in the Qur'an the question of the waiting period arises in respect of the women with whom marriage may have been consummated, for there is no waiting-period in case divorce is pronounced before the consummation of marriage. (Al-Ahzab: 49). Therefore, making mention of the waiting-period for the girls who have not yet menstruated, clearly proves that it is not only permissible to give away the girl in marriage at this age but it is also

permissible for the husband to consummate marriage with her. Now, obviously no Muslim has the right to forbid a thing which the Qur'an has held as permissible.

The girl who is divorced in the state when she has not yet menstruated and then she starts having the menses during the waiting-period, will reckon her waiting-period from the same menstruation and her waiting-period will be reckoned just like the woman who menstruates regularly.

14The consensus of scholarly opinion is that the waiting-period of the pregnant divorced woman is till child birth. But a difference of opinion has occurred about whether the same also applies to the woman whose husband may die during her pregnancy. The dispute has arisen because in Al-Baqarah: 234 the waiting-period of the woman whose husband dies has been laid down as four months and ten days, and there is no mention whatever whether this injunction applies to all widows generally or only to those who are not pregnant,

Hadrat 'Ali and Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas, reading both these verses together, have drawn the rule that the waiting-period of the pregnant divorced woman is till child-birth, but that of the pregnant widow is the longer of the two periods, whether it be of the divorced woman or of the pregnant woman. For example, if delivery takes place before four months and ten days, she will have to observe a waiting period of four months and ten days, and if it does not take place till then, her waiting period will come to an end at delivery. The same is the viewpoint of the Imamiah sect of the Shi'as.

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud says that this verse of Surrah At-Talaq was sent down after the verse of Surah Al-Baqarah; therefore, the later injunction has made the earlier injunction particularly applicable to the non pregnant widow, and has laid down the waiting-period of every pregnant woman as till child birth, whether she is divorced or widowed, Accordingly, whether delivery takes place immediately after the husband's death, or takes longer than four months and ten days, the woman's waiting-period in any case will come to an end at the birth of the child. This view is supported by this tradition of Hadrat Ubayy bin Ka'b. He says, "When this verse of Surah At Talaq came down, I asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah 's peace): Is it both for the divorced woman and for the widow?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes." In another tradition the Holy Prophet further explained it thus: "The waiting period of every pregnant woman is till child-birth." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abu Hatim. Ibn Hajar says that although its reliability is questionable, yet as it has been related through several chains of transmitters, one has to admit that it has some basis). More than that, it is further confirmed by the incident concerning Subai'ah-i Aslamiyyah which occurred in the sacred time of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself. She became a widow during her pregnancy and a few days after her husband's death (according to some traditions 20 days, according to others 23 days. 25 days, 40 days or 35 days) she delivered her burden. The Holy Prophet was asked for his ruling concerning her and Ire permitted her to re-marry. This incident has been related by Bukhari and Muslim in different ways on the authority of Hadrat Umm Salamah. This same incident has been related by Bukhari Muslim, Imam Ahmed Abu Da'ud, Nasa`i and Ibn Majah with different chains of transmitters on the authority of Hadrat Miswar bin Makhramah also. Muslim has cited this statement of

Subai'ah-i Aslamiyyah herself: 'I was the wife of Hadrat Sa'd bin Khawalah. He died during the Farewell Pilgrimage when I was pregnant. A few days after his death I gave birth to a child. A man told me that I could not remarry before the expiry of four months and ten days. I went and asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and he gave the verdict: You have become lawful as soon as you gave birth to the child: you can re-marry if you so like'." This tradition has been related briefly by Bukhari also.

This same viewpoint has been reported from a large number of the Companions. Imam Malik, Imam Shafe'i, 'Abdur Razzaq, Ibn Abi Shaibah and Ibn al-Mundhir have related that when Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar was asked concerning the pregnant widow, he replied that her waiting-period is till childbirth. At this a man from among the Ansar confirmed, saying: "Hadrat `Umar had said that even if the deceased husband had not yet been buried,and his body still lay on bed in the house and his wife gave birth to a child, she would become pure and lawful for remarriage." The same opinion was held by Hadrat Abu Hurairah, Hadrat Abu Mansur Badri and Hadrat `A'ishah, and the same has been adopted by the four Sunni Imams and the other early jurists.

The Shafe`is say that if the pregnant woman has more children than one in her womb, her waiting-period will come to an end at the birth of the last child; even if it is still born, the waiting-period will expire at its birth. In case of abortion, if the mid-wives, on the basis of their knowledge and experience, state that it was not merely a piece of flesh but had human form, or that it was not a tumor but a human embryo, their statement will be admitted and the waiting period will expire. (Mughni, al-Muhtaj). The viewpoint of the Hanbalis and the Hanafis is also very close to it. But in case of abortion, their viewpoint is that unless the human form is clearly visible, the mid-wives' statement that it is human embryo, will not be admitted and this will not bring the waiting-period to an end. (Bade ias-Sane i; AI-Insaf). But in the modem times by means of medical investigation it can be easily ascertained whether what has been expelled from the womb was actually something of the nature of human fetus or a kind of tumor or congealed blood. Therefore, whenever it is possible to obtain expert medical opinion, it can be easily decided whether what is described as abortion, was really abortion or not, and whether it has brought the waiting-period to an end or not. However, in cases when such medical investigation is not possible, the viewpoint of the Hanbalis and the Hanafis itself is preferable and it is not fit to rely on the ignorant mid-wives.

15Although this is a general exhortation which applies to all matters and conditions of human life, yet in this particular context the object is to warn the Muslims to follow the Commands mentioned above in fear of God, no matter what responsibilities they may have to shoulder in consequence thereof, for as a reward for this Allah will remove their ills and will forgive their sins and will enhance their rewards in the Hereafter. Obviously, the waiting-period of the divorced woman whose term has been prescribed as three months, will be longer than that of the woman whose term has been appointed as three menstruation, and the tern of the pregnant woman may be several months longer. To shoulder the responsibility of the maintenance and lodging of the woman whom a man may have decided to give up, during this whole period, will be an unbearable burden for the people, but Allah's promise is that He will lighten the burden that is borne in fear of Him and in following His Command, by His special bounty and grace, and will

reward the person much more generously and richly in comparison to the small burden borne by him in the world.

16The jurists are agreed that if the woman has been divorced revocable, the husband is responsible for her lodging and maintenance; they are also agreed that if the woman is pregnant, the husband will bear the responsibility of her lodging and maintenance till child-birth whether she has been divorced revocable or irrevocably. However, the difference of opinion has arisen about whether the non-pregnant woman who has been divorced irrevocably is entitled to both lodging and maintenance, or only to lodging, or to neither.

One group says that she is entitled to both lodging and maintenance. This is the opinion of Hadrat 'Umar, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat 'Ali bin Husain (Imam Zain al-'Abidin), Qadi Shuraih and Ibrahim Nakha'i. The same has been adopted by the Hanafis, and the same also is the viewpoint of Imam Sufyan Thauri and Hasan bin Saleh. This is supported by the Hadith of Daraqutni in which Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Jabir reports that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: 'The woman who has been divorced thrice has a right to lodging and maintenance during the waiting-period. " This is further supported by those traditions in which it has been reported that Hadrat 'Umar had rejected the Hadith of Fatimah bint-Qais, saying: We cannot abandon the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of our Prophet on the word of a woman. " This shows that the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in the knowledge of Hadrat 'Umar must be that such a woman is entitled to both maintenance and lodging. Furthermore in a tradition from Ibrahim Nakha'i there is the explanation that Hadrat Umar rejecting the Hadith of Fatimah bint-Qais, had said: "I have heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) say that such a woman has a right to lodging as well as to maintenance." The first argument that Imam Abu Bakr al Jassas has given in his discussion of this question in his Ahkam al-Qur an is that Allah has explicitly said: "Divorce them for their prescribed waiting periods." This Divine Command also applies to that person who might have taken his wife back after divorcing her twice in the first instance, and no v he is left with only one divorce to pronounce." His second argument is: "When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) taught this method of pronouncing divorce that one should either pronounce divorce in such a period of purity in which one may not have had sexual intercourse, or in a state when the signs of a woman's being pregnant might have appeared. In this he did not make any distinction between the first, second, or final divorce. Therefore, the Divine (Command, '`Lodge them (in the waiting period) where you yourselves live," will be regarded as relevant to every form of divorce." His third argument is; "The maintenance and lodging of the pregnant woman, whether divorced revocable or irrevocably, is binding on the husband, and in respective the non-pregnant revocably divorced woman also both these rights are binding." This shows that the maintenance and lodging have not been made incumbent on the basis of pregnancy but because both are legally bound to stay in the husband's house. Now, if the same injunction be applicable to the irrevocably divorced non-pregnant woman also, there can be no reason why her lodging and maintenance should not be incumbent on the man divorcing her.

The second group says that the irrevocably divorce woman has a right to lodging but not to maintenance.

This is the viewpoint of Sa'id bin al-Musayyab, Suleman bin Yasar, 'Ata`, Sha`bi, Auza'i, Laith and Abu 'Ubaid (may Allha bless them), and Imam Shafe' i and Imam Malik also have adopted the same. But in Mughni al-Muhtaj a different viewpoint of Imam Shafe`i has been stated as will be explained below.

The third group say that the irrevocably divorced woman is neither entitled to lodging nor to maintenance. This is the viewpoint of Hasan Basri, Hammad Ibn Laila, 'Amr bin Dinar, Ta'us, Ishaq bin Rahawaih and Abu Thaw. Ibn Jarir has cited this very viewpoint as of Hadrat Ibn, Abbas, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and the Imamiah sect of the Shi'as also have adopted the same, and in Mughni al-Muhtaj the viewpoint of the Shafe`is also has been stated to be this: 'The woman who is passing her waiting-period on the basis of divorce has an obligatory right to lodging, whether she is pregnant or not, but for the woman who has been irrevocably divorced, it is not obligatory. And for the non-pregnant irrevocably divorced woman there is neither maintenance nor clothing." This viewpoint in the first place is based on this verse of the Qur'an: "You do not know: Allah may after this bring about a situation (of reconciliation)." .From this they conclude that this could be correct only about a revocably divorced woman, and not about an irrevocably divorced one. Therefore, the Command of lodging the divorced woman in the house is specifically applicable only to the revocably divorced woman. Their second reasoning is from the Hadith of Fatimah bint-Qais, which has been reported in the collections of Hadith through many authentic channels.

This Fatimah bint-Qais al-Fihriyyah was one of the earliest Emigrants. She was esteemed for her wisdom and sagacity, and the consultative body of the Companions on the occasion of Hadrat 'Umar's martyrdom had met together at her house. She was first married. to Abu `Amr bin Hafs bin al-Mughirah al-Makhzumi after she was separated by him by three divorces, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace ) married her to Hadrat Usamah bin Zaid. According to reports, her husband, Abu `Amr had pronounced two divorces on her. Then, when he was sent to Yemen along with Hadrat 'Ali, he also sent from there the third and final divorce, According to lodge her in the house during the waiting-period and maintain her, according to others, she herself had laid claim to maintenance and lodging. Whatever be the case, the husband's relatives refused to concede her claim. Thereupon she took her case to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), and he gave the decision that she was neither entitled to maintenance nor to lodging, According to a tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "The husband is under obligation to provide maintenance and lodging to the woman only in case he had a right to return to her, but when he had no such right, she was neither entitled to maintenance nor to lodging." (Musnad Ahmad), Tabarani and Nasa'i also have related almost the same tradition, the concluding words of which are to the effect: "But when she is not lawful for him until she marries another man than him, there is neither maintenance for her nor lodging." After giving this decision the Holy Prophet first commanded her to pass her waiting period in the house of Umm Sharik and then told her to stay in the house of Ibn Umm Muktum.

However, the arguments of those who have not accepted this Hadith are as follows:

In the first place, she had been commanded to leave the house of her husband's relatives because she was rude of tongue and they were fed tip with her ill-temper Sa'id bin al-Musayyab says: "This lady by

reporting her Hadith has misguided the people. The truth is that she was rude and impudent; that is why she was lodged in the house of Ibn Umm Maktum. " (Abu Daud In another tradition Sa'id bin al Musayyab is reported to have said: "She had been impudent and rude to her husband s relatives; that is why she was commanded to shift from that house" (Al-Jassas) Suleman bin Yasar says 'Her expulsion from the house was because of her ill-temper." (Abu Da ud)

Secondly, her tradition was repudiated by Hadrat Umar at a rime when many of the. Companions were still living, and the matter could be fully investigated. Ibrahim Nakha'i says: "When this Hadtih of Fatimah reached Hadrat Umar. he said: 'We cannot abandon a verse of the Book of Allah and a saying of the Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace(Because of the saying of a woman, who seems to be conjecturing. I have myself heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace(say that the woman who has been divorced irrevocably is entitled to both lodging and maintenance." (AI-Jassas). Abu Ishaq says: "I was sitting with Aswad bin Yazid in the mosque of Kufah, when Sha'bi made mention of the Hadith of Fatimah bint-Qais. Hadrat Aswad thereupon threw pebbles at Sha'bi and said: "When in the time of Hadrat 'Umar this tradition of Fatimah was brought to his nonce, he said: 'We cannot cast off the Book of our Lord and the Sunnha of our Prophet on the strength of the tradition of a woman. Maybe she has forgotten. The woman has a right to maintenance as well as to lodging, for Allah says: 'Do not turn them out of their houses'." This tradition has been reported in Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Nasa'i with some variation in wording.

Thirdly, during the reign of Marwan when a dispute arose in respect of the irrevocably divorced woman, Hadrat 'A'ishah had subjected the tradition of Fatimah bint-Qais to severe criticism. Qasim bin Muhammad says: "I asked Hadrat 'A'ishah: 'Don't you know the incident concerning Fatimah?' She replied: 'Better not mention the Hadith of Fatimah'." (Bukhari), The words of Hadrat 'A'ishah in the other tradition related by Bukhari are to the effect: "What has happened to Fatimah? Is she not afraid of God?" In the third tradition Hadrat 'Urwah bin Zubair says that Hadrat `A'ishah said: "There is no good for Fatimah in reporting this hadith." In still another tradition Hadrat 'Urwah says that Hadrat 'A'ishah expressed great indignation against Fatimah and said: "She in fact was in an empty house, where she had no sympathizer; therefore, for the sake of her convenience the Holy Prophet instructed her to change her house

Fourthly, this lady was later married to Usamah bin Zaid, and Muhammad bin Usamah says: "Whenever Fatimah made mention of this Hadith, my father would throw at her whatever fell in his hand. " (AI-Jassas). Obviously, had not Hadrat Usamah known that the Sunnah was contrary to what Fatimah said, he could not have felt so annoyed at the mention of this Hadith. "

17There is complete consensus that whether the woman has been divorced revocably or irrevocably, her husband is responsible for her lodging and maintenance till child-birth if she is pregnant. However, a difference of opinion has arisen in case the husband of the pregnant woman may have died, irrespective of whether he may have died alter pronouncing the divorce, or May not have pronounced any divorce and

the woman may have been widowed during pregnancy this regard, the jurists have expressed the following views:

(1) Hadrat 'Ali and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud hold that she has an obligatory , right to maintenance in the husband's un-divided legacy. The same also has been cited as the view of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Qadi Shuraih, Abul 'Aliyah, Sha'bi and Ibrahim Nakha'i, and a saying of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also supports the same. (Alusi, Al-Jassas).

(2) Ibn Jarir has cited another view of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas to the effect: "If the deceased person has left some inheritance, expenditure should be made on her from the share of the child of her womb; and if he has left no inheritance, the heirs of the deceased should spend on her, for Allah says: 'And the same responsibility for the maintenance of the mother devolves upon the heir'." (Al-Baqarah: 233).

(3) Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair, Hadrat Hasan Basri, Hadrat Sa'id bin al-Musayyab and Hadrat 'Ata' bin Abi Abi Rabah say that there is no maintenance for her in the inheritance of the deceased husband. A third saying from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also has been cited to be the same. (Al-Jassas) This means that she can meet her expenses from the share of inheritance that she may receive from the husband's legacy, but she has no right of inheritance on the husband's combined legacy, which may burden the other heirs.

(4) Ibn Abi Laila says: "Her maintenance in the deceased husband's legacy is as obligatory as is somebody's debt obligatory In his legacy. " (Al-Jassas). That ii, just as a debt has to be paid out of a combined legacy, so also should her maintenance be paid out of it.

(5) Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muhammad and Imam Zufar say: "She has neither any right to lodging in the deceased husband's legacy nor to maintenance, for nothing belongs to the deceased after death: whatever remains after him belongs to the heirs. The widowed pregnant woman, therefore, cannot have any maintenance in their property." (Hedayah; Al-Jassas). The same is the viewpoint of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (Al-Insaf)

(6) Imam Shafe`i says: "There is no maintenance for her; but she has a right to lodging (Mughni al-Muhtaj) " His reasoning is based on the incident concerning Furai'ah bint-Malik, sister of Hadrat Abu Sa`id Khudri: when her husband was put to death, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) commanded her to pass her waiting-period in the house of her husband. (Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Timtidhi). Furthermore, they deduce their view from the tradition of Daraqutni: "The Holy Prophet said: there is no maintenance for the widowed pregnant woman." The same is the view of Imam Malik also. (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi)

18This Divine Command teaches several important things:

(1) That the woman is the owner of her milk; otherwise, obviously she could not be authorized to receive wages for it,

(2) that as soon as she becomes tree from the marriage bond with her previous husband at child-birth, she is not legally bound to nurse her child; but if the father desires that she nurse it, and she also is willing for it, she would suckle it and would be entitled to receive the wages;

(3) that the father also is not legally bound to have the child suckled only by its mother;

(4) that the maintenance of the child is the responsibility of the father;

(5) that the mother is best entitled to suckle the child, and the other woman can be employed for suckling only in case the mother herself is not willing for it, or demands too high a wage for the father to pay. The sixth rule that automatically follows is that if the other woman also demands the same wages as the mother, then the mother's right is superior.

The following are the opinions of the jurists in this regard:

Dahhak says: "The child's mother is best entitled to suckle it, but she has the option to suckle it or not, However, if the child does not take to the new nurse-maid, the mother will be compelled to suckle it." A similar opinion is held by Qatadah, Ibrahim Nakha`i and Sufyan Thauri. ibrahim Nakha`i adds: "In case another woman is not available for nursing the child, the mother will be compelled to nurse it. (Ibn Jarir). According to Hedayah: "If at the separation of the parents the child has not yet been weaned, it is not obligatory that the mother alone should suckle it. However, if another woman is not available, the mother would be compelled to suckle the child. And if the father says: I shall employ another woman to suckle the child on wages instead of having it suckled by the mother on wages, and if the mother demands the same wages as the other woman, or is Willing to perform the service gratis, the mother's right will be regarded as superior. And if the child's mother demands higher Wages, the father will not be compelled to accede to her demand. "

19This contains a severe rebuke both for the father and tot the mother. The style clearly shows that if the two do not settle the question of the child's suckling amicably, overlooking the previous bitterness that led to divorce, it is not approved by Allah, The woman has been warned to the effect: "If you demand too high a wage only in order to embarrass the man, the fosterage of the child is not dependent on you alone: some other woman will muse it. " And the man also has lien warned as if to say: 'It would be unfair if you pressed the mother unjustly only because she was the mother. In this connection. please also see AI-Baqarah: 233 for details.

20Now, the Muslims are being warned of the fate the would meet I this world and in the Hereafter is they disobeyed the Commands they have been given through the Messenger of Allah and His Book and the

rewards they would receive if they adopted obedience.

21Sane of the commentators opine that 'Admonition here implies the Quran and 'Messenger" the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings); some others say that "Admonition" implies the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace(himself, because he was admonition for .the people through anti through. We are of the opinion that this second interpretation is more correct, for according to the first commentary the sentence would read 'We have sent down to you an Admonition and sent such a Messenger. " obviously, there is no need for such an interpolation in the Qur'anic passage when it is perfectly meaningful, even snore so, without it.

22"Out of darknesses Into light" : out of the darknesses of ignorance into the light of knowledge The full significance of this Divine Saying becomes obvious only when one studies the other ancient and modern family laws of the world pertaining to divorce, waiting-period and provision of maintenance. This comparative study will show that in spite of the un-ending alterations, modifications and continual legislation no nation has been able so far to build for itself such a rational. natural and socially useful law as had been given by this Book and the Messenger who brought it 1500 wears ago. It has never stood in treed of revision nor it .ever will. I here is no occasion here for a detailed comparative study of it; we have, however, given a brief specimen of it in the concluding portion of our book Huquq az-Zaujain; the, scholars who are interested in the subject can for themselves compare the world's religious and secular laws with this law of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

23"Also their like" does not mean that He created as many earths as the heavens, but it means that He has also created several earths as He has created several heavens. "Of the earth- mean that just as this earth which is inhabited by man is serving as bed and cradle for the creatures living on it, so has Allah made and set other earths also in the universe, which serve as beds and cradles for the creatures living on them. Moreover, there arc clear pointers in the Qur'an to the effect that living creatures are not found only on the earth but also in the heavens. (For instance, see .Ash-Shura: 29 and E.N. SO on it). In other words! the countless stars and planets seen in the sky are not all lying desolate, but like the earth there are many among them which are inhabited.

From among the earliest commentators Ibn 'Abbas is the one, who had expressed this truth in the period when man was not even prepared to imagine that in the universe there are other habitats also, apart from the earth, where rational creatures live. Even the scientists of today are yet in doubt about this being a reality, nothing to say of the people living 1500 years ago, That is why Ibn 'Abbas felt hesitant about whether he should say such a thing before the common people are not, because he feared it might affect their 'faith. Mujahid says that when he was asked the meaning of this verse, he said: "If I give you the commentary of this verse, you will turn disbelievers, and your disbelief will be that you will deny it." Almost the same thing has been related from Sa'id bin Jubair, saying; 'Ibn 'Abbas said: what can be the guarantee that if I tell you its meaning, you would not turn disbelievers?" (Ibn Jarir, 'Abd bin Humaid). However, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Hakim and Baihaqi in Shu'ab al-Iman and Kitab al-Asma' was Sifat

have cited, on the authority of Abud-Doha, this 'commentary from Ibn 'Abbas in different words: "In each of those earths there is a Prophet like your Prophet, an Adam like your Adam, a Noah like your Noah, an Abraham like your Abraham, and a Jesus like your Jesus." This tradition has been related by Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bat and by Ibn Kathir in his Commentary, and Imam Dhahbi says: "It has been reported authentically, but in my knowledge none apart from Abud-Doha has related it; therefore, it is an uncommon and rare tradition." Some other scholars regard it as a falsehood and Mulla 'Ali; Qari, in his Maudu at Kabir (p. 19), has described it as a fabrication, and written: `Even if it is a tradition from Ibn 'Abbas, it is based on Israelite traditions." But the truth is that the actual reason why the people have rejected it is their regarding it as remote from reason and beyond understanding; otherwise there is nothing in it which may by itself be opposed to reason. Thus, 'Allama Alusi in his discussion of it in his commentary writes: "There is neither any intellectual barrier to taking it as correct nor religious. It only means that in every earth there is a creation which turns to its origin just as mankind in our earth turns to Adam (peace be upon him). and in every earth there are individuals, who are distinguished among others just as the Prophets Noah and Abraham (peace be upon them) are distinguished among us. " A little below the 'Allama writes: "The earths may be more than seven, and likewise the heavens also may not be only seven. To rest content with the number seven, which is an indivisible integer, does not necessarily negate the higher numbers." Then, about the distances between one heaven and another, which have been stated as five hundred years or so in some Ahadith. the 'Allama says: "This is not meant to give the exact measurement of the distances, but to express the truth in a manner easily comprehensible to the people."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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66. Surah At Tahrim (The Prohibition)

Name

The Surah derived its name from the words *lima tuharrimu* of the very first verse. This too is not a title of its subject matter, but the name implies that it is the Surah in which the incident of *tahrim* (prohibition, forbiddance) has been mentioned.

Period of Revelation

In connection with the incident of *tahrim* referred to in this Surah, the traditions of the *Hadith* mention two ladies who were among the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) at that time Hadrat Safiyyah and Hadrat Mariyah Qibtiyyah. The former (i. e. Hadrat Safiyyah) was taken to wife by the Holy Prophet after the conquest of Khaiber, and Khaiber was conquered, as has been unanimously reported, in A. H. 7. The other lady, Hadrat Mariyah, had been presented to the Holy Prophet by Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt, in A. H. 7 and she had borne him his son, Ibrahim, in Dhil-Hijjah, A. H. 8.These historical events almost precisely determine that this Surah was sent down some time during A.H. 7 or A. H 8.

Theme and Topics

This is a very important Surah in which light has been thrown on some questions of grave significance with reference to some incidents concerning the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace).

First, that the powers to prescribe the bounds of the lawful and the unlawful, the permissible and the forbidden, are entirely and absolutely in the hand of Allah and nothing has been delegated even to the Prophet of Allah himself, not to speak of any other man. The Prophet as such can declare something lawful or unlawful only if he receives an inspiration from Allah to do so whether that inspiration is embodied in the Qur'an, or imparted to, him secretly. However, even the Prophet is not authorized to declare anything made permissible by Allah unlawful by himself, much less to say of another man.

Second, that in any society the position of a Prophet is very delicate. A minor incident experienced by an ordinary man in his life may not be of any consequence, but it assumes the status of law when experienced by a Prophet. That is why the lives of the Prophets have been kept under close supervision by Allah so that none of their acts, not even a most trivial one, may deviate from Divine Will. Whenever such an act has emanated from a Prophet, it was rectified and rectified immediately so that the Islamic law and its principles should reach the people in their absolute purity not only through the Divine Book but also through the excellent example of the Prophet, and they should include nothing which may be in disagreement with Divine Will,

Thirdly, and this automatically follows from the above mentioned point, that when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was checked on a minor thing, which was not only corrected but also recorded, it gives us complete satisfaction that whatever actions and commands and instructions we now find in the pure life of the Holy Prophet concerning which there is nothing on record in the nature of criticism or correction from Allah, they are wholly based on truth, are in complete conformity with Divine Will and we can draw guidance from them with full confidence and peace of mind.

The fourth thing that we learn from this discourse is that about the Holy Messenger himself, whose reverence and respect Allah Himself has enjoined as a necessary part of the Faith of His servants, it has been stated in this Surah that once during his sacred life he made a thing declared lawful by Allah unlawful for himself only to please his wives; then Allah has severely reproved for their errors those very wives of the Holy Prophet, whom He Himself has declared as mothers of the faithful and worthy of the highest esteem and honor by them. Then, this criticism of the Prophet and the administration of the warning to the wives also has not been made secretly but included in the Book, which the entire *Ummah* has to read and recite for ever. Obviously, neither the intention of making mention of it in the Book of Allah was, nor it could be, that Allah wanted to degrade His Messenger and the mothers of the faithful in the eyes of the believers; and this also is obvious that no Muslim has lost respect for them, in his heart after reading this Surah of the Qur'an. Now, there cannot be any other reason of mentioning this thing in the Qur'an than that Allah wants to acquaint the believers with the correct manner of reverence for their great personalities. The Prophet is a Prophet, not God, that he may commit no error. Respect of the Prophet has not been enjoined because he is infallible, but because he is a perfect representative of Divine Will, and Allah has not permitted any of his errors to pass by unnoticed. This gives us the satisfaction that the noble pattern of life left by the Prophet wholly and fully represents the will of Allah. Likewise, the Companions of the holy wives of the Prophet, were human, not angels or super men. They could commit mistakes. Whatever ranks they achieved became possible only because the guidance given by Allah and the training imparted by Allah's Messenger had moulded them into the finest models. Whatever esteem and reverence they deserve is on this very basis and not on the presumption that they were infallible. For this reason, whenever in the sacred lifetime of the Prophet (upon him be peace) the Companions or holy wives happened to commit an error due to human weakness, they were checked. Some of their errors were corrected by the Holy Prophet, as has been mentioned at many places in the *Hadith*; some other errors were mentioned in the Qur'an and Allah Himself corrected them so that the Muslims might not form any exaggerated notion of the respect and reverence of their elders and great men, which might raise them from humanity to the position of gods and goddesses. If one studies the Quran carefully, one will see instances of this one after the other. In Surah Al-Imran, in connection with the Battle of Uhud, the Companions have been addressed and told:

"Allah did fulfill His promise (of help) to you : in the initial stage of the battle, it was you who were killing them by Allah's leave until you lost heart and disputed about your duty and disobeyed your leader, when Allah showed you

what (the spoils) you coveted for there were among you sortie who hankered after the life of this world, and others: who cherished the life after death. Then Allah caused your retreat before the disbelievers in order to test you, but the fact is that even then Allah pardoned you, for Allah is very gracious to the believers." (v. 152).

In surah An-Nur, in connection with the Slander against Hadrat Aisha, the Companions were told,

"When you heard of it, why did not the believing men and the believing women have a good opinion of themselves, and why did they not say: this is a manifest slander?.....Were it not for Allah's grace and mercy towards you in this world and in the Hereafter, a painful scourge would have visited you because of the slander. (Just consider) when you passed this lie on from one tongue to the other and uttered with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge. You took it as a trifling matter whereas it was a grave offense in the sight of Allah. Why did you not, as soon as you heard of it, say 'It is not proper for us to utter such a thing? Glory be to Allah! This is a great slander'."Allah admonishes you that in future you should never repeat anything like this, if you are true believers." (vv. 12-I7).

In surah Al-Ahzab, the holy wives have been addressed thus: "O Prophet, say to your wives If you seek the world and its adornments, come, I shall give you of these and send you off in a good way. But if you seek Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, you should rest assured that Allah has prepared a great reward for those of you, who do good." (vv. 28-29).

In Surah Jumu'ah about the Companions it was said:

"And when they saw some merchandise and amusement they broke off to it and left you (O Prophet) standing (in the course of the Sermon). Say to them : that which is with Allah is far better than amusement and merchandise, and Allah is the best of all providers." (v. 11).

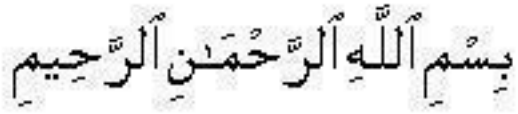
In Surah Al-Mumtahinah, Hadrat Hatib bin Abi Balta'ah, a Companion who had fought at Badr, was severely taken to task because he had sent secret information to the disbelieving Quraish about the Holy Prophet's invasion before the conquest of Makkah.

All these instances are found in the Qur'an itself, in the same Qur'an in which Allah Himself has paid tribute to the Companions and the holy wives for their great merits, and granted them the certificate of His good pleasure, saying: "Allah became well pleased with them and they with Allah." It was this same moderate and balanced teaching of the reverence and esteem of the great men, which saved the Muslims from falling into the pit of man worship in which the Jews and the Christians fell, and it is a result of the same that in the books that the eminent followers of the *Sunnah* have compiled on the subjects of the *Hadith*, Commentary of the Qur'an and History, not only have the excellences and great merits of the Companions and holy wives and other illustrious men been mentioned, but also no hesitance has been shown in mentioning the incidents relating to their weaknesses, errors and mistakes, whereas those scholars were more appreciative of the merits and excellences of the great men and understood the bounds and limits of reverence better than those who claim to be the upholders of reverence for the elders today.

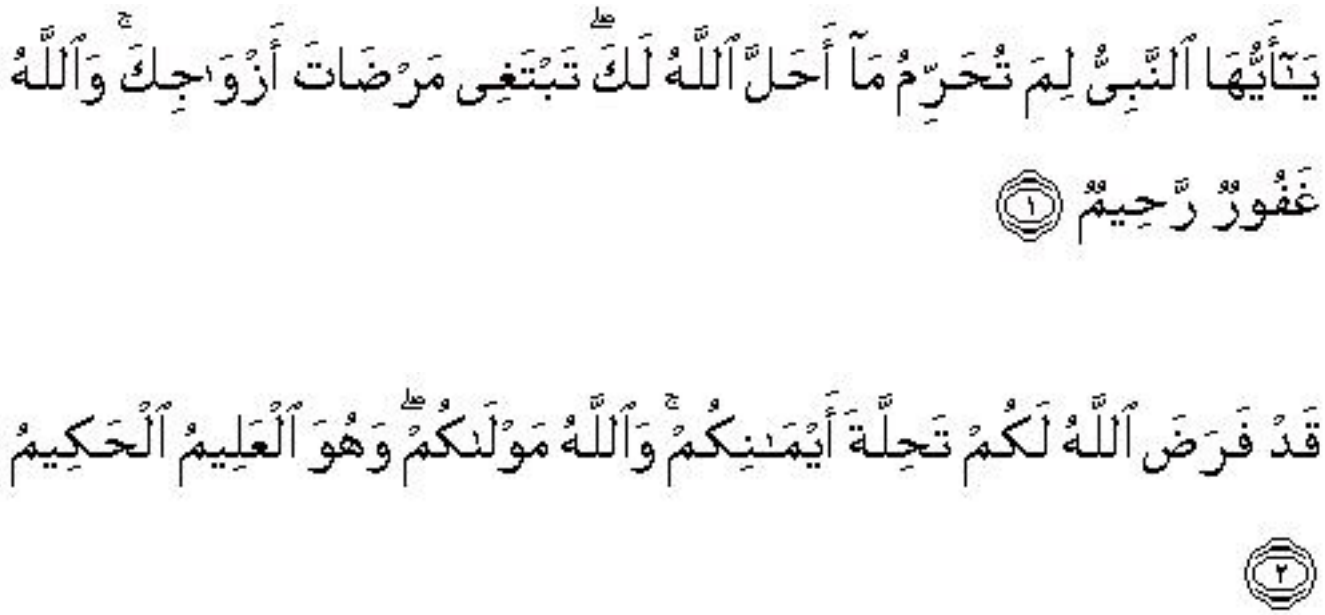
The fifth thing that has been explicitly mentioned in this Surah is that Allah's Religion is absolutely fair and just. It

has for every person just that of which he becomes worthy on the basis of his faith and works. No relationship or connection even with the most righteous person can be beneficial for him in any way and no relationship or connection with the most evil and wicked person can be harmful for him in any way. In this connection three kinds of women have been cited as examples before the holy wives in particular. One example is of the wives of the Prophets Noah and Lot, who, if they had believed and cooperated with their illustrious husbands, would have occupied the same rank and position in the Muslim community. which is enjoyed by the wives of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). But since they were disbelievers, their being the wives of the Prophets did not help them and they fell into Hell. The second example is of the wife of Pharaoh, who in spite of being the wife of a staunch enemy of God believed and chose a path of action separate from that followed by the Pharaoh's people, and her being the wife of a staunch disbeliever did not cause her any harm, and Allah made her worthy of Paradise. The third example is of Hadrat Maryam (Mary) (peace be upon her), who attained to the high rank because she submitted to the severe test to which Allah had decided to put her. Apart from Mary no other chaste and righteous girl in the world ever has been put to such a hard test that in spite of being unmarried, she might have been made pregnant miraculously by Allah's command and informed what service her Lord willed to take from her. When Hadrat Maryam accepted this decision, and agreed to bear, like a true believer, everything that she inevitably had to bear in order to fulfill Allah's will, then did Allah exalt her to the noble rank of *Sayyidatu an-nisa' fil- Jannah*: "Leader of the women in Paradise" (Musnad Ahmad).

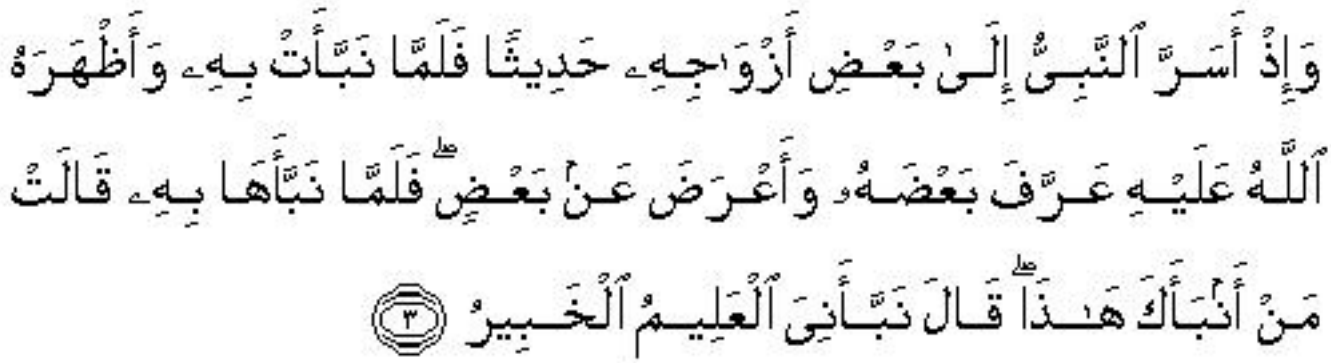
Besides, another truth that we learn from this Surah is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did not receive from Allah only that knowledge which is included and recorded in the Qur'an, but he was given information about other things also by revelation, which has not been recorded in the Qur'an. Its clear proof is verse 3 of this Surah. In it we are told that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) confided a secret to one of his wives, and she told it to another. Allah informed the Holy Prophet of this secret. Then, when the Holy Prophet warned his particular wife on the mistake of disclosure and she said:"Who has informed you of this mistake of mine7" he replied: "I have been informed of it by Him Who knows everything and is All Aware." Now, the question is where in the Qur'an is the verse in which Allah has said "O Prophet, the secret that you had confided to one of your wives, has been disclosed by her to another person, or to so and so?If there is no such verse in the Qur'an, and obviously there is none, this is an express proof of the fact that revelation descended on the Holy Prophet besides the Qur'an as well. This refutes the claim of the deniers of *Hadith*, who allege that nothing was sent down to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) apart from the Qur'an.



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.



[1-2] O Prophet, why do you make unlawful that which Allah has permitted for you?[1] (Is it because) you seek the good-will of your wives?[2] Allah is All-Forgiving All Merciful.[3] Allah has already appointed a way to absolve you (people) from your oaths.[4] Allah is your Master, and He alone is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.[5]



[3] (And this also is noteworthy that) the Prophet had confided a matter to a wife in secret. Then, when she disclosed the secret (to another), and Allah informed the Prophet (of the disclosure of the secret), the Prophet made known (to the wife) part of it and overlooked part of it. So when the Prophet told her (of the disclosure), she asked, "Who informed you of this?" The Prophet said, "I was informed by Him Who knows everything and is All-Aware."[6]

إِن تَتُوبَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ فَقَدۡ صَغَتۡ قُلُوبُكُمَاۖ وَإِن تَظَٰهَرَا عَلَيۡهِ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
هُوَ مَوۡلَىٰهُ وَجِبۡرِيلُ وَصَٰلِحُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَۖ وَٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ بَعۡدَ ذَٰلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ٤

عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُۥٓ إِن طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَن يُبۡدِلَهُۥٓ أَزۡوَٰجًا خَيۡرًا مِّنكُنَّ مُسۡلِمَٰتٖ
مُّؤۡمِنَٰتٖ قَٰنِتَٰتٖ تَٰٓئِبَٰتٍ عَٰبِدَٰتٖ سَٰٓئِحَٰتٖ ثَيِّبَٰتٖ وَأَبۡكَارًا ٥

[4-5] If you both (women) repent to Allah, (it is better for you), for your hearts have swerved from the right path[7] and if you supported each other against the Prophet,[8] you should know that Allah is his Protector, and after Him Gabriel and the righteous believers and the angels are his companions and helpers.[9] It may well be that if the Prophet divorces all of you, Allah will give him in your place better wives,[10] who are true Muslims, who are believing[11] and obedient,[12] penitent,[13] worshiping,[14] and given to fasting,[15] be they previously married or virgins.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قُوٓاْ أَنفُسَكُمۡ وَأَهۡلِيكُمۡ نَارٗا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ
وَٱلۡحِجَارَةُ عَلَيۡهَا مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٞ شِدَادٞ لَّا يَعۡصُونَ ٱللَّهَ مَآ أَمَرَهُمۡ وَيَفۡعَلُونَ
مَا يُؤۡمَرُونَ ٦

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَا تَعۡتَذِرُواْ ٱلۡيَوۡمَۖ إِنَّمَا تُجۡزَوۡنَ مَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ
٧

[6-7] O you who have believed, save yourselves and your households from a Fire whose fuel shall be the men and the stones,[16] over which shall be appointed fierce and stern angels, who never disobey Allah's Command and do as they are commanded.[17] (At that time it will be said:) "O disbelievers, do not make excuses today. You are being recompensed only for what you were doing."[18]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ تُوبُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوۡبَةٗ نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمۡ أَن يُكَفِّرَ
عَنكُمۡ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمۡ وَيُدۡخِلَكُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ
يَوۡمَ لَا يُخۡزِي ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّبِيَّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَعَهُۥۖ نُورُهُمۡ يَسۡعَىٰ
بَيۡنَ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَبِأَيۡمَٰنِهِمۡ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَتۡمِمۡ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَٱغۡفِرۡ لَنَآۖ إِنَّكَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ ٨

[8] O you who have believed, turn to Allah in sincere repentance.[19] (It may well be that) Allah will remove your evils from you and admit you into Gardens underneath which rivers will be flowing.[20] It will be a Day when Allah will not humiliate His Prophet and those who have believed with him.[21] Their light shall be running on before them and on their right hands, and they will be saying, "O our Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us: You have power over all."[22]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ جَٰهِدِ ٱلۡكُفَّارَ وَٱلۡمُنَٰفِقِينَ وَٱغۡلُظۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡۚ وَمَأۡوَىٰهُمۡ جَهَنَّمُۖ
وَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ٩

[9] O Prophet, wage Jihad against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be stern with them.[23] Their abode is Hell, and an evil abode it is!

ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱمْرَأَتَ نُوحٍ وَٱمْرَأَتَ لُوطٍ ۖ كَانَتَا
تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَٰلِحَيْنِ فَخَانَتَاهُمَا فَلَمْ يُغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ
ٱللَّهِ شَيْـًٔا وَقِيلَ ٱدْخُلَا ٱلنَّارَ مَعَ ٱلدَّٰخِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

وَضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱمْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ٱبْنِ لِى
عِندَكَ بَيْتًا فِى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِى مِن فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِۦ وَنَجِّنِى مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١١﴾

وَمَرْيَمَ ٱبْنَتَ عِمْرَٰنَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِنَا
وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَٰتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتُبِهِۦ وَكَانَتْ مِنَ ٱلْقَٰنِتِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

[10-12] Allah cites for the disbelievers the example of the wives of Noah and Lot. They were married to two of Our righteous servants, but they betrayed their husbands,[24] and they could not avail theta anything against Allah. To both it was said, "Enter the Fire along with those who enter," And for the believers, Allah cites the example of the wife of Pharaoh, when she prayed, "My Lord, build for me, in Your Presence, a house in Paradise, and save me from Pharaoh and his work[25] and deliver me from the wicked." And (Allah) cites the example of Mary, daughter of Imran,[26] who had guarded her chastity.[27] So We breathed into her body of Our Spirit,[28] and she testified to the Words of her Lord and His Books, and she was one of the obedient.[29]

1This is not, in fact, a question but an expression of disapproval. The object is not to ask the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) why he had done so, but to warn him that his act to make unlawful for himself what Allah had made lawful is not approved by Allah. This by itself gives the meaning that nobody has the power to make unlawful what Allah has made lawful; so much so that the Holy

Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself also did not possess any such power. Although the Holy Prophet did not regard this as unlawful as a matter of faith nor legally but only forbade himself its use, yet since he was not an ordinary man but Allah's Messenger, and his forbidding himself something could have the effect that his followers too would have regarded it as forbidden, or at least reprehensible, or the people of his community might have thought that there was no harm in forbidding oneself something his Allah had made lawful, Allah pointed it out to him and commanded him to refrain from such prohibition.

2This shows that in this case the Holy Prophet had not made a lawful thing unlawful because of a personal desire but because his wives had wanted him to do so, and he had made it unlawful for himself only in order to please them. Here, the question arises: why has Allah particularly made mention of the cause of making the thing unlawful besides pointing out the act of prohibition? Obviously, if the object had been to make him refrain from making a lawful thing unlawful, this could be fulfilled by the first sentences and there was no need that the motive of the act also should have been stated. Making mention of it in particular clearly shows that the object was not to check the Holy Prophet only for making a lawful thing unlawful, but along with that to warn the holy wives also to the effect that in their capacity as the Prophet's wives they had not understood their delicate responsibilities and had made the Holy Prophet do a thing which could lead to making a lawful thing unlawful.

Although it has not been mentioned ill the Qur'an as to what it was that the Holy Prophet had forbidden himself yet the traditionists and commentators have mentioned in this regard two different incidents, which occasioned the revelation of this verse. One of these relates to Hadrat Mariyah Qibiyyah (Mary, the Copt lady) and the other to his forbidding himself the use of honey.

The incident relating to Hadrat Mariyah is that after concluding the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah one of the letters that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) sent to the rulers of the adjoining countries was addressed to the Roman Patriarch of Alexandria also, whom the Arabs called Muqawqis. When Hadrat Hatib bin Abi Balta a took this letter to him, he did not embrace Islam but received him well, and in reply wrote: "I know that a Prophet is yet to rise, but I think he will appear in Syria. However, I have treated your messenger with due honor, and am sending two slave-girls to you, who command respect among the Coptics. " (Ibn Sa'd). One of those slave-girls was Sirin and the other Mariyah (Mary). Un his way back from Egypt Hadrat Hatib presented Islam before both and they believed. When they came before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) he gave Sirin in the ownership of Hadrat Hassan bin Thabit and admitted Hadrat Mariyah into his own household. In Dhil-Hijjah, A.H. 8 she gave birth to the Holy Prophet's son, Ibrahim. (Al-Isti'ab; Al-Isabah). This lady was very beautiful. Hafiz Ibn Hajar in Al-Isabah has related this saying of Hadrat 'A'ishah about her: "No woman's entry into the Holy Prophet's household vexed me so much as of Mariyah, because she was very beautiful and pleased him much. " Concerning her the story that has been narrated in several ways in the Hadith is briefly as follows:

One day the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) visited the house of Hadrat Hafsah when she was not at home. At that time Hadrat Mariyah came to him there and stayed with him in seclusion. Hadrat Hafsah

took it very ill and complained of it bitterly to him. Thereupon, in order to please her the Holy Prophet vowed that he would have no conjugal relation with Mariyah in future. According to some traditions, he forbade Mariyah for himself, and according to others, he also swore an oath on it. These traditions have been mostly reported by the immediate successors of the Companions without mentioning any intermediary link. But some of these have been reported from Hadrat 'Umar,. Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas and Hadrat Abu Hurairah also. In view of the plurality of the methods of narration, Hafiz Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bari has expressed the view that there is some truth in the story. But in none of the six authentic collections of the Hadith has this story been narrated. In Nasa'i only this much has been related from Hadrat Anas: "The Holy Prophet had a slave-girl with whom he had conjugal relations. Then, Hadrat Hafsah and Hadrat `A'ishah began to point out this to him repeatedly until he forbade her for himself. There upon, Allah sent down this verse: 'O Prophet. why do you make unlawful that which Allah has made lawful for you?"

The other incident has been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i and several other books of Hadith from Hadrat `A'ishah herself and its purport is as follows:

“The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) usually paid a daily visit to all his wives after the `Asr Prayer Once it so happened that he began to stay in the house of Hadrat Zainab bint-Jahsh longer than usual, for she had received some honey from somewhere as a gift and the Holy Prophet was very fond of sweet things; therefore, he would have a drink of honey at her house. Hadrat 'A'ishah states that she felt envious of this and spoke to Hadrat Hafsah, Hadrat Saudah and Hadrat Safiyyah about it and together they decided that whoever of them was visited by the Holy Prophet, she should say to him: 'Your mouth smells of maghafir ' Maghafir is a kind of flower, which gives out an offensive smell, and if the bee obtains honey from it, it is also tainted by the same odor. They all knew that the Holy Prophet was a man of very fine taste and he abhorred that he should emit any kind of unpleasant smell. There fore, this device was contrived to stop him from staying in the house of Hadrat Zainab and it worked. When several of his wives told him that his mouth smelt of Maghafir, he made a promise not to use the honey any longer. In one tradition his words are to the effect "Now, I will never have a drink from it: I have sworn an oath. " In another tradition he only said: "I will never have a drink from it," and there is no mention of the oath And in the tradition which Ibn al Mundhir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabarani and Ibn Marduyah have related from Ibn 'Abbas the words are to the effect: "By God, I will not drink it!"

Our eminent scholars regard this second version as correct and the first as unreliable. Imam Nasa'i says: "About honey the Hadith reported from Hadrat 'A'ishah is authentic, and the story of forbidding Hadrat Mariyah for himself by the Holy Prophet has not been narrated in a reliable way." Qadi 'Iyad says: "The truth is that this verse was sent down concerning honey and not Mariyah." Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabi; also regards the story about honey as correct and the same is the opinion of Imam Nawawi and Hafiz Badruddiu 'Aini. Ibn Humam writes in Fath al-Qadir "The story of the prohibition of honey has been narrated in Bukhari and Muslim from Hadrat `A'ishah who was herself a party to it; therefore, it is much more reliable."

Hafiz Ibn Kathir says: "The truth is that this verse was sent down about forbidding honey for himself by the Holy Prophet."

3That is, "Although the act of making a lawful thing unlawful only in order to please your wives was an act unbecoming of your high and responsible office, yet it was no sin, which might have entailed a punishment. Therefore, Allah has only pointed it out to you and corrected it, and has forgiven you for this error. "

4It means: "Act according to the method Allah has prescribed for absolution from oaths by expiation in Al-Ma'idah :89 and break your promise that you have trade to forbid yourself a lawful thing. " Here, an important legal question arises and it is this: Is this Command applicable to the case when a person has forbidden himself a lawful thing on oath, or is forbidding oneself a lawful thing by itself tantamount to swearing an oath, whether the words of the oath have been used or not'? The jurists in this regard have expressed different opinions:

One section of them says that mere forbidding oneself a lawful thing is not an oath. If a person without swearing an oath has forbidden himself a wife, or some other lawful thing, it is an absurd thing which does not entail any expiation, but he can resume without any expiation the use of the thing that he had forbidden himself. This is the opinion of Masruq, Sha'bi, Rabi'ah and Abu Salamah; and the same view is held by Ibn Jarir and all the Zahiris. According to them forbidding oneself something would be an oath only in case express words of oath are used when forbidding it for oneself. In this regard, their reasoning is that since the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) while forbidding himself a lawful thing had also sworn an oath, as has been reported in several traditions, Allah told him to act according to the method that had been appointed for absolving oneself from oaths.

The second group says that to forbid oneself something without using the words of oath is not an oath by itself, but the case of the wife is an exception. If a person has forbidden himself a garment, or an article of food, it is meaningless, and one can use it without expiation. But if concerning a wife or a slave-girl he has said: "I forbid myself an intercourse with her," she would not become unlawful and forbidden, but one would have to expiate the oath before going in to her. This is the opinion of the Shafe'is. (Mugni al-Muhtaj). And a similar opinion on this question is held by the Malikis. (Ibn al-'Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur an).

The third group says that to forbid oneself something is by itself an oath even if the words of oath have not been used. This is the opinion of Hadrat Abu Bakr. Hadrat 'A'ishah, Hadrat 'Umar, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas (may Allah bless them all). Although from Ibn 'Abbas another opinion has been reported in Bukhari to the effect: "If a man has forbidden himself his wife, it is meaningless," yet it has been interpreted to mean that according to him this is not divorce but an oath which entails an expiation. For in Bukhari, Muslim and Ibn Majah, another saying of Ibn 'Abbas has been reported that to forbid oneself one's wife entails an expiation, and in Nasa'i the

tradition is to the effect that when Ibn 'Abbas was asked his opinion on this, he said: "She is not forbidden to you, but you must pay the expiation." and in Ibn Jarir's tradition the words of Ibn 'Abbas are to the effect: "If the people forbid themselves what Allah has made lawful for them, they must expiate their oath." This same is the opinion of Hasan Basri, 'Ata, Ta'us. Suleman bin Yasar. Ibn Jubair and Qatadah, and the same has been adopted by the Hanafis. Imam Abu Bakr al-Jassas says: `The words of the verse lima tuharrimu do not indicate that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) along with forbidding himself the lawful thing had also sworn an oath, therefore, one will have to admit that tahrim (to forbid oneself something) itself is an oath; for after it Allah made obligatory the expiation of the oath in connection with the prohibition." Farther on he writes again: 'Our companions (i.e. the Hanafis) regard tahrim as an oath in case it is not accompanied by the intention of divorce. If a person forbade himself his wife, he in fact said: "By God, I will not come near you," thus, he committed ila' (act of temporary separation! . And if he forbade himself an article of food. etc, he in a way said: "By God, I will not use that article." For Allah first said: "Why do you forbid that which Allah has made lawful?" and then said. "Allah has appointed a way to absolve you from your oaths." Thus, Allah has regarded tahrim as an oath, and the word tahrim in its meaning and legal effect becomes synonymous with an oath."

Here, for the benefit of the common man, it would be useful to tell what is the legal command according to the jurists in respect of forbidding oneself one's wife and forbidding oneself other things besides the wife.

The Hanafis say that if without the intention of divorce somebody forbade himself his wife, or swore an oath that he would not have conjugal relations with her, this would be ila (temporary separation), and in this cast he would have to expiate his oath before having the sexual relation. But if with the intention Of divorce he said: "You are unlawful to me," it will have to be ascertained what was his actual intention. If his intention was of three divorces, the three divorces will take place, and if the intention was of a lesser number, of one or two divorces, only one divorce will take place in either case. And if some body says: "I have forbidden myself whatever was lawful for me, this would not apply to the wife unless he said these words with the intention of forbidding himself the wife. Apart from the wife, one cannot use the thing O11e has forbidden oneself until one has expiated the oath. Badai as-Sana'i: Hedayah; Fath Al-Qadir,' al-Jassas, Ahkam al-Qur an.

The Shafe'is say that if one forbids oneself the wife with the intention of divorce or zihar, the intended thing would become effective, whether it is a revocable divorce or an irrevocable divorce, or zihar. And if a person used the words of tahrim with the intention of both divorce and zihar, he would be asked to choose one, or the other, for both divorce and zihar cannot be established at one and the same time. Divorce dissolves marriage but in case of zihar it continues and if without any intention the wife is forbidden, she would not become forbidden, but expiation of the oath would become necessary. And if another thing, apart from the wife, is forbidden, it would be meaningless; there is no expiation for it. (Mughni al-Muhtaj).

The Malikis say that if a person forbids himself anything other than the wife, it neither becomes forbidden nor entails an expiation. But if he says to the wife, "You are unlawful, or unlawful for me, or I am unlawful for you," this would amount to a triple divorce in any case whether this was said to a wife with whom marriage has been consummated, or to one with whom it has not yet been consummated, unless his intention was of less than three divorces. Asbagh says: 'If a person says: whatever was lawful for me, is unlawful, the wife also becomes forbidden unless he makes an exception of the wife." In al-Mudawwanah, distinction has been made between the wife with whom marriage has been consummated and the wife with whom it has not been consummated. If one forbids oneself the former, a threefold divorce will take place irrespective of the intention, but in case of the latter the same number of divorces would take effect as was intended, and if there was no intention of any particular number, it would be considered a triple divorce (Hashiyah ad-Dusuqi). Qadi Ibn al-'Arabi in his Ahkam al-Qur'an has cited three statements of Imam Malik: (1) That forbidding oneself the wife amounts to an irrevocable divorce; (2) that it amounts to three divorces; and (3) that in case of the wife with whom marriage has been consummated it amounts to three divorces, bat in case of the one with whom it has not been consummated, to only one divorce if one was intended Then he says: 'The correct thing is that forbidding oneself the wife amounts to one divorce only. for if the man uses the word divorce instead of calling her unlawfirl without specifying the number, only one divorce will take place."

Three different views in this regard have been reported from Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal: (1) That to forbid oneself the wife, or to make a lawful thing absolutely unlawful for oneself, is zihar, whether zihar was intended or not; (2) that this is an express allusion to divorce, and it amounts to pronouncing a triple divorce whether only one divorce was intended; and (3) that it is an oath, unless The man had the intention of divorce or zihar and in this case the same would take effect as was intended. Of these only the first one is the best known view among the Hanbalis. (Al-Insaf)

5That is, "Allah is your Master and Guardian of your affairs. He knows best in what lies your own good, and whatever Commands He has given, they are all based on wisdom. "The first thing means: "You are not independent in this world, but you are servant of Allah and He is your Master; therefore, none of you possesses any power to alter or change the ways and methods prescribed by Him; the best thing for you is to entrust your affairs to Him and continue to obey Him."

The second thing means that all the methods and laws that Allah has enjoined, are based on knowledge and wisdom, Whatever He has made lawful, has been made lawful on the basis of knowledge and wisdom and whatever He has made unlawful also has been made unlawful on the basis of knowledge and wisdom. Nothing has been made lawful or unlawful at random. Therefore, those who believe in Allah should understand that it is Allah Who is AII-Knowing and All-Wist and not they. and their well-being lies only in carrying out duly the Commands given by Him.

6Different things have been reported in different traditions, saying that the Holy Prophet had told such and such a thing to one of his wives in confidence, which she disclosed to another wife. But for us, in the

first place, it is not right to investigate it, for it is on the disclosure of a secret that Allah is taking a wife to task it cannot therefore be right for us to inquire into it and try to uncover it. Secondly, in view of the object for which this verse was sent down, it is not at all important to know what the secret was. Had it any connection with the object of the discourse, Allah would Himself have mentioned it The real object for which this incident has been related in the Qur'an is to warn the Holy Prophet's wives and. through them, the wives of the responsible people among the Muslims not to be careless in the matter of guarding secrets. Had it been only a private and personal affair, as is generally the case between the husband and the wife in the world there was no need that Allah should have directly informed the Holy Prophet of it through revelation, and then did not rest content only with giving the information, but should also have recorded it in the Holy Book which the whole world has to recite forever. The reason why it was given such importance was that this wife was not the wife of an ordinary husband but of that illustrious husband, whom Allah had appointed to the office of the highest responsibility, who was locked in an incessant battle with the disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites at all times and under whose leadership a fierce conflict was going on for establishing Islam in place of paganism. In the house of such an illustrious man there could be countless things which if not kept secret but disclosed before time, could harm the great mission which he was performing. Therefore, when a lady of the house happened to show this weakness for the first time in that she disclosed a secret that had been told her in confidence, to another (a member of her own household), the weakness was immediately pointed out to her, not secretly but openly in the Qur'an, so as to impart training in the guarding of secrets not only to the wives of the Holy Prophet but also to the wives of all responsible people of the Muslim community. In the verse the question whether the secret disclosed pertained to a matter of any consequence or not, and whether its disclosure could cause any harm to the mission or not, has been altogether ignored. What has been disapproved and pointed out in particular is that the secret was disclosed to another. The higher the position of responsibility a person holds the more dangerous would be the leakage of secrets from his house. No matter whether a thing is of any consequence or not, once a person becomes careless in the matter of guarding secrets, he may reveal important things as well as trivial matters.

7The word saghat in the original is from Baghy which means to swerve and to become crooked. Shah Waliyullah and Shah Rafi'uddin have translated this sentence thus: "Crooked have become your hearts." Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, Sufyan Thauri and Dahhak have given this meaning of it: "Your hearts have swerved from the right path." Imam Razi explains it thus: "Your hearts have swerved from what is right, and the right implies the right of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace)." And 'Allama Alusi's commentary is Although it is incumbent on you that you should approve what the Holy Messenger (upon whom he peace) approves and disapprove what he disapproves, yet in this matter your hearts have swerved from conformity with him and turned in opposition to him."

8The word tazahur means to cooperate mutually in opposition to another person, or to be united against another person. Shah Waliyullah has translated this sentence, thus: "If you mutually join together to cause distress to the Prophet. " Shah 'Abdul Qadir's translation is: "If you both overwhelm him." Maulana Ashraf 'Al Thanwi's translation urns: "And if you both continued to work thus against the Prophet. " And

Maulana Shabbir Ahmad 'Uthmami has explained it thus: ,"If you two continued to work and behave thus (against the Prophet)."

The verse is clearly addressed to two ladies and the context shows that these ladies are from among the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for in vv. 1-5 of this Surah the affairs concerning the Holy Prophet's wives only have been discussed continuously, and this becomes obvious from the style of the Qur'an itself. .As for the question who were the wives, and what was the matter which caused Allah's displeasure, the details are found in the Hadith. In Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Nasa'i, a detailled tradition of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas has been related, which describes the incident with sane variation in wording. Ibn 'Abbas says:

"I had been thinking a long time to ask Hadrat 'Umar as to who were the two of the Holy Prophet's wives, who had joined each other against him, and about whom Allah sent down this verse: In tatuba.....; but I could not muster courage because of his awe-inspiring personality until he left for Hajj and I accompanied him. On our way back while helping him to perform ablutions for the Prayer at one place I had an opportunity to ask him this question. He replied: they were 'A'ishah and Hafsah. Then he began to relate the background, saying: "We, the people of Quraish, were used to keeping our women folk under strict control. Then. when we came to Madinah, we found that the people here were under the control of their wives, and the women of Quraish too started learning the same thing from them. One day when I became angry with my wife, I was amazed to see that she argued with me. I felt badly about her conduct. She said, 'Why should you feel so angry at my behavior? By God, the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) answer him back face to face,' (the word in the original is li yuraji nahu) and some one of them remains angrily apart from hire for the whole day. (According to Bukhari: the Holy Prophet remains angry and- apart from her the whole day). Hearing this I came out of my house and went to Hafsah (who was Hadrat `Umar's daughter and the Holy Prophet's wife). I asked her. Do you answer back to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) face to face? She said: Yes. asked: And does one of you remain apart from him for the whole day (According to Bukhari: the Holy Prophet remains angry and apart from her for the entire day). She said: Yes. I said: Wretched is the one from among you, who behaves thus. Has one of you become so fearless of this that Allah should afflict her with His wrath because of the wrath of His Prophet and she should perish? So, do not be rude to the Prophet (here also the words are: la turaji-'i), nor demand of him anything, but demand of me whatever you desire. Do not be misled by this that your neighbor (i.e. Hadrat `A'ishah) is more beautiful and dearer to the Holy Prophet. After this I left her house and went to the house of Umm Salamah, who was related to me, and talked to her on this subject. She said: Son of Khattab, you are a strange man: you have meddled in every matter until you are now interfering in the affair between Allah's Messenger and his wives. She discouraged me. Then it so happened that an Ansari neighbor came to my house at night and he called out to me. We used to sit in the Holy Prophet's assembly by turns and each used to pass on to the other the news of the day of his turn. It was the time when we were apprehending an attack by the Ghassanids any time. On his call when I came out of my house, he said that something of grave significance had happened. 1 said: Have the Ghassanids launched an attack? He said: No, but something even more serious! The Holy Prophet (upon

whom be peace) has divorced his wives. I said: Doomed is Hafsah (the words in Bukhari are: Raghima anfu Hafsah wa `Aishah). I already had a premonition of this."

We have left out what happened after this, how next morning Hadrat 'Umar went before the Holy Prophet and tried to appease his anger. We have described this incident by combining the traditions of Musnad Ahmad and Bukhari. In this the word muraj`at which Hadrat `Umar has used cannot be taken in its literal sense, but the context shows that the word has been used in the sense of answering back face to face and Hadrat `Umar's saying to his daughter: La turaji- `I Rasul Allah clearly has the meaning: Do not be impudent to the Messenger of Allah, Some people say that this is a wrong translation, and their objection is: Although it is correct to translate muraja `at as answering hack, or answering hack face to face, yet it is not correct to translate it as "bing impudent" . These objectors do not understand that if a person of a lower rank or position answers back or retorts to a person of a higher rank and position, or answers him back face to face this very thing is described as impudence. For example, if a father rebukes his son for something or feels angry at his behaviour, and the son instead of keeping quiet or offering an excuse, answers back promptly this could only he described as impudence. Then, when the matter is not between a father and a son, but between the Messenger of Allah and an individual of his community, only a foolish person could say that it was not impudence.

Some other people regard this translation of ours as disrespectful, whereas it could be disrespectful in case we had had the boldness to use such words in respect of Hadrat Hafsah from ourselves. We have only given the correct meaning of the words of .Hadrat 'Umar, and these words he had used while scolding and reproving his daughter for her error. Describing it as disrespectful would mean that either the father should treat his daughter with due respect and reverence even when scolding and rebuking her or else the translator should render his rebuke and reproof in a way as to make it sound respectful and reverent.

Here, what needs to be considered carefully is that if it was such an ordinary and trivial matter that when the Holy Prophet said something to his wives they would retort to Him, why was it given so much importance that in the Qur'an Allah administered a severe warning directly to the wives themselves? And why did Hadrat 'Umar take it as such a grave matter that first he reproved his own daughter, then visited the house of the other wives and asked them to fear the wrath of Allah? And, about all, was the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) also so sensitive that he would take offense at minor things and become annoyed with his wives, and was he, God forbid, so irritable that once having been annoyed at such things he had severed his connections with all his wives and retired to his private apartment in seclusion? If a person considers these questions deeply, he will inevitably have to adopt one of the two views in the explanation of these verses Either on account of his excessive concern for reverence for the holy wives he should not at all mind if a fault is imputed to Allah and His Messenger, or else he should admit in a straightforward way that at that time the attitude and behavior of these holy wives has actually become so objectionable that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was justified in becoming annoyed over it, and more than that, Allah Himself was justified that He should administer a severe warning to the wives

on their unseemly behavior and attitude.

9That is, "You would only harm yourselves if you upheld and supported each other against the Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace), for none could succeed against him whose Protector was Allah and who had Gabriel and the angels and all the righteous Believers on his side. "

10This shows that the fault did not lie only with Hadrat 'A'isha and Hadrat Hafsah but the other wives also had some share in it. That is why, after them, all the other wives too, have been warned in this verse. No light has been thrown on the nature of the error in the Qur'an. However, some details are found in the Hadith, which we shall relate below.

In Bukhari, a tradition has been reported from Hadrat Anas, saying that Hadrat 'Umar said: "The Holy Prophet's wives because of their mutual envies and rivalries had utterly displeased him. At this I said to them: It may well be that if the Holy Prophet divorced you, Allah would give him in your place better wives than you. " Ibn Abi Hatim has, on the authority of Hadrat Anas, reported the statement of Hadrat Umar in these words: "I was informed that a discord had been created between the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and his wives. At this I went to each of them and asked them to refrain from vexing the Holy Prophet; otherwise Allah would give him in their stead better wives than them selves. So much so that when I went to the last of them (and according to a tradition of Bukhari, to Umm Salamah), she said to me: O `Umar, is not the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself enough to admonish his wives? Then why should you come out to counsel them? This made me quiet, and after this Allah sent down this verse.'

In Muslim, Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas has related that Hadrat 'Umar said to him: "When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) separated himself from his wives, I went to the Mosque and found the people worried and upset and playing with pebbles and saying to one another: 'The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has divorced his wives.' After this Hadrat `Umar related his visiting the apartments of Hadrat 'A'ishah and Hafsah and admonishing them. then said: I went before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and said: Why do you feel upset with regard to your wives? If you divorce them, Allah is with you, all the angels and Gabriel and Michael arc with you, and I and Abu Bakr and all the Believers are with you. I thank Allah that seldom has it so happened that I said a thing and did not have hope from Allah that He would testify to what I said. So, after this these verses of Surah At-Tahrim were sent down. Then I asked the Holy Prophet: Have you divorced your wives'? He said: No. Thereupon I stood at the entrance of the Mosque and announced in a loud voice: The Holy Prophet has not divorced his wives."

The traditions related in Bukhari from Hadrat Anas and in Musnad Ahmad from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat 'A'ishah and Hadrat Abu Hurairah say that the Holy Prophet had pledged to remain away from his wives for a month and he retired in seclusion to his apartment. When 29 days passed, Gabriel carne and said; "You have fulfilled your oath: a month has come to completion."

Hafiz Badruddin 'Aini in 'Umdat al-Qari has related this on the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah: The wives of the Holy Prophet had become divided into two parties. one party consisted of Hadrat 'A'ishah herself and Hadrat Hafsah. Hadrat Saudah and Hadrat Safiyyah, and the other of Hadrat Zainab, Hadrat.Umm Salamah and the rest of the wives.

These traditions indicate to some extent the conditions ,that existed in the Holy Prophet's domestic life at that time, which made it necessary that Allah Almighty should intervene and reform the attitude of the holy wives. Although the wives were the best ladies of society, yet they were human beings and were not tree from human weaknesses. Sometimes when it became difficult for them to lead a life of continuous poverty and hardship, they would become restive, impatient and would start pressing the Holy Prophet for better maintenance. At this Allah sent down vv. 28-29 of Surah Al-Ahzab and admonished them to the effect: 'If you seek the world and its adornments,.our Messenger will give you of these and send you of in a good way. But if you seek Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter, you should bear up against the hardships with patience, which you might have to face when living with the Messenger." (For details, see E.N. 41 of Surah Al-Ahzab and the Introduction to it). Then on account of the feminine nature they sometimes happened to behave in a way, which though not unusual in everyday human life, did not go well with the unique dignity and great responsibilities of the house to which Allah had given them the honor to belong. So, when it was apprehended that those things might embitter the Holy Prophet's domestic life and might even adversely affect the great mission that Allah had entrusted to him, He sent down this verse in the Qur'an, and reformed them so that the holy wives may realize the responsibilities of the position and rank which they had attained as the life-companions of the Last Messenger of Allah, and should not regard themselves as ordinary women and their household as a common household. The very first sentence of this verse was such as might have caused Their hearts to shudder. There could be no severer warning for them than ,this: `It may well be that if the Prophet divorces all of you, Allah will give him in your place better wives than yourselves." In the first place, even the thought of being divorced by the Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was unbearable for them: more than that, this would deprive them of the honor of being Mothers of the Believers, and the other women whom Allah would give as wives to the Prophet would be better than them, After this it was no longer possible for the holy wives to behave in a way as would have occasioned a reproof from Allah. That is why we find only two places in the Qur'an where these select and distinguished ladies have been administered a warning, in Surah Al-Ahzab and here in Surah At-Tahrim.

11In the places where the words Muslim and mu min have been used together, Muslim means the one who carries out Divine commands practically, and mu min the one who believes sincerely and truly Thus, the foremost quality of the best Muslim wives is that they should be believing in Allah and His Messenger and His Religion (din) sincerely and also practically following Allah's Religion in their morals, habits, customs and conduct.

12"Obedient" has two meanings and both are implied here

(1) They are obedient to Allah and His Messenger:

(2) they are obedient to their husbands.

13The word when used as attribute of a man does not imply the one who offers repentance only once but the one who continues to implore Allah again and again for the forgiveness of his mistakes, whose conscience is alive and active, who is always a are of his weaknesses and errors and is penitent for them. Such a person never feels proud, arrogant and conceited, but is gentle and clement by nature.

14A worshiper can never be so heedless of God as a non-worshiper. This also helps much in making a woman a good wife. Being devout she adheres to the bounds set by Allah, recognizes and discharges the rights of others and keeps her faith fresh and alive at all times. Because of these qualities she can better be expected that she would not reject obedience to Divine Commands.

15The word saihat in the original has been interpreted by several companions and large number of their successors to mean the same as sa imat (those given to fasting). The reason why the word siyahat journeying has been used for fasting is that in the ancient times journeys were mostly undertaken by the monks and ascetics, who had no provisions and had to go without food till they got something to eat from somewhere. On that account fasting also is a kind of asceticism, for a faster has to remain hungry until the time of breaking the fast. Ibn Jarir in his Commentary of At-Taubah 12 has cited a saying of Hadrat 'A'ishah, saying: "The journeying (i.e. asceticism) of the Ummah is fasting. Here, making mention of fasting as an attribute of the pious wives does not mean that they observe the obligatory fasting month of Ramadan only but that they observe voluntary fasts also besides the obligatory fasts.

Addressing the holy wives Allah's saying: "If the Holy Messenger divorces all of you, Allah will give him in your place better wives who will have this quality" does not mean that the wives were not virtuous, but it means; "Give up your wrong conduct which is causing so much distress to the Holy Prophet; instead, pay attention to developing in yourselves these noble qualities to the highest degree.'

16This verse tells that a person's responsibility is not confined to making effort to save himself from the punishment of God but it is also his responsibility that he should so educate and train to the best of his ability members of his family also to become Allah's favorite servants, who have been entrusted to his care in the natural process of life; and if they might be following a path to Hell, he should try. as far as he can, to correct them. His concern should not only be that his children should lead a happy and prosperous life in the world but; more than that, he should be anxious to see that they do not become fuel of Hell in the Hereafter. According to a tradition reported in Bukhiiri by Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Umar, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Each one of you is a herdsman and is accountable with regard to his herd: the ruler is a herdsman and is accountable with regard to his subjects; the man is a herdsman of his family and is accountable with regard to them; and the woman is a herdsman of her

husband's house and his children and is accountable with regard to them."

Whose fuel...stone" probably implies coal. Ibn Mas' ud, Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and Suddi say that this will be brimstone.

17That is, they will enforce on every culprit precisely the same punishment which they will be commanded to enforce on him without making any alteration in it, or showing any pity for him.

18The style of both these verses contains a severe warning for the Muslims. In the first verse the Muslims have been addressed and told that they should save themselves and their households from the dreadful punishment; in the second that this will be said to the disbelievers while subjecting them to punishment in Hell. This by itself gives the meaning that the Muslims in the world should avoid adopting that conduct and behavior in consequence of which they may have to meet with the fate as the disbelievers in the Hereafter.

19Literally, "taubat an-nasuh-an "may either mean that one should offer such true repentance as may have no tinge of pretense and hypocrisy in it, or that one should wish one's own self well and repenting of sin should save oneself from the evil end, or that one should so adorn and improve one's life after repentance as to become a cause of admonition for others, and seeing his example others also may reform themselves accordingly. These are the meanings of taubat an-nasuh which- are indicated by its literal sense. As for its religious meaning, its explanation is found in the Hadith which Ibn Abi, Hatim has related on the authority of Zirr bin Hubaish. He says: "When I asked Hadrat Ubayy bin Ka'b the meaning of taubat an-nasuh, he said that he had asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) the same question, and he had replied: 'It implies that when you happen to commit an error, you should feel penitent for it, then should implore Allah for forgiveness remorsefully, and then should refrain from committing the same error again." This same meaning has been reported from hadrat 'Umar. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas also, and in a tradition Hadrat 'Umar has defined taubat an-nasuh, thus: “After offering repentance one should not even think of committing the sin, not to speak of repeating it." (Ibn Jarir) Hadrat 'Ali once heard a desert Arab chanting the words of repentance and forgiveness quickly and mechanically and remarked: “This is the repentance of the liars.” The man asked: “What is true repentance?” Hadrat 'Ali replied: “It should be accompanied by six things:

(1) You should feel penitent for the wrong you have done: (2) you should carry out the duties that you have ignored; t3) restore the rights that you have usurped; (4) ask forgiveness of him whom you have wronged; (S) make a resolve not to repeat the sin again; and (6) consume yourself in obedience to Allah as you have so far been consuming it in wrongdoing, and cause it to taste the bitterness of obedience as you have so far been causing it to enjoy the sweet taste of disobedience and sin. “ (Al-Kashshaf)

In connection with repentance there are some other points also which should be well understood: (1)

That repentance, in fact, is to show remorse for an act of disobedience only because it is a disobedience of Allah; otherwise to make a resolve to refrain from a sin because it is harmful for health, for instance, or it is likely to cause defamation or financial loss, is no repentance; (2) that man should offer repentance as soon as he realizes that he has committed disobedience of Allah and should compensate for it without delay in whatever form possible and should not defer it in any way; (3) that violating one's repentance again and making a jest of repentance and repeating the sin again and again of which one has repented, is a proof of the falsity of one's repentance, for the essence of repentance, is penitence, and breaking one's repentance repeatedly is a sign that it has not been motivated by penitence; (4) that if the person who has repented sincerely and resolved not to repeat the sin again, happens to repeat it once again because of human weakness, it will not revive his past sin: however, he should offer a fresh repentance for the latter sin sod should resolve more firmly that he would not commit the sin in future; (5) that it is not necessary to renew one's repentance again every time one remembers the disobedience committed in the past, but if one's self derives pleasure from the remembrance of the past, sinful life, one should offer repentance again and again until the remembrance of the sins causes remorse instead of pleasure and enjoyment. For the person who has actually repented of disobedience because of fear of God cannot derive pleasure from the thought chat he has been disobeying God. His deriving pleasure from it is a sign that fear of God has not taken root in his heart.

20The words of the verse deserve deep consideration. It has not been said chat if you repeat, you will surely be forgiven and will certainly be admitted to Paradise, but that: "If you offer true repentance, it may well be that Allah will treat you kindly." It means that it is not incumbent upon Allah to accept the repentance of the sinner and to grant him Paradise instead of subjecting him to punishment but it will be His kindness and compassion that He may forgive well as reward His servant. One should have hope of His forgiveness, but one should not commit a sin with the confidence that one will achieve forgiveness by repentance.

21That is, “He will not allow the reward of their good deeds to go to waste. He will not let the disbelievers and the hypocrites taunt the believers that they had gained nothing n spite of their worship. Humiliation will be the fate of the rebels and the disobedient and not of the faithful and obedient.”

22When this verse is read along with w. 12-13 of Surah AI-Hadid, it becomes clear that the running on of the light before the believers will take place when they will be proceeding towards Paradise from the Plain of Resurrection. There it will be pitch dark all around and those who will have been condemned to Hell, will be groping; about in it; the light will only be with the believers by which they will be traveling on their way. On this critical occasion, hearing the wailings and groanings of those groping in the dark the believers will be feeling terror stricken. In view of their past errors and short-comings they will be afraid lest they too should be deprived of their light and made to grope about like those-wretched people. Therefore, they will pray: "O our Lord, forgive us our sins and let our light remain with us until we reach Paradise." Ibn Jarir has cited Hadrat Abdullah bin 'Abbas as explaining the meaning of Rabbana-atimim lava nurana thus They will implore Allah Almighty that their light be allowed to remain with thetas and

kept from going out until they have crossed the bridge across Hell." The commentary given by Hadrat Hasan Basri, Mujahid and Dahhak also is almost the same. Ibn Kathir has cited their this saying: ¦When the believers see that the hypocrites have been deprived of the light, they will pray to Allah for the perfection of their light." (For further explanation, see E.N. 17 of Surah Al Hadid).

23For explanation, see E. N . , 82 of Surah At-Taubah.

24This betrayal" was not in the sense that they had committed an indecency but in the sense that they did not follow the Prophets Noah and Lot on the way of faith but sided with their enemies against them. Ibn 'Abbas say: “No Prophet's wife has ever been wicked and immoral The betrayal of these two women in fact was in the matter of faith and religion: they did not acknowledge the religion of the Prophets Noah and Lot. The Prophet Noah's wife used to convey news about the believers to the wicked of her people, and the Prophet Lot's wife used to inform the immoral people about those who visited him in his house. "(Ibn Jarir).

25From Pharaoh and his work : from the evil end that Pharaoh would meet in consequence of his evil deeds.

26It may be that the name of Mary's father was Imran, or she may have been called "daughter of 'Imran" because she belonged to the family of 'Imran.

27This is a refutation of the accusation by the Jews that the birth of Jesus was, God forbid, the result of a sin of his mother. Their same accusation has been called a monstrous calumny" in An-Nisa`: 156. (For explanation, see E.N. 190 of An-Niasa').

28That is, without her having any connection with a man, Allah breathed into her womb a Spirit from Himself. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 212, 213 of An-Nisa' and E.N. 89 of Al-Anbiya').

29For the explanation of the object for which these three kinds of women have been cited as an example, see the Introduction to the Surah.

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67. Surah Al Mulk (The Kingdom)

Name

The Surah takes its name *al-Mulk* from the very first sentence.

Period of Revelation

It could not be known from any authentic tradition when this Surah was revealed, but the subject matter and the style indicate that it is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In this surah, on the one hand, the teachings of Islam have been introduced briefly, and, on the other, the people living in heedlessness have been aroused from their slumber in a most effective way. A characteristic of the earliest surahs of the Makkan period is that they present the entire teachings of Islam and the object of the Holy Prophet's mission, not in detail, but briefly, so that they are assimilated by the people easily. Moreover, they are particularly directed to make the people shun heedlessness, to make them think, and to arouse their dormant conscience.

In the first five verses man has been made to realize that the universe in which he lives is a most well organized and fortified Kingdom in which he cannot detect any fault, any weakness or flaw, how ever hard he may try to probe. This Kingdom has been brought from nothing into existence by Allah Almighty Himself and All the powers of controlling, administering and ruling it are also entirely in Allah's hand and His power is infinite. Besides, man has also been told that in this wise system he has not been created without a purpose, but he has been sent here for a test and in this test he can succeed only by his righteous deeds and conduct.

In vv. 6-11, dreadful consequences of disbelief which will appear in the Hereafter have been mentioned, and the people told that Allah, by sending His Prophets, has warned them of these consequences in this very world, as if to say "Now, if you do not believe in what the Prophets say and correct your attitude and behavior accordingly, in the Hereafter you will yourself have to admit that you really deserved the punishment that was being meted out to you."

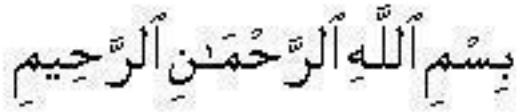
In vv. 12-l4, the truth that has been impressed on the minds is that the Creator cannot be unaware of His creation, as if to say: "He is aware of each open and hidden secret of yours, even of the innermost ideas of your hearts. Hence, the right basis of morality is that man should avoid evil, fearing the accountability of the unseen God, whether in the world there is a power to take him to task for this or not, and whether in the world there is a possibility of being harmed by such a power or not. Those who adopt such a conduct in the world alone will deserve forgiveness and a rich reward in the Hereafter."

In vv. 15-23, making allusions, one after the other to those common truths of daily occurrence, which man does not regard as worthy of much attention, he has been invited to consider them seriously. It has been said: "Look: the earth on which you move about with full satisfaction and peace of mind, and from which you obtain your sustenance has been subdued for you by Allah; otherwise this earth might at any time start shaking suddenly so as to cause your destruction, or a typhoon might occur, which may annihilate you completely. Look at the birds that fly above you; it is only Allah Who is sustaining them in the air. Look at your own means and resources: if Allah wills to inflict you with a scourge, none can save you from it; and if Allah wills to close the doors of sustenance on you, none can open them for you. These things are there to make you aware of the truth, but you see them like animals, which are unable to draw conclusions from observations, and you do not use your sight, hearing and minds which Allah has bestowed on you as men; that is why you do not see the right way."

In vv. 24-27, it has been said: "You have ultimately to appear before your God in any case. It is not for the Prophet to tell you the exact time and date of the event. His only duty is to warn you beforehand of its inevitable occurrence. Today you do not listen to him and demand that he should cause the event to occur and appear prematurely before you; but when it does occur, and you see it with your own eyes, you will then be astounded. Then, it will be said to you "This is the very thing you were calling to be hastened."

In vv. 28-29 replies have been given to what the disbelievers of Makkah said against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and his Companions. They cursed the Holy Prophet and prayed for his and the believers destruction. To this it has been said: "Whether those who call you to the right way are destroyed, or shown mercy by Allah, how will their fate change your destiny? You should look after yourselves and consider who would save you if you were overtaken by the scourge of God?You regard those who believe in God and put their trust in Him as the misguided. A time will come when it will become evident as to who was misguided in actual truth.

In conclusion, the people have been asked this question and left to ponder over it "If the water which has come out from the earth at some place in the desert or hill country of Arabia and upon which depends your whole life activity, should sink and vanish underground, who beside Allah can restore to you this life giving water?"



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

تَبَـٰرَكَ ٱلَّـذِى بِيَـدِهِ ٱلْمُلْـكُ وَهُـوَ عَلَـىٰ كُـلِّ شَـىْءٍ قَدِيـرٌ ﴿١﴾

ٱلَّـذِى خَلَقَ ٱلْمَوْتَ وَٱلْحَيَوٰةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ
ٱلْغَفُورُ ﴿٢﴾

ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَـٰوَٰتٍ طِبَاقًا ۖ مَّا تَرَىٰ فِى خَلْقِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ مِن تَفَـٰوُتٍ ۖ
فَٱرْجِعِ ٱلْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ﴿٣﴾

ثُـمَّ ٱرْجِـعِ ٱلْبَصَـرَ كَـرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِـبْ إِلَيْـكَ ٱلْبَصَـرُ خَاسِـئًا
وَهُـوَ حَسِـيرٌ ﴿٤﴾

[1-4] Full of blessings is He[1] in Whose hand is the Kingdom of the Universe,[2] and He has power over everything.[3] Who created death and life that He may try you to see which of you is best in deeds,[4] and He is All-Mighty as well as All-Forgiving.[5] Who created seven heavens, one above the other.[6] You will not see any fault in the creation of the Merciful.[7] Turn up your eyes: do you see any flaw[8] anywhere? Look up again and yet again: your look will return to you, disappointed, wearied.

وَلَقَـدْ زَيَّنَّا ٱلسَّمَآءَ ٱلدُّنْيَا بِمَصَـٰبِيحَ وَجَعَلْنَـٰهَا رُجُومًا لِّلشَّيَـٰطِينِ ۖ
وَأَعْتَدْنَـا لَهُـمْ عَـذَابَ ٱلسَّـعِيرِ ﴿٥﴾

[5] And indeed We have adorned the nearest heaven[9] with magnificent lamps[10] and made them a means of driving away Satans.[11] For these satans We have prepared a blazing Fire.

وَلِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٦﴾

إِذَآ أُلْقُوا۟ فِيهَا سَمِعُوا۟ لَهَا شَهِيقًا وَهِىَ تَفُورُ ﴿٧﴾

تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ مِنَ ٱلْغَيْظِ ۖ كُلَّمَآ أُلْقِىَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَآ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾

قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَآءَنَا نَذِيرٌ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ ٱللَّهُ مِن شَىْءٍ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا فِى ضَلَٰلٍ كَبِيرٍ ﴿٩﴾

وَقَالُوا۟ لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِىٓ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿١٠﴾

فَٱعۡتَرَفُواْ بِذَنۢبِهِمۡ فَسُحۡقٗا لِّأَصۡحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ١١

[6-11] For those who disbelieve in their Lord,[12] there is the torment of Hell, and it is an evil abode. When they are flung into it, they will hear its roaring,[13] and it will be boiling up, as though bursting with rage. Every time a crowd is cast into it, its keepers will ask them, "Did not a warner come to you?"[14] They will answer, "Yes, a warner did come to us, but we belied him and said, `Allah has not sent down anything: you are in grave error'!"[15] And they will add, "Had we only listened or understood,[16] we would not now be among the dwellers of the blazing Fire." Thus will they confess their own sin.[17] Damned be the dwellers of Hell!

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخۡشَوۡنَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلۡغَيۡبِ لَهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ وَأَجۡرٞ كَبِيرٞ ١٢

وَأَسِرُّواْ قَوۡلَكُمۡ أَوِ ٱجۡهَرُواْ بِهِۦٓۖ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمُۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ ١٣

أَلَا يَعۡلَمُ مَنۡ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ ٱللَّطِيفُ ٱلۡخَبِيرُ ١٤

[12-14] Those who fear their Lord unseen,[18] for them is forgiveness and a rich reward.[19] Whether you speak secretly or aloud it is alike for Allah): He even knows the secrets of the hearts.[20] Would He not know, who has created?[21] He is the knower of subtleties[22] and is All-Aware.

هُوَ ٱلَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ ذَلُولٗا فَٱمۡشُواْ فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُواْ مِن رِّزۡقِهِۦۖ وَإِلَيۡهِ ٱلنُّشُورُ ١٥

ءَأَمِنتُم مَّن فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ أَن يَخۡسِفَ بِكُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ ﴿١٦﴾

أَمۡ أَمِنتُم مَّن فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ أَن يُرۡسِلَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ حَاصِبٗاۖ فَسَتَعۡلَمُونَ كَيۡفَ نَذِيرِ ﴿١٧﴾

وَلَقَدۡ كَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِهِمۡ فَكَيۡفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿١٨﴾

أَوَلَمۡ يَرَوۡاْ إِلَى ٱلطَّيۡرِ فَوۡقَهُمۡ صَٰٓفَّٰتٖ وَيَقۡبِضۡنَۚ مَا يُمۡسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءِۭ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

أَمَّنۡ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِي هُوَ جُندٞ لَّكُمۡ يَنصُرُكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِۚ إِنِ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ إِلَّا فِي غُرُورٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

أَمَّنْ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى يَرْزُقُكُمْ إِنْ أَمْسَكَ رِزْقَهُۥ ۚ بَل لَّجُّوا۟ فِى عُتُوٍّ وَنُفُورٍ

٢١

أَفَمَن يَمْشِى مُكِبًّا عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِۦٓ أَهْدَىٰٓ أَمَّن يَمْشِى سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ

مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ٢٢

قُلْ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۖ قَلِيلًا مَّا

تَشْكُرُونَ ٢٣

[15-23] He it is Who has subdued the earth to you. So walk about on its chest and eat of God's provisions.[23] To Him you shall return on Resurrection.[24] Do you feel secure that He Who is in the heaven[25] would not cause you to sink underground, and the earth may start rocking suddenly? Do you feel secure that He Who is in the heaven would not send a whirlwind charged with stones on you?[26] Then you shall know how terrible was My warning![27] And those who have gone before them also belied. Then see how severe was My chastisement![28] Do they not see the birds above them, spreading their wings and closing them? None is upholding them but the Mercifu1.[29] He it is Who watches over everything.[30] Tell, what army is there with you that can help you against the Merciful.[31] The fact is that the disbelievers are lost in utter delusion. Or tell, who is there to provide for you if the Merciful should withhold His provision? In fact, these people persist in rebellion and aversion from the Truth. Just consider. Is he who is walking prone on his face[32] better guided or he who is walking upright on a smooth road? Say to them, "Allah it is Who created you, and gave you the faculties of hearing and sight and gave you the hearts to think and understand, but you are seldom grateful."[33]

قُلْ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى ذَرَأَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ٢٤

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا ٱلْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

قُلْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْعِلْمُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ زُلْفَةً سِيٓـَٔتْ وُجُوهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَقِيلَ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى كُنتُم بِهِۦ تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

[24-27] Say to them: Allah it is Who has dispersed you in the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered together.[34] They say, "When will this promise be fulfilled if what you say be true?"[35] Say, "The knowledge of it is with Allah, I am only a plain warner."[36] Then, when they see it close at hand, the faces of all those who disbelieve, shall be distorted,[37] and at that time it will be said to them, "This is the same that you were calling for."

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكَنِىَ ٱللَّهُ وَمَن مَّعِىَ أَوْ رَحِمَنَا فَمَن يُجِيرُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾

قُلْ هُوَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا ۖ فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

قُلۡ أَرَءَيۡتُمۡ إِنۡ أَصۡبَحَ مَآؤُكُمۡ غَوۡرٗا فَمَن يَأۡتِيكُم بِمَآءٖ مَّعِينِۢ ٣٠

[28-30] Say to them, "Have you ever considered that even if Allah should destroy me and those with me, or should bestow mercy upon us, who will save the disbelievers from the painful torment?"[38] Say to them, "He is the All-Merciful. In Him we have believed and in Him have we put our trust.[39] Soon you will know who is involved in grave error." Say to them, "Have you ever considered that if the water of your wells should sink down into the earth, who would then restore to you the running springs of water?"[40]

1Tabaraka is a superlative from barkat. Barkat comprehends the meanings of exaltation and greatness, abundance and plentifulness, permanence and multiplicity of virtues and excellences. When the superlative tabaraka is formed from it, it gives the meaning that Allah is infinitely noble and great; He is superior to everything beside Himself in His essence and attributes and works; His beneficence is infinite, and His excellences are permanent and everlasting. (For further explanation, see E.N. 43 of Al-A`raf, E. N. 1.4 of Al-Mu'minun E.N.'s 1 and 19 of Al-Furqan).

2As the word al-Mulk has been used definitely, it cannot be taken in any limited meaning. Inevitably it would imply sovereignty over everything that exists in the Universe. "In Whose hand is the Kingdom' does not mean that He has physical hands, but that He is possessor of all power and authority and no one else has any share in it.

3That is, He can do whatever He wills: nothing can frustrate or hinder Him from doing what He pleases.

4That is, the object of giving life to men in the world and causing their death is to test them to see which of them is best in deeds. Allusion has been made in this brief sentence to a number of truths:

(1) That life and death are given by Allah; no one else can grant life nor cause death;

(2) that neither the life nor the death of a creation like man, which has been given the power to do both good and evil, is purposeless; the Creator has created him in the world for the test: life is for. him the period of the test and death means that the time allotted for the test has come to an end;

(3) that for the sake of this very test the Creator has given every man an opportunity for action, so that he may do good or evil in the world and practically show what kind of a man he is;

(4) that the Creator alone will decide who has done good or evil; it is not for us to propose a criterion for the good and the evil deeds but for Almighty Allah; therefore, whoever desires to get through the test, will have to find out what is the criterion of a good deed in His sight; the fifth point is contained in the meaning

of the test itself, that is, every person will be recompensed according to his deeds, for if there was no reward or punishment the test would be meaningless.

5This has two meanings and both are implied here:

(1),'That He is Almighty: in spite of being dominant over all His creatures, He is Merciful and Forgiving for them, not tyrannous and cruel; and

(2) that He has full power to punish the evildoers: no one can escape His punishment; but He is forgiving for him who feels penitent, refrains from evil and asks for His forgiveness.

6For explanation, see E.N. 34 of Al-Baqarah, E.N 2 of Ar-Ra`d, E.N. 8 of Al-Hijr, E.N. 113 of Al-Hajj, E.N. 15 of Al-Mu'minun, E.N. 5 of As-Saaffat, E.N. 90 of Al-Mu'min.

7Literally, tafawut is disproportion: two things being out of accord and agreement with each other. So, the Divine words mean: "You will not see any indiscipline, any disorder and discordance anywhere in the universe, there is nothing disjointed and out of proportion in this world created by Allah: all its parts are well connected and in perfect harmony and coordination.

8The word futur means a crack, rift, fissure, or a thing's being split and broken. The verse means to say that the whole universe is so closely well-knit and everything in it, from a particle on the earth to the huge galaxies, so well connected and coherent that the continuity of the system of the universe seems to break nowhere, however hard one may try to probe and investigate. (For further explanation, see E.N. 8 of Surah Qaf).

9"The nearest heaven": the heaven the stars and planets of which can be seen with the naked eye; the objects beyond that which can be seen only through telescopes are the distant heaven; and the heavens still farther away are those which have not yet been seen even with telescopes.

10The word masabih in the original has been used as a common noun, and therefore, automatically gives the meaning of the lamp's being splendid and glorious. It means: "We have not created this universe dark, dismal and desolate, but have decked and decorated it with stars, the glory and grandeur of which at night strike man with amazement."

11This does not mean that the stars themselves are pelted at the Satans, nor that the meteorites shoot out only to drive away the Satans, but it means that the countless meteorites which originate from the stars and wander in space at tremendous speeds and which also fall to the earth in a continuous shower prevent the Satans of the earth from ascending to the heavens. Even if they try to ascend heavenward these meteorites drive them away. This thing has been mentioned here because the Arabs believed

about the soothsayers, and this also was the claim made by the soothsayers themselves, that the Satans were under their control, or that they had a close contact with them, and through them they received news of the unseen, and thus, could foretell the destinies of the people. That is why at several places in the Qur'an, it has been stated that there is absolutely no possibility of the Satans' ascending to the heavens and bringing news of the unseen. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 9-12 of Al-Hijr, E.N.'s 6, 7 of As-Saaffat).

As for the truth about meteorites, man's information in this regard is still without a scientific basis. However, the theory which seems best to account for all the facts known today and the information gathered from the examination of the meteorites fallen on the earth, is that meteorites originate from the disintegration of one or more planets and wander in space and sometimes fall to the earth under its gravitational pull. (See Encyclopedia Britannica, vol. XV, under "Meteorites").

12That is, the fate of all those,whether men or Satans, who disbelieve in their Lord. (For the explanation of the meaning of disbelieving in the Lord (Rabb), see E.N 161 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 178 of An-Nisa', E.N. 39 of Al-Kahf, E,N. 3 of Al-Mu'min

13The word shahiq is used for producing a cry like the ass's braying. The sentence may also mean that it could be the sound of Hell itself, as well as that it would be the sound coming from Hell, where the people already flung into it would be screaming and crying. This second meaning is supported by Surah Hud: 106, where it has been said: "Therein they will pant and hiss (because of thirst)", and the first meaning is confirmed by Al-Furqan: 12, which says: "When the Hell will see them from afar, they will hear the sounds of its raging and roaring." On this basis, the correct meaning is that it would be the noise made both by Hell and by the dwellers of Hell.

14The real nature of this question will not be of a question that the keepers of Hell would like to ask them whether a warner from Allah had come to them or not, but the object would be to make them realize that no injustice had been done to them by casting them into Hell. They would try to make them confess that Allah had not kept them uninformed and unwarned: He had sent the Prophets to them; He had informed them of the truth and of the Right Way; He had warned them that if they followed a way other than the Right Way, it would lead them to Hell, in which they had been cast. But they had not listened to the Prophets. Hence, they rightly deserved the punishment which was being meted out to them at that time.

This thing has been pointed out over and over again in the Qur'an that the test for which Allah has sent man in the world is not being conducted by keeping man absolutely unaware and uninformed of the requirements of the test only to see whether he found the right way by himself or not; but Allah has made the most appropriate arrangements that could possibly be trade of guiding him to the Right Way, and it is that He has raised the Prophets and sent down the Books. Now the test of man lies in this whether he accepts the Prophets and the Books brought by them and adopts the straight way, or turns away from them to follow his own desires, whites and speculations. Thus, the Prophethood, in fact, is Allah's

argument which He has established against man and on its acceptance or rejection depends his whole future life. No one, after the appointment of the Prophets, can present the excuse that he remained unaware of the Truth, or that he has been caught and put to the hard test unawares, or that he is being punished while he was innocent. This theme has been presented in countless different ways in the Qur'an; for instance, see Al-Baqarah: 213, and E.N. 230 on it; An-Nisa': 41-42, 165 and E N.'s 64 and 208; Al-An`am: 130-131, and E.N.'s 98-100; Bani Isra'il: 15 and E.N. 17; Ta Ha: 134; Al-Qasas 47, 59, 65 and E.N.'s 66, 83; Fatir: 37; AlMu'min: 50 and E.N. 66.

15That is, "Not only you but the people who have believed in and followed you also are misguided and lost in grave error."

16"Had we only listened or understood": "Had we listened to the Prophets with attention as seekers after Truth or used our intellect to understand what actually was the message they were presenting before us." Here listening has been given priority over understanding, the reason being that the pre-requisite of obtaining guidance is to listen to what the Prophet teaches (or to read if it is in the written form, like a seeker after Truth). To ponder over it in an attempt to understand the truth is secondary. Without the Prophet's guidance man cannot by himself reach the Truth directly by using his intellect and common sense.

17The word dhanb (sin) has been used in the singular. It means that the real sin because of which they became worthy of Hell was to belie the Messengers and refuse to obey them; all other sins are its consequences.

18This is the real basis of morality in religion. A person's refraining from an evil because it is an evil in his personal opinion, or because the world regards it as an evil, or because its commission is likely to bring loss in the world, or because it may entail a punishment by a worldly power, is a very flimsy basis for morality. A man's personal opinion may be wrong, he may regard a good thing as bad and a bad thing as good because of some philosophy of his own. In the first place, the worldly standards of good and evil have never been the same: they have been changing from time to time. No universal and eternal standard in the moral philosophies is found today, nor has it ever been found before. The fear of worldly loss also does not provide a firm foundation for morality. The person who avoids an evil because he fears the loss that may result from it for himself, cannot keep himself from committing it when there is no fear of incurring such a loss. Likewise, the danger of the punishment by a worldly power also is not something which can turn a person into a gentleman. Everybody knows that no worldly power is knower of both the seen and the unseen. Many crimes can be committed unseen and unobserved. Then, there are many possible devices by which one can escape the punishment of every worldly power; and the Laws made by a worldly power also do not cover all evils. Most evils are such as do not come within the purview of the mundane laws, whereas they are even worse than the evils which they regard as punishable. That is why, the Religion of Truth has raised the edifice of morality on the basis that one should refrain from an evil in fear of the unseen God Who sees man under all conditions, from Whose grasp man cannot escape

in any way, Who has given man an all-pervading, universal and everlasting criterion of good and evil. To forsake evil and adopt good only out of fear of Him is the real good which is commendable in religion. Apart from this, if a man refrains from committing evil for .any other reason or adopts acts which in view of their external form are regarded as good acts, his these moral acts will not be worth any merit and value in the Hereafter, for they are like a building which has been built on sand.

19That is, there are two inevitable results of fearing God unseen:

(1) That whatever errors and sins one will have committed because of human weaknesses, will be forgiven provided these were not committed because of fearlessness of God; and

(2) that whatever good acts a man performs on the basis of this belief, he will be rewarded richly for them.

20The address is to all human beings, whether they are believers or unbelievers. For the believer it contains the admonition that while living his life in the world he should always remember that not only his open and hidden deeds but even his secret intentions and innermost thoughts are not hidden from Allah; and for the unbeliever the warning that he may do whatever he may please fearless of God, but nothing that he does can remain un-noticed and unseen by Him.

21Another translation can be: "Would He not know His own creatures?" In the original man khalaqa has been used, which may mean: "Who has created" as well as "whom He has created, " In both cases the meaning remains the same. This is the argument for what has been said in the preceding sentence. That is, how is it possible that the Creator should be unaware of His creation? The creation may remain unaware of itself, but the Creator cannot be unaware of it. He has made every vein of your body, every fiber of your heart and brain. You breathe because He enables you to breathe, your limbs function because He enables them to function, How then can anything of yours remain hidden from Him?

22The word Latif as used in the original means the One Who works in imperceptible ways as well as the One Who knows the hidden truths and realities.

23That is, "This earth has not become subdued for you of its own accord, and the provisions also that you are eating have not become available here by themselves, but Allah has so arranged it by His wisdom and power that your life became possible here and this splendid globe became so peaceful that you are moving about on it with full peace of mind, and it has become such a vast table spread with food that it contains endless and limitless provisions for your sustenance. If you are not lost in heedlessness and look about yourself intelligently you will find how much wisdom underlies the making of this earth habitable for you and arranging in it immeasurable stores of provisions for you." (For explanation, see E. N.'s 73, 74, 81 of Surah An-Naml, E.N.'s 29, 32 of Ya Sin, E.N.'s 90, 91 of Al-Mu'min, E.N. 7 of Az-Zukhruf, E,N. 7 of Al-Jathiyah, E,N. 18 of Surah Qaf.)

24That is, "While you move about on the earth and eat of what Allah has. provided for you here, you should not forget that ultimately you have to appear before God one day."

25This does trot mean that Allah lives in the heavens, but it has been so said because man naturally looks up to the heaven whenever he wants to turn to Allah, raises his hands heavenward in prayer and implores Allah turning his eyes up to heaven whenever he finds himself helpless in an affliction. Then whenever a calamity befalls him suddenly, he says it has descended from heaven; whenever something unusual happens, he says it has come from heaven; and he calls the Books revealed by Allah as heavenly Books. Accordingly to a tradition-in Abu Da'ud, a person came before the Holy Prophet with a black slave-girl and said: "It has become obligatory on me to set a slave free; can I set this slave-girl free? Holy Prophet asked the slave-girl, "Where is Allah?" She pointed heavenward with her forger. The Holy Prophet asked, "Who am I?" She first pointed towards him and then towards the heaven, by which she obviously meant to say: "You have come from Allah." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "Set her free; she is a believer." (A story closely resembling this has been narrated in Mu'watta, Muslim and Nasa'i also). About Hadrat Khawla bint Tha`Ibah.. Hadrat 'Umar once said to the people: "She is the lady whose complaint was heard above the seven heavens" (In E.N. 2 of Surah al-Mujadalah, we have given full details concerning this). All this clearly shows that it is natural with man that whenever he thinks of God, his mind turns to the heaven above and not to the earth below. In view of this very thing the words man fis-samaa. (He Who is in the heaven) have been used about Allah. There is no room here for any doubt that the Qur'an regards Allah Almighty as living in the heaven. In fact, there cannot be any basis for this doubt, for in the very beginning of this Surah Al-hulk, it has been stated: "He Who created seven heavens, one above the other", and in Al-Baqarah it has been said "You will face Allah in whatever direction you turn your face." (v : 115)

26The object is to impress this: " Your very survival and well-being on the earth are at all tunes dependent upon Allah Almighty's grace and bounty: you are not strutting about on this earth at will by your own power: you are under obligation only to Allah's protection for each moment of your life that you are passing here, otherwise Allah at any moment may cause such an earthquake to occur as may make this very earth to become your grave instead of the cradle that it is, or may cause a windstorm to blow razing all your towns and settlements to the ground. "

27"My warning": the warning that was being given through the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and the Qur'an to the disbelievers of Makkah to the effect: "If you do not refrain from your disbelief and polytheism and do not accept the message of Tauhid being given to you, you will be overtaken by the scourge of God."

28The allusion is to the communities who had belied the Messengers, who had come to them previously and consequently been afflicted with Divine punishment.

29That is, each bird that flies in the air, does so in the protection of the All-Merciful God. He it is Who has given to each bird the form and structure by which it became able to fly; He it is Who has taught each bird the method to fly; He it is Who has made the air obey the laws by which it became possible for the heavier than air bodies to fly in it; and He it is Who upholds every bird in the air; otherwise the moment Allah withdraws His protection from it, it drops to the ground.

30That is, this is not confined only to birds, but whatever exists in the world, exists because of Allah's keeping and guardianship. He alone provides the . means necessary for the existence of everything, and He alone keeps watch that everything created by Him is provided with the necessities of life.

31Another translation can be: "Who is there beside the Merciful, who comes to your rescue as your army?" The translation that we have adopted in the text above has relevance to the following sentence, and this second to the preceding discourse.

32"Walking prone on his face": walking with face turned down like the cattle on the same track on which someone put him.

33That is, "Allah had made you men, not cattle. You were not meant to follow blindly whatever error and deviation you found prevailing in the world, without considering for a moment whether the way you had adopted was right or wrong. You had not been given these ears that you may refuse to listen to the one who tries to distinguish the right from the wrong for you, and may persist in whatever false notions you already had in your mind; you had not been given these eyes that you may follow others like the blind and may not bother to see whether the signs scattered around you in the world testified to the Unity of God, which the Messenger of God is preaching, or whether the system of the universe is Godless, or is being run by many, gods simultaneously. Likewise, you had also not been given this knowledge and intelligence that you may give up thinking and understanding to others and may adopt every crooked way that was enforced by somebody in the world, and may not use your own intellect to see whether it was right or wrong. Allah had blessed you with knowledge and intelligence, sight and hearing, so that you may recognize the truth, but you are being ungrateful to Him in that you are employing these faculties for every other object than the one for which these had been granted." (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 72, 73 of An Naml E.N.'s 75, 76 of Al-Mu'minun, E.N.'s 17, 18 of As-Sajdah, E.N. 31 of Al-Ahqaf). "

34That is, "After being resurrected from death, you will be gathered together from every corner of the earth and presented before Allah."

35They did not ask this question in order to know the time and date of Resurrection so that if they were told the Year, the month, the day and time of its occurrence, they would accept it. But, in fact, they thought that Resurrection was impossible, and its occurrence remote from reason, and they asked this question in order to have an excuse for denying it. They meant to say, "When will this strange story of

Resurrection and gathering together, that you are telling us, materialize? What for has it been put off? Why don't you make it appear forthwith so that we are assured of it?" In this connection, one should understand that one can be certain of Resurrection only by rational arguments, and these have been elaborated at many places in the Qur'an. As for the date of its occurrence only an ignorant person could raise such a question about it, for even if it is told, it does not make any difference. The unbeliever would say: "Well, when it does occur on the date you tell, I shall then believe in it; how can I believe today that it will actually occur on that very day?" (For further explanation, see E.N. 63 of Surah Luqman, E.N. 116 of Al-Ahzab, E.N.'s 5, 48 of Saba' E.N. 45 of Ya Sin).

36That is, "This I know that it will certainly come, and knowing this much only is enough for warning the people before its actual occurrence. As for the question when it will actually come, the knowledge of it is with Allah, not with me, and there is no need of this knowledge for administering the warning. This can be better understood by an example. As to the exact time when a person will die, it is only known to Allah; however, all know that everyone has to die one day. Our this knowledge is enough that we may warn a heedless friend of ours that he should look after himself and his interests before death. For this warning it is not necessary to know the exact day on which he will die.

37That is, they will be in the same agony as is suffered by the criminal who is being taken to the gallows.

38When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) started his mission in Makkah and the members of the different clans of Quraish began to embrace Islam, the people of every house started cursing him and his Companions. They started practicing magic and charms on him to cause his death, even devising plots to kill him. At this, it was said: "Say to them: what will it profit you whether we perish or we live by the grace of God? You should worry for yourselves as to how you will save yourselves from the punishment of Allah?"

39That is, "We have believed in God, and you are denying Him; we have put our trust in Him, and you have put your trust in yourself, your own resources and false deities besides Allah; therefore, only we deserve to be shown mercy by Allah, not you".

40That is "Has another besides Allah the power to restore these springs of water to you? If none else has this power, and you know fully well that none has it, then who is worthy of worship: God or your false deities, who do not have the power to restore them? Then ask your own selves as to who is misled and misguided: those who believe in One God, or those who believe in many gods."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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68. Surah Al Qalam (The Pen)

Name

This Surah is called *Nun* as well as *Al-Qalam*, the words with which it begins.

Period of Revelation

This too is one of the earliest surahs to be revealed at Makkah, but its subject matter shows that it was sent down at the time when opposition to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had grown very harsh and tyrannical.

Theme and Subject Matter

It consists of three themes: Replies to the opponents objections, administration of warning and admonition to them, and exhortation to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to patience and constancy.

At the outset, the Holy Prophet has been addressed, to the effect: "The disbelievers call you a madman whereas the Book that you are presenting and the sublime conduct that you practice, are by themselves sufficient to refute their false accusations. Soon they will see as to who was mad and who was sane; therefore, do not at all yield to the din of opposition being kicked up against you, for all this is actually meant to cow you and make you resort to a compromise with them."

Then, in order to enlighten the common people the character of a prominent man from among the opponents, whom the people of Makkah fully well recognized, has been presented, without naming him:At that time, the Holy Prophet's pure and sublime conduct was before them, and every discerning eye could also see what sort of character and morals were possessed by the chiefs of Makkah, who were leading the opposition against him.

Then, in vv. 17-33, the parable of the owners of a garden has been presented, who after having been blessed by Allah turned ungrateful to Him, and did not heed the admonition of the best man among them when it was given them. Consequently, they were deprived of the blessing and they realized this, when all they had lay devastated.

With this parable the people of Makkah have been warned to the effect:"With the appointment of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to Prophethood, you, O people of Makkah, too, have been put to a test similar to the one to which the owners of the garden had been put. If you do not listen to him, you too will be afflicted with a punishment in the world, and the punishment of the Hereafter is far greater."

Then, in vv. 34-47 continuously, the disbelievers have been admonished, in which the address sometimes turns to them directly and sometimes they are warned through the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). A summary of what has been said in this regard, is this: Well being in the Hereafter inevitably belongs to those who spend their lives in the world in full consciousness of God. It is utterly against reason that the obedient servants should meet in the Hereafter the same fate as the guilty. There is absolutely no basis of the disbelievers misunderstanding that God will treat them in the manner they choose for themselves, whereas they have no guarantee for this. Those who are being called upon to bow before God in the world and they refuse to do so, would be unable to prostrate themselves on the Day of Resurrection even if they wanted to do so, and thus would stand disgraced and condemned. Having denied the Qur'an they cannot escape Divine punishment. The rein they are being given, has deluded them. They think that since they are not being punished in spite of their denial, they must be on the right path, whereas they are following the path of ruin. They have no reasonable ground for opposing the Messenger, for he is a preacher without any vested interest: he is not asking any reward of them for himself, and they cannot either make the claim that they know with certainty that he is not a true Messenger, nor that what he says is false.

In conclusion, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been exhorted to the effect:"Bear with patience the hardships that you may have to face in the way of preaching the Faith till Allah's judgment arrives, and avoid the impatience which caused suffering and affliction to the Prophet Jonah (peace be on him)."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

نٓ وَٱلْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ ﴿١﴾

مَآ أَنتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢﴾

وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٣﴾

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

فَسَتُبْصِرُ وَيُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

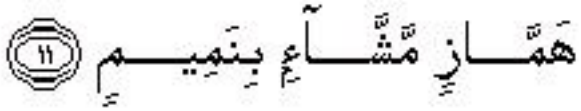
بِأَيِّيكُمُ ٱلْمَفْتُونُ ﴿٦﴾

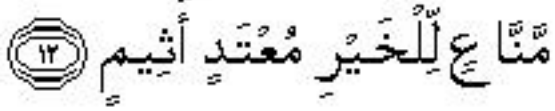
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٧﴾

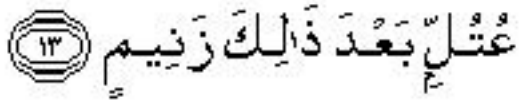
فَلَا تُطِعِ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٨﴾

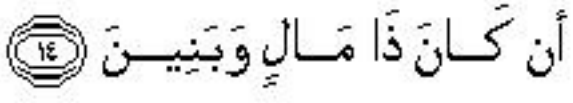
وَدُّوا۟ لَوْ تُدْهِنُ فَيُدْهِنُونَ ﴿٩﴾

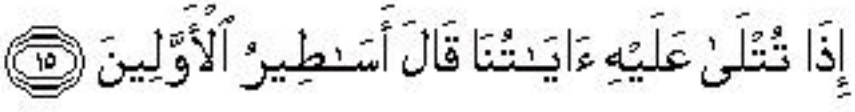
وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿١٠﴾

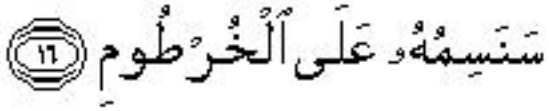

هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّآءٍۭ بِنَمِيمٍ ﴿١١﴾


مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿١٢﴾


عُتُلٍّۭ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ زَنِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾


أَن كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾


إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتُنَا قَالَ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٥﴾


سَنَسِمُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلْخُرْطُومِ ﴿١٦﴾

[1-16] Nun. By the Pen and by that which the writers are writing,[1] you are not, by the grace of your Lord, mad.[2] And surely you have a reward that shall never end,[3] and surely you are exalted to a high and noble character.[4] Soon you shall see as well as they, which of you is afflicted with madness. Your Lord best knows those who have strayed from His Way and He best knows also those who are rightly guided. Therefore, do not at all yield to the beliers of the Truth. They indeed wish that you should compromise a little, then they also would compromises[5] Do not at all yield to any mean swearer of many oaths,[6] who is a slanderer and a backbiter, a hinderer of good[7] and a transgressor, wicked and oppressive,[8] and above all, ignoble by birth,[9] only because he has abundance of wealth and children.[10] When Our Revelations are recited to him, he says, "These are tales of the ancient times." Soon We shall brand him on the snout.[11]

إِنَّا بَلَوۡنَٰهُمۡ كَمَا بَلَوۡنَآ أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ إِذۡ أَقۡسَمُواْ لَيَصۡرِمُنَّهَا مُصۡبِحِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَلَا يَسۡتَثۡنُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَطَافَ عَلَيۡهَا طَآئِفٞ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَهُمۡ نَآئِمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

فَأَصۡبَحَتۡ كَٱلصَّرِيمِ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَتَنَادَوۡاْ مُصۡبِحِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

أَنِ ٱغۡدُواْ عَلَىٰ حَرۡثِكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ صَٰرِمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَٱنطَلَقُواْ وَهُمۡ يَتَخَٰفَتُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

أَن لَّا يَدۡخُلَنَّهَا ٱلۡيَوۡمَ عَلَيۡكُم مِّسۡكِينٞ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَغَدَوۡاْ عَلَىٰ حَرۡدٖ قَٰدِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

فَلَمَّا رَأَوۡهَا قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا لَضَآلُّونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

بَلۡ نَحۡنُ مَحۡرُومُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

قَالَ أَوۡسَطُهُمۡ أَلَمۡ أَقُل لَّكُمۡ لَوۡلَا تُسَبِّحُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

قَالُواْ سُبۡحَٰنَ رَبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَأَقۡبَلَ بَعۡضُهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ يَتَلَٰوَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

قَالُواْ يَٰوَيۡلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا طَٰغِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

عَسَىٰ رَبُّنَآ أَن يُبۡدِلَنَا خَيۡرٗا مِّنۡهَآ إِنَّآ إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا رَٰغِبُونَ ٣٢

كَذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡعَذَابُۖ وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ أَكۡبَرُۚ لَوۡ كَانُواْ يَعۡلَمُونَ ٣٣

[17-33] We have tried them (the people of Makkah) just as we had tried the owners of a certain garden,[12] when they swore that they would surely pluck the fruit of their garden next morning, and they did not make any exception.[13] But while they lay asleep at night, a calamity from your Lord visited the garden and it became as though it had already been reaped. In the morning they called out to one another, saying: "Go forth early to your tilth[14] if you would pluck fruit." So they set out, whispering to one another, "Let no needy man approach you in the garden today." They hurried off early (to their garden) with the resolve not to give away anything[15] as though they had the power (to pluck the fruit). But when they saw the garden, they said, "We have lost our way!-Nay, but we have been left destitute!"[16] The best man among them said, "Did I not tell you, `Why do you not glorify (Allah)'?"[17] They cried out, "Glorified is our Lord: we were indeed sinners!" Then they began to blame one another.[18] At last, they said, "Alas for us! Indeed we had become rebellious. It may well be that our Lord will give us in exchange a better garden than this. We turn to our Lord." Such is the torment, and the torment of the Hereafter is far greater. Would that they knew this!

إِنَّ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمۡ جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ٣٤

أَفَنَجۡعَلُ ٱلۡمُسۡلِمِينَ كَٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ٣٥

مَا لَكُمۡ كَيۡفَ تَحۡكُمُونَ ٣٦

[34-36] Surely[19] for the God fearing there are blissful Gardens with their Lord. Shall We then treat the obedient as We treat the guilty? What has happened to you? How ill you judge.[20]

أَمْ لَكُمْ كِتَٰبٌ فِيهِ تَدْرُسُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيهِ لَمَا تَخَيَّرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْمَٰنٌ عَلَيْنَا بَٰلِغَةٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۙ إِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

سَلْهُمْ أَيُّهُم بِذَٰلِكَ زَعِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ فَلْيَأْتُوا۟ بِشُرَكَآئِهِمْ إِن كَانُوا۟ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

[37-41] Have you a Book[21] in which you study that you shall have there the same that you choose for yourselves? Or, have you covenants binding on Us till the Resurrection Day that you will have will have whatever you demand? Ask them which of them will guarantee this?[22] Or, have they some associate gods (who might be responsible for it)? If so, let them produce their associate gods if they are truthful.[23]

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَن سَاقٍ وَيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى ٱلسُّجُودِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

خَٰشِعَةً أَبۡصَٰرُهُمۡ تَرۡهَقُهُمۡ ذِلَّةٞۖ وَقَدۡ كَانُواْ يُدۡعَوۡنَ إِلَى ٱلسُّجُودِ وَهُمۡ
سَٰلِمُونَ ٤٣

[42-43] The Day the affliction befalls[24] and the people are called upon to prostrate themselves, they will not be able to prostrate themselves. Their eyes downcast, abjectness will be covering them. Yet when they were safe and sound they used to be called upon to prostrate themselves (but they refused to do so).[25]

فَذَرۡنِي وَمَن يُكَذِّبُ بِهَٰذَا ٱلۡحَدِيثِۖ سَنَسۡتَدۡرِجُهُم مِّنۡ حَيۡثُ
لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ٤٤

وَأُمۡلِي لَهُمۡۚ إِنَّ كَيۡدِي مَتِينٌ ٤٥

[44-45] So, O Prophet, leave to Me the case of those who belie this Revelation.[26] We .shall lead them to ruin by degrees in ways they will not perceive.[27] I am respiting them: My scheme[28] is mighty.

أَمۡ تَسۡـَٔلُهُمۡ أَجۡرٗا فَهُم مِّن مَّغۡرَمٖ مُّثۡقَلُونَ ٤٦

أَمۡ عِندَهُمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبُ فَهُمۡ يَكۡتُبُونَ ٤٧

فَٱصۡبِرۡ لِحُكۡمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُن كَصَاحِبِ ٱلۡحُوتِ إِذۡ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكۡظُومٞ ٤٨

لَّوۡلَآ أَن تَدَٰرَكَهُۥ نِعۡمَةٞ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ لَنُبِذَ بِٱلۡعَرَآءِ وَهُوَ مَذۡمُومٞ ٤٩

فَٱجۡتَبَىٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَجَعَلَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ٥٠

[46-50] Are you asking them for a reward that they are being weighed down under undeserved penalties?[29] Have they the knowledge of the unseen, which they might be writing down?[30] So, wait for the issuance of your Lord's decree,[31] and do not be like the Man of the Fish (the Prophet Jonah),[32] when he cried out, overwhelmed with grief.[33] Had not the grace of his Lord reached him, he would have been cast off on the barren ground, condemned.[34] Consequently. his Lord chose him and included him among the righteous.

وَإِن يَكَادُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَيُزۡلِقُونَكَ بِأَبۡصَٰرِهِمۡ لَمَّا سَمِعُواْ ٱلذِّكۡرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُۥ لَمَجۡنُونٞ ٥١

وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكۡرٞ لِّلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٥٢

[51-52] When the disbelievers hear the Admonition (the Qur'an), they look at you in a way as though they would trip you up,[35] and say, "He is certainly mad," although it is an Admonition to all the people of the world.

1The great commentator Mujahid says that by pen here is meant the Pen with which the Qur'an was

being written down. From this it automatically follows that that which was being written implies the Holy Qur'an itself.

2That is for which an oath has been sworn by the Pen and by the Book. It means that this Qur'an which is being inscribed by the hands of the writers of Revelation, is by itself enough to refute the slander of the disbelievers who say that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) is, God forbid, a madman, Before his claim to the Prophethood, the people of Makkah looked upon him as the best of their men and trusted his honesty, intelligence and sagacity. But when he started reciting the Qur'an before them they began to call him a madman. This meant that the Qur'an itself in their sight was the cause because of which they accused him of madness; Therefore, it was said: "The Qur'an by itself is a sufficient proof for the refutation of this slander. The presentation of this highly eloquent Revelation which consists of sublime themes, is an argument which proves that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has been especially favored by Allah, and nor an argument which might be used to prove that he has, God forbid, gone mad." Here, one should remember that although the address apparently is directed to the Holy Prophet, yet the real object is to nail the calumny of the disbelievers. Therefore, no one should have the doubt that this verse was sent down only to assure the Holy Prophet that he was not mad. Obviously, the Holy Prophet himself had no such doubt for removing which he might have stood in need of such an assurance. The object was to tell the disbelievers, as if to say: "The Qur'an because of which you-are calling the one presenting it a madman, is by itself an argument that your accusation is false." (For further explanation' see E.N. 22 of Surah At-Tur)

3That is, "You will get an unlimited and continuous reward, for although you have to hear discouraging and disturbing things in response to the efforts that you are making for the instruction and guidance of the people, yet you are steadfastly performing your Mission of calling them to the Right Way."

4Here, this sentence gives two meanings:

(1) "That you stand exalted to a high and noble character; that is why you are enduring all these hardships in your mission of guiding the people to the Right Way, otherwise a man of weak character could not have done so;" and

(2) "that besides the Qur'an, your high and noble character also is a clear proof that the accusation of madness that the disbelievers bring against you is absolutely false, for high morals and madness cannot co-exist in one and the same person. "

A madman is he whose balance of mind is upset, who has lost his temperamental equilibrium. Contrary to this, the high morals of a person testify that he is a right-minded and sound-natured person, who possesses perfect temperamental equilibrium. The people of Makkah were not unaware of the morals and character possessed by the Holy Messenger of Allah. Therefore, it was enough just to make a reference to them so that every reasonable man of Makkah was made to think how shameless were

those people who were calling a man of such sublime morals and character a madman. Their absurd conduct was not at all harmful for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) but for themselves, for maddened in their craze for opposition they were saying such a thing about him which could not be regarded as credible by any man of understanding. The same also is the case with those men of knowledge and scholarship, who in the modern time are accusing the Holy prophet (upon whom be peace) of having fits of madness and epilepsy. The Qur'an is available everywhere in the world and the Holy Prophet's life also exists in the written form in entire detail. Every person can see it for himself what a foolish and meaningless thing is being uttered in their blind enmity by those who regard the man who brought this unique and matchless Book and who possessed such sublime morals and character as a mentally deranged person.

The best description of the Holy Prophet's character has been given by Hadrat 'A'ishah in her statement: Kana khuluqu-hul-Qur an: the Qur'an was his character." Imam Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Da'ud. Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Darimi and Ibn Jarir have cited, with a little variation in wording, this saying with several chains of transmitters. This means that the Holy Prophet had not merely presented the teaching of the Qur'an before the world but also given its practical demonstration by his personal example. Whatever was enjoined in the Qur'an was acted upon practically by himself in the first instance; whatever was forbidden in it was shunned and avoided by himself most of all. His own self was characterized most of all by the moral qualities which were declared as sublime by it, and his own self was most free from those qualities which were declared as abhorrent and reprehensible by it. In another tradition Hadrat 'A'ishah has stated: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) never hit a servant, never raised his hand on a woman never used his hand to kill a person outside the battlefield, never avenged himself on anyone for an injury caused unless someone violated a sanctity enjoined by Allah and he avenged it for the sake of Allah. His practice was that whenever he had to choose between two things, he would choose the easier one unless it was a sin; and if it was a sin he would keep away from it most of all" (Musnad Ahmad). Hadrat Anas says: "I served the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for ten years. He never did so much as express even a slight disgust over what I did or said: he never asked why I had done what I had done, and never inquired why I had not done what I had not done." (Bukhari, Muslim).

5That is, "If you slackened a little in your propagation of Islam, they also would slacken in their opposition to you. Or, if you became inclined to effect some changes in your Faith to suit these people, they too would effect a compromise with you."

6The word mahin is used for a contemptible, degraded and mean person. This is indeed a necessary quality of a person who swears many oaths. He swears an oath for every minor thing because he himself has the feeling that the people take him for a liar and would not believe him until he swore an oath. For this reason he is not only degraded in his own eyes but commands no respect in society either.

7Khayr in Arabic is used both for wealth and for good. If it is taken in the meaning of wealth the, meaning would be that he is miserly and stingy; he would not even spend a farthing on anyone; and if khayr is

taken in the meaning of goodness and virtue, it would mean that he creates a hindrance in every good work as well as that he is very active in hindering the people from accepting Islam.

8The word `utul is used for a person who is stout and strong and greedy in eating and drinking and is also ill-mannered, quarrelsome and cruel at the same tune.

9The word zanim is used to describe a person of illegitimate birth, who does not, in fact, belong to a family but has joined it. Sa`id bin Jubair and Sha`bi say that this word is used for a person who is notorious among the people for his evildoing.

The views of the commentators with regard to the person who has been described in these verses are different. Some one says it was Walid bin Mughirah; another one says it was Aswad bin `Abd-i Yaghuth, and still another has applied this description to Akhnas bin Shurayq, and some other people have pointed to some other persons. But the Qur'an has only described his attributes without naming him. This shows that in Makkah the man concerned was so notorious for his such qualities that there was no need to name him definitely. Hearing his description every person could understand who was being referred to.

10This sentence may be connected with the preceding theme as well as with the following sentence. In the first case, it would mean: "Do not yield to the influence of such a person just because he has plenty of wealth and children." In the second: "He has become proud because he possesses abundance of wealth and children; so when Our Revelations are recited to him, he says, "These are tales of ancient times."

11Because he thought he was a man of high prestige, his nose has been called a snout, and "branding him on the snout means disgracing him. That is, "We shall so disgrace him in the world and in the Hereafter that his mark of disgrace will become indelible."

12Here, one should also keep Al-Kahf: 32-44 in view, in which the parable of the owners of two gardens has been cited for teaching a lesson.

13That is, "They were so sure and confident of their power and authority that they swore they would surely pluck the fruit of their garden next morning, without feeling any need to say, "We shall do so if Allah so willed."

14The word tilth probably has been used because in the garden there were fields of crops also in between the trees.

15The word hard in Arabic is used for hindering and withholding, for a purpose and resolution, and for making haste; hence, the composite rendering adopted by us.

16That is, on seeing the garden they didn't believe it was their own garden, and they said: "Perhaps we have lost our way and come to another place." But, when they considered it seriously and found it was their own garden, they cried out: "Alas we are undone!"

17This means that when they were saying on oath: "We shall surely pluck the fruit of our garden tomorrow," this person had warned them at that time, saying: "Have you forgotten God? Why don't you say: If Allah so wills?" But they did not listen to him. Then, while they were making up their mind not to give away anything to the needy. he again advised them to remember Allah and to desist from their evil intention, but they persisted in what they had resolved.

18That is, each reproached and blamed the other that because of his wrong counsel they had forgotten God and resolved upon an evil course.

19This is, a rejoinder to the chiefs of Makkah, who argued with the Muslims, thus: "The blessings that we are enjoying in the world are a sign that we are favorites of Allah, and the miserable lives that you are living are a proof that you are under the wrath of Allah. Therefore, even if there was any life after death, as you say, we shall have good time there too, and the torment would be imposed on you, not on us!"

20That is, "It is against reason that God should not differentiate between the obedient servant and the guilty. How do you regard this as reasonable that the Creator of the universe should, like a blind ruler, not judge which people in the world obeyed His commands and refrained from evildoing, and which people committed every sin and crime and perpetrated every cruelty fearless of His punishment? You have seen the adversity of the believers and your own prosperity, but you have not appreciated the distinction between their good morals and your own evildoing, and have given your judgment without the thought that these obedient people will be treated like culprits by God and the guilty like you will be granted Paradise. "

21That is, the Book sent down by Allah.

22Za'im in Arabic is used for a person who stands a surety on behalf of another, or is a spokesman of others. Thus, the verse means to ask: "Which of you will come forward and say that he has made such and such a covenant with Allah on your behalf?"

23That is, "The judgment you are passing concerning yourselves has no basis whatever. It is against reason and you cannot show any such thing written in any Divine Book either. No one can make the claim that he has made Allah promise some such thing, and you cannot make any of your deities vouch that it would take the responsibility of securing Paradise for you from God. How then have you been involved in such a misunderstanding?"

24Literally: "The Day the shin shall be uncovered". A section of the Companions and their successors says that these words have been used idiomatically, for according to Arabic idiom, kashf-i saq implies befalling of an affliction. Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas also has given this same meaning of this and has supported it by evidence from Arabic poetry. According to another saying that has been cited from Ibn 'Abbas and Rabi' bin Anas, kashf-i saq implies uncovering the facts and truths. In view of this interpretation, the meaning would be: "The Day when all truths shall be bared and the people's deeds shall become open and manifest. "

25It means: On the Resurrection Day it will be openly and publicly demonstrated as to who in the world had actually worshiped Allah and who was disinclined to do so. For this purpose the people will be called upon to prostrate themselves before Allah. Then, those who had been sincerely worshiping Allah in the world, would prostrate themselves, and those who had declined to bow before Him in the world, would be unable to do so. It will become impossible for them to put up a false show of being worshipers. Therefore, they will remain standing, degraded and downcast with shame.

26That is, "Do not worry yourself as to how to deal with them; it is for Me to see how to chastise them."

27A form of leading somebody to ruin in imperceptible ways is that an enemy of the Truth and wicked person may be blessed in the world, and be granted health, wealth, children and worldly successes, by which he may be deluded into believing that whatever he is doing, he is doing well and right: there is nothing wrong with his acts and deeds. Thus, he may go on getting more and more deeply involved in enmity of the truth and wickedness and rebellious conduct and may not realize that the blessings he is being favored with are not a reward but, in fact, a means of his own ruin.

28The word kayd in the original means to devise a secret scheme against another. It is an evil only in case it is devised to harm somebody unjustly, otherwise there is nothing wrong with it, especially when such a scheme is adopted against a person who has made himself worthy of it.

29The question apparently is being asked of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), but its real audience are the people, who were crossing all limits in their opposition to him. They are being asked: "is Our Messenger asking you for a reward which makes you feel so upset? You yourself know that he is absolutely selfless in his invitation and is exerting himself only for your own benefit and well-being. If you do not want to believe in what he says, you may not, but why are you feeling so enraged at his this invitation to you? (For further explanation, see E.N. 31 of Surah At-Tur).

30This second question also appears to be directed to the Holy Prophet, but, in fact, its audience are his opponents. It means: "Have you, O people, peered behind the unseen and found that the Messenger, in fact, is not a Messenger sent by God, and the truths that he is presenting before you are also false; that is why you are being so stubborn in belying what he says?" (For explanation, see E.N. 32 of At-Tur).

31That is, "The time when Allah will issue His decree about your success and victory and your opponents' defeat, is yet far off. Till then you should go on enduring with patience whatever hardships and afflictions you may have to face in the way of preaching the Faith. "

32That is, "Do not behave impatiently as did the Prophet Jonah (peace be on him), who an account of his impatience was driven into the fish's belly." Immediately after exhorting the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to have patience until Allah issued forth His decree, to tell him not to behave like the Prophet Jonah by itself gives the meaning that the latter had shown some kind of impatience before Allah gave His decision and thus had incurred His wrath. (For explanation, see Yunus; 98, and E.N, 99 on it; Al-Anbiya': 87-88 and E.N.'s 82 to 85; As-Saaffat: 139-148 and E.N.'s 78 to 85).

33In Surah Al-Anbiya' it has been explained thus: "From inside the fish's belly and the darkness of the sea, the Prophet Jonah invoked Allah, saying: La ilaha ills anta subhanaka inni kuntu min-az-zalimin: `There is no god but You; glory be to You: I had indeed committed a wrong.' Thereupon Allah heard his prayer and delivered him from this affliction." (vv. 87-88).

34When this verse is read with As-Saaffat: 142-146, one learns that at the tune the Prophet Jonah was caused to be swallowed by the fish, he was blameworthy. But when he glorified Allah and confessed his fault, although he was spat up by the fish on a bare beach in a state of sickness, he was not blameworthy at that time. Allah by His mercy caused a creeper to grow over him so that its leaves should provide him shade and its fruit food and drink.

35"Would trip you up": "Would eat you up with their eyes". For a similar expression of the Makkan disbelievers' rage and fury against the Holy Prophet, see also Bani Isra'il: 73-77.

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69. Surah Al Haaqqa (The Inevitable)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-Haaqqah* with which it opens.

Period of Revelation

This too is one of the earliest surahs to be revealed at Makkah. Its subject matter shows that it was sent down at the time when opposition to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had started but had not yet become tyrannical. Musnad Ahmad contains a tradition from Hadrat Umar, saying: "Before embracing Islam one day I came out of my house with a view to causing trouble to the Holy Prophet, but he had entered the *Masjid al-Haram* before me. When I arrived I found that he was reciting surah Al-Haaqqah in the Prayer. I stood behind him and listened. As he recited the Qur'an I wondered at its literary charm and beauty. Then suddenly an idea came to my mind that he must be a poet as the Quraish alleged. Just at that moment he recited the words: "This is the Word of an honorable Messenger: it is not the word of a poet." I said to myself: Then, he must be a soothsayer, if not a poet. Thereupon be recited the words:"Nor is it the word of a soothsayer: little it is that you reflect. It is a Revelation from the Lord and Sustainer of the worlds. On hearing this Islam entered deep into my heart." This tradition of Hadrat Umar shows that this surah had been sent down long before his acceptance of Islam, for even after this event he did not believe for a long time, and he continued to be influenced in favor of Islam by different incidents from time to time, till at last in the house of his own sister he came by the experience that made him surrender and submit to the Faith completely. (For details, see introduction to surah Maryam and Introduction to surah Al-Waqiah).

Theme and Subject Matter

The first section (vv. 1-37) is about the Hereafter and the second (vv. 38-52) about the Qur'an's being a revelation from Allah and the Holy Prophet's being a true Messenger of Allah.

The first section opens with the assertion that the coming of the Resurrection and the occurrence of the Hereafter is a truth which has to take place inevitably. Then in vv. 4-12, it has been stated that the communities that denied the Hereafter in the past became worthy of Allah's scourge ultimately. In vv. 13-17 the occurrence of Resurrection has

been depicted. In vv. 18-37 the real object for which Allah has destined a second life for mankind after the present worldly life has been enunciated. In it we are told that on that Day all men shall appear in the Court of their Lord, where no secret of theirs shall remain hidden each man's record will be placed in his hand. Those who had spent lives in the world with the realization that one day they would have to render an account of their deeds before their Lord, and who had worked righteously in the world and provided beforehand for their well being in the Hereafter, will rejoice when they see that they have been acquitted and blessed with the eternal bliss of Paradise. On the contrary, those who neither recognized the rights of Allah, nor discharged the rights of men, will have no one to save them from the punishment of Allah, and they will be cast into Hell.

In the second section (vv. 38-52) the disbelievers of Makkah have been addressed and told: "You think this Qur'an is the word of a poet or soothsayer, whereas it is a Revelation sent dawn by Allah, which is being presented by the noble Messengers. The Messenger by himself had no power to increase or decrease a word in it. If he forges something of his own composition into it, We will cut off his neck-vein (or heart- vein). For this is the Truth absolute and pure: and those who give it a lie, will have ultimately to regret and repent.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلْحَآقَّةُ ﴿١﴾

مَا ٱلْحَآقَّةُ ﴿٢﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْحَآقَّةُ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] The Inevitable![1] What is the Inevitable? And what do you know what the Inevitable is?[2]

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ وَعَادٌۢ بِٱلْقَارِعَةِ ﴿٤﴾

فَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَأُهْلِكُوا۟ بِٱلطَّاغِيَةِ ﴿٥﴾

وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَأُهْلِكُوا۟ بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ ﴿٦﴾

سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَٰنِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا فَتَرَى ٱلْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَىٰ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ خَاوِيَةٍ ﴿٧﴾

فَهَلْ تَرَىٰ لَهُم مِّنۢ بَاقِيَةٍ ﴿٨﴾

[4-8] Thamud[3] and `Ad belied the coming of the sudden calamity.[4] Thamud were destroyed by a violent catastrophe[5] As for `Ad, they were destroyed by a furious windstorm; Allah imposed it on them for seven nights and eight days continuously. (Had you been there) you would have seen them lying prostrate as though they were hollow trunks of palm trees. Now do you see any of them still surviving?

وَجَآءَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَن قَبْلَهُۥ وَٱلْمُؤْتَفِكَٰتُ بِٱلْخَاطِئَةِ ﴿٩﴾

فَعَصَوْا۟ رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَهُمْ أَخْذَةً رَّابِيَةً ﴿١٠﴾

[9-10] And the same great crime did Pharaoh and the people before him and the overturned settlements[6] commit. They all disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord and He seized them with a terrible grip.

إِنَّا لَمَّا طَغَا ٱلْمَآءُ حَمَلْنَٰكُمْ فِى ٱلْجَارِيَةِ ﴿١١﴾

لِنَجْعَلَهَا لَكُمْ تَذْكِرَةً وَتَعِيَهَآ أُذُنٌ وَٰعِيَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾

[11-12] When the Flood waters rose abnormally high,[7] We boarded you in the Ark,[8] that We may make the event a warning for you and that the retaining ears may retain its memory.[9]

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَٰحِدَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾

وَحُمِلَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَٱلْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَٰحِدَةً ﴿١٤﴾

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ ٱلْوَاقِعَةُ ﴿١٥﴾

وَٱنشَقَّتِ ٱلسَّمَآءُ فَهِىَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ ﴿١٦﴾

وَٱلْمَلَكُ عَلَىٰٓ أَرْجَآئِهَا ۚ وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَٰنِيَةٌ ﴿١٧﴾

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ مِنكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ﴿١٨﴾

[13-18] Then,[10] when the Trumpet is blown once, and the earth and the mountains are razed and crushed into pieces with a single stroke, on that Day shall the Inevitable happen. On that Day the heaven shall split asunder, and its system shall loosen. The angels shall be on its sides and eight of them on that Day shall be upholding the Throne of your Lord, above them.[11] That will be the Day when you will be brought forth: no secret of yours will remain hidden.

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِيَمِينِهِۦ فَيَقُولُ هَآؤُمُ ٱقْرَءُوا۟ كِتَٰبِيَهْ ﴿١٩﴾

إِنِّى ظَنَنتُ أَنِّى مُلَٰقٍ حِسَابِيَهْ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَهُوَ فِى عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ ﴿٢١﴾

فِى جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَآ أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَيَّامِ ٱلْخَالِيَةِ ﴿٢٤﴾

[19-24] Then whoso is given his record in his right hand,[12] shall say: "Look! Read my record.[13] I knew that! would certainly be getting my account,"[14] So he shall be in a state of bliss, in a high Garden, whose clusters of fruit shall be hanging within easy reach. (To such people it will be said) "Eat and drink with relish as a reward for the deeds you did in the days gone by."

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِشِمَالِهِۦ فَيَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى لَمْ أُوتَ كِتَٰبِيَهْ ﴿٢٥﴾

وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَهْ ﴿٢٦﴾

يَٰلَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ ٱلْقَاضِيَةَ ﴿٢٧﴾

مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّى مَالِيَهْ ﴿٢٨﴾

هَلَكَ عَنِّى سُلْطَٰنِيَهْ ﴿٢٩﴾

خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ﴿٣٠﴾

ثُمَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ﴿٣١﴾

ثُمَّ فِى سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَٱسْلُكُوهُ ﴿٣٢﴾

إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣٤﴾

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ ٱلْيَوْمَ هَٰهُنَا حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غِسْلِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

لَّا يَأْكُلُهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱلْخَٰطِـُٔونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[25-37] As for him whose record is given in his left hand,[15] he will say: "Would that I had not been given my record[16] nor known what my account was.[17] Would that the death (that I suffered in the world) were final.[18] Today my wealth has availed me nothing, and I am robbed of all my power.[19] (It will be ordered:) "Seize him and chain him by the neck, then cast him into Hell, then fasten him in a chain seventy cubits long. For he did not believe in Allah, the Most High, nor urged the feeding of the poor.[20] So, he has neither any true friend here today nor any food except the corruption from the washing of wounds, which none but the sinners eat.

فَلَآ أُقۡسِمُ بِمَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَمَا لَا تُبۡصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

إِنَّهُۥ لَقَوۡلُ رَسُولٖ كَرِيمٖ ﴿٤٠﴾

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوۡلِ شَاعِرٖۚ قَلِيلٗا مَّا تُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

وَلَا بِقَوۡلِ كَاهِنٖۚ قَلِيلٗا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

تَنزِيلٞ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضَ ٱلْأَقَاوِيلِ ﴿٤٤﴾

لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٤٥﴾

ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ ٱلْوَتِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

فَمَا مِنكُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَٰجِزِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَتَذْكِرَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَإِنَّا لَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مِنكُم مُّكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَحَسْرَةٌ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَحَقُّ ٱلْيَقِينِ ﴿٥١﴾

فَسَبِّحۡ بِٱسۡمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٥٢

[38-52] Not so![21] I swear by those things which you see and also by those which you do not see, that this is the Word of an honorable Messenger.[22] It is not the word of a poet: little it is that you believe.[23] Nor is it the word of a soothsayer: little it is that you reflect. It is a Revelation from the Lord of the worlds.[24] And if this (Prophet) had forged something himself and ascribed it to Us, We would indeed have seized him by his right hand, and cut off his neck-vein. Then none of you could have withheld (Us) from this.[25] This indeed is an Admonition for the righteous.[26] And We know that there are some among you who deny it. For such disbelievers it is indeed a cause of despair.[27] And surely this is the absolute truth. So, glorify, O Prophet, the name of your Lord, the Great.

1The word al-Haaqqah as used in the Text means an event which has inevitably to take place and the occurrence of which in the future is so certain as to admit of no doubt or suspicion. To use this word for Resurrection and to begin the discourse with it by itself shows that the people were denying its occurrence. They are being told: "That which you are denying is inevitable: your denial will not prevent its occurrence."

2These two questions, one after the other, have been put to arouse the listeners, to make them understand the importance of the the me and listen to what follows with full attention.

3As the disbelievers of Makkah denied Resurrection and took the news of its coming lightly, they have been warned at the outset, as if to say: "Resurrection is inevitable: whether you believe in it; or not, it will in any case take place. Then, they are told: "It is not a simple and ordinary thing that a person accepts the news of the coming of an event, or not, but it has a deep relationship with the morals of the nations and with their future. The history of the nations, which lived before you, testifies that the nation which refused to believe in the Hereafter and thought this worldly life only to be the real life and denied that man would have ultimately to render an account of his deeds before God, corrupted itself morally until the punishment of God overtook it and eliminated it from the world."

4The word al-qari ah is derived from qar', which means to hammer, to beat, to knock and to strike one thing upon the other. This other word for Resurrection has been used to give an idea of its terror and dread.

5In Surah Al-A'raf: 78, it has been called ar-rajfah (a terrible earthquake); in Surah Hud: 67 as-sayhah (a violent blast); in Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 17, it has been said: "They were overtaken by sa`iqa-tul-'adhab (a humiliating scourge); and here the same punishment has been described as at-taghiyah (a violent catastrophe). These words describe different aspects of the same calamity.

6The reference is to the towns and settlements of the people of the Prophet Lot, about which it has been said in Surah Hud: 82 and Al-Hijr: 74: "We turned them upside down. "

7The illusion is to the Deluge of the Prophet Noah, in which a whole nation was drowned because of this very crime, and only those people were saved, who had listened to and obeyed the Messenger of Allah.

8"We boarded you...", because the whole human race that exists today has descended from the people who were boarded in the Ark thousands of years ago and thus saved from the Deluge. It means: "You exist in the world today because in that Deluge Allah had caused only the infidels to be drowned and had saved the believers.

9"The retaining ears,..": the ears which may hear it consciously and take it in. Although the word ear has been used, it implies the hearers who may hear the event and always remember it, take heed from it, and may never forget what dreadful fate the deniers of the Hereafter and the disbelievers of the Messenger of God would ultimately suffer.

10While reading the following verses one should keep in mind that at some places in the Qur'an the three stages of Resurrection which will occur one after the other at different times have been mentioned separately, and at others all the three have been combined and mentioned as a single event. For example, in Surah An-Naml: 87 the first blowing of the Trumpet has been mentioned, when everyone will be suddenly struck with terror. At that time they will witness the general confusion and the upsetting of the order of the universe, as described in Al-Hajj: 1-2, Ya Sin 49-50 and At-Takvir: 1-6. In Surah Az-Zumar: 67-70, mention has been made of the second and third blowing of the Trumpet. On the second blowing of it everyone will fall down dead, and when it is blown for the third time, all dead men will rise back to life and present themselves before Allah. In Ta Ha: 102-112, Al-Anbiya': 101-103, Ya Sin: 51-53 and Qaf: 20-22, only the third sounding of the Trumpet has been mentioned. (For explanation, see E.N. 78 of Ta Ha, E.N. 1 of Al-Hajj. E.N.'s 46, 47 of Ya Sin). But here and at many other places in the Qur'an all the events of Resurrection, from the blowing of the first Trumpet till the people's entry into Heaven and Hell, have been described as a single event.

11This is ambiguous verse the meaning of which is difficult to determine We can neither know what the Throne is nor can understand what will be the nature of the eight angels upholding it on the Day of Resurrection. It is, however. inconceivable that Allah Almighty would be sitting on the Throne and the eight angels would be upholding it along with Him The verse also does not say that Allah at that time would be sitting on the Throne. Besides, the conception of God that the Qur'an gives also prevents one from imagining that the Being Who is free from physical existence as to body, direction and place, should be residing some where and His creatures should sustain Him. Therefore, pursuing any research to determine its meaning would be tantamount to disbelief. However, one should understand that in order to give an idea of Allah Almighty's rule and sovereignty, and of the matters associated with it, the same

scene has been depicted by the Qur'an as of worldly kingship and the same terms have been used for it as are common for kingship and its accompaniments, to enable us to understand matters pertaining to sovereignty of the universe to some extent only by means of this very scene and terms. All this is meant to bring the real Truth within human understanding; it is not, therefore, right to take it literally.

12The record's being given in the right hand will by itself show that the concerned person's account is clear and settled and he is appearing in the Divine Court as a righteous man and not as a culprit. It is probable that at the time the records are distributed the righteous man himself will extend his right hand forward to receive his record. For on account of the good treatment that he would have received right from the moment of death till his appearance in the Plain of Assembly at Resurrection, would have given him the satisfaction that he was there to be blessed and not to be punished. At many a place in the Qur'an it has been explicitly stated that right at death itself it becomes clear to every man whether he is entering the next World in a blessed or wretched state. Then from the moment of death till Resurrection the righteous man is treated like a guest and the evil man as a culprit under custody. After this, froth the time the second life starts on the Day. of Resurrection, the condition and state of the righteous is entirely different from the condition and state of the disbelievers, hypocrites and culprits. (For details, see Al-Anfal: 50, An-Nahl: 28-32, Bani Isra'il: 97, Ta Ha: 102, 103, 124126, Al-Anbiya': 1-3, Al-Furgan: 24, An-Naml: 89, Saba: 51, Ya Sin: 26-27, AlMu'min 45-46, Muhammad: 27. Qaf: 19-23 and the corresponding Notes.

13That is, he will be overjoyed as soon as he receives his record and will show it to his companions. In Surah Al-Inshiqaq: 9, it has been said "He will return to his kinsfolk rejoicing."

14That is, "He was fortunate because he had been conscious of the Hereafter in the world and had lived his life with the belief that he would have to appear before God one day and render his account to Him.

15In Surah Al-Inshiqaq it has been said: "And the one whose record is given him behind his back..." Probably it will be like this: As the culprit would already be knowing that he was a culprit, and would be aware of what his record contained, he would dejectedly extend his left hand forward to receive it, and then would immediately hide it behind his back so that no one else saw what he had received.

16That is, "I should not have been given this record in the Plain of Assembly and thus publicly disgraced before all mankind, but should have been awarded secretly whatever punishment I deserved."

17That is, "I should not have been told what I had done in the world." Another meaning of this verse also can be: "I never knew what an account was: I never had imagined that one day I would also have to render my account and that all my deeds would be presented before me."

18That is, "I should have become extinct after death in the world and should have experienced no other

life after death."

19The word sultan of the Text is used both for an argument and for power and authority. If it is taken in the sense of an argument, the meaning would be: "The arguments that I used to give would not work here: here, I have no argument which I can present in self-defense." And if it is taken in the sense of power, it would imply: "The power of which I was so proud in the world is no more: I have no army here and there is none to obey me: I stand as a miserable, helpless creature, who can do nothing to defend himself."

20That is, not to speak of feeding a poor man himself, he did not even like to say others that they should feed the hungry.

21That is, the truth is not as you think it to be.

22Here, "an honorable Messenger" implies the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and in Surah At-Takwir: 19. the angel Gabriel (peace be on him), the argument being that after describing the Qur'an as the Word of an honorable Messenger, it has been said: "It is not the word of a poet ... nor of a soothsayer," and obviously the disbelievers of Makkah branded the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and not Gabriel as a poet and soothsayer. On the contrary, in Surah At-Takwir, after describing the Qur'an as the word of "a noble messenger" it has been said: "That Messenger has great power, and has high ranks with the Owner of the Throne: there he is obeyed and held as trustworthy ... And Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has seen him on the bright horizon." (vv. 20-23). Almost the same thing has been stated in An-Najm: 5-10 about Gabriel.

Here, the question arises; In what sense has the Qur'an been described as the Word of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and of Gabriel? The answer is: the people were hearing it being recited by the tongue of the Holy Prophet and the Holy Prophet by the tongue of Gabriel. Thereupon, in one way it was the word of the Holy Prophet and in another way of Gabriel, but a little below it has been explicitly stated: "It is indeed a Revelation from the Lord of the worlds," which is being presented before Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) by , the tongue of Gabriel (peace he on him) and before the people by the tongue of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). The word Messenger itself points to the truth that the Word belongs to neither of them but they have presented it as Messengers of the One Who has sent it down.

23One meaning of "little it is that you believe", according to Arabic idiom, can be: "You do not believe it at all." Another meaning also can be: "Hearing the Qur'an your heart sometimes itself cries out: 'This cannot be mortal word'. Yet you behave stubbornly and refuse to believe in it.

24In short: "I swear by whatever you see and by whatever you do not see that this Qur'an is not the word of a poet or a soothsayer, but it is a Revelation from the Lord of the worlds, which is being presented by the Messenger who is noble and gentle." Let us now consider in what sense this oath has been sworn. That which was visible to the people was:.

(1) This Word was being presented by a person who being noble and gentle was not hidden from anybody in the society of Makkah. Everyone knew that he was the best man of their nation in conduct. It could not be expected of such a man that he would forge a lie and attribute it to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

(2) They also saw clearly that he had no selfish motive in presenting that word before the people, but had rather sacrificed all His personal interests to it: had ruined his business, had abandoned every ease and comfort, was being cursed and abused by the same people who had shown him the highest veneration and esteem and had caused even his family and children to be subjected to these agonies besides himself. A person having selfish motives could not have submitted himself to such tribulations.

(3) They could also see that the lives of the people in their own society, who believed in him, underwent a sudden transformation. The word of no poet or soothsayer has been known to have brought about such a wonderful moral change in the people that his follower should become ready to face every hardship and bear up against every persecution for his sake.

(4) They were also not unaware of the language of poetry and the diction of the soothsayers. Apart from stubborn disbelievers, no one could say that the language of the Qur'an was the language of poetry or sorcery. (For a detailed discussion of this, see E.N. 7 of AI-Anbiya', E.N.'s 142-145 of Ash-Shu`ara', E. N.22 of At-Tur).

(5) This also was before their eyes that no one in entire Arabia was so eloquent of speech that his word could be brought to match with the Qur'an. Not to speak of equaling it, not even the greatest poet's eloquence could even approach anywhere near the Qur'an's.

(6) This also was not hidden from them that the language used by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) himself was very different in its literary beauty and merit from the language of the Qur'an. No Arabic speaking person could, after hearing the Holy Prophet's own speech, and the Qur'an, say that both emanated from one and the same person.

(7) The people of Makkah had never heard even until a day before Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) made the claim to Prophethood anything relating to the themes that the Qur'an consisted of, nor they knew that he had any means of obtaining that knowledge and information. That is why even if his opponents alleged that he obtained that information secretly from somewhere, no one in Makkah was prepared to believe it. (For explanation, see E.N l07 of An-Nahl and E.N. 12 of AI-Furgan).

(8) They could also see the wonderful workshop of existence, from the earth to the heavens, which was functioning before their eyes, and in which they could see a supreme, wise law and, an all-pervading order and system at work. In it they could see no sign and evidence of the polytheism and denial of the Hereafter, which the Arabs had adopted as their creed, but there were signs and proofs of the existence of One God and of the truth of the Hereafter which the Qur'an was presenting.

All this they could see, and what they did not see was: Allah Almighty alone is the Creator and Master and Ruler of this universe: all others are only creatures: none beside Him is God! Resurrection has to take place inevitably; Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has really been appointed a Messenger by Allah Himself Who is sending down the Qur'an to him. An oath has been sworn by both truths to affirm that which has been stated in the preceding verses.

25The object is to impress the point that the Prophet has no authority whatever to make any change in the Revelation. If he did so, he would be severely punished. The style depicts the prompt and quick action of a king who strikes off the head of an official, holding him by the hand, if he commits a forgery in his name. Some people have misconstrued this verse to mean that if the heart-vein or neck-vein of an impostor is not immediately severed by Allah, it would be a proof that he was a true prophet, whereas in this verse what has been said is about a true prophet and not about the impostors. Same impostors have even claimed to be God and have thrived and lived long lives in the world, so it could not be a proof of the truth of their claim. For a full discussion of this question, see E.N 23 of Surah Yunus.

26That is, the Qur'an is an admonition for those who wish to avoid wrongdoing and its evil consequences. (For explanation, see E.N. 3 of Al-Baqarah).

27That is, they will ultimately have to despair and regret as to why they had rejected this Qur'an.

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70. Surah Al Maarij (The Ascending Steps)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *dhil Ma'arij* in verse 3.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter bears evidence that this Surah too was sent down in conditions closely resembling those under which Surah Al Haaqqah was sent down.

Theme and Subject Matter

It admonishes and gives warning to the disbelievers who made fun of the news about Resurrection and the Hereafter, and Hell and Heaven, and challenged the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to cause Resurrection with which he threatened them to take place if what he said was true and they had become worthy of the punishment in Hell by denying it. The whole Surah is meant to answer this denial.

The Surah opens with words to the effect:"A demander has demanded a torment, the torment which must befall the deniers; and when it takes place, there will be none to prevent it, but it will take place at its own appointed time. Allah has His own way of doing things, but He is not unjust. Therefore, have patience, O Prophet, at what they say. They think it is far off, but We see it as near at hand."

Then it is said:"Resurrection, which they desire to be hastened out of jest and fun, is terrible, and when it comes, it will cause great distress to the culprits. At that time they will even be prepared to give away their wives and children and their nearest kinsfolk in ransom to escape the punishment, but they will not be able to escape it.

Then the people have been warned to the effect; "On that Day the destinies of men will be decided strictly on the basis of their belief and their conduct. Those who turn away from the Truth in the world and amass wealth and withhold it from the needy, will be doomed to Hell; and those who fear the punishment of God here, believe in the

Hereafter, keep up the Prayer, discharge the rights of the needy out of their wealth, strictly avoid immoral and wicked deeds, practice honesty in all their dealings, fulfill their pledges and trust and bear true witness, will have a place of honor in Paradise"

In conclusion, the disbelievers of Makkah who rushed in upon the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) from every side as soon as they saw him, in order to make fun of him, have been warned to the effect: "If you do not believe, Allah will replace you by other people who will be better than you", and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been consoled, so as to say: "Do not take to heart their mockery and jesting; leave them to indulge in their idle talk and foolish conduct if they are bent upon experiencing the disgrace and humiliation of the Resurrection; they will themselves see their evil end."'

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

سَأَلَ سَآئِلٌۢ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ ﴿١﴾

لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ دَافِعٌ ﴿٢﴾

مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ذِى ٱلْمَعَارِجِ ﴿٣﴾

تَعْرُجُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَٱلرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِى يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُۥ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ﴿٤﴾

فَٱصۡبِرۡ صَبۡرٗا جَمِيلًا ٥

إِنَّهُمۡ يَرَوۡنَهُۥ بَعِيدٗا ٦

وَنَرَىٰهُ قَرِيبٗا ٧

يَوۡمَ تَكُونُ ٱلسَّمَآءُ كَٱلۡمُهۡلِ ٨

وَتَكُونُ ٱلۡجِبَالُ كَٱلۡعِهۡنِ ٩

وَلَا يَسۡـَٔلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيمٗا ١٠

يُبَصَّرُونَهُمۡۚ يَوَدُّ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمُ لَوۡ يَفۡتَدِي مِنۡ عَذَابِ يَوۡمِئِذِۭ بِبَنِيهِ ١١

وَصَٰحِبَتِهِۦ وَأَخِيهِ ﴿١٢﴾

وَفَصِيلَتِهِ ٱلَّتِى تُـْٔوِيهِ ﴿١٣﴾

وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يُنجِيهِ ﴿١٤﴾

كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّهَا لَظَىٰ ﴿١٥﴾

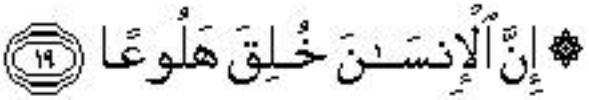
نَزَّاعَةً لِّلشَّوَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾

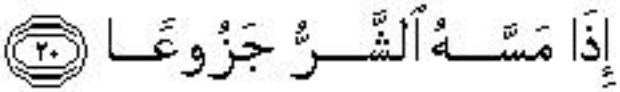
تَدْعُوا۟ مَنْ أَدْبَرَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١٧﴾

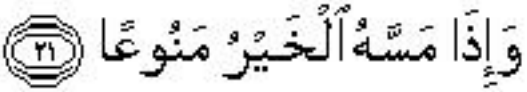
وَجَمَعَ فَأَوْعَىٰٓ ﴿١٨﴾

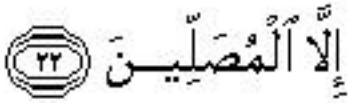
[1-18] A demander has demanded a torment,[1] which must befall. It is for the disbelievers. There is none to avert it. It will come from that God Who is the Owner of the Steps of Ascent.[2] The angels and the Spirit[3] ascend to His Presence[4] in a day whose measure is fifty thousand years[5] So, have patience, O Prophet, a graceful patience.[6] They think it is far off, but We see it as near at hand.[7] (The torment shall befall on the Day)[8] when the heavens shall be like molten silver,[9] and the mountains like carded wool of different colors.[10] And no close friend shall ask after his

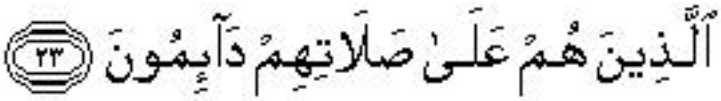
close friend, though they will be shown to each other.[11] To save himself from the torment of that Day, the culprit shall wish to give his children, his wife, his brother, his kinsfolk who gave him shelter, and all the people of the earth, in ransom that this device might rescue him. No, never! It will be the flame of the blazing Fire, that will eat up the very flesh. It shall summon to itself every such person who drew away and turned his back and amassed wealth and guarded it jealously.[12]

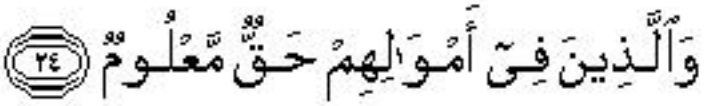


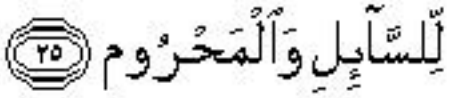












وَٱلَّذِينَ يُصَدِّقُونَ بِيَوۡمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم مِّنۡ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِم مُّشۡفِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمۡ غَيۡرُ مَأۡمُونٖ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ لِفُرُوجِهِمۡ حَٰفِظُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِلَّا عَلَىٰٓ أَزۡوَٰجِهِمۡ أَوۡ مَا مَلَكَتۡ أَيۡمَٰنُهُمۡ فَإِنَّهُمۡ غَيۡرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

فَمَنِ ٱبۡتَغَىٰ وَرَآءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡعَادُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُمۡ لِأَمَٰنَٰتِهِمۡ وَعَهۡدِهِمۡ رَٰعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم بِشَهَٰدَٰتِهِمۡ قَآئِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ هُم عَلَىٰ صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

[19-35] Indeed, man has been created impatient.[13] When affliction befalls him, he becomes fretful, and when good fortune falls to his lot he becomes stingy. But those people (are an exception) who are the performers of salat.[14] Who are steadfast and ever constant in regard to their salat.[15] In whose wealth there is a due share of the beggar and the needy.[16] Who believe in the reality of the Day of Recompense.[17] Who dread the torment of their Lord.[18] For from the torment of their Lord none can feel secure; who guard their private parts.[19] Except with regard to their wives and those women who are legally in their possession, for in their case they are not blameworthy, but those who go beyond this are indeed transgressors.[20] Who keep their trusts and honor their promises.[21] Who bear true witnesses.[22] And who strictly guard their salat.[23] These are they who shall live with honor in the Gardens of Paradise.

فَمَالِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ قِبَلَكَ مُهْطِعِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

عَنِ ٱلْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ ٱلشِّمَالِ عِزِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

أَيَطْمَعُ كُلُّ ٱمْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُدْخَلَ جَنَّةَ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَٰهُم مِّمَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

فَلَآ أُقۡسِمُ بِرَبِّ ٱلۡمَشَٰرِقِ وَٱلۡمَغَٰرِبِ إِنَّا لَقَٰدِرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّبَدِّلَ خَيۡرٗا مِّنۡهُمۡ وَمَا نَحۡنُ بِمَسۡبُوقِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

فَذَرۡهُمۡ يَخُوضُواْ وَيَلۡعَبُواْ حَتَّىٰ يُلَٰقُواْ يَوۡمَهُمُ ٱلَّذِي يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

يَوۡمَ يَخۡرُجُونَ مِنَ ٱلۡأَجۡدَاثِ سِرَاعٗا كَأَنَّهُمۡ إِلَىٰ نُصُبٖ يُوفِضُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

خَٰشِعَةً أَبۡصَٰرُهُمۡ تَرۡهَقُهُمۡ ذِلَّةٞۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡيَوۡمُ ٱلَّذِي كَانُواْ يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[36-44] So, O prophet, what is the matter with the disbelievers that they are rushing in towards you, from the right and from the left, in groups?[24] Does everyone of them cherish the desire that he will be admitted into the Garden of Bliss?[25] No, never! They themselves know of what We have created them.[26] Not so![27] I swear by the Owner of the East's and the Wests[28] that We have the power to replace them by better people than they, and there is none to outstrip Us.[29] Hence, leave them engrossed in their vain talk and sport until they encounter that Day of theirs which they are being promised, when they shall be rushing out of their graves as though racing towards the shrines of their deities.[30] Their eyes shall be downcast and abasement shall be covering them. That is the Day which they are being promised.

1Some commentators have taken the verb sa'ala in the Text in the meaning of asking, and have interpreted the verse to mean: "The asker has asked: whom will the torment with which we are being threatened befall"' And Allah has answered it, saying: "It will befall the disbelievers." But most of the commentators have taken sa'ala here in the meaning of demanding. Nasa'i and other traditionists have related a tradition from Ibn 'Abbas, and Hakim hold it as authentic, that Nadr bin al-Harith Kaladah had said "O God, if it is really the Truth sent dawn by You, then rain down stones on us from the heavens, or

send down any other painful torment on us." (Al-Anfal: 32). Apart from this, at several places in the Qur'an the disbelievers' this challenge has been related: "Why don't you bring down on us the torment that you threaten us with?" For instance, see Yunus: 4b-48, Al-Anbiya': 36-41, An-Naml; 67-72, Saba: 26-30, Ya Sin: 45-52, Al-Mink: 24-27.

2Ma'arij is plural of Mi'raj, which means a stairway, or a ladder, or something by which one may go up. To call Allah dhil-Ma'aij (Owner of the Steps of Ascent) means that He is Most High and in order to go up into His Presence the angels have to ascend many heights, one above the other, as has been stated in the following verses.

3"The Spirit": the Angel Gabriel (peace be on him), who has been mentioned separately from the angels in order to impress his unique glory and greatness. In Surah Ash-Shu'ara' it has been said: "The trustworthy Spirit has came down with this Qur'an upon your heart", (v. 193), and in Surah Al-Baqarah "Say to them: whoever is an enemy to Gabriel, should understand that he has, by .Allah's command. revealed upon your heart this Qur'an." (v. 97). These verses when read together show that Ar-Ruh (the Spirit) implies the Angel Gabriel.

4This is an ambiguous theme the meaning of which cannot be determined precisely. We neither have any knowledge of the reality of the angels, nor can understand the nature of their ascent, nor can conceive the stairways on which they ascend. Besides, about Allah also it cannot be imagined that He lives in a particular place, for He is exalted and free froth the restrictions of space and time.

5In Al-Hajj: 47, it has been said: "These people are demanding of you to hasten the torment; Allah will never tail to fulfill His threat, but a day with your Lord is equal to a thousand years as you reckon." In Surah As-Sajdah: 5, it has been said: "He administers the affairs of the world from the heavens to the earth, and the report of this administration ascends (to be presented) before Him in a Day whose length, according to your reckoning, is a thousand years". And here, in response to the demand for the torment, the measure of Allah's one day has been stated to be fifty thousand years. Then the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been consoled, saying: "Have patience at the demand for the torment which the people make out of jest and fun," and then it is said: "They think it is far off, but We see it as near at hand." When all these verses are read together, what becomes obvious is: "The people, because of their narrow and restricted outlook, measure the time of Allah's decrees by their own scales of time and, therefore, consider a hundred years or so to be a very lengthy period, whereas in the Divine conduct of affairs there are schemes spreading over a thousand years each, or fifty thousand years each, as you reckon, and this measure also is only by way of example; otherwise schemes in the universe may extend over millions and billions of years as well. Of these one is the scheme under which Mankind has been created on the earth, and a time limit has been set during which it has been allowed to function here. No man can know when this scheme began, what time-limit has been decreed for its completion, what Hour has been appointed for bringing it to an end, when Resurrection will take place, and what time has been fixed for raising all men, born since the beginning of creation till Resurrection, from death simultaneously

and calling them to account for their deeds. We only know to some extent that part of the scheme which is passing before us, or a partial history of the past ages which exists with us. As for its beginning and end, to say nothing of knowing it, we do not even have the power to understand it, not to speak of understanding the wisdom which works behind and underlies it. Now the people who demand that the scheme be cut short and its conclusion be brought immediately before them, and if this is not done. they use it for an argument to prove that the universe has no end and conclusion, in fact, present a proof of their own ignorance and folly. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 92, 93 of Surah Al-Hajj, E.N. 9 of As-Sajdah).

6"A goodly patience": "A kind of patience that behooves a magnanimous person like you."

7This can have two meanings:

(1) "That these people think it cannot possibly take place, and in Our view it is going to take place very soon"; and

(2) "that these people think Resurrection is yet remote and far off, and in Our sight it is close at hand and may occur any moment. "

8A section of the commentators regard this sentence as related to "a day whose measure is fifty thousand years"; they say that the day whose measure has been stated to be fifty thousand years is the Day of Resurrection. In Musnad Ahmad and in the Tafsir by Ibn Jarir, a tradition has been related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri, saying: "When wonder and amazement was expressed before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about the length of this Day with reference to this verse, he replied: 'By Him in Whose hand is my life, the believer will find the Day even lighter (of shorter duration) than the time he takes in performing an obligatory Prayer in the world" . " Had this tradition been reported through authentic channels, this verse could not be interpreted in any other way, but two of its transmitters, Darraj and his teacher Abul Haytham, are both weak and untrustworthy.

9That is, it will change its color over and over again.

10As the colors of the mountains are different, when they are uprooted and they drift about weight less, they will appear like flakes of carded wool of different colors.

11Not so that they will not see each other, therefore they will not ask after each other's welfare, but each will be seeing the other in agony and distress, yet will ignore him, being wholly preoccupied with his own torment.

12Here also, as in Al-Haaqqah: 33-34, two causes have been mentioned of a person's evil end in the

Hereafter:

(1) His repudiation of the Truth and refusal to affirm faith; and

(2) his worship of the world and stinginess because of which he amasses wealth and refuses to spend it on any good cause.

13"Man has been created impatient": It is man's nature, or his natural weakness, to be impatient. Here, one should keep in view that at many places in the Qur'an, after making mention of mankind's common moral weaknesses, those who believe and adopted righteousness have been made an exception; the same theme is being expressed in the following verses. This by itself explains the truth that these hereditary weaknesses are not unalterable; if man accepts the guidance sent down by God and tries to reform himself practically, he can remove them, and if he gives a free rope to his self these become ingrained in him deeply. (For further explanation, see E.N. 41 of Al-Anbiya', E.N.'s 23-28 of Az-Zumar, E. N. 75 of Ash-Shura).

14A person's performing the salat necessarily implies that he believes in Allah, His Messenger, His Book and the Hereafter as well as tries to act according to his belief.

15That is, no laziness, or love of ease and comfort, no occupation, or interest, hinders them from being punctual and regular at the prayer. When the Prayer time comes, they abandon every occupation and activity and stand up to perform worship of their God. Another meaning which Hadrat 'Uqbah bin 'Amir has given of ala salat-i-him daa imun is that they perform the Prayer with full peace of mind, tranquility and humility; they do not try to offer the Prayer in a hurry in order to get rid of it somehow, nor think irrelevant things during the Prayer.

16In Surah Adh-Dhariyat: 19, it has been said: "In their wealth there is a right of the beggar and the needy", and here: "In their wealth there is a due share of the beggar and the needy. " Some people have understood this to mean that the "due share" implies the obligatory zakat, for in the zakat both the exemption limit and the rate have been fixed. But this commentary cannot be accepted on the ground that the Surah AI-Ma`arij is unanimously a Makkan Revelation, and the zakat with its specific exemption limit and rate was enjoined at Madinah. Therefore, the correct meaning of the "due share" is that they have of their own accord set aside a share in their possessions of the beggar and needy, which they discharge regularly and honestly. This same meaning of this verse has been given by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar, Mujahid, Sha`bi and Ibrahim Nakha`i.

Here, sail does not imply a beggar but a needy person, who asks someone for help, and mahrum implies a person who is jobless, or the one who tries to earn a living but does not earn enough to meet his needs, or the one who has become disabled because of an accident or calamity, and is unable to make a living.

About such people when it becomes known that they are destitute, a God worshiper does not wait that they should ask for help, but helps them of his own accord as soon as he comes to know that they are needy and stand in need of help. (For further explanation, see E.N. 17 of Surah Adh-Dhariyat).

17"Who believe ... Day of Recompense": who do not think they are irresponsible but believe that one Day they will have to appear before their God and render to Him an account of their deeds.

18In other words, they are not like the disbelievers, who do not fear God even after they have committed every heinous sin and crime and perpetrated every cruelty in the world, but they, in spite of having adopted a righteous attitude in morals and deeds as best as they could, fear God and continue to remain in constant awe lest their shortcomings should exceed their good works before Him and they should be declared as worthy of punishment. (For further explanation, see E N. 54 of Al-Mu'minun, E.N. 19 of Adh-Dhariyat).

19"Who guard their private parts": who abstain from adultery as well as from nudity and exposing their private parts before others. (For explanation, see E.N 6 of Al-Mu'minun, E.N.'s 30, 32 of An-Nur E.N. 62 of Al-Ahzab).

20For explanation, see E.N. 7 of Al-Mu'minun.

21"Trusts" imply those trusts which Allah has entrusted to men as well as those which one man entrusts to another because of faith and confidence. Likewise, "promises" imply those promises which man makes with his God as well as those which one man makes with another. Keeping and fulfilling both these kinds of trusts and promises is a necessary characteristic of a believer. In a Hadith Hadrat Anas (may Allah bless him) has reported that when ever the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) addressed his Companions, he would always give them the instruction: "Beware, the one who does not keep his trust has no faith, and one who does not fulfill his pledges, has no religion." (Baihaqi. Ash-Shu ab al-Imam).

22That is, they neither conceal evidence nor change it in any way for selfish motives.

23This gives an idea of the importance of the Prayer (salat). The description of the merits of the high and sublime character of those who have been declared as worthy of Paradise, began with the Prayer and has been concluded with it. To be a performer of the Prayer is their first characteristic, to be steadfast and ever constant with regard to the Prayer is their second characteristic, and to guard their Prayer is their last characteristic. "Guarding the Prayer" implies many things: to perform the Prayer at its right time, to make sure before the Prayer that one's body and clothes are clean and pure, to have performed the ablutions and to have washed the limbs well, to perform the basic elements of the Prayer with its obligatory and desirable parts with due care and attention, to observe the requisite rites of the Prayer carefully, to avoid disobedience of God, which is destructive of the Prayer; all these are included in the

guarding of the Prayer.

24This refers to those disbelievers who would rush in towards the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) from every side to mock and ridicule him when they heard him preach Islam and recite the Qur'an.

25It means that God's Paradise is only for those righteous people whose characteristics have just been described above, Now, can these people who are not at all inclined to listen to the truth and who are rushing in towards the Prophet in order to suppress every invitation to the truth, be candidates for Paradise? Has God prepared His Paradise only for such people as they? Here, one should also keep in view vv. 34-41 of Surah AI-Qalam in which an answer has been given to this saying of the disbelievers of Makkah: "Even if there is any life after death, we shall have good time there too, as we are having in the world, and the torment would befall Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and his followers and not us."

26Here, this sentence can have two meanings:

(1) If it is taken to be related to the preceding theme, it will mean: As for the substance these people have been created from, all men are equal. For if the substance itself be the cause of man's entry into Paradise, then the good and the bad, the wicked and the just, the guilty and the innocent, all should go to Paradise. But a little common sense is enough to decide that man's qualifications for Paradise are created not on the basis of the substance of his creation but only on the basis of his merit and excellence.

(2) If this sentence is regarded as an introduction to the following theme, it would mean: "These people think they are secure from Our torment and mock the one who warns them of Our punishment, whereas We can punish them even in this world as and when We please, as well as resurrect them after death as and when We like. They themselves know that We began their creation from an insignificant sperm-drop and developed them into a living man. If they had only considered this mode of their creation, they would never have been involved in the misunderstanding that they now have escaped Our grasp, or that We have no power to create them over again."

27That is, the truth is not that which these people think it is.

28Here, Allah has sworn an oath by Himself. The words Easts and Wests have been used because the sun rises and sets at a new angle every day during the year, and goes on rising and setting successively at different times around the globe. Thus considered the Easts and the Wests are not one but many. From another point of view as against the north and the south there is a direction of east and a direction of west. On this basis in Surah Ash-Shu`ara': 28 and AlMuzzammi1:19 the words Rabb-ul-rnashriqi wal-maghrib have been used. From still another view-point the earth has two easts and two wests, for when the sun sets on one hemisphere, it rises on the other. On this basis the words Rabb-ul-mashriqayn wa

Rabb-ul-maghribayn (Lord of two easts and two wests) have been used in Surah Ar-Rahman: 17. (For further explanation, see E.N. 17 of Ar-Rahman).

29This is that for which Allah Almighty has sworn an oath of His being Lord of the Easts and Wests. It means: "As We are Owners of the Easts and Wests, the whole earth is under Our control and power, and you have no power to escape Our punishment: We can destroy you as and when We like and can create another people that may be better than you. "

30There is a difference of opinion among the commentators about the meaning of the word nusub. Some have interpreted it to mean idols, according to which the meaning would be: "They would be racing towards the place appointed by the Lord of Resurrection as they race today towards the shrines of their idols" ; and some others have taken nusub to mean the goal signs which are set for the competitors in a race, so that each tries to reach and touch the appointed post before the other.

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71. Surah Nuh (Noah)

Name

"Nuh" is the name of this Surah as well as the title of its subject matter, for in it, from beginning to the end, the story of the Prophet Noah has been related.

Period of Revelation

This also is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah, but the internal evidence of its subject matter shows that it was sent down in the period when opposition to the Holy Prophet's message of Islam by the disbelievers of Makkah had grown very strong and active.

Theme and Subject

In this surah the story of the Prophet Noah has not been related only for the sake of story telling, but its object is to warn the disbelievers of Makkah, so as to say:"You, O people of Makkah, are adopting towards Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) the same attitude as the people of the Prophet Noah had adopted towards him; if you do not change this attitude, you too would meet with the same end." This had not been said in so many words anywhere in the Surah, but in the background of the conditions under which this story was narrated to the people of Makkah, this subject itself became obvious.

Vv. 2-4 briefly explain how he began his mission and what he preached.

Then after suffering hardships and troubles in the way of preaching his mission for ages the report that he made to his Lord has been given in vv. 5-20. In it he states how he had been trying to bring his people to the right path and how his people had stubbornly opposed him.

After this, the Prophet Noah's final submission has been recorded in vv. 21-24, in which he prays to his Lord, saying: "These people have rejected my invitation: they are blindly following their chiefs, who have devised a

tremendous plot of deceit and cunning. Time now has come when these people should be deprived of every grace to accept guidance." This was not an expression of impatience by the Prophet Noah, but when after having preached his message under extremely trying circumstances for centuries be became utterly disappointed with his people, he formed the opinion that no chance whatever was left of their coming to the right path. His this opinion fully conformed to Allah's own decision. Thus, in the next verse (25), it has been said: "The torment of Allah descended on those people because of their misdeeds."

In the concluding verse, the Prophet Noah's supplication that he made to his Lord, right at the time the torment descended, has been recorded. In it he prays for his own and for all the believers' forgiveness, and makes a submission to Allah to the effect: "Do not leave any of the disbelievers alive on the earth, for they have become utterly devoid of every good: they will not beget any but disbelieving and wicked descendants."

While studying this Surah one should keep in view the details of the Prophet Noah's story which have been given in the Qur'an above. For this see Al-Araf: 59-64 Yunus: 71,73, Hud: 25-49, Al-Mu'minun: 23-31, Ash- Shua'ra: 105-122, Al-Ankabut: 14,15, As-Saaffat: 75-82, Al-Qamar: 9-16.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦٓ أَنْ أَنذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١﴾

[1] We sent Noah to his people (as a Messenger, with the instruction): "Warn your people before there comes upon them a painful torment."[1]

قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢﴾

أَنِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُونِ ٣

يَغۡفِرۡ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمۡ وَيُؤَخِّرۡكُمۡ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمًّىۚ إِنَّ أَجَلَ ٱللَّهِ إِذَا جَآءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُۖ لَوۡ كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ٤

[2-4] He said, "O my people, I am a plain warner to you. (I warn you) that you should worship Allah, and fear Him and obey me.[2] Allah will forgive you your sins,[3] and will give you respite till an appointed time.[4] The fact is that when the appointed time of Allah comes, it cannot be deferred.[5] Would that you know it."[6]

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوۡتُ قَوۡمِي لَيۡلٗا وَنَهَارٗا ٥

فَلَمۡ يَزِدۡهُمۡ دُعَآءِيٓ إِلَّا فِرَارٗا ٦

وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوۡتُهُمۡ لِتَغۡفِرَ لَهُمۡ جَعَلُوٓاْ أَصَٰبِعَهُمۡ فِيٓ ءَاذَانِهِمۡ وَٱسۡتَغۡشَوۡاْ ثِيَابَهُمۡ وَأَصَرُّواْ وَٱسۡتَكۡبَرُواْ ٱسۡتِكۡبَارٗا ٧

ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوۡتُهُمۡ جِهَارٗا ٨

ثُمَّ إِنِّيٓ أَعۡلَنتُ لَهُمۡ وَأَسۡرَرۡتُ لَهُمۡ إِسۡرَارٗا ٩

فَقُلۡتُ ٱسۡتَغۡفِرُواْ رَبَّكُمۡ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ غَفَّارٗا ١٠

يُرۡسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيۡكُم مِّدۡرَارٗا ١١

وَيُمۡدِدۡكُم بِأَمۡوَٰلٖ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجۡعَل لَّكُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ وَيَجۡعَل لَّكُمۡ أَنۡهَٰرٗا ١٢

مَّا لَكُمۡ لَا تَرۡجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارٗا ١٣

وَقَدۡ خَلَقَكُمۡ أَطۡوَارًا ١٤

أَلَمۡ تَرَوۡاْ كَيۡفَ خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ سَبۡعَ سَمَٰوَٰتٖ طِبَاقٗا ١٥

وَجَعَلَ ٱلْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ ٱلشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا ﴿١٦﴾

وَٱللَّهُ أَنۢبَتَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ نَبَاتًا ﴿١٧﴾

ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا ﴿١٨﴾

وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ﴿١٩﴾

لِّتَسْلُكُوا۟ مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا ﴿٢٠﴾

[5-20] Noah submitted,[7] “O my Lord, I called my people night and day, but my calling has only increased their aversion.[8] And whenever I called them that You might pardon them,[9] they thrust their fingers into their ears and covered their faces with their garments,[10] and grew obstinate and showed great arrogance.[11] Then I invited them openly and preached to them in public as well as in private. I said, “Seek forgiveness from your Lord: indeed He is All-Forgiving. He will send abundant rains for you from heaven, will help you with wealth and children, will create gardens for you, and provide flowing rivers for you.[12] What is the matter with you that you do not expect for Allah any dignity,[13] although He has created you in successive stages?[14] Do you not see how Allah has created seven heavens, one above the other and made the moon a light in them and the sun a lamp? And Allah has caused you to grow out of the earth in a strange way,[15] then He will restore you to the same earth, and will raise you up from it suddenly. And Allah has spread out the earth as a carpet for you that you may walk in its open paths.”

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَن لَّمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالُهُۥ وَوَلَدُهُۥٓ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٢١﴾

وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا كُبَّارًا ﴿٢٢﴾

وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ ءَالِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا ﴿٢٣﴾

وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا ۖ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَٰلًا ﴿٢٤﴾

[21-24] Noah said, "O my Lord, they have disobeyed me and followed those (chiefs) whose wealth and children have increased them only in loss. They have devised a mighty plot.[16] They said, “Do not at all abandon your gods, and do not abandon Wadd nor Suwa, nor Yaghuth and Ya `uq and Nasr.”[17] They have led many people astray, and so (O Lord), increase not the wrongdoers in anything but deviation.”[18]

مِّمَّا خَطِيٓـَٔاتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأُدْخِلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنصَارًا ﴿٢٥﴾

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ دَيَّارًا ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنَّكَ إِن تَذَرْهُمْ يُضِلُّوا۟ عِبَادَكَ وَلَا يَلِدُوٓا۟ إِلَّا فَاجِرًا كَفَّارًا ﴿٢٧﴾

رَّبِّ ٱغْفِرْ لِى وَلِوَٰلِدَىَّ وَلِمَن دَخَلَ بَيْتِىَ مُؤْمِنًا وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ
وَلَا تَزِدِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا ﴿٢٨﴾

[25-28] Only because of their sins they were drowned and were cast into Fire.[19] Then they found no helper to save them from Allah.[20] And Noah prayed: "My Lord, leave not on the earth any dweller from among the disbelievers. If you leave them, they would lead Your servants astray, and would beget none but sinners and disbelievers. My Lord, forgive me and my parents and whoever has entered my house as a believer, and all believing men and all believing women, and increase not the wrongdoers in anything but ruin."

1"Warm your people ... ": Warn them that the errors and moral evils that they were involved in, would only earn them Allah's punishment, if they did not desist from them, and tell them what way they should adopt in order to ward off that punishment.

2The three things which the Prophet Noah presented before his people at the outset of his mission of Prophethood were:

(1) Worship of Allah,

(2) adoption of piety (taqwa) and

(3) obedience of the Messenger.

Worship of Allah meant that they should give up worship and service of all others and should acknowledge Allah alone as their Deity and should worship and carry out His commands alone. Taqwa (piety) meant that they should refrain from all those works which caused Allah's anger and displeasure,

and should instead adopt such attitude in their lives as the God fearing people should adopt. As for "obey me", it meant that they should obey the commands that he gave them as Allah's Messenger.

3The sentence yaghfir la-kum min dhunub-i-kum in the original does not mean that Allah will forgive some of their sins, but its correct meaning is: "If you accept and acknowledge the three things which are being presented before you, He will forgive all the sins that you have committed in the past."

4That is, "If you accepted these three things, you would be given respite to live in the world until the time that Allah has appointed for your natural death."

5"The appointed time of Allah .. ": the time fixed by Allah for sending down a torment on a people. In this regard the Qur'an has at several places stated explicitly that when Allah's torment has been decreed for a certain people, they are not pardoned even if they affirm the faith after it.

6That is, "If you come to know fully well that the time which is now passing after you have received Allah's message through me, is, in fact, a period of respite that has been granted to you for affirming the faith-and there is no chance of escape from Allah's torment after the term of respite has elapsed-you would testify to the faith without delay and would not like to postpone it until the torment actually started descending on you."

7Omitting the history of a long period of preaching, now the Prophet Noah's petition that he made to Allah in the last stage of his worldly mission is being related.

8That is, "As I went on calling them towards You, they went on fleeing farther and farther away from You."

9"That you might pardon them": that they might give up their attitude of disobedience and beg forgiveness of Allah, for in that way alone they could be forgiven by Allah.

10They covered their faces either because they did not even like to have a look at the Prophet Noah's face, not to speak of listening to what he said, or they did so in order to hide their own faces from him as they passed by him so that he could not recognize and address them. This precisely was the attitude and conduct which the disbelievers of Makkah were adopting towards the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). In Surah Hud: 5, their attitude has been described thus: "Behold, they turn aside their chests in order to hide themselves from him: Beware, even when they cover themselves up with their garments, Allah knows alike what they hide and what they show; He indeed knows even the secrets they conceal in their breasts." (For explanation, see E.N, 5, 6 of Hud).

11"Arrogance" implies that they thought it was below their dignity to bow before the Truth and accept the admonition of Allah's Messenger. As for example, if a gentlemen admonishes a perverted person and he,

in response, shakes his head and walks away haughtily, this would amount to rejecting the admonition with arrogance.

12This theme has been expressed at several places in the Qur'an that the rebellious attitude against God causes man to lead a wretched life not only in the Hereafter but also in this world, Contrary to this, if a nation adopts the way of faith and piety and obedience to Divine Commands, instead of disobedience, it benefits it not only in the Hereafter but also in the world; it is favored with every kind of blessing. In Surah Ta Ha it has been said: "And whoever turns away from My Admonition, will have a wretched life in the world, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection." (v. 124). In Surah Al-Ma'idah it has been said: "Had the people of the Book observed the Torah and the Gospel and the other Books which had been sent down by their Lord, abundance of provisions would have been given to them from above and from beneath." (v. 66). In Al-A`raf: "Had the people of the settlements believed and adopted the way of piety, We would have opened on them doors of blessings from the heavens and the earth." (v. 96). In Surah Hud, the Prophet Hud addressed his people, saying: "And O my people, beg forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him in penitence, and He will open the gates of heavens for you and add more strength to your present strength." (v. 52). Through the Holy Prophet himself in this very Surah Hud, the people of Makkah have been admonished to the effect: "And you should beg forgiveness of your Lord, then return to Him, and He will provide you with good provisions of life till an appointed term." (v. 3). According to the Hadid, the Holy Prophet said to the Quraish: "There is a word which. if you accept, would enable you to rule over the Arab as well as the non-Arab world." (For explanation, see E.N. 96 of Al-Ma'idah, E.N.'s 3, 57 of Hud, E.N. 105 of Ta Ha; Introduction to Surah Suad),

Acting on this same instruction from the Qur'an, once during a famine Hadrat `Umar came out to invoke Allah for the rain and begged only forgiveness of Him. The people said: "O Commander of the Faithful. you have not prayed for the rain." He replied: "I have knocked at the doors of heaven where from the rain is sent down", and then he recited these verses of Surah Nuh to them. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir). Likewise, when in the assembly of Hadrat Hasan Basri, a person complained of drought, he said to him "Beg forgiveness of Allah." Another person complained of poverty, a third one said .that he was not being blessed with children, a fourth one said that his harvest had failed, and he continued to remind everyone to beg forgiveness of Allah. The people asked: "How is it that you have suggested to all the people one and the same cure for the different complaints? He in response recited these verses of Surah Nuh to them" (Al-Kashshaf).

13It means: "As for the petty chiefs of the world, you think it would be dangerous to do anything against their dignity, but as for the Creator and Lord of the universe, you do not expect that He would also be a Being endowed with dignity. You rebel against Him, associate others in His Divinity, disobey His Commands, and yet you are not at all afraid that He would punish you for your misconduct."

14That is, "He has brought you to the present stage after passing you through different stages of creation and phases of development. In the beginning you lay in the form of sperm and ovum separately in the

loins of your father and mother. Then the two were combined by the power of Allah and you were conceived. Then for nine months in the womb of the mother you were gradually formed into a perfect human form and were endowed with all those capabilities which you needed to function as a man in the world. Then you came out as a child from the mother's womb, and you were developed from one state to another constantly until you attained to full youth and then old age. While passing through all these stages you lay wholly in the power of Allah at all times. Had He so willed He would not have allowed you to be conceived but allowed another person to be conceived in your place. Had He so pleased He would have made you blind, deaf, dumb, or a cripple, in the mother's womb itself, or made you mentally deficient. Had He so liked you would not have been born as a living child. Even after your birth He could have destroyed you any time by causing you to fall a victim to one or other accident suddenly. About that God under Whose power you are so powerless, how could you have taken it into your head that you could commit any insolence against Him, could regard Him with every treachery and ingratitude, could rebel against Him as and when you pleased, and could do all this with impunity?

15Here, the creation of man out of the substances of the earth has been compared to the growth of vegetation. Just as at one time there was no vegetation on the earth, then Allah caused it to grow, so at one time man did not exist, then Allah created him.

16"Mighty plot": All those deceits, deceptions and frauds which the chiefs and religious guides were employing in an attempt to mislead the common people against the teachings of the Prophet Noah. For example, they said; "Noah is no more than a mere man like yourselves. How can one believe that Allah sends down Revelations to him? (Al-A'raf: 63, Hud: 27). "We also see that only the meanest of us have become his followers without due thought. Had there been some weight in what he says, the elders of the people would have believed in him." (Hud: 27). "Had Allah willed, He would have sent down angels." (A1Mu'minun: 24). "Had he been sent by Allah, he would possess treasures, he would know the un-seen, and he would be free from all human needs, like the angels (Hud: 31). "We tied nothing in him that might give him superiority over us. " (Hud: 27). "He merely intends to obtain superiority over you. " (Al Mu'minun: 24). "Obviously, this man is possessed." (AI-Mu'minun: 25). Similar were the things that the Quraish chiefs said to mislead the people against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace).

17Of the gods of the Prophet Noah's people only those gods have been mentioned whom later the people of Arabia also had started worshiping and whose shrines were found all over the country at the advent of Islam. It is not impossible that the later generations heard the names of the ancient gods of Noah's people from the people who were saved from the flood, and when ignorance once again spread among their children, they made idols of the same gods and started worshiping them again.

Wadd was the god of the Bani Kalb bin Wabash, a branch of the Quda`ah tribe, whose shrine had been built at Daumat al-Jandal. In the ancient Arabian inscriptions he has been named as Waddam ibam (father Wadd). Kalbi has stated that the image built to him was of a man of enormous size. The Quraish also acknowledged him as god and called him Wudd. It is after him that a person has been named 'Abd-i

Wudd (slave of Wudd) in history.

Suwa was the goddess of the Hudhayl tribe and her idol was a female figure. Her temple was situated at Ruhat near Yanbu.

Yaghuth was the god of An'um, a branch of the Tay tribe, and of some branches of the Madhjih tribe. The people of Madhjih had installed its idol, the image of a lion, at Jurash, a place between Yaman and Hijaz. Among the Quraish also some people had been named `Abd-i Yaghuth.

Ya'uq was the god of Khaywan, a branch of the Hamdan tribe, in the territory of Hamdan in Yaman; its idol was of the horse's figure.

Nasr was the god of Al-i dhul-Kula', a branch of the Himyar tribe, in the territory of Himyar; it had its idol installed at Balkha` and had the image of the vulture. In the ancient inscriptions of Saba its name has been written as Nasor. Its temple was called bayt Nasor (house of Nasor) and its devotees ahl Nasor (people of Nasor). The ruins of the ancient temples that are found in Arabia and in the adjoining lands have the image of the vulture made on the doors of most of them.

18As we have explained in the introduction to this Surah, the Prophet Noah did not invoke this curse out of impatience but he invoked it when, after doing full justice to the preaching of his mission for many centuries, he became totally despaired of any success with his people. Similar were the conditions under which the Prophet Moses also had cursed Pharaoh and his people, thus: "Lord, destroy their wealth and harden their hearts in a manner so that they do not believe until they see the painful torment." And Allah, in response, had said: "The prayer of you both has been granted" Yunus: 88-89). Like the Prophet Moses', the Prophet Noah's curse also was in complete conformity with Divine Will. Thus, in Surah Hud it has been said: "And it was revealed to Noah: No more of your people will believe in you now than those who have already believed. So, do not grieve at their misdeeds." (v. 36).

19That is, "Drowning was not their end, but after death their souls were immediately subjected to the punishment of the Fire." This precisely was the treatment that was meted out to Pharaoh and his people, as has been stated in Surah Al-Mu'min: 45-46. (For explanation, see E.N. 63 of Al-Mu'min). This verse also is of those verses which prove the punishment of barzakh (intermediary stage between death and Resurrection).

20That is, "None of the gods whom they looked upon as their supporters and helpers came to their rescue." This, in fact, was a warning to the people of Makkah, as if to say: "If you too are subjected to the torment of Allah, these gods on whom you have placed all your reliance, will avail you absolutely nothing."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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72. Surah Al Jinn (The Jinn)

Name

"*Al-Jinn*" is the name of this Surah as well as the title of its subject matter, for in it the event of the Jinn's hearing the Qur'an and returning to their people to preach Islam to them, has been related in detail.

Period of Revelation

According to a tradition related in Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, once the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was going to Visit the Fair of Ukaz with some of his Companions, On the way be led the Fajr Prayer at Nakhlah. At that time a company of the jinn happened to pass that way. When they heard the Quran being recited, they tarried and listened to it attentively. This very event has been described in this Surah.

Most of the commentators, on the basis of this tradition, believe that this relates to the Holy Prophet's well known journey to Taif, which had taken place three years before the Hijrah in the 10th year of the Prophethood. But this is not correct for several reasons. The jinn's hearing the Qur'an during the journey to Taif has been related in Al-Ahqaf 29-32. A cursory reading of those verses shows that the jinn who had believed after hearing the Qur'an on that occasion were already believers in the Prophet Moses and the previous scriptures. On the contrary, vv. 2- 7 of this surah clearly show that the jinn who heard the Qur'an on this occasion were polytheists and deniers of the Hereafter and Prophethood. Then, it is confirmed historically that in his journey to Taif none accompanied the Holy Prophet except Hadrat Zaid bin Harithah. On the contrary, concerning this journey Ibn Abbas says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was accompanied by some of his Companions. Furthermore, the traditions also agree that in that journey the jinn heard the Qur'an when the Holy Prophet had stopped at Nakhlah on his return journey from Taif to Makkah, and in this journey, according to the traditions of Ibn Abbas, the event of the jinn's hearing the Qur'an occurred when the Holy Prophet was going to Ukaz from Makkah. Therefore, in view of these reasons what seems to be correct is that in Surah Al-Ahqaf and Surah Al Jinn, one and the same event has not been narrated, but these were two separate events, which took place during two separate journeys.

As far as Surah Al-Ahqaf is concerned, it is agreed that the event mentioned in it occurred on the return journey from Taif in the 10th year of Prophethood. As for the question, when this second event took place, its answer is not

given by the tradition of Ibn Abbas, nor any other historical tradition shows as to when the Holy Prophet had gone to the Fair of Ukaz along with some of his Companions. However, a little consideration of vv 8-10 of this surah shows that this could only be an event of the earliest stage of Prophethood. In these verses it has been stated that before the appointment of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to Divine Mission the jinn used to have one or another opportunity to eavesdrop in the heavens in order to hear news of the unseen, but after it they suddenly found that angels had been set as guards and meteorites were being shot on every side so that they could find no place of safety from where they could hear the secret news. Thereupon they had set about searching for the unusual thing that had occurred on the earth, or was going to occur, because of which the security measures had been tightened up. Probably since then many companies of the jinn must have been moving about in search of the unusual occurrence and one of them after having heard the Qur'an from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) must have formed the opinion that that was the very thing for the sake of which all the gates of the heavens had been shut against the jinn.

Reality of Jinn

Before one starts the study of this Surah one must clearly know what is the reality of the jinn so as to avoid any possible mental confusion. Many people of the modern times are involved in the misunderstanding that the jinn are not real, but only a figment of the ancient superstition and myths. They have not formed this opinion on the basis that they have known all the realities and truths about the universe and have thus discovered that the jinn do not exist. They cannot claim to possess any such knowledge either. But they have assumed without reason and proof that nothing exists in the universe except what they can see, whereas the sphere of human perceptions as against the vastness of this great universe is not even comparable to a drop of water as against the ocean. Here, the person who thinks that what he does not perceive, does not exist, and what exists must necessarily be perceived, in fact, provides a proof of the narrowness of his own mind. With this mode of thought, not to speak of the jinn, man cannot even accept and acknowledge any reality, which he cannot directly experience and observe, and he cannot even admit the existence of God, to say nothing of admitting any other unseen reality.

Those of the Muslims who have been influenced by modernism, but cannot deny the Qur'an either, have given strange interpretations of the clear statements of the Qur'an about the jinn, Iblis and Satan. They say that this does not refer to any hidden creation, which may have its own independent existence, but it sometimes implies man's own animal forces, which have been called Satan, and sometimes it implies savage and wild mountain tribes, and sometimes the people who used to listen to the Qur'an secretly. But the statements of the Qur'an in this regard are so clear and explicit that these interpretations bear no relevance to them whatever.

The Qur'an frequently mentions the jinn and the men in a manner as to indicate that they are two separate creations. For this, see Al Araf: 38, Hind : 119, Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 25,29, Ahqaf: 18, Adh Dhariyat: 56, and the entire surah Ar-Rahman, which bears such clear evidence as to leave no room to regard the jinn as a human species.

In Surah Al-Araf: 12, Al Hijr : 26-27 and Ar-Rahman : 14-19, it has been expressly stated that man was created out of clay and jinn out of fire.

In Surah Al Hijr: 27, it has been said that the jinn had been created before man. The same thing is testified by the story of Adam and Iblis, which has been told at seven different places in the Qur'an, and at every place it confirms that Iblis was already there at the creation of man. Moreover, in surah Al-Kahf: 50, it has been stated that Iblis belonged to the jinn.

In surah Al-Araf: 27, it has been stated in clear words that the jinn see the human beings but the human beings do not see them.

In surah Al-Hijr: 16-l8, surah As- Saaffat: 6-10 and surah Al-Mulk: 5, it has been said that although the jinn can ascend to the heavens, they cannot exceed a certain limit; if they try to ascend beyond that limit and try to hear what goes on in the heavens, they are not allowed to do so, and if they try to eavesdrop they are driven away by meteorites. By this the belief of the polytheistic Arabs that the jinn possess the knowledge of the unseen, or have access to Divine secrets, has been refuted. The same error has a]so been refuted in Saba: 14.

Al-Baqarah: 30-34 and Al- Kahf: 50 show that Allah has entrusted man with the vicegerency of the earth and the men are superior to the jinn. Although the jinn also have been given certain extraordinary powers and abilities an example of which is found in An-Naml 39, yet the animals likewise have been given some powers greater than man, but these are no argument that the animals are superior to man.

The Qur'an also explains that the jinn, like men, are a creation possessed of power and authority, and they, just like them, can choose between obedience and disobedience, faith and disbelief. This is confirmed by the story of Satan and the event of the jinn affirming the faith as found in Surahs Al-Ahqaf and Al-Jinn.

At scores of places in the Qur'an, it has also been stated that Iblis at the very creation of Adam had resolved to misguide mankind, and since then the Satanic jinn have been persistently trying to mislead man, but they do not have the power to overwhelm him and make him do something forcibly. However, they inspire him with evil suggestions, beguile him and make evil seem good to him. For this, see An-Nisa 117- 120, Al-Araf: 11-17, Ibrahim: 22, Al-Hijr: 30-42, An-Nahl 98-100, Bani Israil 61-65.

The Qur'an also tells us that in the pre Islamic ignorance the polytheistic Arabs regarded the jinn as associates of God, worshiped them and thought they were descended from God. For this, see A1-An'am: 100, Saba : 40-41, As Saffat: 158.

From these details, it becomes abundantly clear that the jinn have their own objective existence and are a concealed creation of an entirely different species from man. Because of their mysterious qualities, ignorant people have formed exaggerated notions and concepts about them and their powers, and have even worshiped them, but the Qur'an has explained the whole truth about them, which shows what they are and what they are not.

Theme and Topics

In this Surah in vv. 1-15, it has been told what was the impact of the Qur'an on the company of the jinn when they heard it and what they said to their fellow jinn when they returned to them. Allah, in this connection, has not cited

their whole conversation but only those particular things which were worthy of mention. That is why the style is not that of a continuous speech but sentences have been cited so as to indicate that they said this and this. If one studies these sentences spoken by the jinn carefully, one can easily understand the real object of the narration of this event of their affirming the faith and or mentioning this conversation of theirs with their people in the Qur'an. The explanations that we have given of their statements in our Notes will be of further help in understanding this object.

After this, in vv 16-l8, the people have been admonished to the effect:"If you refrain from polytheism and follow the way of righteousness firmly, you will be blessed; otherwise if you turn away from the admonition sent down by Allah, you will meet with a severe punishment." Then, in vv. 19-23, the disbelievers of Makkah have been reproached, as if to say: When the Messenger of Allah calls you towards Allah, you surround and mob him from every side, whereas the only duty of the Messenger is to convey the messages of Allah. He does not claim to have any power to bring any gain or cause any harm to the people." Then, in vv. 24-25 the disbelievers have been warned to the effect: "Today you are trying to overpower and suppress the Messenger seeing that he is helpless and friendless, but a time will come when you will know who in actual fact is helpless and friendless. Whether that time is yet far off, or near at hand, the Messenger has no knowledge thereof, but it will come to pass in any case." In conclusion, the people have been told: The Knower of the unseen is Allah alone. The Messenger receives only that knowledge which Allah is pleased to give him. This knowledge pertains to matters connected with the performance of the duties of Prophethood and it is delivered to him in such security which does not admit of any external interference whatever.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ ٱسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ
فَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْءَانًا عَجَبًا ﴿١﴾

يَهْدِىٓ إِلَى ٱلرُّشْدِ فَـَٔامَنَّا بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَن نُّشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَآ أَحَدًا ﴿٢﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥ تَعَٰلَىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا ٱتَّخَذَ صَٰحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا ﴿٣﴾

وَأَنَّهُۥ كَانَ يَقُولُ سَفِيهُنَا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ شَطَطًا ﴿٤﴾

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّآ أَن لَّن تَقُولَ ٱلْإِنسُ وَٱلْجِنُّ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا ﴿٥﴾

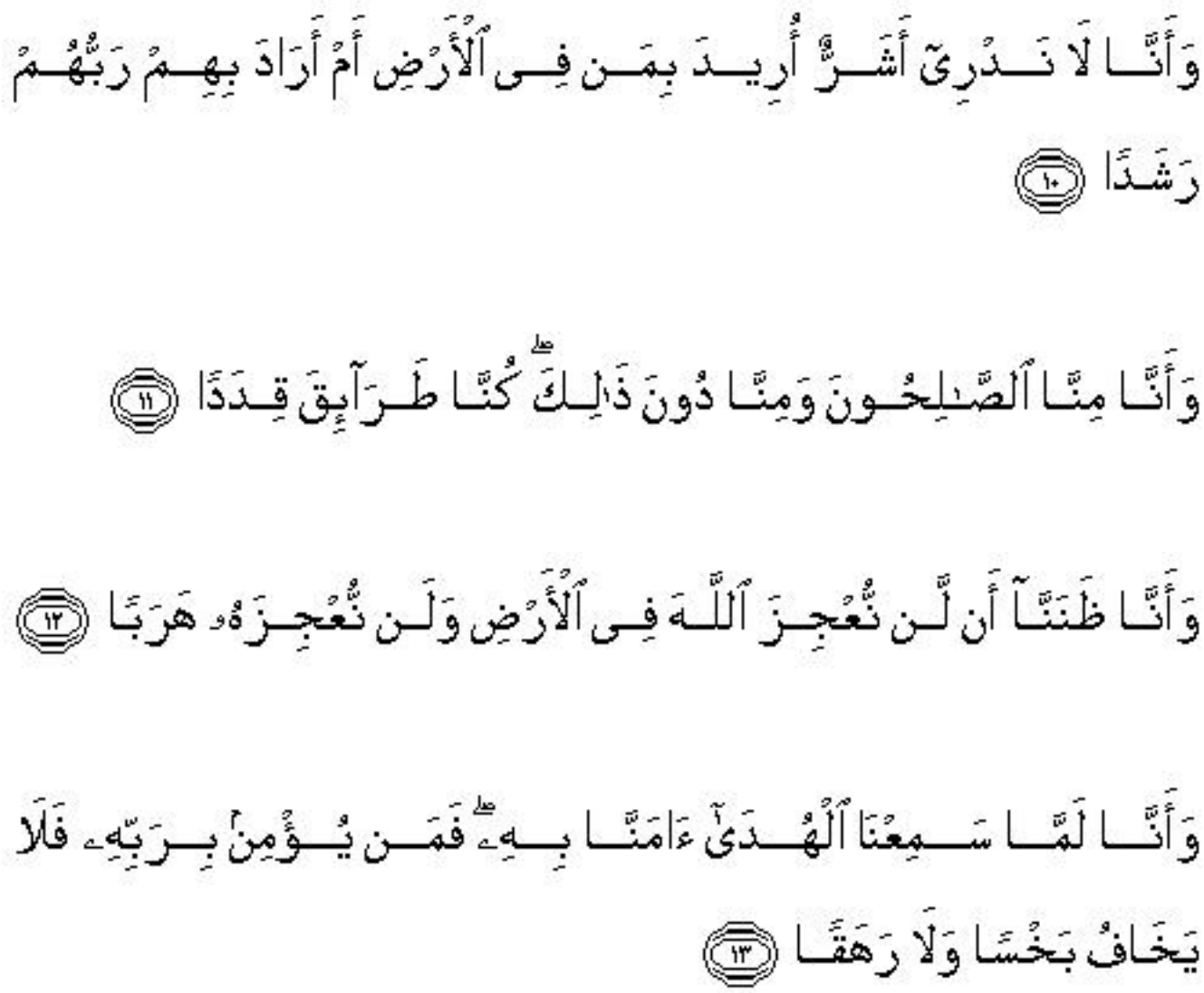
وَأَنَّهُۥ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ ٱلْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ﴿٦﴾

وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا۟ كَمَا ظَنَنتُمْ أَن لَّن يَبْعَثَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدًا ﴿٧﴾

وَأَنَّا لَمَسْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ فَوَجَدْنَٰهَا مُلِئَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهُبًا ﴿٨﴾

وَأَنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَٰعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ ۖ فَمَن يَسْتَمِعِ ٱلْـَٰٔنَ يَجِدْ لَهُۥ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا ﴿٩﴾

[1-9] O Prophet, say: It has been revealed to me that a company of the jinn listened,[1] then (returning to their folks) they said, "We have indeed heard a wonderful Qur'an[2] which guides to the right way, so we have believed in it, and now we shall never associate anyone with our Lord."[3] And that: "Our Lord's majesty is exalted: Ne has neither taken a wife nor a son."[4] And that: "The foolish among us[5] have been uttering falsehood against Allah." And that: "We thought that the men and the jinn could never utter a lie against God."[6] And that: "Some people from among the men used to seek refuge with some people from among the jinn, so they caused the jinn to become even more arrogant."[7] And that: "Men thought, even as you thought, that Allah would not send anyone as a Messenger."[8] And that: "We searched the heavens and found it filled with guards and shooting-stars." And that: "Before this we used to find a seat in heaven for eavesdropping, but now if some one tries to eavesdrop, he finds a shooting-star lying in ambush for him."[9]


وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِيٓ أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدَ بِمَن فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا ﴿١٠﴾

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ كُنَّا طَرَآئِقَ قِدَدًا ﴿١١﴾

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّآ أَن لَّن نُّعْجِزَ ٱللَّهَ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَن نُّعْجِزَهُۥ هَرَبًا ﴿١٢﴾

وَأَنَّا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ءَامَنَّا بِهِۦ ۖ فَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِرَبِّهِۦ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا ﴿١٣﴾

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا ٱلْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا ٱلْقَـٰسِطُونَ ۖ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا۟ رَشَدًا

١٤

وَأَمَّا ٱلْقَـٰسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا۟ لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا ﴿١٥﴾

[10-15] And that: "We did not know whether some evil was intended for the dwellers of the earth or their Lord wanted to show them the right way."[10] And that: "Some of us are righteous, while some are otherwise. We follow different ways."[11] And that: "We thought that we could neither frustrate Allah in the earth nor frustrate Him by flight."[12] And that: "As soon as we heard the message of guidance, we believed in it. Now whoever believes in his Lord, will have neither fear of loss nor of injustice."[13] And that: "Some of us are Muslims (submissive to Allah) and some deviators from the Truth. Those who have adopted Islam (the way of submission) have found the way to salvation, and those who have deviated from the Truth, will become fuel for Hell."[14]

وَأَلَّوِ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَـٰهُم مَّآءً غَدَقًا ﴿١٦﴾

لِّنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَن يُعْرِضْ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِۦ يَسْلُكْهُ

عَذَابًا صَعَدًا ﴿١٧﴾

وَأَنَّ ٱلْمَسَـٰجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا۟ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ أَحَدًا

١٨

وَأَنَّهُۥ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا۟ يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا ﴿١٩﴾

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَدْعُوا۟ رَبِّى وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٠﴾

قُلْ إِنِّى لَآ أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢١﴾

قُلْ إِنِّى لَن يُجِيرَنِى مِنَ ٱللَّهِ أَحَدٌ وَلَنْ
أَجِدَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مُلْتَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾

إِلَّا بَلَٰغًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِسَٰلَٰتِهِۦ ۚ وَمَن يَعْصِ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾

[16-23] And[15] (O Prophet, say: “it has been revealed to me:”) If the people had steadfastly pursued the right way, We would have given them abundant waters to drink[16] that We might try them by that blessing.[17] And he who turns away from his Lord's remembrance,[18] his Lord shall punish him with a severe torment. And that the mosques are for Allah; therefore, do not call upon anyone else in them along with Allah.[19] And that when the servant of Allah[20] stood up to invoke Him, the people were ready to assault him. O Prophet, say; "I call upon my Lord alone, and I do not associate anyone with Him."[21] Say, "I have no control over any harm or good for you." Say, "None can protect me from Allah, nor can I find any refuge apart from Him. My mission is only to convey what I receive from Him and His messages.[22] Now whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger for him awaits the fire of Hell:. Such people shall dwell in it for ever.[23]

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا رَأَوْا۟ مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ أَضْعَفُ نَاصِرًا وَأَقَلُّ عَدَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

قُلْ إِنْ أَدْرِىٓ أَقَرِيبٌ مَّا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ لَهُۥ رَبِّىٓ أَمَدًا ﴿٢٥﴾

عَٰلِمُ ٱلْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾

إِلَّا مَنِ ٱرْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَسْلُكُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِۦ رَصَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾

لِّيَعْلَمَ أَن قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا۟ رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَىٰ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عَدَدًۢا ﴿٢٨﴾

[24-28] (These people shall not change their ways) until when they see that what they are being promised, they shall come to know whose helpers are weaker and whose supporters are fewer in number.[24] Say, "I do not know whether that which you are being promised, is near at hand, or whether my Lord appoints a lengthy term for it.[25] He alone is the Knower of the unseen. He does not reveal His secrets to anyone[26] except to the Messenger whom He may choose[27] (for the purpose). Then He appoints before him and behind him guards[28] that He may know that they have truly delivered the messages of their Lord.[29] And He encompasses all their surroundings and keeps a count of each and every thing.[30]

1This shows that the jinn at that time were not visible to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), nor he knew that they were hearing the Qur'an being recited, but Allah informed him of the incident afterwards

by Revelation. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also has, in connection with this incident, stated: "The Holy Messenger of Allah had not recited the Qur'an before the jinn, nor did he see them." (Muslim, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir).

2The words in the original are: Qur an-an 'ajaba. Qur an means "something which is read again and again", and the jinn probably used this word in this very meaning, for they were introduced to this Divine Revelation for the first time, and they did not perhaps know then that what they were hearing, was the Qur'an itself. 'Ajab is a superlative, which is used in Arabic for a wonderful thing. So, what the jinn said means: "We have heard such a wonderful recital which is unique both in its language and in its subject-matter."

This also shows that the jinn not only hear what human beings say but also understand their language fully, although it is not necessary that all the jinn might know all the human languages. It is possible that those of them who live in a particular region of the earth might know the language of the people of that region. But in any case this statement of the Qur'an clearly shows that the jinn who listened to the Qur'an at that time were so conversant with the Arabic language that they not only appreciated the matchless eloquence of the Divine Word but also understood its sublime subject-matter fully well.

3This throws light on several things:

(1) That the jinn do not deny Allah's existence and His being Lord and Sustainer;

(2) that among them also there are polytheists, who like polytheistic human beings ascribe divinity to others than Allah: thus, the community of the jinn whose members heard the Qur'an was polytheistic;

(3) that the Prophethood and revelation of Divine scriptures does not exist among the jinn, but whoever of them believe, they believe in the Prophets raised among human beings and in the Books brought by them. This same thing is confirmed by Al-Ahqaf: 29-30, where it has been stated that the jinn who had then heard the Qur'an, were from among the followers of the Prophet Moses, and they after having heard the Qur'an, had invited their people to believe in the Revelation that had been sent down by God confirming the previous scriptures. Surah ArRahman also points to the same, for its whole subject-matter shows that the audience of the Holy Prophet's invitation are both the men and the jinn.

4From this we know two things;

(1) That these jinn were either from among the Christian jinn, or they were followers of a different religion in which Allah was regarded as having children and families.

(2) That at that time the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was reciting some such part of the Qur'an

hearing which they realized the error of their creed and knew that it was sheer ignorance and impudence to ascribe wife and children to the High and Exalted Being of Allah.

5The word safihuna as used in the Text can be spoken for an individual as well as for a group. If it is taken for a foolish individual, it would imply Iblis and if for a group, it would imply a group of foolish jinn who said such things.

6That is, "We were misled by those falsehoods because we could never think that the men or the jinn could ever dare forge a lie about Allah, but having heard this Qur'an we now know that they were, in fact, liars."

7Ibn `Abbas says that in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance when the Arabs had to spend a night in some uninhabited, desolate valley, they would shout out: "We seek refuge of the jinn, who is owner of this valley." In other traditions of the pre-Islamic ignorance also the same thing has been reported frequently. For example, if in a place they ran short of water and fodder, the wandering Bedouins would send one of their men to some other place to see if water and fodder were available; and when they reached the new site under his direction, they would shout out before they halted to pitch the camp: "We seek refuge of the sustainer of this valley so that we may live here in peace from every calamity." They believed that every un-inhabited place was under the control of one or another jinn, and if someone stayed there without seeking his refuge, the jinn would either himself trouble the settlers, or would let others trouble them. These believing jinn are referring to this very thing. They meant that when man, the vicegerent of the earth, started fearing them without any reason, and started seeking their refuge instead of God's, it caused their people to become even more arrogant, haughty and wicked, and they became even more fearless and bold in adopting error and disbelief.

8Another meaning of this sentence can be: "Allah will not resurrect anyone after death." As the wards are comprehensive they can be taken to mean that, as among human beings, so among the jinn too there were the people who denied both the Prophethood and the Hereafter. However, in view of the theme that follows, the meaning that we have given in the text above is preferable, for according to it these believing jinn tell the people of their community: "Your view is proved wrong that Allah will not appoint anyone as a Messenger. In fact, the gates of heavens have been closed on us only because Allah has already appointed a Messenger. "

9This is the reason why these jinn were now out searching as to what particularly had happened, or was going to happen, on the earth, which had necessitated strict security measures against eavesdropping so that they were driven away from wherever they tried to eavesdrop in any way.

10This shows that such extraordinary measures were adopted in the heavens only on two kinds of occasions: first, when Allah might decide to inflict the dwellers of the earth with a torment, and the Divine

will might be that before it was actually inflicted the jinn might not know and convey its news to warn their friendly human beings of the impending disaster. Second, that Allah might appoint a Messenger on the earth, and strict security measures might be adopted so that neither the messages being conveyed to him be interfered with by the satans nor should they be able to know beforehand what instructions were being given to the Messenger. Thus, the saying of the jinn means: "When we noticed that strict security measures had been adopted in the heavens for the safeguard of the news, and the meteorites were being showered profusely, we wanted to know which of the two things had happened: whether Allah had caused a torment to descend suddenly on some people of the earth, or a Messenger had been raised somewhere on the earth. We were on the lookout for the same when we heard the wonderful Revelation, which guides to the Right Path, and we came to know that Allah had not sent down a torment but had raised a Messenger to show the Right Way to the people." For further explanation, see E.N.'s 8 to 12 of Al-Hijr, E.N. 7 of As Saaffat, E.N. I 1 of Al-Mulk).

11That is, "Morally also there are good and bad jinn among us, and from the viewpoint of creed as well all do not follow one and the same religion, but we are divided into different groups." With these words the believing jinn want to convince the other jinn of their community that they certainly stood in need of finding out the right way and could not dispense with this need.

12That is, "We were led by this very idea to the way of success. As we were not fearless of Allah and we believed that we would not be able to avoid His punishment if we disobeyed Him, so when we heard the Divine Revelation that had been sent to show the right way, we could not have the courage and boldness to persist in the beliefs that our foolish people had spread among us, afar we had known the truth."

13"Fear of loss": fear of being given a lesser reward than what one actually deserves for one's good deeds, and "injustice" that one may be deprived of the reward for the good deeds done but duly punished for the errors committed or punished innocent; no believer has any fear of such an injustice from Allah.

14Here, one may ask: when, according to the Qur'an, the jinn have been created from the fire, what harm can the fire of Hell do them? The answer is: Even according to the Qur'an, man has been created out of the earth; why does then man feel hurt when a clod of earth is thrown at him? The truth is that although the whole body of man has been made from the earthly substances, when a living man of flesh and blood is molded from them he becomes an entirely different thing from those substances; then other things made from the same substances become a means of causing harm to him. Likewise, although the jinn also have been created from the fire, when a living and sentient creation has been made from it, the same fire becomes a means of causing harm and hurt for it. (For further explanation, see E.N. 15 of Surah Ar-Rahman).

15The conversation of the jinn having come to an end, with this begins the speech of Allah.

16This is the same thing as has been said above in Surah Nuh: 10-11. "Seek forgiveness of Allah. .. He will send abundant rains for you from heaven. " (For explanation, see E.N. 12 of Surah Nuh). Abundance of water has been used for abundance of blessings metaphorically for human life and habitation depend on water. Without water there can be no human settlement, nor can man's basic needs be fulfilled, nor his industries work and prosper.

17"We might try them by that blessing": "We might see whether they remain grateful after having received the blessing or not, and whether they put Our blessing to right use or not."

18"To turn away from Allah's remembrance" means that one may reject the advice and admonition sent down by Allah, or one may disdain giving ear to Allah's remembrance, or one may turn away from the worship of Allah.

19The commentators generally have taken "mosques" to mean the places of worship. Accordingly, the verse means: "None should he associated in the worship of Allah in the places of worship. Hadrat Hasan Basri says: The entire earth is a place of worship, and the verse means to say: polytheism ought not to be committed anywhere on God's earth," He has reasoned out this meaning from the Holy Prophet's Hadith "For me the entire earth has been made a place of worship and a means of obtaining purity:" Hadrat Sa`id bin Jubair has interpreted masajid to imply the parts of the body on which one prostrates oneself, i.e. the hands, the knees, toes and forehead. According to this explanation, the verse means: These limbs have been made by Allah; no one should prostrate oneself on these before anyone other than Allah.

20"Servant of Allah": the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace).

21That is, to call upon Allah is no objectionable thing, which may so provoke the people. The evil thing, however, is that one should associate another with Allah in His divinity, and this I never do; this is done by those who mob and surround me when they hear God mentioned by me.

22That is, "I do not claim to have any share or role in the Godhead of Allah, nor that I possess any power in making or marring the people's destinies. I am only a Messenger and the mission that has been entrusted to me is no more than that I should convey the messages of Allah to you. As for the powers of Godhead, they wholly belong to Allah. Not to speak of benefiting or harming others, I do not have the power to cause good or harm even to myself. If I disobey Allah, I cannot seek and have refuge anywhere from His punishment, and 1 have no helper and protector beside Allah." (For further explanation, see E. N. 7 of Ash-Shura).

23This does not mean that every sin and act of disobedience will cause one to live in Hell for ever, but in view of the context in which this thing bas been said, the verse means: the one who does not accept the

invitation to Tauhid given by Allah and His Messenger and does not refrain from polytheism will suffer in Hell for ever.

24The background of this verse is that those of the Quraish who used to mob and surround the, Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) as soon as they heard his invitation calling to Allah, were under the delusion that they had a strong band at their back and that the Holy Prophet had only a handful of men with him, and therefore, they would easily overwhelm him. At this it is being said: Today these people find the Messenger helpless and friendless and themselves supported and strengthened by great hosts and, therefore, feel encouraged and emboldened to suppress the invitation to the Truth. But when the evil time with which they are being threatened comes, they will know who in actual fact is helpless and friendless.

25The style itself shows that this is an answer which has been given without citing the question. Probably, hearing what has been said above, the opponents might have asked mockingly and tauntingly: "When will the time with which you are threatening us come?" In response, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was commanded to say: "The time will certainly come, but I have not been told the date of its coming. Allah alone knows whether is will come soon, or whether a distant term has been set for it. "

26That is, the knowledge of the unseen wholly rests with Allah: He does not give the whole of this knowledge to anyone.

27That is, the Messenger by himself is no knower of the unseen, but when Allah chooses him to perform the mission of Prophethood, He grants him the knowledge of those of the unseen truths which He is pleased to grant.

28"Guards": Angels. That is, when Allah sends down the knowledge of the unseen realities to the Messenger by revelation, He appoints angels on every side to safeguard it so that the knowledge reaches the Messenger in a safe condition, free from every kind of adulteration. This is the same thing which has been expressed in vv. 8-9 above, saying: After the appointment of the Holy Messenger the jinn found that all the doors to the heavens had been closed, and they noticed that strict security measures had been adopted because of which no room had been left for them to eavesdrop.

29This can have three meanings:

(1) That the Messenger may know that the angels have delivered the messages of Allah to him precisely and accurately;

(2) that Allah may know that the angels have conveyed the messages of their Lord to His Messenger precisely and accurately; and

(3) that Allah may know that the Messenger has conveyed the messages of his Lord to His servants precisely and accurately.

The words of the verse are comprehensive and may possibly imply all the three meanings. Besides, the verse also points out two other things: first, that the Messenger is given that knowledge of the unseen, which is necessary for him to perform his mission of Prophethood; second, that the angels keep watch that the Revelation reaches the Messenger safely and also that the Messenger conveys the messages of his Lord to His servants precisely and accurately.

30That is, Allah's power so encompasses the Messenger as well as the angels that if they swerve even a little from His will, they can be detected immediately. Moreover, a complete record has been kept of each letter of the messages sent down by Allah. The Messengers and the angels cannot dare add or subtract even a letter from them.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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73. Surah Al Muzzammil (The One Who is Covered Up)

Name

The Surah has been so designated after the word *al-muzzammil* occurring in the very first verse. This is only a name and not a title of its subject matter.

Period of Revelation

The two sections of this Surah were revealed in two separate periods.

The first section (vv. 1-19) is unanimously a Makki Revelation, and this is supported both by its subject matter and by the traditions of the *Hadith*. As for the question, in which specific period of the life at Makkah it was revealed, it is not answered by the tradition, but the internal evidence of the subject matter of this section helps to determine the period of its revelation.

First, in it the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been instructed to the effect: "Arise during the night and worship Allah so that you may develop the capability to shoulder the heavy burden of Prophethood and to discharge its responsibilities." This shows that this Command must have been given in the earliest period of the Prophethood when training was being imparted to the Holy prophet by Allah for this office.

Secondly, a Command has been given in it that the Qur'an be recited in, the Tahajjud Prayer for half the night, or thereabout. This Command by itself points out that by that time at least so much of the Qur'an had been revealed as could be recited for that long.

Thirdly, in this section the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been exhorted to have patience at the excesses being committed by his opponents, and the disbelievers of Makkah have been threatened with the torment. This shows that this section was revealed at a time when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had openly started preaching Islam and the opposition to him at Makkah had grown active and strong.

About the second section (v. 20) although many of the commentators have expressed the opinion that this too was sent down at Makkah, yet some other commentators regard it as a Madani Revelation, and this same opinion is confirmed by the subject matter of this section. For it mentions fighting in the way of Allah, and obviously, there could be no question of it at Makkah; it also contains the Command to pay the obligatory *zakat*, and it is fully confirmed that the *zakat* at a specific rate and with an exemption limit (nisab) was enjoined at Madinah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In the first seven verses the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been commanded to the effect: "Prepare yourself to shoulder the responsibilities of the great Mission that has been entrusted to you; its practical form is that you should rise during the hours of night and stand up in Prayer for half the night, or for a little more or less of it."

In vv. 8-14, he has been exhorted to the effect: "Devote yourself exclusively to that God Who is the Owner of the whole universe. Entrust all your affairs to Him with full satisfaction of the heart. Bear with patience whatever your opponents may utter against you. Do not be intimate with them. Leave their affair to God: He Himself will deal with them."

Then, in vv. 15-19, those of the people of Makkah, who were opposing the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) have been warned, so as to say: "We have sent a Messenger to you just as We sent a Messenger to the Pharaoh. Just consider what fate the Pharaoh met when he did not accept the invitation of the Messenger of Allah. Supposing that you are not punished by a torment in this world, how will you save yourselves from the punishment for disbelief on the Day of Resurrection."

This is the subject matter of the first section. The second section, according to a tradition from Hadrat Sa'id bin Jubair, was sent down ten years later, and in it the initial Command given in connection with the Tahajjud Prayer, in the beginning of the first section, was curtailed. The new Command enjoined, "Offer as much of the Tahajjud Prayer as you easily can, but what the Muslims should particularly mind and attend to is the five times obligatory Prayer a day:, they should establish it regularly and punctually; they should discharge their *zakat* dues accurately; and they should spend their wealth with sincere intentions for the sake of Allah. In conclusion, the Muslims have been exhorted, saying: "Whatever good works you do in the world, will not go waste, but they are like the provision which a traveler sends up in advance to his permanent place of residence. Whatever good you send up from the world, you will find it with Allah, and the provision thus sent up is much better than what you will have to leave behind in the world, and with Allah you will also get a much better and richer reward than what you have actually sent up before."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡمُزَّمِّلُ ﴿١﴾

قُمِ ٱلَّيۡلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗا ﴿٢﴾

نِّصۡفَهُۥٓ أَوِ ٱنقُصۡ مِنۡهُ قَلِيلًا ﴿٣﴾

أَوۡ زِدۡ عَلَيۡهِ وَرَتِّلِ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ تَرۡتِيلًا ﴿٤﴾

إِنَّا سَنُلۡقِي عَلَيۡكَ قَوۡلٗا ثَقِيلًا ﴿٥﴾

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ ٱلَّيۡلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطۡئٗا وَأَقۡوَمُ قِيلٗا ﴿٦﴾

إِنَّ لَكَ فِي ٱلنَّهَارِ سَبۡحٗا طَوِيلٗا ﴿٧﴾

وَٱذۡكُرِ ٱسۡمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلۡ إِلَيۡهِ تَبۡتِيلًا ﴿٨﴾



رَّبُّ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَٱتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ٩

وَٱصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَٱهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ١٠

وَذَرْنِى وَٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُو۟لِى ٱلنَّعْمَةِ وَمَهِّلْهُمْ قَلِيلًا ١١

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَآ أَنكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا ١٢

وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ١٣

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَٱلْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ ٱلْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا ١٤

[1-14] O you who sleeps covered up,[1] keep standing in Prayer at night but a little[2] half the night, or lessen it a little, or add to it a little[3] and recite the Qur'an calmly in a measured tone.[4] Indeed, We are about to send down on you a weighty Word.[5] In fact. the rising by night[6] is most effective for controlling the self[7] and most suitable for reciting the Qur'an well,[8] for in the day time you have many an occupations. Remember the name of your Lord[9] and devote yourself to Him exclusively. He is the Owner of the East and the West. There is no god but He; therefore, take Him alone as your Guardian.[10] And bear with patience what they utter, and depart from them gracefully.[11] Leave it to Me to deal with those prosperous people who deny[12] (the Truth) and leave them as they are for a while. We have heavy fetters (for them)[13] and a blazing Fire, and a choking food and a painful torment. This will happen on the Day when the earth and the mountains shall become as heaps of scattering sand.[14]

إِنَّآ أَرۡسَلۡنَآ إِلَيۡكُمۡ رَسُولٗا شَٰهِدًا عَلَيۡكُمۡ كَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَآ إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ رَسُولٗا ١٥

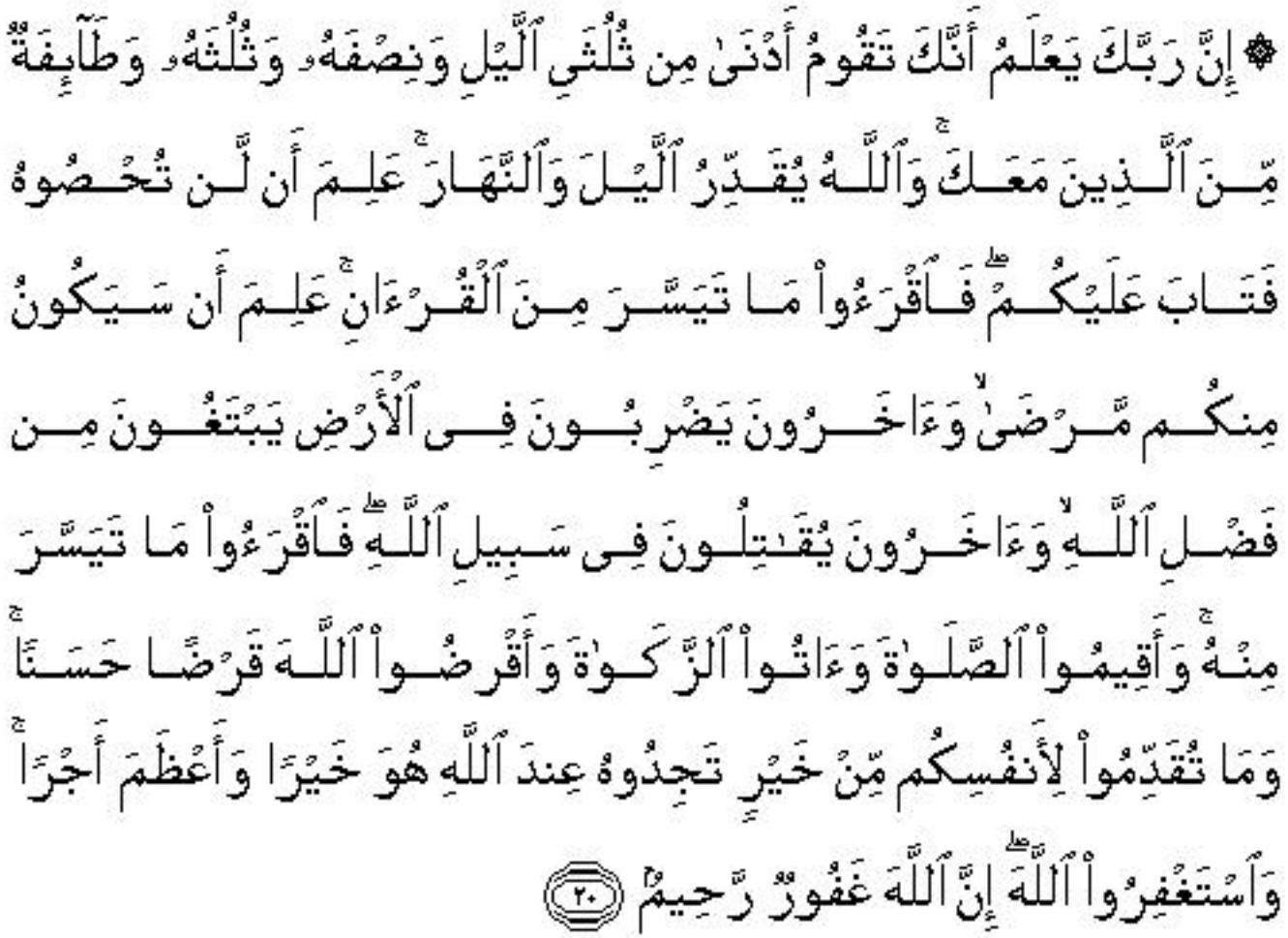
فَعَصَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنُ ٱلرَّسُولَ فَأَخَذۡنَٰهُ أَخۡذٗا وَبِيلٗا ١٦

فَكَيۡفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِن كَفَرۡتُمۡ يَوۡمٗا يَجۡعَلُ ٱلۡوِلۡدَٰنَ شِيبًا ١٧

ٱلسَّمَآءُ مُنفَطِرُۢ بِهِۦۚ كَانَ وَعۡدُهُۥ مَفۡعُولًا ١٨

إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦ تَذۡكِرَةٞۖ فَمَن شَآءَ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ سَبِيلًا ١٩

[15-19] To you[15] We have sent a Messenger to be a witness over you,[16] even as We had sent a Messenger to the Pharaoh. (Then behold when) the Pharaoh disobeyed the Messenger, We seized him with a firm grip. if you too, refuse to believe, then how will you protect yourselves on the Day that will make the children old,[17] and whose severity shall cause the heavens to split? Allah's promise has to be fulfilled in any case. This is an Admonition; so, whoever wills, let him take a path to his Lord.



[20] O Prophet,[18] your Lord knows that you sometimes stand in the. Prayer nearly two-thirds of the night and sometimes half the night, and sometimes one-third of the night,[19] and so does a group of your Companions.[20] Allah alone keeps an account of the time of the day and night. He knows that you cannot compute the time precisely; so He has shown kindness to you. Now you may read as much of the Qur'an as you easily can.[21] He knows that there will be sick men among you, and some others who travel to seek Allah's bounty[22] and yet others who fight in Allah's Way.[23] Therefore, read as much of the Qur'an as you may do with ease. Establish the salat and pay the zakat,[24] and give to Allah a goodly loan.[25] Whatever good you may send forward for yourselves, you shall find it with Allah. That is best and richest in reward.[26] Seek forgiveness from Allah: indeed Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.

1To address the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) with these words and then to command him to rise and keep standing in the Prayer at night, shows that at the tune he either lay asleep, or had wrapped himself up in a sheet in order to go to sleep. Here, to address him with "O you who sleeps covered up" instead of with "O Prophet, or O Messenger", is a fine way of address, which by itself gives the meaning: "Gone is the time when you used to enjoy peaceful sleep at will; now you lie under the burden of a great mission, whose demands and duties are different as well as onerous.

2This can have two meanings:

(1) "Pass the night standing up in the Prayer and spend only a little of it in sleep"; and

(2)"there is no demand from you to pass the whole night in the Prayer, but have rest as well and spend a little part of the night in worship too."

But in view of the theme that follows the first meaning seems to be more relevant, and the same is supported by Ad-Dahr: 26, in which it has been said: "Prostrate yourself before Him in the night and glorify Him during the long hours of night."

3This is an explanation of the duration of time commanded to be spent in worship. In it the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was given the option to spend half of the night in the Prayer, or a little less than that, or a little more than that. But the style shows that half the night has been regarded as preferable, for the measure is the same, which may be decreased or increased, as the people may like and choose.

4"Recite the Qur'an .....": Do not recite it quickly and in haste, but slowly and distinctly: pause at every verse so that the mind understands the meaning and purport of Divine Revelation well and takes effect from it. if it contains the mention of Allah's Being and Attributes, it may awe-inspire the heart with His glory and majesty; if it expresses His mercy, the heart may be filled with feelings of gratitude to Him; if it mentions His wrath and His punishment, the heart may be overwhelmed by fear of Him; if it enjoins something or forbids something, one may understand what has been enjoined and what has been forbidden. In short, the recital does not only consist in uttering the words with the tongue, but it should involve thoughtful consideration of the meaning. When Hadrat Anas was asked about the Holy Prophet's method of reciting the Qur'an, he replied: The Holy Messenger stretched the words when reciting them. For example, when he recited Bismillah ir-Rahman it-Rahim he would stretch and prolong the sound of Allah, Rahman and Rahim (Bukhari). When Hadrat Umm Salamah was asked the same question, she replied that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) recited every verse separately and distinctly and observed a pause at the end of every verse. For instance, he recited Al-hamdu-lillah-i Rabb-il'alamin, and paused, then recited ar-Rahman ir-Rahim, and paused, and then recited Malik-i yaum id-di'n. "(Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi). In another tradition, Hadrat Umm Salamah has stated that the Holy Prophet recited each word distinctly and clearly. (Tirmidhi, Nasa'i). Hadrat Hudhaifah bin Yaman says: "Once I stood beside the Holy Prophet in the Night Prayer to see how he recited the Qur'an. I noticed that he glorified Allah where He should be glorified, invoked and supplicated Allah where He should be invoked and supplicated, and sought refuge of Allah where His refuge should be sought." (Muslim, Nasa'i). Hadrat Abu Dharr has stated that once during the Night Prayer when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) came to the sentence: In to adhdhib-hmn ... (If You punish them, then they are Your servants; and if You forgive them, then You are Almighty, All-Wise), he went on repeating it over and over again until it became dawn." (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari).

5That is, "You are being commanded to stand up in the Night Prayer because We are going to send down on you a weighty word, to bear the burden of which you must develop necessary power in yourself,

and you can develop this power only by abandoning your ease and comfort of the night and by standing up in the Prayer and passing half the night or thereabout in the worship of your Lord. "The Qur'an has been called a weighty Word also for the reason that acting on its commands, demonstrating its teaching practically, extending its invitation in the face of the whole world, and bringing about a revolution in the entire system of belief and thought, morals and manners, civilization and social life, according to it, is indeed the weightiest task any human being ever has been charged with: It has been called a weighty Word also because bearing the burden of its revelation was a difficult and heavy duty. Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit says: "Once Revelation came down upon the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in a state when he was resting his head upon my knee. I felt such a pressure of the weight on my knee that I thought it would break." Hadrat `A`ishah says: "I have seen the state of the Holy Prophet's receiving Revelation during intense cold, drops of perspiration started falling from his forehead." (Bukhari, Muslim, Malik, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i): In another tradition Hadrat `A`ishah has stated: "Whenever Revelation came down on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) while he was riding on his she-camel, the she-camel would be forced to rest her chest on the ground and could not move until the Revelation was over." (Musnad Ahmad. Hakim, Ibn Jarir).

6About the meaning of the word nashi'at al-lail, as used in the original, the commentators and lexicographers have expressed four different viewpoints:

(1) That nashi'at implies the person himself who rises at night;

(2) that it implies the hours of night;

(3) that it means the rising by night; and

(4) that it does not only apply to the rising in the night but rising after having had some sleep,

Hadrat `A`ishah and Mujahid have adopted this fourth viewpoint.

7The word ashaddu wat'an as used in the Text is so vast in meaning that it cannot be explained in any one sentence. Its one meaning is: As the rising for worship by night and standing up for a long tithe in the Prayer is against human nature and the self of man seeks ease and comfort at that time. this act is an exercise which is most effective in controlling and disciplining the self. The person who governs himself by this method and gains dominance over his body and mind becomes able to use his power in the way of God, can work more efficiently and firmly to make the message of true Faith prevail in the world. The second meaning is: This is a very effective means of producing harmony and concord between the heart and the tongue, for during these hours of the night none else intervenes between the servant and his God, and whatever man utters with his tongue in this state, is the very voice of his heart. The third meaning is: This is a very efficacious means of bringing about conformity between the exterior and the interior of man, , for the person who in the solitude of the night would abandon his comfort and ease and

arise for worship, would do so only out of sincerity: there can be no tinge of display and hypocrisy in this. The fourth meaning is: As this worship is harder on man than the worship of the daytime, it develops steadfastness in him: he is enabled to walk in the path of God more firmly and can face and endure the hardships of that way with greater constancy and determination.

8Literally: "Makes the speech most upright and sound." But the purport is to say that at that time man can read the Qur'an with greater peace of mind, attention and understanding. Ibn `Abbas has explained it thus: "That it is the most suitable time for man to ponder over the Qur'an well." (Abu Da'ud).

9After making mention of the occupation of the daytime, the exhortation to "remember the name of your Lord" by itself gives the meaning: "Never be heedless of the remembrance of your Lord even when you are deeply involved in your worldly occupations, and continue. to commemorate His name in one way or another at all times." (For explanation, see E.N. 63 of Surah Al-Ahzab).

10" Wakil is a person in whom one has complete faith; so much so that one can entrust all one's affairs to him with full satisfaction of the heart. Thus, the verse means: "Do not feel distressed at the hardships that you are experiencing at the storm of opposition that has been provoked by your invitation to we Faith. Your Lord is He Who is the Owner of the East and the West, (i.e. of the whole universe) besides Whom no one else possesses the powers of Godhead. Entrust your affair to Him and be satisfied that He will fight your case, He will deal with your opponents, and He will look after all your interests well. "

11"Depart from them" does not mean "Break off all ties with them and stop preaching to them", but it means; "Do not have intimate and friendly relations with them: disregard their foolish behavior and their nonsense." However, you should do so without showing any grief, anger or temper but gracefully like a noble person, who would disregard the abusive remarks of a mean person without minding them at all. This should not create the misunderstanding that the Holy Prophet's conduct was any different from it; therefore, Allah gave him this instruction. As a matter of fact, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was already following this very mode of conduct; this instruction was given in the Qur'an so as to tell the disbelievers: "It is not due to any weakness on the part of the Prophet that he is not responding to what you are saying against him, but Allah Himself has taught His Messenger to adopt this noble way of conduct in response to your foolish behavior. "

12These words clearly contain the sense that the people who were actually denying the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in Makkah and were inciting the common people to oppose and resist him by stirring up prejudices and by deceit and fraud were the well-to-do, prosperous and affluent people, for it was their interests, which were being hit by Islam's message of reform. The Qur'an tells us that this was not peculiar only to the Holy Prophet's case but in every age this very class of the people have been the main obstacle to every movement of reform. For example, see Al-A`raf; 60, 6b, 75, 88; Al-Mu'minun: 33; Saba; 34 35; Az-Zukhruf: 23.

13Heavy fetters in Hell will not be put on the criminals' feet to stop them from escape but in order that they are not able to stand up and move; these will not be used to prevent their escape but as an instrument of their torment.

14Since at that time the cohesive force to bind the parts of the mountains together will cease to work, first they will become like crumbling dunes of fine sand, then because of the earthquake which will be shaking the earth; the sand will scatter and shift and the whole earth will turn into an empty level plain. This last state has been described in Ta Ha: 105-107, thus: "They ask you: where will the mountains go on that Day? Say: My Lord will reduce them to fine dust and scatter it away. He will turn the earth into an empty level plain, wherein you will neither see any curve no crease."

15The address now turns to the disbelievers of Makkah, who were denying the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and persecuting him relentlessly.

16Sending the Holy Prophet to be a witness over the people also means that he should testify to the Truth by his word and deed before them in the world and also that in the Hereafter when Allah's Court is established, he will testify that he had presented the whole Truth before the people in the world. (For further explanation, see E.N. 144 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 64 of An-Nisa', An-Nahl: 84, 89, E.N. 82 of Al-Azab, E.N. 14 of Al-Fath).

17That is, "In the first place, you should be afraid that if you do not accept the invitation of the Messenger sent by Us, you will have to meet the same evil end in this world, which the Pharaoh has already met in consequence of this very crime. But even if no torment is sent on you in the world, how will you save yourselves from the punishment of the Day of Resurrection?"

18About this verse in which reduction has been made in the injunction concerning the Tahajjud Prayer, there are different traditions. Musnad Ahmad, Muslim and Abu Da'ud have related a tradition, on the authority of Hadrat `A'ishah, saying that this second command was sent down one year after the first command, and the standing up in the Prayer at night was made voluntary instead of obligatory. Another tradition which Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim have related, again on the authority of Hadrat `A'ishah, says that this command came down 8 months after the first command, and a third tradition which Ibn Abi Hatim has related again from her, says that it came down 16 months later. Abu Da'ud, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim have cited the period of one year from Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas. But Hadrat Sa'id bin Jubair has stated that it was sent down ten years later. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim). In our opinion this last view is most sound, for the subject-matter of the first section clearly shows that it was sent down in Makkah and that too in the earliest stage when at the most four years might have passed since the advent of Prophethood. Contrary to this, this second section, .in view of the express evidence of its subject matter, seems to have been revealed at Madinah when fighting had started with the disbelievers and the zakat also had been enjoined as an obligatory duty. On this basis inevitably the two sections should have been

sent down at an interval of at least ten years between them.

19Although the initial command to the Holy Prophet was to keep standing up in the Prayer for half the. night, or thereabout, it was difficult to compute the time precisely in the absorption of the Prayer, especially when there were no watches either to measure time accurately; therefore, sometimes two thirds of the night passed in the prayer and sometimes only one-third of it.

20In the initial command only the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was addressed and only he was instructed to stand up in the Prayer by night. But since the Muslims at that time were ardently desirous of following him in everything he did and of earning more and more good and virtues, many of the Companions also performed this Night Prayer regularly.

21As the Prayer is prolonged due mainly to a lengthy recital of the Qur'an, it is said: "You may recite as much of the Qur'an as you easily can in the Tahajjud Prayer This would automatically cause the Prayer to be shortened" . Although the words here are apparently in the imperative mood, it is agreed by all that Tahajjud is not an obligatory but a voluntary Prayer. In the Hadith also it has been explained that on an inquiry by a person the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) replied: "Five times Prayer in the day and night is obligatory on you. He asked: Is anything besides this also binding on me? The Holy Prophet said: No, unless you may like to offer something of your own accord. " (Bukhari, Muslim).

This verse also shows another thing. Just as the bowing (ruku) and prostration (sajdah.) are obligatory in the Prayer, so is the recital of the Qur'an. For just as Allah at other places has used the words ruku' and sajdah for the prayer, so here He has mentioned recital of the Qur'an, which implies its recital in the Prayer. If somebody objects to this conclusion, saying: When the Tahajjud Prayer itself is voluntary, how can recital of the Qur'an in it be obligatory? The answer is: Even in case of the voluntary Prayer it is incumbent on one to fulfil all the pre-requisites of the Prayer and to perform all its basic elements and obligatory parts. No one can say that in case of the voluntary Prayer, purity of the garments and body, ablutions and concealment of the satar (minimal part of the body to be covered) are not obligatory, and the standing up and sitting and performance of ruku`and sajdah also in it are only voluntary.

22Traveling to earn one's living by lawful and permissible methods has been described in many places in the Qur'an as the seeking of Allah's bounty.

23Here, the way Allah has made mention of seeking pure livelihood and fighting in the Way of Allah together and declared these two, besides the compulsion on account of illness, as reasons for exemption from the Tahajjud Prayer, or concession in it, shows how meritorious it is in Islam-to earn one's livelihood by lawful methods. In the Hadith, Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "The person who came to a city of the Muslims with food grains and sold it at the rate of the day, will attain to a place nearest to Allah, and then the Holy Prophet recited this very

verse." (Ibn Marduyah), Hadrat 'Umar once said: "Except for fighting in the way of Allah, the state in which I would love to be overtaken by death, is the state when I am overtaken by it while passing through a mountain pass in search of livelihood and then he recited this very verse." (Baihaqi, Shu ab al-Iman).

24Commentators are agreed that this implies observance of the obligatory Prayer five times a day and giving away of the obligatory zakat.

25Ibn Zaid says this implies spending one's wealth in the cause of Allah besides the zakat, whether it is in the cause of fighting in the way of Allah, or for helping the needy, or for public utilities, or other good works. The meaning of giving to Allah a good loan has been explained at several places above. See E.N 267 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 33 of Al-Ma'idah, E.N. 16 of Al-Hadid).

26It means: "Whatever you have sent forward for the good of your Hereafter is more beneficial for you than that you withheld in the world and did not spend in any good cause for the pleasure of Allah. According to a Hadith reported by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas`ud the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) once asked: "Which of you has a greater love for his own wealth than for the wealth of his heir? The people said: There is none among us, O Messenger of Allah, who would not have greater love for his own wealth than for the wealth of his heir. He said: Consider well what you are saying. The people submitted: This indeed is our considered opinion, O Messenger of Allah. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: Your own property is only that which you have sent forward (for the good f your Hereafter), and whatever you held back indeed belongs to the heir." (Bukhari. Nasa'i, Musnad Abu Ya`la).

74. Surah Al Muddaththir (The Cloaked One)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al- muddaththir* in the first verse. This also is only a name, not a title of its subject matter.

Period of Revelation

The first seven verses of this Surah belong to the earliest period at Makkah. Even according to some traditions which have been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad, etc., on the authority of Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah, these are the very earliest verses of the Qur'an to be revealed to the Holy Prophet (upon whoa be peace). But the Muslim *Ummah* almost unanimously agreed that the earliest Revelation to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) consisted of the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq(XCVI) However, what is established by authentic traditions is that after this first Revelation, no Revelation came down to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for quite some time. Then, when it was resumed, it started with theme verses of Surah Al- Muddaththir. Imam Zuhri has given the following details of it:

"Revelation to the Holy Prophet remained suspended for quite some time, and it was such a period of deep grief and distress for him that he started going early to the tops of the mountains to throw himself down from them. But whenever he stood on the edge of a peak, the Angel Gabriel would appear and tell him that he was Allah's Prophet. This would console him and restore to him full peace of mind." (Ibn Jarir).

After this Imam Zuhri relates the following tradition on the authority of Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah:

"The Ho]y Messenger of Allah describing the period of *falrat al-wahi* (break in revelation) said: One day when I was passing on the way, I suddenly heard a call from heaven. I raised my head and saw that the same Angel who had visited me in the Cave of Hira was sitting on a throne between heaven and earth. This struck terror in my heart, and reaching home quickly, I said: 'Cover me up, cover me up'. So the people of the house covered me up with a quilt (or blanket). At that time Allah sent down the Revelation: *Ya ayyuhal-Muddaththiru...* From then on

revelation became intense and continuous." (Bukhari, Muslim Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir).

The rest of the Surah (vv. 8-56) was revealed when the first Hajj season came after public preaching of Islam had begun in Makkah. This has been fully well described in the *Sirah* by Ibn Hisham and we shall cite it below.

Theme and Subject Matter

As has been explained above, the earliest Revelation to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) consisted of the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq, in which it had been Said: "Read (O Prophet), in the name of your Lord, Who created: created man from a clot of congealed blood. Read: and your Lord is Most Generous, Who taught knowledge by the pen, taught man what he did not know."

This was the first experience of Revelation met with suddenly by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). in this message it was not told what great mission he had been entrusted with and what duties he had to perk form in future. He was only initiated into it and then left alone for a time so that the great strain this experience had caused should pass away and he should mentally become prepared to receive the Revelation and perform the prophetic mission in the future. After this intermission when Revelation Was resumed, the first seven verses of this Surah Were revealed:In these he Was for the first time commanded to arise and warn the people of the consequences of the way of life they were following and to proclaim the greatness of God in the world where others were being magnified without any right. Along with that he was given this instruction: The demand of the Unique mission that you have to perform, now is that your life should be pure in every respect and you should carry out the duty of reforming your people sincerely irrespective of any worldly gain. Then, in the last sentence, he was exhorted to endure with patience, for the sake of his Lord, all the hardships and troubles that he might have to face while performing his mission.

In the implementation of this Divine Command when the Holy Messenger of Allah began to preach Islam and recite the Qur'anic Surahs revealed successively, the people of Makkah felt alarmed, and it provoked a great storm of opposition and hostility. A few months passed in this state until the Hajj season approached. The people of Makkah feared that if Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) started visiting the caravans of the pilgrims coming from all over Arabia at their halting places and reciting the spell binding and unique Revelations of the Qur'an in their assemblies on the occasion of Hajj, his message would reach every part of Arabia and influence countless people. Therefore, the Quraish chiefs held a conference and settled that they would start a propaganda campaign against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) among the pilgrims as soon as they arrived.

After they had agreed on this, Walid bin al-Mughirah said to the assembled people: "If you said contradictory things about Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), we all would lose our trust among the people. Therefore, let us agree upon one opinion, which we should all say without dispute.

Some people said that they would call Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) a soothsayer. Walid said: “No, by God, be is not a soothsayer. We have seen the soothsayers: what they murmur and what they utter has no remote resemblance with the Qur'an.”

Some other people said: “Then we say he is possessed.” Walid said: He is not a possessed one: we have seen mad and insane people; the way one talks disjointedly and behaves foolishly in that state is known to all: who would believe that what Muhammad (upon whom be peace) presented was the incoherent speech of a madman?”

The people said: “Then we say he is a poet.” Walid said: “No, he is not a poet, for we know poetry in all its forms, and what he presents conforms to no form of it.”

The people said: “Then he is a sorcerer.” Walid said: “He is no sorcerer either: we have seen sorcerers and we also know what methods they adopt for their sorcery. This also does not apply to Muhammad.”

Then he said: "Whichever of these things you said about Muhammad, it would be known to be a false accusation. By God, his speech is sweet, his root is deep and his branches are fruitful.” At this Abu Jahl urging on Walid said: “Your people will never be pleased with you unless you say something about Muhammad.” He said: “Let me think over it awhile.”

Then, after prolonged thought and consideration, he said: “The nearest thing to the truth is that you tell the Arabs that he is a sorcerer, who has brought a message by which he separates a man from his father; and from his brother, and from his wife and children, and from his family.” They all agreed on what Walid had proposed.

Then, according to a scheme the men of Quraish spread among the pilgrims in the Hajj season and they warned everyone they met of the sorcery of Muhammad (upon whom be peace) and of his stirring up divisions in the families by it." But the result was that by their this plan the Quraish chiefs themselves made the name of the Holy Messenger known throughout Arabia. (Ibn Hisham, pp. 288-289. That Walid had made this proposal on the insistence of Abu Jahl has been related by Ibn Jarir in his *Tafsir* on the authority of Ikrimah).

This same event has been reviewed and commented upon in the second section of this Surah. The sequence of its contents is as follows:

In vv. 8-10 the deniers of Truth have been warned, saying: "You will see the evil result of what you are doing today on the Resurrection Day."

In vv. 11-26, without naming Walid bin al-Mughirah, it has been told how Allah had blessed him and how inimical he proved to be to true Faith. In this connection, his mental conflict has been portrayed, telling that, on the one hand, he was fully convinced of the truth of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and the Qur'an, but, on the other, he did not want to risk his leadership and position among his people. Therefore, not only he did not believe himself but after a long-drawn-out conflict with his conscience he also came out with the proposal that in order to restrain the people from believing the Qur'an should be branded as magic. After exposing his evil nature, it has been said: "Notwithstanding such evil inclinations and misdeeds, this person desires that he should be further blessed, whereas he has now become worthy of Hell, and never of further blessings."

In vv. 27-48, the dreadfulness of Hell has been depicted and it has been explained as to people of what character and morals really deserve it.

In vv. 49-53, the root cause of the disbelievers' aversion has been pointed out, saying: "Since they are fearless of the Hereafter, and look upon this worldly life as an end in itself, they flee from the Qur'an as though they were wild asses fleeing away from the lion: therefore, they propose unreasonable conditions for believing, whereas even if each and every condition of theirs was fulfilled, they could not advance even an inch on the way of Faith with their denial of the Hereafter."

In conclusion, it has been explicitly stated: Allah does not stand in need of anybody's faith that He may fulfill his conditions. The Qur'an is an admonition that has been presented before the people openly; now whoever wills may accept it. Allah has a right that the people should fear His disobedience and He alone has the power to forgive the one who adopts piety and an attitude of God consciousness even though one may have committed many acts of disobedience in the past.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمُدَّثِّرُ ﴿١﴾

قُمْ فَأَنذِرْ ﴿٢﴾

وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ﴿٣﴾

وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ﴿٤﴾

وَٱلرُّجۡزَ فَٱهۡجُرۡ ٥

وَلَا تَمۡنُن تَسۡتَكۡثِرُ ٦

وَلِرَبِّكَ فَٱصۡبِرۡ ٧

[1-7] O you who lies wrapped up,[1] arise and warn[2] and proclaim the greatness of your Lord.[3] And keep your garments pure,[4] and avoid filth,[5] and do not favor (others) expecting to get more,[6] and be patient for the sake of your Lord.[7]

فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي ٱلنَّاقُورِ ٨

فَذَٰلِكَ يَوۡمَئِذٖ يَوۡمٌ عَسِيرٌ ٩

عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ غَيۡرُ يَسِيرٖ ١٠

ذَرۡنِي وَمَنۡ خَلَقۡتُ وَحِيدٗا ١١

وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُۥ مَالًا مَّمْدُودًا ﴿١٢﴾

وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ﴿١٣﴾

وَمَهَّدتُّ لَهُۥ تَمْهِيدًا ﴿١٤﴾

ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ﴿١٥﴾

كَلَّآ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ لِأَيَٰتِنَا عَنِيدًا ﴿١٦﴾

سَأُرْهِقُهُۥ صَعُودًا ﴿١٧﴾

إِنَّهُۥ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَقُتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴿١٩﴾

ثُـــمَّ قُتِـــلَ كَـــيۡفَ قَـــدَّرَ ﴿٢٠﴾

ثُـمَّ نَظَـرَ ﴿٢١﴾

ثُـــمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَـــرَ ﴿٢٢﴾

ثُـــمَّ أَدۡبَـــرَ وَٱسۡـــتَكۡبَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَقَالَ إِنۡ هَٰـذَآ إِلَّا سِحۡرٞ يُؤۡثَرُ ﴿٢٤﴾

إِنۡ هَٰـــذَآ إِلَّا قَـــوۡلُ ٱلۡبَشَـــرِ ﴿٢٥﴾

سَأُصۡلِيهِ سَـقَرَ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَمَآ أَدۡرَىٰـكَ مَـا سَـقَرُ ﴿٢٧﴾

لَا تُبۡقِي وَلَا تَذَرُ ﴿٢٨﴾

لَوَّاحَةٌ لِّلۡبَشَرِ ﴿٢٩﴾

عَلَيۡهَا تِسۡعَةَ عَشَرَ ﴿٣٠﴾

وَمَا جَعَلۡنَآ أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلنَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَٰٓئِكَةٗۙ وَمَا جَعَلۡنَا عِدَّتَهُمۡ إِلَّا فِتۡنَةٗ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لِيَسۡتَيۡقِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ وَيَزۡدَادَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِيمَٰنٗاۖ وَلَا يَرۡتَابَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَۖ وَلِيَقُولَ ٱلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٞ وَٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ مَاذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَٰذَا مَثَلٗاۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهۡدِي مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَمَا يَعۡلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَۚ وَمَا هِيَ إِلَّا ذِكۡرَىٰ لِلۡبَشَرِ ﴿٣١﴾

كَلَّا وَٱلۡقَمَرِ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَٱلَّيۡلِ إِذۡ أَدۡبَرَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَٱلصُّبۡحِ إِذَآ أَسۡفَرَ ﴿٣٤﴾

إِنَّهَا لَإِحۡدَى ٱلۡكُبَرِ ﴿٣٥﴾

نَذِيرٗا لِّلۡبَشَرِ ﴿٣٦﴾

لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمۡ أَن يَتَقَدَّمَ أَوۡ يَتَأَخَّرَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[8-37] When the Trumpet is blown, it shall be a very hard Day,[8] not easy for the disbelievers.[9] Leave Me and the person[10] whom I created alone.[11] I gave him ample wealth and sons to be present by his side,[12] and smoothed for him the way to his leadership (and prosperity). Yet he desires that I should give him more.[13] No, never! He is hostile to Our Revelations. I shall soon make him ascend a hard ascent. He pondered and tried to devise a plan. May God destroy him: what he tried to devise! Yes, may God destroy him, what he tried to devise! Then he looked around, then he frowned and scowled, then he turned his back and showed arrogance. At last, he said, "This is nothing but magic, handed down from the past; nothing but the word of a mere mortal.[14] Very soon I shall cast him into Hell. And what do you know what Hell is? It leaves nothing and it spares none.[15] It scorches the skin.[16] Nineteen keepers are appointed over it. We[17] have appointed only angels as the keepers of Hell,[18] and have made their number a trial for the disbelievers,[19] so that the people of the Book are convinced[20] and the believers are increased in their faith,[21] and the people of the Book and the believers may have no doubts, and the sick of the heart[22] and the disbelievers may say, "What could Allah mean by this strange parable?"[23] In this way Allah leads astray whom He wills and gives guidance to whom He wills,[24] and none knows the hosts of your Lord but He Himself.[25] And Hell has been mentioned so that the people may take heed.[26] No, never![27] By the moon and by the night when it withdraws, and by the morning when it dawns, this Hell too, is one of the mighty things,[28] a warning to mankind, a warning to every one of you, who desires to go forward, or to lag behind.[29]

كُلُّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

إِلَّآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٣٩﴾

فِى جَنَّٰتٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

عَنِ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِى سَقَرَ ﴿٤٢﴾

قَالُوا۟ لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ ٱلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمُ ٱلْمِسْكِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ ٱلْخَآئِضِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَكُنَّا نُكَذِّبُ بِيَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٤٦﴾

حَتَّىٰٓ أَتَىٰنَا ٱلْيَقِينُ ﴿٤٧﴾

فَمَا تَنفَعُهُمْ شَفَٰعَةُ ٱلشَّٰفِعِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[38-48] Every person is a pledge for his own deeds,[30] except the people of the right hand, who shall be in Gardens.[31] There they will ask the culprits,[32] "what has brought you into Hell?" They will reply, "We were not of those who offered the salat,[33] and we did not feed the poor,[34] and we used to join with those who indulged in idle talk against the Truth, and we used to belie the Day of Recompense, till the inevitable overtook us."[35] At that time, no intercession of the intercessors shall avail them anything.[36]

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ ٱلتَّذْكِرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

كَأَنَّهُمْ حُمُرٌ مُّسْتَنفِرَةٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

فَرَّتْ مِن قَسْوَرَةٍ ﴿٥١﴾

بَلْ يُرِيدُ كُلُّ ٱمْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُؤْتَىٰ صُحُفًا مُّنَشَّرَةً ﴿٥٢﴾

كَلَّا ۖ بَل لَّا يَخَافُونَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ ﴿٥٣﴾

كَلَّآ إِنَّهُۥ تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَمَن شَآءَ ذَكَرَهُۥ ﴿٥٥﴾

وَمَا يَذْكُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ هُوَ أَهْلُ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ وَأَهْلُ ٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ ﴿٥٦﴾

[49-56] What then is the matter with these people that they are turning away from this Admonition as though they were wild asses fleeing away from a lion?[37] Nay, each one of them desires that he should be sent open letters.[38] No, never! The fact is that they do not fear the Hereafter.[39] No, never![40] This indeed is an Admonition. So, let him who wills, take heed. But they will never take heed unless Allah so wills.[41] He alone is worthy that he should be feared,[42] and He alone is worthy to forgive (those who fear Him).[43]

1A study of the background of the revelation of these verses given in the introduction above can help one understand why the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) on this occasion has been addressed with Ya ayyuhal-Muddaththiru instead of Ya ayyuhar-Rasulu (O Messenger), or Ya ayyuhan-Nabiyyu (O Prophet). As the Holy Prophet had been terrified when he had suddenly seen the Angel Gabriel (on whom be peace), sitting on a throne between heaven and earth, and had returned hastily home and asked the people of the house to cover him up, so Allah addressed him with Ya ayyuhal-Muddaththiru. From this fine way of address the meaning which automatically follows is: "O My dear Servant, why have you lain down thus enwrapped? You have been put under the. burden of a great mission: you must now arise from your solitude to perform this mission with resolution and courage."

2A command of this very nature had been given to the prophet Noah (peace be on him) while appointing him to the office of Prophet hood; "Warn the people of your nation before they are overtaken by a painful torment." (Nuh: 1) The verse means: "O you who lies enwrapped, stand up and arouse the people who live in heedlessness around you: warn them of the fate which would certainly overtake them if they remained involved in the same heedlessness, Warn them that they are not living in a lawless kingdom where they are free to conduct themselves as they like and where they can do wherever they please without any fear or being called to account for it. "

3This is the primary duty of a Prophet, which he has to perform in this world. His foremost duty is to refute the greatness of all those whom the ignorant people might be holding as great, and publicly proclaim that we greatness in this universe belongs to none but Allah alone. For this very reason the phrase Allahu Akbar has been Geld as of supreme importance in Islam. The adhan (call to prayer) begins with the proclamation of Allahu Akbar. The Muslim enters the Prayer itself with Allahu Akbar and repeats Allahu Akbar every time he sits or stands, He pronounces Bismillahi Allahu Akbar also when slaughtering an animal. The slogan of Allahu Akbar has become a most distinctive and prominent emblem of Muslims throughout the world today, for the Prophet of this Ummah himself had embarked on his mission with the magnification and glorification of Almighty Allah.

Here, there is another fine point, which must be understood well. As we have learned from the background of the revelation of these verses, this was the first occasion when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had been commanded to arise for performing the duties of the great mission of Prophethood, and it was obvious that the city and society in which he was commanded to perform this mission, was the center of polytheism. Not only were the people around him polytheistic like the common Arabs but, more than that, the city of Makkah had become the most sacred place of pilgrimage for the polytheistic Arabs, and the Quraish were its attendants. Arising of a person in such a place all by himself and proclaiming the Oneness of God in the face of polytheism was full of risks. That is why the exhortation to "proclaim the greatness of your Lord" just after "arise and warn" contains this meaning also: "Do not at all mind the terrifying and dreadful forces that seem to be obstructing and impeding your work and proclaim publicly that your Lord is the greatest of all those who can hinder and resist you from giving your message. This is indeed the greatest encouragement for a person who embarks on a Divine mission. The one who has Allah's greatness and majesty deeply embedded in his heart will feel no hesitation at all in facing and fighting the entire world by himself for the sake of Allah.

4These are very comprehensive words, which are full of meaning.

They mean this: "Keep your garments free from every filth and impurity, for the purity of the body and garments and the purity of the spirit are inter-linked and inter-dependent. " A pure spirit and an impure body with impure garments cannot live together. The society in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had arisen with the invitation to Islam, was not only steeped in the evils of unbelief and immorality,

but was also devoid of even the most elementary concepts of purity and cleanliness, and the Holy Prophet's task was to teach its members cleanliness in every way of life. Therefore he was instructed to establish and present a high standard of purity in his external life as well. Thus, it is the result of the same instruction that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) gave mankind such detailed teaching about the cleanliness of the body and garments as is not possessed even by the most civilized nations of today, not to speak of the Arabs of the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. So much so that in most of the languages of the world there is no word synonymous with "taharat" ". On the contrary, in Islam every book of the Hadith and Fiqh begins with injunctions and instructions on taharat (purity), which distinguishes between purity and impurity and gives minute details about the methods and means of obtaining purity.

The second meaning of these words is: "Keep your garments neat and clean." The criterion of religiosity given to the world by the monastic concepts was that a man was holy to the extent he was unclean. If a person happened to put on neat clothes, he was looked upon as a worldly man, whereas the fact is that human nature abhors filth and uncleanness and even a person of ordinary fine taste loves to be associated only with a neat and clean person. On this very basis, for the one calling the people to Allah it was made imperative that externally also he should look so neat and clean that the people should regard him with esteem and his personality should not be stained in any way so as to repel others.

The third meaning of this Divine Command is: "Keep your garments free from moral evils: your dress should be neat and clean but it should bear no tinge of vanity and pride, display and exhibition, pomp and show. " The dress is the first thing that introduces the personality of a person to others. The kind of dress a person wears makes the people judge at first sight what kind of a man he is. The dresses of the rulers and princes, the dresses of the religious functionaries, the dresses of the vain and conceited people, the dresses of the mean and shallow people, the dresses of the evil-natured and characterless people, all represent the tastes and tempers of those who wear them. The temper of the one calling to Allah is naturally different from all such people. Therefore, his dress also should necessarily be different from all of them. He should wear such a dress as .should make everyone else feel that he is a noble and refined person, who is not involved in any evil of the self.

Its fourth meaning is: Keep away from moral evils. Ibn `Abbas, Ibrahim Nakha`i, Sha`bi, `Ata', Mujahid. Qatadah, Sa`id bin Jubair, Hasan Basri and other major commentators have given this very meaning to this verse: keep yourself morally pure and avoid all that is blameworthy. In Arabic usage also when it is said: "So and so is clean in his garments", it implies that he is morally good and pure; on the contrary, when it is said: "He is filthy in his garments", it means that he is dishonest and fraudulent in his dealings: he is unreliable.

5"Filth" implies every kind of filth, whether of belief and thought, of morals and deeds, of the body, dress or mode of life. The verse means: "Keep yourself free from the filth of evils which are prevalent in society around you: no one should ever impute to you the blame that your own life itself is stained in some degree with the evils that you tell others to avoid."

6The words wa la tamnun tastakthir in the original are so vast in meaning that no one sentence can convey their full sense in translation.

Their one meaning is: "Whomever you favor, you should favor him without any selfish motive. Your bestowal of an endowment and donation, your generosity and good treatment should be only for the sake of Allah: there should be no trace in it of the desire that you should receive any worldly gains in return for the favor done. In other words, do good to others for the sake of Allah, not for seeking any benefits."

The second meaning is: "Although the mission of Prophethood that you are performing is a great favor in itself, for the people are obtaining true guidance because of it, do not remind the people of this favor, nor try to obtain any personal benefits from it."

The third meaning is: "Although you are performing a great service, you should never gloat over it, nor should ever have the idea that by performing your prophetic duties, at the risk of life, you are doing any favor to your Lord."

7That is, "The task that is being entrusted to you is full of hazards: you will meet with great hardships and difficulties and troubles on this way: even your own people will turn hostile to you and the whole of Arabia will become your enemy. Yet you should endure with patience, for the sake of your Lord, whatever you may have to face in this way, and carry out all your duties firmly and resolutely. Fear, greed, friendship, enmity, love, all these will hinder your way, but you should stand your ground firmly and steadfastly."

These were the very preliminary instructions which Allah gave His Messenger (upon whom be peace) at the time when He commanded him to arise and start the work of Prophethood. If a person ponders over these brief sentences and their meaning his heart will testify that no better instructions could be given to a Prophet at the commencement of his prophetic mission. In these he was told what he was required to do, what kind of life, morals and dealings he should adopt, and taught with what intention, mentality and mode of thought he should go about his mission and also forewarned what kind of conditions he would meet with in the performance of his mission and how he would have to face and overcome them Today the people who, blinded by their prejudices, say that these words were. God forbid, uttered by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) during epileptic fits, should study these sentences carefully and judge for themselves whether these are the product of any epileptic fits, or the instructions of a God, which He gave to His Servant while appointing him to the mission of Apostleship.

8As already explained in the introduction, this part of the Surah was sent down a few months after the initial verses when at the beginning of the first ever Hajj season, after the advent of Islam, the Quraish chiefs decided in a conference to start a powerful propaganda campaign to dissuade the outsiders, who came to visit the Ka`bah, from the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). In these verses, this very scheming of the Quraish has been reviewed, and the

review has begun with the words, as if to say: "You they act as you please, but even if you succeed in achieving your object by these devices in the world, how will you save yourselves from your evil end on the Day when the Trumpet will be sounded and Resurrection established?" (For explanation of the Trumpet, see E.N. 47 of Al-An`am, E.N. 57 of Ibrahim, E.N. 78 of Ta Ha, E.N. 1 of Al-Hajj, E.N.'s 46, 47 of Ya Sin, E.N. 79 of Az-Zumar, E.N. 52 of Qaf).

9These words by themselves support the conclusion that that Day will be light for the believers, and its hardships will be specially intended only for the deniers of the Truth. Moreover, these words also contain the meaning that the severity of that Day will be of an enduring and permanent nature for disbelievers it will not be a severity which might be expected to become mild with the passage of time.

10The address is directed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and it means: "O Prophet, leave the case of the person (Walid bin al-Mughirah) to Me, who in the disbelievers' conference proposed that you should be branded as a sorcerer among the pilgrims coming from different parts of Arabia; it is now for Me to deal with him; you need not bother yourself about it at all."

11This sentence can have two meanings and both are correct:

(1) "That when I created him, he was not at that time born with any wealth and children and position of authority and chieftainship" and

(2) "that I alone was his Creator: those other gods whose godhead he is so ardently trying to keep established and is opposing your invitation to One God for the same object, were not My associates in creating him. "

12Walid bin al-Mughirah had ten or twelve' sons of whom Hadrat Khalid bin Walid became most famous. For these sons the word shuhud has been used, which can have several meanings:

(1) That they do not have to run about and go abroad in search of their livelihood: they have enough provisions at home; therefore, they can always remain at the beck and call of their father;

(2) that all his sons are prominent and influential people: they sit in assemblies and conferences with him; and

(3) that they are the people of high rank and position and their testimony is accepted in all matters of life.

13Its one meaning is that there is still no end to his greed. In spite of having all this he still desires that he should be granted every good thing of the world. Another meaning which Hadrat Hasan Basri, and some other scholars have given is:, "He used to say: If what Muhammad (upon whom be peace) says is really

true that there is another life after death, and there will be a Paradise also in it, then that Paradise too has been prepared for me."

14The reference is to what happened in the conference of the disbelievers of Makkah. From the details of it that we have given in the Introduction, it becomes obvious that this man in his heart had become fully convinced of the Qur'an's being Divine Word, but in order to save his position as a chief of his people, he was not prepared to affirm faith. When in the conference he himself turned down all the accusations that the Quraish chiefs were proposing against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), he was compelled to devise an accusation from himself, which could be spread among the Arabs in order to bring a bad name to the Holy Prophet. Then, the way he struggled against his conscience, and the way he devised an accusation at last after a prolonged mental conflict, has been vividly depicted here.

15This can have two meanings: first, that it will burn to ashes whoever is cast into it, but even after death he will not escape from punishment: he will be given life once again and burnt once again, This very subject has been treated at another place thus: He will neither die in it nor live." (Al-A`la: 13) Another meaning also can be: "It will leave none who has deserved the punishment and it will spare none from being punished. "

16After saying that it will leave nothing of the body unconsumed, making mention of "scorching of the skin" separately seems to be somewhat unnecessary. But this form of the punishment has been mentioned separately in particular because it is the skin of a man's face and body which actually makes his personality prominent, and it is its ugliness which makes him feel most ill at ease. He is not so grieved at the internal troubles of his body as, for instance, at his face being ugly, or that there should be spots on the skin of the exposed parts of his body, abhorrent to others. That is why it has been said: If the people who feel proud of their personalities in the world because of having handsome faces and splendid bodies, treat the Revelations of Allah mockingly, as did Walid bin al-Mughirah, their faces will be scorched and their skins burnt black.

17The whole passage from here to "none knows the hosts of your Lord but He Himself", is a parenthetical sentence, which has been inserted here to answer an objection of the disbelievers, who had started mocking it when they heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) say that 19 keepers had been appointed over Hell.

Their objection was: "How strange that, on the one hand, we are told that all human beings, from the time of the Prophet Adam till Resurrection, who disbelieved and committed evil, will be cast into Hell. and, on the other, that there will be only 19 keepers, who will administer punishment to the countless numbers of men in such a huge Hell. "

This caused a huge laughter among the chiefs of Quraish. Abu Jahl said: "Brothers, are you so powerless

that even as many as ten of you at a time will not be able to overpower a single policeman of Hell?" At this a wrestler of the Bani Jumha said: ` Well I will deal with and overpower at least 17 of them by myself; as for the remaining two, you all together can tackle them. " In response these sentences have been inserted as a parenthetical clause.

18That is, "It is foolish on your part to compare the angelic powers to human powers. They will be angels, not men, and you cannot imagine what tremendous powers Allah has granted to the angels He has created."

19That is, "Although apparently there was no need to mention the number of the keepers of Hell, yet We have mentioned it so that it becomes a trial for every such person who may be concealing any kind of unbelief in his heart. Such a man may be making a great display of his faith but if he conceals even a tinge of the doubt about the Godhead and supreme powers of God, or about Revelation and Prophethood, anywhere in his heart, his disbelief would immediately be exposed as soon as he would hear that only 19 policemen would control countless numbers of the culprits from among the jinn and men in such a huge jail and would also administer punishment to each of them individually. "

20Some commentators have explained it thus: "As in the scriptures of the Jews and Christians themselves also the same number of the angels has been mentioned as keepers of Hell, they would be convinced of this thing's being truly from Allah as soon as they heard it." But in our opinion this commentary is not correct for two reasons. First, we have not been able to see anywhere in the existing scriptures of the Jews and Christians in spite of search that the number of the angels appointed over Hell is 19. Second, there are many things in the Qur'an, which also have been mentioned in the scriptures of the Jews and Christians, yet they explain them away, saying that the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has plagiarized these from their books. For these reasons the correct meaning of this statement in our opinion is: The Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) knew fully well that he would be ridiculed as soon as the disbelievers heard that 19 angels had been appointed over Hell, but in spite of this, he presented without the least hesitation and fear publicly before the people what had been revealed to him from Allah, and did not at all mind the jesting and mocking by the people. The pagans of Arabia were unaware of the unique distinction of the Prophets, but the followers of the earlier scriptures were fully aware that the Prophets in every age used to convey to their people intact whatever they received from God, whether it pleased them or displeased them. On this very basis it was to be expected of the Jews and the Christians that they would be convinced of the Prophet Muhammad's truth for only a Prophet could present an apparently strange thing without any hesitation before the people in an environment charged with antagonism and hostility. This also is evident that such a thing was shown by the Holy Prophet on many other occasions. Its most prominent example is the event of the mi'raj (ascension) which he related openly before a general assembly of the disbelievers and did not at all care how his opponents would behave and react after they had heard the story of the wonderful event.

21It has been explained at several places in the Qur'an above that on the occasion of every trial when a believer remains steadfast to his faith, and forsaking the way of doubt and denial, disobedience or disloyalty to the faith, adopts the way of faith, obedience and loyalty to it, it increases and strengthens him all the more in faith and resignation (For explanation, see 'Al-Imran: 173, Al-Anfal: 2, At-Taubah: 124125, Al-Ahzab: 22, Al-Fath: 4 and the corresponding E.N.'s).

22As "sickness of the heart" in the Qur'an is generally understood to imply hypocrisy, seeing this word here some commentators have expressed the view that this verse was revealed at Madinah, for the hypocrites appeared at Madinah. But this view is not correct for several reasons. In the first place, the assertion itself that there were no hypocrites at Makkah is false, and its false-hood has been exposed in the Introduction to the Surah Al-`Ankabut and in its vv. 1011.

Secondly, in our opinion it is not a correct way of writing commentary that in respect of a certain sentence occurring in a particular discourse which was revealed on a particular occasion, under particular circumstances, one should declare that it had been sent down on another occasion but has been inserted here without any relevance. The historical background of this part of Surah Al Muddaththir is fully well known to us from authentic traditions. This was revealed in connection with a particular event of the earliest period of the life at Makkah. The whole context bears full relevance to the event. What could, therefore, be the occasion in this context that this one sentence, if it was revealed many years later at Madinah, should have been inserted here?

As for the question what is implied by the disease of the heart here, its answer is that it implies the disease of doubt. Not only in Makkah but in the entire world also there have been, and are, very few such people, who might deny God, Hereafter, Revelation, Prophethood, Heaven. Hell, etc. absolutely. In every age the greater majority by far has been of those people, who have been involved in the doubt whether there is God, or no God, Hereafter or no Hereafter, whether Heaven and Hell really exist, or are mere figments of the imagination, and whether the Messengers did really come and receive Revelation or not. This same doubt has led most people to unbelief, otherwise the number of such people in the world who denied these truths absolutely has never been great. For a person who has any common sense knows that there is no rational ground whatever for denying the possibility of the existence of these things, or of declaring them absolutely impossible.

23This does not mean that they accepted it as Divine word but wondered why Allah had said such a thing. But what they actually meant was: "A discourse which contained such an irrational and impossible thing could not be a Revelation from Allah."

24That is, Allah in this very way sometimes sends down in the course of His Revelations and Commandments such things as become a means of test and trial for the people. It is one and the same thing which a truth-loving, good-natured and right-minded person hears and understanding its right meaning in the right way, adopts the straight path, but which when heard by an obstinate, perverse and

willful wrongdoer, makes him to misconstrue it and make it a new excuse for fleeing from the truth. Since the first man is himself a lover of the truth, Allah grants him guidance, for it is not the way of Allah to lead the seekers after truth forcibly astray; and since the second man himself does not want guidance, but chooses only error for himself, Allah also pushes him on to the way of error and deviation, for it is also not the way of Allah to forcibly pull to the way of the truth him who has an aversion to the truth. (The question of Allah's granting guidance and misguidance has been fully explained at many places for example, see E.N.'s 10. 16, 19, 20 of Al-Baqarah; E.N. 173 of An-Nisa', E.N.'s 17, 28, 90 of Al An`am, E.N. 13 of Yunus, E.N. 54 of Al-Kahf, E..N. 71 of Al-Qasas)

25That is, none knows but Allah what different kinds and how many of the creatures He has created in the universe, what powers He has granted them, and what services He is taking from them. If the man clinging to the tiny globe of the earth seeing the tiny world around himself with his limited sight, is involved in the misunderstanding that the universe of God contains nothing but what he can perceive by his senses or by his instruments, this would only be his own shortsightedness, other wise this universe is so vast and limitless that it is not in the power of man to obtain full knowledge about any of the things here, not to speak of comprehending mentally the concept of all its vastnesses.

26"The people may take heed" the people may recover their senses and wake up before they make themselves worthy of Hell and suffer its punishment, and should think of saving themselves from it.

27That is, it is not a hollow thing which may be mocked like that.

28That is, "Just as the moon and the night and the day are the great signs of the powers of Allah, so also is Hell a great sign of His powers. If the existence of the moon and the alternation of the night and day so regularly were not impossible, why should the existence of Hell be impossible as you think it is? You see these phenomena day and night; therefore, they do not surprise you: otherwise these things in themselves also are great marvels of the powers of Allah. If you had not observed them and somebody were to tell you that there is also such a thing as the moon in the world, or, there is a sun which leaves the world dark when it hides and makes the world shine forth with light when it appears, then the people like you would have made jests of it too as you make jests of Hell."

29That is, the people have been warned to this effect. Now, let him who heeds the warning go forward on the right way, and let him who wills still lag behind.

30For explanation, see E.N. 16 of Surah At-Tur.

31In other words, the people of the left hand will be seized in consequence of their misdeeds, but the people of the right hand will have their debts settled. (For explanation of the people of the right hand and the left hand, see E.N.'s 5, 6 of Surah Al-Waqi`ah).

32At several places in the Qur'an above, it has been stated that the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell will be able to see and commune with each other directly without the agency of any instrument whenever they will so desire, although they will be living hundreds of thousands of miles away from each other. For instance, see Al-A`raf: 44-50 and E.N. 35, As-Saaffat: 50-57 and E.N. 32 on it.

33That is, "We were not of those who after having believed in Allah and His Messenger and His Book, performed the foremost duty imposed by Allah, i.e. the Prayer. " Here, it should be understood well that unless a person has believed he cannot offer the Prayer at all. Therefore, one's being of those who performed the Prayer, by itself implies that one is a believer. But by attributing one's going to Hell to one's not being of those who performed their Prayer, it has been made explicit that one cannot escape Hell even after having believed if one does not perform one's Prayers regularly.

34This shows how grave a sin it is in Islam to see a hungry man and fail to feed him even if one can, for this has been particularly mentioned as one of the causes of one's going to Hell.

35"Till the inevitable overtook us" : till death came upon us. Here, "the inevitable" implies death as well as the Hereafter.

36That is, "Even if an intercessor interceded for a person who persisted in this way of life till death, he would not be forgiven." The question of intercession has been so fully explained at so many places in the Qur'an that no one can have any difficulty in knowing and understanding as to who can intercede and who cannot, when one can intercede and when one cannot, for whom one can intercede and for whom one cannot, and for whom intercession is beneficial and for whom it is not. As one of the major causes of the people's deviation in the world, is their false concept about intercession, it has been explained at such length in the Qur'an as to leave no room for any doubt and ambiguity. For example, see Al-Baqarah; 255, Al-An`am: 94, Al-A`raf: 53. Yunus: 3-18, Maryam: 87, Ta Ha: 109, Al-Anbiya': 28, Saba: 23, Az-Zumar: 43-44, Al-Mu'min: 18, Ad-Dukhan: 86, An-Najm: 26, An-Naba: 37-38.

37This is an idiomatic expression in Arabic which depicts the character of wild asses who flee stupefied and stunned as soon as they smell a lion or hear a hunter.

38That is, they desire that if Allah really has appointed Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as His Prophet, He should send a letter to each one of the chiefs and elders of Makkah telling him that Muhammad is Allah's Prophet; therefore he should obey and follow him. And these letters should be such as may convince them that they have been written by Allah Himself. At another place in the Qur'an, this saying of the disbelievers of Makkah has been cited: "We will not believe in it unless we are given the like of what has been given to the Messengers of Allah." (Al-An`am: 124). At still another place their this demand has been cited: "Or you ascend the sky ... and bring down to us a writing that we may

read." (Bani Isra'il: 93).

39That is, the real cause of their failure to affirm the faith is not that their demands are not fulfilled, but the real cause is that they are fearless of the Hereafter. They think that this world is an end in itself and they do not have any idea that there is another life after this worldly life in which they will have to render an account of their deeds. This very thing has made them careless and irresponsible in the world. They regard the question of truth and falsehood as utterly meaningless, for they do not see any truth following which may have necessarily led to a good result in the world, nor do they see any falsehood which might have always led to an evil result in the world. Therefore, they think it is useless merely to consider as to what is really true and what is false. This question can be worthy of serious consideration only for the person who regards the present life of the world as transitory and admits that the real and everlasting life is the life hereafter, where the truth will necessarily lead to a good result and falsehood necessarily to an evil result. Such a person will certainly believe when he sees the rational arguments and the pure teachings presented in the Qur'an and will use his common sense to understand what is actually wrong with the beliefs and deeds which the Qur'an calls wrong. But the denier of the Hereafter who is not at all serious in his search for the truth, will present ever new demands every day for not believing, and will present a new excuse for his denial even if all his demands are fulfilled. This same thing has been expressed in Surah Al-An`am: 7 thus: "O Prophet, even if We had sent down to you a Book written in paper, and even if they had touched it with their own hands. the disbelievers would have said: `This is nothing but manifest sorcery. "

40That is, no such demand of theirs will ever be fulfilled.

41That is, a person's taking heed does not wholly depend upon his own will, but he takes heed only when Allah also wills to grant him the grace to take heed. In other words, the truth that has been expressed here is that no act of man takes a concrete shape solely by his own will, but each act is implemented only when the will of God combines with the will of the man. This is a very delicate question, failure to understand which has often made human thought falter. Briefly it can be understood thus: If in this world every man had the power to accomplish whatever he wanted to accomplish, the system of the world would be disturbed. This system continua to hold only because the will of Allah is .dominant over all other wills. Man can accomplish whatever he wants to accomplish only when Allah also wills that he be allowed to accomplish it. The same is also the case with guidance and error. Only man's own desiring to have guidance is not enough for him to have guidance; he receives guidance only when Allah also takes a decision to fulfill his desire. Likewise, only man's desiring to go astray by itself is also not enough, but when Allah in view of his desire decides that he be allowed to wander into evil ways, then he wanders into the evil ways in which Allah allows him to wander. As for example, if a person wants to become a thief, only his desire is not enough that he may enter into any house he likes and matte away with whatever he likes, but he can fulfill his desire only at the time and to the extent and in the form that Allah allows him to fulfill it, according to His supreme wisdom and expedience.

42That is, "The admonition being given to you to avoid Allah's displeasure is not for the reason that Allah needs it, and if you did not take it, Allah would be harmed, but you are being so admonished because it is Allah's right that His servants should seek His pleasure and good will and should avoid doing anything against His will."

43That is, "It behooves only Allah that He should receive into His mercy whoever desists from evil no matter how many acts of disobedience he might have committed in the past. Allah is not vengeful to His servants so that He may refuse to forgive their errors and be bent upon punishing them in any case."

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75. Surah Al Qiyama (The Resurrection)

Name

The Surah has been so named after the word *al-Qiyamah* in the first verse. This is not only the name but also the title of this Surah, for it is devoted to Resurrection itself.

Period of Revelation

Although there is no tradition to indicate its period of revelation, yet there is in the subject matter of this Surah an internal evidence, which shows that it is one of the earliest Surahs to be sent down at Makkah. After verse 15 the discourse is suddenly interrupted and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) told: "Do not move your tongue to remember this Revelation hastily. It is Our responsibility to have it remembered and read. Therefore, when We are reciting it, listen to its recital carefully. Again, it is Our responsibility to explain its meaning." Then, from verse 20 onward the same theme which was interrupted at verse 15, is resumed. This parenthetical passage, according to both the context and the traditions, has been interposed here for the reason that when the Angel Gabriel was reciting this Surah to the Holy Prophet, the Holy Prophet, lest he should forget its words later, was repeating them at the same moment. This in fact happened at the time when the coming down and receipt of Revelation was yet a new experience for him and he was not yet fully used to receiving it calmly. There are two other instances also of this in the Qur'an. First, in Surah Ta Ha the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been told: "And see that you do not hasten to recite the Qur'an before its revelation is completed to you." (v. 114). Then, in Surah Al-A'la, it has been said: "We shall enable you to recite:, then you shall never forget. (v. 6). Later, when the Holy Prophet became fully used to receiving the Revelation well, there remained no need to give him any such instruction. That is why except for these, three, there is no other instance of this in the Qur'an.

Theme and Subject Matter

Most of the Surahs, from here till the end of the Qur'an, in view of their content and style, seem to have been sent down in the period when after the first seven verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir, revelation of the Qur'an began like a shower of rain:Thus, in the successively revealed Surahs Islam and its fundamental concepts and moral teachings were presented so forcefully and effectively in pithy, brief sentences and the people of Makkah warned so

vehemently on their errors and deviations that the Quraish chiefs were utterly confounded. Therefore, before the next Hajj season came they held the conference for devising schemes to defeat the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) as has been mentioned in the Introduction to the Surah Al-Muddaththir above.

In this Surah, addressing thee deniers of the Hereafter, replies have been given to each of their doubts and objections, strong arguments have been given to prove the possibility, occurrence and necessity of the Resurrection and Hereafter, and also it has been pointed out clearly that the actual reason of the people's denying the Hereafter is not that they regard it as impossible rationally but because their selfish motives do not allow them to affirm it. At the same time, the people have been warned, as if to say: "The event, the occurrence of which you deny, will inevitably come: all your deeds will be brought and placed before you. As a matter of fact, even before any of you sees his record, he will be knowing fully well what he has done in the world, for no man is unaware of himself, no matter what excuses and pretenses he may offer to deceive the world and deceive himself in respect of his misdeeds."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

لَآ أُقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ﴿١﴾

وَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِٱلنَّفْسِ ٱللَّوَّامَةِ ﴿٢﴾

أَيَحْسَبُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُۥ ﴿٣﴾

بَلَىٰ قَٰدِرِينَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُۥ ﴿٤﴾

بَلۡ يُرِيدُ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ لِيَفۡجُرَ أَمَامَهُۥ ۝٥

يَسۡـَٔلُ أَيَّانَ يَوۡمُ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ ۝٦

فَإِذَا بَرِقَ ٱلۡبَصَرُ ۝٧

وَخَسَفَ ٱلۡقَمَرُ ۝٨

وَجُمِعَ ٱلشَّمۡسُ وَٱلۡقَمَرُ ۝٩

يَقُولُ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ يَوۡمَئِذٍ أَيۡنَ ٱلۡمَفَرُّ ۝١٠

كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ ۝١١

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوۡمَئِذٍ ٱلۡمُسۡتَقَرُّ ۝١٢

يُنَبَّؤُا۟ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ ﴿١٣﴾

بَلِ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ بَصِيرَةٌ ﴿١٤﴾

وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُۥ ﴿١٥﴾

لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِۦ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِۦٓ ﴿١٦﴾

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُۥ وَقُرْءَانَهُۥ ﴿١٧﴾

فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَـٰهُ فَٱتَّبِعْ قُرْءَانَهُۥ ﴿١٨﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُۥ ﴿١٩﴾

كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَتَذَرُونَ ٱلْأَخِرَةَ ﴿٢١﴾

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَاسِرَةٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

تَظُنُّ أَن يُفْعَلَ بِهَا فَاقِرَةٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

كَلَّآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ ٱلتَّرَاقِيَ ﴿٢٦﴾

وَقِيلَ مَنْ ۜ رَاقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

وَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ ٱلْفِرَاقُ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَٱلۡتَفَّتِ ٱلسَّاقُ بِٱلسَّاقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوۡمَئِذٍ ٱلۡمَسَاقُ ﴿٣٠﴾

[1-30] Nay,[1] I swear by the Day of Resurrection and nay, I swear by the reproaching self.[2] Does man think that We shall not be able to put his bones together?[3] Why not? We have even the power to shape and restore his very finger-tips.[4] But man desires that he may go on doing evil in future as well.[5] He asks, "When is the Day of Resurrection to be?"[6] When the eyes are dazzled[7] and the moon is darkened and the sun and the moon are brought together,[8] then the same man will say, "Whither to escape?" No, by no means! There will be no refuge whatever. Only before your Lord that Day shall be the place of rest. That Day man shall be told all his former and latter deeds.[9] Nay, man knows his own self best, even though he may offer many excuses.[10] O Prophet,[11] do not move your tongue to remember this Revelation hastily. It is for Us to have it remembered and read. Therefore, when We are reciting it,[12] listen to its recital carefully. Again, it is for Us to explain its meaning.[13] -No, by no means![14] The fact is that you (people) love that which is hastily attainable (i.e. the world) and neglect the Hereafter.[15] On that Day some faces shall be fresh,[16] looking towards their Lord,[17] and some faces shall be gloomy, thinking that a back breaking calamity is about to befall them. No, by no means![18] When the soul reaches the throat, and it is said, "Is there an enchanter to help?"[19] and man thinks that it is the time of his departure from the world, and the leg is joined to the leg,[20] that will be the Day of driving towards your Lord.

فَلَا صَدَّقَ وَلَا صَلَّىٰ ﴿٣١﴾

وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٣٢﴾

ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِۦ يَتَمَطَّىٰٓ ﴿٣٣﴾

أَوۡلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوۡلَىٰ ﴿٣٤﴾

ثُمَّ أَوۡلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوۡلَىٰٓ ﴿٣٥﴾

[31-35] But he neither affirmed (the Truth) nor prayed, but he belied turned away. Then he went to his kinsfolk, arrogantly.[21] This sort of conduct behooves you and you alone. Yes, this sort of conduct behooves you and you alone![22]

أَيَحۡسَبُ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ أَن يُتۡرَكَ سُدًى ﴿٣٦﴾

أَلَمۡ يَكُ نُطۡفَةٗ مِّن مَّنِيّٖ يُمۡنَىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةٗ فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَجَعَلَ مِنۡهُ ٱلزَّوۡجَيۡنِ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَٱلۡأُنثَىٰٓ ﴿٣٩﴾

أَلَيۡسَ ذَٰلِكَ بِقَٰدِرٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يُحۡۦِيَ ٱلۡمَوۡتَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾

[36-40] Does man[23] think that he will be left to himself to wander at will?[24] Was he not a mere sperm-drop, which is

emitted (in the mother's womb)? Then he became a blood-clot then Allah formed him and fashioned his limbs in proportion; then from it He made two kinds, male and female. Has He not then the power to give life to the dead?[25]

1To begin the discourse with "Nay" by itself indicates that the Surah was sent down to refute some argument which was already in progress. The theme that follows shows that the argument was about Resurrection and life after death, which the people of Makkah were denying and also mocking at it at the same time. This can be understood by an example. If a person only wants to affirm the truth of the Messenger, he will say: "By God, the Messenger has come with the truth." But if some people might be denying the truth of the Messenger, he in response would rejoin, thus: “Nay, by God, the Messenger has come with the truth." It would mean: "That which you say is not true. I swear that the truth is this and this."

2The Qur'an has mentioned three kinds of human self:

(1) Ammarah: the self that urges man to evil;

(2) Lawwamah: the self that feels repentant at doing wrong, thinking wrong and willing wrong and reproaches man for this; and the same is called Conscience in modern terminology; and

(3) Mumta'innah: the self that feels full satisfaction at following the right path and abandoning the wrong path.

Here. the thing for which. Allah has sworn an oath by the Resurrection (al- Qiyamah) and the self-reproaching Self, has not been mentioned, for the following sentence itself points it out. The oath has been sworn to stress the truth that Allah will certainly resurrect man after death and He has full power to do so. Now, the question arises: What is the relevance of swearing an oath by these two truths to this thing?

As for the Day of Resurrection, the reason of swearing by it is certainty. The whole system of the universe testifies that it is neither eternal nor everlasting. Its own nature tells that it has neither existed since eternity nor can last till eternity. Human intellect has never had any strong argument to support the baseless view that this ever changing world could have existed since ever and would last for ever. But as the knowledge of man about this world goes on increasing, ii goes on becoming more and more certain for man himself that this workhouse of life had a beginning in time before which it was not, and necessarily it has also an end in time after which it will not be. For this reason, Allah has sworn an oath by Resurrection itself on the occurrence of Resurrection, and this is an oath of the kind that we might swear addressing a skeptical person, who may be skeptical about his own existence, saying: "By you yourself, you exist, i.e., your own being itself testifies that you exist. "

But an oath by the Day of Resurrection is only an argument for the truth that this system will one day be upset. As for the truth that after that man shall be resurrected and called upon to account for his deeds

and made to see the good or evil results thereof, another oath has been sworn by the self reproaching soul. No man exists in the world, who may not have a faculty called Conscience in him. This Conscience is necessarily conscious of the good and evil, and no :natter how perverted and degraded a man might be, his Conscience always checks him on doing evil and for not doing good irrespective of the fact whether the criterion of good and evil that he had set for himself might in itself be right or wrong. This is an express pointer that man is not merely an animal but a moral being. He naturally can distinguish good from evil; he regards himself as responsible for the good or the evil he does; and even if he might feel pleased suppressing the reproaches of his Conscience over the evil he has done to another, he, on the contrary, feels and demands from within that the other one who has done the same evil to him, must deserve punishment. Now, if the existence of a self-reproaching soul of this kind in man himself is an undeniable truth, then this truth too is undeniable that the same self-reproaching soul is an evidence of the life hereafter, which exists in man's own nature itself. For this demand of nature that man must be rewarded or punished for his good or evil deeds for which he himself is responsible, cannot be met in any other way than in the life hereafter. No sensible man can deny that if man becomes non existent after death, he will certainly be deprived of the rewards of his good deeds and escape the just and lawful punishment of many of his evil deeds. Therefore, unless one comes to believe in the absurd idea that a rational being like man has stumbled into an irrational system of the universe and a moral being like man has happened to be born in a world which basically has nothing to do with morality, he cannot deny the life hereafter. Likewise, the philosophy of the transmigration of souls also is no reply to this demand of nature, for if man goes on being born and reborn in this very world for the sake of being rewarded and punished for his moral acts, in every cycle of life he will perform some additional moral acts, which again will nerd to be rewarded and punished, thus making his account snore and snore lengthy and complicated in an endless way instead of being settled tidally and for good. Therefore, this demand of nature is fulfilled only in case man in this world should have only one life and then, after the whole human race has been brought to an end, there should be another life in which all acts of man should be judged and assessed rightly and justly and he should be fully rewarded or punished in consequence thereof. (For further explanation, see E.N. 30 of Surah Al-A'raf).

3The above two arguments, which have been presented in the form of the oaths, only prove two things. First, that the end of the world (i.e. the first stage of Resurrection) is a certainty; and second, that another life after death is necessary, for without it the logical and natural demands of man's being a moral being cannot be fulfilled; and this will certainly happen, for the existence of the Conscience in man testifies to it. Now, this third argument has been given to prove that life after death is possible. The people of Makkah who denied it, said again and again: "How can it be that the people who died hundreds of thousands of years ago, whose bodies have disintegrated into particles and mixed in the dust, whose bones decayed and were scattered away by the winds, some of whom were burnt to ashes, others devoured by the beasts of prey, still others drowned in the seas and swallowed by fish, the material constituents of their bodies should re-assemble and every man should rise up as the same person that he once was ten or twenty thousand years before? Allah has given its very rational and highly forceful reply in the form of this brief question: "Does man think that We shall not be able to put his bones together?" That is, "If you had

been told that the scattered particles of your body would reunite of their own accord some time in the future, and you would come back to life by yourself with this very body, you would no doubt have been justified in regarding it as impossible. But what you have actually been told is that such a thing will not happen by itself, but Allah Almighty will do this. Now, do you really think that the Creator of the universe, Whom you yourself also regard as the Creator, would be powerless to do so?" This was such a question in answer to which nobody who believed in God to be the Creator of the universe; could say, neither then nor today, that even God Himself could not do this even if He so willed. And if a disbeliever says such a thing, he can be asked: How did God in the first instance make the body in which you at present exist, by gathering its countless particles together from the air, water and earth and many other places you know not what, and how can you say that the same God cannot gather its constituent parts together once again?

4That is, "Not to speak of building up your skeleton once again by gathering together the major bones? We are able to make whole the most delicate parts of your body, even your finger tips, as they used to be before."

5In this brief sentence the real disease of the deniers of the Hereafter has been clearly diagnosed. What makes them deny the Hereafter is not, in fact, their regarding the Resurrection and Hereafter as impossible but they deny it because acceptance of the Hereafter inevitably imposes certain moral restrictions on them, which they detest. They desire that they should continue roaming in the world at will as they have been roaming before. They should have full freedom to go on committing whatever injustice, dishonesty, sin and wickedness that they have been committing before, and there should be no deterrent to obstruct their freedom and to warn them that one day they will have to appear and render an account of their deeds before their God. Therefore, it is not their intellect which is hindering them from believing in the Hereafter but their desires of the self.

6This question was not put as a question but derisively and to deny Resurrection, That is, they did not want to ask when Resurrection would take place but asked mockingly: "What has happened to the day with which you are threatening us. When will it come?"

7Literally, the words bariq al-basaru mean dazzling of the eyes by lightning, but in the Arabic idiom these words do not specifically carry this meaning only but are also used for man's being terror-stricken and amazed, or his being confounded on meeting with an accident suddenly and his eyes being dazed at some distressing sight before him. This subject has been expressed at another place in the Qur'an, thus; "Allah is only deferring their case to the Day when the eyes shall stare with consternation." (Ibrahim: 42).

8This is a brief description of the chaotic condition of the system of the universe, that will prevail in the first stage of Resurrection. The darkening of the moon and the joining of the moon and the sun together can also mean that not only will the moon lose its light, which is borrowed from the sun, but the sun itself

will become dark and both will become devoid of light similarly. Another meaning can be that the earth will suddenly start rotating in the reverse order and on that day both the moon and the sun will rise simultaneously in the west. And a third meaning can be that the moon will suddenly shoot out of the earth's sphere of influence and will fall into the sun. There may possibly be some other meaning also of this which we cannot understand today.

9Bima qaddama wa akhkhara is a very comprehensive sentence, which can have several meanings and probably all are implied;

(1) That man on that Day will be told what good or evil he had earned in his worldly life before death and sent forward for his hereafter, and also informed what effects of his good or evil acts he had left behind in the world, which continued to work and to influence the coming generations for ages after him;

(2) that he will be told everything he ought to have done but which he did not do, and did what he ought not to have done;

(3) that the full datewise account of what he did before and what he did afterwards will be placed before him;

(4) that he will be told whatever good or evil he had done as well as informed of the good or the evil that he had left undone.

10That is, the object of placing man's record before him will not be to inform the culprit of his crimes, but this will be done because the demands of justice are not fulfilled unless the proof of the crime is produced before the court; otherwise everyman fully well knows what he actually is. For the sake of self- knowledge he does not need that another one should tell him what he is. A liar can deceive the whole world but he him self knows that he lies. A thief can devise a thousand devices to conceal his crime but he himself is aware that he is a thief. A person involved in error can present a thousand arguments to assure the people that he is honestly convinced of the disbelief, atheism or polytheism, which he professes and follows, but his own conscience is never unaware of why he persists in that creed and what, in fact, prevents him from understanding and admitting its error and falsity. An unjust, wicked, dishonest, unmoral and corrupt person can even suppress the voice of his own conscience by inventing one or another excuse so that it may stop reproaching him and should be satisfied that he is doing whatever he is doing only because of certain compulsions, expediencies and genuine needs, but despite this he has in any case the knowledge of what wrong he has committed against a certain person, how he has deprived another of his rights, how he deceived still another and that unlawful methods he used to gain what he has gained. Therefore, at the time when one appears in the Court of the Hereafter, every disbeliever, every hypocrite, every wicked person and culprit will himself be knowing what he has done in the world and for what crime he stands before his God.

11The whole passage from here to "Again, it is for Us to explain its meaning", is a parenthesis, which has been interposed here as an address to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). As we have explained in the Introduction above, in the initial stage of the Prophethood when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was not yet fully used to receiving the Revelation, he was afraid when Revelation came down to him whether he would be able to remember exactly what the Angel Gabriel (peace be on him) was reciting to him or not. Therefore, he would try to commit to memory rapidly what he heard from the Angel simultaneously. The same thing happened when Gabriel was reciting these verses of Surah Al-Qiyamah. Therefore, interrupting what was being revealed, the holy Prophet was instructed to the effect: "Do not try to memorize the words of the revelation, but listen to it attentively and carefully. It is Our responsibility to enable you to remember it by heart and then to recite it accurately. Rest assured that you will not forget even a word of this Revelation, nor ever commit a mistake in reciting it!

After this instruction the original theme is resumed with "No, by no means! The fact is . . . " The people who are not aware of this background regard these sentences as wholly unconnected with the context when they see them interposed here. But one does not see any irrelevance when one has understood their background. This can be understood by an example. A teacher seeing the inattentiveness of a student in the course of the lesson might interrupt the lesson to tell him, "Listen to me carefully", and then resume his speech, This sentence will certainly seem to be irrelevant to those who might be unaware of the incident and might read the lesson when it is printed and published word for word, But the one who is aware of the incident because of which this sentence was interposed, will feel satisfied that the lesson has been reproduced verbatim and nothing has been increased or decreased in it in the process of reproduction.

The explanation that we have given above of the interpolation of the parenthesis in the present context, is not merely based .on conjecture, but it has been explained likewise in the authentic traditions. Imam Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi Ibn Jarir, Tabarani, Baihaqi and other traditionists have related with authentic chains of transmitters a tradition from Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, saying that when the Qur'an was revealed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), he would start repeating the words of the Revelation rapidly as the Angel Gabriel recited them, fearing lest he should forget some part of it later. Thereupon, he was instructed: "Do not move your tongue to remember this Revelation hastily ... The same thing has been related from Sha`bi, Ibn Zaid, Dahhak, Hasan Basri, Qatadah, Mujahid and other early commentators.

12Although it was Gabriel (peace be on him) who recited the Qur'an to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), since he recited it on behalf of Allah and not on his own behalf, Allah said: "When We are reciting it."

13This gives the feeling, and some early commentators also have given expression to the same, that probably in the beginning the Holy Messenger of Allah used to ask of the Angel Gabriel the meaning of a verse or a word or a command of the Qur'an even in the very midst of the Revelation itself. Therefore, the

Holy Prophet was not only given the instruction that he should listen quietly to Revelation when it came down to him, and assured that its each word would be preserved in his memory precisely, and he would be enabled to recite the Qur'an exactly as it was revealed, but at the same time it was also promised that he would be made to understand the meaning and intention of each command and each instruction of Divine Revelation.

This is a very important verse, which proves certain fundamental concepts which if understood well, can protect one against the errors which some people have been spreading before as they are spreading them today.

First, it clearly proves that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did not receive only the Revelation which is recorded in the Qur'an but besides that he was also given such knowledge by revelation as is not recorded in it. For, if the meaning and intention of the commandments of the Qur'an, its allusions, its words and its specific terms, which the Holy Prophet was made to understand, had been recorded in the Qur'an, there was no need to say that it was also Allah's own responsibility to explain its meaning, for it should then be there in the Qur'an itself. Hence, one will have to admit that the explanations which were given by Allah of the meanings of the contents of the Qur'an, were in any case in addition to the words of the Qur'an. This is another proof of the secret Revelation to the Holy Prophet which the Qur'an provides. (For further proofs of this from the Qur'an, see our book Sunnat ki A ni Haithiyat pp. 94-95 and pp. 118-125).

Secondly, the explanation of the meaning and intention of the Qur'an and of its commandments that was given by Allah to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), was given for the purpose that he should make the people understand the Qur'an by his word and deed according to it and teach them to act on its Commands. If this was not the object, and the explanation was only given so that he may restrict its knowledge to himself, it was then an exercise in futility, for it could not help in any way in the performance of the prophetic duties. Therefore, only a foolish person could say that this explanatory work had no legal value at all. Allah Himself has said in Surah An-Nahl: 44: "And O Prophet, We have sent down this Admonition to you so that you may make plain and explain to the people the teaching which has been sent for them." (For explanation, see E.N. 40 of Surah An-Nahl). And at four places in the Qur'an Allah has stated that the Holy Prophet's task was not only to recite the verses of the Book of Allah but also to teach the Book. (Al-Baqarah: 129,.151, Al-Imran: 164, Al-Jumu`ah: 2. We have fully explained all these verses at pp. 74-77 of Sunnat ki A'ini Haithiyat After this, how can a believer of the Qur'an deny that the Qur'an's correct and authoritative, as a matter of fact official, explanation is only that which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has given by his word and deed, for it is not his personal explanation but the explanation given by the God Who sent down the Qur'an to him. Apart from this, or leaving this aside any person who explains a verse, or a word, of the Qur'an according to his personal whim and desire, commits a boldness which no true believer could ever commit.

Thirdly, even if a person has read the Qur'an only cursorily, he cannot help feeling that there are many

things in it whose actual meaning and intention cannot be understood by a reader of Arabic only from the words of the Qur'an, nor can he know how to act on the commands enjoined in them. Take the word salat for instance; The act which has been most stressed by the Qur'an after the affirmation of faith is the act of salat. But no man only with the help of the dictionary can determine its actual meaning. At the most what one can understand from the way it has been repeatedly mentioned in the Qur'an is that this Arabic word has been used in some special terminological sense, and it probably implies some special act which the believers are required to perform. But merely by reading the Qur'an no reader of Arabic can determine what particular act it is, and how it is to be performed. The question: If the Sender of the Qur'an had not appointed a teacher from Himself and explained to him the precise and exact meaning of this term and taught him the method in full detail of implementing the command of salat, could there be even two Muslims in the world who would have agreed on one method of acting on the command of salat just by reading the Qur'an? The reason why Muslims have been performing salat in one and the same way, generation after generation, for more than 1500 years, and the way millions and millions of Muslims are carrying out the command of salat similarly in every part of the world, is that Allah had not only revealed the words of the Qur'an to His Messenger but had also explained to him fully the meaning of those words and the same meaning he taught to the people who accepted the Qur'an as the Book of Allah and him as the Messenger of Allah.

Fourthly, the means of knowing the explanation of the words of the Qur'an that Allah taught His Messenger and the Messenger his Ummah by word and deed, is none but the Hadith and the Sunnah, The Hadith implies the traditions which the earliest followers passed on to the later generations about the sayings and acts of the Messenger on sound authority, and the Sunnah implies the way of life which became prevalent in the individual and collective life of the Muslims by the Holy Messenger's oral and practical teaching, the details of which have been bequeathed by the former to the latter generations by reliable traditions as well as seen .by them practically in the life of the earliest followers. The person who refuses to acknowledge this means of knowledge, in fact, says that Allah after taking the responsibility of explaining the meaning of the Qur'an to His Messenger had, God forbid, failed to fulfill His promise. For this responsibility had not been taken to explain the meaning only to the Messenger in his personal capacity but for the purpose that the Ummah also be made to understand the meaning of the Divine Book through the agency of the Messenger. And as soon as the Hadith and the Sunnah are denied to be a source of law, it virtually amounts to saying that Allah has failed to carry out His responsibility. May Allah protect us froth such blasphemy! To the one who argues that many people had also fabricated Hadid, we would say that fabrication of Hadid itself is a major proof of the fact that in the beginning the entire Ummah gave the sayings and acts of the Holy Messenger (Upon whom be Allah's peace) the status of law, otherwise why should the people who wanted to spread error have fabricated false ,Hadith. For only those coins are counterfeited which are current in the bazaar; nobody would print paper currency which had no value in the bazaar. Then, those who say such a thing perhaps do not know that this Ummah had seen to it from the very beginning that no falsehood was ascribed to the holy man whose sayings and acts had the status of law, and as the danger of ascribing false things to him increased, the well-wishers of the Ummah made greater and still greater efforts to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit. The

science of distinguishing the genuine from the false traditions is a unique science invented and developed only by the Muslims. Unfortunate indeed are those who without acquiring this science are being misled by the western orientalists to look upon the Hadith and the Sunnah as un-authentic and un-reliable and do not realize how grievously they are harming Islam by their foolhardiness.

14The theme is again resumed from where it was interrupted by the parenthesis. "By no means" implies; "You deny the Hereafter not because you regard the Creator of the universe as helpless to bring about Resurrection and raise the dead, but because of this and this other reason."

15This is the second reason for denying the Hereafter, the first being the one mentioned in verse 5 above, saying: Since man wants to avoid the moral restrictions which are inevitably imposed by the belief in the Hereafter, his selfish motives, in fact, urge him to deny the Hereafter, and then he tries to present arguments in order to rationalize his denial. Now, the second reason being presented is that the deniers of the Hereafter are narrow-minded and shortsighted; for them only those results are all important, which appear in this world, and they do not give any importance to those effects which will appear in the Hereafter. They think that they should expend all their labor and effort in attaining whatever benefits, pleasures or joys they can attain here, for if one attained this, one attained everything, no matter what evil end this might lead to in the Hereafter. Likewise, they think that the loss or trouble or grief that can afflict one here is a thing that one must avoid, no matter how great a reward it might earn one in the Hereafter if one endured it here. They are only interested in the cash bargain. For the sake of as remote a thing as the Hereafter they can neither abandon a profit nor suffer a loss today. With this mode of thought when they discuss the question of the Hereafter rationally, it is not true rationalism but a mode of thinking because of which they are resolved not to acknowledge the Hereafter in any case even if their conscience might be crying froth within that the arguments for the possible occurrence and necessity of the Hereafter given in the Qur'an are highly rational and their own reasoning against it is very weak.

16"Some faces will be fresh"; will be beaming with joy and delight, for the Hereafter which they had believed in, will be before them precisely accordingly to their belief. Thus, when they see the Hereafter for the sake of which they had given up the unlawful benefits of the world and suffered the lawful losses, actually established before their very eyes, they will have the satisfaction that they had trade the correct decision about their way of life, and the tithe had come when they would enjoy its best and plentiful fruits.

17Some commentators have understood this allegorically. They say that the words "looking towards someone" are used idiomatically for having expectations from some one, awaiting his decision and hoping for his mercy and kindness: so much so that even a blind person also says that he is looking towards some one in the hope to see how he helps him. But in a large number of the Ahadith the commentary that has been reported of it from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) is that on the Hereafter the illustrious servants of Allah will be blessed with the vision of their Lord. According to a tradition in Bukhari: "You will openly see your Lord." Muslim and Tirmidhi have related on the authority of Hadrat Suhaib that the Holy Prophet said: "When the righteous people enter Paradise. Allah will ask them: Do you want that I should bless you with something more? They will answer: Have

You not made our faces bright: Have You not admitted us into Paradise and saved us from Hell? Thereupon, Allah will remove the curtain and none of the blessings that they had been blessed with until then will be dearer to them than that they should be blessed with the vision of their Lord" And this very reward is the additional reward about which the Qur'an says: "Those who have done excellent works, will get excellent rewards, and even something in addition to that." (Yunus: 26) Bukhari and Muslim have related, on the authority of Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri and Hadrat Abu Hurairah: "The people asked: O Messenger of Allah, shall we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection? The Holy Messenger replied: Do you find any difficulty in seeing the sun and the moon when there is no cloud in between? They said that they did not. The Holy Messenger said: Likewise, you will see you Lord." Another tradition bearing almost on the same subject has been reported in Bukhari and Muslim from Hadrat Jarir bin `Abdullah. Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Daraqutni, lbn Jarir, Ibn AlMundhir. Tabarani, BaihaqI. Ibn Abi Shaibah and some other traditionists have related, with a little variation in wordings a tradition from Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Umar, saying: "The man of the lowest rank among the dwellers of Paradise will see the vastness of his kingdom up to a distance covered in two thousand years, and the people of the highest rank among them will see their Lord twice daily. Then, the Holy Prophet recited this verse: `On that Day some faces shall be fresh, looking towards their Lord'." A tradition in Ibn Majah from Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah is to the effect: "Allah will look towards them, and they will look towards Allah. Then, until Allah hides Himself from them, they will not pay attention to any other blessing of Paradise, and will continue to look towards Him." On the basis of this and many other traditions, the followers of the Sunnah almost unanimously understand this verse in the meaning that in the Hereafter the Dwellers of Paradise will be blessed with the vision of Allah, and this is supported by this verse of the Qur'an too: "Nay, surely on that Day they (the sinners) shall be kept away from their Lord's vision." (AI-Mutaffifin: 15). From this one can automatically conclude that this deprivation will be the lot of the sinners. not of the righteous.

Here, the question arises how can man ever see God? A thing is seen when it is there in a particular direction, place, form and color, and the rays of light are reflected from it to the eye of man and its image is conveyed from the eye to the sight area in the brain. Is it ever conceivable with regard to the Being of Allah, Lord of the Universe, that man would be able to see Him in this way? But this question, in fact, springs from a grave misunderstanding. It does not take into account the distinction between two things: the essence of seeing and the specific form of the occurrence of the act of seeing with which we are familiar in the world. The essence of seeing is that the seer should be characterized by the power of sight: he should not be blind, and the thing to be seen should be manifest to him, not hidden from him. But in the world what we experience and observe is only the specific form of seeing in which a man or an animal practically sees something, and for this it is necessary that the seer should have an organ called the eye in his body, the eye should have the power of sight, it should have a physically bounded, colored object before it, which should reflect rays of light to the eye, and the eye should be able to receive its image. Now, if a person thinks that the practical demonstration of the essence of seeing can take place only in the form with which we are familiar in the world, he would be only showing the narrowness of his own mental outlook; otherwise there can be in the Kingdom of God countless ways of seeing, which we cannot even imagine. The one who disputes this should tell us whether his God is seeing or blind. If He is seeing and sees His whole Universe and everything in it, does He see all this with an organ called the eye with which men and animals see things in the world, and does the act of seeing issue forth from Him as it issues forth from us? Obviously, the answer to this is in the negative, and when it is so, why should a sensible man find it difficult to understand that in the Hereafter the dwellers of Paradise will not see Allah in the specific form in which man sees something in the world, but there nature of seeing will be different, which we cannot comprehend here.

The fact is that it is even more difficult for us to understand the nature of the Hereafter precisely and accurately than it is for a two-year-old child to understand what matrimonial life is, whereas he himself will experience it when he grows up.

18The phrase "by no means" relates to the context, and means: "You are wrong in thinking that you will be annihilated after death and you will not return to your Lord."

19The word raqin in the original may he derived from ruqayyah, which means resort to charming, enchanting and exercising, and also from raqi, which means ascending. In the first case, the. Meaning would be: "At last, when the attendants of the patient are disappointed with every remedy and cure, they will say: "Let us at least call in an enchanter, who may save him;" in the second case, the meaning would be: "At that tune the angels will say: which angels are to take his soul: the angels of punishment or the angels of mercy?" In other words, at that very time the question will be decided in what capacity the dying one is entering the Hereafter; if he is a righteous person, the angels of mercy will take him, and if he is wicked, the angels of mercy will keep away and the angels of punishment will seize him and take him away.

20Some commentators have taken the word saq (leg, shank) in its literal meaning, thereby implying that at death one lean leg will join the other lean leg; some others have taken it metaphorically in the sense of difficulty, vehemence and hardship so as to mean: At that tune one affliction will be joined with another affliction, one of being separated from the world and all its enjoyments, and the other of being seized and taken to the Hereafter as a culprit, and this will be experienced by every disbeliever, hypocrite and sinner.

21It means that the one who was not prepared to believe in the Hereafter, heard all that has been described in the above verses; yet he persisted in his denial, and hearing these verses went back to his household, arrogantly. Mujahid, Qatadah and Ibn Zaid say that this person was Abu Jahl. The words of the verse also indicate that it was some particular person, who adopted such a conduct after having heard the above-mentioned verse of Surah Al-Qiyamah.

The words, "He neither affirmed the Truth nor offered the Prayer", are particularly noteworthy. They clearly show that the first and necessary demand of acknowledging the truth about Allah and His Messenger and Book is that one should perform the Prayer, The occasion and time to carry out the other injunctions of the Divine Shari 'ah come later but the Prayer time approaches soon after one has affirmed the faith, and then it becomes known whether what one has affirmed with the tongue was really the voice of one's heart, or it was only a puff of the wind which one sent out from one's mouth in the form of words.

22The commentators have given several meanings of the word aufa laka: shame on you, may you perish, woe to you, may you hasten to your doom. But in our opinion, in view of the context, the most appropriate meaning is that which Hafiz Ibn Kathir has given in his commentary: "When you have had the boldness to disown your Creators then it only behoves a person like you to persist in the sort of conduct you display." This is the same sort of sarcastic remark as occurred in Surah Ad-Dukhan: 49 above. While meting out punishment to the culprit in Hell, it will be said: "Taste this: a mighty and honorable man that

you are!"

23Now, in conclusion, the same theme is being repeated with which the discourse began Life-after-death is necessary as well as possible.

24The word suda when used with regard to a camel implies a camel who is wandering aimlessly, grazing at will, without there being anybody to look after him. Thus, the verse means: "Does man think that he has been left to himself to wander at will as if his Creator had laid no responsibility on him, had imposed no duty on him, had forbidden nothing to him, that at no time in future he would be required to account for his deeds'?" This same theme has been expressed in Al Mu'minun: 115 thus: "On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will ask the disbelievers: 'Did you think that We had created you without any purpose, and that you would never be brought back to Us?" At both these places the argument for the necessity of the life hereafter has been presented as a question. The question means: Do you really think that you are no more than mere animals? Don't you see the manifest difference between yourself and the animal? The animal has been created without the power of choice and authority, but you have been blessed with the power of choice and authority; there is no question of morality about what the animal does, but your acts are necessarily characterized by good and evil. Then, how did you take it into your head that you had been created irresponsible and unanswerable as the animal has been? Why the animal will not be resurrected, is quite understandable The animal only fulfilled the fixed demands of its instinct it did not use its intellect to propound a philosophy; it did not invent a religion; it did not snake anyone its god nor became a god for others; it did nothing that could be called good or bad; it did not enforce a good or bad way of life, which would influence others, generation after generation, so that it should deserve a reward or punishment for it. Hence, if it perished to annihilation, it would be understandable, for it could not be held responsible for any of its acts to account for which it might treed to be resurrected. But how could you be excused from life after-death when right till the time of your death you continued to perform moral acts, which your own intellect judged as good or bad and worthy of reward or punishment? Should a man who killed an innocent person and then fell a victim to a sudden accident immediately after it, get off Scot-free and should never be punished for the crime of murder he committed? Do you really feel satisfied that a man, who sowed corruption and iniquity in the world, which entailed evil consequences for mankind for centuries after him, should himself perish like an insect; or a grasshopper, and should never be resurrected to account for his misdeeds, which corrupted the lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings after him? Do you think that the man, who struggled throughout his life for the cause of truth and justice, goodness and peace, and suffered hardships for their sake, was a creation of the kind of an insect, and had no right to be rewarded for his good acts?

25This is an argument for the possibility of life-after-death. As for the people who believe that the whole act of creation, starting from the emission of a sperm-drop till its development into a perfect man, is only a manifestation of the power and wisdom of Allah, they cannot in fact refute this argument in any way, for their intellect however shamelessly and stubbornly they might behave, cannot Refuse to admit that the God Who thus brings about man in the world, also has the power to bring the same man into being once

again. As for those who regard this expressly wise act only as a result of accident, do not in fact have any explanation to offer, unless they are bent upon stubbornness, how in every part and in every nation of the world, from the beginning of creation till today, the birth of boys and girls has continuously been taking place in such proportion that at no time it has so happened that in some human population only males or only females might have been born and there might be no possibility of the continuation of the human race. Has this also been happening just accidentally? To make such an absurd claim one Should at least be so shameless as to come out one day with the claim that London and New York, Moscow and Peking, have come into existence just accidentally. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 27 to 30 of Surah Ar-Rum, E.N. 77 of AshShura).

There are several traditions to show that whenever the Holy Prophet recited this verse, he would sometimes respond with bala (why not!), sometimes with Subhanaka Allahumma fa-bala (Glorified are You, O Allah, why not!) and sometimes with Subhanaka fa-bala or Subhanaka wa-bala. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Abu Da'ud). Abu Da'ud contains a tradition from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet said: "When in Surah At-Tin, you read the verse; Alais-Allahu bi-ahkam-il-Hakimin ("Is not Allah the greatest Ruler of all?"), you should respond to it, saying: Bala wa ana `ala dhalika min-ash-shahidin (Why not? I am of those who bear witness to this"). And when you read verse: Fa-bi ayyi ,hadith-in ba `da hu yu minun ("Now, what message is there after this (Qur'an) in which they will believe?" of Surah Al-Mursalat, say: Amanna billah (We believed in Allah), Traditions on this subject have been related also by Imam Ahmad Tirmidhi, lbn al-Mundhir, lbn Marduyah, Baihaqi and Hakim.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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76. Surah Al Insan (Man), also known as Surah Ad Dahr (Time)

Name

This Surah is called *Ad-Dahr* as well as *Al-Insan* after the words occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Most of the commentators, including Allama Zamakhshari, Imam Razi, Qadi, Baidawi, Allama Nizam ad-Din Nisaburi, Hafiz Ibn Kathir and many others, regard it as a Makki Surah, and, according to Allama Alusi, the same is the opinion of the majority of scholars. However, some commentators hold the view that the Surah was revealed at Madinah, and some others say that it was revealed at Makkah but vv. 8-10 of it were sent down at Madinah.

As far as the subject matter and the style of the Surah are concerned, these are very different from those of the Madani Surahs. A little study of it rather shown that it is not only a Makki Surah but it was revealed during the earliest period at Makkah, which began just after the revelation of the first seven verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir. As for vv 8-10, they are so naturally set in the theme of the Surah that if they are read in their proper context, no one can say that the theme preceding and following them had been sent down 15 to 16 years earlier but these three verses which were revealed many years later were inserted here unnaturally.

In fact, the basis of the idea that this Surah; or some verses of it were revealed at Madinah, is a tradition which has related from Ibn Abbas (may Allah bless him). He says that once Hadrat Hasan and Husain fell ill The Holy Prophet and some of his Companions visited them. They wished Hadrat Ali to make a vow to Allah for the recovery of the two children. Thereupon, Hadrat Ali, Hadrat Fatimah and Fiddah their maid servant, vowed a fast of three days if Allah restored the children to health. The children recovered by the grace of Allah and the three of them began to fast as avowed. As there was nothing to eat in the house, Hadrat Ali borrowed three measures (sa') of barley from somebody (according to another tradition, earned through labor). When on the first day they sat down to eat after breaking the fast, a poor man came and begged for food. They gave all their food to him, drank water and retired to bed. The next day when they again sat down to eat after breaking the fast, an orphan came and begged for something. They again gave away the whole food to him, drank water and went to bed. On the third day when they were just going to eat after breaking the fast, a captive came up and begged for food likewise. Again the whole food

was given away to him. On the fourth day Hadrat Ali took both the children with him and went before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). The Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) seeing the weak condition of the three, returned with them to the house of Hadrat Fatimah and found her lying in a corner half dead with hunger. This moved him visibly. In the meantime the Angel Gabriel (peace be on him) came and said; "Look, Allah has congratulated you on the virtues of the people of your house!"When the Holy Prophet asked what it was, he recited this whole Surah in response. (According to Ibn Mahran's tradition, he recited it from verse 5 till the end. But the tradition which Ibn Marduyah has related from Ibn Abbas only says that the verse *Wa yut'imun-at ta'am...* was sent down concerning Hadrat Ali and Hadrat Fatimah; there is no mention of this story in it). This whole story has been narrated by Ali bin Ahmad al-Wahidi in his Commentary of the Qur'an, entitled *Al'Basit*, and probably from the same it has been taken by Zamakhshari, Razi, Nisaburi and others.

In the first place, this tradition is very weak as regards its chain of transmission. Then, from the point of view of its subject matter also, it is strange that when a poor man, or an orphan, or a captive, comes to beg for food, he is given all the food. He could be given one member's food and the five of them could share the rest of it among themselves:Then this also is incredible that illustrious persons like Hadrat Ali and Hadrat Fatimah, who possessed perfect knowledge of Islam, should have regarded it as an act of virtue to keep the two children, who had just recovered their health and were still weak, hungry for three consecutive days. Moreover, in respect of the captives also, it has never been a practice under the Islamic government that they should be left to beg for food for themselves. For if they were prisoners of the government, the government itself was responsible to arrange food and clothing for them, and if they were in an individual's custody, he was made responsible to feed and clothe them. Therefore, it was not possible that in Madinah a captive should have gone about begging food from door to door. However, overlooking the weaknesses of transmission and the probability of subject matter, even if the narrative is accepted as it goes, at the most what it shows is that when the people of the Holy Prophet's house acted righteously as they did, Gabriel came and gave him the good news that Allah had much appreciated their act of virtue, for they had acted precisely in the righteous way that Allah had commanded in these verses of Surah Ad-Dahr. This does not necessitate that these verses too were sent down on that very occasion. The same is the case with many traditions concerning the occasion of revelation. When about a certain verse it is said that it was sent down on a particular occasion, it in fact does not mean that the verse was sent down on the very occasion the incident took place. But it means that the verse applies precisely and exactly to the incident. Imam Suyuti in *Al-Itqan* has quoted this from Hafiz Ibn Taimiyyah: "When the reporters say that a verse was sent down concerning a particular incident, it sometimes implies that the same incident (or matter) occasioned its revelation, and sometimes that the verse applies to the matter although it may not have occasioned its revelation."Further on he quotes Imam Badr ad-Din Zarkashi's view from his *Al-Burhan fi Ulum al-Quran*:"It is well known in respect of the Companions and their immediate successors that when one of them says that a verse was sent down concerning a particular matter, it means that the ruling contained in it applied to that matter and not that the matter itself occasioned the revelation of the verse. Thus, it only uses the ruling of the verse for the purpose of reasoning and not for stating a fact." (*Al-Itqan fi Ulum al-Quran*, vol. I, p. 31, Ed. 1929).

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of this Surah is to inform man of his true position in the world and to tell him that if he understood his true position rightly and adopted the attitude of gratefulness, he would meet with such and such good end, and if he adopted the way of disbelief, he would meet with such and such evil ends In the longer Surahs of the Qur'an this

same theme has been presented at length, but a special characteristic of the style of the earliest Surahs revealed at Makkah is that the subjects dealt with at length in the later period, "have been presented in a brief but highly effective way in this period in such concise, elegant sentences as may automatically be preserved in the memory of the hearers.

In this Surah, first of all man has been reminded that there was a time when he was nothing; then a humble beginning of him was made with a mixed drop of sperm and ovum of which even his mother was not aware; even she did not know that he had been conceived nor anyone else seeing the microscopic cell could say that it was a man, who in future would become the best of creation on the earth. After this, man has been warned, so as to say: "Beginning your creation in this way We have developed and shaped you into what you are today in order to test and try you in the world. That is why, unlike other creatures, you were made intelligent and sensible and were shown both the way of gratitude and the way of ingratitude clearly so that you may show, in the interval that you have been granted here for work, whether you have emerged as a grateful servant from the test or an unbelieving, Un- grateful wretch!"

Then, just in one sentence, it has been stated decisively what will be the fate to be met with in the Hereafter by those who emerged as unbelievers from this test.

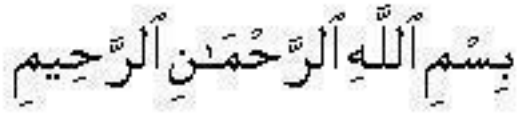
After this, in vv. 5-22 continuously, the blessings with which those who do full justice to servitude in the world, will be favored, have been mentioned in full detail. In these verses, not only have their best rewards been mentioned but they have also been told briefly what are the acts on the basis of which they would become worthy of those rewards. Another special characteristic of the earliest Surahs revealed at Makkah is that besides introducing in them briefly the fundamental beliefs and concepts of Islam, here and there, those moral qualities and virtuous acts have been mentioned, which are praiseworthy according to Islam, and also those evils of deed and morality of which Islam strives to cleanse human life. And these two things have not been mentioned with a view to show what good or evil result is entailed by them in the transitory life of the world, but they have been mentioned only to point out what enduring results they will produce in the eternal and everlasting life of the Hereafter, irrespective of whether an evil quality may prove useful or a good quality may prove harmful in the world.

This is the subject matter of the first section (vv. 1-22). In the second section, addressing the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), three things have been stated: first, that "it is in fact We Ourself Who are revealing this Qur'an piecemeal to you, and this is intended to inform the disbelievers, not you, that the Qur'an is not being fabricated by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) but it is "We Who are revealing it, and it is Our Own wisdom which requires that We should reveal it piece by piece and not all at once."Second, the Holy Prophet has been told: "No matter how long ,it may take for the decree of your Lord to be enforced and no matter what afflictions may befall you in the meantime, in any case you should continue to perform your mission of Apostleship patiently, and not to yield to the pressure tactics of any of these wicked and unbelieving people."The third thing he has been told is: "Remember Allah day and night, perform the Prayer and spend your nights in the worship of Allah, for it is these things which sustain and strengthen those who call to Allah in the face of iniquity and disbelief."

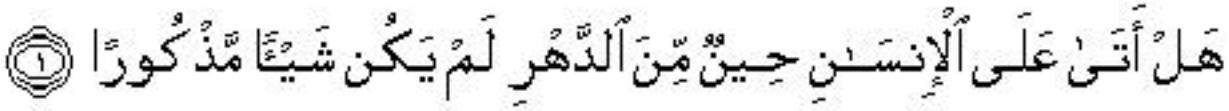
Then in one single sentence, the actual cause of the disbelievers wrong attitude has been stated: they have forgotten the Hereafter and are enamored of the world. In the second sentence, they have been warned to the

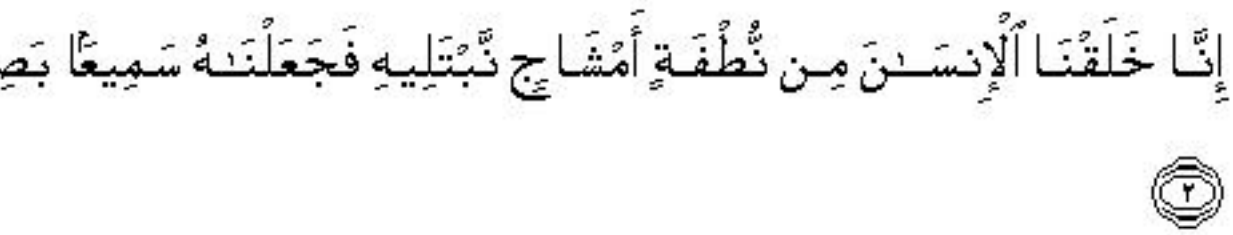
effect: "You have not come into being by yourself: We have created you. You have not made these broad chests, and strong, sturdy hands and feet for yourselves, it is We Who made these for you; and it so lies in Our power to treat you as We please. We can distort your figures, We can destroy you and replace you by some other nation. We can cause you to die and can recreate you in whatever form We like."

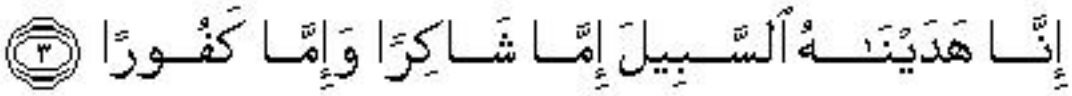
In conclusion, it has been said: This is an Admonition: whoever wills may accept it and take a path to his Lord. But man's own will and desire is not everything in the world. No one's will and desire can be fulfilled unless Allah (also) so wills. And Allah's willing is not haphazard: whatever He wills, He wills it on the basis of His knowledge and wisdom. He admits into His mercy whomever He regards as worthy of His mercy on the basis of His knowledge and wisdom, and He has prepared a painful torment for those whom He finds unjust and wicked.


بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.


هَلْ أَتَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ حِينٌ مِّنَ ٱلدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْـًٔا مَّذْكُورًا ﴿١﴾


إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَٰهُ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٢﴾


إِنَّا هَدَيْنَٰهُ ٱلسَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] Has there also passed on man a period of the endless time when he was not yet a thing worthy of mention?[1] Indeed, We created man from a mixed sperm drop,[2] to try him,[3] and therefore We made him capable of hearing and seeing.[4] We showed him the way, whether to be grateful or disbelieving.[5]

إِنَّآ أَعۡتَدۡنَا لِلۡكَٰفِرِينَ سَلَٰسِلَا۠ وَأَغۡلَٰلٗا وَسَعِيرًا ٤

[4] For the disbelievers We have prepared chains and collars and a raging Fire.

إِنَّ ٱلۡأَبۡرَارَ يَشۡرَبُونَ مِن كَأۡسٖ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ٥

عَيۡنٗا يَشۡرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ ٱللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفۡجِيرًا ٦

يُوفُونَ بِٱلنَّذۡرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوۡمٗا كَانَ شَرُّهُۥ مُسۡتَطِيرًا ٧

وَيُطۡعِمُونَ ٱلطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ مِسۡكِينٗا وَيَتِيمٗا وَأَسِيرًا ٨

إِنَّمَا نُطۡعِمُكُمۡ لِوَجۡهِ ٱللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنكُمۡ جَزَآءٗ وَلَا شُكُورًا ٩

إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِن رَّبِّنَا يَوۡمًا عَبُوسٗا قَمۡطَرِيرٗا ١٠

فَوَقَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡيَوۡمِ وَلَقَّىٰهُمۡ نَضۡرَةٗ وَسُرُورٗا ﴿١١﴾

وَجَزَىٰهُم بِمَا صَبَرُواْ جَنَّةٗ وَحَرِيرٗا ﴿١٢﴾

مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلۡأَرَآئِكِۖ لَا يَرَوۡنَ فِيهَا شَمۡسٗا وَلَا زَمۡهَرِيرٗا ﴿١٣﴾

وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيۡهِمۡ ظِلَٰلُهَا وَذُلِّلَتۡ قُطُوفُهَا تَذۡلِيلٗا ﴿١٤﴾

وَيُطَافُ عَلَيۡهِم بِـَٔانِيَةٖ مِّن فِضَّةٖ وَأَكۡوَابٖ كَانَتۡ قَوَارِيرَاْ ﴿١٥﴾

قَوَارِيرَاْ مِن فِضَّةٖ قَدَّرُوهَا تَقۡدِيرٗا ﴿١٦﴾

وَيُسۡقَوۡنَ فِيهَا كَأۡسٗا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنجَبِيلٗا ﴿١٧﴾

عَيۡنٗا فِيهَا تُسَمَّىٰ سَلۡسَبِيلًا ١٨

۞وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وِلۡدَٰنٞ مُّخَلَّدُونَ إِذَا رَأَيۡتَهُمۡ حَسِبۡتَهُمۡ لُؤۡلُؤٗا مَّنثُورٗا ١٩

وَإِذَا رَأَيۡتَ ثَمَّ رَأَيۡتَ نَعِيمٗا وَمُلۡكٗا كَبِيرًا ٢٠

عَٰلِيَهُمۡ ثِيَابُ سُندُسٍ خُضۡرٞ وَإِسۡتَبۡرَقٞۖ وَحُلُّوٓاْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن فِضَّةٖ وَسَقَىٰهُمۡ رَبُّهُمۡ شَرَابٗا طَهُورًا ٢١

إِنَّ هَٰذَا كَانَ لَكُمۡ جَزَآءٗ وَكَانَ سَعۡيُكُم مَّشۡكُورًا ٢٢

[5-22] The righteous[6] shall drink (in Paradise) cups of wine flavored with camphor-water. It will be a running fountain[7] with the waters of which the servants of Allah[8] shall drink wine, and shall take out its channels from place to place at will.[9] These will be the people who fulfill their vows[10] (in the world), and fear the Day whose evil shall be wide-spread, and who feed, out of love for Allah,[11] the poor and the orphan and the captive,[12] (saying),[13] "We are feeding you only for the sake of Allah: we neither seek any reward from you nor thanks.[14] We dread from our Lord the torment of the Day, which will be a long, dismal Day of affliction. " So Allah shall save them from the evil of that Day and shall bestow on them freshness and joy,[15] and shall grant them Paradise and robes of silk as a reward for their patience.[16] There they shall be reclining upon high couches, neither troubled by the heat of the sun nor by severe cold. The shades of Paradise shall cover them all round, and its fruits shall be within their easy reach (so that they may pluck them at will). Vessels of silver[17] and goblets of glass shall be passed round to them, goblets

made of crystal-clear silver,[18] which will have been filled (by the attendants of Paradise) in due measure.[19] There they shall be served with cups of wine flavored with ginger. This will be a fountain of Paradise named Salsabil.[20] They will be attended by brisk-moving boys who will for ever remain boys. When you see them, you would think they were scattered pearls.[21] In whatever direction you may look there, you would see only bliss and the splendor of a great kingdom.[22] Upon them shall be the garments of fine green silk and rich brocade.[23] They shall be adorned with bracelets of silver,[24] and their Lord shall give them a pure wine to drink.[25] This is your reward and your endeavors have been appreciated.[26]

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ تَنزِيلًا ﴿٢٣﴾

فَٱصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ ءَاثِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٤﴾

وَٱذْكُرِ ٱسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٢٥﴾

وَمِنَ ٱلَّيْلِ فَٱسْجُدْ لَهُۥ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ يُحِبُّونَ ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ وَيَذَرُونَ وَرَآءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾

نَّحْنُ خَلَقْنَٰهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَآ أَسْرَهُمْ ۖ وَإِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَآ أَمْثَٰلَهُمْ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾

إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦ تَذۡكِرَةٞۖ فَمَن شَآءَ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ سَبِيلٗا ٢٩

وَمَا تَشَآءُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمٗا ٣٠

يُدۡخِلُ مَن يَشَآءُ فِي رَحۡمَتِهِۦۚ وَٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ أَعَدَّ لَهُمۡ عَذَابًا أَلِيمَۢا ٣١

[23-31] O Prophet, it is We Ourself Who have sent down this Qur'an piecemeal to you.[27] So be patient with regard to the command of your Lord,[28] and do not obey any wicked or disbelieving person from among them.[29] Remember the name of your Lord morning and evening, prostrate yourself before Him in the night, and glorify Him during the long hours of night.[30] These people only love the quickly attainable (world), and neglect a heavy Day that is coming ahead.[31] It is We Who have created them and strengthened their joints, and whenever it be Our will We can change their forms.[32] This is indeed an admonition. Now whoever wills, let him adopt the way to his Lord, but you cannot will it unless Allah wills.[33] Indeed Allah is All-knowing, All-Wise. He admits into His mercy whomever He wills, and for the wrongdoers He has prepared a painful torment.[34]

1Most of the commentators and translators have taken hal in the first sentence hal ata alal-insan-i, in the meaning of qad. Accordingly, they interpret this sentence to mean; "No doubt, there has indeed passed on man a time." But, in fact, the word hal in Arabic is used only as an interrogative particle, and its object is not to ask a question in every case, but this apparently interrogative particle is used in different meanings on different occasions. For example, sometimes, in order to find out whether a certain incident has taken place or not, we ask: "Has this thing happened?" Sometimes we do not mean to ask a question but to deny something and we express the denial, thus: "Can any other also do this?" Sometimes we want somebody to affirm something and so ask him: "Have I paid what was due to you? And sometimes we do not intend to have something just affirmed but we put a question in order to make the addressee pay particular attention to something which follows his affirmation as a sequel. For example, we ask someone: "Have I harmed you in any way'?" The object is not only to make him affirm that one has not done him any harm, but also to make him think how far one is justified to harm somebody who has not harmed him in any way. The interrogative sentence in the verse before us illustrates this last meaning. The object is not only to make man affirm that there has indeed passed on him such a period of time but also to make him think that the God Who developed and shaped him into a perfect man from an insignificant, humble beginning, would not be helpless to create him once again.

In the second sentence, hin um-min ad-dahr the word dahr implies the endless time, the beginning and end of which are unknown to man and here is the particular period of tune which might at some time have passed during this endless period. What is meant to be said is that in this immensely long span of time there has passed a long period when human race was altogether non-existent. Then a time came in it when a species called Man was created, and in the same period a time has passed on every person when a beginning was made to bring him into existence from nothingness.

The third sentence, "when he was not yet a thing worthy of mention" implies that a part of him existed in the form of a microscopic gene in the sperm drop of the father and a part in the form of a microscopic ovum in the mother. For long ages man did not even know that he comes into being when the sperm gene and the ovum combine. Now both have been observed by means of powerful microscopes but even now no one can say how much of man exists in the father's germ and how much in the mother's ovum. Then, the initial cell that comes into being by the combination of the two at the time of conception is such an insignificant thing that it can be seen only through highly powerful microscopes and seeing it also no one at first sight can claim that it is a man taking shape, nor that even if a man emerges from this humble beginning, what will be his size and stature, what will be his form and figure, and what will be his capabilities and personality like. This is the meaning of the sentence that at that tithe he was not yet a thing worthy of any mention although a beginning of his being as a man had been made.

2"From a mixed sperm-drop": from the intermingling of the male sperm with the female ovum and not separately from the sperm and the ovum.

3This shows man's real position in the world and the position of the world for man. He is not like the trees and animals that the object of his creation be fulfilled on the earth itself, and he should die and perish here after he has played his appointed role over a period of time according to the law of nature. Furthermore, this world is neither a place of punishment for him, as the monks think, nor a place of rewards as the believers of the law of transmigration think, nor a place of entertainment and enjoyment, as the materialists think, nor a battlefield, as the followers of Darwin and Marx think, but in fact it is a place of test and trial for him. That which he regards as his age, is in fact the time given him for the test. Whatever powers and capabilities he has been given in the world, the thing, that have been placed under his control and authority, the various positions and capacities in which he functions, and the relationships that he enjoys with other men, all these are the countless papers of the test and this test continues till the last breath of his life. The result is not to be announced in this world but in the Hereafter when all his answer-books will have been assessed, decision will be given whether he has come out successful or failed. And his success or failure wholly depends on what he thought of himself while he functioned here and how he answered the papers that were given him here. If he believed that he had no God, or that he was the slave of many gods, and while answering the papers thought that he was not to be held accountable before his Creator in the Hereafter, his whole lifework went wrong. And if he regarded himself as the slave of One God and worked in the way approved by God, with the accountability of the Hereafter always in view, he stood successful in the test. (This theme has occurred at many places in the

Qur'an and has been dealt with at length in the corresponding notes. It is not possible to give all the references, but those who are interested in it may see the explanation of it in its different aspects under "Test and Trial" in the Index. In no other book beside the Qur'an has this truth been explained at such length) .

4The word sami' (hearing) and basir (seeing) in the original actually imply being "sensible and intelligent". These words of the Arabic language are never used in respect of the animal although it also hears-and sees. Thus, hearing and seeing here do not imply the powers of hearing and seeing which have been given to the animals too, but those means through which man obtains knowledge and then draws conclusions from it. Besides, since hearing and seeing are among the most important means of knowledge for man, only these two have been mentioned briefly; otherwise it actually implies giving man all those senses of the body by which he gathers information. Then the senses given to man are quite different in their nature from those given to animals, for at the back of every sense he has a thinking brain, which collects information gained through the senses; arranges it, draws conclusions from it, forms opinions, and then takes some decisions which become the basis of his attitude and conduct in life. Hence, after saying, "We created man in order to try him," to say, "therefore, We made him capable of hearing and seeing¦ actually contains the meaning that Allah save him the faculties of knowledge and reason to enable him to take the test. Obviously, if this were not the meaning and the meaning of making man hearing and seeing just implied the one who could hear and see, then a blind and deaf person would stand exempted from the test, whereas unless a person is utterly devoid of knowledge and reason, there can be no question of his being exempted from the test.

5That is, "We did not just leave him to himself after giving him the powers of knowledge and reason, but We also guided him so that he knows which is the path of gratefulness and which of ungratefulness, so that whichever path he chooses in his later life, he himself is responsible for it. In Surah Al-Balad, the same subject has been expressed, thus "And We showed him both the conspicuous ways (of good and evil)." And in Surah Ash-Shams, thus "By the human self, and by Him Who balanced it (with all the external and internal powers), then inspired it with its wickedness and its piety " When all these explanations are kept in view and also those detailed statements of the Qur'an in which it has been stated what arrangements Allah has made for man's guidance in the world, it becomes evident that in this verse "showing the way" does not imply any one form of guidance but many forms of it which arc limitless and countless. For example.

(1) Along with the faculties of knowledge and reason man has also been endowed with a moral sense by which he discerns between good and evil, regards some acts and qualities as evil even if he himself is involved in them, and regards some other acts and qualities as good even if he himself is avoiding them. So much so that even those people who for the satisfaction of their selfish motives and desires have invented philosophies by which they have justified many evils for themselves, protest loudly when they are themselves treated with the same evils by others, and then it becomes known that in spite of their false philosophies they actually regard them as evil. Likewise, when a man himself is benefited by a good

treatment from another person, he is from within forced to commend and appreciate it even though he might be looking upon good acts and qualities as ignorance folly and antiquated things,

(2) In every man Allah has placed the faculty of Conscience (the lawwamah), which checks and pricks him every time he is about to commit an evil, or is in the process of committing it, or has already committed it. However hard man may try to silence his Conscience or make it insensitive, he does not have the power to destroy it completely. He may become shameless and prove himself to be absolutely devoid of the Conscience, he may also try to deceive the world by argumentation, he may even invent a thousand excuses to justify his acts in order to deceive himself, but despite all this the censor that Allah has placed in his nature is so active and powerful that it does not let remain hidden from an evil person what he actually is. This same thing has been stated in Surah Al-Qiyamah, thus: "Man knows his own self best even though he may offer many excuses." (v. 15)

(3) In man's own self and outside him, from the earth to the heavens, there lie scattered in the universe countless such signs which clearly show that all this could not happen without a God, nor could there be many gods to create this life and control and administer it. Likewise, these very signs, inside man and outside him, clearly point also to the Resurrection and Hereafter. If man shuts down his eyes on them, or refuses to ponder over them intelligently, or avoids to admit the truths which they point out, he himself would be to blame. For Allah has shown no negligence in laying out every possible sign of the truth for the guidance of man.

(4) Man does come across in his own life, and in the contemporary world and in the experiences of past history, countless such incidents which prove that a supreme power is ruling over him and the entire universe before whom he is absolutely powerless, whose Will is dominant over everything and whose help he needs at every moment. These experiences and observations which point to the truth do not exist only outside him but in man's own nature as well there exists the evidence of the existence of the supreme power on the basis of which even the most confirmed atheist spreads out his hands in prayer before God when in distress and the most hardened polytheist abandons all false gods and starts invoking One God only for help.

(5) Man's intellect and his nature assert positively that crime ought to be punished and good deeds ought to be rewarded. On this very basis in every society of the world a system of the courts is established in one form or another, and the services and works, which are regarded as commendable are also rewarded in one way or another. This is a clear proof of the fact that there is a necessary relationship between morality and the law of retribution, which man cannot possibly deny. Now, if it is admitted that in this world there are countless such crimes which cannot be punished at all. to say nothing of punishing them fully and adequately, and there are also countless such virtues, which cannot be rewarded at all, to say nothing of rewarding them fully and adequately, there is no alternative but to acknowledge the Hereafter, unless, of course, a foolish person may assume, or a stubborn person may insist on having the opinion, that man who has been endowed with the concept of justice, has taken birth in a world which in

itself is devoid of the concept of justice; and then it remains for him to answer the question as to how and where from this man, who was born in such a world, obtained this concept of justice.

To reinforce these means of guidance Allah sent Messengers and revealed Books in the world for the purpose of giving clear and definite guidance to man; in these Books it was clearly explained what is the way of gratefulness and what is the way of ungratefulness and unbelief and what will be the consequences of following either way. The teaching brought by the Prophets and the Books has spread throughout the world in countless perceptible. and imperceptible ways, on such a large scale that no section of human population has remained unaware of the concept of God and the Hereafter, of the distinction between good and evil, and of the moral principles and legal rulings presented by them, whether it knows or does not know that it has obtained this knowledge only through the teachings of the Prophets and the Books they brought. Even those who disbelieve in the Prophets and the Books today, or are unaware of them, also are following many of those things which have reached them actually through their teachings while they do not know what is the real source of these teachings.

6The word abrar as used in the original implies the people who have done full justice to their Lord's obedience, have carried out the duties enjoined by Him and abstained from the things forbidden by Him.

7That is, it will not be camphor-mixed water but a natural fountain, the purity, coolness and agreeable odor of whose water will resemble camphor.

8Although the words 'ibad Allah (servants of Allah), or `ibad ar-Rehman (servants of Rehman), can be used for all then literally, for every human being is God's servant, yet wherever these words occur in the Qur'an they only imply the righteous men. In other words, the wicked ones who have excused themselves from Allah's servitude do not deserve that Allah should honor them with the honorable title of ibad-Allah or ibad ar-Rehman, attributing them to His own Holy Name.

9It does not mean that they will use spades and shovels to dig out its channels and will take out its branches whither so ever they please, but that their one single command and desire will be enough to cause a fountain to gush forth from wherever they please in Paradise.

10One meaning of fulfilling the vow is that one should fulfill, second, that one should fulfill what one has pledged oneself to do, third, that one should fulfill what one has been enjoined; what is obligatory for one to do, whether one has been enjoined it, or is self-imposed. Of these three the second meaning is the best known and generally the same is implied by fulfilling the vow. In any case, these righteous people have been regarded as praiseworthy either because they carry out the duties enjoined by Allah, or because if they vow to Allah to perform certain good deeds which Allah has not enjoined on them, they fulfill even those self imposed vows, not to speak of showing any negligence,in carrying out the duties which Allah has actually enjoined on them.

As for the commandments concerning the vow, we have explained these briefly in E.N. 310 of Surah Al-Baqarah above, But it would be useful to explain them at length here so as to enable the people to avoid the errors and rid themselves of the misunderstandings with regard to fulfilling the vow and learn the correct rules pertaining to it.

(1) The jurists have mentioned four kinds of the vow: (a) that one should pledge to Allah that one would perform such and such a good act to earn His good pleasure; (b) that one should make a vow that one would perform such and such a good act in gratitude to Allah if He fulfilled one's such and such wish and desire. Both these kinds of the vow have been termed nadhr tabarrur (i.e. vows for a good cause) by the jurists, and it is agreed by all that it is obligatory to fulfill them. (c) That one should pledge to do an unlawful thing or to refrain from an obligatory thing; (d) that one should bind oneself to do a permissible thing, or to refrain from an obligatory thing, or pledge to do an unworthy thing. These two kinds of the vow have been termed nadhr lajaj (i.e. vow of ignorance, disputation and stubbornness) by the jurists. About the third kind of the vow it is agreed that it does not take place at all; and about the fourth kind the juristic opinion is divided. Some jurists say that it should be fulfilled; some others say that one should expiate the breaking of the oath, and still others that one has the option to fulfil the vow or to expiate it. According to the Shaf is and the Malikis this vow does not take place at all, and according w the Hanafis both these kinds of the vow entail expiation. (`Umdat al-Qari)

(2) Several Ahadith show that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has forbidden making a vow with a view to changing the destiny, or with a view to making an offer to Allah that if He fulfilled one's such and such wish, one would perform such and such good act, not in gratitude to Allah, but in exchange for His , help. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar has reported that once the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) while he forbade the making of a vow, said; "It cannot avert anything which is about to befall, but through it something is extracted from the miserly person." (Muslim, Abu Da'ud), The last sentence of the Hadith means: The miserly person is not prone to spend anything in the cause of Allah; because of the vow he gives away something in charity in the greed that Allah would accept his offer and change his destiny for him. Another tradition from Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Umar is to the effect; "The Holy Prophet said: the vow can neither hasten anything nor defer anything, but through it something is extracted from the miserly person. " (Bukhari, Muslim). In another tradition he says that the Holy Prophet forbade making of the vow and said: "It does not bring any good, but it is a means whereby something is extracted from the miserly person." (Bukhari, Muslim). Several traditions on the same subject have been related by Muslim from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, and in one tradition which both Bukhari and Muslim have related, he reports that the Holy Prophet said: "As a matter of fact, the vow cannot bring the son of Adam anything which Allah has not ordained for him, but the vow sometimes coincides with the destiny itself and through it the Divine will takes out from the possession of the miserly person that which he was not inclined to give away willingly." This same theme is further explained by the tradition of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr bin `As according to which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "True vow is that whereby Allah's goodwill and approval may be sought. " (Tahavi)

(3) Another rule that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) gave concerning the vow is that only that vow should be fulfilled, which is in obedience to Allah; the vow made in disobedience to Allah should never be fulfilled. Likewise, there can be no vow concerning a thing which is not in one's power to perform. Hadrat `A'ishah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "The one who made a vow that he would obey Allah, should obey Him, and the one who made a vow that he would disobey Allah, should not disobey." (Bukhari, Abu Da ud Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Tahavi). Thabit bin Dahhak says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "There can be no question of fulfilling a vow made in the disobedience of Allah, nor in something which is not in one's possession." (Abu Da'ud). Muslim has related a tradition on the same subject from Hadrat `Imran bin Husain; and in Abu Da'ud a tradition has been reported in greater detail from Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr bin `As, saying that the Holy Prophet said: "No vow and no oath is of any use in an act which is not in the power of man to perform, or which involves disobedience of Allah, or severance of relations with kindred."

(4) One should not fulfill a vow which is made to perform an act which is of no good in itself, which is useless, or involves unbearable hardship or self-torture, and might have been self-imposed as an act of virtue. In this connection, the sayings of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) are very clear and definite. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas says that once when the Holy Prophet was giving a sermon, he saw a man who was standing in the sun. He asked who he was and why he was standing in the sun. The people said that he was Abu Isra'il: he had vowed that he would keep standing and would not sit, nor take shade, nor speak to anybody, and would keep fast. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "Tell him to speak, to come in the shade and sit, but to observe the fast." (Bukhari, Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, Mu'watta). Hadrat `Uqbah bin `Amir Juhani says: "My sister vowed that she would go for Hajj bare-foot and also vowed that she would not cover her head with a garment during the journey. The Holy Prophet said: Tell her to go by a conveyance and to cover 'her head." (Abu Da'ud). Muslim has related several traditions on this subject with a little variation in wording. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas reporting the incident concerning `Uqbah bin `Amir's sister, has reported the Holy Prophet's words to the effect: "Allah has no need of her vow: tell her to use a conveyance." (Abu Da'ud). In another tradition Hadrat Ibn `Abbas says "A man said: My sister has vowed to go and perform Hajj on foot. The Holy Prophet replied: Allah has no need that your sister should undergo hardship. She should go for Hajj by a conveyance." (Abu Da'ud). Hadrat Anas bin Malik has reported that the Holy Prophet saw (probably during the Hajj journey) an old man being supported between his two sons. When he asked what was the matter with him, it was said that the old man had vowed to go on foot. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "Allah is free from this that the man should place himself in agony. Then he commanded him to ride." (Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud. In Muslim another Hadith on this very subject has been reported by Hadrat Abu Hurairah also).

(5) If it is not practically possible to fulfill a vow, it may be fulfilled in some other way. Hadrat Jabir bin `Abdullah says: "On the day of the conquest of Makkah, a man stood up and said: O Messenger of Allah, I had vowed that if Allah made Makkah fall at your hand, I would pray two rak ahs of the Prayer in Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). The Holy Prophet replied: Say the Prayer here. He again asked the same thing and the Holy Prophet again gave the same reply. When he asked it again, the Holy Prophet said: All right, as

you please." According to another tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "By Him Who has sent Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) with the truth, if you pray here it will suffice for you instead of your praying at Bait al Maqdis (Abu Da'ud)."

(6) The opinion among the jurists is divided concerning the person who vows to give away all his possessions for the cause of Allah. Imam Malik says that he should give away one-third of his possessions, and Sahnun from among the Malikis has expressed the opinion that he should give away so much of his possessions as does not subject him to hardship later. Imam Shafe`i says that if the vow is of the nature of tabarrur(i.e. for a good cause), he should give away all his possessions, and if it is of the nature of lajaj (i.e, a vow of ignorance), he has the option to fulfill the vow or to expiate the oath. Imam Abu Hanifah says that he should give away all such possessions as are subject to zalrat, but the vow will not apply to those possessions which are exempt from zakat, e.g. house, or other such properties. Imam Zufar from among the Hanafis is of the opinion that he should give away everything in charity after he has taken out two months' maintenance for his family. (`Umdat al-Qari, Sharh Mu'watta by Shah Waliyullah). Traditions of the Hadrat in this connection are as follows.

Hadrat Ka'b bin Malik says: "When I was granted forgiveness for incurring Allah's displeasure for staying behind on the occasion of the Battle of Tabuk, I went before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and submitted: My repentance also included that I would give away all my possessions in charity for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. The Holy Prophet replied: No, do not do that. I said. Then half of the possessions? He said: No. I said: Then one-third of the possessions? He replied: Yes." (Abu Da'ud). According to another tradition, the Holy Prophet replied: "Withhold some of your possessions for yourself: this would be better for you." (Bukhari), Imam Zuhri says: "Information has reached me that Hadrat Abu Lubabah (who had similarly incurred displeasure in connection with the same Battle of Tabuk) said to the Holy Prophet: "I shall give away all my possessions for the sake of Allah and His Messenger in charity. The Holy Prophet replied: For you it would be enough to give away only one-third of it." (Mu'watta).

(7) Should a person who vowed to perform a good act before embracing Islam, fulfil it after he has embraced Islam? The Holy Prophet's ruling in this connection is that he should fulfil it. (Bukhari; according to a tradition in Abu Da ud and Tahavi Hadrat `Umar is reported to have vowed in the pre-Islamic days that he would observe i `tikaf(devotional seclusion) in the Masjid al-Haram (for one night, or according to others, one day). After embracing Islam when he asked for the Holy Prophet's ruling, he replied: "Fulfill your vow." Some jurists have taken this ruling of the Holy Prophet to mean that it is obligatory to do so, and some others that it is commendable.

(8) About the question whether the heirs are under obligation to fulfill a vow made by the deceased person or not, the juristic opinion is divided. Imam Ahmad, Ishaq bin Rahawaih, Abu Thaur and the Zahiris say that if the deceased person had vowed to observe the Fast or perform the Prayer but could not fulfill the vow, the heirs have to fulfill it. The Hanafis say that if the vow pertained to a bodily worship (e.g. the Prayer or the Fast), the heirs are under no obligation to fulfill it, and if it pertained to monetary

worship and the deceased did not leave any will for his heirs to fulfill it, they are again under no obligation to fulfill it. but if he left a will, it will be obligatory for the heirs to fulfill it from his inheritance up to one-third of its extent. The Maliki viewpoint also is somewhat the same. The Shafe`is say that if the vow pertains to a non-monetary worship, or if it pertains to a monetary worship and the deceased person did not leave any inheritance, the heirs are under no obligation to fulfill it; and if the deceased left some inheritance, the heirs would be bound to fulfill the vow pertaining to a monetary worship, no matter whether the dying person left a will or not. (Sharh Muslim by Al-Nawawi, Badhl al-Majhud Sharh Abi Da ud). In the Hadith there is a tradition from Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas on this subject to the effect: "Hadrat Sa`d bin `Ubadah asked for the Holy Prophet's verdict, saying: My mother has died and she had made a vow which she could not fulfill. The Holy Prophet said: Fulfill the vow on her behalf." (Abu Da'ud. Muslim). Another tradition from Ibn `Abbas is to the effect: "A woman went on a sea journey and vowed that if she returned home safe and sound, she would observe fast for a month. On her return home she died. Her sister or her daughter came to the Holy Prophet to ask for his decision. The Holy Prophet replied: "Observe the fast on her behalf." (Abu Da'ud Abu Da'ud has related another tradition with the same content from Hadrat Buraidah, saying: "A woman asked the Holy Prophet a similar thing and he gave the same reply as mentioned above." Since these traditions are not explicit as to whether the rulings the Holy Prophet gave pertained to its being obligatory or commendable, and since about the vow made by Hadrat Sa`d bin `Ubadah's mother also it is not clear whether it pertained to a monetary worship, or a bodily worship, there have arisen differences among the jurists on this question.

(9) As for an unlawful vow it is clear that it should not be fulfilled. However, there is a difference of opinion as to whether it entails an expiation or not. On this point since the traditions differ the juristic opinion is also divided. According to one kind of the traditions the Holy Prophet commanded the person concerned to make the expiation. Hadrat `A'ishah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Three is no vow in the disobedience of Allah, and its expiation is the expiation of breaking the oath" (Abu Da'ud, In the case of `Uqbah bin `Amir Juhani's sister (mentioned under No. 4 above), the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) commanded that she should break her vow and fast for three days. (Muslim, Abu Da'ud). In the case of another woman also who had vowed to go for Hajj on foot, he commanded that she should go by a conveyance and should make expiation for the oath (Abu Da'ud). Ibn `Abbas has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "The one who made a vow but did not specify what the vow was about, should expiate for the oath, and the one who made a vow to perform a sinful act, should expiate for the oath, and the one who made a vow to perform something which he does not have the power to perform, should expiate for the oath, and the one who made a vow to do something which he can do, should fulfill it." (Abu Da'ud). On the other hand, there are the traditions which show that there is no expiation in this case. The person under No.4 above had vowed that he would stand in the sun and would not speak to anyone. Making a reference to him in Mu'watta, Imam Malik writes: "I could not know by any means whether the Holy Prophet besides commanding him to break the vow might also have told him to make the expiation. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr bin `As has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "If the one swearing an oath for something later finds that another thing was better than that he should abandon it and should adopt the better course and the abandonment itself is the expiation." (Abu Da'ud; Baihaqi says that this Hadith

and Hadrat Abu Hurairah's this tradition: "He should adopt the better course and this is its expiation" are not established). Imam Nawawi discussing these traditions of the Hadid in his commentary of Sahih Muslim writes: "Imam Malik, Shafe`i, Abu Hanifah, Da'ud Zahiri and other scholars say that the vow made to do a sinful thing is void and ineffectual and it does not entail any expiation if not fulfilled, but Imam Ahmad says that it entails expiation."

11Most of the commentators hold the view that the pronoun in hubbi-hi refers to food. Accordingly, they interpret the sentence to mean: "In spite of the food's being agreeable and tasty and that they need it, they give it away to others." Ibn `Abbas and Mujahid say: "they do so because of their fondness for feeding the poor ( `ala hubb-il-it am); and Fudail bin `Iyad and Abu Suleman ad-Darani say: "They do so out of love for Allah." In our opinion the following sentence ("We are feeding you only for the sake of Allah") supports the last meaning.

12The custom in the ancient days was that the prisoners were put in fetters and shackles and taken out daily to go about the streets begging food. Later the Islamic government abolished this custom. (Imam Abu Yusuf, Kitab al-Kharaj, p, 150, Ed, 1382 H.) In this verse, the captive implies every such person who is in bondage, whether he is an unbeliever, a Muslim, a war prisoner, or imprisoned in consequence of a crime, and whether he is provided food in that state, or made to beg for it. In any case, to feed a helpless person who cannot do anything to earn a living, is an act of great virtue.

13Although feeding a poor man is in itself a great virtue, yet fulfilling the other needs of an indigent person is no less virtuous. For example, to clothe a poor man, to arrange treatment for a sick person, or to help a debtor who is harassed by his creditor, is an act of equally great virtue. Here, a particular kind of virtue in view of its importance has been presented only as an example, but the real object is to stress giving help to the needy.

14It is not necessary that this may be said in so many words while feeding the poor man. It may be said in the heart; in the sight of Allah this is as meritorious as saying it with the tongue. But saying these words with the tongue has been particularly mentioned so as to set the person being helped at ease that no thanks or recompense is due from him, so that he eats with full satisfaction and peace of mind.

15"Freshness and joy": freshness of the face and joy of the heart. In other words, all the severities and terrors of the Day of Resurrection will be meant only for the disbelievers and the culprits. The righteous will on that Day remain immune from every hardship and will be well-pleased with their lot. The same theme has been expressed in Al-Anbiya': 103, thus: "The time of great fright will not trouble them at all; the angels will rush forth to receive them, saying: this is the Day that you were promised; and in An-Naml: 89 thus: "He who brings good deeds, will have a reward better than that, and such people shall be secure from the terror of that Day. "

16Here the word sabr (patience) has been used in a very comprehensive sense. The whole worldly life of the righteous believers in fact has been described as a life of patience. From the time a man attains discretion, or believes, till death;' his suppressing of unlawful desires, adhering to the bounds set by Allah, carrying out the duties enjoined by Him, sacrificing his time, his wealth, his effort, powers and abilities, even his life if so required, ignoring every greed and temptation, which might turn him away from Allah's way, meeting every danger and enduring every hardship faced on the way of the truth, giving up every gain and pleasure accruing from unlawful ways and means, bearing every loss and suffering and affliction incurred on account of his love for truth, and doing all this with full faith in the promise of Allah that He will bless the doer with the fruits of this righteous conduct not in this world but in the second life after death, turns the whole life of a believer into a life of patience-eternal and perpetual patience. all-pervasive and life-long patience! (For further explanation, see E N 60 of Al-Baqarah. E.N.'s 13, 107, 131 of ,Al-`Imran, E.N. 23 of Al-An`am, E.N.'s 37, 47 of Al-Anfal, E.N. 9 of Yunus, E N 11 of Hud, E.N. 39 of Ar-Ra'd, E.N. 98 of An-Nahl, E.N. 40 of Maryam, E.N: 94 of AI-Furgan, E.N.'s 75, l00 of AI-Qasas. E.N. 97 of Al-`Ankabut, E.N.'s 29, 56 of Luqman, E.N. 37 of As-Sajdah, E.N. 58 of Al-Ahzab, E.N. 32 of Az-Zumar, E.N. 38 of Ha-Mim As-Sajdah, E.N. 53"of Ash-Shura).

17According to Az-Zukhruf: 71, vessels of gold shall be passed round to them, but here of silver. This shows that vessels of gold as well as of silver shall be passed round to them as required by the occasion.

18That is, though silver, it will be as transparent as glass, Vessels of this kind of transparent, crystal like silver will be the special characteristic of the vessels in which drinks will be served to the people of Paradise.

19"In due measure": filled accurately according to the desire of every person, neither over-filled nor under-filled. In other words, the attendants of the dwellers of Paradise will be so judicious and discerning that they will have accurate judgment about everybody whom they serve wine as to how much of it he wishes to drink. (For the characteristics of the wine of Paradise, see As-Saaffat: 45-47 and the E.N.'s 24 to 27, Muhammad: 15 and E.N. 22, At-'tur; 23 and E.N. 18, Al-Waqi`ah: 19 and E.N. 10).

20This is to suit the taste of the Arabs who liked the wine flavored with ginger-mixed water. But this flavoring will not be achieved by adding ginger-mixed water to it: it will be a natural fountain which will have the flavor of ginger but without its bitterness; Therefore, it will be called Salsabil, which implies such water as flows gently and pleasantly down the throat on account of its being sweet, light and palatable. Most commentators think that the word salsabil has been used here as an adjective of the fountain and not as a name for it.

21For explanation, see E.N. 26 of As-Saaffat, E-N. 19 of At-Tur, E.N. 9 of Al-Wiiqi`ah.

22Even if a person might have lived a pauper in the world, in the Hereafter when he is admitted to Paradise, on the basis of his good deeds, he will live as though he were the owner of a splendid kingdom.

23This same theme has been expressed in Surah Al-Kahf: 31, thus: "They (the dwellers of Paradise) will wear colored robes of silk and rich brocade and will be reclining upon raised thrones." On this basis, the opinion of the commentators who have expressed the view that this implies the sheets of cloth which will be hanging over their thrones or bedsteads or that this would be the dress of the boys who would be moving about serving them does not seem to be correct.

24In Surah Al-Kahf: 31, it has been said: "They will be adorned with bracelets of gold. This same theme has also occurred in Al-Hajj: 23 and Fatir 33 above. When all these verses are read together, three possibilities become obvious,

(1) That sometimes they would 1ike to wear bracelets of gold and sometimes bracelets of silver, both kinds of the ornaments being available for use as and when required;

(2) that they will wear bracelets of both gold and silver at the same time, for the combination of the two enhances the personal charms of the wearer;

(3) that whosoever desires will wear bracelets of gold and whosoever desires will wear bracelets of silver.

As for the question, why will the men be adorned with the ornaments when these are usually worn by the women? The answer is that in the ancient times the custom was that the kings and their nobles used to adorn their hands and necks and the crowns of their heads with different kinds of ornaments. In Surah Az-Zukhruf it has been said that when the Prophet Moses arrived in the Pharaoh's court in his simple dress, with only a staff in hand, and told him that he was a Messenger sent by Allah, Lord of the worlds, the Pharaoh said to his courtiers: "What kind of a messenger is he, who has appeared before me in this state? If he was sent by the King of the universe, why were not bracelets of gold sent down on him, or a company of angels as attendants?" (v. 53).

25Two kinds of the wine have been mentioned above, first that to which water will be added from the fountain of camphor; second that to which water will be added from the fountain of ginger, After these, making mention of another wine, with the' remark that their Lord shall give them a pure wine to drink, gives the meaning that this will be some superior kind of wine, which they will be given to drink as a special favor from Allah.

26In the original, kana sa yu kum mashkura: "your endeavors have been accepted and recognized." Sa`i implies the entire lifework that a person accomplished in the world, the works and objectives to which he applied his energies and abilities; and its being mashkur means that Allah has appreciated it. Shukr when

expressed by the servant to God implies his gratefulness to Him for His blessings, and when it is expressed by God for the servant, it means that He has appreciated his services. It is indeed highly kind of the Master that He should appreciate the endeavors of the servant when the servant has only carried out his duties according to the Master's will.

27Though the addressee here apparently is the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), the discourse is directed to the disbelievers, who said "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) himself composes the Qur'an deliberately piece by piece; had it been from Allah, it would be revealed all at once. At some places on the Qur'an this objection bas been cited and answered (e.g. see E.N.'s 102, 104, 105, 106 of An-Nahl and E.N. 119 of Bani Isra'il), but here Allah has answered it without citing it, saying emphatically: "It is We Ourself Who are sending it down: it is not the composition of Muhammad: and it is We Ourself Who are sending it gradually. That is, it is the requirement of Our wisdom that We should not send down Our message all together in book form, but should send it piece by piece."

28"Be patient": "Face patiently the hardships and difficulties of the great Mission your Lord has entrusted to you: endure firmly and steadfastly whatever comes to pass, without showing any weakness in this regard."

29"Do not obey ...": "Do not yield to any one of them so as to give up preaching of the true faith: do not be inclined to make even the least change in the religious beliefs for the sake of any denier of the Truth, or in the moral teachings for the sake of a wicked person. Proclaim whatever is unlawful and forbidden to be so openly even if an immoral person might press you hard to show some lenience in this condemnation, and proclaim whatever is false as false and whatever is we as true publicly even if the disbelievers might use all their influence to silence you, or to make you adopt a little lenience in this regard."

30The rule followed in the Qur'an is that wherever the Muslims have been exhorted to show patience against the disbelievers, immediately after it they have been commanded to remember Allah much and to observe the Prayer, which automatically implies that the power needed to meet the resistance of the enemies of the Truth in the way of truth faith can be obtained only by this means. To remember Allah morning and evening may also imply remembering Allah always but when the command to remember Allah at specific times is given, it implies the salat (Prayer). In this verse, bukrah means the morning and asil the time from the sun's decline till sunset, which obviously covers the Zuhr and the Asr times. Night starts after sunset;. therefore, the command "to prostrate yourself in the night" would apply to both the Maghrib and the `Isha' Prayers. Then, the command "to glorify Allah in the long hours of night", clearly points to the time of the Tahajjud Prayer. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 92 to 97 of Bani Isra'il, E N. 2 of AI-Muzzammil). This also shows that these very have been the Prayer times in Islam from the beginning. However, the command making the Prayer obligatory five times a day with fixed tunes and number of rakahs was given on the occasion of mi`raj (ascension).

31That is, "The reason why the disbelieving Quraish still persist in the errors and deviations of belief and morality and why they turn a deaf ear to your invitation to the Truth is, in fact, their worship of the world and their heedlessness of the Hereafter. Therefore, the way being followed by a true God-worshiper is so different from and opposed to their way that there can be no question of any compromise between them. "

32The sentence, "Whenever it be Our will We can change their forms¦, can have several meanings:

(1) That whenever We please We can destroy them and replace them by other people of their own kind, who will be different from them in conduct;

(2) that whenever We please We can change their forms; that is, just as We can make someone healthy and sound in body, so also We have the power to make somebody a paralytic, cause someone to be struck with facial paralysis and other to fall a victim to some disease or accident and become a cripple permanently; and

(3) that whenever We will We can recreate them in some other form after death.

33Three things have been said in these verses:

(1) That whoever wills may adopt the way to his Lord;

(2) that one's willing to do a thing is not enough unless Allah so wills; and

(3) that Allah is All-Wise, All-Knowing. If one considers these three things deeply one can fully well understand the relationship between man's freedom of choice and Allah's Will, and it helps to remove all the confusions from the people's minds about the question of destiny.

The first verse shows that in this world the authority granted to man is only to the extent that he may decide to adopt any one of the different courses available for passing life here. This is the freedom of choice that Allah has given him. For example, when a man confronts the question of earning a living for himself, he finds many ways before him of which some are lawful, as for example lawful kinds of labor, service, trade and business, industry, or agriculture, and some are unlawful as thievery, robbery, picking pockets, prostitution, trading in money (on interest), gambling, bribery and unlawful kinds of services and business, etc. The decision to adopt any one of these ways has been left to man's own free choice as to how he would like to earn his living. Likewise, there are different modes of morality. On the one side, there are the good qualities, like honesty, nobility, decency, justice, pity, sympathy and chastity, and on the other, the evil traits like wickedness, meanness, tyranny, dishonesty, and frivolity. Man has full freedom to adopt any mode of morality he likes. The same is the case with religion; man has many ways

open before him in this regard also-atheism and denial of God, polytheism and idol-worship, different combinations of monotheism and polytheism, and the un-alloyed creed of God-worship which is taught by the Qur'an. In these also the decision to choose has been left to man as to which of these he wants to adopt. Allah does not impose on him any decision of His own so that man may like to choose a lawful means of earning his living for himself but Allah may force him to adopt an unlawful means for it. or that he may like to follow the Qur'an, but Allah may force him to become an atheist, polytheist or disbeliever, or that he may like to become a good man, but Allah may force him to become an evil man.

But after man has exercised this freedom of choice whether he can practically also do the same which he wants to do, depends on Allah's Will, His leave and His grace. If the Will of Allah be to let the man do what he has willed or decided to do, then alone can he do it; otherwise he cannot do anything without Allah's Will and His leave, however hard and seriously he may try to do it. This same thing has been said in the second verse. This can be explained by an example. If man had been delegated all the powers in the world and permitted to do whatever he pleased, the system of the world would have been disrupted. One murderer was enough to murder all the, people in the world if he were given the freedom to kill anybody he liked. One pickpocket could pick the pocket of everyone if he were given the option to pick anyone's pocket he pleased. One thief was enough to steal whatever he liked; one adulterer to commit rape on every woman, one robber to plunder every house, if each one of these had full powers to act at he desired. Therefore, Allah has kept this in His own power whether He may allow or disallow the man to follow the right or the wrong path that he chooses to follow or not. The person who, giving up error, wants to adopt the right way is also granted righteousness only by Allah's leave and will. However, the condition is that the decision to give up error and choose guidance should have been taken by the man himself; otherwise just as Allah does not make anybody a thief or murderer or atheist or polytheist forcibly, so also He does not make anybody a believer forcibly.

After this, the third verse removes the misunderstanding whether Allah's willing may not be arbitrary. That is why it has been said that "Allah is All-Knowing, Al-Wise." That is whatever He does, He does it on the basis of knowledge and wisdom; therefore, there can be no possibility of any error in His decisions. He decided with full knowledge and wisdom as to who should be given a particular kind of help and who should not be given it, who should be allowed to do a particular work and who should not be allowed to do it. To the extent that Allah provides opportunities to man and makes the conditions favorable for him, he can work according to his desire, whether it be good or evil, The question of guidance also is no exception to it. Allah alone knows on the basis of His knowledge and He alone determines on the basis of His wisdom as to who deserves to be guided and who does not. (Also see E.N. 41 of Al-Muddaththir

34In this verse "wrong doers" imply the people whom the Revelations of Allah and the teachings of His Prophet may reach, yet they deliberately and consciously decide that they would not obey and follow them. This also includes those unjust people who may plainly say that they do not accept the Revelation as God's Revelation and the Prophet as God's Prophet, or that they do not believe in God at all, and also those wicked people who may not refuse to believe in God and the Prophet and the Qur'an, but they are

resolved not to obey and follow them. As a matter of fact, both these groups are unjust and wicked. As regards the first group, their case is clear and obvious; but the second group is no less wicked: it is also hypocritical and treacherous. Verbally they say that they believe in God and the Messenger and the Qur'an, but in their hearts and minds they are resolved not to follow them, and their practical conduct of life is also opposed to it. About both Allah has declared that He has prepared for them a painful torment. They might strut about in the world, enjoy life as they like, boast and brag of their superiority, but ultimately they will be subjected to a disgraceful punishment; they cannot enter and enjoy Allah's mercy in any way.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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77. Surah Al Mursalat (The Winds Which Are Sent)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *wal-mursalat* in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Its subject matter bears full evidence that it was revealed in the earliest period at Makkah. If this Surah is read together with the two Surahs preceding it, namely Al-Qiyamah and Ad-Dahr, and the two Surahs following it, namely An-Naba and An-Naziat, it becomes obvious that all these Surahs are the Revelations of the same period, and they deal with one and the same theme, which has been impressed on the people of Makkah in different ways.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to affirm the Resurrection and Hereafter and to warn the people of the consequences which will ultimately follow the denial and the affirmation of these truths.

In the first seven verses, the system of winds has been presented as an evidence of the truth that the Resurrection which is being foretold by the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) must come to pass. The reasoning is that the power of All-Mighty Allah Who established this wonderful system on the earth, cannot be helpless in bringing about the Resurrection, and the express wisdom which underlies this system bears full evidence that the Hereafter must appear, for no act of an All-Wise Creator can be vain and purposeless, and if there was no Hereafter, it would mean that the whole of one's life was useless and absurd.

The people of Makkah repeatedly asked, "Bring about the Resurrection with which you threaten us; only then shall we believe in it."In vv. 8-l5, their demand has been answered, saying:"Resurrection is no sport or fun so that whenever a jester should ask for it, it should be brought forth immediately. It is indeed the Day of Judgment to settle the account of all mankind and of all its individuals. For it Allah has fixed a specific time it will take place at its own time, and when it takes place with all its dreads and horrors, it will confound those who are demanding it for fun

today. Then their cases will be decided only on the evidence of those Messengers whom these deniers of the truth are repudiating with impunity. Then they will themselves realize how they themselves are responsible for their dooms

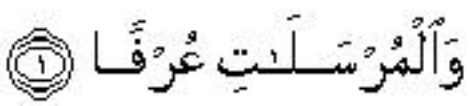
In vv. 16-28 arguments have been given continuously for the occurrence and necessity of the Resurrection and Hereafter. In these it has been stated that man's own history, his own birth, and the structure of the earth on which he lives, bear the testimony that the coming of Resurrection and the establishment of the Hereafter are possible as well as the demand of Allah Almighty's wisdom. History tells us that the nations which denied the Hereafter ultimately became corrupted and met with destruction. This means that the Hereafter is a truth which if denied and contradicted by a nation by its conduct and attitude, will cause it to meet the same doom, which is met by a blind man who bushes headlong into an approaching train. And it also means that in the kingdom of the universe only physical laws are not at work but a moral law also is working in it, under which in this very world the process of retribution is operating. But since in the present life of the world retribution is not taking place in its complete and perfect form, the moral law of the universe necessarily demands that there should come a time when it should take its full course and all those good works and evil deeds, which could not be rewarded here, or which escaped their due punishment should be fully rewarded and punished. For this it is inevitable that there should be a second life after death. If man only considers how he takes his birth in the world, his intellect, provided it is sound intellect, cannot deny that for the God Who began his creation from an insignificant sperm drop and developed him into a perfect man, it certainly possible to create the same man once again. After death the particles of man's body do not disappear but continue to exist on the same earth on which he lived his whole life. It is from the resources and treasures of this very earth that he is made and nourished and then into the same treasures of the earth he is deposited. The God who caused him to emerge from the treasures of the earth, in the first instance, can also cause him to re-emerge from the same treasures after he has been restored to them at death. If one only considers the powers of Allah, one cannot deny that He can do this; and if one considers the wisdom of Allah, one also cannot deny that it is certainly the very demand of His wisdom to call man to account for the right and wrong use of the powers that He has granted him on the earth; it would rather be against wisdom to let him off without rendering an account.

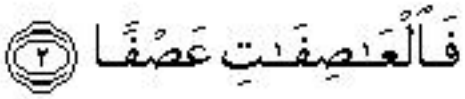
Then, in vv. 28-40, the fate of the deniers of the Hereafter has been depicted, and in vv. 41-45 of those who affirming faith in it in their worldly life, endeavored to improve their Hereafter, and abstained from the evils of disbelief and thought, morality and deed, conduct and character which might be helpful in man's worldly life, but are certainly ruinous for his life hereafter.

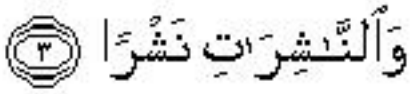
In the end, the deniers of the Hereafter and those who turn away from God-worship, have been warned as if to say: "Enjoy your short-lived worldly pleasure as you may, but your end will ultimately be disastrous." The discourse concludes with the assertion that the one who fails to obtain guidance from Book like the Qur'an, can have no ether source in the world to afford him Guidance.

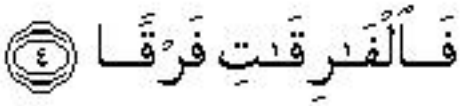
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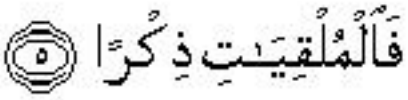
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

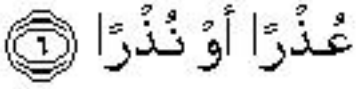

وَٱلْمُرْسَلَٰتِ عُرْفًا ﴿١﴾

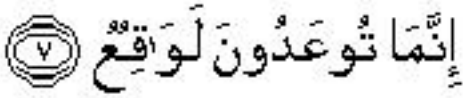

فَٱلْعَٰصِفَٰتِ عَصْفًا ﴿٢﴾


وَٱلنَّٰشِرَٰتِ نَشْرًا ﴿٣﴾


فَٱلْفَٰرِقَٰتِ فَرْقًا ﴿٤﴾


فَٱلْمُلْقِيَٰتِ ذِكْرًا ﴿٥﴾


عُذْرًا أَوْ نُذْرًا ﴿٦﴾


إِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَٰقِعٌ ﴿٧﴾

[1-7] By the (winds) which are sent in succession, which then blow tempestuously, and lift up (the clouds) and scatter them, then split (them) asunder, then infuse (the hearts) with the remembrance (of God), as an excuse or as a warning.[1] That which you are being promised,[2] must happen.[3]

فَإِذَا ٱلنُّجُومُ طُمِسَتۡ ﴿٨﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ فُرِجَتۡ ﴿٩﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡجِبَالُ نُسِفَتۡ ﴿١٠﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلرُّسُلُ أُقِّتَتۡ ﴿١١﴾

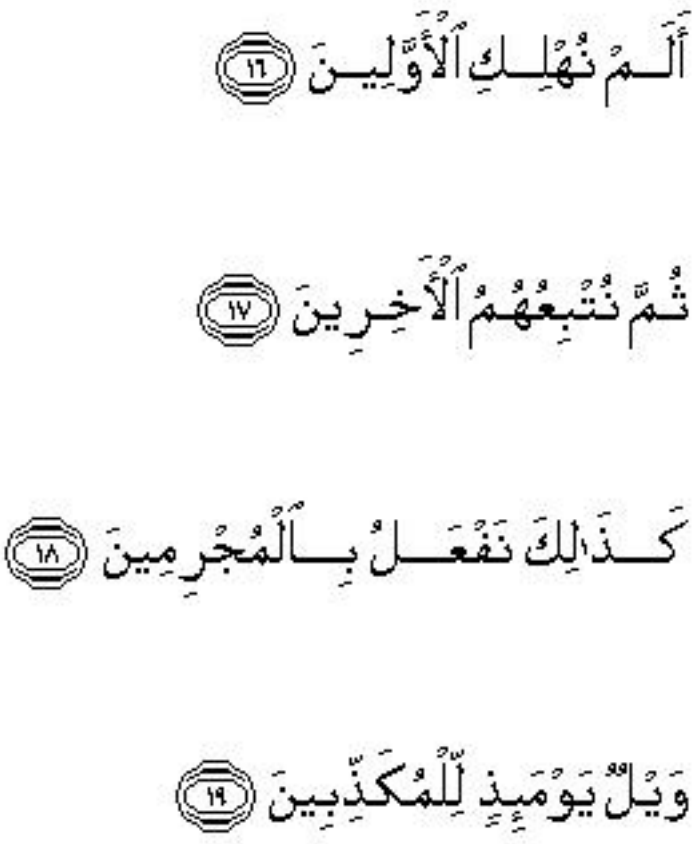
لِأَيِّ يَوۡمٍ أُجِّلَتۡ ﴿١٢﴾

لِيَوۡمِ ٱلۡفَصۡلِ ﴿١٣﴾

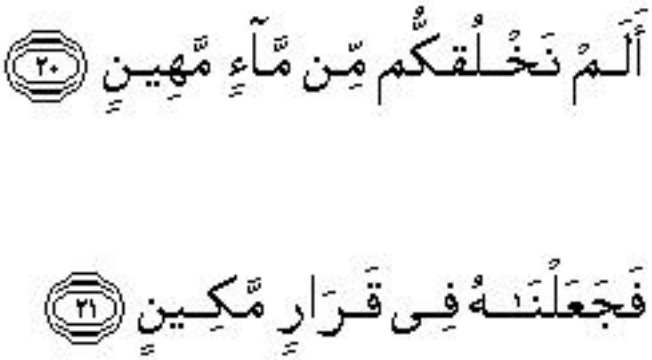
وَمَآ أَدۡرَىٰكَ مَا يَوۡمُ ٱلۡفَصۡلِ ﴿١٤﴾

وَيۡلٞ يَوۡمَئِذٖ لِّلۡمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

[8-15] Then, when the stars become dim[4] and the heaven is rent asunder,[5] and the mountains are thrashed into dust, and the time of the Messengers' appointment comes[6] (that Day it shall happen). For what day has all this been deferred? For the Day of Decision. And what do you know what the Day of Decision is? Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)![7]



[16-19] Did We not destroy the former peoples?[8] Then We shall follow them up with those of latter day.[9] Thus do We deal with the culprits. Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)![10]



إِلَىٰ قَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ ٱلْقَٰدِرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[20-24] Did We not create you out of a mean fluid, and kept it lodged in a secure place[11] for an appointed term?[12] Behold! We had power to do this, as We are excellent Possessors of power![13] Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)![14]

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ ٱلْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا ﴿٢٥﴾

أَحْيَآءً وَأَمْوَٰتًا ﴿٢٦﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رَوَٰسِيَ شَٰمِخَٰتٍ وَأَسْقَيْنَٰكُم مَّآءً فُرَاتًا ﴿٢٧﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[25-28] Have We not made the earth a receptacle, both for the living and for the dead, and set in it high mountains,

and given you sweet water to drink?[15] Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)![16]

ٱنطَلِقُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَا كُنتُم بِهِۦ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

ٱنطَلِقُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ ظِلِّ ذِى ثَلَٰثِ شُعَبٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

لَّا ظَلِيلٍ وَلَا يُغْنِى مِنَ ٱللَّهَبِ ﴿٣١﴾

إِنَّهَا تَرْمِى بِشَرَرٍ كَٱلْقَصْرِ ﴿٣٢﴾

كَأَنَّهُۥ جِمَٰلَتٌ صُفْرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[29-34] Go off[17] now to the same that you used to deny. Go off to the shadow which has three branches.[18] It neither gives coolness nor shelter from the flame of Fire. The Fire shall throw off sparks as huge as castles as though they were yellow camels.[19] Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)!

هَٰذَا يَوْمُ لَا يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

[35-37] That is the Day when they shall neither speak nor be given leave to offer excuses.[20] Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth!)

هَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ ۖ جَمَعْنَاكُمْ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُونِ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

[38-40] This is the Day of Decision. We have gathered both you and those who had gone before you together. Now, if you have a trick, use it against Me.[21] Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)!

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلَالٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤١﴾

وَفَوَٰكِهَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

[41-45] The righteous[22] are today amidst shades and springs, and whatever fruits they desire (they shall have). "Eat and drink with relish as a reward for the deeds you have been doing." Thus do We recompense the doers of good. Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)![23]

كُلُوا۟ وَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُم مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱرْكَعُوا۟ لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُۥ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

[46-50] "Eat[24] and enjoy yourselves for a while.[25] Indeed, you are culprits." Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)! When it is said to them: "Bow down (before Allah) they do not bow down."[26] Woe on that Day to the deniers (of Truth)! Now, what message can there be after this (Qur'an) in which they will believe?[27]

1That is, sometimes the failure of winds causes the people to be alarmed at the prospect of a famine, and they turn to Allah to repent of their sins: sometimes they bring a lot of rain and the people turn to Allah in gratitude; and sometimes their blowing violently causes dread in the hearts and the people turn to Allah from fear of destruction.

In these verses initially the order of rain-bringing winds has been stated, which is thus: first, winds start blowing in succession; then they assume the proportions of a storm; then they raise the clouds and spread them; then they split and separate them. After this, instead of making mention of the rainfall, it is said that the winds infuse the hearts with the remembrance of Allah, as an excuse or as a warning. That is, it is an occasion when either because of fear man is compelled to remember Allah, or else he confesses his errors and invokes Allah to protect and save him from ruin and bless him with rain. If it has not rained for a long time, and the people are thirsty for rain, even the most hardened disbeliever sometimes begins to remember God when he. sees the winds blowing and the clouds advancing. The drought's being mild and severe makes the difference. In case the drought is mild, the common man who is not far from Allah, will remember Him, but others will offer scientific explanations, saying that there was no cause for anxiety: it did not rain because of such and such a cause and it would be weak-mindedness to start praying to God on such an ordinary thing. However, if the drought is unusually prolonged, and the whole country is faced with a calamitous situation, even the confirmed disbelievers begin to remember God. If they feel shy to use their tongue, in their hearts they feel penitent on their wrongdoing and ingratitude and pray to God to cause rain throughout the country from the winds which are raising the clouds. This is infusion of God's remembrance in the hearts as an excuse. As for its infusion as a warning, it happens when the wind develops into a cyclone and destroys settlement after settlement or it rains so heavily as to cause a deluge, In such a state even a confirmed atheist starts imploring God out of awe for Him, and then all scientific explanations of the cyclone or deluge evaporate from his mind. Thus, after describing the blowing of winds in their succession to say that they infuse the hearts with Allah's remembrance as an excuse or as a warning, is meant to impress the truth that the system working in the

world keeps on reminding man that everything on the earth has not been placed under his control but there is a Supreme Power above him, which rules his destiny. That Power is so supreme and mighty that it can use the elements for the sustenance and nourishment of man when it so wills and can use the same elements for his destruction when it so wills.

After this the same system of winds has been proffered as an argument to prove that the Resurrection which is being promised to man, must come to pass. Now, let us see how this system testifies to this truth.

Man generally is perplexed in the case of Resurrection and the Hereafter at two questions. First: is the occurrence of Resurrection possible? Second: what is its need and necessity? And then being perplexed at these questions, he starts entertaining doubts whether it will at all occur or not, or whether it was only a figment of the imagination. In this connection, the Qur'an has at some places reasoned out and proved its possibility, its necessity and occurrence from the system of the universe, and at others adopted another mode of reasoning: oaths have been sworn by some of the countless signs of God's Kingdom and it has been asserted that it shall surely come to pass. This mode of reasoning contains arguments for its possibility as well as arguments for its necessity and arguments for its occurrence.

Here, adopting the same mode of reasoning only the system of the circulation of winds and rainfall has been presented as a sign of the truth that it is a regular system, which has been established by the design of an All-Wise, All-Mighty Sovereign; it is not a chance occurrence, as a result of which a system might have been generated in the atmosphere of the earth that vapors should arise from the seas, winds should carry them and gather them into clouds, then split and separate them into pieces and transport them to different parts of the earth and then should cause them to fall as rain. This system has not been devised accidentally by some blind and deaf Nature, but it is a well-considered and well-designed plan, which is functioning regularly according to a law. That is why it never so happens that the heat of the sun should produce ice on the surface of the sea instead of vapors, but the sun always raises only vapors from the sea. It never so happens that the monsoons should blow in the reverse order and suppress vapors into the sea but they always raise them up into the atmosphere. It never so happens that the formation of clouds should cease, or the winds should stop to carry them to dry lands or the falling of rain on the earth should discontinue. The same law has been at work since millions and millions of years under which this system is functioning. Had it not been so our coming into existence on the earth and survival here would not be possible.

In this system one fords a clear purpose and the working of regular law. One can clearly see that on the earth the life of man, animal and vegetation deeply relates to the winds and rainfall, and this arrangement testifies that water has been provided to bring animate life into existence and keep it alive precisely according to their requirements and a law. This purpose and regularity is not found only in this aspect but in the entire system of the universe, and man's whole scientific progress is based on it. About every thing man tries to find out what is its purpose and on what principle it works Then as he goes on gaining insight

into the purposes of the creation of different things and the principles on which they work, he goes on devising new and ever new methods of their use and making new inventions for the progress of his civilization. Had there been no such concept in the mind of man naturally that the world is a meaningful world and everything in it is working on a principle, he would never have entertained the question about anything as to what was its purpose and how it could be put to use.

Now, when this world and everything in it has meaning, and if there is a law working in this world and in everything it contains, and if it has been functioning with the same purpose and regularity since millions and millions of years, then a stubborn person only could refuse to accept that an all-knowing, All-Mighty God has made it, and about that God it would be foolish to assume that although He could make and cause it to function but cannot break it, and after breaking it, cannot reconstruct it in any other form if He so wills, The concept about matter that it is imperishable was the chief support of the ignorant atheist of the past, but the progress of knowledge has proved it also false. Now it is an acknowledged scientific fact that matter can change into energy and energy into matter. Therefore, it is perfectly according to knowledge and reason that this material world will last only as long as the Living and Eternal God sustains it. As soon as He wills to change it into energy, He can change it by a simple Command and His one Command is enough to re-create it into any other material form and shape He wills.

This much then about the possibility of the Resurrection, which cannot now be rejected by any scientific and rational argument. As for the question that it must take place so that man is rewarded for his good works and punished for his evil deeds, the person who acknowledges man's moral responsibility and also believes that rewarding the good services and punishing the crimes is the necessary demand of this moral responsibility, cannot but admit that there must be the Hereafter. There is no law or government in the world, which can punish every crime and reward every good act. To say that the prick of the conscience is a sufficient punishment for the culprit and the satisfaction of the conscience is sufficient reward for the doer of good is no more than meaningless philosophizing. The question is: How and when did the conscience of the person who killed an innocent man and then himself died in an accident immediately after it reprove him? And when did the conscience of the man who went to fight for the sake of truth and justice and fell a victim to a bomb blast suddenly, have the satisfaction that he had laid down his life for a good cause? Thus, the truth is that the pretenses invented to avoid the belief in the Hereafter are all meaningless. Man's intellect wants, his nature requires, that there should be justice, but in the present life of the world it is not possible to have full and perfect justice. Justice can be had only in the Hereafter and only under the judgment and command of the All-Knowing, Omnipotent God. Denial of the necessity of the Hereafter is, in fact, denial of the necessity of justice.

Intellect can go only so far as to convince man that the Hereafter is possible and it should come about. As for the truth that it will surely come about, the "knowledge" of it can be obtained only through Revelation, and Revelation has given us the news that "that which you are being promised must happen". We cannot attain this knowledge by intellectual reasoning; however, we can attain the certainty of its being true on the basis that the thing of which we are being informed by Revelation is both possible and

necessary.

2Another meaning can be; "That which you are being threatened with," i. e. the Resurrection and Hereafter.

3Here an oath has been sworn by five things on the inevitability of the Resurrection:

(1) "Those which are sent forth in succession, or for a good cause;"

(2) "those which blow violently and tempestuously

(3) "those which disperse and scatter;"

(4) "those which split and separate;" and

(5) "those which inspire the remembrance." As these words only describe the characteristics and it has not been specified what thing or things they qualify, this has given rise to a difference of opinion among the commentators as to whether these are the qualities of one particular thing or of different things and what the thing or things are. One group of them says that all the five qualify the winds; the second group says that all the five imply the angels; the third group says that the first three imply the winds and the remaining two the angels; the fourth says that the first two imply the winds and the other three the angels; another group has opined that the first quality implies the angels of mercy, the second the angels of punishment and the remaining three imply the verses of the Qur'an.

In our opinion, the first thing worthy of consideration is that when five characteristic have been mentioned continuously in one and the same context and there is no indication to show as to what has been qualified up to a certain point and where from has the qualification of another thing begun, it cannot be correct, on the basis of a baseless conjecture, to understand that in these verses oaths have been sworn by two or three different things. Rather in this case the continuity of the subject by itself requires that the whole passage be regarded as related to the characteristics of one and the same thing. Secondly, wherever in the Qur'an an oath bas been sworn by a certain thing or, things in order to convince the doubters or deniers of an unseen truth, there the oath stands for an argument or reasoning which is meant to tell that the thing or things point to the truth's being right and correct. For this purpose obviously it cannot be correct to present one imperceptible thing as an argument for another imperceptible thing; for, only a perceptible thing can be presented as an argument for an imperceptible thing. Hence in our opinion the correct explanation is that it implies the winds and the explanation of the people who interpret the five things to mean the angels cannot; be acceptable, for the angels are as imperceptible as is the occurrence of the Resurrection.

Now, let us consider as to how these different states of winds point to the occurrence of the Resurrection.

One of the most important factor which has made animal and vegetable life possible on the earth is the air. The relationship its qualities bear with every kind of life testify that there is an all-powerful, All-Wise Creator, Who willed to create life on this earth and for this purpose created here a thing whose qualities exactly and precisely correspond to the requirements of the existence of living beings. Then, He did not only wrap up the earth in the air and left it alone, but by His power and wisdom characterized this air with countless different states, which are being regulated since millions and millions of years in such a way that they cause the change of seasons and weather sometimes it is close and sometimes a soft breeze blows sometimes it is hot and sometimes cold; sometimes it brings clouds and sometimes it drives away clouds; sometimes it causes pleasant gusts to blow and sometimes disastrous windstorms; sometimes it brings beneficial rains and sometimes there is drought; in short, there are different 'kinds of winds which blow in their own time, and every kind serves one or the other purpose. This arrangement is the proof of a dominant Power, for which neither it can be impossible to bring life into existence, nor to obliterate it, nor to re-create it after having annihilated it. Likewise, this arrangement is also a proof of a supreme wisdom about which only a foolish man could think that all this was being done for fun, without any higher object in view. As against this wonderful system man is so helpless that he can neither cause a favorable wind to blow for himself, nor can prevent a disastrous cyclone from blowing on himself. However shameless, obstinate and stubborn he may be, the wind does at one time or another remind him that a Mighty Sovereign is ruling over him, Who can turn this principal means of his life into a cause of blessing for him or into a cause of ruin for him whenever He so likes, and man does not have the power to prevent or avert any of His decisions. (For further explanation, see E.N. 7 of Al-Jathiyah, E.N.'s 1 to 4 of Adh-Dhariyat).

4That is, when they lose their light and lustre.

5"When the heaven is rent asunder": when the system and discipline of the heavens under which every star and planet is established and moving in its orbit and everything in the universe is adhering to the bounds set for it, is broken.

6At several places in the Qur'an it has been stated that when the case of mankind will be presented before Allah on the Day of Resurrection, the Messenger of every nation will be called upon to testify that he had conveyed Allah's Messages intact to his people. This will be Allah's first and major argument against the culprits and the wicked people to prove that they were themselves responsible for their wrong attitude and conduct in life, for there had been no negligence on the part of Allah to show guidance and administer warnings . For instance, see Al-A`raf: 172, 173 and E.N.'s 134, 135, Az-Zumar: 69 and E.N. 80, Al-Mulk:8 and E.N. 14.

7"Deniers of Truth": those people who took the news of the coming of Resurrection as a lie, and spent their lives in the world under the delusion that the time would never come when they would have to present themselves before their God and render an account of their deeds.

8This is an argument from history for the Hereafter, It means; "Consider your own history in the world. Whichever nations denied the Hereafter and took this worldly life to be real life and based their moral attitude on the results appearing here regarding them as the criterion of good and evil, ultimately went to their doom without exception This is a proof of the fact that the Hereafter is an actual reality overlooking and ignoring which causes the same kind of harm to a person which is caused when he chooses to close his eyes to the hard facts of life. (For further explanation, see E.N. 12 of Yunus, E.N. 86 of An-Naml, E.N. 8 of Ar-Rum, E.N. 25 of Saba).

9That is, "This is a permanent law with Us. Just as denial of the Hereafter has proved disastrous for the nations of the past so it will always prove disastrous also for the nations of the future. No nation has been an exception to it before nor will any be so in the future."

10This sentence in the present context means: "The fate they have met or will meet in the world, is not their real punishment; their real doom will descend on them on the Day of Decision. The punishment here is only in the nature of a person's being arrested when he commits one crime after the other fearlessly and is not inclined to mend and change his ways. The court where his test is to be decided and he is to be punished for all his misdeeds, will not be established in this world but in the Hereafter, and that indeed will be the actual Day of his ruin and disaster." (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 5, 6 of Al-A`raf, E. N.,105 of H ud).

11"A secure place": the mother's womb in which the child is so firmly lodged as soon as it has been conceived and where such arrangements are made for its security and nourishment that abortion cannot take place unless there is a disaster, and even for artificial abortion extraordinary devices have to be adopted, which are both risky and harmful in spite of modern developments in medical science.

12The words qadar im-malum do not only mean that the term is appointed and fixed but they also contain the sense that it is known to Allah alone. About no child can man know by any means how many months, days, hours, minutes and seconds it will remain in the mothers womb and what will be its exact and precise time of birth. Allah alone has fixed a specific term for every child and He alone knows it.

13This is an express argument for the possibility of the life-after-death What is meant to be said is: "When We had the power to shape and develop you into a perfect and complete man from insignificant sperm-drop, how shall We be helpless to re-create you in some other way ? Our this creation in consequence of which you exist as a living being, is a proof that We are excellent Possessors of power; We cannot be so helpless as to be unable to re-create you after having created you in the first instance.

14This sentence here gives the meaning that in spite of the express argument for the possibility of life-after-death, the people who are denying it, may mock it as they may and look down upon its believers as people of antiquated ideas and whims, but when the Day comes which they are denying today, they will

themselves know that it is a Day of their own ruin and disaster.

15This is yet another argument for the possibility and reasonableness of the Hereafter. It is this very earth which since millions and millions of years has been sustaining and providing for countless different kinds of creatures. Every kind of vegetation and every kind of animal and man are living on it, To meet the requirements of all immeasurable treasures of provisions of different kinds are corning out of its belly. Then it is on this very earth that countless members of all kinds of creatures die every day, but there exists a wonderful arrangement in that the dead bodies of all creatures are deposited in the same earth, and it again becomes ready for sustaining life and providing home to the new members of every species. This earth has not been shaped like a smooth-surfaced ball either, but here and there on it there have been set high mountains and mountain-ranges, which play an important role in causing the change of seasons and rainfall, the birth of rivers creation of fertile valleys, growth of trees which supply timber, and provisions of a variety of minerals and stones. Then in the interior of this very earth, sweet water has been stored and on its surface rivers of sweet water have been arranged and from the saline waters of the sea also vapors of pure water are raised and caused to fall as rain from the sky. Is not all this an argument to prove that an All-Powerful Sovereign has created all this and He is not only All-Powerful but AII-Knowing and All-Wise as well'? Now, if this earth has been thus equipped and provisioned only by His power and wisdom, why should an intelligent man trod it difficult to understand that the same Sovereign by His power can wind up this world and create another world on a new pattern, and the demand of His wisdom is that he should create another world after it so that He may call man to account for the deeds he has done in this world?

16Here, this sentence signifies that the people who deny the coming of the Hereafter and regard it as impossible and irrational in spite of seeing these manifest signs of Allah's power and wisdom, may remain lost in their vain imaginations if they so like. But the Day when all this takes place against their expectations, they will realize that they have earned ruin on account of their own folly.

17After giving proofs of the coming of the Hereafter, now it is being stated how the deniers will be dealt with when it has actually taken place.

18"Shadow": shadow of smoke; "three branches": because when a big smoke arises it is divided into several parts at the top.

19That is, each spark will be like a castle, and when these huge sparks will rise and burst and fly about in all directions it will seem as though they were yellow camels running and jumping about ceaselessly.

20This will be their ultimate state at the time they will be entering Hell. Before this in the plain of Resurrection they will be offering all sorts of excuses, blaming others for their errors and proving their own selves to be innocent, abusing their leaders and guides who led them astray; so much so that some

of them will even disown their crimes shamelessly, as has been stated at several places in the Qur'an. But when their being criminals will have been established by every kind of evidence, and when their own hands and feet and limbs will have borne witness against them to prove their guilt fully, and when after fulfilling all requirements of justice rightly and truly, the sentence will be passed on them, they will be dumbfounded and no room will be left for them to offer any excuse. To refuse an opportunity or permission to offer an excuse, does not mean that judgment will be passed against them without giving them a chance for self-defense, but it means that their guilt and crime will be proved to the hilt and they will not be able to offer any excuse after it.

21That is, "In the world you used every kind of deception and trick in self-interest. Now, if you have any trick to escape My punishment, you may use it to defeat Me and My plan."

22As this world has been used here in contrast to the "deniers'; the righteous here implies the people who refrained from denying the Hereafter and accepted it and passed their life in the world with the belief that in 'the Hereafter they would have to render an account of their word and deed and their conduct and character.

23Here this sentence means that one of their afflictions. as mentioned above, will be that they will be standing as culprits in the plain of Resurrection, their crimes will have been proved and established openly and they will not be in a position even to open their mouths to put forward a plea in self defense, and shall ultimately become fuel of Hell. Their other affliction, and by far the worse will be that they will see the same believers enjoying themselves in Paradise, whom they had been opposing and resisting and mocking throughout their lives as foolish, narrow-minded, mean and old fashioned people.

24In conclusion, these words are being addressed not only to the disbelievers of Makkah but to all disbelievers of the world.

25"For a while": in their brief life of the world.

26"Bowing before Allah": does not only imply worshiping Him but also means believing in the Messenger sent by Allah and in the Book revealed by Him and following and obeying His Commands.

27That is, the greatest Message that could distinguish the Truth from falsehood for man and show him right guidance, has been sent down in the shape of the Qur'an. if a person does not believe even after reading it or hearing it read, what else after this can show him the correct guidance?

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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78. Surah An Naba (The News)

Name

The Surah derived its name from the word *an-Naba* in the second verse. This is not only a name but also a title of its subject matter, for *Naba* implies the news of Resurrection and Hereafter and the whole Surah is devoted to the same theme.

Period of Revelation

As we have explained in the introduction to Surah Al-Mursalat, the theme of all the Surahs, from Al-Qiyamah to An-Naziat, closely resembles one another's, and all these seem to have been revealed in the earliest period at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme also is the same as of Surah Al-Mursalat, i. e. to affirm the Resurrection and Hereafter, and to warn the people of the consequences of acknowledging or disacknowledging it.

When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) first started to preach Islam in Makkah, his message consisted of three elements: (1) That none be held as an associate with Allah in Godhead; (2) that Allah had appointed him as His Messenger; (3) that this world will come to an end one day and then another world will be established when all the former and the latter generations will be resurrected with the same bodies in which they lived and worked in the world; then they will be called to account for their beliefs and deeds and those who emerge as believing and righteous in this accountability will go to Paradise and those who are proved to be disbelieving and wicked will live in Hell for ever.

Of these although the first thing was highly unpleasant for the people of Makkah, yet in any case they were not disbelievers in the existence of Allah. They believed in His Being the Supreme Sustainer, Creator and Providence and also admitted that all those beings whom they regarded as their deities, were themselves Allah's creatures. Therefore, in this regard the only thing they disputed was whether they had any share in the attributes and powers

of Divinity and in the Divine Being itself or not.

As for the second thing, the people of Makkah were not prepared to accept it. However, what they could not possibly deny was that during the 40 years life that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had lived among them before his claim to Prophethood, they had never found him a lying deceitful person or the one who would adopt unlawful methods for selfish ends. They themselves admitted that he was a man possessed of wisdom, righteousness and moral superiority. Therefore, in spite of charging him with a thousand false accusations, nothing to say of making others believe, they were finding it difficult even for themselves to believe that although he was an honest and upright man in every other affair and dealing of life, yet, God forbid, a liar only in his claim to be a Prophet.

Thus, the first two things were not in fact so perplexing for the people of Makkah as the third thing. When this was presented before them, they mocked it most of all, expressed unusual wonder at it, and regarding it as remote from reason and impossible, started talking against it as incredible, even inconceivable, in their assemblies. But in order to bring them to the way of Islam it was absolutely essential that the doctrine of the Hereafter should be instilled into their minds, for without belief in this doctrine, it was not at all possible that they could adopt a serious attitude with regard to the truth and falsehood, could change their standard of values in respect of good and evil, and giving up worship of the world, could be inclined to follow the way that Islam urged them to follow. That is why in the earliest Surahs revealed at Makkah the doctrine of the Hereafter has been impressed and stressed more than anything else. However, the arguments for it have been given in such a way that the doctrine of the Oneness of God (*Tauhid*) also is impressed on the minds automatically. This also contains brief arguments, here and there, to confirm the truth of the Holy Messenger of Allah and the Qur'an.

After understanding well why the theme of the Hereafter has been so frequently repeated in the Surahs of this period, let us now have a look at the subject matter of this Surah. In it first of all, allusion has been made to the common talk and the doubts that were being expressed in every street of Makkah and in every assembly of the people of Makkah on hearing the news about Resurrection. Then, the deniers have been asked: "Don't you see this earth which We have spread as a carpet for you? Don't you see the high mountains which we have so firmly placed in the earth?Don't you consider your own selves how We have created you as pairs of men and women?Don't you consider your sleep by which We make you seek a few hours rest after every few hours labour and toil so as to keep you fit for work in the world? Don't you see the alternation of the night and day which We are so regularly perpetuating precisely according to your needs and requirements?Don't you see the strongly fortified system of the heavens above you? Don't you see the sun by means of which you are receiving your light and heat? Don't you see the rains which fall from the clouds and help produce corns and vegetables and luxuriant gardens? Do these things only tell you that the power of the Almighty Being Who has created them, will be unable to bring about Resurrection and establish the Next World? Then, from the supreme wisdom which is clearly working in this world around you, do you only understand this that although each part of it and each function of it is purposive, yet life is meaningless? Nothing could be more absurd and meaningless that after appointing man to the office of foreman and granting him vast powers of appropriation, in this workhouse, when he leaves the world after fulfilling his role, he should be let off without any accountability. He should neither be rewarded and granted pension on satisfactory work, nor subjected to any accountability and punishment on unsatisfactory performance of duty.

After giving these arguments it has been emphatically stated that the Day of Judgment shall certainly come to pass

on its appointed time. No sooner is the Trumpet sounded than whatever is being foretold shall appear before the eyes, and whether you believe in it today, or not, at that time you will come out in your multitudes from wherever you would be lying dead and buried to render your account. Your denial cannot in any way avert this inevitable event.

Then, in vv. 21-30; it has been stated that every single misdeed of those who do not expect any accountability to take place and have thus belied Our Revelations, lies reckoned and recorded with Us, and Hell is ever lying an ambush to punish them and punish them fully for all their doings. Then, in vv. 31-36, the best rewards of those who lived as responsible people in the world and have provided for their Hereafter beforehand have been mentioned. They have been reassured that they will not only be rewarded richly for their services but in addition they will also be given sufficient gifts.

In conclusion, the Divine Court in the Hereafter has been depicted, making it plain that there will be no question of somebody's being adamant in the matter of getting his followers and associates forgiven, none will speak without leave, and leave will be granted on the condition that intercession be made only for the one to whom leave of intercession will have been given, and the intercessor will say only what is right. Moreover, leave for intercession will be given only for those who had acknowledged the Truth in the world but were sinners; rebels of God and rejectors of the Truth will deserve no intercession at all.

The discourse has been concluded with this warning: The Day the coming of which is being foretold, shall certainly come to pass. Do not think it is yet far off, it is close at hand. Now, whoever wills, let him believe in it and take the way towards his Lord. But he who disbelieves, in spite of the warning, "will have all his deeds placed before him: and he will exclaim regretfully: "Oh, would that I were not born in the world!" At that time, his regrets will be about the same world of which he is so enamored today!

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

عَمَّ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿١﴾

عَنِ ٱلنَّبَإِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢﴾

ٱلَّذِى هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٣﴾

كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤﴾

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥﴾

[1-5] About what are they inquiring? Is it about the Great News concerning which they are at variance?[1] By no means![2] They shall soon know. Yes, by no means! They shall soon know![3]

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ ٱلْأَرْضَ مِهَـٰدًا ﴿٦﴾

وَٱلْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا ﴿٧﴾

وَخَلَقْنَـٰكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا ﴿٨﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا ﴿٩﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا ٱلَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا ﴿١٠﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا ٱلنَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا ﴿١١﴾

وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا ﴿١٢﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا ﴿١٣﴾

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلْمُعْصِرَٰتِ مَآءً ثَجَّاجًا ﴿١٤﴾

لِّنُخْرِجَ بِهِۦ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا ﴿١٥﴾

وَجَنَّٰتٍ أَلْفَافًا ﴿١٦﴾

[6-16] Is it not a fact that We have made the earth a bed[4] and set the mountains as pegs[5] and created you as pairs (of men and women),[6] and made your sleep for rest[7] and the night a covering and the day for seeking livelihood,[8] and established above you seven strong heavens,[9] and set a bright, blazing lamp,[10] and rained water from the clouds in abundance that We may produce thereby corn and vegetables and lush gardens?[11]

إِنَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَٰتًا ﴿١٧﴾

يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿١٨﴾

وَفُتِحَتِ ٱلسَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَٰبًا ﴿١٩﴾

وَسُيِّرَتِ ٱلْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا ﴿٢٠﴾

[17-20] Surely the Day of Decision is an appointed time. The day the Trumpet is blown, you shall come out in multitudes,[12] and the heaven shall be opened so as to become all doors, and the mountains shall be set in motion till they become as a mirage.[13]

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا ﴿٢١﴾

لِّلطَّٰغِينَ مَـَٔابًا ﴿٢٢﴾

لَّٰبِثِينَ فِيهَآ أَحْقَابًا ﴿٢٣﴾

لَّا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرۡدٗا وَلَا شَرَابًا ﴿٢٤﴾

إِلَّا حَمِيمٗا وَغَسَّاقٗا ﴿٢٥﴾

جَزَآءٗ وِفَاقًا ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنَّهُمۡ كَانُواْ لَا يَرۡجُونَ حِسَابٗا ﴿٢٧﴾

وَكَذَّبُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا كِذَّابٗا ﴿٢٨﴾

وَكُلَّ شَيۡءٍ أَحۡصَيۡنَٰهُ كِتَٰبٗا ﴿٢٩﴾

فَذُوقُواْ فَلَن نَّزِيدَكُمۡ إِلَّا عَذَابًا ﴿٣٠﴾

[21-30] Hell, in fact, is an ambush,[14] the abode for the rebellious in which they shall remain lodged for ages.[15] In it they shall not taste any coolness nor any drink, except boiling water and the washing from wounds,[16] a full recompense (for their misdeeds). They did not expect any reckoning and had treated Our Revelations as utterly false,[17] whereas We had counted and preserved everything in writing.[18] Now taste it, for We shall never increase anything for you except the torment.

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِيـــنَ مَفَـــازًا ﴿٣١﴾

حَـــدَآئِقَ وَأَعْنَـٰبًـــا ﴿٣٢﴾

وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٣﴾

وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا ﴿٣٤﴾

لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِذَّٰبًا ﴿٣٥﴾

جَزَآءً مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَآءً حِسَابًا ﴿٣٦﴾

رَّبِّ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ۖ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾

[31-37] Surely for the righteous[19] there is an abode of success. Gardens and vineyards and maidens of equal age[20] and brimful cups. There they shall neither hear idle talk nor any falsehood,[21] a reward and sufficient gift[22] from your

Lord, from the All-Merciful God, Who is the Owner of the heavens and the earth and of everything lying between them, before Whom none can have the power to speak.[23]

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ ٱلرُّوحُ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ صَفًّا ۖ لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ
وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ﴿٣٨﴾

ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْيَوْمُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۖ فَمَن شَآءَ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ مَـَٔابًا ﴿٣٩﴾

[38-39] The Day when the Spirit[24] and the angels shall be standing up in ranks, none shall speak except the one whom the Merciful may permit, and who speaks what is right.[25] That Day is sure to come. Now whoever wills, let him take the path back to his Lord.

إِنَّآ أَنذَرْنَٰكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنظُرُ ٱلْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ
ٱلْكَافِرُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى كُنتُ تُرَٰبًۢا ﴿٤٠﴾

[40] We have warned you of the torment which is near at hand.[26] The Day when man will see all that his hands have sent forward, and the disbeliever will cry out: "Would that I were mere dust!"[27]

1"The Great News": the news of the Resurrection and Hereafter, which the people of Makkah heard with amazement, then raised questions and doubts about it in their assemblies. When they met each other they would ask: "Did you ever hear that the dead will be resurrected to life? Is it credible that life will be infused once again into the bones which have decayed and become rotten? Does it stand to reason that the former and the latter generations will rise up and gather together at one place? Is it possible that these huge mountains which are so firmly set in the earth will fly about like flakes of wool? Can it so happen that the sun and the moon and the stars should be extinguished and the order and system of the world be overturned and upset? What has happened to him who was until yesterday a sane and wise man among us? Today he is giving us strange, impossible news. Where were this Hell and Heaven of which we had never heard from him before? where from have they appeared suddenly so that he has

started depicting them so vividly before us?"

Another meaning of fi-hi mukhtalifun also can be: "As these people themselves are not agreed on any one view about the end of the world, they hold varying views about it." Some one has been influenced by the Christian belief and believes in the life after death but thinks that the second life would not be a physical but only a spiritual life. Another does not deny the Hereafter absolutely but doubts whether it was possible or not. The Qur'an relates the view of these very people when it says: "We do only guess: we are not certain." (Al-Jathiyah: 32). And another plainly said: "There is no other life than this present life, and we shall never be raised back to life after our death." (Al-An`am: 29). Then, there were some atheists, who said: "Life is only this worldly life of ours. Here we shall die and live and nothing but the change of time destroys us." (Al-Jathiyah: 24). There were some others who were not atheistic but they regarded the second life as impossible. According to them it was beyond the power of God to raise the dead back to life. They said, "Who will give life to these bones when they are rotten." (Ya Sin: 78). Their different views by themselves were a proof that they had no knowledge in this regard; they were only conjecturing and guessing. Had they any knowledge they would have agreed on one view. (For further explanation, see E.N. 6 of Surah Adh-Dhariyat).

2That is, whatever they say about the Hereafter is false, and all their concepts about it are wrong.

3That is, the time is not far off when the same thing about which they are expressing all sorts of meaningless doubts and misgivings, will appear before them as a reality. Then they will realize that what the Messenger had foretold was absolutely true and what they were saying on the basis of conjecture and speculation had no truth in it.

4Enough light has been thrown at several places in The Meaning of the Qur'an on the supreme wisdom and power of Allah that underlies His making the earth a carpet, i.e. an abode of perfect peace and rest. For explanation, see E.N.'s 73, 74, 81 of An-Naml, E.N. 29 of Ya Sin, E.N.'s 90, 91 of Al-Mu'min, E.N. 7 of Az-Zukhruf, E.N. 7 of Al-Jathiyah, E.N. 18 of Surah Qaf.

5For the wisdom of creating mountains on the earth, see E.N. 12 of AnNahl, E.N. 74 of An-Naml, E.N. 15 of Al-Mursalat.

6For explanation of the supreme wisdom that underlies the creation of men and women into pairs, see E. N. 69 of Al-Furgan, E. N.'s 28 to 30 of Ar-Rum, E.N. 31 of Ya Sin, E.N. 77 of Ash-Shura, E N.12 of Az-Zukhruf, E.N. 25 of Al Qiyamah.

7The explanation of the wisdom for which Allah Almighty has placed a desire for sleep in man's nature in order to make him fit for work in the world, and which impels him to a few hours' sleep after every few hours of work, has been given in E.N. 33 of Surah Ar-Rum.

8That is, "The night has been made dark so that protected from light, you could enjoy a peaceful sleep-more easily and made the day bright for the reason that you could work for your livelihood with greater ease and facility. Reference has been made to only one benefit out of countless benefits of the continuous alternation of night and day regularly on the earth to tell that all this is not happening without a purpose or accidentally, but there is supreme wisdom underlying it, which has a deep connection with your own immediate interests. The darkness that was needed for the peace and rest of your body in view of its structure has been provided in the night and the light that was needed for earning livelihood has been provided in the day. This arrangement that has been made precisely in accordance with your needs by itself testifies that it could not be possible without the wisdom of a Wise Being." (For further explanation, see E.N. 65 of Yunus, E.N. 32 of Ya Sin, E.N. 85 of AI-Mu'min, E.N. 4 of Az-Zukhruf).

9"Strong" in the sense that their boundaries are so strongly fortified that no change whatever occurs in them, nor does any of the countless stars and planets in the heavens, violating these boundaries, collide with the other, nor falls down to the earth. (For further explanation, see E.N. 34 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 2 of Ar Ra'd, E.N.'s 8, 12 of Al-Hijr, E.N. 15 of AI-Mu'minun, E.N. 13 of Luqman, E.N. 37 of Ya Sin, E.N.'s 5, 6 of As-Saaffat, E.N. 90 of Al-Mu'min, E.N.'s 7, 8 of Surah Qaf).

10"A bright, blazing lamp": the sun. The word wahhaj used for the sun means both intensely hot and intensely bright. Hence our rendering. In this brief sentence, allusion has been made to a most wonderful and glorious sign of Allah Almighty's power and wisdom which the sun is. Its diameter is 109 times that of the earth's and its size more than 333,000 tunes that of the earth's. Its temperature is 14,000,000 C. In spite of shining 93,000,000 miles away from the earth, its light and brightness is dazzling, and man can look at it with the naked eye only at the risk of losing his eye-sight. As for its heat, temperature in some parts of the earth reaches 140 F. because of its radiation. It is only Allah Who by His wisdom has placed the earth at the right distance from it, neither it is too hot for being close to it, nor too cold for being very far away from it. For this very reason life of man, animal and vegetable became possible on it. Measureless treasures of energy from it are reaching the earth and sustaining life. It helps ripen our crops to provide sustenance to every creature; its heat causes vapors to rise from the seas, which spread to different parts of the earth by means of the winds and fall as rain. In the sun Allah has kindled such a mighty furnace that has been constantly radiating light, heat and different kinds of rays throughout the entire solar system since millions and millions of years.

11For the details of the wonderful manifestations of Allah Almighty's power and wisdom in making arrangements for the rain and the growth of vegetation thereby, set E.N. 53 (a) of An-Nahl, E.N. 17 of AI-Mu'minun, E.N. 5 of Ash-Shua'ra', E.N. 35 of Ar-Rum E.N. 19 of Fatir E.N. 29 of Ya Sin, E.N. 20 of Al-Mu'min, E.N.'s 10, 11 of Az-Zukhruf, E.N.'s 28 to 30 of Al-Waqi'ah.

After presenting a number of the signs and testimonies, one after the other, in these verses, the deniers of the Resurrection and Hereafter have been exhorted, so as to say: "If you consider the earth and the

mountains and your own creation, your sleep and wakefulness, and the system of the day and night intelligently, and consider the well-fortified system of the universe and the shining sun in the heavens, the rain falling from the clouds and the vegetables growing thereby, you will see two things very clearly: first, that all this could neither come into existence without a mighty power, nor continue to exist and function so regularly; second, that in each of these great wisdom is working and nothing that happens here is purposeless. Now, only a foolish person could say that the Bring Who by His power has brought these things into existence, does not have the power to destroy them and create them once again in some other form, and this also could be said only by an unreasonable person that the Wise Bring Who has not done anything without purpose in this universe, has given to man in His world understanding and intelligence, discrimination between good and evil, freedom to obey or disobey, and powers of appropriation over countless of His creatures, without any purpose and design: whether man uses and employs the things granted by Him in the right way or the wrong way, it does not make any difference; whether man continues to do good throughout life till death, he will end up in the dust, or continues to do evil till death, he will likewise end up in the dust; neither the virtuous man will receive any reward for the good deeds nor the bad man will be held accountable for his evil deeds. These very arguments for life after death and Resurrection and Hereafter have been given here and there in the Qur'an, e.g. see E.N. 7 of Ar Ra'd, E.N. 9 of Ai-Hajj, E.N. 6 of Ar-Rum, .E.N.'s 10, 12 of Saba, E.N.'s 8, 9 of As-Saaffat.

12This implies the final sounding of the Trumpet at which all dead men will rise back to life forthwith. "You" implies not only those who were the addressees at that time but all those humans who will have been born from the beginning of creation till Resurrection. (For explanation, see E.N. 57 of Ibrahim, E.N. 1 of Al Hajj, E.N.'s 46, 47 of Ya Sin, E.N. 79 of Az-Zumar).

13One should bear in mind the fact that here also, as at many other places in the Qur'an, the different states of Resurrection have been mentioned all together. In the first verse, mention has been made of what will happen at the final sounding of the Trumpet and in the following two verses of the state which will appear at the second sounding of the Trumpet. This we have already explained in E.N. 10 of Surah Al-Haaqqah above. "The heavens shall be opened" means: All obstacles in the heavens will be removed and every heavenly calamity from every side will be befalling freely as though all doors for it were open and no door had remained closed to obstruct its happening. "The mountains will be set in motion till they become as a mirage" means: In no time will the mountains be uprooted from their places and then will be scattered away in particles leaving nothing but vast, empty sand plains behind. "This same state has been described in Surah Ta Ha, thus: They ask you: well, where will the mountains go on that Day? Say to them: My Lord will reduce them to fine dust and scatter it away. He will turn the earth into an empty level plain, wherein you will neither see any curve nor crease." (vv. 105-107 and the corresponding E. N . 83)

14"An ambush": a place contrived to entrap game by surprise. Hell has been described as an ambush, because the rebels of God are fearless of it and are enjoying life thinking that the world is a haven of bliss for them. They do not know that Hell is lying in ambush for them, which will trap them suddenly and keep

them trapped.

15The word ahqab as used in the original means successive periods of long time appearing continuously one after the other. From this word some people have tried to argue that there will be eternity in the life of Paradise but no eternity. in the life of Hell. For however long these ages may be, they will not be endless but will come to an end at some time. But this argument is wrong for two reasons. First, that lexically, the word haqab (sing. of ahqab) itself contains the meaning that one haqab should be closely followed by another haqab; therefore, ahqab will necessarily be used only for such periods of time as continue to appear successively one after the other and there should be no period which is not followed by another period. Second, that as a rule it is wrong to put a meaning on a verse of the Qur'an pertaining to a particular theme which clashes with other statements of the Qur'an pertaining to the same theme. At 34 places in the Qur'an the word khulud (eternity) has been used concerning the dwellers of Hell. At three places not only the word khulud has been used but the word abad an (for ever and ever) also has been added to it; and at one place it has been clearly stated: "They will wish to get out of Hell but shall not be able to come out of it and theirs shall be an everlasting torment." (AI-Ma'idah: 37). At another place it has been said: "Therein they shall abide for ever, as long as the earth and the heavens shall last, unless your Lord ordains otherwise." And the same thing has been said about the dwellers of Paradise too:" "They shall dwell in Paradise for ever, as long as the earth and the heavens shall last, unless your Lord wills something else." (Hud: 107-108). After these explanations, how can one argue, on the basis of the word abqab, that the stay of the rebels of God in Hell will not be eternal, but it will come to an end at some stage in time?

16The word ghassaq as used in the original applies to pus, blood, pus-blood and all those fluids that flow out from the eyes and skins as a result of a grievous penalty. Besides, this word is also used for a thing which stinks and gives out horrid, offensive smell.

17This is the reason for which they will deserve this dreadful penalty of Hell. Firstly, they lived in the world thinking that the time will never come when they will have to appear before God and render an account of their deeds; second, that they utterly refused to accept and acknowledge the Revelations that Allah had sent through His Prophets for their instruction and treated them as falsehood.

18That is, "We were continuously preparing a complete record of their sayings and doings, their movements and occupations, even of their intentions. thoughts and aims in life and nothing was being left un-recorded, whereas the foolish people in their heedlessness thought that they were living in a lawless kingdom where they were free to do whatever they pleased and desired. and there was no power to call them to account."

19Here, the word "righteous" has been used in contrast to those who did not expect any accountability and who had belied Allah's Revelations. Therefore, this word inevitably implies those people who

believed in Allah's Revelations and lived in the world with the understanding that they had to render an account of their deeds ultimately.

20This may mean that they will be of equal age among themselves as well as that they will be of equal age with their husbands. This same theme has already occurred in Surah Suad 52 and Al-Waqi`ah :37 above.

21At several places in the Qur'an this has been counted as among the major blessings of Paradise. Human ears there will remain secure against idle, false and indecent talk. There will be no nonsensical, meaningless gossiping in Paradise; no one will tell lies nor belie others; nor will there be any use of abusive language, slandering; calumnies and false accusations which are so common in the world. (For further explanations, see E.N. 28 of Surah Maryam, E.N.'s 13, 14 of Al Waqi`ah).

22"A reward and sufficient gift": that is, they will not only be given their due rewards which they will deserve for their good deeds, but over and above these they will be given additional and sufficient gifts and prizes as well. Contrary to this, in respect of the dwellers of Hell it has been said: "They will be recompensed fully for their misdeeds." That is, they will neither be punished less than what they will deserve for their crimes nor more. This theme has been explained at length at many places in the Qur'an, for example, see Yunus: 26-27, An-Naml: 89-90, Al-Qasas: 84, Saba: 33-38, Al-Mu'min: 40.

23That is, the Court of Allah Almighty will be so awe-inspiring that no one, whether belonging to the earth or to the heavens, will dare open his mouth of his own will before Allah, nor interfere in the Court's work and proceedings.

24According to most commentators, "the Spirit" implies the Angel Gabriel (peace be on him), who has been mentioned separately from the angels because of his high rank and position with Allah. (For further explanation, see E.N. 3 of Al-Ma`arij).

25"To speak": to intercede, and intercession has been made conditional upon two things:

(1) That the person who is granted permission by Allah to intercede for a sinner will alone be allowed to intercede and for the particular sinner only; and

(2) that the intercessor will say only what is right and proper, and nothing derogatory, and the one for whom he is interceding should have at least acknowledged the Truth in the world. That is, he should only be a sinner, not an unbeliever. (For further explanation, see E.N. 281 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 5 of Yunus, E. N. 106 of Hud, E.N. 52 of Maryam, E.N.'s 85, 86 of Ta Ha, E.N. 27 of Al-Anbiya', E.N.'s 40, 41 of Saba. E. N. 32 of Al-Mu'min, E.N 63 of Az-Zukhruf, E N. 21 of An-Najm, E.N. 36 of Al-Muddaththir).

26Apparently, one might think that the people who were the audience of this verse died fourteen centuries ago, ,and even now it cannot be said how many hundreds or thousands or millions of years Resurrection will take to come. Then, in what sense has it been said: "The torment of which you have been warned, has approached near at hand?" And what is the meaning of saying in the beginning of the Surah: "Soon they shall know?" The answer is that man can have the feeling of time only until he is passing a physical life in the world within the bounds of space and time. After death when only the soul will survive, he will lose every feeling and consciousness of time, and on the Day of Resurrection when man will rise back to life, he will feel as though some one had aroused him from sleep suddenly. He will not at all be conscious that he has been resurrected after thousands of years. (For further explanation, see E.N. 26 of An-Nahl, E.N. 56 of Bani Isra'il, E.N. 80 of Ta Ha, E.N. 48 of Ya Sin).

27"Would .....dust": "Would that I had not been born in the world, or had become mere dust after death, and thus reduced to nothingness."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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79. Surah Naziat (Those Who Tear Out)

Name

It is derived from the word *wan-nazi`at* with which the Surah opens.

Period of Revelation

According to Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, this Surah was sent down after Surah An-Naba. Its subject matter also testifies that it belongs to the earliest period at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is affirmation of Resurrection and the life hereafter; It also warns of the consequences of belying the Messenger of God.

The Surah opens with oaths sworn by the angels who take the soul at deaths and those who hasten to carryout Allah's Commands, and those who conduct the affairs of the universe according to Divine Will, to assure that the Resurrection will certainly come to pass and the second life after death will certainly take place. For the angels who are employed to pluck out the soul today can also be employed to restore the soul tomorrow, and the angels who promptly execute Allah's Commands and conduct the affairs of the universe today can also upset the order of the universe tomorrow by orders of the same God and can also bring about a new order.

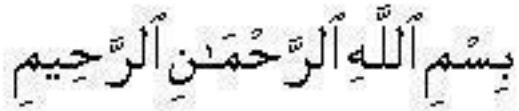
After this the people have been told, so as to say: "This work which you regard as absolutely impossible, is not any difficult for Allah, for which He may have to make lengthy preparations. Just a single jolt will upset this system of the world and a second jolt will be enough to cause you to appear as living beings in the new world. At that time the same people who were wont to deny it, would be trembling with fear and seeing with awe struck eyes all that they thought was impossible.

Then, relating the story of the Prophet Moses and Pharaoh briefly, the people have been warned to the effect: "You

know full well what fate the Pharaoh met in consequence of belying the Messenger and rejecting the guidance brought by him and endeavoring to defeat his mission by trickery and deceit. If you do not learn any lesson from it and do not change your ways and attitude accordingly, you also will have to meet the same fate.

Then, in vv. 27-13, arguments have been given for the Hereafter and life after death. In this regard, the deniers have been asked the question:"Is your resurrection a more difficult task or the creation of the huge Universe which spreads around you to infinite distances with myriads of its stars and planets? Your recreation cannot be difficult for the God for Whom this was an easy task. Thus, after presenting in a single sentence, a decisive argument for the possibility of the Hereafter, attention has been drawn to the earth and its provisions that have been arranged in it for the sustenance of man and animal and of which everything testifies that it has been created with great wisdom for fulfilling some special purpose. Pointing to this the question has been left for the intellect of man to ponder for itself and form the opinion whether calling man to account after having delegated authority and responsibilities to a creature like him in this wise system would be more in keeping with the demands of wisdom, or that he should die after committing all sorts of misdeeds in the world and should perish and mix in the dust for ever and should never be called to account as to how he employed the authority and fulfilled the responsibilities entrusted to him. Instead of discussing this question, in vv. 34-41, it has been said: "When the Hereafter is established, men's eternal future will be determined on the criterion as to which of them rebelled against his God transgressing the bounds of service and made the material benefits and pleasures his objective of life and which of them feared standing before his Lord and refrained from fulfilling the unlawful desires of the self." This by itself provides the right answer to the above question to every such person who considers it honestly, free from stubbornness. For the only rational, logical and moral demand of giving authority and entrusting responsibilities to man in the world is that he should be called to account on this very basis ultimately and rewarded or punished accordingly.

In conclusion, the question of the disbelievers of Makkah as to when Resurrection will take place, has been answered. They asked the Holy Prophet this question over and over again. In reply it has been said that the knowledge of the time of its occurrence rests with Allah alone. The Messenger is there only to give the warning that it will certainly come. Now whoever wishes may mend his ways, fearing its coming, and whoever wishes may behave and conduct himself as he likes, fearless of its coming. When the appointed time comes, those very people who loved the life of this world and regarded its pleasures as the only object of life, would feel that they had stayed in the world only for an hour or so. Then they will realize how utterly they had ruined their future for ever for the sake of the short lived pleasures of the world.



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلنَّـٰزِعَـٰتِ غَرۡقٗا ١

وَٱلنَّـٰشِطَـٰتِ نَشۡطٗا ٢

وَٱلسَّـٰبِحَـٰتِ سَبۡحٗا ٣

فَٱلسَّـٰبِقَـٰتِ سَبۡقٗا ٤

فَٱلۡمُدَبِّرَٰتِ أَمۡرًا ٥

يَوۡمَ تَرۡجُفُ ٱلرَّاجِفَةُ ٦

تَتۡبَعُهَا ٱلرَّادِفَةُ ٧

قُلُوبٞ يَوۡمَئِذٖ وَاجِفَةٌ ٨

أَبۡصَٰرُهَا خَٰشِعَةٌ ٩

[1-9] By those (angels) who tear out from the depths, and draw out gently, and by those (angels) who glide about swiftly (through space), then hasten out (to carry out Commands), then conduct the affairs (in accordance with Divine Commands).[1] The Day when the quake shall cause. a violent jolt, which is followed by another jolt,[2] some hearts on that Day shall be trembling with fear,[3] their looks struck with awe.

يَقُولُونَ أَءِنَّا لَمَرۡدُودُونَ فِي ٱلۡحَافِرَةِ ١٠

أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَٰمٗا نَّخِرَةٗ ١١

قَالُواْ تِلۡكَ إِذٗا كَرَّةٌ خَاسِرَةٞ ١٢

فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجۡرَةٞ وَٰحِدَةٞ ١٣

فَإِذَا هُم بِٱلسَّاهِرَةِ ١٤

[10-14] They say, "Shall we really be restored to our former state? What, when we shall have become hollow, rotten bones?" They said, "It would then be a return with sheer loss!"[4] Whereas it will only need a single shout and they will forthwith appear in an open plain.[5]

هَلۡ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَىٰٓ ﴿١٥﴾

إِذۡ نَادَىٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ بِٱلۡوَادِ ٱلۡمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ﴿١٦﴾

ٱذۡهَبۡ إِلَىٰ فِرۡعَوۡنَ إِنَّهُۥ طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾

فَقُلۡ هَل لَّكَ إِلَىٰٓ أَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٨﴾

وَأَهۡدِيَكَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَتَخۡشَىٰ ﴿١٩﴾

فَأَرَىٰهُ ٱلۡأٓيَةَ ٱلۡكُبۡرَىٰ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَكَذَّبَ وَعَصَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾

ثُمَّ أَدۡبَرَ يَسۡعَىٰ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَحَشَرَ فَنَادَىٰ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَقَالَ أَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمُ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾

فَأَخَذَهُ ٱللَّهُ نَكَالَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ وَٱلْأُولَىٰٓ ﴿٢٥﴾

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَىٰٓ ﴿٢٦﴾

[15-26] Has[6] the story of Moses reached you? Recall when his Lord called out to him in the sacred valley of Tuwa,[7] (saying), "Go to Pharaoh: he has become rebellious, and say to him: Will you mind to adopt purity that I may guide you to your Lord, so that you may have fear (of Him)?"[8] Then Moses (went to Pharaoh and) showed him the great Sign,[9] but he belied it and disobeyed. Then, he turned back to devise plots,[10] and gathering the people together, proclaimed,[11] "I am your Lord, the highest." Consequently, Allah seized him for punishment both in the Hereafter and in the world. Indeed, there is a lesson in this for him who fears.[12]

ءَأَنتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمِ ٱلسَّمَآءُ ۚ بَنَىٰهَا ﴿٢٧﴾

رَفَعَ سَمْكَهَا فَسَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٢٨﴾

وَأَغۡطَشَ لَيۡلَهَا وَأَخۡرَجَ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٢٩﴾

وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ ذَٰلِكَ دَحَىٰهَآ ﴿٣٠﴾

أَخۡرَجَ مِنۡهَا مَآءَهَا وَمَرۡعَىٰهَا ﴿٣١﴾

وَٱلۡجِبَالَ أَرۡسَىٰهَا ﴿٣٢﴾

مَتَٰعٗا لَّكُمۡ وَلِأَنۡعَٰمِكُمۡ ﴿٣٣﴾

[27-33] Are[13] you (O men,) harder to create, or is the heaven?[14] Allah built it: He raised its vault high and gave it balance, and covered its night and brought forth its day.[15] After that He spread out the earth[16] from within it. He brought out its water and its pasture,[17] and set the mountains in it, as a mesas of sustenance for you and your cattle.[18]

فَإِذَا جَآءَتِ ٱلطَّآمَّةُ ٱلۡكُبۡرَىٰ ﴿٣٤﴾

يَوۡمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٥﴾

وَبُرِّزَتِ ٱلْجَحِيمُ لِمَن يَرَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾

فَأَمَّا مَن طَغَىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَءَاثَرَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴿٣٨﴾

فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾

فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾

[34-41] Then, when the great Disaster befalls[19] the Day when man shall remember whatever he had striven for[20] and Hell shall be laid open for everyone to see, then the one who had rebelled and preferred the life of the world, Hell shall be his home. As for him who had feared to stand before his Lord and restrained himself from evil desires, Paradise shall be his home.[21]

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلسَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَىٰهَا ﴿٤٢﴾

فِيمَ أَنتَ مِن ذِكۡرَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٣﴾

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَىٰهَآ ﴿٤٤﴾

إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرُ مَن يَخۡشَىٰهَا ﴿٤٥﴾

كَأَنَّهُمۡ يَوۡمَ يَرَوۡنَهَا لَمۡ يَلۡبَثُوٓاْ إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوۡ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٤٦﴾

[42-46] They ask you, "When will the Hour come to stay?"[22] (But) it is not for you to tell its time. Its knowledge rests only with your Lord. You are only a warner to him who fears it.[23] The day these people see it, they will feel as though they had stayed (in the world or in the state of death) only for the afternoon of a day or its forenoon.[24]

1Here, the object for which an oath has been sworn by beings having five qualities has not been mentioned; but the theme that follows by itself leads to the conclusion that the oath has been sworn to affirm that the Resurrection is a certainty, which must come to pass, when all dead men shall be resurrected. Nor is there any mention as to what are the beings possessed of the qualities. However, a large number of the Companions and their immediate successors and most of the commentators have expressed the opinion that they are the angels. Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Masruq, Sa`id bin Jubair, Abu salih Abud-Duha and Suddi; say that "those who pluck out from the depths and those who draw out gently" imply the angels, who wrench out the soul of man at death from the very depths of his body, from its every fiber. "Those who glide about swiftly", according to Hadrat Ibn Mas`ud, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubair and Abu Salih, also imply the angels, who hurry about swiftly in execution of Divine Commands as though they were gliding through space. The same meaning of "those who hasten out as in a race" has been taken by Hadrat `Ali, Mujahid, Masruq, Abu Salih and Hasan Bari, and hastening out implies that each one of them hurries on his errand as soon as he receives the first indication of Divine Will. "Those who conduct the affairs" also imply the angels as has been reported from Hadrat `Ali, Mujahid, 'Ata' Abu -Salih, Hasan Bari;, Qatadah, Rabi` bin Anas and Suddi. In other words, these are the workers of the Kingdom of the Universe, who are conducting all the affairs of the world in

accordance with Allah's Command and Will. Though this meaning of these verses has not been reported in any authentic Hadith from the Holy Prophet, while this meaning has been given by some major Companions and their immediate successors and pupils, one is led to form the view that they must have obtained this knowledge from the Holy Prophet himself.

Now the question arises: On what basis has the oath been sworn by these angels for the occurrence of the Resurrection and life after death when they themselves are as imperceptible as the thing for the occurrence of which they have been presented as an evidence and as an argument. In our opinion the reason is (and Allah has the best knowledge) that the Arabs were not deniers of the existence of the angels. They themselves admitted that at the death the soul was taken out by the angels; they also believed that the angels moved at tremendous speeds; they could reach any place between the earth and the heavens instantly and promptly execute any errand that was entrusted to them. They also acknowledged that the angels are subordinate to Divine Will and they conduct the affairs of the universe strictly and precisely in accordance with Divine Will; they are not independent and masters of their will. They regarded them as daughters of Allah out of ignorance and worshiped them as deities, but they did not believe that they possessed the real authority as well. Therefore, the basis of the reasoning from the above mentioned attributes for the occurrence of the Resurrection and life after death is that the angels who took the soul by the order of God, could also restore the soul by the order of the same God; and the angels who conducted the affairs of the universe by the order of God could also upset this universe by the order of the same God whenever . He so ordered them and could also bring about a new world order. They would not show any negligence or delay in the execution of His Command.

2The first jolt implies the jolt which will destroy the earth and everything on it, and the second jolt at which all dead men will rise up from death and from their graves. This same state has been described in Surah Az-Zumar, thus: "And when the Trumpet shall be blown on that Day, all those who are in the heavens and the earth shall fall down dead except those whom Allah may allow (to live). Then the Trumpet shall be blown again and they will all stand up, looking around." (v. 68)

3"Some hearts", because, according to the Qur'an, only the disbelievers, the wicked people and the hypocrites will be terror-stricken on the Resurrection Day, the righteous believers will remain secure from this tenor. About them in Surah Al-Anbiya' it has been said: "The time of great fright will not trouble them at all; the angels will rush. forth to receive them, saying: `This is the very Day which you were promised'." (v. 103)

4That is, when they were told that they would surely be raised back to life after death, they started mocking it, saying to one another, "Well, if we have really to be restored to our former state of life, then we would certainly be doomed. "

5That is, "They are mocking it as an impossibility, whereas it is not at all a difficult task for Allah for the performance of which He may have to make lengthy preparations. For it only a single shout or cry is

enough at which your dust of ash will gather together from wherever it lay, and you will suddenly find yourself alive on the back of the earth. Thinking this return to be a return to loss, you may try to escape from it however hard you may, but it will inevitably take place; it cannot be averted by your denial, escape or mockery."

6As the denial of the Resurrection and Hereafter by the disbelievers of Makkah and their mockery of it was not, in fact, rejection of a philosophy but belying Allah's Messengers, and the tricks that they were employing against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) were not against an ordinary man but were meant to frustrate the mission of Allah's Messenger, the story of the Prophet Moses and the Pharaoh is being related before giving additional arguments for the occurrence of the Hereafter so that they are warned of the consequences of fighting with the Messenger and resisting the God Who sent him.

7According to general opinion among the commentators "the sacred . valley of 'Tuwa" means "the sacred valley which was named Tuwa". But, besides this, two other meanings of it also have been given:

(1) "The valley that was blessed and made sacred twice" . for it was first made sacred when Allah spoke to Moses in it for the first time, and it was blessed and made sacred for the second time when the Prophet Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt and brought them into it; and

(2) "called out to him in the sacred valley in the night," and this is according to the meaning of tuwa in the Arabic idiom.

8Here, one should understand a few things well:

(1) The dialogue that took place between the Prophet Moses and Allah Almighty at the time of appointing him to the office of Prophethood has been related at some places briefly and at others in full detail in the Qur'an as the occasion demanded. Here; brevity was the need; therefore, only a resume has been given. Fuller details are found in Ta Ha: 9-48, Ash-Shua`ra': 10-17, An Naml: 7-12, AI-Qasas: 29-35.

(2) The rebellion of the Pharaoh referred to here relates to his transgressing the bounds of service and rebelling both against the Creator and against His creatures. As for his rebellion against the Creator, it is being mentioned a little below when he gathered his people together and prolaimed: "I am your lord, the supreme." As against the creatures his rebellion was that he had divided his subjects into classes; he treated the weak classes tyrannically and had reduced his entire nation to slavery as has been mentioned in Al-Qasas: 4 and Az-Zukhruf: 54.

(3) The instruction given to Moses was: "Go, you and your brother Aaron, to Pharaoh for he has transgressed all bounds. Talk to him gently; maybe that he is convinced by admonition or is imbued with

fear." (Ta Ha: 44). One model of the gentle speech has been given in these verses, which shows what right method a preacher should adopt when preaching to a perverted man. Other models are given in Ta Ha: 49-52, Ash-Shua`ra': 23-28, and Al-Qasas: 37. These verses are of those in which Allah has taught the correct methods of preaching Islam in the Qur'an.

(4) The Prophet Moses had not been sent to Pharaoh only for the deliverance of the children of Israel as some people seem to think but the primary object of his appointment was to show Pharaoh and his people the right way, and the second object was that if he did not accept the right way, the children of Israel (who in fact were a Muslim people) should be taken out of his slavery and from Egypt. This thing becomes plain from these verses too, for there is no mention whatever in these of the deliverance of the children of Israel, but the Prophet Moses has been commanded to present the message of the Truth before Pharaoh, and this is confirmed by those verses also in which the Prophet Moses has preached Islam as well as demanded freedom of the children of Israel, e.g. see Al-A`raf 104-105, Ta Ha: 47-52, Ash-Shua ara': 16-17, 23-28. (For further explanation, see E.N. 74 of Yunus).

(5) Here, "to adopt purity" means to adopt purity of belief, morals and deeds, or, in other words, to accept Islam. Ibn Zaid says: "Wherever in the Qur'an the word tazakka (purity) has been use, it implies acceptance of Islam." As an example of this he has cited the following three verses: "And this is the reward of him who adopts purity", i.e. accepts Islam; "and what would make you know that he might adopt purity", i.e. becomes a Muslim (`Abasa:3); "And you would not be responsible if he did not adapt purity", i.e. did not become a Muslim (`Abasa: 7). (Ibn Jarir).

(6) "That I may guide you to your Lord so that you may have fear (of Him)" means: "When you recognize your Lord and come to know that you are His slave, and not a free man, you will inevitably have fear of Him in your heart, for fear of God is the thing on which depends the right attitude of man in the world. Without the knowledge and fear of God no purity of the self can be possible."

9"The great Sign" : the turning of the staff into a serpent, as has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'an. Obviously there could be no greater sign than that a lifeless staff should turn into a living serpent right in front of the eyes of the people, that it should devour the artificial serpents produced by the magicians out of their staffs and cords, and when the Prophet Moses should pick it up, it should become a walking stick again. This was proof that it was Allah, Lord of the worlds, Who had sent Moses as a Prophet.

10According to the details given at other places in the Qur'an, he summoned skillful magicians from all over Egypt and made them produce serpents out of sticks and cords in front of the assembled people so that they were convinced that Moses (peace be upon him was not a Prophet but a magician, and that the miracle worked by him of turning a staff into a serpent, could also be worked by other magicians. But this device of his recoiled upon himself and the defeated magicians themselves admitted that what Moses (peace be on him) had displayed was no magic but a miracle.

11This proclamation of Pharaoh has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'an. On one occasion he said to the Prophet Moses: "If you took another one as a deity beside me, I would cast you in the prison." (Ash-Shua`ra': 29). On another occasion he had addressed his courtiers, saying: "O chiefs, I do not know of any other god of yours than myself. (Al-Qasas.: 38). By this Pharaoh did not mean, nor could he ever mean, that he himself was the creator of the universe and he had made the world, nor that he denied the existence of Allah and claimed to be lord of the universe, nor that he regarded only himself as a deity of the people in the religious sense. In the Qur'an itself there is a clear testimony that as regards religion he himself worshiped other gods. Once his courtiers said to him: "Will you leave Moses and his people free to spread chaos in the land, and let them discard you and your deities?" (Al A`raf: 127). And in the Qur'an itself this saying of the Pharaoh also has been cited: "Had Moses been sent by Allah, why were not bracelets of gold sent down to him, or a company of angels as attendants?" (AzZukhruf: 53). Thus, in fact, he called himself a god and supreme deity not in the religious but in the political sense. What he meant was that he possessed the sovereign rights: no one beside him had the right to rule in his kingdom and there was no superior power whose orders could be enforced in the land. (For further explanation. see E.N. 85 of Al-A`raf, E.N. 21 of Ta Ha, E.N.'s 24, 26 of Ash Shua'ra', E-N.'s 52, 53 of Al-Qasas E.N. 49 of Az-Zukhruf).

12"...who fears": who fears the consequences of denying God's Messenger, which the Pharaoh experienced in the past.

13Now arguments are being given for the possibility of Resurrection and life after death and their being the very demand and requirement of wisdom.

14Here, creation implies the recreation of men, and the heaven the entire firmament which contains countless stars and planets, and innumerable solar systems and galaxies. means to say: "You think that your resurrection after death is something extremely improbable and you express wonder saying: `How is it possible that when our very bones will have decayed and become rotten the scattered particles of our bodies will be reassembled and made living once again?' But have you ever also considered whether the great universe is harder to create or your own re-creation in the form in which you were created in the first instance? The God Who created you in the first instance cannot be powerless to create you once again." This same argument for life after death has been given at several places in the Qur'an. For example, in Surah Ya Sin it has been said: "Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them (again)? Why not, when He is the skillful Creator." (v. 81) And in Surah Al-Mu'min it was said: "Surely the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater task than the creation of man, but most people do not know. (v. 57)

15The night and the day have been attributed to the heaven, for the night falls when the sun of the heavens sets and the day dawns when it rises. The word "cover" has been used for the night in the sense

that after the sun has set the darkness of the night so spreads over the earth as though it has covered it from above by a curtain.

16"After that He spread out the earth" does not mean that Allah created the earth after the creation of the heavens, but it is a style of expression just like our saying after making mention of something: "Then this is noteworthy." The object is not to express the sequence of occurrence between the two things but to draw attention from the first to the second thing although both may exist together. Several instances of this style are found in the Qur'an, e.g. in Surah Al-Qalam it is said: "(He is) oppressive, and after that, ignoble by birth." This does not mean that first he became oppressive and then he turned ignoble by birth, but it means: "He is oppressive, and above all, ignoble by birth." Likewise, in Surah Al-Balad it is said: "Should free a slave...then be of those who believe." This also does not mean that first he should act righteously and then believe. but that along with doing righteous deeds he should also be characterized by belief. Here, one should also understand that at some places in the Qur'an the creation of the earth has been mentioned first and then the creation of the heavens, as in Al-Baqarah: 29, and at others the creation of the heavens has been mentioned first and then of the earth, as in these verses. There is, in fact, no contradiction in this. At no place the object is to tell what was created first and what afterwards, but wherever the context requires that the excellences of the power of Allah be made prominent, the heavens have been mentioned first and then the earth, and where the context requires that the people be made to appreciate and acknowledge the blessings that they are benefiting by on the earth, the mention of the earth has been made before that of the heavens. (For further explanation, see E.N's 13,14 of Ha Mim As-Sajdah).

17"Pasture" here does not only imply pasture and fodder for the animals but all kinds of herbal produce suitable for consumption both by man and by animal. An example of the use of rat'. which is generally used in Arabic for the grazing animals, is found in Surah Yusuf: 12, signifying that this word is sometimes used for man also. The brothers of Joseph said to their father: "Send Joseph with us tomorrow that he may freely graze and enjoy sport. " Here, the word grace (rat`) for the child has been used in the meaning that he may move about freely in the jungle and pluck and eat fruit.

18In these verses arguments have been given for the Resurrection and life after death from two aspects: first, that it is not at all difficult to establish these for the power of that God Who has made this vast and huge universe with such wonderful balance and this earth with such provisions. Second, that the pointers to the perfect wisdom of Allah which are clearly visible in the universe and the earth, point out that nothing is happening here purposelessly. The balance that exists between countless of the stars and planets and galaxies in the heavens testifies that all this has not happened haphazardly but there is a well thought-out plan working behind it. The regular alternation of the night and day is an evidence that this system has been established with supreme wisdom and knowledge for making the earth a home and place of settlement. On this very earth are found regions where the alternation of the night and day takes place within 24 hours and also those regions where there are longer days and longer nights. A very large part of the earth's population lives in the first kind of the regions. Then as the days and nights go on

becoming longer and longer, life goes on becoming harder and harder and population thinner and thinner. So much so that the regions where there are six-month-long days and six-month-long nights, are not at all fit for human settlement. Arranging both these types of the land on this very earth Allah has provided the evidence that this regular order of the alternation of night and day has not come about accidentally but has been brought about with great wisdom precisely in accordance with a scheme to make the earth a place fit for human settlement. Likewise, spreading out the earth so that it becomes a fit place to live in, providing in it that water which should be palatable for man and animal and a cause of growth for vegetation, setting in it mountains and creating all those things which may become a means of life for both man and animal- all these are a manifest sign that they are not chance happenings of the purposeless works of a care-free person but each one of these has been arranged purposefully by a Supreme, Wise Being. Now every sensible and intelligent man can consider for himself whether the necessity and occurrence of the Hereafter is the requirement of wisdom or its negation. The person who in spite of seeing all this says that there is no Hereafter, in fact, says that everything in the universe is happening wisely and purposefully, but only the creation of man on the earth as a being endowed with sense and power is meaningless and foolish. For there could be nothing more purposeless than delegating to man vast powers of appropriation in the earth and providing him an opportunity to do good as well as evil deeds but then failing to ever subject him to accountability.

19This implies the Resurrection for which the words at-Taammat alkubra have been used. Taammah by itself is a grievous calamity which afflicts everybody. Then it has been further qualified by the word kubra (great), which shows that the mere word taammah is not enough to describe fully its intensity and severity.

20That is, "When man will see that the same Day of accountability of which he was being foretold in the world, has come, he will start remembering each one of his misdeeds done in the world even before his records are handed over to him. Some people experience this even in the world. if at some time they come across a dangerous situation suddenly when death seems to be staring them in the face, their whole life-film flashes across their mind's eye all at once.

21Here, in a few words, it has been told briefly what shall be the criterion of the final judgment in the Hereafter. One kind of the conduct of life in the world is that transgressing all bounds of service man should rebel against his God and should make up his mind that he would seek only the benefits and pleasures of this world in whatever way they could be sought and achieved. The other kind of conduct is that while man passes life in the world he should constantly keep in view the truth that ultimately one day he has to stand before his Lord, and should refrain from fulfilling the evil desires of the self only for the fear that if he earned an unlawful benefit in obedience to his self, or enjoyed an evil pleasure, what answer he would give to his Lord. The criterion of the judgment in the Hereafter will be which of the two kinds of conduct he adopted in the world. If he had adopted the first kind of conduct, his permanent abode would be Hell, and if he had adopted the second kind of conduct, his permanent home would be Paradise.

22The disbelievers of Makkah asked this question of the Holy Prophet over and over again. By this they did not mean to know the time and date of the coming of Resurrection but to mock it. (For further explanation, see E.N. 35 of Surah Al-Mulk).

23This also we have explained in E.N. 36 of Surah Al-Mulk above. As for the words "you are only a Warner to him who fears it", they do not mean that it is not your duty to warn those who do not fear, but it means: "Your warning will benefit only him who fears the coming of that Day."

24This theme has occurred at several places in the Qur'an and been explained in the corresponding Notes. For it, see E.N. 53 of Yunus, E.N. 56 of Bani Isra'il, E.N. 80 of Ta Ha, E.N. 101 of Al-Mu'minun, E. N.'s 81, 82 of ArRum, E.N. 48 of Ya Sin. Besides, this theme has also occurred in Al-Ahqaf: 35 but we have not explained it there for fear of repetition.

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80. Surah Abasa (He Frowned)

Name

The Surah is so designated after the word `*abasa* with which it opens.

Period of Revelation

The commentators and traditionists are unanimous about the occasion of the revelation of this Surah. According to them, once some big chiefs of Makkah were sitting in the Holy Prophet's assembly and he was earnestly engaged in trying to persuade them to accept Islam. At that very point, a blind man, named Ibn Umm Maktum, approached him to seek explanation of some point concerning Islam. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) disliked his interruption and ignored him. Thereupon Allah sent down this Surah. From this historical incident the period of the revelation of this Surah can be precisely determined.

In the first place, it is confirmed that Hadrat Ibn Umm Maktum was one of the earliest converts to Islam. Hafiz Ibn Hajar and Hafiz Ibn Kathir have stated that he was one of those who had accepted Islam at a very early stage at Makkah.

Secondly, some of the traditions of the Hadith which relate this incident show that he had already accepted Islam and some others show that be was inclined to accept it and had approached the Holy Prophet in search of the truth. Hadrat Aishah states that coming to the Holy Prophet he had said: "O Messenger of Allah, guide me to the straight path." (Tirmidhi, Hakim, Ibn Hibban, Ibn Jarir, Abu Ya'la. According to Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, he had asked the meaning of a verse of the Qur'an and said to the Holy Prophet: "O Messenger of Allah, teach me the knowledge that Allah has taught you." Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abu Hatim). These statements show that he had acknowledged the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace as a Messenger of Allah and the Quran as a Book of Allah. Contrary to this, Ibn Zaid has interpreted the words *la allahu yazzakka* of verse 3 to mean: *la allahu yuslim*: "maybe that he accepts Islam." (Ibn Jarir) And Allah's own words: "What would make you know that he might reform, or heed the admonition, and admonishing might profit him?" and "The one who comes to you running, of his own will, and fears, from him you turn away", point out that by that time he had developed in himself a deep desire to learn the truth: he had come to the Holy Prophet with the belief that he was the only source of guidance and his desire would be

satisfied only through him; his apparent state also reflected that if he was given instruction, he would benefit by it.

Thirdly, the names of the people who were sitting in the Holy Prophet's assembly at that time, have been given in different traditions. In this list we find the names of `Utbah, Shaibah, Abu Jahl, Umayyah bin Khalaf, Ubayy bin Khalaf, who were the bitterest enemies of Islam. This shows that the incident took place in the period when these chiefs were still on meeting terms with the Holy Prophet and their antagonism to Islam had not yet grown so strong as to have stopped their paying visits to him and having dialogues with him off and on. All these arguments indicate that this is one of the very earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In view of the apparent style with which the discourse opens, one feels that in this Surah Allah has expressed His displeasure against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for his treating the blind man with indifference and attending to the big chiefs exclusively. But when the whole Surah is considered objectively, one finds that the displeasure, in fact, has been expressed against the disbelieving Quraish, who because of their arrogant attitude and indifference to the truth, were rejecting with contempt the message of truth being conveyed by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). Then, besides teaching him the correct method of preaching, the error of the method that he was adopting at the start of his mission has also been pointed out. His treating the blind man with neglect and disregard and devoting all his attention to the Quraish chiefs was not for the reason that he regarded the rich as noble and a poor blind man as contemptible, and, God forbid, there was some rudeness in his manner for which Allah reproved him. But, as a matter of fact, when a caller to Truth embarks on his mission of conveying his message to the people, he naturally wants the most influential people of society to accept his message so that his task becomes easy, for even if his invitation spreads among the poor and weak people, it cannot make much difference. Almost the same attitude had the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) also adopted in the beginning, his motive being only sincerity and a desire to promote his mission and not any idea of respect for the big people and hatred for the small people. But Allah made him realize that that was not the correct method of extending invitation to Islam, but from his mission's point of view, every man, who was a seeker after truth, was important, even if he was weak, or poor, and every man, who was heedless to the truth, was unimportant, even if he occupied a high position in society. Therefore, he should openly proclaim and convey the teachings of Islam to all and sundry, but the people who were really worthy of his attention, were those who were inclined to accept the Truth, and his sublime and noble message was too high to be presented before those haughty people who in their arrogance and vanity thought that they did not stand in need of him but rather he stood in need of them.

This is the theme of vv. 1-16. From verse 17 onward the rebuke directly turns to the disbelievers, who were repudiating the invitation of the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace). In this, first they have been reproved for their attitude which they had adopted against their Creator, Providence and Sustainer. In the end, they have been warned of the dreadful fate that they would meet in consequence of their conduct on the Day of Resurrection.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّىٰٓ ﴿١﴾

أَن جَآءَهُ ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ ﴿٢﴾

وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُۥ يَزَّكَّىٰٓ ﴿٣﴾

أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنفَعَهُ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰٓ ﴿٤﴾

أَمَّا مَنِ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٥﴾

فَأَنتَ لَهُۥ تَصَدَّىٰ ﴿٦﴾

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكَّىٰ ﴿٧﴾

وَأَمَّا مَن جَآءَكَ يَسْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

وَهُوَ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٩﴾

فَأَنتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّىٰ ﴿١٠﴾

كَلَّآ إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴿١١﴾

فَمَن شَآءَ ذَكَرَهُۥ ﴿١٢﴾

فِى صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾

مَّرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾

بِأَيْدِى سَفَرَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾

كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

[1-16] He frowned and turned away his face because there came up to him the blind man.[1] And what would make you know that he might reform, or heed the admonition, and admonishing might profit him? As for him who is indifferent, to him you attend, though you would not be responsible if he did not reform. And the one 'who comes to you running, of his own will, and fears, from him you turn away.[2] By no means![3] This is but an admonition.[4] Let him who wills accept it. It is written in scrolls, which are honored, exalted, purified,[5] (and which) remain in the hands of noble[6] and virtuous scribes.[7]

قُتِلَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ مَآ أَكْفَرَهُۥ ﴿١٧﴾

مِنْ أَىِّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقَهُۥ ﴿١٨﴾

مِن نُّطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُۥ فَقَدَّرَهُۥ ﴿١٩﴾

ثُمَّ ٱلسَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُۥ ﴿٢٠﴾

ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُۥ فَأَقۡبَرَهُۥ ﴿٢١﴾

ثُمَّ إِذَا شَآءَ أَنشَرَهُۥ ﴿٢٢﴾

كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقۡضِ مَآ أَمَرَهُۥ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَلۡيَنظُرِ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِهِۦٓ ﴿٢٤﴾

أَنَّا صَبَبۡنَا ٱلۡمَآءَ صَبّٗا ﴿٢٥﴾

ثُمَّ شَقَقۡنَا ٱلۡأَرۡضَ شَقّٗا ﴿٢٦﴾

فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا فِيهَا حَبّٗا ﴿٢٧﴾

وَعِنَبٗا وَقَضۡبٗا ﴿٢٨﴾

وَزَيْتُونًا وَنَخْلًا ﴿٢٩﴾

وَحَدَآئِقَ غُلْبًا ﴿٣٠﴾

وَفَـٰكِهَةً وَأَبًّا ﴿٣١﴾

مَّتَـٰعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَـٰمِكُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾

[17-32] Cursed[8] be man![9] What a perverse disbeliever he is![10] Out of what has Allah created him? Out of a sperm drop.[11] Allah created him, then set him his destiny,[12] then made the way of life easy for him[13] then caused him to die, and brought. him to the grave.[14] Then whenever He wills, He .will raise him up again to life.[15] Nay, but he has not fulfilled the duty that Allah-had assigned to him.[16] Then let man look at his food.[17] We poured down water in abundance,[18] then cleft the earth asunder,[19] then caused to grow in it corns and grapes and Vegetables and olives and dates and lush gardens and fruits of every kind and fodder as a means of sustenance for you and your cattle.[20]

فَإِذَا جَآءَتِ ٱلصَّآخَّةُ ﴿٣٣﴾

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ ٱلْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ ﴿٣٤﴾

وَأُمِّهِۦ وَأَبِيهِ ﴿٣٥﴾

وَصَٰحِبَتِهِۦ وَبَنِيهِ ﴿٣٦﴾

لِكُلِّ ٱمْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ ﴿٣٧﴾

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

ضَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ ﴿٤١﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْكَفَرَةُ ٱلْفَجَرَةُ ﴿٤٢﴾

[33-42] At last, when the deafening blast is sounded,[21] that Day shall man flee from his brother and his mother and his father and his wife and his children.[22] Each one of them, on that Day, shall have enough to occupy him so as to make him heedless of others.[23] Some faces on that Day shall be shining, rejoicing and joyful. And some faces on that Day shall be dusty, and darkness shall be covering them. These will be the disbelievers and the sinners.

1The style of this first sentence is elegant and subtle. Although in the following sentences the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been directly addressed, which by itself shows that the act of frowning and turning aside had issued forth from him, the discourse has been opened in a manner as though it was not he but some one else who had so acted. By this style the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), by a subtle method, has been made to realize that it was an act unseemly for him. Had somebody familiar with his high morals witnessed it, he would have thought that it was not he but some other person who had behaved in that manner.

The blind man referred to here implies, as we have explained in the Introduction, the well-known Companion, Hadrat Ibn Umm Maktum. Hafiz Ibn 'Abdul Barr in Al-Isti'ab and Hafiz Ibn Hajar in Al-Isbah have stated that he was a first cousin of the Holy Prophet's wife, Hadrat Khadijah. His mother, Umm Maktum, and Hadrat Khadijah's father, Khuwailid, were sister and brother to each other. After one knows his relationship with the Holy Prophet, there remains no room for the doubt that he had turned away from him regarding him as a poor man having a low station in life, and attended to the high-placed people, for he was the Holy Prophet's brother-in-law and a man of noble birth. The reason why the Holy Prophet had shown disregard for him is indicated by the word a ma (blind man), which Allah Himself has used as the cause of the Holy Prophet's inattention. That is, the Holy Prophet thought that even if a single man from among the people whom he was trying to bring to the right path, listened to him and was rightly guided, be could become a powerful means of strengthening Islam. On the contrary, Ibn Umm Maktum was a blind man, who could not prove to be so useful for Islam because of his disability as could one of the Quraish elders on becoming a Muslim. Therefore, he should not interrupt the conversation at that time; whatever he wanted to ask or learn, he could ask or learn at some later time.

2This is the real point which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had overlooked in the preaching of Islam on that occasion, and for teaching him the same Allah first reproved him on his treatment of Ibn Umm Maktum, and then ' told him what really deserved to occupy his attention as preacher of the Truth and what did not. There is a man whose apparent state clearly shows that he is a seeker after truth: he fears lest he should follow falsehood and invite Allah's wrath; therefore, he comes all the way in search of the knowledge of the true faith. There is another man, whose attitude clearly reflects that he has no desire for the truth; rather on the contrary, he regards himself as self-sufficient, having no desire to be guided to the right way. Between these two kinds of men one should not see whose becoming a Muslim would be of greater use for Islam and whose becoming a believer could not be of any use in its propagation. But one should see as to who was inclined to accept the guidance and reform himself, and who was least interested in this precious bargain. The first kind of man, whether he is blind, lame, crippled. or an indigent mendicant, who might apparently seem incapable of rendering any useful service

in the propagation of Islam, is in any case a .valuable man for the preacher to the Truth. To him therefore he should attend, for the real object of this invitation is to reform the people, and the apparent state of the person shows that if he was instructed he would accept guidance. As for the other kind of man, the preacher has no need to pursue him, no matter how influential he is in society. For his attitude and conduct openly proclaim that he has no desire for reform; therefore, any effort made to reform him would be mere waste of time. If he has no desire to reform himself, he may nor the loss would be his, the preacher would not at all be accountable for it.

3That is, "You should never do so: do not give undue importance to those who have forgotten God and become proud of their high worldly position. The teaching of Islam is not such that it should be presented solicitously before him who spurns it, nor should a man like you try to invite these arrogant people to Islam in a way as may cause them the misunderstanding that you have a selfish motive connected with them, and that your mission would succeed only if they believed, otherwise not, whereas the fact is that the Truth is as self-sufficient of them as they are of the Truth."

4The allusion is to the Qur'an.

5"Purified" : free from all kinds of mixtures of false ideas and thoughts, and presenting nothing but the pure Truth. There is no tinge whatever in these scrolls of the impurities with which the other religious boors of the world have been polluted. They have been kept pure and secure from all kinds of human speculation and evil suggestions.

6This refers to the angels who were writing the scrolls of the Qur'an under the direct guidance of Allah, were guarding them and conveying them intact to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). Two words have been used to qualify them: karim, i.e. noble, and barr, i.e. virtuous. The first word is meant to say that they are . so honored and noble that it is not possible that such exalted beings would commit even the slightest dishonesty in the trust reposed in them. The second word has been used to tell that they carry out the responsibility entrusted to them of writing down the scrolls, guarding them and conveying them to the Messenger with perfect honesty and integrity.

7If the context in which these verses occur, is considered deeply, it becomes obvious that here the. Qur'an has not been praised for the sake of its greatness and glory but to tell the arrogant people, who were repudiating its message with contempt, plainly: "The glorious Qur'an is too holy and exalted a Book to be presented before you humbly with the request that you may kindly accept it if you so please. For it does not stand in need of you as you stand in need of it. If you really seek your well-being, you should clear your head of the evil thoughts and submit to its message humbly; otherwise you are not so self-sufficient of this Book as this Book is self-sufficient of you. Your treating it with scorn and contempt will not affect its glory and greatness at all, rather your own pride and arrogance will be ruined on account of it.

8From here the rebuke turns directly against the disbelievers, who were treating the message of the Truth with scant attention. Before this, from the beginning of the Surah to verse 16, the address though apparently directed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), was actually meant to reprimand the disbelievers, as if to say: "O Prophet, why are you ignoring a seeker after truth and paying all your attention to those who are worthless from your mission's point of view? they do not deserve that a great Prophet like you should present a sublime thing like the Qur'an before them."

9At all such places in the Qur'an, "man" does not imply every individual of the human race but the people whose evil traits of character are intended to be censured. At some places the word "man" is used because the evil traits are found in most of human beings, and at others for the reason that if the particular people are pin-pointed for censure, it engenders stubbornness. Therefore, admonition is given in general terms so as to be more effective. (For further explanation, see E.N. 65 of Ha Mim As-Sajdah, E. N. 75 of Ash-Shura).

10Another meaning also can be: "What caused him to be inclined to kufr?" Or, in other words: "On what strength does he commit kufr?' Kufr?" then means denial of the Truth as well as ingratitude for the favors of one's benefactor and also rebellious attitude against one's Creator, Providence and Master.

11That is, let him first consider out of what he was created, where he was nourished and developed, by what way he came into the world, and from what helpless state he began his life in the world. Why does he forget his such beginning and becomes involved in conceit and haughtiness and why does he feel so puffed up as to resist his Creator and stand before Him as an adversary? (The same theme has been expressed in Ya Sin 77-78 above).

12That is, he was yet developing and taking shape in his mother's womb when his destiny was set for him. It was determined what would be his sex, his color, his size; the extent and volume of his body, the extent to which his limbs would be sound or unsound, his appearance and voice, the degree of Physical strength and mental endowments, what would be the land, the family, the conditions and environments in which he would take birth, develop and be molded into a specific person, what would be the hereditary influences and effects of the surroundings and the role and impact of his own self in the make-up of his personality, the part he would play in his life of the world, and how long he would be allowed to function on the earth. He cannot swerve even a hair-breadth from his destiny, nor can effect the slightest alteration in it. Then, how strange is his daring and stubbornness! He commits disbelief of the Creator before Whose destiny he is so helpless and powerless!

13That is, He created all those means and provisions in the world, which he could utilize, otherwise all the capabilities of his body and mind would have remained useless, had not the Creator provided the. means and created the possibilities on the earth to employ them. Furthermore, the Creator also gave him the opportunity to choose and adopt for himself whichever of the ways, good or evil, of gratitude or

ingratitude, of obedience or disobedience, that he pleased. He opened up both the ways before him and made each way smooth and easy so that he could follow any way that he liked.

14That is, not only in the matter of birth and destiny but in the matter of death also he is absolutely helpless before his Creator. Neither he can take birth by his choice nor die by his choice, nor can defer his death even by a moment. He dies precisely at the appointed time, in the appointed place, under the appointed circumstances that have been decreed for his death, and he is deposited in the type of grave destined for him whether it is the belly of the earth, the depths of the sea, a bonfire. or the stomach of a beast. Nothing to say of the man, even the whole world together cannot change the Creator's decree in respect of any person.

15That is, he does not either have the power to refuse to rise up when the Creator may will to resurrect him after death. When he was first created, he was not consulted: he was not asked whether he wanted to be created or not. Even if he had refused, he would have been created. Likewise, his resurrection also is not dependent upon his will and assent that he may rise from death if he so likes, or refuse to rise if he does not like. In this matter also he is absolutely helpless before the Creator's will. Whenever He wills He will resurrect him, and he will have to rise whether he likes it or not.

16"Duty" implies the duty that Allah has enjoined on every man in the form of natural guidance as well as the duty to which man's own existence and every particle of the universe, from the earth to the heavens, and every manifestation of Divine power are pointing, and that duty also which Allah has conveyed in every age through His Prophets and Books and disseminated through the righteous people of every period. (For explanation, see E.N. 5 of Surah Ad- Dahr). In the present context the object is to express the meaning that on the basis of the truths stated in the above verses, it was man's duty to have obeyed his Creator, but, contrary to this, he adopted the way of disobedience and did not fulfill the demand of his being His creature.

17That is, let him consider the food, which he regards as an ordinary thing, how it is created. Had God not provided the means for it, it was not in the power of man himself to have created the food on the earth in any way.

18This refers to rainwater: water vapors are raised in vast quantities from the oceans by the heat of the sun: then they are turned into thick clouds; then the winds blow and spread them over different parts of the earth; then because of the coolness in the upper atmosphere the vapors turn back to water and fall as rain in every area in a particular measure. The water not only falls as rain directly on the earth but also collects underground in the shape of wells and fountains, flows in the form of rivers and streams, freezes on the mountains as snow and melts and flows into rivers in other seasons as well than the rainy season. Has man himself made all these arrangements? Had his Creator not arranged this for his sustenance, could man survive on the earth?

19"Cleaving the earth asunder" implies cleaving it in a way that the seeds, or seed-stones, or vegetable seedlings that man sows or plants in it, or which are deposited in it by winds or birds, or by some other means, should sprout up. Man can do nothing more than to dig the soil, or plough it, and bury in it the seeds that God has already created. Beyond this everything is done by God. It is He Who has created the seeds of countless species of vegetable; it is He Who has endowed these seeds with the quality that when they are sown in the soil, they should sprout up and from every seed vegetable of its own particular species should grow. Again it is He Who has created in the earth the capability that in combination with water it should break open the seeds and develop and nourish every species of vegetable with the kind of food suitable for it. Had God not created the seeds with these qualities and the upper layers of the earth with these capabilities, man could not by himself have arranged any kind of food on the earth.

20That is, "A means of sustenance not only for you but also for those animals from which you obtain items of food like meat, fat, milk, butter, etc. and which perform countless other services also for your living. You benefit by all this and yet you disbelieve in God Whose provisions sustain you."

21The final terrible sounding of the Trumpet at which all dead men shall be resurrected to life.

22A theme closely resembling this has already occurred in Al-Ma'arij: 10-14 above. "Fleeing" may also mean that when he sees those nearest and dearest to him in the .world, involved in distress, instead of rushing forth to help them, he will run away from them lest they should call out to him for help; and it may also mean that when they see the evil consequences of committing sin for the sake of one another and misleading one another, fearless of God and heedless of the Hereafter, in the world, each one would flee from the other lest the other should hold him responsible for his deviation and sin. Brother will fear brother, children their parents, husband his wife, and parents their children lest they should become witnesses in the case against them.

23A tradition has been reported in the. Hadith by different methods and through different channels, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "On the Day of Resurrection all men will rise up naked." One of his wives (according to some reporters, Hadrat `A'ishah, according to others, Hadrat Saudah, or a woman) asked in bewilderment: "O Messenger of Allah, shall we (women) appear naked on that Day before the people?" The Holy prophet recited this very verse and explained that on that Day each one will have enough of his own troubles to occupy him, and will be wholly unmindful of others. (Nasa'i, Tirmidhi, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Jarir, Tabarani Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi, Hakim).

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81. Surah At Takwir (The Folding Up)

Name

It is derived from the word *kuwwirat* in the first verse. *Kuwwirat* is passive voice from *takvir* in the past tense, and means "that which is folded up", thereby implying that it is a Surah in which the "folding up" has been mentioned:

Period of Revelation

The subject matter and the style clearly show that it is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

It has two themes: the Hereafter and the institution of Prophethood.

In the first six verses the first stage of the Resurrection has been mentioned when the sun will lose its light, the stars will scatter, the mountains will be uprooted and will disperse, the people will become heedless of their dearest possessions, the beasts of the jungle will be stupefied and will gather together, and the seas will boil up. Then in the next seven verses the second stage has been described when the souls will be reunited with the bodies, the records will be laid open, the people will be called to account for their crimes, the heavens will be unveiled, and Hell and Heaven will be brought into full view. After depicting the Hereafter thus, man has been left to ponder his own self and deeds, saying: "Then each man shall himself know what he has brought with him."

After this the theme of Prophethood has been taken up. In this the people of Makkah have been addressed, as if to say "Whatever Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is presenting before you, is not the bragging of a madman, nor an evil suggestion inspired by Satan, but the word of a noble, exalted and trustworthy messenger sent by God, whom Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has seen with his own eyes in the bright horizon of the clear sky in broad day light. Whither then are you going having turned away from this teaching?"

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِذَا ٱلشَّمۡسُ كُوِّرَتۡ ﴿١﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلنُّجُومُ ٱنكَدَرَتۡ ﴿٢﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتۡ ﴿٣﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتۡ ﴿٤﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتۡ ﴿٥﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتۡ ﴿٦﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلنُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ﴿٧﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلْمَوْءُۥدَةُ سُئِلَتْ ﴿٨﴾

بِأَىِّ ذَنۢبٍ قُتِلَتْ ﴿٩﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ﴿١٠﴾

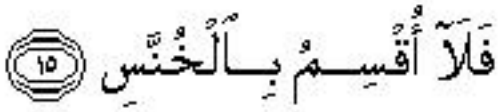
وَإِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ كُشِطَتْ ﴿١١﴾

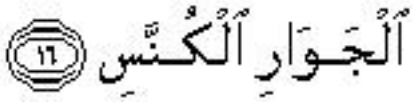
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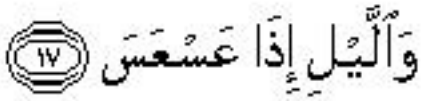
وَإِذَا ٱلْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ ﴿١٣﴾

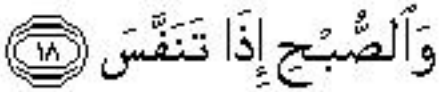
عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أَحْضَرَتْ ﴿١٤﴾

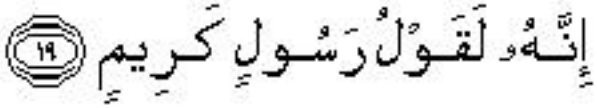
[1-14] When the sun is folded up,[1] and when the stars scatter,[2] and when the mountains are set in motion,[3] and when the ten month pregnant she-camels are left untended,[4] and when the beasts are gathered together,[5] and when the oceans are set ablaze,[6] and when[7] the souls are reunited (with their bodies),[8] and when the infant girl, buried alive, is asked for what crime she was slain,[9] and when the records are unfolded, and when the veil of heaven is removed,[10] and when Hell is set blazing, and when Paradise is brought near,[11] then each person shall know what he has brought with him.

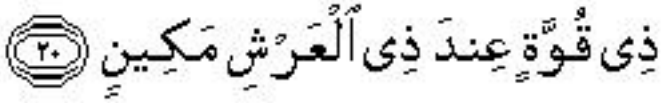

فَلَآ أُقۡسِمُ بِٱلۡخُنَّسِ ١٥


ٱلۡجَوَارِ ٱلۡكُنَّسِ ١٦


وَٱلَّيۡلِ إِذَا عَسۡعَسَ ١٧


وَٱلصُّبۡحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ ١٨


إِنَّهُۥ لَقَوۡلُ رَسُولٖ كَرِيمٖ ١٩


ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِندَ ذِي ٱلۡعَرۡشِ مَكِينٖ ٢٠

مُّطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

وَمَا صَاحِبُكُم بِمَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ بِٱلْأُفُقِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ﴿٢٣﴾

وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى ٱلْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَيْطَٰنٍ رَّجِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

لِمَن شَآءَ مِنكُمْ أَن يَسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَمَا تَشَآءُونَ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٢٩

[15-29] But not so![12] I swear by the retreating and hiding stars, and the night when it departed, and the dawn when it breathed up,[13] that this indeed is the Word of a noble Messenger,[14] who has great power,[15] and has high ranks with the Owner of the Throne: there he is obeyed[16] and held as trustworthy.[17] And (O people of Makkah), your Companion[18] is not mad. He has seen that Messenger on the clear horizon.[19] And he is not stingy in the matter of conveying the (knowledge of the) unseen (to the people).[20] And this is not the word of an accursed satan.[21] Whither then are you going? This is an Admonition to all the people of the world, to each one of you, who wishes to follow the Straight Path.[22] But your willing is of no avail unless Allah, Lord of the worlds, wills so.[23]

1This is a matchless metaphor for causing the sun to lose its light. Takwir means to fold up; hence takwir al- `amamah for folding up the turban on the head. Here, the light which radiates from the sun and spreads throughout the solar system has been likened to the turban and it has been said that on the Resurrection Day the turban will be folded up about the sun and its radiation will fade.

2That is, when the force which is keeping them in their orbits and positions is loosened and all the stars and planets will scatter in the universe. The word inkidar also indicates that they will not only scatter away but will also grow dark.

3In other words, the earth also will lose its force of gravity because of which the mountains have weight and are firmly set in the earth. Thus, when there is no more gravity the mountains will be uprooted from their places and becoming weightless will start moving and flying as the clouds move in the atmosphere.

4This was by far the best way of giving an idea of the severities and horrors of Resurrection to the Arabs. Before the buses and trucks of the present day there was nothing more precious for the Arabs than the she-camel just about to give birth to her young. In this state she was most sedulously looked after and cared for, so that she is not lost, stolen, or harmed in any way. The people's becoming heedless of such she-camels, in fact, meant that at that time they would be so stunned as to become unmindful of their most precious possessions.

5When a general calamity befalls the world, all kinds of beasts and animals gather together in one place. Then neither the snake bites, nor the tiger kills and devours.

6The word sujjirat as used in the original in passive voice from tasjir in the past tense. Tasjir means to kindle fire in the oven. Apparently it seems strange that on the Resurrection Day fire would blaze up in the oceans. But if the truth about water is kept in view, nothing would seem strange. It is a miracle of God that He combined oxygen and hydrogen, one of which helps kindle the fire and the other gets kindled of

itself and by the combination of both He created a substance like water which is used to put out fire. A simple manifestation of Allah's power is enough to change this composition of water so that the two gases are separated and begin to burn and help cause a blaze, which is their basic characteristic.

7From here begins mention of the second stage of Resurrection.

8That is, men will be resurrected precisely in the state as they lived in the world before death with body and soul together.

9The style of this verse reflects an intensity of rage and fury inconceivable in common life. The parents who buried their daughters alive, would be so contemptible in the-sight of Allah that they would not be asked: "Why did you kill the innocent infant?" But disregarding them the innocent girl will be asked: "For what crime were you slain?" And she will tell her story how cruelly she had been treated by her barbarous parents and buried alive. Besides, two vast themes have been compressed into this brief verse, which though not expressed in words, are reflected by its style and tenor. First that in it the Arabs have been made to realize what depths of moral depravity they have touched because of their ignorance in that they buried their own children alive; yet they insist that they would persist in the same ignorance and would not accept the reform that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) was trying to bring about in their corrupted society. Second, that an express argument has been given in it of the necessity and inevitability of the Hereafter. The case of the infant girl who was buried alive, should be decided and settled justly at some tune, and there should necessarily be a time when the cruel people who committed this heinous crime, should be called to account for it, for there was none in the world to hear the cries of complaint raised by the poor soul. This act was looked upon with approval by the depraved society; neither the parents felt any remorse for it, nor anybody in the family censured them, nor the society took any notice of it. Then, should this monstrosity remain wholly unpunished in the Kingdom of God?

This barbaric custom of burying the female infants alive had become widespread in ancient Arabia for different reasons. One reason was economic hardship because of which the people wanted to have fewer dependents so that they should not have to bear the burden of bringing up many children. Male offspring were brought up in the hope that they would later help in earning a living, but the female offspring were killed for the fear that they would have to be reared till they matured and then given away in marriage. Second, the widespread chaos because of which the male children were brought up in order to have more and more helpers and supporters; but daughters were killed because in tribal wars they had to be protected instead of being useful in any way for defense. Third, another aspect of the common chaos also was that when the hostile tribes raided each other and captured girls they would either keep them as slave-girls or sell them to others. For these reasons the practice that had become common in Arabia was that at childbirth a pit was kept dug out ready for use by the woman so that if a girl was born, she was immediately cast into it and buried alive. And if sometimes the mother was not inclined to act thus, or the people of the family disapproved of it, the father would rear her for some time half-heartedly, and then finding time would take her to the desert to be buried alive. This tyranny and hard-heartedness

was once described by a person before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself. According to a Hadith related in the first chapter of Sunan Darimi, a man came to the Holy Prophet and related this incident of his pre-Islamic days of ignorance: "I had a daughter who was much attached to me. When I called her, she would come running to me. One day I called her and took her out with me. On the way we came across a well. Holding her by the hand I pushed her into the well. Her last words that I heard were: Oh father, oh father!!" Hearing this the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) wept and tears started falling from his eyes One of those present on the occasion said: O man, you have grieved the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet said: Do not stop him, let him question about what he feels so strongly now. Then the Holy Prophet asked him to narrate his story once again. When he narrated it again the Holy Prophet wept so bitterly that his beard became we with tears. Then he said to the man: "Allah has forgiven that you did in the days of ignorance: now turn to Him in repentance.'

It is not correct to think that the people of Arabia had no feeling of the baseness of this hideous, inhuman act. Obviously, no society, however corrupted it may be, can be utterly devoid of the feeling that such tyrannical acts are evil. That is why the Holy Qur'an has not dwelt upon the vileness of this act, but has only referred to it in awe-inspiring words to the effect: "A time will come when the girl who was buried alive, will be asked for what crime she was slain?" The history of Arabia also shows that many people in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance had a feeling that the practice was vile and wicked. According to Tabarani, Sa`sa'ah bin Najiyah al-Mujashi`i, grandfather of the poet, Farazdaq, said to the Holy Prophet: "O Messenger of Allah, during the days of ignorance I have done some good works also among which one is that I saved 360 girls from being buried alive: I gave two camels each as ransom to save their lives. Shall I get any reward for this?" The Holy Prophet replied; "Yes, there is a reward for you, and it is this that Allah has blessed you with Islam."

As a matter of fact, a great blessing of the blessings of Islam is that it not only did put an end to this inhuman practice in Arabia but even wiped out the concept that the birth of a daughter was in any way a calamity, which should be endured unwillingly. On the contrary, Islam taught that bringing up daughters, giving them good education and enabling them to become good housewives, is an act of great merit and virtue. The way the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) changed the common concept of the people in respect of girls can be judged from his many sayings which have been reported in the Hadith. As for example, we reproduce some of these below:

"The person who is put to a test because of the birth of the daughters and then he treats them generously, they will become a means of rescue for him from Hell." (Bukhari, Muslim).

"The one who brought up two girls till they attained their maturity, will appear along with me on the Resurrection Day ... Saying this the Holy Prophet jointed and raised his fingers. (Muslim).

"The one who brought up three daughters, or sisters, taught then good manners and treated them with kindness until they became self-sufficient. Allah will make Paradise obligatory for him. A man asked: what

about two, O Messenger of Allah? The Holy Prophet replied: the same for two." Ibn `Abbas, the reporter of the Hadith, says: "Had the people at that time asked in respect of one daughter, the Holy Prophet would have also given the same reply about her. " (Sharh as-Sunnh).

"The one who has a daughter born to him and he does not bury her alive, nor keeps her in disgrace, nor prefers his son to her, Allah will admit him to Paradise." (Abu Da'ud).

"The one who has three daughters born to him, and he is patient over them, and clothes them well according to his means, they will become a means of rescue for him from Hell. " (Bukhari, Al-Adab al-Mufrad, Ibn Majah).

"The Muslim who has two daughters and he looks after them well, they will lead him to Paradise." (Bukhari: Al-Adab al-Mufrad).

This is the teaching which completely changed the viewpoint of the people about girls not only in Arabia but among all the nations of the world, which later become blessed with Islam.

10That is, everything which is hidden from view now will become visible. Now one can only see empty space, or the clouds, hanging dust, the moon, the sun or stars, but at that time the Kingdom of God will appear in full view before the people, without any veil in between, in its true reality.

11That is, in the Plain of Resurrection, when the hearing of the cases of the people will be in progress, the blazing fire of Hell also will be in full view, and Paradise also with all its blessings will be visible to all, so that the wicked should know what they are being deprived of and where they are going to be cast, and the righteous as well should know what they are being saved from and with what being blessed and honored.

12That is, "You are not correct that what is being presented in the Qur'an is the bragging of an insane person, or the evil suggestion of a devil."

13That for which the oath has been sworn, has been stated in the following verses. The oath means: "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has not seen a vision in darkness, but when the stars had disappeared, the night had departed and the bright morning had appeared, he had seen the Angel of God in the open sky. Therefore, what he tells you is based on his own personal observation and on the experience that he had in full senses in the full light of day."

14"A noble messenger": the Angel who brought down Revelation, as becomes explicit from the following verses. "The word of a noble messenger" does not mean that the Qur'an is the word of the Angel himself, but, as the context shows, of Him Who appointed him a messenger. In Al-Haaqqah: 40, likewise, the

Qur'an has been called the word of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), and there too it does not mean that it is the Holy Prophet's own composition, but describing it as "the word of an honorable messenger", it has been made clear that the Holy Prophet is presenting it in his capacity as the Messenger of God and not as Muhammad bin `Abdullah. At both places, the Word has been attributed to the Angel and to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) on the ground that the message of Allah was being delivered to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) by the Angel and to the people by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). (For further explanation, see E.N. 22 of Al-Haaqqah).

15Surah An-Najm: 45, deals with the same theme, thus "It is but a Revelation which is sent down to him. One, mighty in power, has taught him. " As to what is implied by the mighty powers of the Angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) is ambiguous. In any case it at least shows that he is distinguished even among the angels because of his extraordinary powers. In Muslim (kitab- al-iman) Hadrat `A'ishah has reported the Holy Prophet's saying to the effect: "I have twice seen Gabriel in his real shape and form: his glorious being was encompassing the whole space between the earth and the heavens." According to the tradition reported from Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud in Bukhari. Muslim, Tirmidhi and Musnad Ahmad, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had seen Gabriel with his six hundred wings. From this one can have an idea of his mighty powers.

16That is, he is the chief of the angels and all angels work under his command.

17That is, he is not one who would tamper with Divine Revelation, but is so trustworthy that he conveys intact whatever he receives from God.

18"Your Companion": the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace). Here, making mention of the Holy Prophet as the companion of the people of Makkah, they have been made to realize that the Holy Prophet was no stranger for them. He was not an outsider but a man of their own clan and tribe; he had lived his whole life among them; even their children knew that he was a very wise man. They should not be so shameless as to call such a man a mad man. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 2, 3 of An-Najm).

19In An-Najm: 7-9, this observation of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been described in greater detail, (For explanation, see E.N.'s 7. 8 of An-Najm).

20That is, "The Holy Messenger of Allah does not conceal anything from you. Whatever of the unseen realities are trade known to him by Allah, whether they relate to the essence and attributes of Allah, the angels, life after death and Resurrection, or to the Hereafter, Heaven and Hell, he conveys everything to you without change.

21That is, "You are wrong in thinking that some satan comes and whispers these words into the ear of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). It does not suit Satan that he should divert

man from polytheism, idol worship, atheism and sin and turn him to God-worship and Tauhid, make man realize that he should live a life of responsibility and accountability to God instead of living an irresponsible, care-free life, should forbid man to adopt practices of ignorance, injustice, immorality and wickedness and lead him to a clean life of justice, piety and high morals." (For further explanation, see Ash-Shua`ra': 210-212 along with E.N.'s 130 to 133, and w. 221-223 along with E.N.'s 140,141).

22In other words, although this is an Admonition for all mankind, only such a person can benefit by it, who is himself desirous of adopting piety and righteousness. Man's being a seeker after truth and a lover of right is the foremost condition of his gaining any benefit from it.

23This theme has already occurred in Al-Muddaththir: 56 and Ad-Dahr: 20 above. For explanation, see E. N. 41 of Al-Muddaththir.

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82. Surah Al Infitar (The Cleaving)

Name

It is derived from the word *infatarat* in the first verse. *Infitar* is an infinitive which means to cleave or split asunder, thereby implying that it is the Surah in which the splitting asunder of the sky has been mentioned.

Period of Revelation

This Surah and the Surah At-Takwir closely resemble each other in their subject matter. This shows that both were sent down in about the same period.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is the Hereafter. According to a tradition related in Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn al-Mundhir, Tabarani, Hakim and Ibn Marduyah, on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Umar, the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) said: "The one who wants that he should see the Resurrection Day as one would see it with one's eyes, should read Surah At-Takwir, Surah Al-Infitar and Surah Al-Inshiqaq."

In this Surah first the Resurrection Day has been described and it is said that when it occurs, every person will see whatever he has done in the world. After this, man has been asked to ponder the question: "O man, what has deluded you into thinking that the God, Who brought you into being and by Whose favor and bounty you possess the finest body, limbs and features among all creatures, is only bountiful and not just? His being bountiful and generous does not mean that you should become fearless of His justice."Then, man has been warned, so as to say: "Do not remain involved in any misunderstanding. Your complete record is being prepared. There are trustworthy writers who are writing down whatever you do." In conclusion, it has been forcefully stated that the Day of Resurrection will surely take place when the righteous shall enjoy every kind of bliss in Paradise and the wicked shall be punished in Hell. On that day no one shall avail anyone anything. All powers of judgment shall be with Allah.

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ ٱنفَطَرَتۡ ﴿١﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡكَوَاكِبُ ٱنتَثَرَتۡ ﴿٢﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتۡ ﴿٣﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلۡقُبُورُ بُعۡثِرَتۡ ﴿٤﴾

عَلِمَتۡ نَفۡسٞ مَّا قَدَّمَتۡ وَأَخَّرَتۡ ﴿٥﴾

[1-5] When the heaven is cleft asunder, and when the stars scatter, and when the seas are torn apart,[1] and when the graves are laid open.[2] Then every person shall know all his works, the former and the latter.[3]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلۡكَرِيمِ ﴿٦﴾

ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّىٰكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ﴿٧﴾

فِىٓ أَىِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَآءَ رَكَّبَكَ ﴿٨﴾

كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُونَ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿٩﴾

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَٰفِظِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

كِرَامًا كَٰتِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

[6-12] O man, what has beguiled you concerning your Lord, the gracious, Who created you, fashioned you, proportioned you, and put you together in whatever form He pleased?[4] Indeed not![5] But (the fact is that) you (O men) deny (the meting out of) rewards and punishments,[6] although watchers have been appointed over you, honorable scribes, who know whatever you do.[7]

إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾

وَإِنَّ ٱلْفُجَّارَ لَفِى جَحِيمٍ ﴿١٤﴾

يَصْلَوْنَهَا يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٥﴾

وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَآئِبِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٧﴾

ثُمَّ مَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٨﴾

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَٱلْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلَّهِ ﴿١٩﴾

[13-19] Surely the righteous shall be in bliss, and the wicked shall indeed go to Hell. They shall enter it on the Day of Recompense, and shall never be able to be absent from it. And what do you know what the Day of Recompense is? Yes, what do you know what the Day of Recompense is? It is a Day when no one shall have the power to do anything for another.[8] Judgment on that Day shall wholly rest with Allah.

1In Surah At-Takwir it has been said: "When the oceans are set ablaze," and here: "When the oceans are torn apart." When the two verses are read together, and this fact also is kept in view that even according to the Qur'an a terrible earthquake will occur on the Resurrection Day, which will shake up the entire earth all at once, the state of the splitting of the oceans and their being set ablaze ' seems to be as follows: first, because of the terrible convulsion, the bottom of the oceans will split asunder and their

water will start sinking into the interior of the earth where an intensely hot lava is constantly boiling up. Coming into contact with the lava, water will dissolve into its two constituent parts, oxygen which helps combustion, and hydrogen, which is itself combustible. Thus, in the process pf dissolution and combustion, a chain reaction will start, which will set all the oceans 'of the world ablaze. This is our conjecture, the correct knowledge is only with Allah.

2In the first three verses, the first stage of the Resurrection has been mentioned, and in this verse the second stage is being described. "Opening of the graves" implies resurrection of the dead then.

3The words ma qaddamat wa akhkharat can have several meanings and all are implied here:

(1) Ma qaddamat is the good or evil act which man has sent forward, and ma akhkharat is what he refrained from doing. Thus, these Arabic words correspond to the acts of commission and omission in one's life.

(2) Ma qaddainat is what one did earlier and ma akhkharat what one did later; i.e. the whole life-work of man will appear before him date-wise and in proper sequence

(3) Whatever good and evil deeds a man did in his life is ma qaddamat and whatever effects and influences of his acts he left behind for human society is ma akhkharat.

4That is, "In the first place, the bounty and favor of your Beneficent Sustainer required that you should have acknowledged his bounties and become an obedient servant and should have felt shy of disobeying Him, but you were deluded into thinking that you have become whatever you are by your own effort, and you never thought that you should acknowledge that favor of Him Who gave you life. Secondly, it is your Lord's bounty and kindness that you can freely do whatever you like in the world and it never so happens that whenever you happen to commit an error, He should punish you with paralysis, or blind your eyes, or cause lightning to strike you. But you took His bountifulness for weakness and were beguiled into thinking that the Kingdom of your God was devoid of justice "

5That is, "There is no reasonable ground for you to be deluded. Your own physical existence itself tells that you did not come into being by yourself; your parents also did not make you. Man also did not come about as a result of the elements combining together by themselves accidentally; but a Wise and Powerful God has composed you into this perfect human shape and form. There are other kinds of animals in the world compared with which your excellent form and structure and your superior powers and faculties stand out in sharp contrast. Reason demanded that in view of all this you should have submitted gratefully and should never have dared commit disobedience of your beneficent Sustainer. You also know that your Lord and Sustainer is not only Compassionate and Bountiful but Almighty and Omnipotent as well. When an earthquake, cyclone or flood occurs by His Command, all your devices and

measures tail to be effective. You also know that your Lord and Sustainer is not ignorant and foolish but Wise and knowing, and the necessary demand of wisdom and knowledge is that whoever is given intellect should also be held responsible for his acts; whoever is given powers should also be held accountable as to how he used those powers; and whoever is given the choice to do good or evil on his own responsibility, should also be rewarded for his good act and punished for his evil act. All these truths are clearly and plainly known to you; therefore, you cannot say that there exists a reasonable ground for you to be deluded concerning your Lord. Your own nature is sufficient evidence that the beneficence of the Master should never cause the servant to be fearless of Him, and be involved in the misunderstanding that he may do whatever he pleases, no one can harm him in any way.

6That is,"You have not been deluded and beguiled by any good reason but by your foolish concept that there is going to be no meting out of rewards and punishments after the life of this world. It is this wrong and baseless concept which has made you heedless of God, fearless of His justice and irresponsible in your moral attitude. "

7That is, "whether you deny the meting out of rewards and punishments, belie it, or mock it, the reality cannot change. The reality is .that your Lord has not left you to your self in the world, but has appointed over each one of you honest and upright guardians, who are recording objectively and faithfully all your good and evil acts, and none of your acts is hidden from them, whether you commit it in darkness, or in private, or in far off jungles, or in secret when you are fully satisfied that whatever you have done bas remained hidden from human eye. For these guardian angels Allah has used the words kiram-an katibin, i.e. writers who are honorable and noble They are neither attached in personal love with somebody, nor are inimical to anybody, so that they would prepare a fictitious record on the basis of their favoring one man and disfavoring another unduly. They are neither dishonest that without being present on duty they would make wrong entries by themselves; nor are they bribable so that they would take bribes and make false reports in favor of or against somebody. They are far above these moral weaknesses. Therefore, both the good and the bad people should be fully satisfied that each man's good acts will be recorded without any omission, and no one will have an evil act recorded in his account which he has not done. Then the second quality that has been mentioned of these angels is: "They know whatever you do " That is, they are not like the secret, intelligence agencies of the world, from which, despite all their search and scrutiny, many things remain hidden. They are fully aware of everyone's deeds. They accompany every person, at all places, under all conditions, in such a way that he himself does not know that someone is watching him, and they also know with what intention has somebody done a certain thing. Therefore the record prepared by them is a complete record in which nothing has been left un-recorded. About this very thing it has been said in Surah Al-Kahf 49: "Woe to us! What sort of a book it is, it has left nothing unrecorded of our doings, small or great. They will see before them everything, whatever they had done."

8That is, no one there will have the power to save anyone from suffering the consequences of his deeds; no one there will be so influential, strong, or such a favorite with Allah that he should behave stubbornly in the Divine Court and say: "Such and such a one is a close relative or associate of mine; he will have to

be forgiven, no matter what evils He might have committed in the world."

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83. Surah Al Mutaffifin (Those Who Deal in Fraud)

Name

It is derived from the very first verse; *Wayl-ul-lil mutaffifin*.

Period of Revelation

The style of the Surah and its subject matter clearly show that it was revealed in the earliest stage at Makkah, when surah after surah was being revealed to impress the doctrine of the Hereafter on the people's minds. This Surah was revealed when they had started ridiculing the Muslims and disgracing them publicly in the streets and in their assemblies, but persecution and manhandling of the Muslims had not yet started. Some commentators regard this as a Madani Surah. This misunderstanding has been caused by a tradition from Ibn Abbas according to which when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) arrived in Madinah, the evil of giving short weight and measure was widespread among the people there. Then Allah sent down *Wayl ul-lil mutaffifin* and the people began to give full weight and measure. (Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Marduyah, Ibn Jarir, Baihaqi: *Shu`ab-il-Iman*) But, as we have explained in the introduction to Surah Ad-Dahr, the common practice with the Companions and their successors was that when they found that a verse applied to a certain matter of life, they would say that it had been sent down concerning that particular matter. Therefore, what is proved by the tradition of Ibn Abbas is that when after his emigration to Madinah the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) saw that the evil was widespread among the people there, he recited this Surah before them by Allah's Command and this helped them mend their ways.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of this Surah too is the Hereafter. In the first six verses the people have been taken to task for the prevalent evil practice in their commercial dealings. When they had to receive their due from others, they demanded that it be given in full, but when they had to measure or weigh for others, they would give less than what was due. Taking this one evil as an example out of countless evils prevalent in society, it has been said that it is an inevitable result of the heedlessness of the Hereafter. Unless the people realized that one day they would have to appear before God and account for each single act they performed in the world, it was not possible that they would adopt piety and righteousness in their daily affairs. Even if a person might practice honesty in some of his less important

dealings in view of "honesty is the best policy," he would never practice honesty on occasions when dishonesty would seem to be "the best policy". Man can develop true and enduring honesty only when he fears God and sincerely believes in the Hereafter, for then he would regard honesty not merely as "a policy" but as "a duty" and obligation, and his being constant in it, or otherwise, would not be dependent on its being useful or useless in the world.

Thus, after making explicit the relation between morality and the doctrine of the Hereafter in an effective and impressive way, in vv. 7-17, it has been said: The deeds of the wicked are already being recorded in the black list of the culprits, and in the Hereafter they will meet with utter ruin. Then in vv. 18-28, the best end of the virtuous has been described and it has been laid that their deeds are being recorded in the list of the exalted people, on which are appointed the angels nearest to Allah.

In conclusion, the believers have been consoled, and the disbelievers warned, as if to say: "The people who are disgracing and humiliating the believers today, are culprits who, on the Resurrection Day, will meet with a most evil end in consequence of their conduct, and these very believers will feel comforted when they see their fate."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ﴿١﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ٱكْتَالُوا۟ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ﴿٢﴾

وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَو وَّزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ﴿٣﴾

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَٰٓئِكَ أَنَّهُم مَّبۡعُوثُونَ ٤

لِيَوۡمٍ عَظِيمٖ ٥

يَوۡمَ يَقُومُ ٱلنَّاسُ لِرَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٦

[1-6] Woe to those who give short weight,[1] who, when they take by measure from others, take it fully, and when they measure or weigh for them, they give them less than what is due.[2] Do they not think that they will be raised up again on a Great Day?[3] The Day when all mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds.

كَلَّآ إِنَّ كِتَٰبَ ٱلۡفُجَّارِ لَفِي سِجِّينٖ ٧

وَمَآ أَدۡرَىٰكَ مَا سِجِّينٞ ٨

كِتَٰبٞ مَّرۡقُومٞ ٩

وَيۡلٞ يَوۡمَئِذٖ لِّلۡمُكَذِّبِينَ ١٠

ٱلَّذِينَ يُكَذِّبُونَ بِيَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١١﴾

وَمَا يُكَذِّبُ بِهِۦٓ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿١٢﴾

إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَٰتُنَا قَالَ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

كَلَّا ۖ بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا۟ ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٦﴾

ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى كُنتُم بِهِۦ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

[7-17] Indeed not![4] Surely the records of the wicked are in the Prison Register[5] and what do you know what the Prison Register is? It is a written book. Woe on that Day to the beliers who belie the Day of Recompense, and none belies it but every sinful transgressor. When Our Revelations are recited to him,[6] he says: "These are tales of the ancient times." By no means! But the fact is that their evil deeds have stained their hearts.[7] By no means! Surely on that Day they shall be debarred from their Lord's vision.[8] Then they shall enter Hell. Then it will be said to them,

"This is the very thing you used to belie."

كَلَّآ إِنَّ كِتَٰبَ ٱلْأَبْرَارِ لَفِى عِلِّيِّينَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا عِلِّيُّونَ ﴿١٩﴾

كِتَٰبٌ مَّرْقُومٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

يَشْهَدُهُ ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

تَعْرِفُ فِى وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٢٤﴾

يُسۡقَوۡنَ مِن رَّحِيقٖ مَّخۡتُومٖ ٢٥

خِتَٰمُهُۥ مِسۡكٞۚ وَفِي ذَٰلِكَ فَلۡيَتَنَافَسِ ٱلۡمُتَنَٰفِسُونَ ٢٦

وَمِزَاجُهُۥ مِن تَسۡنِيمٍ ٢٧

عَيۡنٗا يَشۡرَبُ بِهَا ٱلۡمُقَرَّبُونَ ٢٨

[18-28] Indeed not![9] Surely the record of the righteous is in the Register of the exalted ones. And do you know what is the Register of the exalted ones? It is a written book, guarded by the angels nearest to Allah. Surely the righteous shall be in bliss; seated on high couches they shall be looking around. In their faces you shall mark the glow of bliss. They shall be given to drink the choicest, sealed wine whose seal shall be musk.[10] Those who wish to excel others, let them endeavor to excel in this. That wine shall have the mixture of Tasnim.[11] This is a fountain with the waters of which those nearest to Allah shall drink wine.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أَجۡرَمُواْ كَانُواْ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ يَضۡحَكُونَ ٢٩

وَإِذَا مَرُّواْ بِهِمۡ يَتَغَامَزُونَ ٣٠

وَإِذَا ٱنقَلَبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِمُ ٱنقَلَبُواْ فَكِهِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

وَإِذَا رَأَوۡهُمۡ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَضَآلُّونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَمَآ أُرۡسِلُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡ حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

فَٱلۡيَوۡمَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنَ ٱلۡكُفَّارِ يَضۡحَكُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

عَلَى ٱلۡأَرَآئِكِ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

هَلۡ ثُوِّبَ ٱلۡكُفَّارُ مَا كَانُواْ يَفۡعَلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

[29-36] The culprits used to laugh at the believers in the world. They would wink at one another when they passed by them. When they returned to their kinsfolk they returned jesting.[12] And when they saw them, they would say, "These are the people gone astray,"[13] although they had not been sent to be guardians over them.[14] Today the believers are laughing at the disbelievers, as they recline on couches and gaze at them. Have not the disbelievers been duly rewarded for what they used to do?[15]

1In the original the word mutaffifin has been used, which is derived from tatfif, a word used for an inferior and base thing in Arabic. Terminologically, tatfif is used for giving short weight and short measure fraudulently, for the person who acts thus while measuring or weighing, does not defraud another by any substantial amount, but skimps small amounts from what is due to every customer cleverly, and the poor

customer does not know of what and of how much he is being deprived by the seller.

2At several places in the Qur'an giving of short measure and weight has been condemned and measuring fully and weighing rightly has been stressed. In Surah Al-An'am, it has been enjoined: "You should use a full measure and a just balance. We charge one only with that much responsibility that one can bear." (v. 152). In Surah Bani Isra'il it has been said: "Give full measure when you measure and weigh with even scales." (v. 35). In Surah Ar-Rehman it has been stressed: Do not upset the balance: weigh with equity and do not give short weight." (vv. 8-9). The people of the Prophet Shu`aib were punished for the reason that the evil of giving short measure and weight had become widespread among them and in spite of his counsel and advice they did not refrain from it.

3"A Great Day": the Day of Resurrection when all men and jinn will be called to account together in the Divine Court and decisions of vital importance will be made pertaining to rewards and punishments."

4That is, "These people are wrong in thinking that they will be let off without being called to account when they have committed such and such crimes in the world. "

5The word sijjin in the original is derived from sijn (a prison) and the explanation of it that follows shows that it implies the general Register in which the actions and deeds of the people worthy of punishment are being recorded.

6"Our Revelations": those verses in which news of the Day of Recompense has been given.

7That is, they have no good reason for regarding the meting out of rewards and punishments as unreal. What has made them say this, is that their hearts have become rusty because of their sins; therefore, a thing which is thoroughly reasonable appears unreal and unreasonable to them. The explanation of this rust as given by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) is as follows: "When a servant commits a sin, it marks a black stain on his heart. If he offers repentance, the stain is washed off, but if he persists in wrongdoing. it spreads over the whole heart." (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Jarir, Hakim, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Hibban and others).

8That is, these people will remain deprived of the vision of Allah with which the righteous will be blessed. (For further explanation, see E.N. 17 of Al - Qiyamah).

9That is, they are wrong in thinking that there is going to be no meting out of rewards and punishments.

10One meaning of the words khltamu-hu misk is that the vessels containing the wine will carry the seal of musk instead of clay or wax. Accordingly the verse means: This will be the choicest kind of wine, which will be superior to the wine flowing in the canals, and it will be served by the attendants of Paradise in

vessels sealed with musk to the dwellers of Paradise. Another meaning also can be: When that wine will pass down the throat, its final effect will be of the flavor of musk. This state is contrary to the wines of the world which give out an offensive smell as soon as the bottle opens and one feels its horrid smell even while drinking and also when it passes down the throat.

11"Tasnim ".: height. Thus, Tasnim will be a fountain flowing down from a height.

12That is, they returned home rejoicing, thinking that they had made fun of such and such a Muslim, had passed evil remarks against him and subjected him to ridicule among the people.

13That is, they have lost their reason: they have deprived themselves of the gains and enjoyments of the world and have experienced dangers and undergone hardships only for the reason that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has deluded them with the Hereafter, Heaven and Hell. They are giving up whatever is present and here on the false hope that the promise of some Paradise has been held out to them after death, and they are enduring the hardships in the present life only for the reason that they have been threatened with some Hell in the next world.

14In this brief sentence the mockers and jesters have been given an instructive warning to the effect: "Even if what the Muslims have believed in, is false, they are not harming you at all They regard something as we and are accordingly adopting a certain moral attitude for themselves, for their own good. Allah has not appointed you to be keepers over them so that you may be free to criticize and persecute those who are not harming you in any way."

15There is a subtle satire in this sentence. In the world, the disbelievers used to persecute the believers, thinking it was an act of virtue. In the Hereafter, the believers will be enjoying life in Paradise, and watching the disbelievers being punished in Hell, will say to themselves what a reward they have earned for their acts of virtue!

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84. Surah Inshiqaq (The Splitting)

Name

It is derived from the word *inshaqqat* in the first verse. *Inshaqqat* is infinitive which means to split asunder, thereby implying that it is the Surah in which mention has been made of the splitting asunder of the heavens.

Period of Revelation

This too is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah. The internal evidence of its subject matter indicates that persecution of the Muslims had not yet started; however, the message of the Qur'an was being openly repudiated at Makkah and the people were refusing to acknowledge that Resurrection would ever take place when they would have to appear before their God to render an account of their deeds.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is the Resurrection and Hereafter.

In the first five verses not only have the state of Resurrection been described vividly but an argument of its being true and certain also have been given. It has been stated that the heavens on that Day will split asunder, the earth will be spread out plain and smooth, and it will throw out whatever lies inside it of the dead bodies of men and evidences of their deeds so as to become completely empty from within. The argument given for it is that such will be the Command of their Lord for the heavens and the earth; since both are His creation. they cannot dare disobey His Command. For them the only right and proper course is that they should obey the Command of their Lord.

Then, in vv 6-19 it has been said that whether man Is conscious of this fact or not, he in any case is moving willy nilly to the destination when he will appear and stand before his Lord. At that time all human beings will divide into two parts: first those whose records will be given in their right hands: they will be forgiven without any severe reckoning; second those whose records will be given them behind their back. They will wish that they should die somehow, but they will not die; instead they will be cast into Hell. They will meet with this fate because in the world

they remained lost in the misunderstanding that they would never have to appear before God to render an account of their deeds, whereas their Lord was watching whatever they were doing, and there was no reason why they should escape the accountability for their deeds. Their moving gradual]y from the life of the world to the meting out of rewards and punishments in the Hereafter was as certain as the appearance of twilight after sunset, the coming of the night after the day, the returning of men and animals to their respective abodes at night, and the growing of the crescent into full moon.

In conclusion, the disbelievers who repudiate the Qur'an instead of bowing down to God when they hear it, have been forewarned of a grievous punishment and the good news of limitless rewards has been given to the believers and the righteous.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِذَا ٱلسَّمَآءُ ٱنشَقَّتْ ﴿١﴾

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ﴿٢﴾

وَإِذَا ٱلْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ ﴿٣﴾

وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ ﴿٤﴾

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ﴿٥﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمُلَٰقِيهِ ﴿٦﴾

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ﴿٧﴾

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ مَسْرُورًا ﴿٩﴾

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِىَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ وَرَآءَ ظَهْرِهِۦ ﴿١٠﴾

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُواْ ثُبُورًا ﴿١١﴾

وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾

إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فِىٓ أَهۡلِهِۦ مَسۡرُورًا ﴿١٣﴾

إِنَّهُۥ ظَنَّ أَن لَّن يَحُورَ ﴿١٤﴾

بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّ رَبَّهُۥ كَانَ بِهِۦ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٥﴾

[1-15] When the heaven splits asunder, and obeys its Lord's Command,[1] as in truth it must (obey its Lord's Command). And when the earth is spread out,[2] and throws out whatever is within it, and becomes empty,[3] and obeys its Lord's Command, as in truth it must (obey the Command).[4] O man, you are moving on towards your Lord, willy nilly,[5] and are about to meet Him. Then he whose record is given in his right hand, shall have an easy reckoning,[6] and he shall return to his kinsfolk rejoicing.[7] As for him whose record is given him behind his back,[8] he shall call for death and shall enter a blazing Fire. For he lived among his kinsfolk, completely absorbed,[9] and deemed he would never return. Why not! His Lord was ever watching his misdeeds.[10]

فَلَآ أُقۡسِمُ بِٱلشَّفَقِ ﴿١٦﴾

وَٱلَّيۡلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَٱلۡقَمَرِ إِذَا ٱتَّسَقَ ﴿١٨﴾

لَتَرۡكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٖ ١٩

فَمَا لَهُمۡ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ ٢٠

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانُ لَا يَسۡجُدُونَۜ ٢١

بَلِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ يُكَذِّبُونَ ٢٢

وَٱللَّهُ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ ٢٣

فَبَشِّرۡهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٢٤

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمۡ أَجۡرٌ غَيۡرُ مَمۡنُونِۭ ٢٥

[16-25] So no! I swear by the twilight and the night and what it gathers together, and the moon when it grows full, that you have surely to pass from one state to another gradually.[11] Then, what is the matter with these people that they do not believe, and when the Qur'an is recited before them, they do not fall prostrate?[12] But, on the contrary, the disbelievers deny, although Allah knows best what they are collecting (in their record).[13] Therefore, give them the good news of a painful torment. However, those who have believed and done righteous deeds, shall have a

reward that will never fail.

1Literally: "... and hears its Lord's Command." However, according to Arabic usage adhina lahu does not only mean: "He heard the Command but it means: "Hearing the Command he carried it out promptly like an obedient servant. "

2"When the earth is spread out": when the oceans and rivers are filled up, the mountains are crushed to pieces and scattered away, and the earth is leveled and turned into a smooth plain. In Surah Ta Ha, the same thing has been expressed, thus: "He will turn the earth into an empty level plain, wherein you will neither see any curve nor crease." (vv 106-107) Hakim in Mustadrak has related through authentic channels on the authority of Hadrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah a saying of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to the effect: "On the Resurrection Day the earth will be flattened out and spread out like the table-cloth; then there will hardly be room on it for men to place their feet." To understand this saying one should keep in mind the fact that out that Day all men who will have been born from the first day of creation till Resurrection, will be resurrected simultaneously and produced in the Divine Court. For gathering together such a great multitude of the people it is inevitable that the oceans, rivers, mountains, jungles, ravines and all high and low areas be leveled and the entire globe of the earth be turned into a vast plain so that all individuals of human race may have room on it to stand on their feet.

3That is, it will throw out all dead bodies of men and also the traces and evidences of their deeds lying within it. so that nothing remains hidden and buried in it.

4Here, it has not been expressly told what will happen when such and such an event takes place, for the subsequent theme by itself explains this, as if to say: "O man, you are moving towards your Lord and are about to meet Him; you will be given your conduct book; and rewarded or punished according to your deeds."

5That is, "You may if you so like think that all your efforts and endeavors in the world are confined to worldly life and motivated by worldly desires, yet the truth is that you are moving, consciously or unconsciously, towards your Lord and you have ultimately to appear before Him in any case.."

6That is, his reckoning will be less severe: he will not be asked why he had done such and such a thing and what excuses he had to offer for it. Though his evil deeds also will be there along with his good deeds in his records, his errors will be overlooked and pardoned in view of his outweighing good deeds. In the Holy Qur'an, for the severe reckoning of the wicked people the words su-al-hisab (heavy reckoning) have been used (Ar-Ra'd: 18), and concerning the righteous it has been said: "From such people We accept the best of their deeds and overlook their evils." (Al-Ahqaf: 16). The explanation of it given by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been related in different words by Imam Ahmad Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Abu Da'ud, Hakim, Ibn Jarir, `Abd bin Humaid, and Ibn Marduyah on

the authority of Hadrat 'A'ishah. According to one of these traditions the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Doomed will be he who is called to account for his deeds. Hadrat 'A'ishah said: O Messenger of Allah, has not Allah said: 'He whose record is given in his right hand shall have an easy reckoning?' The Holy Prophet replied: That is only about the presentation of the deeds, but the one who is questioned would be doomed." In another tradition Hadrat 'A'ishah has related: "I once heard the Holy Prophet supplicate during the prayer, thus: O God, call me to a light reckoning. When he brought his Prayer to conclusion, I asked what he meant by that supplication. He replied: Light reckoning means that one's conduct book will be seen and one's errors will be overlooked. O 'A'ishah, the one who is called to account for his deeds on that Day, would be doomed.

7"His kinsfolk": his family and relatives and companions who will have been pardoned even like himself.

8In Surah Al Haaqqah: 25, it was said that his record will be given him in his left hand but here "behind his back. ! This will probably be for the reason that he would already have lost all hope that he would be given his record in his right hand, for he would be well aware of his misdeeds and sure to receive his record in his left hand. However, in order to avoid the humiliation of receiving it in the left hand, in front of all mankind, he will withdraw his hand behind and so would receive it 'behind his back."

9That is, his way of life was different from that of God's righteous men, about whom in Surah At-Tur: 26, it has been said that they lived among their kinsfolk in fear and dread of God, i.e. they fear lest they should ruin their own Hereafter on account of their absorption in the love of children and endeavors for the sake of their well-being and prosperity in the world. On the contrary, this man lived a life free from every care and worry and helped his children and kinsfolk also to enjoy life fully, no matter what wicked and immoral methods he had to use to procure the means of enjoyment, how he had to usurp the rights of others and transgress the bounds set by Allah for the sake of the worldly pleasures.

10That is, it was against God's justice and His wisdom that He should overlook the misdeeds that he was committing and should not summon him before Himself to render his account of the deeds.

11That is, "You will not remain in one and the same state, but will have to pass through countless stages gradually, from youth to old age, from old age to death, from death to barzakh (the intermediary state between death and Resurrection), from barzakh to Resurrections from Resurrection to the Plain of Assembly, then to the Reckoning, and then to the meting out of rewards and punishments. An oath has been sworn by three things to confine this:

(1) by the twilight,

(2) by the darkness of night and the gathering together in it of all those human beings and animals who remain scattered in the day time, and

(3) by the moon's passing through different phases to become full. These are some of those things which testify that rest and stillness is unknown in the universe in which man lives. There is a continuous and gradual change taking place everywhere. Therefore, the disbelievers are wrong in thinking that life comes to an end after man has breathed his last.

12"They do not fall prostrate": they do not bow down to God out of fear of Him. To perform a sajdah (prostration) here is confirmed by the practice of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). lmam Malik, Muslim and Nasa'i have related a tradition concerning Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him), saying that he recited this Surah in the Prayer and performing a sajdah here said: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) performed a sajdah at this point." Bukhari; Muslim, Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i have cited this statement of Abu Rafi`: "Hadrat Abu Huraira recited this Surah in the 'Isha' Prayer and performed a sajdah When I asked why he had done so, he replied: I prayed under the leadership of Abul Qasim (upon whom be Allah's peace) and he performed a sajdah here. Therefore, I will continue to perform this sajdah likewise as long as 1 live." Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and others have related another tradition saying that Hadrat Abu Huraira said: "We performed sajdah behind the Holy Messenger of Allah in this Surah and in Iqra' bi-ismi Rabbik-alladhi khalaq.

13Another meaning also can be: "Allah knows best what tilth of disbelief, malice, hostility to the Truth and evil intentions and designs they keep tilled in their breasts."

85. Surah Al Burooj (The Constellations)

Name

The Surah is so designated after the word *al buruj* appearing in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

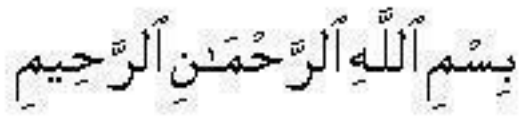
The subject matter itself indicates that this Surah was sent down at Makkah in the period when persecution of the Muslims was at its climax and the disbelievers of Makkah were trying their utmost by tyranny and coercion to turn away the new converts from Islam.

Theme and Subject Matter

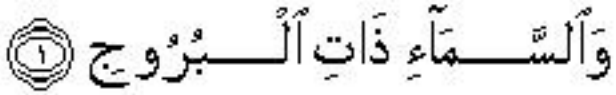
Its theme is to warn the disbelievers of the evil consequences of the persecution and tyranny that they were perpetrating on the converts to Islam, and to console the believers, so as to say: "If you remain firm and steadfast against tyranny and coercion, you will be rewarded richly for it, and Allah will certainly avenge Himself on your persecutors on your behalf."

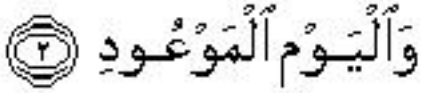
In this connection, first of all the story of the people of the ditch (*ashab al-ukhdud*) had been related, who had burnt the believers to death by casting them into pits full of fire. By means of this story the believers and the disbelievers have been taught a few lessons. First, that just as the people of the ditch became worthy of Allah's curse and punishment, so are the chiefs of Makkah also becoming worthy of it. Second, that just as the believers at that time had willingly accepted to sacrifice their lives by being burnt to death in the pits of fire instead of turning away from the faith, so also the believers now should endure every persecution but should never give up the faith. Third, that Gods acknowledging Whom displeases the disbelievers and is urged on by the believers, is Dominant and Master of the Kingdom of the earth and heavens; He is self-praiseworthy and is watching what the two groups are striving for. Therefore, it is certain that the disbelievers will not only be punished in Hell for their disbelief but, more than that, they too will suffer punishment by fire as a fit recompense for their tyranny and cruelties. Likewise, this also is certain that those, who believe and follow up their belief with good deeds, should go to Paradise and this indeed is the supreme success. Then the disbelievers have been warned, so as to say: "God's grip is very severe. If

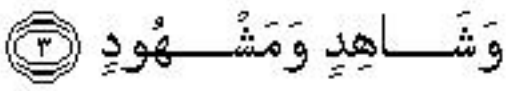
you are proud of the strength of your hosts, you should know that the hosts of Pharaoh and Thamud were even stronger and more numerous. Therefore, you should learn a lesson from the fate they met. God's power has so encompassed you that you cannot escape His encirclement, and the Qur'an that you are bent upon belying, is unchangeable: it is inscribed in the Preserved Tablet, which cannot be corrupted in any way."

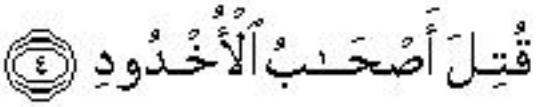

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

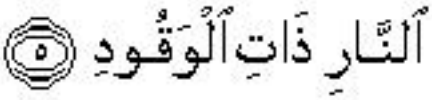
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.


وَٱلسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ ٱلْبُرُوجِ ﴿١﴾


وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْمَوْعُودِ ﴿٢﴾


وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ ﴿٣﴾


قُتِلَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْأُخْدُودِ ﴿٤﴾


ٱلنَّارِ ذَاتِ ٱلْوَقُودِ ﴿٥﴾

إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ ﴿٦﴾

وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ ﴿٧﴾

وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَن يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿٨﴾

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٩﴾

[1-9] By the heaven with its strong forts,[1] and the promised Day,[2] and the seer and that which is seen.[3] Doomed were the people of the ditch, which had the fire fed by the intensely blazing fuel, when they were sitting by the ditch and witnessing what they were doing with the believers.[4] And their enmity against the believers was for no other reason than that they had believed in that Allah Who is the All-Mighty the Self-Praiseworthy, Who is the Owner of the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth: and Allah is watching over everything.[5]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٠﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

[10-11] For those who persecuted the believing men and women and did not repent of it, there is the torment of Hell and the punishment of burning.[6] As for those who believed and did good deeds, there are Gardens for them beneath which canals will be flowing. This is the supreme success!

إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾

إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ ﴿١٣﴾

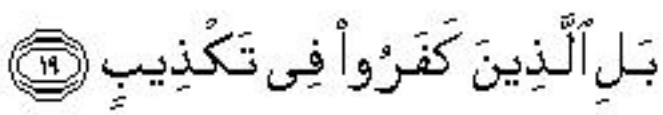
وَهُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلْوَدُودُ ﴿١٤﴾

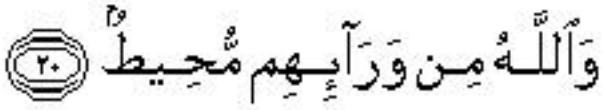
ذُو ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْمَجِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾

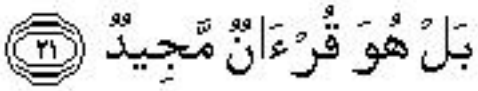
فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٦﴾

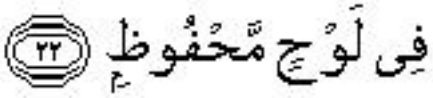
هَلْ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ ٱلْجُنُودِ ﴿١٧﴾

فِرْعَوْنَ وَثَمُودَ ﴿١٨﴾









[12-22] Indeed, the grip of your Lord is very severe. It is He Who creates in the first instance, and He it is Who will create again. And He is the All-Forgiving, the All-Loving, Owner of the Throne, the Exalted and Doer of whatever He wills.[7] Has the story of the hosts reached you, (of the hosts of) Pharaoh and Thamud?[8] But those who disbelieve, persist in denying, although Allah has encircled them. (Their denial does not affect the Qur'an at all), for this Qur'an is sublime: it is (inscribed) in the Tablet that is preserved.[9]

1Literally: "By the heaven having constellations." Some of the commentators have interpreted it to mean the twelve signs of the zodiac in the heavens according to ancient astronomy, However, according to Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, Hasan Basri, Dahhak and Suddi it implies the glorious stars and platters of the sky.

2That is, the Day of Resurrection.

3The commentators have expressed many different views about "the seer" and "that which is seen". In our opinion what fits in well with the context is that the seer is every such person who will witness the Day of Resurrection and that which is seen is the Resurrection itself, the dreadful scenes of which will be seen by all This is the view of Mujahid. 'Ikrimah, Dahhak, lbn Nujaih and some other commentators.

4"The people of the ditch": those who had burnt the believers at stake and witnessed their burning themselves. "Doomed were...": cursed were they by God and they became worthy of Hell torment. On

this an oath has been sworn by Three things:

(1) By the heaven having constellations,

(2)by the Day of Resurrection, which has been promised, and

(3) by the dreadful scenes of the Day of Resurrection and all those creatures who will witness those scenes.

The first of these testifies to the truth that the Sovereign, Absolute Being Who is ruling over the glorious stars and planets of the universe, cannot allow this contemptible, insignificant creature called man to escape His grip. The second thing has been sworn by on the basis that the wicked people committed whatever tyranny they wanted to commit, but the Day of which men have been fore-warned is sure to come when the grievances of every wronged person will be redressed and every wrongdoer will be brought to book and punished. The third thing has been sworn by for the reason that just as these wicked people enjoyed witnessing the burning of the helpless believers, so will all human beings on the Day of Resurrection witness how they are taken to task and burnt in Hell.

Several events have been mentioned in the traditions of the believers having been thrown into pits of blazing fire, which show that such tyrannies have been inflicted many a time in history.

One of the events has beets reported by Hadrat Suhaib Rumi from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), saying that a king had a magician at his court who cm becoming old requested the king to appoint a boy who should learn magic from him. Accordingly the king appointed a boy. But the boy while going to the magician's place and coming hack home also started visiting on the way a monk (who was probably a follower of the Prophet Jesus) and being influenced by his teaching turned a believer. So much so that by his training he acquired miraculous powers. He would heal the blind and cure the lepers. When the king came to know that the boy had behaved in the Unity of God, he first put the monk to the sword: the+ wanted to kill the boy, but no instrument and no device had any effect on him. At last, the boy said to the king: "If you are bent upon killing me, shoot an arrow at me with the word: Bi-ismi Rahhil-ghulam (in the name of this boy's Lord) in front of the assembled people. and I shall die." The king did as he was told and the boy died. There upon the people cried out that they affirmed faith in the Lord of the boy. The courtiers told the king that the same precisely had happened which Ire wanted to avoid: the people had forsaken his religion and adopted the boy's religion. At this the king was filled with rage. Consequently, hr got pits dug out along the roads, got them tilled with tire and ordered all those who refused to renounce the new faith to he thrown into the tire. (Ahmad, Muslim. Nasa'i, TIrmidhi, Ibn Jarir. 'Abdur Razzaq. Ibn Abi Shaibah, Tabarani. 'Ahd hin Humaid)

The second event has been reported from Hadrat 'Ali. He says that a king of lean drank wine and committed adultery with his sister resulting in illicit relations between the two. When the secret became

known, the king got the announcement made that God had permitted marriage with the sister. When the people refused to believe in it, hr started coercing them into accepting by different kinds of punishment; so much so that he began to cast into the pits of fire every such person who refused to concede it. According to Hadrat 'AIi, marriage with the prohibited relations among the fire worshipers has begun since then (Ibn Jarir).

The third event has been related by lbn 'Abbas probably on the hasin of the Israelite traditions, saying that the people of Babylon had compelled the children of Israel to give up the religion of the Prophet Moses (peace he upon himl: so much so that they cast into pits of tire all those who refused to obey. Ibn Jarir, 'Ahd bin Humaid).

The best known event, how ever, relates to Najran. which has been related by Ibn Hisham, Tabari. Ibn Khaldun. the author of Mujam al-Buldan and other Islamic historians. Its resume is as follows: Tuban Asad Abu Karib, king of Himyar (Yaman), went to Yathrib once where he embraced Judaism under the influence of the Jews, and brought two of the Jewish scholars of Bani Quraizah with him to Yaman. There hr propagated Judaism widely. His son Dhu Nuwas succeeded him and hr attacked Najran which was a stronghold of the Christians in southern Arabia so as to eliminate Christianity and make the people accept Judaism. Ibn Hisham says that these people were true followers of the Gospel of the Prophet Jesus) In Najran hr invited the people to accept Judaism but they refused to obey. There upon hr caused a large number of the people to he burnt in the ditches of fire and slew many others with the sword until he had killed nearly twenty thousand of them. Daus Dhu Tha laban an inhabitant of Najran escaped and went. according to one tradition. to the Byzantine emperor, and according to another. to the Negus king of Abyssinia, and told him what had happened

According to the first tradition, the emperor wrote to the king of Abyssinia, and according to the second, the Negus requested the emperor to provide him with a naval force. In any case; an Abyssinian army consisting of seventy thousand soldiers under a general called Aryat, attacked Yaman, Dhu Nuwas was killed, the Jewish rule came to an end, and Yaman become a part of the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia.

The statements of the Islamic historians are not only confirmed by other historical means but they also give many more details. Yaman first came under the Christian Abyssinian domination in 340 A.D. and this domination continued till 378 A.D. The Christian missionaries started entering Yaman in that period. About the same time, a man named Faymiyun (Phemion), who was a righteous, earnest, ascetic man and possessed miraculous powers, arrived in Yaman and by his preaching against idol-worship converted the people of Najran to Christianity. These people were ruled by three chiefs: Sayyid, who was the principal chief like the tribal elders and responsible for external affairs, political agreements and command of the forces, 'Aqib, who looked after the internal affairs and Usquf (Bishop), the religious guide. In southern Arabia Najran commanded great importance, being a major trade and industrial center with tussore, leather and the armament industries. The well-known Yarnanite wrapper and cloak (hulls Yamani) was also manufactured here. On this very basis, Dhu Nuwas attacked this important place not

only for religious but also for political and economic reasons. He put to death Harithah (called Arethas by the Syrian historians), Sayyid of Najrain, killed his two daughters in front of his wife Romah and compelled her to drink their blood and then put even her to death. He took out the bones of Bishop Paul from the' grave and burns them, and ordered women, men, children, aged people, priests and monks, all to be thrown into the pits of fire. The total number of the people thus killed has been estimated between twenty and forty thousand. This happened in October, 523 A.D. At last, in 525 A.D. the Abyssinians attacked Yaman and put an end to Dhu Nuwas and his Himyarite kingdom. This is confirmed by the Hisn Ghurab inscription which the modern archaeologists have unearthed in Yaman.

In several Christian writings of the 6th century A.D. details of the event relating to the people of the ditch" have been given, some of which are contemporary and reported from eye-witnesses. Authors of three of these books were contemporaries with the event. They were Procopeus, Cosmos Indicopleustis, who was translating Greek book of Ptolemy under command of the Negus Elesboan at that time and resided at Adolis, a city on the sea-coast of Abyssinia, and Johannes Malala froth whom several of the later historians have related this event. After this, Johannes of Ephesus (d. 585 A.D) has related the story of the persecution of the Christians of Najran in his history of the Church from a letter of Bishop Mar Simeon who was a contemporary reporter of this event. Mar Simeon wrote this letter to Abbot von Gabula; in it Simeon has reported this event with reference to the statements of the Yarnanite eye-witnesses present on the occasion. This letter was published in 1881 A.D from Rome and in 1890 A.D. in the memoirs of the martyrs of Christianity Jacobian Patriarch Dionysius and Zacharia of Mitylene have in their Syriac histories also related this event. Ya`qub Saruji also in his book about the Christians of Najran has made mention of it. Bishop Pulus of Edessa's elegy on those who perished in Najran, is still extant. An English translation of the Syriac kitab al-Himyarin (Book of the Himyarites) was published in 1924 from London, which confirms the statements of the Muslim historians. In the British Museum there are some Abyssinian manuscripts relating to that period or a period close to it, which support this story. Philby in his travelogue entitled "Arabian Highlands", writes: Among the people of Najran the place is still well known where the event of the people of the ditch (ashab al-ukhdud) had taken place. Close by Umm Kharaq there can still be seen some pictures carved in the rocks, and the present day people of Najran also know the place where the cathedral of Najran stood.

The Abyssinian Christians after capturing Najran had built a church here resembling the Ka`bah, by which they wanted to divert pilgrimage from the Ka`bah at Makkah to it. Its priests and keepers wore turbans and regarded it as a sacred sanctuary. The Roman empire also sent monetary aid for this "ka`bah". The priests of this very "Ka`bah" of Najran had visited the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) under the leadership of their Sayyid, `Aqib and Bishop for a discussion with him and the famous event of the mubahala (trial through prayer) took place as referred to in Al-Imran: 61. (For details. see E.N.'s 29 and 55 of Al-Imran)

5In these verses those of Allah Almighty's attributes have been mentioned on account of which He alone deserves that one should believe in Him, and the people who feel displeased at one's believing in Him,

are wicked and unjust.

6"Punishment by burning" has been mentioned separately from the torment of Hell because they had burnt the oppressed people to death by casting them into the pits of fire. Probably this will be a different and severer kind of fire from the fire of Hell in which those people will be burnt.

7"He is All-Forgiving": If a person repents and reforms himself, he can hope to be received by Allah in His mercy. "He is All-Loving", i.e. He has no enmity with His creatures that he would subject them to torment without any reason, but He loves the creatures He has created and punishes them only when they do not give up the attitude of rebellion against Him. "Owner of the Throne" means that He alone is the Ruler of the Kingdom of the Universe: no one who is a rebel can escape His grip and punishment The mention of His being "Exalted" is meant to warn man for his meanness when he adopts an attitude of arrogance against such a Being. Last of all, "He is Doer of whatever He wills": no one in the entire universe has the power to obstruct and resist what Allah wills to do.

8The address is directed to the people who in their false pride of having powerful hosts, are breaking the law of God on His earth. They are being warned. as if to say: "Do you know what evil fate was stet before by those who broke the hounds set by Allah on the strength of the power of their hosts”

9That is, "The writ of the Qur'an is unchangeable and imperishable. It is inscribed in the Preserved Tablet of God. which cannot he corrupted in any way Whatever is written in it, has to be fulfilled: even the whole world together cannot avert its fulfillment.

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86. Surah Al Tariq (The Morning Star)

Name

The Surah taken its name from the word *at-tariq* in its first verse.

Period of Revelation

The style of its subject matter resembles that of the earliest Surahs revealed at Makkah, but this surah was sent down at a stage when the disbelievers of Makkah were employing all sorts of devices and plans to defeat and frustrate the message of the Qur'an and Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

Theme and Subject Matter

It discuses two themes: first that man has to appear before God after death; second, that the Qur'an is a decisive Word which no plan or device of the disbelievers can defeat or frustrate.

First of all, the stars of the heavens have been cited as an evidence that there is nothing in the universe which may continue to exist and survive without guardian over it. Then man has been asked to consider his own self as to how he has been brought into existence from a mere sperm drop and shaped into a living human being. Then it has been said that the God, Who has so brought him into existence, has certainly the power to create him once again, and this resurrection will be for the purpose to subject to scrutiny all the secrets of man which remained hidden in the world. At that time, man will neither be able to escape the consequences of his deeds by his own power, nor will anyone else come to his rescue.

In conclusion, it has been pointed out that just as the falling of rain from the sky and the sprouting of plants and crops from the earth is no child's play but a serious task, so also the truths expressed in the Qur'an are no jest but a firm and unchangeable reality. The disbelievers are involved in the misunderstanding that their plans and devices will defeat the invitation of the Qur'an, but they do not know that Allah too is devising a plan which will bring to naught all their scheming and planning. Than in one sentence the discourse has been summed up, with a word of

consolation to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and a tacit warning to the disbelievers, saying: "Have patience for a while: let the disbelievers do their worst. Before long they will themselves realize whether they have been able to defeat the Qur'an by their scheming or the Qur'an has dominated them in the very place where they are exerting their utmost to defeat it."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلطَّارِقِ ﴿١﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلطَّارِقُ ﴿٢﴾

ٱلنَّجْمُ ٱلثَّاقِبُ ﴿٣﴾

إِن كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ ﴿٤﴾

فَلْيَنظُرِ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ ﴿٥﴾

خُلِقَ مِن مَّآءٍ دَافِقٍ ﴿٦﴾

يَخۡرُجُ مِنۢ بَيۡنِ ٱلصُّلۡبِ وَٱلتَّرَآئِبِ ﴿٧﴾

إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَجۡعِهِۦ لَقَادِرٞ ﴿٨﴾

يَوۡمَ تُبۡلَى ٱلسَّرَآئِرُ ﴿٩﴾

فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن قُوَّةٖ وَلَا نَاصِرٖ ﴿١٠﴾

وَٱلسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ ٱلرَّجۡعِ ﴿١١﴾

وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ ذَاتِ ٱلصَّدۡعِ ﴿١٢﴾

إِنَّهُۥ لَقَوۡلٞ فَصۡلٞ ﴿١٣﴾

وَمَا هُوَ بِٱلْهَزْلِ ﴿١٤﴾

إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ﴿١٥﴾

وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا ﴿١٦﴾

فَمَهِّلِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ أَمْهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْدًا ﴿١٧﴾

[1-17] By the heaven and the visitant by night, and what do you know what the visitant by night is? A shining star! There is no soul without a Guardian over it.[1] Then let man at least consider from what he is created.[2] He is created from a spurting fluid that issues forth from between the backbone and the breast-bones.[3] Surely He (the Creator) has the power to create him again.[4] The Day the hidden secrets are held to scrutiny,[5] then man will neither have any power of his own nor any helper. By the heaven that sends down rain[6] and by the earth that splits lat the sprouting of vegetation), it is a decisive Word. It is no jest.[7] These people (i.e. the disbelievers of Makkah) are devising some plans,[8] and I, too, am devising a plan.[9] So leave the disbelievers, O Prophet; leave them to themselves for a while.[10]

1"A Guardian": Allah Almighty Himself, Who is looking after and watching over every creature, big or small, in the earth and heavens. He it is Who has brought everything into existence, Who is maintaining and sustaining everything in its place and position, and Who has taken the responsibility to provide for every creature and to protect it from calamities till an appointed tune. On this, an oath has been sworn by the heaven and by every star and planet which appears in the darkness of the night. (Although lexically, an-najm ath-thaqib is singular, it does not imply any one star but the star in the generic sense). The oath signifies that the existence of each of the countless stars and planets that shines in the sky at 'night, testifies to the fact that there is a Being Who has created it, illuminated it, suspended it in space, and thus is watching over it in a manner that neither it falls from its place nor collides with any other of the countless stars in their movements, nor does any other star collide with it.

2After making man ponder over the heavens, he is now being invited to consider his own self and see

how he has been created, Who is it Who selects one spermatozoon from among billions of spermatozoa emitted by the father and combines it at some time with one ovum out of a large number of the ova produced by the mother, and thus causes a particular human being to be conceived? Then, Who is it Who after conception develops it gradually in the mother's womb Until it is delivered in the form of a living child? Then, Who is it Who in the mother's womb itself brings about a certain proportion and harmony between its bodily structure and its physical and mental capabilities? Then, Who is it Who watches over it continuously from birth till death-protects it from disease, accidents and calamities and provides him with countless means of life and opportunities for survival in the world of which he is not even conscious, not to speak of having the power to provide these for himself. Is all this happening without the planning and supervision of One God?

3"Sulb" is the backbone and "tara'ib"the breast- bones, i.e. the ribs. Since the procreative fluid in both man and woman is discharged from that part of the body which is between the back and the breast, it is said that man has been created from the fluid issuing out froth between the back and the breast. This fluid is produced even in case the hands and feet are cut off. Therefore, it is not correct to say that it issues out from the whole body of man. In fact, the principal organs of the body are its source and all these are located in the trunk. The brain has not been mentioned separately because the back-bone is that part of the brain through which connection between the body and the brain is established. (Also see Appendix I).

4That is, His bringing man into existence and watching over him from the tithe conception takes place until death, is a clear proof that He can create him once again after death. If He had the power to create him in the first instance and man stays alive in the world by His power alone, what rational arguments can be presented for the conjecture that He does not have the power to do the same thing a second time? To deny this power man will even have to deny that God has brought him into existence, and the one who denies this may well come out one day with the claim that all books in the world have been printed accidentally, all cities of the world have been built accidentally, and there has occurred on the earth an explosion by chance which made all the factories start functioning automatically. The fact is that the creation of man, the structure of his body, the existence of the powers and capabilities working within him, and his survival as a living being û all this is a much more complex process than all those works that have come to be accomplished through man, or are still in the process of being accomplished. If such a complex work with such wisdom, proportion and order could be accomplished just through a chance accident, what else could not be regarded as accidental by a mentally deranged person?

5"The hidden secrets": the acts of every person which remained a secret to the world as well as those affairs which came before the world only in their apparent form, but the intentions, aims and secret motives working behind them remained hidden from the people. On the Resurrection Day all this will be laid bare and not only will the acts and deeds of every person be examined but it will also be seen what was his motive and intention and object of so acting. Likewise, it also remained hidden from the world, even from the doer of the act himself, what effects and influences of his act appeared in the world, to

what extent they spread and for how long they continued to work. This secret too will be revealed on the Resurrection Day and it will be fully examined as to what were the consequences of the seed that a person sowed in the world, what fruit it bore and for how long it affected the later generations for better or far worse.

6The words dhat ar-raj`e have been used for the sky. Literally raj`e means to return, but metaphorically this word is used for the rain in Arabic, for rain does not fall just once, but returns over and over again in the season and of season as well. Another reason for calling the rain raj `e is that vapor from the oceans of the earth and then falls back as rain on the sometimes out water rises as the same earth.

7That is, just as the falling of rain froth the sky and the splitting of the earth to put out shoots is no jest but a serious reality, so also the news which the Qur'an gives that man has to return to his God is no jest but a definite and decisive reality and an unchangeable truth which has to be fulfilled.

8That is, these disbelievers are devising every kind of plan to defeat the invitation of the Qur'an; they wish to blow out this candle; they are creating all sorts of doubts In the people's minds: they are inventing false accusations against the Prophet who has brought it, so as to frustrate his mission in the world and perpetuate the darkness of ignorance and unbelief which hr is struggling so hard to remove.

9That is, "I am planning that none of their devices should succeed so that they are utterly defeated in their designs, and the light which they are trying their utmost to put out, spreads far and wide.

10That is, "Leave them for a while to have their will. Before long the result will be before them and they will realize how far their scheming has become successful against My plan."

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87. Surah Al Ala (The Most High)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-A`la* in the very first verse.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter shows that this too is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed, and the words: "We shall enable you to recite, then you shall never forget" of verse 6 also indicate that it was sent down in the period when the Holy Messenger (upon whom he Allah's peace) was not yet fully accustomed to receive Revelation and at the time Revelation came down he feared lest he should forget its words. If this verse is read along with verse 114 of Surah Ta Ha and verses 16-19 of Al-Qiyamah and the three verses are also considered with regard to their styles and contexts, the sequence of events seems to be that first in this Surah the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was reassured to the effect: "Do not at all worry: We shall enable you to recite this Word, then you shall not forget it." Then after a lapse of time, on another occasion, when the Surah Al-Qiyamah was being revealed, the Holy Prophet involuntarily began to rehearse the words of the Revelation. Thereupon it was said: "O Prophet do not move your tongue to remember this Revelation hastily. It is for Us to have it remembered and read. Therefore when We are reciting it, listen to its recital carefully. Again, it is for Us to explain its meaning."Last of all, on the occasion of the revelation of Surah Ta Ha, the Holy Prophet on account of human weakness, again became afraid lest his memory should fail to preserve some portion of the 113 verses which were continuously revealed at that time, and therefore, he began to memorize them. Thereupon, it was said: "And see that you do not hasten to recite the Quran before its revelation is completed to you."After this, it never so happened that he felt any such danger, for apart form these three places, there is no other place in the Quran where there might be a reference to this matter.

Theme and Subject Matter

This short surah contains three themes: *Tauhid*, instructions to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and the Hereafter.

In the first verse, the doctrine of *Tauhid* has been compressed into a single sentence, saying that Allah's name

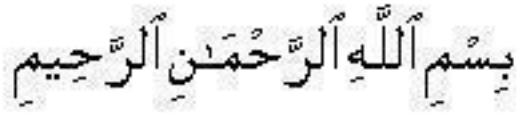
should be glorified and exalted, i. e. He should not be remembered by any name which mighty reflect a deficiency, fault, weakness, or an aspect of likeness, with created beings, for the root of all false creeds in the world are wrong concepts about Allah, which assumed the form of an erroneous name for His glorious and exalted Being. Therefore, for the correction of the creed, the primary thing is that Allah Almighty should be remembered only by the beautiful names which suit and befit Him.

In the next three verses, it has been said: "Your Lord, glorification of Whose name is being enjoined, is He Who created everything in the Universe, proportioned it, set it a destiny, taught it to perform the function for which it is created, and you witness this manifestation of His power day and night that He creates vegetation on the earth as well as reduces it to mere rubbish. No other being has the power to bring about spring nor the power to prevent autumn."

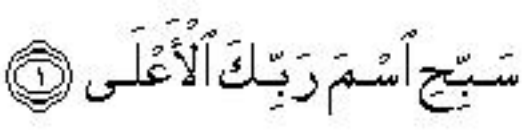
Then, in the following two verses, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) his been consoled, as if to say: "Do not worry as to how you will remember word for word the Qur'an that is being revealed to you. It is for Us to preserve it in your memory, and its preservation is not in any way the result of any excellence in you but the result of Our bounty and favor, otherwise if We so will, We can cause you to forget it."

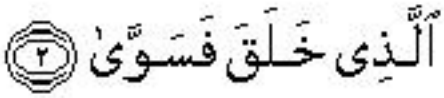
Then, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been told: "You have not been made responsible to bring everyone on to the right path; your only duty is to convey the truth, and the simplest way of conveying the truth is that admonition be given to him who is inclined to listen to the admonition and accept it, and the one who is not inclined to it, should not be pursued. The one who fears the evil consequences of deviation and falsehood, will listen to the truth and accept it, and the wretched one who avoids listening to and accepting it, will himself see his evil end."'

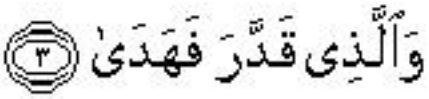
The discourse has been summed up, saying: "Success is only for those who adopt purity of belief, morals and deed, and remember the name of their Lord and perform the Prayer. But, on the contrary, the people are wholly lost in seeking the ease, benefits and pleasures of the world, whereas they should actually endeavor for their well being in the Hereafter, for the world is transitory and the Hereafter everlasting and the blessings of the Hereafter are far better than the blessings of the world. This truth has not been expressed only in the Qur'an but in the books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses too, it had been brought to the notice of man.

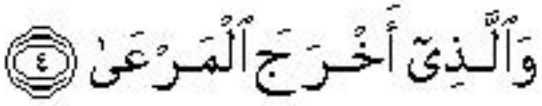


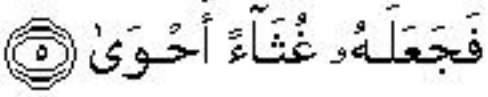
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.



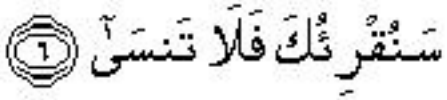


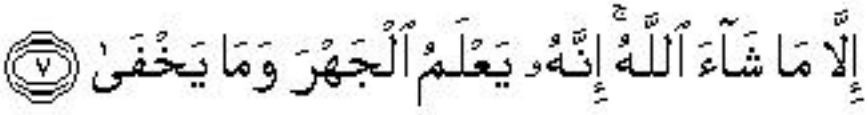






[1-5] (O Prophet,) glorify the name of your Lord, the Highest.[1] Who created and proportioned.[2] Who set a destiny[3] and showed the way.[4] Who caused vegetation to grow,[5] then reduced it to black rubbish.[6]





[6-7] We shall enable you to recite; then you shall not forget[7] except what Allah wills.[8] He knows what is open and also what is hidden.[9]

وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿٩﴾

سَيَذَّكَّرُ مَن يَخْشَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾

وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا ٱلْأَشْقَى ﴿١١﴾

ٱلَّذِى يَصْلَى ٱلنَّارَ ٱلْكُبْرَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾

[8-13] And We give you the facility of the easy way; therefore, admonish them if admonition be profitable.[10] He who fears will accept the admonition,[11] and it will be shunned by the most wretched one, who shall enter the Great Fire, wherein he shall neither die nor live.[12]

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٤﴾

وَذَكَرَ ٱسْمَ رَبِّهِۦ فَصَلَّىٰ ﴿١٥﴾

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴿١٦﴾

وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿١٧﴾

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَفِى ٱلصُّحُفِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿١٨﴾

صُحُفِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ ﴿١٩﴾

[14-19] Truly successful was he who purified himself,[13] and remembered the name of his Lord,[14] then prayed.[15] But you (O men,) prefer the life of this world,[16] although the Hereafter is better and more lasting.[17] The same had been said in the former Books, the Books of Abraham and Moses.[18]

1Literally: "Purify the name of your Lord, the Highest." This can have several meanings and all are implied:

(1) Allah should be remembered by the names which fit Him, and no such name should be used for His exalted Being which, with regard to its meaning and sense, does not fit Him, or which reflects some aspect of deficiency, lack of reverence, polytheism about Him, or which refers to some wrong belief in respect of His Being, attributes, or works. For this purpose, the safest way is that only such names be used for Allah, which He himself has mentioned in the Qur'an, or which are a correct translation of these names in other languages.

(2) Allah should not be remembered by the names as are used generally for the created beings, or the

created beings should not be called by names as are specifically meant for Allah. And if there are some attributive names which are not specifically meant for Allah, but may also be used for the created beings, such as Ra'uf (Kind), Rahim (Compassionate), Karim (Generous), Sami` (I Hearing), Basir (Seeing), etc. one should exercise due care not to use them for man as they are used for Allah.

(3) Allah should not be mentioned in a way or in a state which reflects lack of respect for Him; for example, to mention His name when engaged in mockery or jest, or when in the lavatory, or while committing a sinful act, or before the people who might behave insolently in response or in assemblies where the people are engaged in absurd things and might laugh off His mention, or on an occasion when it is feared that the hearer will hear it disdainfully. About Imam Malik, it is related that when a beggar begged him for something and he did not have anything to give, he would not turn away the beggar, saying that Allah would help him, as is commonly done by the people, but he would excuse himself in some other way. When asked why he did so, he replied: "When the beggar is not given anything and one makes an excuse, it inevitably displeases him. On such an occasion, I do not like to mention Allah's name, for I do not like that somebody should hear His name in a state of annoyance and displeasure."

In the Hadith, it has been reported from Hadrat `Uqbah bin `Amir Juhani that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had enjoined recitation of Subhana Rabbi yal-A Ya in the sajdah on the basis of this very verse, and the recitation of Subhana Rabbi yal-'Azim in ruku ` on the basis of the last verse of Surah AI-Waqi'ah, viz. Fa-sabhih bi-isrni-Rabbi-kal- Azim." (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, lbn Majah, Ibn Hibban, Hakim, Ibn al-Mundhir).

2That is, He created everything, from the earth to the heavens, in the universe, and gave whatever he created the right proportion and balance and gave every creature the best conceivable form and shape. The same thing has been expressed in Surah As-Sajdah, thus: "Who gave everything He created the best form" (v. 7) Thus, the creation of everything in the world giving it due order and proportion, is an express sign of the truth that some Wise Designer is its Creator. Had the creation of the countless things in the universe been the result of a chance accident, or the work of many creators, there could be no order and balance, no beauty and inner coherence among the many things existing in the world.

3"Set a destiny": determined beforehand what would be the function of a certain thing in the world, and for that purpose what would be its size, its form and shape, its qualities, its place of location, and what opportunities and means should be provided for its survival, existence and functioning, when it should come into being, and when and how it should cease to be after completing its part of the work. Such a scheme for a thing is its "destiny" (taqdir). And this destiny Allah has set for everything in the universe and for the entire universe as a whole. This means that the creation has not come about without a pre-conceived plan, haphazardly, but for it the Creator had a full plan before Him, and everything is happening according to that plan. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 13, 14 of Al-Hijr. E.N. 8 of AI-Furgan, E.N. 25 of AI-Qamar. E.N. 12 of 'Abasa).

4That is, nothing was just created and left to itself, but whatever was created to perform a certain function, it was also taught the method of performing that function. In other words, He is not merely the Creator but Guide too. He has taken the responsibility to give guidance to whatever He has created in a particular capacity to fit its nature and to guide it in the way suitable for it. One kind of guidance is for the earth, the moon, the sun, and the stars and planets, which they are following in performing their role. Another kind of guidance is for water, air, light and the solid and mineral elements, and they are performing the same services for which they have been created accordingly. Still another kind of guidance is for vegetables, according to which they take root and spread in the earth, sprout up from its layers, obtain food from wherever Allah has created it for thetas, produce stem, branches, leaves, blossom and fruit, and fulfill the function which has been appointed for each of them. Still another kind of guidance is for the countless species of animals of the land, and water, and for each member of the species, the wonderful manifestations of which are clearly visible in the life of the animals and in their works, so much so that even an atheist is compelled to concede that different kinds of animals possess some sort of inspirational knowledge which man cannot obtain even through his instruments, not to speak of his senses. Then, there are two different kinds of guidance for man, which correspond to his two different capacities. One kind of guidance is for his animal life, by which each child learns to suck milk spontaneously on birth, by which the eyes of man, his nose, ear, heart, brain, lungs, kidney, liver, stomach, intestines, nerves, veins and arteries, all are performing their respective functions, without man's being conscious of it, or his will having anything to do with the functions of these organs. This is the guidance under which all physical and mental changes pertaining to childhood, maturity, youth and old age go on taking place in man, independent of his will, choice, even his consciousness. The second kind of guidance is for his intellectual and conscious life, the nature of which is absolutely different from the guidance for unconscious life, for in this sphere of life a kind of freedom has been transferred to man, for which the mode of guidance meant for voluntary life is not suitable. For turning away from this last kind of guidance, man may offer whatever arguments and excuses he may like, it is not credible that the Creator Who has arranged guidance for everything in this universe according to its capacity, might have set for man the destiny that he may appropriate numerous things in His world freely, but might not have made any arrangement to show what is the right way of using his choice and what is the wrong way. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 9, 10, 14, 56 of An-Nahl, E.N. 23 of Ta Ha, E.N.'s 2, 3 of Ar-Rahman, E.N. 5 of Ad-Dahr)

5The word mar`a as used in the Text means the fodder for animals but the context shows that here it does not imply mere fodder but every kind of vegetation that grows out of the soil.

6That is, "He does not only bring about spring but autumn as well. You witness both the manifestations of this power. On the one side, He causes lush green vegetation to grow, the freshness of which pleases the hearts and, on the other, He renders the same vegetation pale, dry and black rubbish, which is blown about by winds and swept away by floods. Therefore, no one here should be involved in the misunderstanding that he will only experience spring and will never see autumn." This same theme has been expressed at several other places in the Qur'an in other ways. For example see Yunus: 24, Al-Kahf:

45, Al-Hadid: 20.

7Hakim has related from Hadrat Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas and Ibn Marduyah from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) repeated the words of the Qur'an for fear lest he should forget them. Mujahid and Kalbi say that even before Gabriel finished recitation of the Revelation the Holy Prophet would start repeating the initial verses lest he should forget them. On this very basis Allah assured him that he should listen quietly when the Revelation was coming down, for, "We shall enable you to recite it; then you will remember it for ever. You should have no fear that you will forget any word of it. " This is the third occasion where the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been taught the method of receiving the Revelation. The first two occasions have been referred to in Ta Ha: 114 and Al-Qiyamah: 16-19 above. This verse proves that just as the Qur'an was sent down to the Holy Prophet as a miracle, so also its each word was preserved in his memory as a miracle and no possibility was allowed to remain that he should forget anything of it, or that he should utter another synonymous word for any word of it.

8This sentence can have two meanings: first, "that the preservation of the entire Qur'an word for word in your memory is not a manifestation of your own power but the result of Allah Almighty's bounty and grace; otherwise if Allah so willed, He could cause it to be forgotten. " This same theme has been expressed at another place in the Qur'an, thus: "O Muhammad! We may, if We so will, take back from you all of what We have revealed to you." (Bani Isra'il: 86). Another meaning also can be: "Your forgetting something temporarily, or your forgetting a verse or a word occasionally is an exception froth this promise. What has been promised is: `You will not forget any word of the Qur'an permanently'." This meaning is confirmed by the following tradition of Bukhari: Once while leading the Fajr Prayer the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) happened to omit a verse during the recitation. After the Prayer hadrat Ubayy bin Ka`b asked if the verse had been abrogated. The Holy Prophet replied that he had forgotten to recite it.

9Although the words are general, and they mean that Allah knows everything, whether it is open or hidden, yet in the context in which they occur, they seem to mean: "O Prophet, your reciting the Qur'an along with Gabriel (peace be on him) is known to Allah and your fear for which you do so is also in Allah's knowledge." Therefore, the Holy Prophet is being assured that he will not forget it.

10Generally, the commentators take these as two separate sentences. They interpret the first sentence to mean: "We are giving you a simple code of law, which is easy to practice and act upon", and the second sentence to mean: "Admonish the people if admonishing be useful. " but in our opinion, the word "fa-dhakkir" connects the two sentences in meaning, and the theme of the second sentence bears upon the theme of the first sentence. Therefore, we interpret these sentences to mean: "O Prophet! We do not want to put you to any hardship concerning the preaching of Islam by demanding that you should snake the deaf to hear and the blind to see the way, but We have appointed an easy way for you, which is this: Give admonition when you feel that the people are inclined to benefit by it. As to who is inclined to benefit

by the admonition and who is not, this you can only know through general preaching. Therefore, you should continue your general preaching, but your object should be to search out those from among the people who will benefit by it and adopt the right way. Such people alone are worthy of your attention and you should pay full attention only to their instruction and training. You need not abandon them and pursue those about whom you find by experience that they are not inclined to accept any admonition." Almost this very theme has been expressed in Surah 'Abasa in another way, thus: "As for him who is indifferent, to him you attend, though you would not be responsible if he does not reform. And the one who comes to you running, of his own will and fears, from him you turn away. By no means: This is but an Admonition. Let him who wills, accept it." (vv. 5-12).

11That is, only the one who has fear of God and of evil consequences, will consider whether or not he is following a wrong way, and he only will heed the admonition of the Servant of Allah who is distinguishing guidance from misguidance for him and guiding him to true successes and piety.

12That is, "He will neither die so as to escape the punishment nor live as one truly lives so as to enjoy the pleasures of life." This punishment is for those who do not at all accept the admonition of Allah and His Messenger and persist in disbelief, polytheism and atheism till death. As for those who believe in their hearts but are cast into Hell because of their evil deeds, it has been said in the Hadid that when they will have undergone their punishment, Allah will give them death; then intercession on their behalf will be accepted, and their scorched bodies will be brought to the canals of Paradise, and the dwellers of Paradise will be asked to sprinkle water on them; then by that water they will come to life even as vegetation grows up when water is sprinkled on the earth. This theme has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in Muslim on the authority of Hadrat Abu Sa`id Khudri and in Bazzar on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah.

13"Who purified himself": who affirmed the faith giving up disbelief and polytheism, adopted good morals giving up evil morals, and performed good deeds giving up evil deeds. Success does not imply worldly prosperity, but true and real success whether worldly prosperity accompanies it or not. (For explanation, see E.N. 23 of Yunus, E.N.'s 1, I 1-50 of Al-Mu'minun, E.N. 4 of Luqman).

14To remember Allah signifies His remembrance in the heart as well as with the tongue.

15That is, he did not remain content only with remembering Allah but proved by performing the Prayer that he is practically also prepared to obey God in Whom he has affirmed the faith, and will remember His name as long as he lives. In this verse mention has been made of two things respectively: first, to remember Allah, then to perform the Prayer. Accordingly, the method enjoined is that the Prayer be begun with Allahu Akbar. This is an evidence to prove that all the elements of the procedure that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has taught of performing the Prayer, are based on the allusions in the Qur'an. But, no one else, apart from the Messenger of Allah, could by combining these injunctions and

allusions give the Prayer the form that it has.

16That is, "O man, all your thoughts and endeavors are only for the world, its ease and comforts, its benefits and enjoyments. You regard whatever you gain here as the real gain and whatever you lose here as your real loss"

17That is, the Hereafter is preferable to the world for two reasons: first, that its comforts and pleasures are far superior to all the blessings of the world; second, that the world is transitory and the Hereafter everlasting.

18This is the second place in the Qur'an where reference has been made to the teachings of the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses. The first reference was trade in section 3 of Surah An-Najm above.

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http://www.quran411.com

Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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88. Surah Al Ghashiya (The Overwhelming Event)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-ghishiyah* in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

The whole subject matter of the Surah indicates that this too is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed; but this was the period when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had started preaching his message publicly, and the people of Makkah were hearing it and ignoring it carelessly and thoughtlessly.

Theme and Subject Matter

To understand the subject matter well one should keep in view the fact that in the initial stage the preaching of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) mostly centered around two points which he wanted to instill in the people's minds: *Tauhid* and the Hereafter: and the people of Makkah were repudiating both. Let us now consider the subject matter and the style of this Surah.

At the outset, in order to arouse the people from their heedlessness, they have been plainly asked:"Do you have any knowledge of the time when an overwhelming calamity will descend?" Immediately after this details of the impending calamity are given as to how the people will be divided into two separate groups and will meet separate ends. One group of the people will go to Hell and they will suffer punishment; the second group will go to the sublime Paradise and will be provided with, blessings.

After thus arousing the people the theme suddenly changes and the question is asked: Do not these people, who frown and scorn the teaching of *Tauhid* and the news of the Hereafter being given by the Qur'an, observe the common things which they experience daily in their lives? Do they never consider how the camels, on whom their whole life activity in the Arabian desert depends, came into being, endowed precisely with the same characteristics as were required for the beast needed in their desert life? When they go on their journeys, they see the sky, the

mountains, or the earth. Let them ponder over these three phenomena and consider as to how the sky was stretched above them, how the mountains were erected and how the earth was spread beneath them? Has all this come about without the skill and craftsmanship of an All- Powerful, All Wise Designer? If they acknowledge that a Creator has created all this with great wisdom and power and that no one else is an associate with Him in their creation, why then do they refuse to accept Him alone as their Lord and Sustainer? And if they acknowledge that that God had the power to create all this, then on what rational ground do they hesitate to acknowledge that that God also has the power to bring about Resurrection, to recreate man, and to make Hell and Heaven?

After making the truth plain by this concise and rational argument, the address turns from the disbelievers to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and he is told: "If these people do not acknowledge the truth, they may not; you have not been empowered to act with authority over them, so that you should coerce them into believing: your only task is to exhort, so exhort them. Ultimately they have to return to Us; then We shall call them to full account and shall inflict a heavy punishment on those who do not believe."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

هَلْ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ ٱلْغَٰشِيَةِ ﴿١﴾

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَٰشِعَةٌ ﴿٢﴾

عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ﴿٣﴾

تَصْلَىٰ نَارًا حَامِيَةً ﴿٤﴾

تُسۡقَىٰ مِنۡ عَيۡنٍ ءَانِيَةٍ ﴿٥﴾

لَّيۡسَ لَهُمۡ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِن ضَرِيعٍ ﴿٦﴾

لَّا يُسۡمِنُ وَلَا يُغۡنِي مِن جُوعٍ ﴿٧﴾

وُجُوهٞ يَوۡمَئِذٖ نَّاعِمَةٞ ﴿٨﴾

لِّسَعۡيِهَا رَاضِيَةٞ ﴿٩﴾

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٖ ﴿١٠﴾

لَّا تَسۡمَعُ فِيهَا لَٰغِيَةٗ ﴿١١﴾

فِيهَا عَيۡنٞ جَارِيَةٞ ﴿١٢﴾

فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾

وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ ﴿١٤﴾

وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ﴿١٥﴾

وَزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ ﴿١٦﴾

[1-16] Has the news of the over-shadowing calamity (of Resurrection) reached you?[1] Some faces[2] on that Day shall be downcast, laboring, hard, feeling weary, scorching in the blazing fire. They will be given to drink from a boiling fountain, and their only food will be thorny, dry grass,[3] which will neither fatten nor satisfy hunger. Some faces on that Day shall be joyful, well-pleased with their endeavors,[4] in a lofty Garden; there they shall hear no idle talk.[5] In it there will be running springs; in it there will be raised couches, goblets set forth,[6] cushions ranged in rows and fine carpets spread out.

أَفَلَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَى ٱلْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴿١٧﴾

وَإِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ﴿١٨﴾

وَإِلَى ٱلْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ﴿١٩﴾

وَإِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ﴿٢٠﴾

[17-20] (They do not believe:) but, do they not look at the camels, how they were created? And at the heaven, how it was raised high? And at the mountains, how they were firmly set? And at the earth, how it was spread out?[7]

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ﴿٢١﴾

لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيْطِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

إِلَّا مَن تَوَلَّىٰ وَكَفَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَيُعَذِّبُهُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْعَذَابَ ٱلْأَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٤﴾

إِنَّ إِلَيْنَآ إِيَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُم ﴿٢٦﴾

[21-26] Well, (O Prophet) go on admonishing them, for you are only an admonisher. You are not there to coerce them.[8] But on him who turns away and disbelieves, Allah will inflict a heavy punishment. To Us they have to return; then it is for Us to call them to account.

1"The over-shadowing calamity": the Resurrection which will overshadow the whole world. One should know that here the Hereafter as a whole is being depicted, which comprehends all the stages from the upsetting of the present system to the resurrection of all human beings and the dispensation of rewards and punishments from the Divine Court.

2Some faces : some persons, so said for the face is the most conspicuous part of the human body by which man s personality is judged and which reflects the good or bad states through which man passes.

3At some places in the Qur'an it has been stated that the dwellers of Hell will be given zaqqum to eat; at another place it has been said that they will have no other food but glhislin (washing from wounds), and here that "their only food will he thorny, dry grass." There is, in fact, no contradiction between these statements. This may as welt mean that Hell will have many different compartment in which different categories of the criminals will be lodged according to their crimes, and subjected to different punishments. This may also mean that if they try to avoid zaqqum they will be given ghislin, and if they try to avoid even that, they will only get thorny grass. In short, they would get nothing to suit their taste.

4That is. they will be overjoyed to see the best results in the Hereafter of their endeavors and deeds in the world; they will be satisfied to see that they had, in fact, made a profitable bargain in that they had adopted a life of faith, virtue and piety, by sacrificing the desires of the flesh, undergone hardships in carrying out their obligations, endured afflictions in obeying the Divine Commands, incurred losses and suffered deprivation of benefits and pleasures while trying to avoid sins and acts of disobedience.

5This thing has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'an as a major blessing of Paradise. (For explanation, see E.N. 38 of Maryam, E.N. 18 of At-Tur, E.N. 13 of Al-Wiiqi`ah, E.N. 21 of An-Naba).

6That is, filled goblets already supplied so that they do not have to ask for them.

7That is, "If they deny the possibility of the Hereafter, have they never looked around themselves and considered how the camels were created, how the heaven was raised high, how the mountains were firmly set and how the earth was spread out? When all these things could be created, and exist before

them in their finished form, why can the Resurrection not take place? Why cannot a new world come about, and why cannot .Hell and Heaven be possible'? Only a foolish and thoughtless person would think that the coming into existing of only those things which he has found existing on opening his eyes in the world, is possible. because they already exist. As for the things, which he has not yet observed and experienced, he should thoughtlessly pass the judgment that their coming into being is impossible. If he has any common sense, he should think as to how he things which already exist, came into being? How did the camel possessing precisely the same Characteristics as needed for the beast required by the desert dwellers of Arabia come into being" How did the sky whose atmosphere is filled with air to breathe in, whose clouds bring rain, whose sun provides light and warmth in the day, whose moon and stars shine at night, come into being" How did the earth spread out on which man lives and passes his life, whose products fulfill all his needs and requirements on whose springs and wells his life depends? How did the mountains rise up from the surface of the earth, which stand fixed with earth and stones of different colors and a variety of minerals in them? Has all this happened without the artistic skill of an All-Powerful, AI-Wise Designer No thinking and intelligent mind can answer this question in the negative. Unless it is stubborn and obstinate, it will have to acknowledge that each one of these things was impossible, had an Omnipotent; Wise Being not made it possible. And when an All-Powerful, Wise Being created these things, there is no reason why the Hereafter should be regarded as remote from reason and impossible."

8That is, "If a person does not listen to reason, he may not. You have not been appointed to force the will of the deniers. Your only task is to distinguish the right from the wrong for the people and warn them of the consequences of following the wrong way; so this is the task you should continue to perform."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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89. Surah Al Fajr (The Dawn)

Name

The Surah is so designated after the word *wal-fajr* with which it opens.

Period of Revelation

Its contents show that it was revealed at the stage when persecution of the new converts to Islam had begun in Makkah. On that very basis the people of Makkah have been warned of the evil end of the tribes of Ad and Thamud and of Pharaoh.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to affirm the meting out of rewards and punishments in the Hereafter, which the people of Makkah were not prepared to acknowledge, Let us consider the reasoning in the order in which it has been presented.

First of all, swearing oaths by the dawn, the ten nights, the even and the odd, and the departing night, the listeners have been asked: "Are these things not enough to testify to the truth of that which you are refusing to acknowledge?" From the explanation that we have given of these four things in the corresponding notes, it will become clear that these things are a symbol of the regularity that exists in the night and day, and swearing oaths by these the question has been asked in the sense: Even after witnessing this wise system established by God, do you still need any other evidence to show that it is not beyond the power of that God Who has brought about this system to establish the Hereafter, and that it is the very requirement of his wisdom that He should call man to account for his deeds?

Then, reasoning from man's own history, the evil end of the Ad and the Thamud and Pharaoh has been cited as an example to show that when they transgressed all limits and multiplied corruption in the earth, Allah laid upon them the scourge of His chastisement. This is a proof of the fact that the system of the universe is not being run by deaf and blind forces, nor is the world a lawless kingdom of a corrupt ruler, but a Wise Ruler is ruling over it, the demand

of Whose wisdom and justice is continuously visible in the world itself in man's own history that He should call to account, and reward and punish accordingly, the being whom He has blessed with reason and moral sense and given the right of appropriation in the world.

After this, an appraisal has been made of the general moral state of human society of which Arab paganism was a conspicuous example; two aspects of it in particular, have been criticized: first the materialistic attitude of the people on account of which overlooking the moral good and evil, they regarded only the achievement of worldly wealth, rank and position, or the absence of it, as the criterion of honor or disgrace, and had forgotten that neither riches was a reward nor poverty a punishment, but that Allah is trying man in both conditions to see what attitude he adopts when blessed with wealth and how he behaves when afflicted by poverty. Second, the people's attitude under which the orphan child in their society was left destitute on the death of the father. Nobody asked after the poor; whoever could, usurped the whole heritage left by the deceased parent, and drove away the weak heirs fraudulently. The people were so afflicted with an insatiable greed for wealth that they were never satisfied however much they might hoard and amass. This criticism is meant to make them realize as to why the people with such an attitude and conduct in the life of the world should not be called to account for their misdeeds.

The discourse has been concluded with the assertion that accountability shall certainly be held and it will be held on the Day when the Divine Court will be established. At that time the deniers of the judgment will understand that which they are not understanding now in spite of instruction and admonition, but understanding then will be of no avail. The denier will regret and say, "Would that I had provided for this Day beforehand while I lived in the world." But his regrets will not save him from Allah's punishment. However, as for the people who would have accepted the Truth, which the heavenly books and the Prophets of God were presenting, with full satisfaction of the heart in the world, Allah will be pleased with them and they will be well pleased with the rewards bestowed by Allah. They will be called upon to join the righteous and enter Paradise.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلْفَجْرِ ﴿١﴾

وَلَيَـالٍ عَشْـرٍ ﴿٢﴾

وَٱلشَّفْعِ وَٱلْوَتْرِ ﴿٣﴾

وَٱلَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ ﴿٤﴾

هَلْ فِى ذَٰلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِى حِجْرٍ ﴿٥﴾

[1-5] By the dawn, and the ten nights, and the even and the odd, and the night when it departs! Is there in it an oath for a man of sense?[1]

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ﴿٦﴾

إِرَمَ ذَاتِ ٱلْعِمَادِ ﴿٧﴾

ٱلَّتِى لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِى ٱلْبِلَٰدِ ﴿٨﴾

وَثَمُودَ ٱلَّذِينَ جَابُوا۟ ٱلصَّخْرَ بِٱلْوَادِ ﴿٩﴾

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِى ٱلْأَوْتَادِ ﴿١٠﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ طَغَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْبِلَٰدِ ﴿١١﴾

فَأَكْثَرُوا۟ فِيهَا ٱلْفَسَادَ ﴿١٢﴾

فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ ﴿١٣﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِٱلْمِرْصَادِ ﴿١٤﴾

[6-14] Have you[2] not seen how your Lord dealt with `Ad Iram of lofty pillars,[3] the like of whom no nation was created in the lands of the world?[4] And with Thamud who had hewed out the rocks in the valley?[5] And with Pharaoh of the stakes.[6] These were those who had committed great excesses in the lands of the world and spread great mischief in them. Consequently, your Lord let loose on them a scourge of the torment. Indeed, your Lord is ever lying in ambush.[7]

فَأَمَّا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِذَا مَا ٱبْتَلَىٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَأَكْرَمَهُۥ وَنَعَّمَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّىٓ أَكْرَمَنِ

﴿١٥﴾

وَأَمَّآ إِذَا مَا ٱبۡتَلَىٰهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيۡهِ رِزۡقَهُۥ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّيٓ أَهَٰنَنِ ١٦

كَلَّاۖ بَل لَّا تُكۡرِمُونَ ٱلۡيَتِيمَ ١٧

وَلَا تَحَٰٓضُّونَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلۡمِسۡكِينِ ١٨

وَتَأۡكُلُونَ ٱلتُّرَاثَ أَكۡلٗا لَّمّٗا ١٩

وَتُحِبُّونَ ٱلۡمَالَ حُبّٗا جَمّٗا ٢٠

كَلَّآ إِذَا دُكَّتِ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ دَكّٗا دَكّٗا ٢١

وَجَآءَ رَبُّكَ وَٱلۡمَلَكُ صَفّٗا صَفّٗا ٢٢

وَجِاْيٓءَ يَوۡمَئِذِۭ بِجَهَنَّمَۚ يَوۡمَئِذٖ يَتَذَكَّرُ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنُ وَأَنَّىٰ لَهُ ٱلذِّكۡرَىٰ ٢٣

يَقُولُ يَٰلَيۡتَنِي قَدَّمۡتُ لِحَيَاتِي ٢٤

فَيَوۡمَئِذٖ لَّا يُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهُۥٓ أَحَدٞ ٢٥

وَلَا يُوثِقُ وَثَاقَهُۥٓ أَحَدٞ ٢٦

[15-26] As for man,[8] whenever his Lord tries him and honors and blesses him, he says, "My Lord has honored me." But when He tests him and restricts his provisions for him,. he says, "My Lord has disgraced me."[9] Indeed not![10] But you do not treat the orphan with respect,[11] and you do not urge one another to feed the poor,[12] and you devour the whole inheritance greedily,[13] and you love the wealth with all yow hearts.[14] Indeed not![15] When the earth is incessantly pounded to become a sand-desert. and your Lord comes[16] while the angels shall be standing in ranks, and Hell on that Day is brought within sight, on that Day shall man understand, but what will understanding avail him then?[17] He will say, "Would that I had provided in advance for this life of mine!" Then none can punish as Allah shall punish on that Day, and none can bind as Allah shall bind.

يَٰٓأَيَّتُهَا ٱلنَّفۡسُ ٱلۡمُطۡمَئِنَّةُ ٢٧

ٱرۡجِعِيٓ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةٗ مَّرۡضِيَّةٗ ٢٨

فَٱدۡخُلِي فِي عِبَٰدِي ٢٩

وَٱدۡخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

[27-30] (To the righteous it will be said:) "O peaceful and fully satisfied soul,[18] return to your Lord.[19] You are well-pleased (with your good end) and well-pleasing (in the sight of your Lord). Join My (righteous) servants and enter My Paradise."

1Much difference of opinion has been expressed by the commentators in the commentary of these verses, so much so that in respect of "the even and the odd" there are as many as 36 different views. In some traditions the commentary of these verses has also been attributed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), but the fact is that no commentary is confirmed from him, otherwise it was not possible that anyone from among the Companions, their immediate successors, and later commentators would have dared to determine the meaning of these verses by himself after the commentary by the Holy Prophet.

After a study of the style one clearly feels that there was an argument already in progress in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was presenting some thing and the disbelievers were denying it. At this, affirming what the Holy Prophet presented, it was said: By such and such a thing", so as to say: "By these things, what Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) says is wholly based on the truth. Then, the argument is concluded with the question: "Is there an oath in it for a man of understanding ?" That is, "is there need for yet another oath to testify to the truth of this matter "" Is this oath not enough to persuade a sensible man to accept that which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is presenting?"

Now the question arises: what was the argument for the sake of which an oath was sworn by these four things? For this we shall have to consider the whole theme which, in the following verses, commences with: "Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the 'Ad" and continues till the end of the Surah. It shows that the argument concerned the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter, which the people of Makkah were refusing to acknowledge and the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) was trying to convince them of this by constant preaching and instruction. At this oaths were sworn by the dawn, the ten nights, the even and the odd, and the departing night to assert: Are these four things not enough to convince a sensible man of the truth of this matter so that he may need yet another evidence for it?

After having determined the significance of these oaths in the context, we would inevitably have to take each of these in the meaning relevant to the subsequent theme. First of all, it is said: "By Fajr." Fajr is the breaking of day, i.e. the time when the first rays of the light of day appear in the midst of the darkness of night as a white streak from the east. Then, it is said: "By the ten nights." If the context is kept in view, it will become plain that it implies each group of the ten nights among the thirty nights of the month, the first

ten nights being those during which the crescent moon starting as a thin nail. goes on waxing every night until its major portion becomes bright; the second group of the ten nights being those during which the greater part of the night remains illumined by the moon, and the last ten nights being those during which the moon goes on waning and the nights becoming more and more dark until by the end of the month the whole night becomes absolutely dark. Then, it is said : "By the even and the odd." Even is the number which is divisible into two equal parts, as 2, 4, 6, 8, and the odd the number which is not so divisible, as l, 3, 5, 7. Generally, it may imply everything in the universe, for things in the universe either exist in pairs or as singles. But since the context here concerns the day and the night, the even and the odd mean the alternation of day and night in the sense that the dates of the month go on changing from the first to the second, and from second to the third, and every change brings with it a new state. Last of all, it is said: "By the night when it is departing", i.e. when the darkness which had covered the world since sunset may be at the verge of disappearing and the day be dawning.

Now let us consider as a whole the four things an oath by which has been sworn to assert that the news which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is giving of the meting out of rewards and punishments is wholly based on the truth. All these things point to the reality that an all-Powerful Sustainer is ruling over this universe, and nothing of what He is doing is absurd, purposeless, or lacking wisdom; on the contrary, a wise plan clearly underlies whatever He does. In His world one will never see that while it is night, the midday sun should suddenly appear overhead, or that the moon should appear one evening in the shape of the crescent and be followed next evening by the full moon, or that the night, when it falls, should never come to an end, but should become perpetual, or that there should be no system in the alternation of the day and night so that one could keep a record of the dates and know what month was passing, what was the date, on what date a particular work is to begin, and when it is to finish, what are the dates of the summer season and what of the rainy or winter season. Apart from countless other things of the universe if man only considers this regularity of the day and night intelligently and seriously, he will find evidence of the truth that this relentless discipline and order has been established by an Omnipotent Sovereign God; with it are connected countless of the advantages of the creatures whom He has created on the earth. Now, if a person living in the world of such a Wise, Omnipotent and All-Mighty Creator denies the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter, he inevitably commits one of the two errors: either he is a denier of His powers and thinks that though He has the power to create the universe with such matchless order and discipline, He is powerless to recreate man and mete out rewards and punishments to him or he denies His wisdom and knowledge and thinks that although He has created man with intellect and powers in the world, vet He will neither ever call him to account as to how he used his intellect and his powers, nor will reward him for his good deeds, nor punish him for his evil deeds. The one who believes in either, is foolish in the extreme.

2After reasoning out the judgment from the system of day and night, now an argument is berg given from man's own history for its being a certainty The mention of the conduct of a few well known tribes of history and their ultimate end is meant to point out that the universe is not working under some deaf and blind law of nature, but a Wise God is ruling over it, and in the Kingdom of that God only one law, which

man describes as the law of nature is not working, but a moral law also is operative, which necessarily calls for retribution and rewards and punishments. The results of the working of the law have been appearing over and over again even in this world, which point out to the people of understanding as to what is the nature of the Kingdom of the Universe. Any nation which carved out a system of life for itself heedless of the Hereafter and of the rewards and punishments of God, was ultimately corrupted and depraved, and whichever nation followed this way, was eventually visited with the scourge of punishment by the Lord of the universe. This continuous experience of man's own history testifies to two things clearly:

(1) That denial of the Hereafter has been instrumental in corrupting every nation and sending it ultimately to its doom; therefore, the Hereafter indeed is a reality clashing with which leads, as it has always led, to the same inevitable results; and

(2) that retribution for deeds will at some time in the future take place in its full and complete form also, for the people who touched the extreme limits of corruption and depravity and were visited with punishment had been preceded be many others who had sown seeds of corruption for centuries and left the world without being visited by any scourge.

The justice of God demands that all those people also should be called to account at some time and they too should suffer for their misdeeds. (Argument from history and morals for the Hereafter has been given at many places in the Qur'an and we have explained it everywhere accordingly. For example, see E.N.'s 5, 6 of Al-A'raf, E.N. 12 of Yunus,, E.N.'s 57, 105, 115 of Hud, E.N. 9 of Ibrahim, E.N.'s 66, 86 of An-Naml, E.N. 8 of Ar-Rum E.N. 25 of Saba, E.N.'s 29. 30 of Suad, E.N. 80 of Al-Mu'min, E.N.'s 33, 34 of Ad-Dukhan, E.N.'s 27, 28 of Al-Jathiah, E.N. 17 of Qaf, E.N. 21 of Adh-Dhariyat).

3`Ad Iram implies the ancient tribe of `Ad, who have been called 'Ad Ula in the Qur'an and Arabian history. In Surah An-Najm, it has been said: "And that We destroyed the ancient people of `Ad" (v. 50), i. e. the `Ad to whom the Prophet Hud had been sent, and who were punished with a scourge. As against thetas the people of `Ad who retrained safe and flourished afterwards are remembered as Ad Ukhra in Arabian history. The ancient `Ad are called Ad Iram for the reason that they belonged to that branch of the Semetic race which descended from Iram son of Shem son of Noah (peace be upon him). Several other sub-branches of this main branch are well known in history one of which were the Thamud, who have been mentioned in the Qur'an; another are the Aramaeans, who in the beginning inhabited the northern parts of Syria and whose language Aramaic occupies an important place among the Semetic languages.

The words dhat-ul-`imad (of lofty pillars) have been. used for the 'Ad because they built high buildings and the pattern of architecture of erecting edifices on lofty pillars was introduced by them in the world. At another place in the Qur'an this characteristic has been mentioned in connection with the Prophet Hud, who said to them: "What, you erect for mere pleasure a monument on every high spot, and build huge

castles as if you were immortal!" (Ash-Shu`ara': 128-129).

4That is, they were a matchless people of their time; no other nation in the world compare with them in strength, glory and grandeur. At other places in the Qur'an, it has been said about them: "Your Lord made you very robust." (Al-A`raf: 69) "As for the `Ad, they became arrogant with pride in the land, without any right, and said: `Who is stronger than us in might"? (Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 15). "When you seized somebody, you seized him like a tyrant." (Ash-Shu`ara' 130)

5"The valley": Wad-il-Qura, where the Thamud carved out dwellings in the mountains, and probably in history they were the first people who started cutting out such buildings into the rocks. (For details, see E. N.'s 57, 59 of Al A'raf, E.N. 45 of Al-Hijr, E.N.'s 95, 99 of Ash-Shu`ara' along with the photographs) .

6The words dhul-autad (of the stakes) for Pharaoh have also been used in Surah Suad: 12 above. This can have several meanings. Possibly his forces have been compared to the stakes, and "of the stakes" means "of great forces", for it was by their power and might that he ruled a firmly established kingdom; it might also imply multiplicity of forces and the meaning be that wherever his large armies camped, pegs of the tents were seen driven into the ground on every side; it may also imply the stakes at which he punished the people, and it is also possible that the pyramids of Egypt have been compared to the stakes, for they are the remnants of the grandeur and glory of the Pharaohs, and seem to have been driven into the ground like stakes for centuries.

7The words "ever lying in ambush" have been used metaphorically for keeping watch on the movements and activities of the wicked and mischievous people. An ambush is a place where a person lies hiding in wait to attack somebody by surprise. The victim, thoughtless of his fate, comes and falls a prey. The same is the case against Allah of those wicked people who spread mischief in the world and have no sense and tear that there is God above them, Who is watching all their misdeeds. Therefore, they go on committing everyday more and more evils fearlessly until they reach the limit which Allah does not permit them to transgress. At that very moment His scourge descends upon them suddenly.

8Now, criticizing the general moral state of the people, it is being said: "After all, why shouldn't the men who have adopted such an attitude in the life of the world, be ever called to account, and how can it be regarded as a demand of reason and justice that when man has left the world, after doing all he could, he should never receive any reward or suffer any punishment for his deeds?"

9This then is man's materialistic view of life. He regards the wealth and position and power of this world alone as everything. When he has it, he is filled with pride and says God has honored me; and when he fails to obtain it, he says: God has humiliated me. Thus, the criterion of honor and humiliation in his sight is the possession of wealth and position and power, or the absence of it, whereas the actual truth which he does not understand is that whatever Allah has given anybody in the world has been given for the

sake of a trial. If he has given him wealth and power, it has been given for a trial to see whether he becomes grateful for it, or commits ingratitude. If he has made him poor, in this too there is a trial for him to see whether he remains content and patient in the will of God and faces his hardships bravely within permissible bounds, or becomes ready to transgress every limit of morality and honesty and starts cursing his God.

10That is, this is not all the criterion of honor and disgrace, for the real criterion is the moral good and evil.

11That is, "As long as his father is alive, your treatment of him is attentive and when his rather dies, even the paternal and maternal uncles and the elder brothers, to say nothing of the neighbors and distant relatives, neglect him."

12That is, "Nobody in your society feels any urge to feed the poor. Neither a man himself feels inclined to feed a hungry person, nor is there among the people any urge to do something to satisfy the hunger of the hungry, nor do they exhort one another to do so."

13In Arabia, the women and children were as a rule deprived of inheritance and the people's idea in this regard was that the right to inheritance belonged only to those male members who were fit to fight and safeguard the family. Besides, the one who was more powerful and influential among the heirs of the deceased, would annex the whole inheritance without qualms, and usurp the shares of all those who did not have the power to secure their shares. They did not give any importance to the right and duty so that they should honestly render the right to whom it was due as a duty whether he had the power to secure it or not.

14That is, "You have no regard for the permissible or the forbidden, the lawful or the unlawful. You feel no qualms about acquiring wealth in any way or by any means, fair or foul, and your greed is never satisfied however much you may have acquired and amassed. "

15That is, "You are wrong in thinking that you may do whatever you like in your life of the world, but you will never be called to account for it. The meting out of rewards and punishment denying which you have adopted this mode of life, is not anything impossible and fictitious, but it has to come to pass and it will certainly come to pass at the time being mentioned below."

16Although literally the words jaa Rabbuka mean "your Lord will come", obviously there cannot be any question of Allah Almighty's moving from one place to another; therefore, this will inevitably have to be understood as an allegoric expression, which is meant to give an idea that at that time the manifestations of Allah Almighty's power and His majesty and sovereignty will appear fully, as, for example, in the world the arrival of a king in person in the court is more awe-inspiring than the mere array of his forces and chiefs and nobles.

17The words in the original can have two meanings:

(1) That on that Day man will remember whatever he had done in the world and will regret, but what will remembrance and regretting avail him then?

(2) That on that Day man will take heed and accept admonition: he will realize that whatever he had been told by the Prophets was true and he committed a folly when he did not listen to them; but what will taking heed and accepting the admonition and realizing one's errors avail one then?

18"Peaceful .. satisfied soul": the man who believed in Allah, the One, as his Lord and Sustainer, and adopted the Way of Life brought by the Prophets as his way of life, with full satisfaction of the heart, and without the least doubt about it, who acknowledged as absolute truth whatever creed and command he received from Allah and His Messenger, who withheld himself from whatever he was forbidden by Allah's Religion, not unwillingly but with perfect conviction that it was really an evil thing, who offered without sacrifice whatever sacrifice was required to be offered for the sake of the truth. who endured with full peace of mind whatever difficulties, troubles and hardships he met on this way and who felt no remorse on being deprived of the gains and benefits and pleasures in the world which seemed to accrue to those who followed other ways but remained fully satisfied that adherence to true Faith had safeguarded him against those errors. This very state has been described at another place in the Qur'an as sharh Badr. (Al-An'am 125)

19This he will be told at the time of his death as well as on the Day of Resurrection when he will rise from the dead and move towards the Plain of Assembly and also on the occasion when he will be presented in the Divine Court; at every stage he will be assured that he is moving towards the Mercy of Allah Almighty.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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90. Surah Al Balad (The City)

Name

The Surah has been so named after the word *al balad* in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Its subject matter and style resemble those of the earliest Surahs revealed at Makkah, but it contains a pointer which indicates that it was sent down in the period when the disbelievers of Makkah had resolved to oppose the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), and made it lawful for themselves to commit tyranny and excess against him.

Theme and Subject Matter

In this Surah a vast subject has been compressed into a few brief sentences, and it is a miracle of the Quran that a complete ideology of life which could hardly be explained in a thick volume has been abridged most effectively in brief sentences of this short Surah. Its theme is to explain the true position of man in the world and of the world in relation to man and to tell that God has shown to man both the highways of good and evil, has also provided for him the means to judge and see and follow them, and now it rests upon mans own effort and judgment whether he chooses the path of virtue and reaches felicity or adopts the path of vice and meets with doom.

First, the city of Makkah and the hardships being faced therein by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and the state of the children of Adam have been cited as a witness to the truth that this world is not a place of rest and ease for man, where he might have been born to enjoy life, but here he has been created into toil and struggle. If this theme is read with verse 39 of Surah An-Najm (*Laisa lil insani illa ma saa*: there is nothing for man but what he has striven for), it becomes plain that in this world the future of man depends on his toil and struggle, effort and striving.

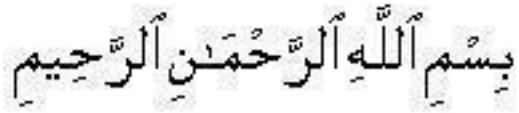
After this, man's misunderstanding that he is all in all in this world and that there is no superior power to watch what

he does and to call him to account, has been refuted.

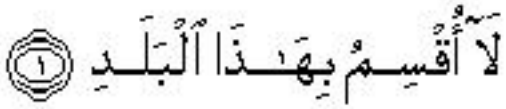
Then, taking one of the many moral concepts of ignorance held by man, as an example, it has been pointed out what wrong criteria of merit and greatness he has proposed for himself in the world. The person who for ostentation and display squanders heaps of wealth, not only himself prides upon his extravagances but the people also admire him for it enthusiastically, whereas the Being Who is watching over his deeds, sees by what methods he obtained the wealth and in what ways and with what motives and intention he spent it.

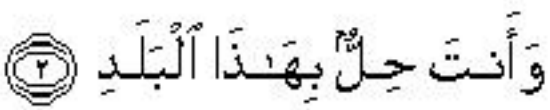
Then Allah says: We have given man the means of knowledge and the faculties of thinking and understanding and opened up before him both the highways of virtue and vice: one way leads down to moral depravity, and it is an easy way pleasing for the self; the other way leads up to moral heights, which is steep like an uphill road, for scaling which man has to exercise self- restraint. It is man's weakness that he prefers slipping down into the abyss to scaling the cliff.

Then, Allah has explained what the steep road is by following which man can ascend to the heights. It is that he should give up spending for ostentation, display and pride and should spend his wealth to help the orphans and the needy, should believe in Allah and His Religion and joining the company of believers should participate in the construction of a society which should fulfill the demands of virtue and righteousness patiently and should be compassionate to the people. The end of those who follow this way is that they would become worthy of Allah's mercies. On the contrary, the end of those who follow the wrong way, is the fire of Hell from which there is no escape.



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.





[1-2] Nay![1] I swear by this City,[2] while you (O Prophet), have been made lawful in this City.[3]

وَوَالِـــدٍ وَمَـــا وَلَـــدَ ﴿٣﴾

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ فِى كَبَدٍ ﴿٤﴾

أَيَحْسَـــبُ أَن لَّـــن يَقْـــدِرَ عَلَيْـــهِ أَحَـــدٌ ﴿٥﴾

يَقُـولُ أَهْلَكْـتُ مَـالًا لُّبَـدًا ﴿٦﴾

أَيَحْسَـبُ أَن لَّـمْ يَـرَهُۥٓ أَحَـدٌ ﴿٧﴾

أَلَمْ نَجْعَل لَّهُۥ عَيْنَيْنِ ﴿٨﴾

وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ ﴿٩﴾

وَهَدَيْنَـٰهُ ٱلنَّجْـدَيْنِ ﴿١٠﴾

[2-10] And I swear by father and the children he begot[4] that We have indeed created man in toil.[5] Does he think that no one will have power over him?[6] He says, "I have squandered heaps of wealth."[7] Does he think that no one has seen him?[8] Have We not given him two eyes, and a tongue and two lips,[9] and shown him both the highways (of good and evil)?[10]

فَلَا ٱقْتَحَمَ ٱلْعَقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْعَقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾

فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾

أَوْ إِطْعَٰمٌ فِى يَوْمٍ ذِى مَسْغَبَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾

يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾

أَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

[11-16] Yet he has not attempted the steep pass.[11] And what do you know what the steep pass is? It is the freeing of a neck from bondage, or the feeding in a day of hunger of a nearly related orphan, or a poor man lying in the dust[12]

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلصَّبۡرِ وَتَوَاصَوۡاْ بِٱلۡمَرۡحَمَةِ ﴿١٧﴾

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡمَيۡمَنَةِ ﴿١٨﴾

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا هُمۡ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡمَشۡـَٔمَةِ ﴿١٩﴾

عَلَيۡهِمۡ نَارٞ مُّؤۡصَدَةُۢ ﴿٢٠﴾

[17-20] Then (besides) one should be of those who have believed[13] and exhorted one another to patience and exhorted one another to mercy (for God's creatures).[14] These are the people of the right hand. As for those who refuse to believe in Our Revelations, they are the people of the left hand.[15] They shall have a Fire enveloping them.[16]

1As we have explained in E.N.1 of Surah Al-Qiyamah above, to begin a discourse with a "Nay" and resume it with an oath means that the people were asserting a wrong thing to refute which it was said: "Nay, the truth is not that which you seem to assert, but I swear by such and such a thing that the truth is this and this" As for the question what it was to refute which this discourse was sent down, it is indicated by the theme that follows. The disbelievers of Makkah said that there was nothing wrong with the way of life that they were following, as if to say: "Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die in the natural process of time. Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), without any reason, is finding fault with this way of life and warning us that we would at some time in the future be called to account for it and rewarded and punished accordingly."

2"This City": the city of Makkah. There was no need here to explain why an oath was being sworn by this City. The people of Makkah were well aware of the background and importance of their city and knew how in the midst of desolate mountains, in an un-cultivated, barren valley, the Prophet Abraham had brought his wife and suckling child and left them there without any support; how he had built a House there and proclaimed to the people to visit it as pilgrims when there was no soul for miles around to hear the proclamation, and then how this city had eventually become the commercial and religious center of

Arabia and was blessed with such sacredness that there was no other place of security beside it in that lawless land for centuries.

3Three meanings of the words in the Text have been given by the commentators:

(1) "That you are a resident of this city and your residence here has further enhanced the glory of this city";

(2) "that although this city is a sanctuary; a time will come when for some time it will become lawful for you to fight and kill the enemies of the true Faith here; and,

(3) "that in this city where even killing of animals and cutting of trees is forbidden for the people of Arabia, and where everyone is living in perfect peace, you, O Prophet, have no peace, and persecuting you and devising plans to kill you has been made lawful."

Although the words are comprehensive enough to cover all the three meanings, yet when the theme that follows is considered, one feels that the first two meanings bear no relevance to it, and only the third meaning seems to be correct.

4As the words "father and children he begot" have been used indefinitely, and this is followed by the mention of man, father could only imply Adam (peace be on him) and children the human beings who existed in the world, exist today and will exist in the future.

5This is that for which the oaths as mentioned above have been sworn. Man's being created in toil means that man in this world has not been created to enjoy himself and live a life of ease and comfort, but the world for him is a place of enduring and undergoing toil, labor and hardship, and no man can be immune from this. The city of Makkah is a witness that a servant of Allah toiled and struggled hard, then only did it become a city and the center of Arabia. In this city of Makkah the condition of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is a witness that he is enduring every kind of hardship for the sake of a mission; so much so that there is full peace here for the wild animals but no peace for him. Then, every man's survival, from the tithe he is conceived in the mother's womb till the last breath of life, is a witness that he has to pass through trouble, toil, labor, dangers and hardships at every step. The most fortunate of us is also exposed to grave dangers of death before birth or of elimination by abortion while in the mother's womb. At birth he is only a hair-breadth away from death. After birth he is so helpless that had there not been somebody to look after him, he would perish uncared for and un-noticed. When he became able to walk he stumbled at every step. Froth childhood to youth and old age he had to pass through such physical changes that if any change had taken a wrong turn, his very life would have been at stake. Even if he is a king or a dictator, he at no time enjoys internal peace from the tear that a rebellion might arise against him somewhere. Even if he is a conqueror he is never at peace from the danger that one of his generals might rise in revolt against him Even if he is a Korah of his time, he is ever anxious to increase

his wealth and to safeguard it. Thus, there is no one who may he enjoying perfect peace freely and without hesitation, for man indeed has been created into a life of toil and trouble.

6That is: Is man, who is ever exposed to such hazards, involved in the delusion that he can do what he likes, and there is no superior power to seize and suppress him? The fact, however, is that even before the occurrence of the Hereafter in this world itself, he sees that his destiny every moment is being ruled by some other Being against Whose decrees all his plans and designs prove ineffective. A single jolt of the earthquake, a blast of wind, a flood in the river and a sea-storm are enough to show how weak and feeble man is against the Divine forces. A sudden accident can reduce a strong and robust person to a cripple; one turn of the fortune deposes a mighty sovereign froth the position of authority. When the fortunes of the nations, which have climbed to the very apex of glory and prosperity, change, they are humiliated and disgraced even in the world where do one could dare look them in the face. How has then this man been deluded into thinking that no one else can have power over him ?

7Literally: "I have destroyed heaps of wealth", i.e. squandered and wasted it. These words show how proud the speaker was of his wealth. The heaps of wealth that he spent was so insignificant as against his total wealth that he did not mind squandering it carelessly. And to what purpose did he squander it'? Not for a genuine, good cause as becomes evident from the following verses, but for display of his wealth and expression of his pride and glory. Bestowing rich awards on , poetic admirers, inviting and feeding hundreds of thousands of people on marriage and death ceremonies, gambling away heaps of wealth, attending festivals with large entourages, trying to excel others in display of glory and grandeur, having heaps of food cooked on ceremonial occasions and throwing invitations to all and sundry to come and eat, or arranging and supplying running meals at the residence so as to impress the people around with one's generosity and largeheartedness; such were the expenditures of ostentation, which in the days of ignorance were regarded as a symbol of man's munificence and magnanmity, and a sign of his greatness. For these they were praised and admired; on these their Praises were sung; and on account of these they prided themselves against the less fortunate.

8That is, "Doesn't this boaster understand that there is also a God above him, Who sees by what means he obtained this wealth, in what ways he spent it, and with what intention, motive, and purpose he did all this ? Does he think that God will put any value on his extravagance, his fame-mongering and his boasting Does he think that like the world, God too will be deluded by it?"

9That is, "Have We not given him the means of obtaining knowledge and wisdom '?" "Two eyes" does not imply the eyes of the cow and buffalo, but human eyes, which if used intelligently can help man see all around himself those signs which lead to the reality and distinguish the right from the wrongs. "The tongue and lips" do not merely imply the instruments of speech but the rational wind behind these instruments which performs the functions of thinking and understanding and then uses them for expressing its ideas, motives and designs.

10That is, "We have not left him alone after granting him the faculties of thinking and reasoning so that he may have to search out his own way, but We have also guided him and opened up before him both the highways of good and evil, virtue and vice, so that he may consider them seriously and choose and adopt one or the other way on his own responsibility. This same subject has been expressed in Surah Ad-Dahr: 2-3, thus: "Indeed We created man from a mixed sperm-drop, to try him, and so We made him capable of hearing and seeing. We showed him the way, whether to be grateful or disbelieving. " For explanation, see E.N.'s 3 to S of Ad-Dahr.

11The words in the original are: fa-lagtaham-al- aqabah. Iqtiham means to apply oneself to a hard and toilsome task, and 'aqabah is the steep path that passes through mountains for ascending heights. Thus, the verse means: "One of the two paths that We have shown him, leads to heights but is toilsome and steep; man has to tread it against the desires of his self and the temptations of Satan. The other path is easy which descends into chasms, but does not require any toil from man; one only needs to give free reins to oneself, then one automatically goes on rolling down the abyss. Now, the man to whom We had shown both the paths, adopted the easy down-hill path and abandoned the toilsome path, which leads to the heights."

12Since in the foregoing verses the extravagances of man which he indulges in for ostentation and expression of superiority to others, have been mentioned, now here it is being stated as to what expenditure of wealth it is which leads man up to moral heights instead of causing him to sink into moral depravity and perversion. But in this there is no enjoyment for the self; on the contrary, man has to exercise self-restraints and make sacrifices. The expenditure is that one should set a slave free, or should render a slave monetary help so as to enable him to win his freedom by paying the ransom, or free a debtor from his debt, or secure release of a helpless person without means from penalties. Likewise, the expenditure is that one should feed a nearly related orphan (i.e. an orphan who is either a relative or a neighbor) who is hungry, and a needy, helpless person who might have been reduced to extreme poverty and might have none to support and help him. Helping such people does not win a person fame and reputation, nor feeding them brings him the admiration for being wealthy and generous which one usually wins by holding banquets to thousands of well-to-do people. But the path to moral and spiritual heights passes on steep uphill roads only.

Great merits of the acts of virtue mentioned in these verses have been described by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). For instance, about fakku raqabah (fleeing a neck from bondage) many ahadith have been related in the traditions, one of which is a tradition from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, to the effect; "The Holy Prophet said: The person who set a believing slave free, Allah will save from fire of Hell every limb of his body in lieu of every limb of the slave's body, the hand in lieu of the hand, the foot in lies of the foot, the private parts in lieu of the private parts " (Musnad, Ahmad, Bukhari. Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i). Hadrat 'Ali bin Husain (Imam Zain al-`Abedin) asked Sa`d bin Marjanah, the reporter of this Hadith: "Did you hear it yourself from Abu Hurairah?" When 6e replied in the affirmative, Imam Zain al-

`Abedin called out his most valuable slave and set him free there and then. According to Muslim, he had an offer often thousand dirhams for the slave. On the basis of this verse, Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Sha`bi have ruled: "Setting a slave free is superior to giving away charity, for Allah has mentioned it before the mention of charity.

The Holy Prophet has mentioned the merits of rendering help to the needy in many ahadith, one of which is this Hadith from Hadrat Abu Hurairah: "The Holy Prophet said: The one who strives in the cause of rendering help to the widow and the needy is like the one who endeavors and strives in the cause of jihad for the sake of Allah. (And Hadrat Abu Hurairah says :) I think that the Holy Prophet also said: He is even like him who keeps standing up in the Prayer constantly, without ever taking rest, and like him who observes the fast continuously without ever breaking it:" (Bukhari, Muslim).

As for the orphans, there are numerous sayings reported from the Holy Prophet. Hadrat Sahl bin Sa`d has reported: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: I and the one who supports a nearly related of un-related orphan, shall stand in Paradise like this-saying this he raised his index finger and the middle finger, keeping them a little apart." (Bukhari). Hadrat Abu HIurairah has reported this saying of the Holy Prophet: "The best among the Muslim homes is the home wherein an orphan is treated well and the worst the one wherein an orphan is mistreated." (Ibn Majah, Bukhari in Al-Adab al- Mufrad). Hadrat Abu Umamah says that the Holy Prophet said: "The one who passed his hand on the head of an orphan, only for the sake of Allah, will have as many acts of virtue recorded in his favour as the number of the hair on which his hand passed, and the one who treated an orphan boy or girl well. will stand in Paradise with me like this...saying this the Holy Prophet joined his two fingers together." (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi). Ibn 'Abbas says: The Holy Prophet said: "The one who made an orphan join him in eating and drinking, Allah will make Paradise obligatory for him unless he commits a sin which cannot be forgiven." (Sharh as-Sunnah).Hadrat Abu Hurairah says: A man complained before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), saying: "I am hard-hearted." The Holy Prophet said to him: "Treat the orphan with kindness and love and feed the needy one." (Musnad Ahmad).

13That is, "In addition to these qualities it is essential that one should be a believer, for without faith no act is an act of virtue, nor acceptable in the sight of Allah. At numerous places in the Qur'an it has been stated that only such an act of virtue is appreciable and becomes a means of salvation as is accompanied by faith. In .Surah An-Nisa', for example, it has been said: "The one who does good deeds, whether man or woman, provided that the one is a believer, will enter Paradise (v. 1245.)" In Surah An-Nahl: "Whosoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, provided that he is a believer, We shall surely grant him to live a pure life in this world, and We will reward such people (in the Hereafter) according to their best deeds" (v. 97). In Surah Al-Mu'min: "Whoever does good, whether man or woman, provided that he is a believer, all such people shall enter Paradise wherein they shall be provided without measure." (v : 4U). Whoever studies the Qur'an, will see that in this Book wherever the good reward of a righteous act has been mentioned, it has always been made conditional upon the faith, a good act without faith; has nowhere been regarded as acceptable to God, nor has any hope been given for a

reward for it.

Here, the following important point also should not remain hidden from view: In this verse it has not been said: "Then he believed", but: "Then he joined those who believed.' This means that mere believing as an individual and remaining content with it is not what is desired; what is desired is that every new believer should join those who have already believed so as to form a party of the believers, to bring about a believing society, which should work for establishing the virtues and wiping out the vices as demanded by the faith.

14These are two of the important characteristics of the believing society, which have been expressed in two brief sentences. The first characteristic is that its members should exhort one another to patience, and the second that they should exhort one another to compassion and mercy.

As for patience, we have explained at many places that in view of the extensive meaning in which the Qur'an has used this word, the entire life of a believer is a life of patience. As soon as a man stops on to the path of the faith, test of his patience starts. Patience is required to be exercised in performing the acts of worship enjoined by Allah patience is needed in carrying out the commands of Allah; abstention from the things forbidden by Allah is not possible without patience; patience is needed in abandoning the moral evils and in adopting the pure morals; temptations to sin faced at every step can be resisted only by recourse to patience. On countless occasions in life obedience to God's law entails losses, troubles, hardships and deprivations, and disobedience to the law seems to bring benefits and pleasures. Without patience no believer can fare well on such occasions. Then, as soon as a believer has adopted the way of the faith, he has to meet with resistance not only from his own self and personal desires but also from his children, family, society, country and nation and from the base-hearted among men and jinn of the entire world; so much so that he is even required to abandon his country and undertake Jihad in the cause of God. Under all these conditions only the quality of patience can cause a man to remain steadfast to principles. Now, obviously, if every believer individually was put to such a hard test, he would be faced with the danger of defeat at every step and world hardly be able to pass through the test successfully. On the contrary, if there existed a believing society every member of which was not only himself possessed of patience but all its members also were .supporting one another mutually in the test of patience, successes would fall to its lot, a tremendous power would be generated to face the evil, a mighty force of good individuals would be ready to help bring the entire society on to the path of virtue and righteousness.

As for mercy and compassion, it is the distinctive feature of the society of believers that they are not a hard-hearted, merciless and unjust people but a society whose members are merciful and compassionate. to humanity at large and sympathetic and friendly among themselves. A believer as an individual is an embodiment of Allah's quality of mercy and the group of the believers as a party also is a representative of Allah's Messenger, who has been described thus: "O Muhammad, We have sent you to be a real blessing for the people of the world." (AI-Anbiya': 107). The highest moral quality which the Holy

Messenger (upon whom be Allah's peace) tried his utmost to inculcate among his followers was this very quality of mercy. Consider - the following of his sayings, which show what importance he attached to it. Hadrat Jarir bin `Abdullah says that the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) said: "Allah does not show mercy to him who does not show mercy to others." (Bukhari, Muslim).

Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr bin al-`As says that the holy Prophet said: "The Rahman (Merciful) shows mercy to those who show mercy (to others). Show mercy to those who live in the earth, the One who is in heaven will show mercy to you." (Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi).

Hadrat Abu Sa`id Khudri has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "The one who does not show mercy, is not shown mercy. " (Bukhari in Al-Adab al-Mufrad). Ibn `Abbas says that the Holy Prophet said: "The one who does not treat our young ones mercifully and does not treat our elderly ones respectfully, dces not belong to us. " (TirmidhI).

Abu Da'ud has related this same saying of the Holy Prophet on the authority of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Amr, thus: "The one who did not feel pity on our young and did not respect our elderly does not belong to us."

Hadrat Abu Hurairah says: "I have heard Abul-Qasim, the Truthful (upon whom be peace), say: "The heart of the wretched one is deprived of the quality of mercy altogether' . " (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi).

Hadrat `Iyad bin Humad relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Three kinds of men belong to Paradise, one of whom is the person who is kindly and compassionate to every relative and every Muslim." (Muslim).

Hadrat Nu`man bin Bashir has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "You will find the believers like a body in the matter of mutual kindness, love and sympathy, so that if one part of the body suffers the whole body suffers and becomes restless because of it." (Bukhari, Muslim).

Hadrat Abu Musa Al-ash`ari says that the Holy Prophet said: "The believer is for the other believer like a wall each part of which supports and strengthens the other part." (Bukhari, Muslim).

Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Umar has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "A Muslim is a brother of the other Muslim: neither treats him unjustly, nor withholds his help from him. The person who works to fulfill a need of his brother, Allah will seek to fulfill his need; and the one who rescues a Muslim from an affliction, Allah will rescue him from an affliction of the afflictions of the Resurrection Day; and the one who conceals the fault of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his fault on the Resurrection Day. " (Bukhari, Muslim).

These traditions indicate what kind of a society is envisaged by the Qur'anic instruction given in this verse, which exhorts the righteous people to join the group of the believers after they have affirmed the faith.

15For an explanation of "the people of the right hand and of the left hand", see E.N.'s 5, 6 of Surah Al-Waqi'ah.

16That is, fire will be so covering them from every side that they will find no way of escape from it.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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91. Sura As Shams (The Sun)

Name

The Surah has been so designated after the word *ash-shams* with which it opens.

Period of Revelation

The subject matter and the style show that this Surah too was revealed in the earliest period at Makkah at a stage when opposition to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had grown very strong and intense.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to distinguish the good from the evil and to warn the people, who were refusing to understand this distinction and insisting on following the evil way, of the evil end.

In view of the subject matter this Surah consists of two parts. The first part consists of vv. 1-10, and the second of vv. 11-15. The first part deals with three things:

1. That just as the sun and the moon, the day and the night, the earth and the sky, are different from each other and contradictory in their effects and results, so are the good and the evil different front each other and contradictory in their effects and results; they are neither alike in their outward appearance nor can they be alike in their results.

2. That Allah after giving the human self powers of the body, sense and mind has not left it uninformed in the world, but has instilled into his unconscious by means of a natural inspiration the distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, and the sense of the good to be good and of the evil to be evil.

3. That the future of man depends on how by using the powers of discrimination, will and judgment that Allah has endowed him with, he develops the good and suppresses the evil tendencies of the self. If he develops

the good inclination and frees his self of the evil inclinations, he will attain to eternal success, and if, on the contrary, he suppresses the good and promotes the evil, he will meet with disappointment and failure.

In the second part citing the historical precedent of the people of Thamud the significance of Prophethood has been brought out. A Messenger is raised in the world, because the inspirational knowledge of good and evil that Allah has placed in human nature, is by itself not enough for the guidance of man, but on account of his failure to understand it fully man has been proposing wrong criteria and theories of good and evil and thus going astray. That is why Allah sent down clear and definite Revelation to the Prophets (peace be upon them) to augment man's natural inspiration so that they may expound to the people as to what is good and what is evil. Likewise, the Prophet Salih (peace be upon him) was sent to the people of Thamud, but the people overwhelmed by the evil of their self, had become so rebellious that they rejected him. And when he presented before them the miracle of the she camel, as demanded by themselves, the most wretched one of them, in spite of his warning, hamstrung it, in accordance with the will and desire of the people. Consequently, the entire tribe was overtaken by a disaster.

While narrating this story of the Thamud nowhere in the Surah has it been said "O people of Quraish, if you rejected your Prophet, Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), as the Thamud had rejected theirs, you too would meet with the same fate as they met." The conditions at that time in Makkah were similar to those that had been created by the wicked among the people of Thamud against the Prophet Salih (peace be upon him). Therefore, the narration of this story in those conditions was by itself enough to suggest to the people of Makkah how precisely this historical precedent applied to them.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلشَّمْسِ وَضُحَىٰهَا ﴿١﴾

وَٱلْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَىٰهَا ﴿٢﴾

وَٱلنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّىٰهَا ﴿٣﴾

وَٱلَّيۡلِ إِذَا يَغۡشَىٰهَا ﴿٤﴾

وَٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا بَنَىٰهَا ﴿٥﴾

وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَمَا طَحَىٰهَا ﴿٦﴾

وَنَفۡسٖ وَمَا سَوَّىٰهَا ﴿٧﴾

فَأَلۡهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقۡوَىٰهَا ﴿٨﴾

قَدۡ أَفۡلَحَ مَن زَكَّىٰهَا ﴿٩﴾

وَقَدۡ خَابَ مَن دَسَّىٰهَا ﴿١٠﴾

[1-10] By the sun and his brightness,[1] and by the moon when she follows him, and by the day when it makes (the sun) conspicuous and by the night when it covers up (the sun),[2] and by the heaven and Him Who established it,[3] and by the earth and Him Who spread it, and by the human self and Him Who balanced it,[4] then inspired it with its wickedness and its piety.[5] Truly successful is he who purified his self and a failure he who suppressed it.[6]

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَىٰهَآ ﴿١١﴾

إِذِ ٱنۢبَعَثَ أَشْقَىٰهَا ﴿١٢﴾

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ نَاقَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَسُقْيَىٰهَا ﴿١٣﴾

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِذَنۢبِهِمْ فَسَوَّىٰهَا ﴿١٤﴾

وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَىٰهَا ﴿١٥﴾

[11-15] Thamud[7] belied (the Truth) because of their transgression.[8] When the most wretched of them rose up, in his rage, the Messenger of Allah warned them, saying, "(Do not molest) the she-camel of Allah, and (do not hinder her from) drinking water."[9] But they belied what he said and killed the she-camel.[10] Consequently, their Lord let loose on them a scourge in consequence of their sin and leveled them down all together, and he has no fear of any evil result (of his this action).[11]

1The word duha as used in the original applies both to the light of the sun and to its heat. Although in Arabic its well known meaning is the time between sunrise and meridian when the sun has risen high, at that height it does not only give light but heat too. Therefore, when the word duha is attributed to the sun, its full meaning can be expressed more appropriately by its radiant brightness than by its light, or by the

time of the day that it indicates.

2That is, when the night comes, the sun hides and its light remains hidden throughout the night. This state has been described, saying that the night covers up the sun, for the night actually signifies the sun's hiding behind the horizon because of which its light cannot reach that part of the earth where the night has fallen.

3"Who established it": Who established it like a vault over the earth. In this verse and in the two succeeding verses, the word ma has been used. A section of the commentators has taken this ma as an infinitive, and interpreted these verses to mean "By the heaven and its being established, by the earth and its being spread out, and by the human self and its being balanced. " But this meaning is not correct for the reason that the following sentence: "then inspired it with its wickedness and its piety", does not fit in with the context. Other commentators have taken ma here in the meaning of mun or alladhi and they interpret the sentence to mean: "Who established the heaven, who spread out the earth, and who balanced the human self. " This second meaning is correct in our view, and no one can object that ma in Arabic is used of lifeless things and irrational creatures, For in the Qur'an itself there are numerous instances that ma has been used in the meaning of mun, e.g. we la antum `abiduna ma a `bud ("nor are you the worshipers of Him Whom I worship"), fankihu ma taba lakun~-mia-an-nisa ` ("so, marry from among the women those whom you like") .wa la tanlkihu ma nakaha abaa ukum min-nisa' ("do not marry those women whom your fathers had married").

4"Balanced it" : gave man such a body which by virtue of its erect stature, its hands and feet, and its brain was most appropriate for him to live as man in the world. He blessed him with the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell which on account of their combination and their characteristics could become the best means of obtaining knowledge for him. He endowed him with the faculties of thinking and reasoning, imagination, memory, discrimination, judgment, will-power and such other mental powers by virtue of which he is able to perform the functions fit for man in the world. In addition, balancing also means that man was not created a sinner by birth and a criminal by instinct but on right and sound nature, anti was not characterized with any inborn crookedness because of which he may be unable to adopt the right path even if he wanted to do so. This same thing has been expressed in Surah Ar-Rum, saying: "Be steadfast on the nature whereupon Allah has created mankind." (v. 30), and the same has been explained by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in a Hadith, saying: "Every new-born child is born on true human nature; it is his parents who make him a"Jew or a Christian or a Magian afterwards. Its example is of an animal giving birth to complete and sound young one. Do you find any one with a torn or slit ear ?" (Bukhari, Muslim). That is, it is the polytheistic people who on account of their superstitions of ignorance tear and slit the ears of animals after wards; otherwise God does not cause an animal to be born with torn ears from its mother's belly. In another Hadith the Holy Prophet said: "My Lord says: I had created all My servants on true Faith (i.e. on sound nature); then the satans came and led them astray from their Faith (i.e.. the true natural Faith) and made unlawful what I had made lawful for them, and commanded them to associate with Me those for whom I had sent down no authority." (Musnad Ahmad;

Muslim also has related a saying from the Holy Prophet in similar words).

5The word ilham is derived from Jahm which means to swallow. According to this very basic meaning, the word ilham is used terminologically for Allah's inspiring a man with a concept or idea unconsciously. Inspiring the human self with its wickedness and its piety and virtue has two meanings: (1) That the Creator has placed in it tendencies to both good and evil, and this is the thing that every man feels in himself. (2) That Allah has endowed every man's unconscious mind with the concept that there is a moral good and there is a moral evil, that good morals and acts and evil morals and acts are not equal and alike; fujur (immorality) is an evil thing and taqva (abstention from evils) a good thing. These concepts are pot new to man; he is conscious of these by nature, and the Creator has endowed him with the ability to distinguish between good and evil naturally. This same thing has been said in Surah AI-Balad: "And We showed him both the highways of good and evil." v. 10); and in Surah Ad Dahr, thus: "We showed him the way, whether to be grateful or disbelieving" (v. 3); and the same has been expressed in Surah AI-Qiyamah, saying: "In man there is the reproaching self (conscience) which reproaches him when he commits evil (v. 2)," and "Man knows his own self best, even though he may offer many excuses." (w. 1415).

Here, one should also understand well that Allah has blessed every creature with natural inspiration according to its position and nature, as has been pointed out in Surah Ta Ha: "Who has given a distinctive form to everything and then guided it aright." (v. 50). For example, every species of animals has been given inspirational knowledge according to its needs by virtue of which the fish learns to swim, the bird to fly, the bee to make the beehive and the weaver-bird to build the nest instinctively. Man also in view of his different capacities has been granted separate kinds of inspirational knowledge. His one capacity is that he is an animal being; as such the most significant instance of the inspirational knowledge that he has been given is that the human child starts sucking the mother's milk soon on birth. which no one could teach it, had it, not been taught it instinctively by God. Another position of man is that 6e is a rational being. As such God has boon blessing him with . inspirational guidance continuously since the time of his creation, by virtue of which he has been discovering things and making inventions to develop his civilization. Anyone who studies the history of these discoveries and inventions will realize that there was hardly any which might be the result of man's own effort or thought, but mostly it so happened that suddenly an idea struck a person and he discovered or invented something. Besides these two, another position of man is that he is a moral being. In this position too Allah has blessed him by inspiration with discrimination between good and evil and of the realization of the good to be good and of the evil to be evil. This sense of discrimination and realization is a universal truth on account of which no human society in the world has even been without the concepts of good and evil; there has never been in history, nor is there now, a society which may not be having some kind of a system of rewarding the good and punishing the evil. this fact being prevalent in every age, at every place, and at every stage of civilization is a clear proof of its being natural and innate. Furthermore, this is also proof that a Wise Creator possessed of knowledge has endued man's nature with it, for in the elements of which man is made up and the laws which govern the material system of the world, no human origin of morals can be traced

out.

6This is for which an oath has been sworn by the things mentioned in the above verses. Let us now consider how those things bear upon it. The rule that Allah has followed in the Qur'an is that to bear testimony to the truths that He wants to impress on the human mind, he cites some of the most conspicuous, common-place things which every man sees in his surroundings, or in his own self. Accordingly here, pairs of contradictory things have been cited, each unlike the other in its effects and results, rather opposite and reverse. The first pair is of the sun and the moon. The light of the sun is intensely bright and also hot. As against it the moon has no light of its own. Even if it is there in the sky when the sun shines, it is without light. It shines when the sun hides, and even then its light is neither so bright that it may change the night into day nor is there any heat in it that it may have the same effect as the sun's light. Nevertheless, it has its own effects which are quite different from the effects of the sun. Likewise, there is the pair of the day and the night. Each is the reverse of the other. The effects and results of each are so different from the other that no one can say they are alike; so much so that even a most foolish person cannot possibly say that the day's being the day or the ,night's being the night does not make any difference. Likewise, there is the pair of the sky and the earth; the former has been raised high by the Creator and the latter spread like a carpet beneath it. Although both are serving the same universe, its system and expediencies, yet there is a world of difference between their functions and their effects and results. After citing these universal evidences, man's own self has been considered, and it has been said that after balancing it with suitable combination of the limbs, senses and mental powers and faculties the Creator has placed in it tendencies, inclinations and motives to both good and evil, which are contradictory to each other, and made him understand by inspiration the distinction between the two: that one is fujur, which is evil, and the other is tagva, which is good. Now, if the sun and the moon, the day and the night, the earth and the heaven, are not alike but necessarily different from each other in their effects and results, how can fujur and taqva of the self be alike in spite of being reverse of each other? Man himself in this world does not regard and acknowledge the good and the evil as equal, no matter what criteria of good and evil he might have devised for himself according to his self-propounded philosophies. In any case, about whatever he regards as good, he holds the opinion that it is appreciable and worthy of praise, reward and recompense. On the contrary, about whatever he regards as evil, it is his own objective opinion that it is worthy of condemnation and punishment. But the real judgment does not lie with man; it lies with the Creator, Who has inspired man with his fujur and taqva. The fujur is that which is fujur in the sight of the Creator and the tagva that which is tagva in His sight, and both have separate results in the sight of the Creator. The result of the one is that he who purifies his self, should attain to eternal success, and the result of the, other is that he who suppresses his self, should be a failure.

Tazkiyah means to purify, develop and cultivate. In the context it clearly moans the one who purifies his self of fujur and develops it to the level of tagva and cultivates in it the ,good, will attain to eternal success. As against this; the word dassaha has been used, the infinitive of which is tadsiyah, which means to suppress, conceal, seduce and lead astray. The meaning of this also becomes clear from the

context; i. e. the one who suppresses the tendency in his self towards good instead of developing and cultivating it, who seduces it into doing evil, and makes fujur dominate over taqva so as to cover it up completely like the dead body which is buried and covered with earth, will be a failure. Some commentators have interpreted this verse to mean: "Truly successful was he whom (whose self) Allah purified .and a failure he whom (whose self) Allah suppressed." But this commentary is, firstly, opposed to the style of the Qur'an in view of the language, for if Allah had meant to say this, He would have said: "Truly successful was the self which Allah purified and a failure the self which Allah suppressed;" secondly, this commentary clashes with the other statements of the Qur'an on this subject. In Surah Al-A`la, Allah says: "Truly successful was he who adopted purity." (v. 14). In Surah `Abasa, Allah has addressed His Holy Messenger, saying: "And. you would not be responsible if he did not adopt purity " In both these verses, adoption of purity has been regarded as an act of man. Besides, the truth stated at many places in the Qur'an is that man in this world is being put to the test. For example, in Surah Ad-Dahr, it is said: "We created man from a mixed sperm-drop, to try him, and so We made him capable of hearing and seeing." (v. 2) In Surah AlMulk it is stated: "Who created death and life that he may try you to see which of you is best in deeds. (v. 2) Now, obviously, if the examiner at the outset encourages one candidate and discourages the other, the test would he a farce. Therefore, the correct commentary is that which Qatadah, `Ikrimah, Mujahid and Sa`id bin Jubair have given, saying that the subject zakkaha and dassaha is man and not God. As for the Hadith which Ibn Abi Hatim has related on the authority of Juwaybir bin Sa`id from Dahhak from Ibn `Abbas, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself interpreted this verse to mean: "Truly successful was the self whom the Almighty Allah purified"; this saying is not confirmed to be from the Holy Prophet, for its one reporter Juwaybir, has been rejected as a narrator of Hadith, and Dahhak did not meet Ibn `Abbas. However, the Hadith which Imam Ahmad, Muslim, Nasa'i and Ibn Abi Shaibah have related on the authority of Hadrat Zaid bin Arqam, is correct which says that the Holy Prophet used to pray: "O Allah, grant my self its taqva and purify it: You alone are the best to purify it; You alone are its Guardian and Master. " In almost similar words, this supplication of the Holy Prophet has been related by Tabarani Ibn Marduyah and Ibn al-Mundhir from Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas and Imam Ahmad from Hadrat `A'ishah. It actually means that man can only desire and seek tagva and tazkiyah; as for its attainment, it depends in any case on Allah's grace and,favour alone. And the same also is we of tadsiyah: Allah does not suppress a self forcibly, but when a man is resolved on iniquity, Allah deprives him of the grace of tagva and tazbyab, 'and leaves him alone to suppress and bury his self under nay heap of filth he likes.

7The things stated in principle in the above verses, are now being explained by as historical precedent or what it is a precedent and how it relates to what has been stated above, one should consider well in .the. light of the other statements of the Qur'an the two basic truths which have been expressed in vv. 7-10.

Firstly, in these it has been stated that attar creating the human self on balanced and sound nature, Allah inspired it with its fujur and its taqwa. The Qur'an along with stating this truth also makes explicit that this inspirational knowledge of fujur and tagva is not enough for every man that he may by himself obtain detailed guidance from it, but for this purpose Allah gave detailed guidance to the Prophets through

Revelation in which it was explained what is fujur and what it applies to, which one should avoid, and what is taqwa which one should attain and develop, if man does not accept and acknowledge this clear and definite guidance sent down through Revelation, he can neither avoid fujur not find the way to taqwa.

Secondly, in these verses it has been stated that, the rewards and punishments are the necessary results which accrue from adoption of either fujur or taqva The result of cleansing the self of fujur and developing it ,with taqwa is eternal success and the result of suppressing its good tendencies and causing it to be overwhelmed with fujur is.failure, ruin and destruction.

To make man understand this truth a historical precedent is being cited and for this the tribe of Thamud has been taken as an illustration, for the various tribes destroyed in antiquity the territory of the Thamud was closest to Makkah. In northern Hijaz its historical ruins were extant. which the people of Makkah passed by during their trade journeys to Syria, and the way this tribe has been frequently referred to in the pre-Islamic poetry shows that its destruction was a common subject of talk among the Arabs.

8"Belied the truth": belied the Prophethood of the Prophet Salih, who was sent for their guidance. On account of their rebellious attitude they were not prepared to give up the fujur in which they were involved, and they were not inclined to accept the taqwa to which the Prophet Salih was calling them. For details, see Al-A'raf: 73-76, Hud: 61-62, Ash-Shu`ara': 141-153, An-Naml: 45-49, Al-Qamar: 23-25.

9At other places in the Qur'an the following details, are given: The people of Thamud challenged the Prophet Salih to present a sign (a miracle) if he was truthful. Thereupon the Prophet presented a she-camel miraculously before them and warned them to the effect: "This is Allah's she-camel. She will graze at will in the land. One day will be for her to drink and one day for you and your cattle. If you molest her, you will be punished with a scourge." This proved to be a deterrent for some time. Then they appealed to their most wicked and rebellious, chief to put an end to the she-camel, and he took up the responsibility and hamstrung her. (Al-A`raf 73, Ash-Shu`ara: 134156, Al-Qamar: 29).

10According to Surah Al-A`raf: 77, after they had killed the she-camel, the people of Thamud said to the Prophet Salih: "Bring the scourge with which you threatened us." And according to Hud: 65, the Prophet Salih said to them: "Well, you have only three more days to enjoy yourselves in your houses This is a limit that will not prove false. "

11That is, Allah is not like the kings of the world and the rulers of governments, who, when they want to take some action against a people, are compelled to consider what will be the consequences of their action. Allah's power is supreme. He had no apprehension that some supporting power of the Thamud would come out to avenge itself on Him.

92. Sura Al Lail (The Night)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *wal-lail* with which it opens.

Period of Revelation

Its subject matter so closely resembles that of Surah Ash-Shams that each Surah seems to be an explanation of the other. It is one and the same thing which has been explained in Surah Ash-Shams in one way and in this Surah in another. This indicates that both these Surahs were sent down in about the same period.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to distinguish between the two different ways of life and to explain the contrast between their ultimate ends and results. In view of the subject matter this Surah consists of two parts, the first part consisting of vv. 1-11 and the second of vv. 12-21.

In the first part, at the outset it has been pointed out that the strivings and doings that the individuals, nations and groups of mankind are engaged in in the world, are, in respect of their moral nature, as divergent as the day is from the night, and the male from the female. After this, according to the general style of the brief Surahs of the Quran, three moral characteristics of one kind and three moral characteristics of the other kind have been presented as an illustration from among a vast collection of the strivings and activities of man, from which every man can judge which style of life is represented by one kind of the characteristics and which style of life by the other kind. Both these styles have been described in such brief, elegant. and pithy sentences that they move the heart and go down into memory as soon as one hears them. Characteristics of the first kind are that one should spend one's wealth, adopt God-consciousness and piety, and acknowledge the good as good. The second kind of the characteristics are that one should be miserly, should least care for God's pleasure and His displeasure, and should repudiate what is good and right. Then it has been stated that these two modes of action which are clearly divergent, cannot be equal and alike in respect of their results. But, just as they are divergent in their nature, so they are divergent in their results. The person (or group of persons) who adopts the first mode of action, Allah will make easy for him the

correct way of life, so much so that doing good will become easy for him and doing evil difficult. On the contrary, he who adopts the second mode of life, Allah will make easy for him the difficult and hard way of life, so much so that doing evil will become easy for him and doing good difficult. This passage has been concluded with a most effective and touching sentence, saying: "This worldly wealth for the sake of which man is even prepared to risk his life will not go down with him into the grave; therefore, what will it avail him after death?"

In the second part also three truths have been stated equally briefly. First, that Allah has not left man uninformed in the examination hall of the world, but He has taken on Himself the responsibility to tell him which one is the straight and right way out of the different ways of life. Here, there was no need to point out that by sending His Messenger and His Book He has fulfilled His this responsibility, for both the Messenger and the Book were present to afford the guidance. Second, that the Master of both the world and the Hereafter is Allah alone. If you seek the world, it is He Who will give it, and if you seek the Hereafter, again it is He Who will give it. Now, it is for you to decide what you should seek from Him. The third truth that has been stated is that the wretched one who rejects the good, which is being presented through the Messenger and the Book, and turns away from it, will have a blazing fire ready for him. As for the God fearing person who spends his wealth in a good cause, without any selfish motive, only for the sake of winning his Lord's good pleasure, his Lord will be pleased with him and will bless him with so much that he will be well pleased with Him.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١﴾

وَٱلنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ ﴿٢﴾

وَمَا خَلَقَ ٱلذَّكَرَ وَٱلْأُنثَىٰٓ ﴿٣﴾

إِنَّ سَعۡيَكُمۡ لَشَتَّىٰ ﴿٤﴾

فَأَمَّا مَنۡ أَعۡطَىٰ وَٱتَّقَىٰ ﴿٥﴾

وَصَدَّقَ بِٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ ﴿٦﴾

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلۡيُسۡرَىٰ ﴿٧﴾

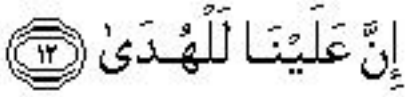
وَأَمَّا مَنۢ بَخِلَ وَٱسۡتَغۡنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

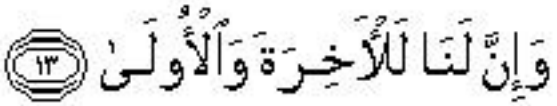
وَكَذَّبَ بِٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ ﴿٩﴾

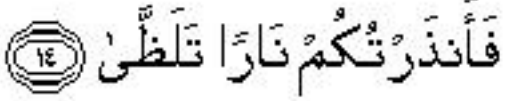
فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلۡعُسۡرَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾

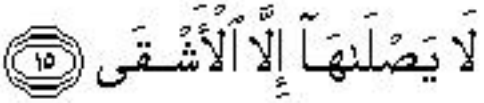
وَمَا يُغۡنِي عَنۡهُ مَالُهُۥٓ إِذَا تَرَدَّىٰٓ ﴿١١﴾

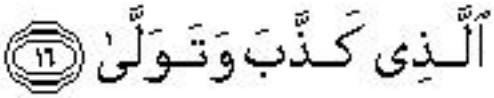
[1-11] By the night when it spreads, and the day when it shines forth, and Him Who created the male and the female: In fact, your endeavors (O men) are for different ends.[1] So he who gave wealth (in God's Way) and avoided (God's disobedience), and believed in goodness,[2] for him We shall facilitate the easy way.[3] As for him who was niggardly and lived as though he was independent (of God) and belied goodness,[4] for him We shall facilitate the hard way[5] And what will his. wealth avail him when he perishes?[6]

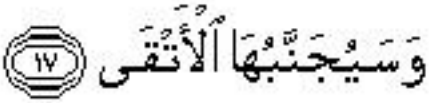


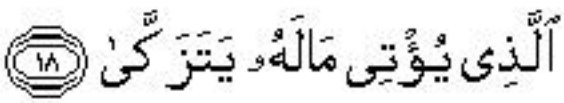












وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِندَهُۥ مِن نِّعْمَةٍ تُجْزَىٰٓ ﴿١٩﴾

إِلَّا ٱبْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٢٠﴾

وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾

[12-21] Indeed, it is for Us to tell the Way,[7] and, indeed, Ours are both the Hereafter and this present life.[8] So, I have warned you of the blazing Fire. None shall burn in it but the most wretched one, who belied and turned away. And away from it shall be kept the most pious one, who gives away his wealth in order to purify himself.[9] He has received no favor from anyone for which he may have to return a reward. He only seeks the goodwill of his Lord, the Exalted,[10] and He will certainly be well-pleased (with him).[11]

1This is that for which an oath has been sworn by the night and the day, and the creation of the male and the female. It means to say: Just as the night and the day, and the male and the female, are different from each other, and their effects and results are mutually contradictory, so are the aims and objects for which men are endeavoring and struggling, different in their nature and contradictory with regard to their results. In the following verses, it has been told that all these divided endeavors are divided into two main kinds.

2This is the first kind of endeavors, which includes three things, and a little consideration shows that they comprehend all virtues:

(1) That Man should refrain from wealth-worship, but should spend whatever Allah has given him generously in rendering Allah's and His servants' rights, for good works and for helping others;

(2) that he should fear God and refrain from things which cause His displeasure in his moral, social, economic and other dealings with the people;

(3) that he should believe in goodness. Goodness is a comprehensive word, which includes goodness of belief, morals and acts. Goodness of belief means that one should give up polytheism; atheism, and

disbelief, and affirm faith in Tauhid, the Hereafter, and Prophethood. Affirming belief in goodness of morals and acts is that one should not be doing good and right merely unconsciously, outside a definite system, but one should acknowledge as right and sound the system of goodness which God has sent, which combines every kind of goodness in all its forms and aspects into a system comprehensively called the Divine Shari'ah.

3This is the result of the first kind of endeavoring and struggling. The easy way implies the way which is in accordance with human nature, which is in accordance with the will of the Creator, Who has created man and the whole _ universe. It is a way in which man has not to fight his conscience, in which he does not have to force his faculties of mind and energies of body into doing works for which they are not given but to do things for which they have actually been given him. It is a way in which man has not to experience war, resistance and conflict on every side, which he has to experience in a life full of sin, but a human society in which at every step he experiences peace and concord, appreciation and honor. Obviously, the person who spends his wealth for public welfare, treats every other person kindly and well, whose life is free from crime, sin and immorality, who is righteous and fair in his dealings, who neither cheats others nor proves false in his promises, from whom no one apprehends dishonesty, injustice and excess, and with whose character no one finds any fault, will in any case be honored and respected in any society, however, corrupt and depraved it may be. Hearts will be attracted towards him in esteem and regard; his own heart and conscience will be satisfied, and he will attain to dignity in society which no immoral person can ever attain. This same thing has been expressed in Surah AnNahl, thus: "Whoever does righteous deeds whether male or female, provided that he is a believer, We will surely grant him to live a pure life in this world (v. 97)", and in Surah Maryam, thus "The Merciful ,will fill with love the hearts of those who believe and do righteous deeds (v. 86). This then is the way in which there is nothing but joy and tranquility for man, for the world till the Hereafter. Its results are not transient and temporary but eternal and everlasting.

Concerning this Allah says "We shall facilitate for him the easy way." It means to say "When after affirming goodness he decides that this way alone suits him, and the evil way does not suit him, and when by making sacrifices and adopting the life of -taqwa practically he proves that he is true in his affirmation, Allah will make easy for him to walk this way. Then, to commit evil will become difficult for him, and to do good easy. When unlawful wealth comes before him, he will not regard it as a good bargain, but consider it a hot piece of burning coal, which he cannot hold in his hand. When opportunities for sin appear before him, he will not rush to seize them as opportunities for pleasure and enjoyment, but will look upon them as gates to Hell and will flee them. The Prayer will not be hard for him, and hem will have no internal peace until he has performed it at its appointed time. He will not feel hurt when paying the zakat, but will regard his wealth as impure until he has paid out the Zakat from it. In short, at every step, Allah will favor him with His grace and help him to follow this way; conditions will be made favorable for him and he will be helped out of every difficulty.

Now, the question arises that in Surah Al-Baled above this very way has been called an uphill road, and

hire it has been described as an easy way How can the two things be reconciled? The answer is that before a man has adopted this way, it appears to be a steep, uphill road, for ascending which he has to fight his desires, his materialistic members of the family, his relatives, his friends and those with whom he has social and other dealings, and above all Satan, for each one of them obstructs his way, and makes it seem dreadful. But after man has affirmed goodness and resolved to follow this way, and giving away his wealth in the cause of God and adopting the way of taqwa, has practically strengthened his resolve, ascending the steep road becomes easy and slipping into the abyss of moral depravities becomes difficult for him.

4This is the second kind of human endeavoring, which in every part of it is different from the corresponding part of the first kind. Niggardliness (bukhl) is not merely the niggardliness because of which people generally regard a person as niggardly if he hoards money: neither spends it on himself nor on his children, but bukhl here implies to refrain from spending in the cause of Allah and public welfare. According to this, niggardly is every person who spends generously, rather squanders money, on his self, for his own ease and comfort, interests and enjoyments, but, as. for a good cause, spends nothing, or, if at all he spends anything, ii is for display, or to win a reputation and name, or to have access to officers, or to obtain some benefit and gain. Independence of God implies that one should make worldly, material benefits only the object of all one's endeavors and strivings and being independent of God should least care to see what pleases Him and what displeases Him. As for belying goodness, it is in sharp contrast to believing in goodness in every detail, therefore, it need not be explained here as it has already been explained above.

5This way has been called the hard way, for although the one who follows it, does so for the sake of material benefits, worldly enjoyments and superficial successes, yet while following it he is always at war with his nature his conscience, the laws made by the Creator of the universe and the society in Which he lives. When he transgresses all moral limits of truth, honesty, nobility, purity and chastity and endeavors to satisfy his interests and desires in every way, when the people feel harmed by him rather than benefiting from him, and when he encroaches upon the rights of others and violates people's honor, he feels disgraced in his own eyes and has to clash at every step with the society in which he lives. If he is weak, he has to suffer every kind of punishment on account of his conduct, and if he is wealthy, strong and influential, the world may lie low before him, but no one cherishes any good wishes, any feeling of honor and love for him; so much so that even his associates and companions regard him as a wicked man. And this thing is not only restricted to individuals, even when a strong and powerful nation transgresses the bounds of morality and adopts an immoral conduct, in arrogance of pride and wealth, it earns on the one hand, the enmity of the outside world: on the other, its own society falls a victim to all sorts of crime, prevalence of suicide, intoxication, venereal diseases, destruction of family life, waywardness of the new generation, class conflict and ever-increasing injustice and tyranny. So much so that when it falls from its position of prestige, it leaves nothing behind except curses and condemnation for itself in the history of the world.

As for saying that "We shall facilitate for him the hard ways", it means: He will be deprived of the grace to follow the way of good, gates of evil will be opened up for him, means and resources for the same will be provided for him, doing evil will become easy, and doing good will become toilsome and risky for him. This same theme has been expressed at another place in the Qur'an, thus: "So whomever Allah wills to guide aright, He makes his breast wide open to Islam, and whomever He wills to let go astray, he makes his breast narrow and squeezes it so tightly that (at the very idea of Islam) he begins to feel as though his soul were climbing up towards the sky." (Al-An`am :125) . At another place it has been said: "No doubt, salat is a hard task but not for the obedient servants." (Al Baqarah: 46). And about the hypocrites it has been said: "When they come to offer the salat, they come reluctantly and they expend in the way of Allah with unwilling hearts." (At-Taubah: 54), and that: "There are such among them, who regard what they expend in the way of Allah as a penalty." (At-Taubah: 98).

6In other words it means that he has to die one day and leave behind in the world whatever he had amassed for his ease and enjoyment. If he did not earn and send forward something for the Hereafter, what would this wealth avail him? He will not take his palatial residence, his majestic conveyance, his property and wealth into the grave.

7That is, Allah as the Creator of man has on the basis of His wisdom, His justice and His mercy, taken of Himself the responsibility not to leave him uninformed in the world, but to tell him what is the right way and what are the wrong ways, what is good and what is evil , what is lawful and what is unlawful, what attitude and conduct will make him an obedient servant and what attitude and conduct will make him a disobedient servant. This same thing has been expressed in Surah An-Nahl; thus: "Allah has taken upon Himself to show the Right Way, when there are also crooked ways." (v.9) (For explanation, See E.N. 9 of AnNahl).

8This statement has several meanings and all are correct:

(1)"That from the world till the Hereafter, you are nowhere beyond Our grasp, for Ours are both this and the next world;"

(2) "that both this world and the Hereafter are in any case under Our sovereignty, whether you follow the way shown by Us or not. If you adopt error, you will not harm Us but only yourselves; and if you adopt the right way, you will not do any good to Us, but will do good only to yourselves. Your disobedience cannot cause any decrease in Our sovereignty and your obedience cannot cause any increase in it;"

(3) "that We alone are Master of both the worlds. If you seek the world, We alone can grant it; and if you seek the well being of the Hereafter, We alone have the power to bestow it too,"

This very theme has been expressed in Al-`Imran: 145: "Whoso makes effort with the intention of the reward of this world, We will reward him in this world, and whoso makes effort with the intention of the

reward of the Hereafter, We shall grant him thereof", and the same has been expressed in Ash-Shu`ara: 20, thus: "Whoever seeks the harvest of the Hereafter, We do increase his harvest; and whoever seeks the harvest of this world, We do give him of it here, but in the Hereafter he will have no share at all." (For explanation, see E.N. 105 of Al`Imran, E.N. 37 of Ash-Shura).

9This does not mean that no one will enter the fire except the most wretched one, and no one will be saved from it except the most pious one but the object is to describe the extremely contradictory fate of the two extremely contradictory' characters. One of them is the person who belies the teachings of Allah and His Messenger and turns away from obedience; the other one is the person, who not only believes but also spends his wealth in the cause of Allah sincerely, without any desire for display and reputation, only in order to be regarded as a pure man in His eyes. Both these types of character were present in the Makkah society of that day. Therefore., without mentioning any name, the people have been told that the man of the first type of character only will burn in the fire of Hell and not the man of the second type of character; the man of the second type of character only will be kept away from it and not the man of the first type of character.

10This is further explanation of the sincerity of the pious man. He was not indebted in any way to the people on whom he spends his wealth so that he may be doing so in order to repay for favors received, or may be giving gifts and holding banquets to them in order to further benefit from them, but he is helping such people only in order to seek the goodwill of his Lord, the Supreme. He was neither indebted to them before, nor he expects any favors from them in the future. Its best illustration is the act of Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (may Allah blesshim), He would purchase and set free the poor slaves and slaves-girls who accepted Islam in Makkah and were cruelly treated by their masters on that account. Ibn Jarir and Ibn 'Asakir have related, on the authority of Hadrat 'Amir bin 'Abdullah bin Zubair, that when Hadrat Abu Bakr's father saw him spending money to purchase the freedom of the poor slaves and slave-girls, he said to him: "Son, I see that you are getting the weak people free; had you spent this money on the freedom of strong, young men, they would have become your helpers and supporters." Hadrat Abu Bakr replied: "Dear father, I only seek the reward that is with Allah."

11This verse can have two meanings and both are correct:

(1) "That Allah certainly will be well pleased with him;" and

(2) "that Allah soon will bless this man with so much that he will be happy."

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http://www.quran411.com

Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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93. Sura Ad Dhuha (The Morning Light)

Name

The Surah takes its name *Ad-Duha* from the very first word.

Period of Revelation

Its subject matter clearly indicates that it belongs to the earliest period at Makkah. Traditions also show that the revelations were suspended for a time, which caused the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) to be deeply distressed and grieved. On this account he felt very anxious that perhaps he had committed some error because of which his Lord had become angry with him and had forsaken him. Thereupon he was given the consolation that revelation had not been stopped because of some displeasure but this was necessitated by the same expediency as underlies the peace and stillness of the night after the bright day, as if to say: "If you had continuously been exposed to the intensely bright light of Revelation (*Wahi*) your nerves could not have endured it. Therefore, an interval was given in order to afford you peace and tranquility." This state was experienced by the Holy Prophet in the initial stage of the Prophethood when he was not yet accustomed to hear the intensity of Revelation. On this basis, observance of a pause in between was necessary. This we have already explained in the introduction to Surah Al Muddaththir; and in E. N. 5 of Surah Al-Muzzammil also we have explained what great burden of the coming down of Revelation he had to bear. Later, when the Holy Prophet developed the power to bear this burden, there was no longer any need for long gaps.

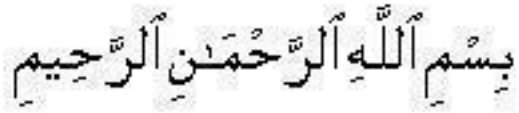
Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to console the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and its object to remove his anxiety and distress, which he had been caused by the suspension of Revelation. First of all, swearing an oath by the bright morning and the stillness of night, he has been reassured, so as to say: "Your Lord has not at all forsaken you, nor is he displeased with you." Then, he has been given the good news that the hardships that he was experiencing in the initial stage of his mission, would not last long, for every later period of life for him would be better than the former period, and before long Allah would bless him so abundantly that he would be well pleased. This is one of the express prophecies of the Quran, which proved literally true, afterwards, whereas when this prophecy was made

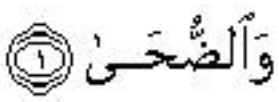
there seemed not to be the remotest chance that the helpless and powerless man who had come out to wage a war against the ignorance and paganism of the entire nation, would ever achieve such wonderful success.

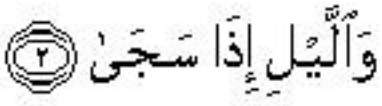
Then, addressing His Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) Allah says:"O My dear Prophet, what has caused you the anxiety and distress that your Lord has forsaken you, and that We are displeased with you? Whereas the fact is that We have been good to you with kindness after kindness ever since the day of your birth. You were born an orphan, We made the best arrangement for your upbringing and care: you were unaware of the Way, We showed you the Way; you were indigent, We made you rich. All this shows that you have been favored by Us from the very beginning and Our grace and bounty has been constantly focused on you."Here, one should also keep in view vv. 37-42 of Surah Ta Ha, where Allah, while sending the Prophet Moses to confront a tyrant like Pharaoh, encouraged and consoled him, saying: "We have been looking after you with kindness ever since your birth; therefore, you should be satisfied that you will not be left alone in this dreadful mission. Our bounty will constantly be with you."

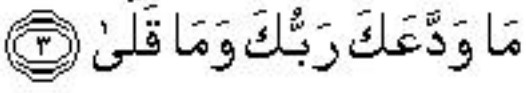
In conclusion, Allah has instructed His Prophet (upon whom be peace) telling him how he should treat the creatures of God to repay for the favors He has done him and how he should render thanks for the blessings He has bestowed on him.



In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.







[1-3] By the day, full of light,[1] and the night when it falls peacefully,[2] your Lord has not forsaken you (O Prophet), nor is He displeased.[3]

وَلَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ ﴿٤﴾

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ ﴿٥﴾

[4-5] And surely the later period is better for you than the earlier period,[4] and soon your Lord shall give you so much that you shall be well pleased.[5]

أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ ﴿٦﴾

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ﴿٧﴾

وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ﴿٩﴾

وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ﴿١٠﴾

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ﴿١١﴾

[6-11] Did He not find you an orphan and then he sheltered you?[6] And He found you unaware of the Way, then He guided you,[7] and He found you poor, then He enriched you.[8] Therefore, do. not be harsh to the orphan,[9] and do not scold the beggar,[10] and do proclaim the bounty of your lord.[11]

1Here, the word duha has been used in contrast to the night; therefore, it implies the bright hours of the day. A precedent of it are vv. 97-98 of Surah Al-A'raf, which say: Do the people of the settlements now feel secure that Our punishment will not come to them all of a sudden at night, while they might be fast asleep? Or, do they feel secure that Our punishment will not smite them all of a sudden during the day while they might be engaged in pastimes?" In these verses also since the word duha has been used in contrast to the night, it implies the day and not just forenoon.

2The word raja in the original does not only signify the spreading of darkness but it also contains the meaning of stillness and peace that prevails at night. This quality of night deeply relates to the theme that follows.

3Traditions show that Revelations to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had remained suspended. for some period of time. Different traditions have mentioned different durations of this period. Ibn Juraij has mentioned it to be 12 days, Kalbi 15 days, Ibn 'Abbas 25 days, and Suddi and Muqatil have stated that it extended to 40 days. In any case the period was so long that it made the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) sorrowful, and the opponents also had the opportunity to taunt him. For whenever a new Surah came down, the Holy Prophet would recite it before the people. Therefore, when he did not recite any new Revelation to them for quite some days, the opponents thought that the fountainhead from where the revelation came, had dried up. Jundub bin 'Abdullah al-Bajali has related that when Gabriel (peace he on him) stopped coming, the pagans started saying that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had been forsaken by his Lord. (Ibn Jarir, Tabarani, 'Abd bin Humaid, Sa'id bin Mansur, Ibn Marduyah). Other traditions show that Umm Jamil, wife of Abu Lahab, who was an aunt of the Holy Prophet and whose house adjoined his, said to him: "It appears your satan has forsaken you." `Aufi and Ibn Jarir have related, on the authority of Ibn `Abbas, that when Gabriel did not visit him for several days, the Holy Prophet became anxious and distressed, and the pagans began to say that his Lord had become angry with him and had forsaken him. In the mursal traditions of Qatadah and Dahhak almost the same theme has been expressed. The Holy Prophet's extreme grief and anguish in this condition has also been referred to in several traditions. And this was natural. The apparent indifference on the part of the beloved, the apparent deprivation of the contact with the source of power, which was his chief support, in the soul-destroying conflict between belief and unbelief, and above all, the taunts and jeers of the enemy, when all these things combined they must have caused great anguish to the Holy

Prophet, and he must be thinking that because of some error that he might have committed his Lord had become displeased with him and had forsaken and left him to fight the battle between truth and falsehood alone.

This was the state when this Surah was sent down to console the Holy Prophet. In it, swearing an oath by the light of the day and the peacefulness of the night, he has been told: "Your Lord has neither forsaken you, nor is He displeased with you." The relevance of the oath by these two things to the theme is: "Just as brightening up of the day and spreading of the night with darkness and stillness is not for the reason that Allah is pleased with the people during the day and displeased with them during the night but both states are based on supreme wisdom and expedience, so sending down of revelation to you at one-time and suspending it at another time, also is based on wisdom and expedience; it has nothing to do with Allah's being pleased with you when He sends down revelation and his being displeased with you when He suspends it. Besides, another relevance of the oath to the subject is that if man is constantly exposed to the light of days it wearies him; so, it is necessary that night should fall after the day has remained bright for a certain period so that man may have rest and peace in it. Likewise, if you are constantly exposed to the light of revelation, your nerves would not stand it. Therefore, fatrah (break or gap in the revelation) also has been provided by Allah on account of expedience so that the effects of the strain of revelation that you have to bear pass away and complete peace is restored to you. In other words, rising of the sun of -revelation is analogous to the bright day and the period of the fatrah to the stillness and peace of the night. "

4This good news was given by Allah to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in a state when he had only a handful of Muslims with him, the entire nation was hostile and there was no remote chance of success even. The candle of Islam was flickering only in Makkah and storms were brewing all around to blow it out. At that juncture Allah said to His Prophet "Do not at all grieve at the hardships of the initial stage: every later period of life will be better for you than the former period. Your power and glory, your honor and prestige, will go on enhancing and your influence will go on spreading. This promise is not only confined to the world, but it also includes the promise that the rank and. position you will be granted in the Hereafter will be far higher and nobler than the rank and position you attain in the world. " Tabarani in A wsat and Baihaqi in Ad-dala il have related, on the authority of Ibn `Abbas .that the Holy Prophet said: "All the victories which would be attained by my Ummah after me, were presented before me. This pleased me much. Then, Allah sent down this Word, saying: 'The Hereafter is fat better for you than the world'."

5That is "Although it will take some time, yet the time is not far when your Lord will bless you with so much that you will be well pleased "This promise was fulfilled during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet and all Arabia, from the southern coasts to the Syrian frontiers of the Byzantine empire and the Iraqi frontiers of the Persian empire in the north, and from the Persian Gulf in the east to the Red Sea in the west, carne under his control. For the first time in the history of Arabia this land became subject to one law and rule. Whichever power clashed with it was doomed to destruction. The slogan La ilaha ill-allah-u Muhammad ur-Rasul-Allah reverberated throughout the land where the polytheists and the followers of

the earlier scriptures had tried their utmost to keep their false creeds and slogans aloft till the last. The people not only bowed their heads in obedience, their hearts also were conquered, and their .beliefs, morals and acts were revolutionized. There is no precedent in human history that nation sunk in paganism might have completely changed in only 33 years. Then the movement started by the Holy Prophet gathered such power that it spread over a large part of Asia, Africa and Europe and its influence reached every nook and corner of the world. This much Allah gave His Messenger in the world, the glory and extent of what he will give him in the Hereafter cannot be imagined." (Also see E.N. 112 of Surah Ta Ha).

6That is, "There can be no question of forsaking you and being displeased with you; We have, in fact, been good to you ever since the time you were born an orphan." The Holy Prophet's father passed away three months before his birth; thus he was an orphan at birth. But Allah did not leave him without support even for a day. Up to six years of age his mother nourished and looked after him. After her death, his grandfather took him and brought him up with great love. He would proudly tell the people; "My this son has a great future.' When he also died, his uncle, Abu Talib, became his guardian and treated him with such rare love that one father could treat his son better. So much so that when after his proclamation to be a Prophet the entire nation turned hostile, Abu Talib alone stood firm as his chief supporter for as long as ten years.

7The word daallan as used in the original is derived from dalalat, which has several meanings in Arabic. Its one meaning is to be lost in error and deviation; another, to be unaware of the way and to be bewildered at the crossroads as to which way one should choose; still another meaning is of being lost and astray. The tree also is daallah which stands alone and lonely in the desert; the word dalal is also used for a thing which is wasting in unfavorable and uncongenial condition and climate, and also for heedlessness, of which there is an example in the Qur'an itself: La yadillu Rabbi wa la yansa:. "My Lord is neither heedless nor He forgets." ('Ta Ha: 52). Out of these different meanings. The first meaning does not apply here, for in the historical accounts of the Holy Prophet's life, from childhood till just before Prophethood, there is no trace that he ever might have been involved in idolatry, polytheism or atheism, or in any of the acts, customs and practices of paganism prevalent among his people. Therefore, inevitably wa wa. jadaka daallan cannot mean that Allah had found him erring and astray in respect of creed or deed. The other meanings, however, can be applicable here in one or other aspect, and possibly all are applicable in their own particular aspect. Before Prophethood the Holy Prophet was certainly a believer in the existence of Allah and His Unity, and his life was free from sin and reflected excellent morals, yet he was unaware of true Faith, its principles and injunctions, as it has been pointed out in the Qur'an: "You did not know at all what was the Book and what was the Faith." (Ash-Shura: 52). This verse may also mean that the Holy Prophet was lost in a society, engrossed in ignorance, and his personality as a guide and leader was not in anyway prominent before Prophethood. It may as well mean that in the desert of ignorance, he was standing like a lonely tree, which had the capability to bear fruit and turn the whole desert into a garden, but this capability was not being put to any use before Prophethood. It may also imply that the extraordinary powers that Allah had blessed him with, were going waste in the

unfavorable environment of ignorance. Dalal can also be taken in the meaning of heedlessness, so as to say: "You were heedless of the truths and sciences of which Allah made you aware after Prophethood." This thing also has been referred to in the Qur'an itself: "Though before this you were utterly unaware of these truths." (Yusuf: 3). (Also see AI-Baqarah: 282, Ash-Shu'ara: 20).

8The Holy Prophet's father had left only a she-camel and a slave-girl in heritage for him; so he started his life in a state of poverty. Then a time came when the wealthiest lady among the Quraish, Hadrat Khadijah, first made him her partner in trade, then married him, and he took charge of all her trade and business. Thus, he not only became wealthy but his riches in no way were dependent on the resources of his wife; his own hard work and ability had gone a long way towards promoting her trade and commerce.

9That is, "As you yourself have been an orphan, and Allah graced you with the bounty that he made the best possible arrangements to help you in that state, therefore, in gratitude you should see that no orphan is treated unjustly and harshly."

10It has two meanings.

If sa'il is taken in the sense of a needy person, who asks for help, it would mean that if you can,, you should help him; if you cannot you should excuse yourself politely, but should never scold him. In this sense the instruction corresponds to Allah's this favor: "You were poor, then Allah enriched you. "

And if sa'il is taken in the sense of the one who inquires, i. e. asks for enlightenment on a religious matter or injunction, it would mean that even if such a person be extremely ignorant and ill-mannered and might put the question, or present his problem, impolitely, you should in any case answer him politely and kindly, and should not turn him away like the rude people proud of their knowledge.

In this meaning, the instruction corresponds to Allah's this favor: "You were unaware of the Way, then he guided you." Hadrat Abud-Darda`, Hasan Basri, Sufyan Thauri and some other scholars have preferred this second meaning, for in view of the order and sequence this instruction corresponds to: wa wajadaka daalllan fa hada.

11The word ni 'mat . (bounty) is general, which also implies those bounties, which Allah had bestowed on His Messenger until the revelation of this Surah as well as those which He bestowed on him afterwards according to the promise made in this Surah, which He fulfilled completely. Then, it is enjoined:"O Prophet, mention and proclaim every bounty that Allah has favored you with." Now, obviously, there can be different forms and ways of mentioning and proclaiming the bounties and every bounty in view of its nature, requires a special form or its mention and proclamation. As a whole, the way of proclaiming the bounties is that Allah be thanked with the tongue and the truth be acknowledged that all the bounties received are only due to His grace and favor and none is the result of any personal excellence and merit

on his part. The blessing of Prophethood can be proclaimed by preaching and conveying its message in the best way possible. The blessing of the Qur'an can be proclaimed by publicizing it widely and impressing its teachings on the peoples minds as far as one can. The blessing of Allah's guidance can be proclaimed by showing the right way to the people who are gone astray and by enduring patiently all the bitternesses and hardships of the way. The favor that Allah has done of helping during orphanhood, demands that the orphans be treated well. The favor that Allah did of enriching after poverty requires that Allah's needy servants be helped and supported. In short, this is a very comprehensive instruction which Allah gave His Messenger (upon whom be His peace) in this brief sentence after having described His bounties and blessings.

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94. Surah Al Inshirah (The Opening Up)

Name

The Surah is so designated after the first sentence.

Period of Revelation

Its subject matter so closely resembles that of Surah Ad-Duha that both these Surah seem to have been revealed in about the same period under similar conditions. According to Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, it was sent down in Makkah just after wad-Duha.

Theme and Subject Matter

The aim and object of this Surah too is to console and encourage the Holy Messenger (upon whom be Allah's peace). Before his call he never had to encounter the conditions which he suddenly had to encounter after it when he embarked on his mission of inviting the people to Islam. This was by itself a great revolution in his own life of which he had no idea in his life before Prophethood. No sooner had he started preaching the message of Islam than the same society which had esteemed him with unique honor, turned hostile to him. The same relatives and friends, the same clansmen and neighbors, who used to treat him with the highest respect, began to shower him with abuse and invective. No one in Makkah was prepared to listen to him; he began to be ridiculed and mocked in the street and on the road; and at every step he had to face new difficulties. Although gradually he became accustomed to the hardships, even much severer ones, yet the initial stage was very discouraging for him. That is why first Surah Ad-Duha was sent down to console him, and then this Surah.

In it, at the outset, Allah says: "We have favored you, O Prophet, with three great blessings; therefore you have no cause to be disheartened. The first is the blessing of *Sharh Sadr* (opening up of the breast), the second of removing from you the heavy burden that was weighing down your back before the call, and the third of exalting your renown the like of which has never been granted to any man before. Further below in the notes we have explained what is implied by each of these blessings and how great and unique these blessings indeed are!

After this, the Lord and Sustainer of the universe has reassured His Servant and Messenger (upon whom be peace) that the period of hardships which he is passing through, is not very long, but following close behind it there is also a period of ease. This same thing has been described in Surah Ad-Duha, saying: "Every later period is better for you than the former period, and soon your Lord will give you so much that you will be well pleased."

In conclusion, the Holy Prophet has been instructed, so as to say, "You can develop the power to bear and resist the hardships of the initial stage only by one means, and it is this: `When you are free from your occupations, you should devote yourself to the labor and toil of worship, and turn all your attention exclusively to your Lord'."This same instruction has been given him in much greater detail in Surah Al-Muzzammil 1-9.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ﴿١﴾

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ ﴿٢﴾

ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ﴿٣﴾

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ﴿٤﴾

فَإِنَّ مَعَ ٱلْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٥﴾

إِنَّ مَعَ ٱلْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ﴿٦﴾

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَٱنصَبْ ﴿٧﴾

وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَٱرْغَب ﴿٨﴾

[1-8] (O Prophet!) have We not opened up your breast for you?[1] And removed from you the heavy burden that was weighing down your back,[2] and exalted your renown for you.[3] So, the fact is that along with every hardship there is also ease. Indeed, with every hardship there is also ease![4] Hence, when you are free, devote yourself to the labor of worship, and turn all your attention to your Lord.[5]

1To begin the discourse with this question, and then the subsequent theme, shows that the Holy Messenger (upon whom be Allah's peace) at that time was very disturbed and distressed at the great hardships that he was passing through in the initial stage of his mission of calling the people to Islam. Under those conditions Allah addressed him and consoling him, said: "O Prophet, have We not blessed you with such and such favor? Then, why do you feel so disturbed and distressed at these initial difficulties?"

A little consideration of the context wherever the word sharh sadr (opening up of the breast) has occurred in the Qur'an, shows that it has two meanings:

(1) In Surah Al-An'am: 125, it was said: "So whomever Allah wills to guide aright, He makes his breast wide open to Islam (yashrah sadrahu lil-Islam)"; and in Surah Az-Zumar; 22: "Can the person whose breast Allah has opened for Islam (sharahallabu sadrahu lil-Islam) and he is walking in the light shown by his Lord.." At both these places sharh sadr implies to free oneself from every kind of distraction and vacillation and to be satisfied with Islam as the only right way of life, and to regard the beliefs, principles

of morality and civilization, religious instructions and injunctions, which Islam has given to man, as right and true.

(2) In Surah Ash-Shu`ara': 12-13, it has been mentioned that when Allah appointed the Prophet Moses to the great office of Prophethood and commanded him to go and confront the Pharaoh and his mighty empire, he submitted: "My Lord, I fear that they will treat me as a liar, and my breast straitens." And in Surah Ta Ha: 2526, it has been stated that on this very occasion the Prophet Moses implored Allah, saying: "Lord, open up my breast for me (Rabbisbrah-li sadri) and make my task easy for me." Here, straitening of the breast implies a person's finding it too hard for himself to shoulder the onerous responsibilities of Prophethood and going out to clash with a mighty and tyrannical power of disbelief all by himself, and sharh sadr implies that his morale be boosted so that he is ready to undertake any campaign and any task however difficult and hard, without any hesitation, and he develops the nerve and courage to shoulder the great responsibilities of Prophethood.

A little consideration will show that in this verse "opening up of the Holy Prophet's breast" contains both these meanings. According to the first meaning, it implied that before the Prophethood the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) looked upon the religion of the polytheistic Arabs, Christians, Jews and fire worshipers as false, and was not even satisfied with the hanifiyyat prevalent among some of the Arab monotheists, for it was an ambiguous creed which contained no detail of the right way. (This we have explained in E.N.'s of As Sajdah). But since he himself did not know what was the right way, he was mentally confused and distracted. With the blessing of Prophethood Allah removed his mental agitation and opened up before him the way of right guidance, which brought him full peace of mind. According to the second meaning, it implies that along with the blessing of Prophethood Allah also blessed him with the courage, spirit ,of resolution and broad mindedness which were needed for shouldering the onerous responsibilities of the great office. He became bearer of the vast knowledge, which no other human mind could encompass and contain. He was blessed with the wisdom which could rectify any evil however grave and wide spread. He developed the capability to stand up without any equipment and the apparent help and support of a worldly power as the standard-bearer of Islam in a society sunk in ignorance and barbarism, to brave any storm of hostility without the least hesitation, to endure patiently all the difficulties and hardships of the way 'so that no power might cause him to abandon his position and standpoint. Thus, The verse means to impress the point: "When Allah has blessed you, O Prophet, with this invaluable wealth of sharh sadr, why do you feel distressed and depressed at the hardships you are experiencing in the initial stage of your mission."

Some commentators have taken sharh sadr to mean shaqq Sadr (splitting up of the breast) and have declared this verse to be a proof of the miracle of sharh sadr as related in the traditions of the Hadith. But the fact is that the proof of that miracle is dependent only on the traditions of the Hadith, it is not correct to prove it from the Qur'an. According to the Arabic language, sharh sadr can in no way be taken to mean shaqq sadr. `Allama Alusi in the Ruh al-Ma'ani says:"In the sight of the research scholars it is a weak thing to regard sharh sadr as shaqq sadr. "

2Some of the commentators have interpreted this to mean that before Prophethood, in the days of ignorance, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had happened to commit certain errors because of which he was feeling disturbed, and Allah by sending down this verse consoled and satisfied him, saying that He had forgiven him those errors. But in our opinion it is a grave mistake to interpret this verse thus. In the first place, the word vizr does not necessarily mean a sin, but it is also used for a heavy burden. Therefore, there is no reason why it should in every case be taken in the bad sense. Secondly, the Holy Prophet's life before Prophethood also was so clean and pure that it had been presented in the Qur'an as a challenge before the opponents.. So much so that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was made to point out to the disbelievers: "I have already lived a lifetime among you before the revelation of this Qur'an." (Yunus 16). and he was also not the type of a person who would commit a sift secretly. God forbid, had he been such a man, Allah would not have been unaware of it, and would not have made him proclaim the thing before the people openly, which He made him proclaim in the above-mentioned verse of Sarah Yunus, if his person carried the blot of a sin committed secretly. Thus, in fact, in this verse vizr means a heavy burden and it implies the burden of distress, anguish and anxiety that was, telling on his sensitive nature when he saw- his nation deeply sunk in ignorance and barbarism. Idols were being worshiped, the community was engrossed in idolatry and polytheistic customs and practices, filth of immorality and indecency prevailed all around, wickedness and corrupt practices were rampant in society, the powerful were suppressing the powerless; girls were being-buried alive, tribes were subjecting, one another to surprise attacks, and sometimes the wars of vengeance continued for a hundred years at a stretch. No one's life, property and honor was safe unless he had a strong hand at his back. This grieved the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) but he could find no way to cure the malady. This same anxiety was weighing down his back. Allah by showing him the way to Guidance removed its burden from him. Then as soon as he was appointed to the office of Prophethood, . he came to know that belief in the doctrine of Tauhid, the Hereafter and Prophethood was the master-key by which each corruption in human life could be eradicated and the way to reform opened in every aspect of life. This guidance front Allah relieved him of his burden and he felt re-assured that by means of it he would not only be able to cure the maladies of Arabia but also of all mankind outside Arabia as well.

3This was said at a time when no one could even conceive how the renown of the one unique individual who had only a few followers confined only to the city of Makkah, would be exalted throughout the world, and what high fame he would achieve. But Allah Almighty gave His Messenger (upon whom be peace) this good news under those very conditions and then fulfilled it in a strange way. In the first place, he took from his enemies themselves the task of exalting his renown. One of the methods that the disbelievers of Makkah adopted to defeat his mission was that in the Hajj season when the pilgrims from every corner of Arabia were attracted to their city, they would visit them at their halting places and would warn them to beware of a dangerous man called Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), who they alleged, worked such magic on the people that father was separated from son, brother from brother, and husband from wife; therefore, they should keep away from him, The same thing they said to all other people, who visited Makkah on other than Hajj days in connection with pilgrimage or on other business.

In this way although they were trying to defame the Holy Prophet, yet the result was that his name reached every nook and comer of Arabia and the enemies themselves. took him out of his seclusion in Makkah and introduced him among all the tribes of the country. After this, it was but natural that .'the people should become curious to know as to who was this man, what he preached, what was his character like and who were the people influenced by his magic and what sort of effect his "magic" had on them. As the propaganda of the Makkan disbelievers spread the people's curiosity also grew. When as a result of this curiosity the people came to know of the Holy Prophet's morals, his character and conduct, when they heard the Qur'an and found what teachings it presented and when the people saw how different the lives of those who had been influenced by what was being described as .magic had become from the lives of the common Arabs, the bad name started being changed into good name. So much so that by the time the Hijrah took place there was perhaps no tribe left anywhere in Arabia from which one or another person, one or another clan had not accepted Islam and in which at least some people had not developed sympathy and interest in the Holy Prophet and his message. This was the first stage of the exaltation of his renown. Then from the Hijrah started the second stage in which on the one hand the hypocrites, the Jews and the prominent polytheists of Arabia were actively engaged in defaming him and on the other the Islamic State of Madinah was presenting such a practical model of God-worship, God consciousness, piety and devotion, purity of morals and community life, justice and equity, equality of man and man, generosity of the rich, care of the poor, fulfillment of pledges and promises and righteousness in dealings, which was conquering the hearts, The enemies tried by resort to war to impede the growing influence of the Holy Prophet, but the party of the believers, trained and developed under his own leadership, proved its superiority by their discipline, their bravery, their fearlessness of death, and their adherence to restrictions of morality even in the state of war; so convincingly that entire Arabia had to recognize it as a power to be reckoned with. Within ten years the Holy Prophet's renown become so exalted that the same land in which the opponents had exerted their utmost to defame him, reverberated with the slogan of Ash hadu anna Muhammad ar-Rasul Allah from one end to the other. Then the third stage commenced with the establishment of the righteous Caliphate when his holy name started being mentioned and praised everywhere in the world. This process continues till today, and will continue till Resurrection if Allah so wills. Wherever in the world there exists a settlement of the Muslims, the apostleship of Muhammad (Upon whom be Allah's peace) is being proclaimed aloud in the call to the Prayer five times a day, blessings of Allah are being invoked on him in the Prayers, and his sacred remembrance is being made in the Friday Sermons. There is no moment in the 12 months of the year and in the 24 hours of the day when at one or another place in the world, the Prophet's holy name is not being mentioned. This is a clear proof of the truth of the Qur'an that when in the initial stage of the Prophet hood Allah proclaimed wa rafa `na Iaka dhikrak, no one could estimate and imagine with what esteem and to what great extent the Holy Prophet's renown would be exalted. In a Hadith Hadrat Abu Sa`id Khudri has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Gabriel came to me and said: My Lord and your Lord asks: In what ways have I exalted your renown? I submitted: Allah alone has the best. knowledge. He said: Allah says: Whenever mention is made of Me, yon too will be mentioned along with Me." (Ibn Jarir, lbn Abi Hatim, Musnad Abu Ya`la, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Hibban Ibn Marduyah, Abu Nu`aim). The whole later history stands witness that this prediction has proved literally true.

4This has been repeated twice so as to reassure the Holy Prophet that the bad times hp was passing through at that time would not last for ever, but were going to be replaced by good times in the near future. On the surface this appears to be a contradiction that hardship should be accompanied by ease, for these two things do not co-exist. But the words "hardship with ease" instead of "ease after hardship" have been used in the sense that the period of ease is so close to it as if it were a concomitant of it.

5“When you are free,” When you are free from other occupations, whether occupations in connection with the preaching of Divine message, or teaching and training of the new converts, or domestic occupations of mundane nature." The commandment means: "When you are no more occupied, you should spend your time in the labor and toil of Allah's worship and turn all your attention exclusively to your Lord."

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95. Surah At Tin (The Fig)

Name

The Surah has been so named after the very first word *at-tin*.

Period of Revelation

According to Qatadah, this Surah is Madani. Two different views have been reported from Ibn Abbas: first that it is a Makki Surah, and second that it is Madani. But the majority of scholars regard it as a Makki revelation, a manifest symbol of which is the use of the words *hadh-al-balad-il-amin* (this city of peace) for Makkah. Obviously, if it had been revealed at Madinah, it would not be correct to use the words "this city" for Makkah Besides, a study of the contents of the Surah shows that it belongs to the earliest period of Makkah, for in it there is no sign whatever to indicate that during the period of its revelation any conflict had started between Islam and unbelief. Moreover, it reflects the same style of the earliest revelations of Makkah period in which briefly and succinctly the people have been made to realize that the judgment of the Hereafter is necessary and absolutely rational.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter. For this purpose first swearing an oath by the habitats of some illustrious Prophets, it has been stated that Allah has created man in the most excellent of molds. Although at other places in the Quran, this truth has been expressed in different ways, for example, at some places it has been said: "Allah appointed man His vicegerent on the earth and commanded the angels to bow down to him (Al-Baqarah: 30,34, Al-Anam: 165, Al-Araf: 11, Al-Hijr 28,29, An-Naml: 62, Suad 71- 73);" at others that: "Man has become bearer of the Divine trust, which the earth and the heavens and the mountains did not have the power to bear (Al-Ahzab 72);" and at still others that: "We honored the children of Adam and exalted them above many of Our other creatures (Bani Israil 70)," yet here the statement made on oath in particular by the habitats of the Prophets that man has been created in the finest of molds, signifies that mankind has been blessed with such an excellent mold and nature that it gave birth to men capable of attaining to the highest position of Prophethood, a higher position than which has not been attained by any other creature of God.

Then, it has been stated that there are two kinds of men. those who in spite of having been created in the finest of molds, become inclined to evil and their moral degeneration causes them to be reduced to the lowest of the low, and those who by adopting the way of faith and righteousness remain secure from the degeneration and consistent with the noble position, which is the necessary demand of their having been created in the best of molds. The existence among mankind of both these kinds of men is such a factual thing which no one can deny, for it is being observed and experienced in society everywhere at all times.

In conclusion, this factual reality has been used as an argument to prove that when among the people there are these two separate and quite distinct kinds, how can one deny the judgment and retribution for deeds If the morally degraded are not punished and the morally pure and exalted are not rewarded and both end in the dust alike, it would mean that there is no justice in the Kingdom of God; whereas human nature and common sense demand that a judge should do justice. How then can one conceive that Allah, Who is the most just of all judges, would not do justice?

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلتِّينِ وَٱلزَّيْتُونِ ﴿١﴾

وَطُورِ سِينِينَ ﴿٢﴾

وَهَٰذَا ٱلْبَلَدِ ٱلْأَمِينِ ﴿٣﴾

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ فِىٓ أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَٰهُ أَسْفَلَ سَٰفِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾

إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٦﴾

فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿٧﴾

أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ ٱلْحَٰكِمِينَ ﴿٨﴾

[1-8] By the fig and the olive,[1] and the Mount Sina,[2] and this City of peace (Makkah), We have indeed created man in the finest of molds,[3] then We reversed him to the lowest of the low,[4] except those who believed and did good works. For them there is a reward unending.[5] Therefore, (O Prophet,) who can .after this belie you concerning the rewards and punishments?[6] Is not Allah the best of all judges?[7]

1There has been much difference of opinion among the commentators about the explanation of this verse. Hasan Basri. `Ikrimah, `Ata' bin Abi Rabah, Jabir bin Zaid, Mujahid and Ibrahim Nakha'i (may Allah bless them all) say that the fig implies the same fig which the people eat, and the olive the same which produces oil. Ibn Abi Hatim and Hakim have cited a statement from Ha 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also in support of this. And the commentators who have accepted this explanation have, in view of the uses and virtues of the fig and the olive, expressed the opinion that Allah has sworn by these two fruits because of these very qualities. There is no doubt that the Arabic reader would understand the words do and zayun in the same meaning as are their well known meanings in Arabic, yet there are two reasons for which these meanings cannot be accepted. First, that in the subsequent verses, oaths have been sworn by the Mount Sinai and the City of Makkah, and there seems to be no relevance between the oaths sworn by the two fruits and the oaths by the two places. Second, the theme that follows the oaths is borne out by the Mt. Sinai and the City of Makkah but not by the two fruits. Wherever in the Qur'an Allah has sworn by something, He has not sworn by it because of its glory or its uses and benefits but every oath has relevance to the theme that follows it. Therefore, the virtues and qualities of these two fruits cannot be regarded as the reason for swearing the oath by them.

Some other commentators have taken tin and zaytun to imply some places. Ka`b Abhar, Qatadah an Ibn Zaid say that tin implies Damascus and zaytun Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). A view of Ibn 'Abbas has been cited by Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Marduyah to the effect that tin implies the mosque of the Prophet Noah, which he built on Mt. Judi, and zaytun implies Bait al-Maqdis, but hearing the words wat-tin waz-zaytin, no ordinary Arab could think of these meanings, nor was it well known among the Arabs, who were the first addressees of the Qur'an that ain and zaytun were names of the places.

However, there was a practice among the people of Arabia that they generally named a land where a certain fruit was produced in plenty after the name of the fruit itself. Accordingly, the meaning. Of tin and zaytun can be the land where these fruits are grown, and it is the land of Syria and Palestine, for among the Arabs of that period this very land was well known for the production of fig and olive. lbn Taimiyah, Ibn al-Qayyim, zamakhshari and Alusi (may Allah show them mercy) have adopted this very explanation; and although Ibn Jarir also has preferred the first view, yet he has conceded that ain and zaytun may also imply the land where these fruits are grown. Hafiz Ibn Kathir also has regarded this explanation as worthy of consideration.

2The words in the original are Tur- i-Sinin. Sinin is another name for the Sinai Peninsula. It is called Sama or Sina as well as Sinin. In the Qur'an itself at one place the words Tur-i-Sinin. have been used. Since the land in which Mt. Sinai is located is well known as Sina, we have adopted this well known name in the translation.

3This is the truth for which the oath has been sworn by the lands of the fig and the olive (i.e. Syria and Palestine) and Mt. Sinai and Makkah, the city of peace. Man's having been created in the most excellent of molds means that he has been given the finest body which no other living being has been given, and he has been blessed with the noblest faculties of thought, knowledge and intellect which no other creature has been blessed with. Then, since the most sublime model these excellencies and . unique merits of mankind's are the Prophets (upon whom be Allah's peace), and no creation can have a higher rank than they, so that Allah may choose it for appointment to the office of Prophethood, an oath has been sworn by the places associated with the Prophets of God to bear testimony to man's having been created in the finest of molds. The land of Syria and Palestine is the land where a large number of Prophets, from the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) to the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), were raised. Mt. Tur is the place where the Prophet Moses was blessed with Prophethood. As for Makkah, it was founded by the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael themselves. It was on account of their association with it that ' it became the holiest central place of Arabia. It was the Prophet Abraham who had prayed: "O my Lord, make this city a city of peace and security." (Al-Baqarah: 126); and it was because of this prayer that in the midst of chaos and confusion prevailing everywhere in Arabia only this city continued to remain an island of peace for some 2500 years or more. Thus, the verse means to say: "We created mankind in such an excellent mold that it produced men who attained to the most sublime rank of Prophethood."

4The commentators in general have given two meanings of this:

(1) That We reversed him to the miserable state of old age in which he was no longer able to think and understand and work; and

(2) that We reversed him to the lowest stage of Hell.

But these two meanings cannot be an argument for the object for the confirmation of which this Surah was revealed. The Surah is meant to reason out the truth of the judgment in the Hereafter. On this, neither has this tact any bearing that some human beings are caused to reach the most miserable state of old age, nor that a section of human beings will be cast into Hell. The first thing cannot be an argument for the judgment because old age comes upon both the good and the bad people, and a person's reaching this age is no punishment which he might suffer in consequence of his deeds. As for the second thing, it will occur in the Hereafter. It cannot be presented as an argument before the people who are being convinced of the meting out of rewards and punishments in the Hereafter itself. Therefore in our opinion the correct meaning of the verse is: After having been created in the finest of molds when man uses the powers of his body and mind in evil ways Allah grants him the power to do only evil and causes him to reach the lowest ebb of degradation. This is a truth which one commonly observes in human society. People become so overwhelmed by greed, selfishness, lustfulness, addiction to intoxicants, meanness, rage and fury and such other traits that morally they are actually reduced to the lowest of the low. Consider only one example: When a nation is blinded by its hostility to another country it surpasses all savage beasts in barbarity. A wild beast preys upon its victim only for the sake of food, it does not resort to a general massacre; but man resorts to massacre of his own kind. The beast only uses its claws and teeth but man who has been created in the best of molds invents the gun, rifle, tank, aircraft, atom and hydrogen bombs and countless other weapons by his intellect so that he can instantly destroy whole populations. The beast only kills or inflicts a wound but man invents such painful methods of torturing men like himself as cannot even be -imagined by a' beast. Then to wreak his vengeance and fury on his enemies he forces the women to march out in naked processions: they are subjected to rape by tens and twenties of men; they are dishonored before the eyes of their fathers, brothers and husbands; children are massacred in front of their parents; mothers are forced to drink their children's blood; human beings are burnt and buried alive. There is no wild species of animals in the world which may equal this human barbarity in any degree. The same is also the case with other evil traits: man proves himself to he the lowest of the low in whichever evil he indulges. So much so that he degrades even religion which is the most sacred thing for man: he worships the trees, animals and mountains, even the sex organs of man and woman; he keeps religious prostitutes in the places of worship to win the goodwill of the gods and commits adultery with them as an act of virtue. In his mythology he attributes such filthy tales to his gods and goddesses which would make the most wretched beast to hang his head in shame.

5The commentators who have taken asfala safilin to imply the state of extreme old age when man loses

his sense and reason, interpret this verse to mean: "But the people who in the prime and strength of their age believed and did righteous deeds would have in this old age too the same righteous deeds credited for them and will be rewarded accordingly. No reduction will be made in their rewards on the ground that they could not perform those righteous deeds in that period of life". And the commentators who construe reversal to safilin to imply being cast into the lowest stage of Hell interpret this verse to mean: "the people also believed and did righteous deeds are an exception: they will not be reversed to this stage but they will have a reward unending and unfailing." But, neither of these meanings is relevant to the reasoning made in this Surah to justify the judgment of the Hereafter. In our opinion the verse means: "Just as it is a common observation in human society that the morally degraded are made the lowest of the low, so this also is an observation of every age that those who believed in God, the Hereafter and the Prophethood and who molded their lives after righteousness and piety, remained secure from this degeneration and remained consistent with the best mold and nature that Allah had created them on. Therefore, they are worthy of the unending reward, i.e. the reward which will neither be less than what they deserve, nor will it ever be cut off. "

6Another translation of this verse can be: "What can after this (O man) make you deny the judgment ?" In both cases the intention and purpose remains the same. That is when it is a common observation in human society that a section of mankind which has been created in the best of molds and nature, is rendered lowest of the low because of moral degradation, and the other section remains secure by adopting the path of constant faith and righteousness in view of its being created in the best of molds and nature how can judgment be denied after this ? Does common sense require that the end of both these men be the same? Does justice demand that neither those who are reduced to the lowest of the low be punished nor those who strive to adopt a righteous life be rewarded ? The same theme has been expressed at other places in the Qur'an thus: "Shall We then treat the obedient as We treat the culprits? What has happened to you: how ill you judge?" (AI-Qalam: 35, 36). "Do those who have committed evil think that We shall hold them and those who have believed and done righteous deeds as equal so that their life and their death should be alike ? Ill are the judgments they pass!" (Al-Jathiyah 21).

7That is, "When you want and expect even the petty judges of the world to do justice, punish the culprits and reward the doers of good, what is your opinion about God? Is He not the greatest of all judges? If you think he is the . greatest of all judges, do you think that He will not do any justice? Do you expect that He will treat the good and the evil alike? Will those who commit the vilest of deeds in the world and those who perform righteous deeds, both end in the dust: neither will any be punished for his evil deeds, nor any be rewarded for his good works"

Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud, Ibn al-Mundhir, Baihaqi, Hakim and Ibn Marduyah have related, on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "When one of you recites Surah Wat-tin waz-zaytun and reaches Alais-Allah-u bi-ahkam-il-Hakimin he should respond to it, saying: Bata wa ana ala dhalika min-ash-shahidin (Yes, and I am of those who bear witness to it). According to some other traditions, the Holy Prophet responded with Subhanaka fa-bald when he recited

this verse.

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96. Sura Al Alaq (The Clot)

Name

The Surah is so entitled after the word `*alaq* in the second verse.

Period of Revelation

This Surah has two parts: the first part consists of vv. 1-5, and the second of vv. 6-19. About the first part a great majority of the Islamic scholars are agreed that it forms the very first Revelation to be sent down to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). In this regard, the *Hadith* from Hadrat Aishah, which Imam Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, and other traditionists have related with several chains of authorities, is one of the most authentic *Ahadith* on the subject. In it Hadrat Aishah has narrated the full story of the beginning of revelation as she herself heard it from the Holy Messenger of Allah. Besides, Ibn Abbas, Abu Musa al-Ashari and a group of the Companions also are reported to have stated that these were the very first verses of the Quran to be revealed to the Holy Prophet. The second part was sent down afterwards when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) began to perform the prescribed Prayer in the precincts of the Kabah and Abu Jahl tried to prevent him from this with threats.

Beginning of Revelation

The traditionists have related on the strength of their respective authorities the story of the beginning of revelation from Imam Az-Zuhri, who had it from Hadrat Urwah bin Zubair, who had it from Hadrat Aishah, his aunt. She states that revelations to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) began in the form of true (according to other traditions, good) visions. Whichever vision he saw it seemed as though he saw it in broad daylight. Afterwards solitude became dear to him and he would go to the Cave of Hira to engage in worship there for several days and nights (Hadrat Aishah has used the word *tahannuth*, which Imam Zuhri has explained as *ta'abbud*: devotional exercises. This was some kind of worship which he performed, for until then he had not been taught the method of performing the Prayer by Allah). He would take provisions with him and stay there for several days, then would return to Hadrat Khadijah who would again provide for him for a few more days. One day when he was in the Cave of Hira, Revelation came down to him unexpectedly and the Angel said, to him: "Read".

After this Hadrat Aishah reports the words of the Holy Prophet himself, to the effect, "I said: I cannot read! There upon the Angel took me and pressed me until I could bear it no more. Then he left me and said: Read. I said: I cannot read! He pressed me a second time until I could bear it no more. Then he left me and said: Read. I again said: I cannot read! He pressed me for the third time until I could bear it no more. Then he left me and said: *Iqra bismi Rabbi kal- ladhi khalaqa*: (Read in the name of your Lord Who created) till he reached *ma lam ya lam* (what he did not know).

Then the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) returned home to Hadrat Khadijah trembling with fear, and said to her: `Cover me, cover me', and he was covered. When terror left him, he said: `O Khadijah, what has happened to me?' Then he narrated to her whatever had happened, and said: `I fear for my life'. She said; `No never! Be of good cheer. By God, never will God debase you: you treat the kindred well, you speak the truth, (one tradition adds: you restore what is entrusted to you), you bear the burden of the helpless, you help the poor, you entertain the guests, and you cooperate in good works.'

Then she took him to Waraqah bin Naufal, who was her cousin. He had become a Christian in pre-Islamic days, wrote the Gospel in Arabic and Hebrew, and had become very old and blind. Hadrat Khadijah said: `Brother, listen to the son of your brother.' Waraqah said to the Holy Prophet: `What have you seen, nephew?' The Holy Prophet described what he had seen. Waraqah said; `This is the same Gabriel (the Angel of Revelation) which Allah had sent down to Moses. Would that I were a young man during your Prophethood! Would that I were alive when your tribe would expel you!' The Holy Prophet said: `Will they expel me?' Waraqah said; `Yes, never has it so happened that a person brought what you have brought and was not treated as an enemy. If I live till then I would help you with all the power at my command.' But not very long after this Waraqah died.

This narrative is explicit that even until a moment before the coming Angel the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace) was without any expectation that he was going to be appointed a Prophet. Nothing to say of any such wish or expectation, he did not even have any idea that he would meet with such an experience. Coming down of the Revelation and appearing of the Angel face to face was an unexpected accident for him the first effect of which on him was precisely the same as could naturally be on a person meeting with such a tremendous experience, in the absence of any preparation. That is why when he proclaimed the message of Islam, the people of Makkah raised all sorts of objections, but no one said that they were already apprehending that he would make a claim, for he had been making preparations since long to become a Prophet.

From this narrative another thing which also becomes obvious is how pure was the Holy Prophet's life and how sublime was his character before Prophethood, Hadrat Khadijah was no young lady: she was 55 years old at the time this event took place and had been the Holy Prophet's life companion for 15 years. No weakness of the husband can remain hidden from the wife. She had during this long period of married life found him to be such a generous and noble man that when he told her of his experience in the Cave of Hira', she admitted without the least hesitation that it was indeed Allah's own Angel who had come to him with Revelation. Likewise, Waraqah bin Naufal also was an old inhabitant of Makkah, who had seen the Holy Prophet grow up from childhood. Particularly, for the past 15 years because of the close relationship he was even more intimately aware of his life, his Affairs and dealings. When he also heard of his experience, he did not regard it as an evil suggestion, but immediately said that it was the same Gabriel who had descended on Moses (peace be upon him). This meant that even according to him

the Holy Prophet was such a sublime person that there was nothing surprising in his being elevated to the office of Prophethood.

Occasion of Revelation of verses 6-19

This second part of thee Surah was revealed when the Holy Messenger of Allah began to perform the Prayer in the Islamic way in the Ka'bahand Abu Jahl threatened and tried to prevent him from this. It so happened that after his appointment to Prophethood even before he could start preaching Islam openly, he began to perform the Prayer in the precincts of the Ka'bahin the way Allah taught him; and from this the Quraish felt for the first time that he had adopted a new religion. The other people were watching it with curiosity, but Abu Jahl in his arrogance and pride threatened the Holy Prophet and forbade him to worship in that way in the Ka'bah. In this connection, quite a number of the *Ahadith* have been related from Hadarat Abdullah ibn Abbas and Hadrat Abu Huraira, which mention the foolish behaviour of Abu Jahl.

Hadrat Abu Huraira says that Abu Jahl asked the people of Quraish: "Does Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) set his face on the ground before you?"When they replied in the affirmative, he said:"By Lat and Uzza, if I ever catch him in that act of worship, I would set my foot on his neck and rub his face in the dust."Then it so happened that he saw the Holy Messenger in that posture and came forward to set his foot on his neck, but suddenly turned back as if in a fright and being asked what was the matter, he said there was a ditch of fire and a terrible apparition between himself and Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and some wings. On hearing this the Holy Prophet remarked:"Had he come near me, the angels would have smitten and torn him to pieces." (Ahmad, Muslim, Nasai, Ibn Jarir, Ibn AbI Hatim, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah, Abu Nu'aim Isfahani, Baihaqi).

According to Ibn Abbas, Abu Jahl said:"If I caught Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) performing his Prayer by the Ka'bah, I would trample his neck down." When the Holy Prophet heard of it, he said: "If he acted so, the angels would seize him there and then?" (Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Nasai, Ibn Jarir, Abdur Razzaq, Abd bin Humaid, Ibn al- Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah).

According to another tradition from Ibn Abbas, the Holy Prophet was performing his Prayer at the *Maqam Ibrahim*. Abu Jahl passed that way and said: "O Muhammad, did I not forbid you this, and then he started to threaten him." In reply the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) rebuked him severely. There upon he said:"O Muhammad, on what strength do you rebuke me? By God, my followers in this valley far exceed yours in number." (Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Nasai, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Ibn al-Mundhir, Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah).

Because of these very incidents the portion of this Surah beginning with *Kalla inn al-insana la yat gha* was sent down. Naturally the place of this part should be the same as assigned to it in this Surah of the Quran, for after the coming down of the first Revelation the Holy Prophet had given expression to Islam first of all by the act of Prayer, and his conflict with the pagans.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱقْرَأْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾

خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾

ٱقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ ٱلْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾

ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَ بِٱلْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾

عَلَّمَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

[1-5] Read[1] in the name of your Lord[2] Who created.[3] Created man from a clot of congealed blood.[4] Read, and your Lord is Most Generous. Who taught knowledge by the pen,[5] taught man what he did not know.[6]

كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ لَيَطْغَىٰٓ ﴿٦﴾

أَن رَّءَاهُ ٱسْتَغْنَىٰٓ ﴿٧﴾

إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ٱلرُّجْعَىٰٓ ﴿٨﴾

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يَنْهَىٰ ﴿٩﴾

عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّىٰٓ ﴿١٠﴾

[6-10] Indeed not![7] Man behaves rebelliously for he deems himself to be self-sufficient,[8] (although) towards your Lord indeed is the return.[9] Have you seen the one who forbids a servant when he prays?[10]

أَرَءَيْتَ إِن كَانَ عَلَى ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ ﴿١١﴾

أَوْ أَمَرَ بِٱلتَّقْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٢﴾

أَرَءَيْتَ إِن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰٓ ﴿١٣﴾

أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَرَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾

كَلَّا لَئِن لَّمْ يَنتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًۢا بِٱلنَّاصِيَةِ ﴿١٥﴾

نَاصِيَةٍ كَٰذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُۥ ﴿١٧﴾

سَنَدْعُ ٱلزَّبَانِيَةَ ﴿١٨﴾

كَلَّا لَا تُطِعْهُ وَٱسْجُدْ وَٱقْتَرِب ۩ ﴿١٩﴾

[11-19] What do you think: if (the Servant) be on the right path, or be exhorting to piety? What do you think, if the one forbidding be belying (the Truth) and turning away? Does he not know that Allah sees?[11] By no means![12] If he does not desist, We shall drag him by his forelock, the forelock that is lying and utterly sinful.[13] So let him call his band of supporters.[14] We, too, shall call the angels of torment.[15] Nay, never! Do not obey him, and prostrate yourself and draw closer (to your Lord).[16]

1As we have explained in the Introduction, when the Angel said to the Holy Prophet, "Read", the latter replied, "I cannot read!"" This indicates that the Angel had presented these words of the Revelation before him in the written form and had asked him to read them. For if the Angel had meant that he should repeat what he recited, he should not have replied, saying "I cannot read!"

2"Read in the name of your Lord": Bismillah and read. This shows that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) even before the coming down of this Revelation regarded and acknowledged Allah alone as his Lord. That is why there was no need to ask who his Lord was, but it was said: "Read in the name of your Lord."

3Only the word khalaqa (created) 'has been used absolutely, and the object of creation has not been mentioned, This automatically gives the meaning: "Read in the name of the Lord, Who is the Creator, Who created the whole universe and everything in it."

4After making mention generally of the creation of the universe, mention has been made of man in particular, saying how Allah made him a perfect man starting his creation from an insignificant and humble state. 'Alaq is plural of 'alaqah, which means congealed blood. This is the primary state of the embryo which appears a few days after conception. Then it assumes the form of a lump of flesh, then afterwards it gradually takes human shape. (For details, see Al-Hajj: 5 and the corresponding E.N.'s 5 to 7).

5That is, "It is a great favor of Allah that starting man's creation from a most insignificant state He made him possessor of knowledge which is the noblest attribute of creation, and He made him not only possessor of knowledge but also taught him the art of writing by the use of pen, which became the means of propagation, progress, dissemination and preservation of knowledge on a large scale. Had He not given man the knowledge of the art of pen and writing (by inspiration) his intellectual faculty would have stagnated, and it would have had no opportunity to develop, expand and become a means of transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next and make future progress.

6That is, Man originally was absolutely illiterate. Whatever of knowledge he obtained, he obtained it as a gift from Allah. Whatever doors of knowledge at any stage did Allah will to open for man, they went on opining up before him. This same thing has been expressed in the verse of the Throne, thus: "And the people cannot comprehend anything of His knowledge save what He Himself may please to reveal." (Al-Baqarah: 255). Whatever man looks upon as his own scientific discovery was, in fact, unknown to him before. Allah gave him its knowledge whenever He willed without his realizing that Allah by His grace had blessed him with the knowledge of it.

These verses were the very first to be revealed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), as is stated in the Hadith reported by Hadrat `A'ishah. This first experience was so intense and tremendous that the Holy Prophet could not bear it any more. Therefore, at that time he was only made aware that the Being Whom he already knew and acknowledged as his Lord and Sustainer was in direct communion with him, had started sending down Revelations to him, and had appointed him as His Prophet. Then after an intermission the opening verses of Surah al-Muddaththir were revealed in which he was told what mission he had to perform after his appointment to Prophethood. (For explanation, see Introduction to Al-

Muddaththir)

7That is, man should never adopt an attitude of ignorance and rebellion against the Bountiful God Who has been so generous to him.

8That is, when the man has attained wealth, honor and rank and whatever else he desired to attain in the world, he becomes rebellious instead of being grateful and transgresses the boundaries of servitude to Allah.

9That is, "Whatever he might have attained in the world, which makes ,him behave arrogantly and rebelliously, in the end he has to return to your Lord. Then he will realize what fate awaits him in consequence of his such attitude and behavior."

10"A Servant" : the Holy Messenger of Allah himself. The Holy Prophet has been mentioned by this epithet at several places in the Qur'an. For example, "Glory be to Him Who transported His servant one night from the Masjid al Haram to the distant Temple." (Bani Isra'il: 1); "All praise is for Allah Who has sent down this Book to His servant." (Al-Kahf: 1); "And that when the servant of Allah stood up to pray, the people got ready to assault him." (Al-Jinn: 19). This shows that it is a special style of love by which Allah makes mention of His Messenger Muhammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings) in His Book. Besides, it also shows that Allah after appointing His Messenger to Prophethood had taught him the method of performing the Prayer. There is no mention of this method anywhere in the Qur'an, saying: "O Prophet, perform the Prayer in this and this way." Hence, this is another proof that the Revelation sent down to the Holy Prophet did not only consist of what has been recorded in the Qur'an, but besides this, other things also were taught to him by revelation, which are not recorded in the Qur'an.

11The audience here apparently is every just man, who is being asked: Have you watched the act of the person who prevents a Servant from God's worship? What do you think: if the Servant be rightly guided, or warning the people to fear God and refrain from evil, and this forbidden be denying the Truth and turning away from it, what will his act be like? Could this man adopt such an attitude had he known that Allah is watching the man who is exhorting others to piety as well as him who is denying the truth and turning away from it? Allah's watching the oppressor and his wrongdoing and the oppressed and his misery by itself implies that He will punish the oppressor and redress the grievances of the wronged and down-trodden person.

12That is, the person who threatens that he would trample the neck of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) down when he performed the Prayer, would never be able to do so.

13"The forelock" here implies the person with the forelock.

14As we have explained in the Introduction, when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) rebuked Abu Jahl on his foolish behavior, he had retorted: "O Muhammad, on what strength do you threaten me? By God, my supporters in this valley far exceed yours in number." At this it is being said: "Let him call his band of supporters."

15According to the explanation given by Qatadah, the word zabaniyah in the original, is used for the police in Arabic idiom, and zaban actually means to push away. The kings too kept armed attendants who would push out the one with whom the king was annoyed and angry. Therefore, what Allah means is: "Let him call his supporters; We too shall summon Our Police, i.e. the angels of torment, to deal with him and his supporters."

16"Sajdah" (prostration) here implies the Prayer, so as to say: "O Prophet, continue to perform your Prayer fearlessly as you have been in the past, and seek your Lord's presence through it." In the Sahih of Muslim and other books of Hadith there is a tradition from Hadrat Abu Huraira to the effect: "The servant is nearest to his Lord when he is in the state of prostration", and in Muslim there is also a tradition from Hadrat Abu Hurairah that when the Holy Prophet recited this verse, he performed a sajdah of recital.

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97. Surah Al Qadr (Power)

Name

The Surah has been so designated after the word *al-qadr* in the very first verse.

Period of Revelation

Whether it is a Makki or a Madani revelation is disputed. Abu Hayyan in *Al-Bahr al-Muhti* has made the claim that the majority of scholars regard it as a Madani Surah. Ali bin Ahmad al-Wahidi in his commentary says that this is the first Surah to be sent down in Madinah. Contrary to this, Al Mawardi says that according to the majority of scholars it is a Makki revelation, and the same view has Imam Suyuti expressed in *Al-Itqan*. Ibn Mardayah has cited Ibn Abbas, lbn Az Zubair and Hadrat Aishah as saying that this Surah was revealed at Makkah. A study of the contents also shows that it should have been revealed at Makkah as we shall explain below.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to acquaint man with the value, worth and importance of the Quran. Its being placed just after Surah Al-Alaq in the arrangement of the Quran by itself explains that the Holy Book, the revelation of which began with the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq. was sent down in a destiny making night. It is a glorious Book and its revelation for mankind is full of blessings.

At the outset, Allah says: "We have sent it down." That is, it is not a composition of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessing) himself, but We Ourself have revealed it.

Then, it is said that "We sent it down in the Night of Destiny." Night of Destiny lies two meanings and both are implied here. First, that it is the night during which destinies are decided; or, in other words, it is not an ordinary night like the other nights, but a night in which destinies are made or marred. The revelation of this Book in this night is not merely the revelation of a book but an event which will change the destiny of not only the Quraish, or of Arabia, but of, the entire world. The same thing has been said in Surah Ad-Dukhan for which please see

Introduction to that Surah and E. N. 3 thereof. The other meaning is that this is, a night of unique honor, dignity and glory; so much so that it is better than a thousand months. Thus, the disbelievers of Makkah have been warned, as if to say: "You on account of your ignorance regard this Book, which Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has presented, as a calamity for yourselves and complain that a disaster has befallen you, whereas the night in which it was decreed to be sent down was such a blessed night that a task was accomplished in it for the well being of mankind, which had never been accomplished even during a thousand months of history. This also has been said in verse 3 of Ad-Dukhan in another way, which we have explained in the introduction to that Surah.

In conclusion, it has been stated that in this night the angels and Gabriel descend with every decree (which in verse 4 of Surah Ad- Dukhan has been described as arm-hakim: wise decree) by the leave of their Lord, and it is all peace from evening till morning; that is, there is no interference of evil in it, for all decrees of Allah are intended to promote good and not evil. So much so that even if a decision to destroy a nation is taken, it is taken for the sake of ultimate good, not evil.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَـٰهُ فِى لَيْلَةِ ٱلْقَدْرِ ﴿١﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ ٱلْقَدْرِ ﴿٢﴾

لَيْلَةُ ٱلْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ﴿٣﴾

تَنَزَّلُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ وَٱلرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ﴿٤﴾

سَلَٰمٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطۡلَعِ ٱلۡفَجۡرِ ٥

[1-5] We have sent down this (Qur'an) in the Night of Glory.[1] And what do you know what the Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months.[2] The angels and the Spirit[3] descend in it with every decree, by the permission of their Lord.[4] That Night is peace, until the rising of the dawn.[5]

1The words in the original are anzalana hu: "We Ourself have sent it down". But although there is no mention of the Qur'an before it, the Qur'an is implied, for "sending down" by itself points out that the Qur'an is meant. And there are numerous instances of this in the Qur'an that if from the context, or the style, the antecedent of a pronoun is apparent, the pronoun is used even if the antecedent has not been mentioned anywhere before or after it. (For explanation, see E.N. 9 of An-Najm).

Here, it has been said: "We have sent down the Qur'an in the Night of Destiny", and in Al-Baqarah: 185, "Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was sent down. " This shows that the night in which the Angel of God had brought down revelation for the first time to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be .Allah's Peace) in the Cave of Hira, was a night of the month of Ramadan. This night has been described as Lailat-ul-qadr here and as Lailat-im-mubarakah in Surah Ad-Dukhan: 3 above.

There can be two meanings of sending down the Qur'an in this night: first, , that in this night the entire Qur'an was entrusted to the bearers .(angels) of Revelation, and then Gabriel (peace be on him) continued to reveal its verses and Surahs, from time to time, to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) during 23 years as the occasion and conditions demanded. This meaning has been given by Ibn `Abbas. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Hakim, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi). Second, that the revelation of the Qur'an began in this night. This is Imam Sha`bi's view, although from him too the other view also is related, which is the view of Ibn `Abbas as cited above (Ibn Jarir). Anyhow, in both cases, the meaning is the same that the revelation of the Qur'an to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be pence) began in this very night, and this was the night in which the five opening verses of Surah Al-`Alaq were revealed. The fact, however, is that Allah did not compose the verses and the Surahs of the Qur'an right at the time guidance was needed by the Holy Prophet for his message of Islam in respect of an occasion or affair, but even before the creation of the universe, in the very beginning, Allah had a full plan of the creation of mankind on the earth, of raising the Prophets in it, of sending down the Books to the Prophets, of raising the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) at the end of the line of the Prophets and of sending down the Qur'an to him. In the Night of Destiny only the execution of the final phase of the plan began. No wonder if at that very time the entire Qur'an was entrusted to the bearers of Revelation.

Some commentators have interpreted qadr to mean destiny (taqdir) , . i. e it is the night in which Allah entrusts the decrees of destiny to the angels to be enforced. This is supported by verse 3 of Surah Ad-

Dukhan: "This is a night in which every matter is decided wisely by Our command." On the contrary, Imam Zuhri says that qadr means glory and honor, there by implying that it is a Night of Destiny. This meaning is supported by the words "Lallat-ul-qadr is better than a thousand months" of this Surah itself.

As for the question as to which night it was, it is disputed and there are as many as 40 different views on this subject. however, a great majority of scholars hold the opinion that one of the odd nights of the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan is Lailat-ul-qadr, and among these also most scholars think that it is the 27th night. Below we give the authentic Ahadith which have been reported in this connection:

According to Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said, in connection with Lailat-ul qadr, that it is the 27th night. (Abu Da'ud Tayalisi). According to another tradition from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, it is the last night of Ramadan. (Musnad Ahmad).

When Zirr bin Hubaish asked Hadrat Ubayy bin Ka`b about Lailat-ulqadr, he stated on oath, and did not make any exception, that it is the 27th night. (Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Hibban).

When Hadrat Abu Zarr was asked about it, he said: "Hadrat `Umar, Hadrat Hudhaifah and many other Companions of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had no doubt that it is the 271h night." (Ibn Abi Shaibah).

Hadrat `Ubadah bin as-Samit says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: `Lailat-al-qadr is one of the odd nights of the last ten nights of Ramadan: 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th, 29th, or the last night." (Musnad Ahmad).

Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Search for it among the last ten nights of Ramadan when there are still nine days in the month, or seven days, or five days." (bukhari). Most of the scholars have understood it to mean that by this the Holy Prophet meant the odd nights.

Hadrat Abu Bakr said: "When nine days remain in the month, or seven days, or five days, or three days, or the last night." What he meant was that Lailat-ul-qadr should be sought among these dates. (Tirmidhi, Nasa'i).

According to Hadrat 'A'ishah, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Search for lailat-ul- qadr among the odd nights of the last ten nights of Ramadan. (Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmidhi). Hadrat 'A'ishah and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Umar have also reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) observed i`tikaf (seclusion in the Mosque) during the last ten nights of Ramadan every year during his lifetime.

On the basis of the traditions related in this regard on the authority of a great Companions like Hadrat

Mu`awiyah, Hadrat Ibn 'Umar, Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas and others, a large number of the earliest scholars regard the 27th of Ramadan as Lailat-ul-qadr. Probably Allah and His Messenger have not specified any one night for the reason so that the people, in their zeal to benefit from the virtues of Lailat-ul-qadr, should spend more and more nights in worship and devotion and should not remain content with only one night. Here the question arises that when it is night at Makkah, it is daytime in a large part of the world; therefore, the people of those parts can never take advantage of Lailat-ul-qadr. The answer is that the word night in Arabic is mostly used for the combination of the day and night. Therefore, the night preceding the day on any one of these dates of Ramadan can be Lailat ul-qadr for that part of the world.

2The commentators in general have understood this to mean that the good acts performed in this Night are superior in value to the good acts of a thousand months in which Lailat-ul-qadr is not included. There is no doubt that this is in itself correct and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has described great excellencies and virtues of the good acts and devotions of this Night. According to a tradition related in Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said: The one who remained standing in worship in the state of belief and for the sake of rewards from Allah during Lailat-ul-qadr, would have all his previous sins forgiven." And in Musnad Ahmad, there is a tradition from Hadrat `Ubadah bin as-Samit, saying that the Holy Prophet said: Lailat-ut-qadr is. Among the last ten nights of Ramadan. The one who stood up in worship in order to take advantage of their rewards, Allah wilt forgive all his former and latter sins." But, the verse does not say: "To act righteously in Lailat-ul-qadr is better than acting righteously in a thousand months, " but it says: lailat-ul-qadr is better than a thousand months. " And "a thousand months" also does not imply 83 years and 4 months exactly, but a very long period of time as "a thousand" denoted among the Arabs. Therefore, the verse means that in this one night a task was accomplished for the welfare of mankind the like of which had not been accomplished even during an indefinitely long period of history.

3"The Spirit": Gabriel (peace be on him), who has been mentioned separately from the angels in view of his unique eminence, honor and merit.

4That is, they do not descend of their own accord but by leave of their Lord, and "every decree" implies amr hakim (a wise decree) as described in Ad-Dukhan: 5.

5That is, the entire Night, from evening till morning, is peace, free from every evil and mischief.

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98. Surah Al Bayyina (The Clear Evidence)

Name

The Surah is so designated after the word *al-bayyinah* occurring at the end of the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Where it was revealed, at Makkah or Madinah, is also disputed. Some commentators say it is a Makki revelation according to most scholars; others say it is a Madani revelation according to most scholars. Ibn Az Zubair and Ata bin Yasar hold the view that it is Madani. Ibn Abbas and Qatadah are reported to have held two views, first that it is Makki, second that it is Madani. Hadrat Aishah regards it as a Makki Surah. Abu Hayyan, author of *Bahr al-Muhit*, and Abdul Munim ibn al- Faras, author of *Ahkam al-Quran*, also have preferred to regard it as Makki. As for its contents, there is nothing in it to indicate whether it was revealed at Makkah or at Madinah.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its having been placed after Surahs Al-Alaq and Al-Qadr in the arrangement of the Quran is very meaningful. Surah Al-Alaq contains the very first revelation, while Surah Al-Qadr shows as to when it was revealed, and in this Surah it has been explained why it was necessary to send a Messenger along with this Holy Book.

First of all the need of sending a Messenger has been explained, saying: The people of the world, be they from among the followers of the earlier scriptures or from among the idolaters, could not possibly be freed from their state of unbelief, until a Messenger was sent whose appearance by itself should be a clear proof of his apostleship, and he should present the Book of God before the people in its original, pristine form, which should be free from every mixture of falsehood corrupting the earlier Divine Books; and which should comprise sound teachings.

Then, about the errors of the followers of the earlier Books it has been said that the cause of their straying into different creeds was not that Allah had not provided any guidance to them, but they strayed only after a clear statement of the Right Creed had come to them. From this it automatically follows that they themselves were

responsible for their error and deviation. Now, if even after the coming of the clear statement through this Messenger, they continued to stray, their responsibility would further increase.

In this very connection, it has been stated that the Prophets who came from Allah and the, Books sent down by Him, did not enjoin anything but that the way of sincere and true service to Allah be adopted, apart from all other ways, no one else's worship, service or obedience be mixed with His, the *salat* be established and the *zakat* be paid. This same has been the true religion since ever. From this also it automatically follows that the followers of the earlier scriptures, straying from this true religion, have added extraneous things to it, which are false, and Allah's this Messenger has come to invite them back to, the same original faith.

In conclusion, it has been pointed out clearly that the followers of the earlier Books and the idolaters who would refuse to acknowledge this Messenger are the worst of creatures: their punishment is an everlasting Hell; and the people who would believe and act righteously, and would spend life in the world in awe of God, are the best of creatures: their reward is eternal Paradise wherein they will live for ever. Allah became well pleased with them and they became well pleased with Allah.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

لَمْ يَكُنِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ مُنفَكِّينَ
حَتَّىٰ تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَةُ ﴿١﴾

رَسُولٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ يَتْلُواْ صُحُفًا مُّطَهَّرَةً ﴿٢﴾

فِيهَا كُتُبٌ قَيِّمَةٌ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] The disbelievers[1] from among the people of the Book and the mushriks[2] would not desist (from their unbelief) until the clear evidence should come to them,[3] a Messenger[4] from Allah, who should recite to them holy scriptures[5] containing sound and correct writings.

وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ إِلَّا مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ
ٱلْبَيِّنَةُ ﴿٤﴾

وَمَآ أُمِرُوٓا۟ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ حُنَفَآءَ وَيُقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
وَيُؤْتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ دِينُ ٱلْقَيِّمَةِ ﴿٥﴾

[4-5] The people who were given the Book before this did not divide into sects until after the clear statement (of the Right Way) had come to them[6] and the only Command they were given was to worship Allah, making their religion sincerely His, turning all their attention towards Him, and to establish the salat and to pay the zakat. for this alone is the most true and right religion.[7]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَآ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ ٱلْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ ٱلْبَرِيَّةِ ﴿٧﴾

جَزَآؤُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِىَ رَبَّهُۥ ﴿٨﴾

[6-8] Those who have disbelieved[8] from among the people of the Book and the mushriks, shall certainly enter Hell, and remain therein for ever. They are the worst of all creatures.[9] As for those who believed and did righteous works, they are indeed the best of all creatures.[10] Their reward with their Lord shall be Gardens of Eternity beneath which rivers will be flowing; they shall live in them for ever and ever. Allah became well pleased with them and they with Allah. All this is for him who feared his Lord.[11]

1Here the word kufr (unbelief) has been used in its widest sense, which includes different forms of the unbelieving attitude. For example, some were unbelievers in the sense that they did not acknowledge Allah at all: some did acknowledge Allah but did not regard Him as the One and only God, but worshiped others as well, thinking they were associates in Divine Being or Divine attributes and powers in one way or the other; some acknowledged oneness of God but committed some kind of shirk as well; some acknowledged God but did not acknowledge His Prophets and the guidance brought by them; some acknowledged one particular Prophet and did not acknowledge another; 'others rejected the Hereafter. In short, there were different kinds of kufr in which the people were involved. And the statement: "the disbelievers from among the people of the Book and the mushriks . . . ",does not mean that some of them were not involved in kufr, but that those who were involved in kufr were of two kinds: the followers of the Book and the mushriks. Here, min has not been used for division but for explanation, as, . for example, in Surah Al-Hajj: 30, where it has been said Fajtanib-ur rijsa min al-authan. which means: "therefore, guard yourselves against the filth of idols'-, and not: "guard yourselves against the filth which is in the idols." Likewise, alladhina kafaru min ahl-il-Kitabi wal-mushrikin means: "the, disbelievers from among the followers of the .Book and the mushriks ... ", and not: "those who have disbelieved from these two groups.

2Despite the common factor of kufr between them the two groups have been mentioned by separate names. The followers of the Book imply the people who possessed any of the revealed Books, even if in corrupted form, sent to the former Prophets, and they believed in it. And the mushriks (idolaters) imply the people who did not follow any Prophet nor believed in any Book. Although in the Qur'an the shirk, (polytheism, idolatry) of the people of the Book has been mentioned at many places, e.g. about the Christians it has been said: "They say: God is one of the three" (Al-Ma'idah: 73); "The Messiah is son of God" (At Taubah: 30); "The Messiah; son of Mary; is God" (Al-Ma'idah: 17); and about the Jews it has been said: "They say: Ezra is son of God" (At-Taubah: 30), yet nowhere in the Qur'an has the term "mushrlk"been used for them, but they have been mentioned as "alladhina ul-ul-Kitaba" (those who were given the Book), or by the words Jews and Christians. For they believed in the principle of Tauhid

(Oneness of God) as the we religion, and then committed shirk. Contrary to this, for others than the followers of the Book, the word mushrik has been used as a. term, for they acknowledged shirk (idolatry) as true religion and disacknowledged Tauhid. This distinction between the two groups holds good not only in the use of the term but also in the Shari`ah injunctions. Animal flesh duly slaughtered by the followers of the Book has been declared lawful for the Muslims if they slaughter a lawful animal in the name of Allah in the prescribed way, and permission to marry their women also has been given. On the contrary, neither the animal slaughtered by the mushriks is lawful for the Muslims nor is marriage with their women.

3That is, "There was no means of their being freed from this state of unbelief except that a clear evidence (of the truth) should come and make them understand the falsity of every form of kufr and its being untrue, and should present the right way before them in a clear and rational way." This dces not mean that after the coming of the char evidence they would give up kufr but that in the absence of the clear evidence it was not at all possible that they would be delivered from that state. However, if even after its coming some of them still persisted in their kufr, then they themselves would be responsible for it; they could not complain that Allah had made no arrangement for their guidance. This same thing bas been expressed in the Qur'an at different places in different ways, e.g. in Surah An-Nahl: 9, it is said: "Allah has taken upon Himself to show the Right Way"; in Surah Al-Laila 12, it is said: "It is for Us to show the Way"; in Surah An-Nisa: 163-165: "O! Prophet, We have sent Revelation to you just as We had sent it to Noah and other Prophets after him ... All these Messengers were sent as bearers of good news and warners so that, after their coming, the people should have no excuse left to plead before Allah"; and in Surah Al-Ma'idah: 19: "O people of the Book, this Messenger of Ours has come to you and is making clear to you the teachings of the Right Way after a long interval during which there had come no Messengers, lest you should say: `No bearer of good news nor warner came to us. Lo, now the bearer of good news and warner has come."

4Here, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself has been called "the clear evidence", for his life before and after Prophethood, his presenting a Book like the Qur'an in spite of being .un-lettered, his bringing about an extraordinary revolution in the lives of the converts to Islam through education and training, his educating the people in rational beliefs, clean and pure forms of worship, excellent morals and the best principles and ,injunctions for human life, perfect harmony and agreement between his word and deed, and his constancy of purpose in respect of his message in spite of every kind of resistance and opposition, all these were clear signs of the truth that he was Allah's Messenger.

5Lexically, suhuf means "written pages", but in the Holy Qur'an this word has been used as a term for the Books revealed to the Prophets of Allah (peace be upon them); and by the holy scriptures are meant the scriptures which are free from every mixture of falsehood, every kind of error and moral filth. The full import of these words becomes evident when one studies the Bible (and the books of other religions as well) vis-a-vis the Holy Qur'an, and finds written in them along with sound teachings such things as are not only opposed to truth and reason but are also morally contemptible. After reading them when one

turns to the Qur'an, one realizes how pure and hallowed this Book is.

6That is, the reason why the people of the Book before this were divided into countless sects because of different kinds of errors and deviation, was not that Allah had failed to send "a clear evidence" from Himself for their guidance, but the fact that they adopted the wrong way after guidance had come from Allah; therefore, they themselves were responsible for their deviation, for Allah had fulfilled His obligation towards them. Likewise, since their scriptures are no longer pure and their books no longer consist of original and correct teachings, Allah by sending a Messenger of His, as a clear evidence, with a hallowed Book, containing sound and pure teachings, has again fulfilled His obligation towards them, so that if even after that they remained divided, they themselves should be responsible for it and should have no excuse left to plead before Allah. This thing has been stated at many places in the Qur'an, e.g. see Al-Baqarah: 213, 253; Al-`Imran: 19: Al-Ma'idah: 44-50; Yunus: 93; Ash-Shura: 13-I5; Al-Jathiyah: 16-18, along with the corresponding notes for fuller understanding.

7That is, the message of the same religion, which now the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is preaching, had been given to the people of the Book by the Prophets who came to them and by the Books which were sent among them; they had not ban enjoined any of the false belief and wicked deeds which they adopted afterwards and created different sects. Right and correct religion has always been the same: that Allah alone should be served and worshiped exclusively, none else be joined with Him in worship, man should become worshiper of One Allah alone and obedient to His Command only, should establish the salat and pay the zakat. (For further explanation, see E. N. 19 of Al-A`raf; E.N.'s: 108,109 of Yunus, E.N.'s 43 to 47 of Ar-Rum; E.N.'s 3, 4 of Az-Zumar) . Some commentators have taken the words din al-qayyimah in this verse in the meaning of din al-millat al-qayyimah: "Religion of the righteous community". Some others have taken qayyimah 'in the superlative sense and understood it in the same meaning as we have adopted in our translation.

8"Disbelieved": refused to acknowledge the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) as Allah's Messenger. The meaning is that the end of those from among the mushriks and the followers of the Book, who have not acknowledged the Messenger whose emergence by itself is a clear evidence, and who is reciting to them hallowed pages containing sound and correct teachings, will be as is being described below.

9That is, they are worse than all creatures of God, even than animals, for the animals do not possess reason and power, but these people reject the Truth in spite of having reason and authority.

10That is, they are superior to all creatures of God, even to the angels, for the angels do not have the power to disobey, and these people adopt Allah's obedience in spite of having the power to disobey Him.

11In other words, the person who did not live in the world fearless and independent of God, but feared

Him at every step lest he should do something which might entail His wrath and punishment, will have this reward resolved for him with Allah.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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99. Surah Az Zalzala (The Earthquake)

Name

It is derived from the word *zilzal* in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Whether or not it was revealed, at Makkah or Madinah, is disputed. Ibn Masud, Ata, Jabir, and Mjahid say that it is a Makki Surah and a statement of Ibn Abbas also supports this view. On the contrary, Qatadah and Muqatil say that it is Madani and another statement of Ibn Abbas also has been cited in support of this view. That it is a Madani Surah is reasoned from a tradition from Hadrat Abu Said Khudri, which Ibn Abi Hatim has related from him. He says: "When the verse *Fa-man ya mal mithqala dharratin khairan yarah, wa man ya mal mithqala dharratin sharran yarah*, was revealed, I said: "O Messenger of Allah, shall I really see my deeds? The Holy Messenger replied in the affirmative. I submitted: And every major sin? He replied yes. I said: And the minor sins too? He replied yes. Thereupon I exclaimed that I would then be ruined. The Holy Prophet said: Rejoice, O Abu Sa'id, for each good act will be equal to ten good acts like it." The basis of the argument for this Surah's being Madani is that Hadrat Abu Sa'ld Khudri was an inhabitant of Madinah and reached maturity after the Battle of Uhud. Therefore, if this Surah was revealed in his presence, as is apparent from his statement, it must be a Madani Surah. However, the practice that the Companions and their immediate successors followed in respect of the occasion of the revelation of the verses and Surahs, has already been explained in the Introduction to Surah Ad-Dahr above. Therefore, a Companion's saying that a verse was sent down on this or that particular occasion is no proof that it was sent down on that very occasion. It may well be that after coming of age when Hadrat Abu Sa'id heard this Surah for the first time from the Holy Prophet, terrified by its last portion he might have asked the Holy Prophet the questions which we have cited above, and he might have narrated the incident saying that when this verse was revealed he put this and this question to the Holy Prophet. In the absence of this tradition every reader who reads the Qur'an with understandings will feel that it is a Makki Surah. More than that: from its theme and style he would feel that it must have been sent down in the earliest stage at Makkah when the fundamental principles and beliefs of Islam were being presented before the people in a concise but highly effective way.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is the second life after death and presentation in it before man of the full record of the deeds done by him in the world. In the first three sentences it has been told briefly how the second life after death will take place and how confounding it will be for man. In the next two sentences it has been said that this very earth on which man has lived and performed all kinds of deeds thoughtlessly, and about which he never could fancy that this lifeless thing would at some time in the future bear witness to his deeds, will speak out on that Day by Allah's command and will state in respect of each individual person what act he had committed at a particular time and place. Then, it has been said that men on that Day, rising from their graves, will come out in their varied groups from all corners of the earth, to be shown their deeds and works, and their presentation of the deeds will be so complete and detailed that not an atom's weight of any good or evil act will be left unnoticed or hidden from his eyes.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ﴿١﴾

وَأَخْرَجَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ﴿٢﴾

وَقَالَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنُ مَا لَهَا ﴿٣﴾

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا ﴿٤﴾

بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا ﴿٥﴾

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ ٱلنَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا۟ أَعْمَـٰلَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٧﴾

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٨﴾

[1-8] When the earth is shaken with her utmost shaking,[1] and the earth casts out all the burdens from within her,[2] and man says, "What has befallen her?"[3] On that Day shall she relate whatever had happened (on her),[4] for your Lord shall have commanded her (to do so). On that day, men shall turn up in sundry groups[5] to be shown their deeds.[6] Then, whoever has done an atom's weight of good, shall see it; and whoever has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it.[7]

1Zalzalah means to shake violently over and over again. Thus, zulzilat-il,ardu means that the earth will be shaken violently by convulsion after convulsion, and since shaking of the earth has been mentioned, it automatically gives the meaning that the entire earth will be shaken and not a limited territory of it. Then, in order to express the great intensity of the earthquake the word zilzalaha has been added, which literally means "its being shaken". It mean: "It will be so shaken as a huge sphere like it ought to be shaken, or shaken to its utmost intensity." Some commentators have taken it to imply the first earthquake with which the first stage of Resurrection will begin, i:e. when all living beings will perish and the present order of the world will be upset. But, according to a large section of them, ii implies the earthquake with which the second stage of Resurrection will begin, i. e. when all the former and the latter generations of mankind will rise back to life. This second commentary seems to be more correct, for the whole subsequent theme supports it.

2This same has been expressed in Surah Al-Inshiqaq: 4, thus: "And throws out whatever is within it, and becomes empty." It has several meanings:

(1) It will cast out bodies of the dead in whatever form and state and wherever they may be lying in the earth; and the following sentence indicates that at that time all the scattered parts of the bodies will reassemble and be resurrected once again in the same form and shape as they had been in their first life, for if it were not so, how will they say: "What has happened to the earth ?" It will not only cast out the dead bodies of men but also all traces and evidences of the words, deeds and activities of their former life lying buried in it; the following sentence points out that the earth will narrate all that had happened on its back.

(2) A third meaning also has been given by some Commentators, saying that it will cast out the treasures of gold, silver, jewels and every kind of wealth lying hidden in the earth's belly and man will see it and realize how he thirsted for these things in the world: how he committed murders. thefts, robberies and piracies in the land and sea, usurped the rights of others, waged wars and devastated vast populations. On that Day all that will lie heaped up before him, yet of no avail, but will rather become a means of punishment for him.

3Man here may as well imply every man, for after resurrection and coming to senses the first impression of every man will be as to what was happening around him; afterwards he will realize that it was the Resurrection Day. Man may also imply the man who denies the Hereafter, for what he regarded as impossible would be happening in front of him and causing him confusion and bewilderment. As for the believers, they will not be bewildered and' confused, for . everything would be taking place according to their belief and conviction. To an extent, this second meaning is supported by verse 52 of Surah Ya Sin, in which it has been said that the deniers of the Hereafter at that time will exclaim: "Ah, who has roused us from our sleeping-place?" .And the reply given would be: "This is the same which the Merciful God had promised; and the Messengers sent by God had spoken the truth." This verse does not expressly say that this answer to the disbelievers would actually be given by the believers, for there is no indication of it in the verse. The probability, however, is that the believers will give them this answer.

4According to Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) recited this verse and asked: "Do you know what annals it will relate ?" The people said: "Allah and His Messenger have the best knowledge." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "The annals are that the earth will testify to the deeds which every man and woman has done on its back." She will say: "He or she had done such and such a thing on such and such a day. These will be the annals the earth will narrate." (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir, 'Abd bin Humaid, Ibn al-Mundhir, Hakim, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi in Ash-Sbu'ab). According to Hadrat Rabi'al-Kharashi, the Holy Prophet said: "Beware of the earth, for it is your root and basis, and there is nothing which a person does on it, and it will not report, whether it is good or bad." (Mu jam at-Tabarani). Hadrat Anas reports that the Holy Prophet said: "The earth on the Day of Resurrection will bring out every act that would have been done on its back. Then he recited these verses." (Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi). About Hadrat 'Ali it is related that when he distributed the money of the Bait al-Mal (public treasury) among the needy ones and thus emptied it, he would perform two rakahs of the Prayer

in it and say: "You will have to bear witness that I filled you with justice and emptied you with justice."

It might have been difficult for a man of ancient times to understand how the earth will speak and narrate the annals and events happening on it on the Resurrection Day, but in the present age of scientific discoveries and the inventions of cinema, loudspeaker, radio, television, tape-recorder, electronic equipment, etc., it is no longer difficult to understand how the earth will narrate its annals. The impression of whatever man speaks is preserved in the air, in the radio waves, on the particles of the walls and floors and ceilings of the houses, and on the environments of the road, plain or field if he spoke outside the house. If Allah so wills He can make these things repeat all these voices precisely in the way these were uttered in the first instance by man. Man at that time will hear with his ears and know that it was his own voice, and all his acquaintances also will testify that whatever they were hearing was the person's own voice and his own accent. Then whatever man has done anywhere on the earth, and in whatever state, has had its impression on everything of the environment and its image inscribed on it. Even if he did something in pitch dark, there are such rays in the Kingdom of God for which darkness and light make no difference; they can preserve his image in any case. All these images will pass before man on the Resurrection Day like a motion picture, and will show him when and where he had done something during his life on the earth.

The fact is that although Allah directly knows whatever a man does, yet in the Hereafter when He will establish His Court, He will punish every culprit only after fulfilling all the demands of justice. Any case which is brought before His Court against a criminal will be proved with such perfect evidence that no room will be left to doubt his being a criminal. The first and foremost evidence against him is the record in which the two recording angels are recording his each word and deed. (Qaf: 17-18, Al-Infitar: 10-12). This record will be handed over to him and he will be asked to read it, for "you yourself suffice as reckoner against yourself." (Bani Isra'il: 14). Reading it man will be bewildered, for "it has left nothing un-recorded of our deeds, small or great." (Al-Kahf: 49). Then there is man's own body which he had used in the world. In Allah's Court his own tongue will bear witness as to what he had been speaking through it in the world, his own hands and feet will bear witness as to what deeds he had committed through them (An-Nur: 24). His eyes and his ears will bear witness as to what he saw and heard by their means. Even the skin of his body will bear witness to his deeds. Bewildered he will ask his limbs, "Why have you borne witness against me?" They will reply: "The same God Who has given speech to everything has given us speech." (Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 20-22). On top of these, there will be the witnesses which will be presented from the earth and all its environments, in which man will hear his own voice by his own ears and see the exact pictures of his own deeds by his eyes. Furthermore, the ideas, motives and aims hidden in the heart of man and the intentions with which he had performed every deed will be brought out and placed before him as is stated in Surah Al-`Adiyat below. That is why with the production of such absolute, clear and undeniable proofs, man will be confounded and he will be left with no chance to say anything in self-defense to excuse himself. (Al-Mursalat 35-36)

5This can have two meanings:

(1) That each man with present himself in his own individual capacity--families, groups, parties, nations, all will scatter away. This thing has been said at other places also in the Qur'an, e.g., according to Surah Al-An`am 94, Allah on that Day will say to the people "So, you have come before Us all alone, as We created you at first", and in Surah Maryam: "He will appear before Us all alone" (v 80), and "Everyone of them will be presented before Him individually on the Resurrection Day" (v 95)

(2) That the people who during thousands and thousands of years had died at different places; will be rising from different corners of the earth and proceeding in groups, as has been said in Surah An-Naba "The day the Trumpet is blown, you will come out in crowds." (v 18)

Apart from these, there is no room in the word ashtatan for the meanings, which different commentators have given, and are, therefore, outside the literal bounds of this word, although they are correct by themselves and in accordance with the conditions depicted of the Resurrection Day in Qur'an and the Hadith.

6This can have two meanings:

(1) That they are shown their deeds, i. e. , each one told what he did in the world; and

(2) that they are shown the rewards of their deeds.

Although this second meaning also can be taken of the words li yurau' jaza'a a malahum (so as to be shown the rewards of their deeds) but li yurau' a malahum (so as to be shown their deeds). Therefore, the first meaning only is preferable, especially when at several places in the Qur'an it has been stated clearly that the disbeliever and the believer, the righteous and the wicked, the obedient and the disobedient, all will be given their records (e.g. see Al-Haqqah: 19, 25; Al-Inshiqaq: 7, 10). Evidently, there is no difference between showing somebody his deeds and handing over to him his record. Furthermore, when the earth will narrate whatever had happened on her, the whole picture of the conflict between the Truth and the falsehood that has been raging since the beginning of time and will continue to rage till the end, also will appear before the people and they will see what part the truth-loving people played in it and what vile deeds did the supporters of falsehood commit against them. It may well be that the people will hear with their own ears all the speeches and dialogues of the callers to right guidance and of the publicists of error and evil; the whole record of the writings and literature produced by the two sides will be placed intact before them, and the people gathered together in the Plain of Assembly will see with their own eyes the persecution of the lovers of Truth by the worshipers of falsehood and all the scenes of the bitter conflict that raged between the two parties.

7A simple and straightforward meaning of this statement, and it is right and correct, is that not an atom's weight of good or evil done by a person, will have been left unrecorded in his conduct book, and he will

see it in any case. But if seeing is taken to imply seeing its reward and punishment, it will be wrong to take it in the meaning that in the Hereafter every person will be rewarded for his most minor offence, and no one will be left un-rewarded for a good and unpunished for an evil done by him. For in the first place, it would mean that each evil act will be punished and each good act rewarded separately; secondly, it also means that no believer, however righteous and virtuous, will remain safe from being punished for a most ordinary error, and no disbeliever, however wicked and iniquitous, will be left unrewarded for a most ordinary good act, Both these meanings are opposed not only to the explanations given in the Qur'an and the Hadith, but also to reason. From the point of view of reason, it is not understandable that a master would refuse to pardon a most loyal and dutiful servant for a most minor error, and along with rewarding for each act of service and obedience, would also punish him for each and every error. Likewise, this also is not understandable from the viewpoint of reason that a person brought up and favoured by you should prove disloyal and treacherous and ungrateful in spite of your favors, and you, over-looking his collective attitude, should punish him for each act of treachery separately and reward him for each, even if most insignificant, act of service separately. As for the Qur'an and the Hadith, they have laid down a detailed law of rewards and punishments for the different categories of the people, be they believers, hypocrites, disbelievers, righteous believers; erring believers, wicked and sinful believers, common disbelievers, or wicked and mischievous disbelievers, and these rewards and punishments pervade the entire life of man, from there to the Hereafter.

In this connection, the Qur'an has stated, in principle, certain things explicitly:

First, that the deeds of the disbelievers, idolaters and hypocrites (i.e., the deeds regarded as virtuous) have been rendered vain; they will receive no reward for them in the Hereafter; if at all they deserve a reward for them, they will receive it here in the world. For this, see Al-A'raf: 147, At-Taubah: 17, 67-69; Hud: 15-16; Ibrahim: 18; Al-Kahf: 104-105; An-Nur: 39; Al-Furgan: 23; AlAhzab: 19; Az-Zumar: 65; Al-Ahqaf: 20.

Second, that evil will be punished to the extent that evil has been committed, but the good deeds will be rewarded much more generously than what they will actually deserve. At some places it has been explicitly stated that a good act will have a ten-fold reward for it, and at others that Allah will increase the reward of the good act as much as He will please. For this, see AI-Baqarah: 261, AI-An`am: 160, Yunus: 26-27, An-Nur: 38, Al-Qasas: 84, Saba: 37, Al Mu'min:40.

Third, that if the believers abstained from major sins, their ordinary offenses will be forgiven. (An-Nisa': 31, Ash-Shura: 37, An-Najm: 32).

Fourth, that the righteous believer shall have an easy reckoning, his evils will be overlooked and he will be rewarded according to his best deeds. (Al`Ankabut: 7, Az-Zumar: 35, Al-Ahqaf: 16, Al-Inshiqaq: 8).

The Hadith also is very explicit in this regard. In the commentary of Sarah Al-Inshiqaq above, we have

cited the Ahadith which have been reported from the Holy Prophet in connection with the explanation of easy reckoning and severe accountability. (See E.N. 6 of Al-Inshiqaq). Hadrat Anas says that once Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddiq was having his meals with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). In the meantime this verse was revealed. Hadrat Abu Bakr withdrew his hand from food and said: "O Messenger of Allah, shall I see the result of every little evil that I have happened to commit?" The Holy Prophet replied: "O Abu Bakr, whatever unpleasant and troublesome things you experience in the world, will compensate for the little evils that you happened to commit, and Allah is reserving every little good that you do for your Hereafter," (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabarani in Al-Ausat, Baihaqi in Ash-shu ab. Ibn al-Mundhir, Hakim, Ibn Marduyah, `Abd bin Humaid). The Holy Messenger of Allah had explained this verse also to Hadrat Abu Ayyub Ansari, saying: "Whoever from among you dces good will have his reward in the Hereafter, and whoever commits an evil will suffer punishment for it in this very world in the form of misery and disease. (Ibn Marduyah). Qatadah has related this saying of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) on the authority of Hadrat Anas: "Allah does not wrong a believer in the world: He provides him sustenance in lieu of his good deeds; in the Hereafter He will reward him for these. As for the disbeliever, he is recompensed for his good deeds in the world itself; then when Resurrection takes place, he, will have no good work left to his credit." (Ibn Jarir). Masruq has related from Hadrat `A'ishah that she asked the Holy Prophet "In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance `Abdullah bin Jud`an treated his kindred kindly, fed the poor, received his guests well, earned freedom for the captives. Will this be of any use to him in the Hereafter ? The Holy Prophet replied: No, he never said omit death: Rabbighfir-li khati'ati yaum ad-din. `My Lord, forgive me my errors on the Judgement Day. " (Ibn Jarir) The Holy Prophet gave similar replies also in respect of the other people, who did good deeds in the pre-Islamic days, but died as pagans. But there are certain other sayings of the Holy Prophet, which show that although the good done by a disbeliever cannot save him from the fire of Hell, yet in Hell he will not be subjected to the severe punishment which will be the lot of the wicked, sinful and villainous disbelievers, e.g. according to a Hadith, Hatim Ta'i in view of his generosity will be subjected to a light punishment in Hell (Ruh al-Ma `ani).

However, this verse warns man of a truth of vital importance which is this: Even a most ordinary good has its own weight and its own value, and the same is also true of evil: even a most ordinary evil will also be considered and taken into account; it will not just be overlooked. Therefore, no good act, however small and insignificant, should be left, undone, for many such good acts can collect and be regarded as a major good not in the reckoning with Allah. Likewise, even a most ordinary evil also should not be committed, for a large number of such ordinary errors can become serious sins. The same thing has been described by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in several Ahadith. According to, a tradition related in Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Hadrat `Adi bin Hatim, the Holy Prophet said: "Save yourselves from the fire of Hell even if it be by giving away a bit of a date, or by uttering a good word." Again from Hadrat `Adi, in an authentic tradition, the Holy Prophet's saying has been reported: "Do not look upon any good work as insignificant, even if it be emptying a bucket into the vessel of one asking for water, or receiving a brother. of yours with a pleasant face. " According to a tradition reported in Bukhari from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, the Holy Prophet, addressing the women, said: "O Muslim women, no woman should look upon

sending a gift to her neighbor as mean, even if it be the hoof of a goat." A tradition has been related in Musnad Ahmad, Nasa'i and Ibn Majah from Hadrat 'A'ishah, saying that the Holy Prophet said: "O `A'ishah, abstain from the sins which are looked upon as trivial, for they too will be inquired about by Allah." Musnad Ahmad contains a tradition from Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud, saying that the Holy Prophet said: "Beware of minor sins, for they will gather together on man so much so that they will kill him. " (For the distinction between the grave and the trivial offenses., see E.N. 53 of An-Nisa' and E.N. 32 of An-Najm).

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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100. Surah Al Adiyat (Those That Run)

Name

The Surah has been so entitled after the word *al `adiyat* with which it opens.

Period of Revelation

Whether it is a Makki or a Madani Surah is disputed. Hadrat Abdullah bin Masud, Jabir, Hasan Basri, Ikrimah, and Ata say that it is Makki. Hadrat Anas bin Malik, and Qatadah say that it is Madani; and from Hadrat Ibn Abbas two views have been reported, first that it is a Makki Surah, and second that it is Madani. But the subject matter of the Surah and its style clearly indicate that it is no only Makki but was revealed in the earliest stage of Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its object is to make the people realize how evil man becomes when he denies the Hereafter, or becomes heedless of it, and also to warn them that in the Hereafter not only their visible and apparent deeds but even the secrets hidden in their hearts too will be subjected to scrutiny.

For this purpose the general chaos and confusion prevailing in Arabia, with which the whole country was in turmoil, has been presented as an argument. Bloodshed, loot and plunder raged on every side. Tribes were subjecting tribes to raids, and no one could have peaceful sleep at night from fear that some enemy tribe might raid his settlement early in the morning. Every Arab was fully conscious of this state of affairs and realized that it was wrong. Although the plundered bemoaned his miserable, helpless state and the plunderer rejoiced, yet when the plunderer himself was plundered, he too realized how abject was the condition in which the whole nation was involved. Referring to this very state of affairs, it has been said, Unaware of the second life after death and his accountability before God in it, man has become ungrateful to his Lord and Sustainer. He is using the powers and abilities given by God for perpetrating tyranny and pillage; blinded by the love of worldly wealth he tries to obtain it by every means, however impure and filthy, and his own state itself testifies that by abusing the powers bestowed by his Lord he is being ungrateful to Him. He would never have behaved so, had he known the time when the dead will be raised from the graves, and when the intentions and motives with which he had done all sorts of deeds in the

world, will be exposed and brought out before everyone to see. At that time the Lord and Sustainer of men shall be well informed of what one had done and what punishment or reward one deserved.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

وَٱلْعَٰدِيَٰتِ ضَبْحًا ﴿١﴾

فَٱلْمُورِيَٰتِ قَدْحًا ﴿٢﴾

فَٱلْمُغِيرَٰتِ صُبْحًا ﴿٣﴾

فَأَثَرْنَ بِهِۦ نَقْعًا ﴿٤﴾

فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِۦ جَمْعًا ﴿٥﴾

إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لِرَبِّهِۦ لَكَنُودٌ ﴿٦﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾

وَإِنَّهُۥ لِحُبِّ ٱلْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

۞ أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِى ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿٩﴾

وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿١٠﴾

إِنَّ رَبَّهُم بِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّخَبِيرٌۢ ﴿١١﴾

[1-11] By the (horses) who run with panting breath,[1] then dash off sparks (with their hoofs),[2] then charge suddenly in the morning,[3] then raise up dust in doing so; then penetrate into a host in a body! Verily, man is ungrateful to his Lord,[4] and he himself is a witness to it,[5] and he loves the worldly wealth with all his heart.[6] But, does he not know the time when all that lies (buried) in the graves shall be brought out,[7] and all that lies (hidden) in the breasts shall be divulged and examined?[8] Surely, their Lord on that Day shall be well informed of them.[9]

1There is no indication in the words of the verse to show whether "those who run" imply the horses; only the word wal-`Adiyat (by, those who run) has been used. That is why the commentators have disputed as to what is implied by "those who run" ..One section of the Companions and their immediate successors has been to think that it implies the horses; another section says that it implies the camels. But since the peculiar sound called dabh is produced only by the panting, snorting horses, and the following verses also in which mention has been made of striking sparks and raiding a settlement early at dawn and raising clouds of dust, apply only to the horses, most scholars are of the opinion that horses are meant. Ibn Jarir says: "Of the two views this view is preferable that by "those who run" horses are implied, for the camel does not breathe hard in running, it is the horse which does so, and Allah has said: "By those

runners which pant and breathe hard in running." Imam Razi ays: "The words of these verses proclaim that horses are meant, for the sound of dabh (panting breath) is only produced by the horses, and the act of striking sparks of fire with the hoofs too is associated with the horses, and, likewise, mounting of a raid early at. dawn is easier by means of the horses than by other animals."

2"Dashing off sparks" indicates that the horses run in the dead of night, for the sparks struck by their hoofs become conspicuous only at night.

3The practice among the Arabs was that when they had to mount a raid on a settlement, they marched out in the night so as to take the enemy by surprise; then they would launch a sudden attack early. in the morning so that everything became visible in the light of day, and at the same tune it did not become so bright that the victim could notice their movement from a distance and be ready to meet the offensive.

4This is for which an oath has been sworn by the horses, which run with panting breath and dash off sparks at night, then raising dust rush to assault a settlement at dawn and penetrate into the enemy host. It is astonishing to note that a large number of the commentators have taken these horses to imply the horses of the Muslim fighters and the enemy host to imply the host of disbelievers, whereas the oath has been sworn to impress the point that "man is highly ungrateful to his Lord". Now, obviously, in the course of Jihad for the sake of Allah, the rushing forth of the fighters' horses and their assaulting a host of disbelievers all of a sudden, does not at all support the point that man is ungrateful to his Lord, nor the following sentences, viz. "man himself is a witness to it, and he. loves the worldly wealth with all his heart," apply to the people who go out to fight in the cause of Allah. Therefore, one will have to admit that the oaths sworn in the first five verses of this Sarah, refer, in fact, to the general bloodshed, loot and plunder prevalent in Arabia at that time. In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance the night was a very dreadful thing: in it the people of every tribe and settlement apprehended the danger of a sudden attack by some unknown enemy, and when the light of day appeared they would heave a sigh of relief that the night had passed in peace. The tribes did not fight only retaliatory wars but different tribes also raided others in order to deprive them of their worldly goods and herds and to capture their women and children to be made slaves. This kind of tyranny and plunder was carried opt mostly by means of the horses, which Allah is presenting here as an argument for the fact that man is ungrateful to his Lord. That is the powers which man is employing for fighting, shedding blood and plundering had not been given him by God for this purpose. Therefore this indeed is sheer ingratitude that the resources granted by Allah and the power given by Him should be used for causing chaos and corruption to spread in the earth. which Allah abhors.

5That is his own conscience and his own deeds are a witness to it; then there are many disbelievers also who by their own tongue express their ingratitude openly for they do not even believe that God exists to say nothing of acknowledging His blessings for which they may have to render gratitude to Him.

6Literally "He is most ardent in the love of khair". But the word khair is not only used for goodness and virtue in Arabic but also for worldly wealth. In Surah Baqarah: 180, khair has been used in the meaning of worldly wealth. The context itself shows where khair has been used in the sense of goodness and where in that of worldly goods. The context of this verse clearly shows that here khair means worldly wealth and not virtue and goodness. For about the man who is ungrateful to his Lord and who by his conduct is himself testifying to his ingratitude it cannot be said that he is very ardent in the love of goodness and virtue.

7That is, the dead men will be raised back as living men from whatever state and wherever they would be lying buried in the earth.

8That is all the intentions aims and objects, ideas and thoughts and the motives behind acts and deeds that lie hidden in the hearts will be exposed and examined in .order to sort out the good from the evil. In other words judgment will not be passed only on the apparent and superficial as to what a man practically did but the secrets hidden in the hearts also will be brought out to see what were the intentions and motives under which a man did what he did. If man only considers this he cannot help admitting that real and complete justice cannot be done anywhere except in the Court of God. Secular laws of the world also admit in principle that a person should not be punished merely on the basis of his apparent act but his motive for so acting also should be seen and examined. But no court of the world has the means by which it may accurately as certain the motive and intention. This can be done only by God: He alone can examine the underlying motives behind every apparent act of man as well as take the decision as to what reward or punishment he deserves. Then, as is evident from the words of the verse, this judgment will not be passed merely on the basis of the knowledge which Allah already has about the intentions and motives of the hearts, but on Resurrection Day these secrets will be exposed and brought out openly before the people and after a thorough scrutiny in the Court it will be shown what was the good in it and what was the evil. That is why the words hussila ma fis-sudur have been used. Tahsil means to bring out something in the open, and to sort out different things from one another. Thus, the use of tahsil concerning hidden secrets of the hearts contains both the meanings: to expose them and to sort out the good from the evil. This same theme has been expressed in Surah At-Tariq, thus: "The Day the hidden secrets are held to scrutiny." (v. 9)

9That is, He will be knowing full well who is who, and what punishment or reward he deserves.

101. Surah Al Qaria (The Disaster)

Name

The Surah takes its name from its first word *al- qari`ah*. This is not only a name but also the title of its subject matter, for the Surah is devoted to Resurrection.

Period of Revelation

There is no dispute about its being a Makki Surah. Its contents show that this too is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is Resurrection and the Hereafter. At the outset, the people have been aroused and alarmed, saying: "The Great Disaster! What is the Great Disaster? And what do you know what the Great Disaster is? "Thus, after preparing the listeners for the news of the dreadful calamity, Resurrection has been depicted before them in two sentences, saying that on that Day people will be running about in confusion and bewilderment just like so many scattered moths around a light, and the mountains uprooted, will their cohesion and will fly about like carded wool. Then, it has been said that when Allah's Court is established in the Hereafter and the people are called upon to account for their deeds. The people whose good deeds are found to be heavier than their evil deeds, will be blessed with bliss and happiness, and the people whose good deeds are found to be lighter than their evil deeds, will be cast into the deep pit full of burning fire.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

ٱلْقَارِعَةُ ﴿١﴾

مَا ٱلْقَارِعَةُ ﴿٢﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْقَارِعَةُ ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] The Great Disaster![1] What is the Great Disaster? And what will explain to you what the Great Disaster is?

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ ٱلنَّاسُ كَٱلْفَرَاشِ ٱلْمَبْثُوثِ ﴿٤﴾

وَتَكُونُ ٱلْجِبَالُ كَٱلْعِهْنِ ٱلْمَنفُوشِ ﴿٥﴾

فَأَمَّا مَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ ﴿٦﴾

فَهُوَ فِى عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ ﴿٧﴾

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ ﴿٨﴾

فَأُمُّهُۥ هَاوِيَةٌ ﴿٩﴾

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا هِيَهْ ﴿١٠﴾

نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌۢ ﴿١١﴾

[4-11] The Day when men shall be like scattered moths and the mountains like carded wool of different colors.[2] Then[3] he whose scales are heavy, shall be in a state of bliss, and he whose scales are light,[4] shall have the deep pit for his dwelling.[5] And do you know what it is? A raging Fire![6]

1"Qari'ah " literally means the "striking one" Qar ` is to strike one thing upon another so severely as to produce a noise. In view of this literal meaning, the word qari'ah is used for a dreadful disaster and a great calamity. At another place in the Qur'an this word has been used for a great affliction befalling a nation. In Surah Ar-Ra`d 31, it has been said: "As for the disbelievers, because of their misdeeds, one affliction or the other does not cease to visit them every now and then."

But, here the word al-Qari'ah has been for the Resurrection and in Surah Al-Haaqqah too the Resurrection has been described by this very epithet (v.4). One should remember that here the whole Hereafter, from the first stage of Resurrection to the last stage of judgment and meting out of rewards and punishments, is being depicted together.

2This will be the first stage of Resurrection, when in consequence of the Great Disaster the whole of the present order of the world will be overthrown; the people then will be running about in confusion and bewilderment like so many scattered moths around a light; and the mountains will be flying about like carded wool of different colors. The mountains have been compared to wool of different colors because of the existence of a variety of colors in them.

3From here begins description of the second stage of Resurrection when after having been resurrected men will appear in the Court of God.

4The word mawazin in the original can be plural of mauzun as well as, of mizan. In the first case, mawazin would imply the deeds which might have some weight in the sight of Allah and be, thus, worthy of appreciation; in the second case, mawazin would imply scales of a balance. In the first case, the meaning of the mawazin's being heavier or lighter is that the good deeds will be heavy or light as ,against the evil deeds, for in the sight of Allah only good deeds have any weight and worth. In the second case. the meaning of the mawazin's being heavy is that the scale of the good deeds will be heavier than the scale of evil deeds, in Allah Almighty's Balance of Justice, and their being light means that the scale of good deeds will be lighter than the scale of evil deeds. Besides, in Arabic idiom the word mizan is also used for weight (wazan); accordingly, the weight's being heavy of light implies the good deeds being heavy or light. In any case, whether mawazin is taken in the meaning of mauzun or of mizan, or of wazan, the intention remains the same, which is that the basis of judgment in the Divine Court will be whether the provision of the deeds that a man has brought is weighty or weightless, or whether his good deeds are heavier than his evil deeds or lighter. This theme has occurred at several places in the Qur'an which explains the meaning fully well.

In Surah Al-A'raf it has been said: "On that Day the weight will be identical with the Truth: accordingly, those whose scales, will be heavy will alone come out successful; and those whose scales are light will be the ones who will have incurred loss upon themselves." (w. 8-9).

In Surah Al-Kahf, it was said: 'O Prophet, say to them: Should we tell you who are the most un-successful people and miserable failures in regard to their deeds? They are those whose all endeavors in the worldly life had gone astray from the Right Way, but they were under the delusion that everything they were doing, was rightly directed: these are the people who rejected the Revelations of their Lord and did not believe that they would ever go before Him. Therefore, all their deeds were Lost, for We will assign no weight to them on the Day of Resurrection." (vv. 103-105).

In Surah Al-Anbiya': "On the Day of Resurrection, We will set up just and accurate balances so that no one will be wronged in the least in any way; even if it be an act equal in weight to a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it forth (to be weighed) and We suffice for reckoning". (v.47).

These verses show that kufr and denial of the truth is in itself such a stupendous evil that it will certainly lower the scale of evils, and there will be no good act of the disbelievers, which may have any weight in the scale of good deeds so that its scale of goodness may become heavy. However, in the scales of the believer there will be the weight of Faith as well as the weight of the good deeds which he performed in the world. On the other hand, every evil done by him will be placed in the scale of evil deeds and then it will be seen whether his scale of the good deeds is heavier or his scale of the evil deeds.

5The words in the original are: ammu hu hawiyah: "his mother will be hawiyah. " Hawiyah is from hawa, which means to fall from a height to a depth, and hawiyah is the deep pit into which something falls. Hell has been called Hawiyah because it will be very deep and the culprits will be thrown into it from the height. As for the words, "his mother will be Hawiyah" they mean: Just as the mother's lap is the child's abode, so Hell will be the culprits' only abode in the Hereafter.

6That is, it will not merely be a deep pit but will also be full of raging fire.

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102. Surah At Takathur (The Mutual Rivalry)

Name

The Surah taken its name from the word *at takathur* in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Abu Hayyan and Shaukani say that this Surah, according to all commentators, is Makki, and this same is the well known view according to Iman Suyuti. However, there are some traditions, on the basis of which it is considered a Madani Surah, and they are as follows:

Ibn Abi Hatim has cited Abu Buraidah as saying that this Surah was sent down concerning the two tribes, Bani Harithah and Bani al-Harth, of the Ansar. The two tribes had first recounted the glories and illustrious deeds of their living men; then they had gone to the grave yard and bragged of the glorious deeds of their dead. Thereupon the Divine Revelation *Alhakum at takathur* came down. But, if the practice of the Companions and their successors concerning the occasions of revelation, is kept in view, this tradition is no argument to prove that Surah At Takathur was sent down on that very occasion, but it shows that this Surah fully applied to the act of the two tribes.

Imam Bukhari and Ibn Jarir have cited this view of Hadrat Ubayy bin Ka'ab: "We took the Holy Prophet saying: “If the son of Adam had two valleys full of wealth, he would long for a third valley; the son of Adam's belly cannot be filled but by earth, to be from the Quran until *Alhakum at takathur* was sent down.”

This *Hadith* has been regarded as an argument for Surah At-Takathur to be a Madani Surah on the ground that Hadrat Ubayy had become a Muslim in Madinah. But Hadrat Ubayy's this statement does not indicate in what sense the Companions regarded this saying of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) as belonging to the Quran. If it means that they regarded it as a verse of the Quran, it cannot be acceptable, for a great majority of the Companions consisted of the men who were well aware of each and every word of the Quran; they could not have the misunderstanding that the *Hadith* was a verse of the Quran. And if its belonging to the Quran is taken to mean its being derived from the Quran, the tradition can also mean that when the Companions who entered Islam in

Madinah, heard this Surah for the first time from the Holy Prophet, they thought that it had been revealed just then, and then about the Holy Prophet's above saying they formed the idea that it was derived from this very Surah.

Ibn Jarir Tirmidhi, Ibn al Mundhir and other traditionists have related this view of Hadrat Ali: "We were in doubt about the torment of the grave until *Alhakum at takathur* was sent down." This view has been regarded as an argument for Surah At-Takathur to be Madani on the ground that the torment of the grave was first mentioned at Madinah; no mention of it was ever made at Makkah. But this is wrong. In the Makki Surahs of the Quran, the torment of the grave has been mentioned at many places so clearly that there can he no room for any such doubt; for example, see Al- An'am: 93, An-Nahl: 28, Al-Muminun: 99-100, Al-Mu'min: 45-46, which are all Makki Surahs. Therefore, if anything is proved by Hadrat Ali's saying, it is that Surah At-Takathur had been revealed before the revelation of the above mentioned Makki Surahs and its revelation had removed the Companions doubt about the torment of the grave.

That is why, in spite of these traditions, a great majority of the commentators are agreed that this Surah is Makki. In our opinion this is not only a Makki Surah but in view of its contents and style it is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In it the people have been warned of the evil consequences of world worship because of which they spend their lives in acquiring more and more of worldly wealth, material benefits and pleasures, and position and power, till death, and in vying with one another and bragging and boasting about their acquisitions. This one pursuit has so occupied them that they are left with no time or opportunity for pursuing the higher things in life. After warning the people of its evil end they have been told us if to say: "These blessings which you are amassing and enjoying thoughtlessly, are not mere blessings but are also a means of your trial. For each one of these blessings and comforts you will surely be called to account in the Hereafter."

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

أَلْهَىٰكُمُ ٱلتَّكَاثُرُ ﴿١﴾

حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ ٱلْمَقَابِرَ ﴿٢﴾

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣﴾

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤﴾

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ ٱلْيَقِينِ ﴿٥﴾

لَتَرَوُنَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ ﴿٦﴾

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ ٱلْيَقِينِ ﴿٧﴾

ثُمَّ لَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٨﴾

[1-8] Your craze for more and more and mutual rivalry for worldly gains has made you heedless,[1] until you reach the graves.[2] By no means! Soon you shall know![3] Again (note it well) by no means! Soon you shall know. Nay! Had you known with certainty of knowledge (the end of this way of life you would never have acted thus). You shall certainly see Hell. Again (note it well that) you shall most certainly see it. Then, on that Day, you shall certainly be called to account for the blessings and comforts of life.[4]

1The words alhakum at-takathur of the original are too vast in meaning to be fully explained in a passage Alhakmn is from lahv which originally means heedlessness, but in Arabic this word is used for every occupation which engrosses man so completely that he becomes heedless of the more important things in life.

When the word alhakum is made from this root, it will mean that man has become so obsessed with some occupation that he has lost sight of everything more important than it. He is pre-occupied with it, is wholly lost in pursuit of it and this obsession has rendered him heedless of everything else in life.

Takathur is from kathrat, which has throe meanings:

(1) That man should strive to gain more and more of everything;

(2) that the people should vie with one another for gaining more and more; and

(3) that they should brag and boast of possessing greater abundance of things than others.

Therefore, alhakum at-takathur would mean: " Takathur (greed for more and more) has so occupied you that its pursuit has made you heedless of every higher thing in life." In this sentence it has not been indicated as to abundance of what is meant in takathur, heedlessness of what is implied in alhakrun, and who are the addresses of alhakum. In the absence of such an explanation, the words become applicable in their most general and extensive meaning. Thus, takathur does not remain restricted in meaning and application but applies to all the gains and benefits, pleasures and comforts, the passion for acquiring more and more means of power and authority, vying with others in pursuit of these and bragging and boasting of their abundance. Likewise, the addressees of alhakum also do not remain limited but the people of all ages, in their individual as well as collective capacity, become its addressees. It gives the meaning that the passion for acquiring more and more of the worldly wealth, vying with others in pursuit of it and bragging and boasting of its possession has affected individuals as well as societies. Like wise, since in alhakum at-takathur it has not been pointed out as to which people are engrossed in acquisitiveness and of what they are rendered heedless, it has also become very extensive in meaning. It means that the passion for piling up more and more has made the people heedless of everything more important than it. They have become heedless of God, of the Hereafter, of the moral bounds and moral responsibilities, of the rights of others and of their own obligations to render those rights. They are only after raising the standard of living and do not bother even if the standard of humanity be falling. They want to acquire more and more of wealth no matter how and by what means it is acquired. They desire to have more and more means of comfort and physical enjoyment and, overwhelmed by this greed, they have become wholly insensitive as to the ultimate end of this way of living. They are engaged in a race with others to acquire more and more of power, more and more of forces, more and more of weapons, and they have no idea that all this is a means of filling God's earth with tyranny and wickedness and of

destroying humanity itself. In short, takathur has many forms, which have engrossed individuals as well as societies so completely that they have become heedless of everything beyond the world, its benefits and pleasures.

2That is, "You expend your whole life in the same craze and endeavor, until the time comes when you must die and leave the world."

3That is, "You are under the delusion that the abundance of the worldly goods and surpassing others in it, is real progress and success, whereas the opposite is the case. Soon you will know its evil end and you will realize that it was a stupendous error in which you remained involved throughout your life. "Soon" may mean the Hereafter, for, for the Being Whose sight comprehends all ages, from eternity to eternity, a few thousand years or a few hundred thousand years can only be a short span of the eternal time. But it can also mean death, for death is not very far away from any man, and soon after death man will come to know whether the occupations which engaged him throughout life were a means of good fortune and success for him, or of misfortune and failure.

4"Then" in this sentence does not mean that accountability will be held after the culprits have been cast into Hell, but it means: "Then We give you the news that you will be questioned about these comforts of life," and obviously this questioning will be held at the time of accountability in the Divine Court. Its chief argument is that in several Ahadith it has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) that the believers and the disbelievers, both will have to account for the blessings granted by Allah. However, the people who did not show ingratitude but spent their lives as grateful servants of Allah, will come out successful from the accountability, and those who proved thankless to Allah for His blessings and committed ingratitude by word or by deed, or by both; will emerge as failures.

Hadrat Jabir bin `Abdullah says: "The Holy Prophet once visited us and we served him with fresh dates and gave him cool water to drink. Thereupon he said: "These are of the blessings about which you will be questioned." (Musnad Ahmad, Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah, `Abd bin Humaid, Baihaqi in Ash-Shu `ab).

Hadrat Abu Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet once asked Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat `Umar to accompany him to the place of AbulHaitham bin at-Tahan Ansari. Thus, he took them to the oasis of Ibn at-Taihan-The latter brought a bunch of dates and placed it before them. The Holy Prophet said: "Why didn't you pluck the dates yourself? ` He said: "1 thought you would yourselves select and eat dates of your choice." So, they ate the dates and drank cool water. At the end, the Holy Prophet said: "By Him in Whose hand is my life: this is of the blessings about which you will be questioned on the Resurrection Day: the cool shade, the cool dates, the cool water." (This tradition has been narrated in different ways by Muslim, Ibn Majah, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir, Abu Ya`la and others, on the authority of Hadrat Abu Hurairah, in some of which the name of the Ansari Companion has been mentioned and in some he has been referred to as a person from among the Ansar. This incident has been related with

several details by Ibn Abi Hatim from Hadrat `Umar and by Imam Ahmad from Abu `Asib, the Holy Prophet's freed slave. Ibn Hibban and Ibn Marduyah have related a tradition from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas, which shows that an almost similar thing had happened in the house of Hadrat Abu Ayyub Ansari.

These Ahadith make it explicit that not only the disbelievers but the righteous believers too will be questioned. As for the blessings which Allah has bestowed on man, they are unlimited and countless. There are many blessings of which man is not even conscious. The Qur'an says: "If you try to count the blessings of Allah, you will not be able to calculate them." (Ibrahim : 34). Countless of them are the blessings which Allah has granted directly to man, and a large number of these are the blessings which man is granted through his own skill and endeavor. About the blessings that accrue to man in consequence of his own labor and skill, he will have to render an account as to how he acquired them and in what ways he expended them. In respect of the blessings directly bestowed by Allah, he will have to give an account as to how he used them. And in respect of all the blessings, on the whole, he will have to tell whether he had acknowledged that those blessings had been granted by Allah and whether he had expressed gratitude for them to Allah with his heart, and by word and deed, or whether he thought he had received all that accidentally, or as' a gift from many gods, or whether he Geld the belief that although those were the blessings of One God, in their bestowal many other beings also had a part, and for that very reason he had taken them as his gods and worshiped and thanked them as such.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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103. Surah Al Asr (The Declining Day, The Time)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-`asr* occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

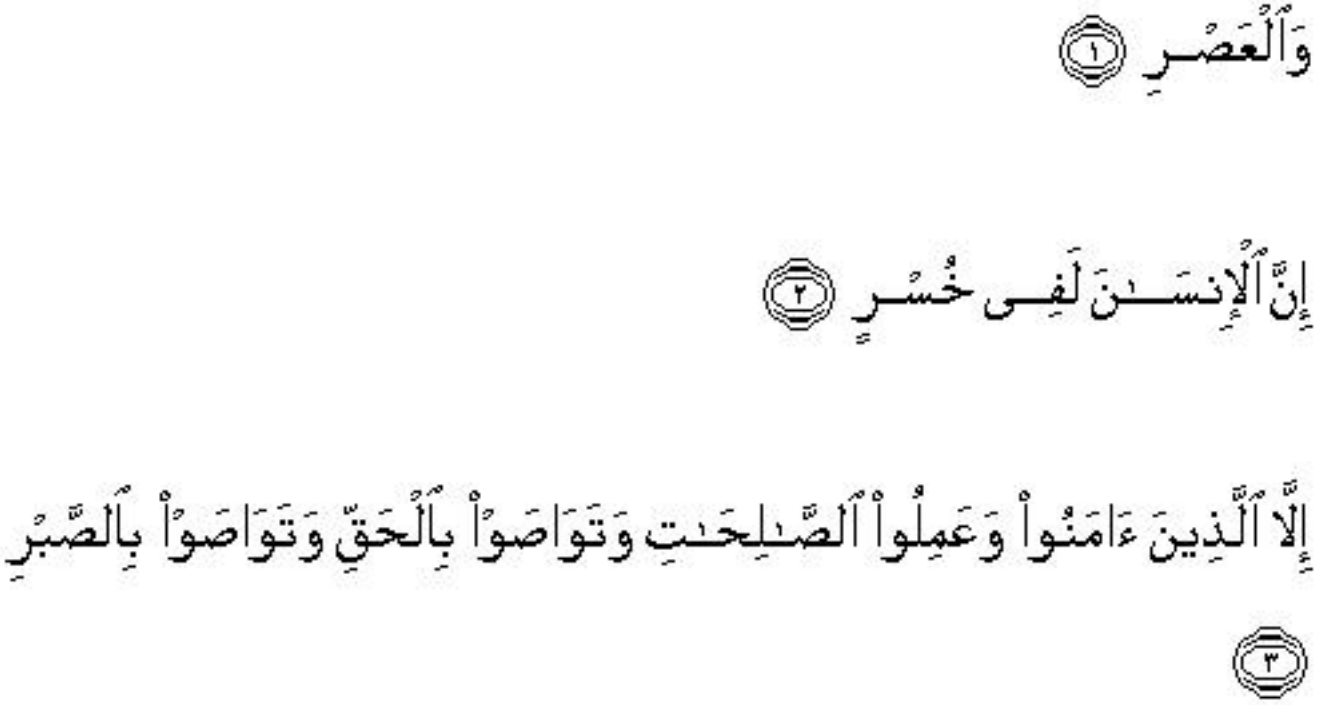
Although Mujahid, Qatadah and Muqatil regard it as a Madani Surah, yet a great majority of the commentators opine that it is Makki; its subject matter also testifies that it must have been sent down in the earliest stage at Makkah, when the message of Islam was being presented in brief but highly impressive sentences so that the listeners who heard them once could not forget them even if they wanted to, for they were automatically committed to memory.

Theme and Subject Matter

This Surah is a matchless specimen of comprehensiveness and brevity. A whole world of meaning has been compressed into its few brief words, which is too vast in content to be fully expressed even in a book. In it, in a clear and plain way it has been stated what is the way to true success for man and what is the way to ruin and destruction for him. Imam Shafi has very rightly said that if the people only considered this Surah well, it alone would suffice them for their guidance. How important this Surah was in the sight of the Companions can be judged from the tradition cited from Hadrat Abdullah bin Hisn ad-Darimi Abu Madinah, according to which whenever any two of them met they would not part company until they had recited Surah Al-Asr to each other. (Tabarani)

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.



[1-3] By the Time! Man is surely in loss, except those who believed and did good works, and exhorted one another to Truth, and exhorted one another to patience.[1]

1In this Surah an oath has been sworn by the Time to impress the point that man is in sheer loss and only those people are an exception from the loss who are characterized by four qualities:

(1) Faith,

(2) righteous deeds,

(3) exhorting one another to Truth, and

(4) exhorting one another to patience.

Let us consider each of these parts separately in order to understand the meaning fully.

As for the oath, we have explained several times above that Allah has not sworn an oath by any of the created objects on account of its glory or its excellence and wonderful qualities but for the reason that it testifies to the truth which is meant to be established. Therefore, the oath by Time signifies that Time is witness to the truth that man is in sheer loss except for the people who possess the four qualities.

The word time is used for the past as well as for the passing time in which the present, in fact, does not signify any long stretch of time. Every moment, when it has passed, becomes past, and every moment of the future, when it is passing, becomes present, and when it has passed, becomes past. Here, since the oath has been sworn by time absolute, both kinds of time are included in its meaning. The oath by the past time means that human history .testifies that the people who were without these qualities, eventually incurred loss, and in order to understand the significance of the oath by the passing time, one should understand that the time which is now passing is, in fact, the time which has been given to every single individual and every single nation to work in the world. Its example is of the time which is allotted to a candidate for answering his question-paper in the examination hall. The speed with which this time is passing can be estimated from the movement of the second-hand in the watch. Even a second is a considerable amount of time, for during this very second light travels 186,000 miles, and in the Kingdom of God there may as well be many things which move even faster than light, but are net yet known to man. However, if the speed of the passing time be regarded the same as of the movement of the second-hand, and we consider that whatever act, good or bad, we perform and whatever occupation we pursue, takes place in the limited span of age that we have been given for work in the world, we feel that our real wealth is this very time, which is passing so quickly. Imam Razi has cited a scholar as saying: "I understood the meaning of Surah Al-`Asr from an ice-seller, who was calling aloud for the attention of the people repeatedly in the bazaar: 'Have mercy on the one whose wealth is melting away !' Hearing what he was crying I said to myself: this then is the meaning of Wal- asr-i innal-insana la-fi khusr-in. The age-limit that man has been allotted is passing quickly" like the melting away of ice. if it is wasted, or expended in wrong pursuits, it will be sheer loss to man. Thus, swearing an oath by the Time what has been said in this Surah, means that the fast passing Time is witness that devoid of these four qualities in whatever occupation and work man is expending his limited span of life, he is engaged in bad bargains; only such people are engaged in good bargains, who work in the world, characterized by the four qualities. It would be just like calling attention of the candidate, who was expending the time allotted for solving the question paper in some other pursuit, to the wall clock in the examination hall, to tell him that the passing time bore witness that he was causing loss to himself; the candidate benefiting by the Time was he who was using every moment of the allotted time in solving the paper.

Though the word Man has been used in the singular, in the following sentences those people have been made an exception from it, who are characterized by the four qualities. Therefore, one will have to admit that here the word Man has been used as a collective noun, denoting a class, and it applies equally to individuals, groups, nations, and entire mankind. Thus,. the general statement that whoever is devoid of the above four qualities, is in loss, would be proved in any case whether it is a person who is devoid of these, or a nation, or all men' of the world. It will be just like giving the verdict that poison is fatal for man; it will mean that poison is fatal in any case whether it is taken by an individual, or a nation, or all the people of the world. Poison's being fatal is an unchangeable truth; it dces not make any difference whether one man has taken it, or a nation has decided to take it, or all the people of the world collectively have agreed to take poison. Precisely in the same way this truth by itself is unchangeable that man's being devoid of the above foul qualities brings him loss. The general rule is not at all affected even if one

man is devoid of these, or a nation, or all the people of the world agree that they would exhort one another to disbelief, immorality, falsehood and servitude to the self.

Now, let us see in what sense has the Qur'an used the word khusr (loss). Lexically, khusr is an antonym of nafa ` (profit); in trade this word is used in the case when loss results from one bargain as well as in the case when the whole business is running in loss, and also in the case when man loses all his capital and becomes bankrupt. The Qur'an has made this word a special term of its own and uses it as an antonym of falah (true success). And just as its concept of falah is not merely synonymous with. worldly prosperity but comprehends man's true success from the world till the Hereafter, so its concept of khusr (loss) also is not merely synonymous with worldly failure or distress but comprehends man's real failure and disappointment from the world till the Hereafter. We have explained the Qur'anic concept of both falah and khusran at several places above which need not be repeated here. (For this please see E.N. 9 of Al-A`raf, E.N. 30 of Al-Anfal, E.N. 23 of Yunus, E.N. 102 of Bani Isra'il, E.N. 17 of Al-Hajj, E N.'s 1, 2, 11, 50 of Al-Mu'minun, E.N.4 of Luqman, E.N. 34 of Az-Zumar). Besides., one should also understand that although according to the Qur'an true success is man's success in the Hereafter and real loss his failure there, yet in this world too what the people describe as success is not, in fact, real success but its end in this world itself is failure, and what they regard as loss is not, in fact, loss but a means of true success even in this world. This truth has been stated by the Qur'an at several places and we have explained it everywhere accordingly. (Please see E.N. 99 of An-Nahl E.N. 53 of Maryam, E.N. 105 of Ta Ha, E.N.'s 3-5 of Al-Lail). Thus, when the Qur'an states conclusively and absolutely that Man is certainly in loss, it implies loss both in this world and in the Hereafter; and when it says that only such people are secure from this loss, who are characterised by the four qualities, it implies their being secure from loss and attaining true success both here and in the Hereafter.

Now, let us consider the four qualities on the existence of which depends man's being secure from loss and failure.

Of these the first quality is Iman (Faith). Although this word at some places in the Qur'an has been used in the meaning of only verbal affirmation of Faith (e.g. in An-Nisa': 137, Al-Ma'idah 54, Al-Anfal: 20, 27, At-Taubah: 38, As-Saff: 2) it has primarily been used in the meaning of believing sincerely and faithfully, and in the Arabic language also this word has this very meaning. Lexically, amanu lahu means saddaqa-hu wa `tamada 'alai-hi: "affirmed him and put faith in him", and amana bi-hi means aiqana bi hi: "had full faith in him." The Faith which the Qur'an regards as true Faith has been explained in the following verses:

"In fact, true believers are those who believed in Allah and His Messenger, then entertained no doubt." (Al-Hujurat: 15)

"Those who said: 'Allah is our Lord', and then stood steadfast by it." (Ha Mim As-Sajdah : 30)

"True believers are those whose hearts tremble with awe, whenever Allah is mentioned to them. (Al-

Anfal : 2).

"Those who have believed adore Allah most ardently." (AI-Baqarah 165)

"Nay, (O Prophet), by your Lord, they can never become believers until they accept you as judge for the decision of the disputes between them, and then surrender to your decision with entire submission without the least resentment in their hearts." (An-Nisa': 65).

The following verse is even more explicit as regards the distinction between verbal affirmation of Faith and true Faith; it says that what is actually desirable is true Faith and not mere verbal affirmation of the Faith:

"O you who profess to have believed, believe sincerely in Allah and His Messenger." (An-Nisa': 136)

As for the question, what has one to believe in, in order to have true faith? This also has been answered and explained in the Qur'an most explicitly. First, it implies that one has to believe in Allah, not merely in His Being but in the sense that He alone is God; no one else is an associate in His Godhead; He alone is worthy that man should worship, serve and obey Him; He alone can make or mar destinies; man should invoke Him alone and have trust in Him alone; He alone can enjoin things and forbid things; man is under obligation to obey Him and refrain from what he forbids; He sees everything and hears everything; not to speak of any act of man, even his motives and intentions with which he has done an act, are not hidden from Him. Secondly, one has to believe in the Messenger, in the sense that he is a guide and leader appointed by Allah: whatever he has taught, is from Allah, is based upon the truth and has to be acknowledged and accepted. This belief in Apostleship also includes faith in the angels, the Prophets, the Divine Books and in the Qur'an itself, for this forms part of the teachings which the Messenger of Allah has given. Thirdly, one has to believe in the Hereafter, in the sense that man's present life is not his first and last life, but after death man has to be resurrected, to render an account to God of the deeds done in the present life, and has to be rewarded for the good deeds and punished for the evil deeds accordingly. This Faith provides a firm basis for morality and character, upon which can be built the edifice of a pure life, whereas the truth is that without such Faith, the life of man, however beautiful and pleasing outwardly, is like a ship without an anchor, which is at the mercy of the waves wherever they may take it.

After Faith the second quality required to save man from loss is to perform righteous deeds (salihalt) Salihat comprehends all kinds of virtuous and good deeds. However, according to the Qur'an, no act can be a good act unless it is based on Faith and it is performed in obedience to the guidance given by Allah and His Messenger. That is why in the Qur'an exhortation to perform good deeds is preceded everywhere by Faith, and in this Surah too it has been mentioned after the Faith. Nowhere in the Qur'an has a deed without Faith been called a good deed, nor any reward promised for a deed performed without Faith. On the contrary, this also is a fact that only that Faith is reliable and beneficial, the sincerity of which is proved by man's own act and deed, otherwise Faith without righteous deeds would be a false claim

refuted by the man himself when in spite of this claim he follows a way opposed to the way taught by Allah and His Messenger. The relationship between Faith and righteous deed is of the seed and the tree Unless the seed is sown in the soil no tree can grow out of it. But if the seed is in the soil and no tree is growing out of it, it would mean that the seed is lost in the soil. On this very basis whatever good news has been given in the Qur'an, has been given to the people who believe and do good deeds, and the same has been reiterated in this Surah. What man requires to do after the Faith in order to remain secure from loss is to perform righteous deeds. In other words, mere Faith without righteous deeds cannot save man from loss.

The above two qualities are such as must be possessed by every single individual. Then, the Surah mentions two further qualities, which a man must have in order to be saved from loss. They are that the people who believe and do good deeds must exhort one another to truth and to patience. This means that. in the first place, a believing and righteous people should not live as individuals but should create a believing and righteous society by their combination. Second, that every individual of this society must feel his responsibility not to let the society become degenerate. Thus, all its members are duty bound to exhort one another to truth and to patience.

Truth is the antonym of falsehood, and generally it is used in , two meanings:

(1) A correct and right thing which is in accordance with justice and truth, whether it relates to belief and faith or to mundane affairs; and

(2) the right which is obligatory on man to render, whether it is the right of God, the right of man, or the right of one's own self. Thus, to exhort one another to truth means that the society of the believers should not be so insensitive that falsehood may thrive and things against justice and truth be done in it, and the people be watching everything indifferently. On the contrary, it should be a living, sensitive society so that whenever and wherever falsehood appears, the upholders of the Truth should rise up against it, and no member of the society rest content with only himself adhering to truth, righteousness, justice and rendering the rights of others, but should exhort others also to adopt the same way of life. This is the spirit that can ensure security of a society against moral degeneration and decay. If a society becomes devoid of this spirit, it cannot remain secure from loss, and eventually even those people also are affected by the loss, who might in their own way be adhering to the truth, but were insensitive to violation of the truth in their society.

The same has been stated in Al-Ma'idah, thus: "Those who adopted the way of disbelief among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and of Jesus, son of Mary, because they had grown rebellious and become transgressors: they would not forbid one another to do the wrong deeds they committed. (w. 78-79).

Then the same idea has been expressed in Al-A`raf, thus: "When the children of Israel totally forgot the

teachings (of observing the Sabbath), We seized with a severe scourge all those who were transgressors, and We saved those who used to forbid evil" (v. 165); and in Surah Al-Anfal, thus: "And guard against that mischief which will not bring punishment in particular to the mischief-makers alone from among you." (v. 25) That is why to enjoin what is good and to forbid what is evil, has been enjoined on the Muslim community as a duty (Al-`Imran 104) and the community which performs this duty has been declared to be the best community (Al-`Imran: 110).

Besides exhorting to the truth, the other thing which has been declared as a necessary condition for keeping the believers and their society secure from loss is that the members of the society should enjoin patience upon one another. That is, they should enjoin upon one another to bear with fortitude and steadfastness the difficulties, hardships, trials, losses and deprivations which befall the one who adheres to the truth and supports it. Each one of them should encourage the other to bear up against adversity steadfastly. (For further explanation, see E.N. 16 of Ad-Dahr, E.N. 14 of Al-Balad).

104. Surah Al Humaza (The One Who Slanders)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *humazah* occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

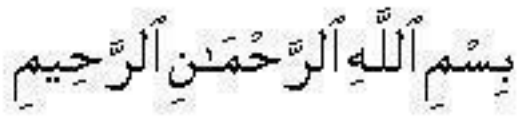
All commentators are agreed that it is a Makki Surah; a study of its subject matter and style shows that this too is one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed at Makkah.

Theme and Subject Matter

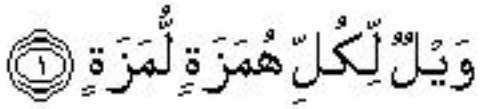
In it some of the evils prevalent among the materialistic hoarders of wealth in the pre-Islamic days have been condemned. Every Arab knew that they actually existed in their society; they regarded them as evils and nobody thought they were good. After calling attention to this kind of ugly character, the ultimate end in the Hereafter of the people having this kind of character has been stated. Both these things (i.e. the character and his fate in the Hereafter) have been depicted in a way which makes the listener automatically reach the conclusion that such a man fitly deserves to meet such an end. And since in the world, people of such character do not suffer any punishment, but seem to be thriving instead, the occurrence of the Hereafter becomes absolutely inevitable.

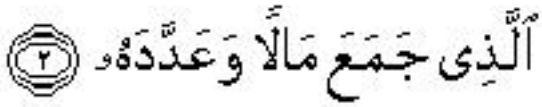
If this Surah is read in the sequence of the Surahs beginning with Az-Zilzal, one can fully well understand how the fundamental beliefs of Islam and its teachings were impressed on the peoples minds in the earliest stage in Makkah. In Surah Az-Zilzal, it was said that in the Hereafter man's full record will be placed before him and not an atom's weight of good or evil done by him in the world will have been left unrecorded. In Surah Al-Adiyat, attention was drawn to the plunder and loot, bloodshed and vandalism, prevailing in Arabia before Islam; then making the people realize, that the way the powers given by God were being abused, was indeed an expression of sheer ingratitude to Him, they were told that the matter would not end up in the world, but in the second life after death not only their deeds but their intentions and motives too would be examined, and their Lord fully well knows which of them deserves what reward or punishment. In Surah Al-Qariah after depicting Resurrection the people were warned that in the Hereafter a man's good or evil end will be dependent on whether the scale of his good deeds was

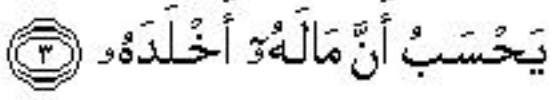
heavier, or the scale of his evil deeds was heavier:In Surah At-Takathur the people were taken to task for the materialistic mentality because of which they remained occupied in seeking increase in worldly benefits, pleasures, comforts and position, and in vying with one another for abundance of everything until death overtook them. Then, warning them of the evil consequences of their heedlessness, they were told that the world was not an open table of food for then to pick and choose whatever they pleased, but for every single blessing that they were enjoying in the world, they would have to render an account to their Lord and Sustainer as to how they obtained it and how they used it. In Surah Al-Asr it was declared that each member, each group and each community of mankind, even the entire world of humanity, was in manifest loss, if its members were devoid of Faith and righteous deeds and of the practice of exhorting others to truth and patience. Immediately after this comes Surah Al-Humazah in which after presenting a specimen of leadership of the pre-Islamic age of ignorance, the people have been asked the question: "What should such a character deserve if not loss and perdition?"

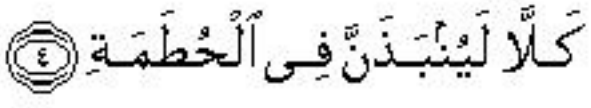

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

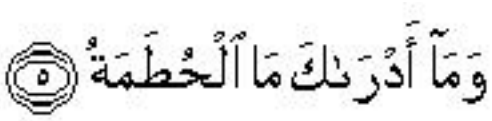
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

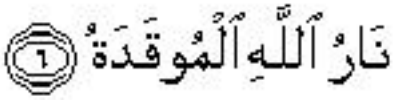

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ﴿١﴾

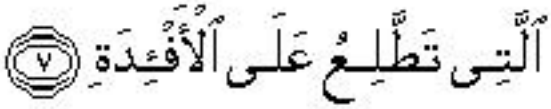

ٱلَّذِى جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُۥ ﴿٢﴾

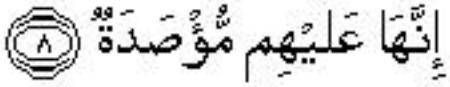

يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَهُۥ ﴿٣﴾

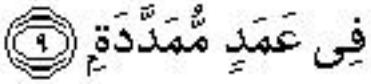

كَلَّا ۖ لَيُنۢبَذَنَّ فِى ٱلْحُطَمَةِ ﴿٤﴾











[1-9] Doomed (to ruin) is every such person who slanders others (in their face) and backbites them habitually,[1] who gathers wealth and counts it over and over again.[2] He thinks that his wealth will remain with him for ever.[3] Nay. never! He will be cast[4] into the crushing place[5] And what do you know what the crushing place is? It is the Fire of Allah,[6] kindled brightly, which shall rise up to the hearts.[7] It will be covered down on them[8] (in a way that) they shall be (enclosed) by tall columns.[9]

1The words used in the original are humazat il-lumazah. In Arabic hamz and lamz are so close in meaning that they are sometimes used as synonyms and sometimes with a little difference in the shade of meaning. But this difference is not definite and clear, for the meaning given to lamz by some Arabic speaking people themselves is given to lamz by other Arabic speaking peoples. On the contrary, the meaning given to harm by some people is given to hamz by others. Here, since both the words appear together and the words humazat il-lumazat have been used, they give the meaning that it has become a practice with the slanderer that he insults and holds others in contempt habitually. He raises his finger and winks at one man, finds fault with the lineage and person of another, taunts one in the face and backbites another; creates differences between friends and stirs up divisions between brothers; calls the

people names and satirizes and defames them.

2This second sentence after the first sentence by itself gives the meaning that he slanders others because of his pride of wealth. The words jama `a malan for collecting money suggest the abundance of wealth; then the words "counting it over and over again" depict the person's miserliness and his selfish hoarding of wealth.

3Another meaning also can be: "He thinks that his wealth will make him immortal." That is, he is so engrossed in amassing wealth and counting it over and over again that he has forgotten death and he never bothers to consider that a time will come when he will have to depart from the world empty-handed, leaving everything behind.

4The word in the original is la yrtnbadhanna. Nabdh in Arabic is used for throwing away a thing regarding it as worthless and mean. This by itself indicates that because of his wealth he thinks that he is a great man but on the Day Of Resurrection he will be hurled into Hell as a mean and contemptible object.

5The word hutamah in the original is from hatm, which means to smash, crush and break into pieces. Hell has been described by this epithet because it will crush and break to pieces whatever is thrown into it because of its depth and its fire.

6Nowhere else in the Qur'an has the fire of Hell been called the fire of Allah. Here, its ascription to Allah not only expresses its dreadfulness but it also shows how the wrath and contempt of Allah envelops those who become proud and arrogant with the worldly wealth. That is why Allah has described that fire as His own Fire into which they will be hurled.

7Tattali'u is from ittala a, which means to climb and mount to the top, and also to be aware and informed. Afidah is plural of fuwad, which means the heart. But this word is not used for the organ which throbs in the breast, but for the seat of man's understanding and consciousness, his'feelings and desires, beliefs and thoughts, motives and intentions, Thus, one meaning of the rising of the fire to the hearts is that this. fire will reach the place which is the center of man's evil thoughts, false beliefs, impure desires and feelings, and wicked motives and intentions. The second meaning is that the Fire of Allah will not be blind like the tire of the world, which burns up the deserving and the non-deserving alike, but it will reach the heart of every culprit and discover the nature of his crime and then punish him according to his guilt.

8That is, after the culprits have been thrown into it, Hell will be closed in upon them without leaving any slit or opening anywhere, in order to choke and suffocate them.

9Fi amad-im-mumaddahah can have several meanings

(1) That the gates of Hell will be closed and tall columns will be erected on them;

(2) that the culprits will be tied to the tall columns;

(3) according to Ibn `Abbas, the flames of the fire shall be rising high like tall columns.

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105. Surah Al Fil (The Elephant)

Name

The Surah derives its name from the word *ashab al fil* in the very first verse.

Period of Revelation

This is unanimously a Makki Surah; and if it is studied against its historical background it appears that it must have been sent down in the very earliest stage at Makkah.

Historical Background

As we have explained in E. N. 4 of Surah Al-Buruj above, in retaliation for the persecution of the followers of the Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be on him) in Najran by the Jewish ruler Dhu-Nuwas of Yemen, the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia invaded Yemen and put an end to the Himyarite rule there, and in 52S A. D. this whole land passed under Abyssinian control. This happened, in fact, through collaboration between the Byzantine empire of Constantinople and the Abyssinian kingdom, for the Abyssinians at that time had no naval fleet. The fleet was provided by Byzantium and Abyssinia sent 70,000 of its troops by it across the Red Sea to Yemen. At the outset one should understand that all this did not happen under the religious zeal but there were economic and political factors also working behind it, and probably these were the real motive, and retaliation for the Christian blood was just an excuse. Since the time the Byzantine empire had occupied Egypt and Syria, it had been trying to gain control over the trade going on between East Africa, India, Indonesia, etc., and the Byzantine dominions: from the Arabs, who had been controlling it for centuries, so as to earn maximum profits by eliminating the intermediary Arab merchants. For this purpose, in 24 or 25 B. C., Caesar Augustus sent a large army under the Roman general, Aelius Gallus, which landed on the western coast of Arabia, in order to intercept and occupy the sea route between southern Arabia and Syria. (See map of this trade route on p. 111 of *The Meaning of the Qur'an*, vol. iv). But the campaign failed to achieve its objective on account of the extreme geographical conditions of Arabia. After this, the Byzantines brought their fleet into the Red Sea and put an end to the Arab trade which they carried out by sea, with the result that they were left only with the land route. To capture this very land route they conspired with the Abyssinian Christians and aiding them with their fleet helped them to occupy Yemen.

The Arab historians statements about the Abyssinian army that invaded Yemen are different. Hafiz Ibn Kathir says that it was led by two commanders, Aryat and Abrahah, and according to Muhammad bin Ishaq, its commander was Aryat, and Abrahah was included in it. Then both are agreed that Aryat and Abrahah fell out, Aryat was killed in the encounter, and Abrahah took possession of the country; then somehow he persuaded the Abyssinian king to appoint him his viceroy over Yemen. On the contrary, the Greek and Syrian historians state that when after the conquest of Yemen, the Abyssinians started putting to death the Yamanite chiefs, who had put up resistance, one of the chiefs, named As-Sumayfi Ashwa (whom the Greek historians call Esymphaeus) yielded to the Abyssinians and promising to pay tribute obtained the Abyssinian king's warrant to be governor over Yemen. But the Abyssinian army revolted against him and made Abrahah governor in his place. This man was the slave of a Greek merchant of the Abyssinian seaport of Adolis, who by clever diplomacy had come to wield great influence in the Abyssinian army occupying Yemen. The troops sent by the Negus to punish him either warned him or were defeated by him. Subsequently, after the death of the king, his successor was reconciled to accept him as his vice regent of Yemen. (The Greek historians write him as Abrames and the Syrian historians as Abraham. Abrahah perhaps is an Abyssinian variant of Abraham, for its Arabic version is Ibrahim).

This man through passage of time became an independent ruler of Yemen. He acknowledged the sovereignty of the Negus only in name and described himself as his deputy. The influence he wielded can be judged from the fact that after the restoration of the dam of Marib in 543 A. D. he celebrated the event by holding a grand feast, which was attended by the ambassadors of the Byzantine emperor, king of Iran, king of Hirah, and king of Ghassan. Its full details are given in the inscription that Abrahah installed on the dam. This inscription is extant and Glaser has published it.(For further details, see E. N. 37 of the commentary of Surah Saba).

After stabilizing his rule in Yemen Abrahah turned his attention to the objective which from the very beginning of this campaign had been before the Byzantine empire and its allies, the Abyssinian Christians, i. e. to spread Christianity in Arabia, on the one hand, and to capture the trade that was carried out through the Arabs between the eastern lands and the Byzantine dominions, on the other. The need, for this increased because the Byzantine struggle for power against the Sasanian empire of Iran had blocked all the routes of the Byzantine trade with the East.

To achieve this objective, Abrahah built in Sana, the capital of Yemen, a magnificent cathedral, called by the Arabian historians al-Qalis, al-Qullais, or al-Qulais, this word being an Arabic version of the Greek word Ekklesia, church. According, to Muhammad bin Ishaq, after having completed the building, he wrote to the Negus, saying: "I shall not rest until I have diverted the Arabs pilgrimage to it."Ibn Kathir writes that he openly declared his intention in Yemen and got it publicly announced. He, in fact, wanted to provoke the Arabs into doing something which should provide him with an excuse to attack Makkah and destroy the Ka'bah. Muhammad bin Ishaq says that an Arab, enraged at this public proclamation somehow went into the cathedral and defiled it. Ibn Kathir says this was done by a Quraishite and according to Muqatil bin Suleman, some young men of the Quraish had set fire to the cathedral. Either might have happened, for Abrahah's proclamation was certainly provocative and in the ancient pre-Islamic age it cannot be impossible that an Arab, or a Quraishite youth, might have been enraged and might have defiled the cathedral, or set fire to it. But it may well also be that Abrahah himself got this done secretly by his own agent so as to have an excuse for invading Makkah and thus achieving both his objectives by destroying the Quraish and intimidating the Arabs. In any case, whatever happened, when the report reached Abrahah that the devotees of the Ka'bah had thus defiled his cathedral, he swore that he would not rest until he had destroyed the Ka'bah.

So, in 570 or 571 A. D., he took 60,000 troops and 13 elephants (according to another tradition, 9 elephants) and set off for Makkah. On the way, first a Yamanite chief, Dhu Nafr by name, mustering an army of the Arabs, resisted him but was defeated and taken prisoner. Then in the country of Khath'am he was opposed by Nufail bin Habib al-Khath'am, with his tribe, but he too was defeated and taken prisoner, and in order to save his life he accepted to serve him as guide in the Arab country. When he reached near Ta'if, Bani Thaqif felt that they would not be able to resist such a big force and feeling the danger lest he should destroy the temple of their deity Lat, too; their chief, Mas'ud. came out to Abrahah with his men, and he told him that their temple was not the temple he had come to destroy. The temple He sought was in Makkah, and they would send with him a man to guide him there. Abrahah accepted the offer, and Bani Thaqif sent Abu Righal as guide with him. When they reached al-Mughammas (or al-Mughammis), a place about 3 miles short of Makkah, Abu Righal died, and the Arabs stoned his grave and the practice survives to this day. They cursed the Bani Thaqif too, for in order to save the temple of Lat they had cooperated with the invaders of the House of Allah.

According to Muhammad bin Ishaq, from al- Mughammas Abrahah sent forward his vanguard and they brought him the plunder of the people of Tihamah and Quraish, which included two hundred camels of Abdul Muttalib, the grandfather of the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace). Then, he sent an envoy of his to Makkah with the message that he had not come to fight the people of Makkah but only to destroy the House (i. e. the Ka'bah). If they offered no resistance, there would be no cause for bloodshed. Abrahah also instructed his envoy that if the people of Makkah wanted to negotiate, he should return with their leading chief to him. The leading chief of Makkah at that time was Abdul Muttalib. The envoy went to him and delivered Abrahah's message. Abdul Muttalib replied:"We have no power to fight Abrahah. This is Allah's House. If He wills He will save His House." The envoy asked him to go with him to Abrahah. He agreed and accompanied him to the king. Now Abdul Muttalib was such a dignified and handsome man that when, Abrahah saw him he was much impressed; he got off his throne and sat beside him on the carpet. Then he asked him what he wanted. Abdul Muttalib replied that he wanted the king to return his camels which he had taken. Abrahah said: "I was much impressed when I saw you but your reply has brought you down in my eyes: you only demand your camels but you say nothing about this House which is your sanctuary and the sanctuary of your forefathers." He replied: "I am the owner of my camels and am requesting you to return them. As for the House, it has its own Owner: He will defend it." When Abrahah said that He would not be able to defend it against him, Abdul Muttalib said that that rested between Him and him. With this Abdul Muttalib left Abrahah and he restored to him his camels.

Ibn Abbas tradition is different. It does not mention the demand for the camels at all. According to the traditions related from him by Abd bin Humaid, Ibn al-Mundhir, lbn Marduyah, Hakim, Abu Nuaim and Baihaqi, he states that when Abrahah reached As-Sifah (a place situated between Arafat and Taif in the mountains near the sacred bounds of Makkah), Abdul Muttalib went to him and said: "There was no need for you to come so far. You should have ordered us and we would have brought before you whatever you needed." He said: "I hear that this House is the House of peace: I have come to destroy its peace."Thereupon, Abdul Muttalib said: "This is Allah's House. He has not allowed anyone so far to dominate it."Abrahah replied: "We will not return until we have destroyed it."Abdul Muttalib said:"You may take whatever you like from us and return."Abrahah refused to budge and ordered his troops to advance, leaving Abdul Muttalib behind.

Leaving the two traditions as they are, one thing which becomes evident is that the tribes living in and around

Makkah did not have the power to fight such a big force and save the Ka'bah. Therefore, obviously, the Quraish did not try to put up any resistance. The Quraish on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench (Ahzab) had hardly been able to muster & strength numbering ten to twelve thousand men in spite of the alliance with the pagan and Jewish tribes; they could not have resisted an army 60,000 strong.

Muhammad bin Ishaq says that after returning from the camp of Abrahah Abdul Muttalib ordered the Quraish to withdraw from the city and go to the mountains along with their families for fear of a general massacre. Then he went to the Ka'bah along with some chiefs of the Quraish and taking hold of the iron ring of the door, prayed to Allah Almighty to protect His House and its keepers. There were at that time 360 idols in and around the Ka'bah, but on that critical moment they forgot them and implored only Allah for help. Their supplications which have been reported in the books of history do not contain any name but of Allah, the One. Ibn Hisham in his *Life of the Prophet* has cited some verses of Abdul Muttalib, which are to the following effect:

"O God, a man protects his house, so protect Your House; Let not their cross and their craft tomorrow overcome Your craft. If You will to leave them and our qiblah to themselves, You may do as You please."

Suhail in Raud al-Unuf has cited this verse also in this connection: "Help today Your devotees against the devotees of the cross and its worshipers."

Ibn Jarir has cited Abdul Muttalib's these verses also, which he had recited in his supplication; "O my Lord, I do not cherish any hope from anyone against them except You. O my Lord, protect Your House from them. The enemy of this House is Your enemy. Stop them from destroying Your settlement."

After making these supplications Abdul Muttalib and his companions also went off to the mountains. Next morning Abrahah prepared to enter Makkah, but his special elephant, Mahmud, which was in the forefront, knelt down. It was beaten with iron bars, goaded, even scarified, but it would not get up. When they made it face south, north, or east, it would immediately start off, but as soon as they directed it towards Makkah, it knelt down. In the meantime swarms of birds appeared carrying stones in their beaks and claws and showered these on the troops. Whoever was hit would start disintegrating. According to Muhammad bin Ishaq and Ikrimah, this was smallpox, which was seen in Arabia for the first time in that year. Ibn Abbas says that whoever was struck by a pebble, would start scratching his body resulting in breaking of the skin and falling off of the flesh. In another tradition Ibn Abbas says that the flesh and blood flowed like water and bones in the body became visible. The same thing happened with Abrahah too. His flesh fell in pieces and there arose bores on his body emitting pus and blood. In confusion they withdrew and fled towards Yemen. Nufail bin Habib, whom they had brought as guide from the country of Khatham, was searched out and asked to guide them back to Yemen, but he refused and said: "Now where can one flee when God pursues? The split nose (Abrahah) is the conquered; not the conqueror."

As they withdrew they were continually falling by the bay and dying. Ata bin Yasar says that all the troops did not perish at the spot; some perished there and others perished by the wayside as they withdrew. Abrahah died in the country of Khath'am.

This event took place at Muhassir by the Muhassab valley, between Muzdalifah and Mina. According to the *Sahih*

of Muslim and Abu Da'ud, in the description of the Holy Prophet's farewell pilgrimage that Imam Jafar as-Sadiq has related from his father, Imam Muhammad Baqir, and he from Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah, he says that when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) proceeded from Muzdalifah to Mina, he increased his speed in the valley of Muhassir. Imam Nawawi has explained it saying that the incident of the people of the elephant had occurred there; therefore, the pilgrims have been enjoined to pass by quickly, for Muhassir is a tormented place. Imam Malik in *Mu'atta* has related that the Holy Prophet said that the whole of Muzdalifah is a fit place for staying but one should not stay in the valley of Muhassir.

In the verses of Nufail bin Habib, which Ibn Ishaq has cited, he describes this event as an eye witness: "Would that you had seen, O Rudaina, but you would not see, What we saw by the valley of Muhassab. I praised God when I saw the birds, and I feared lest the stones should fall upon us. Everyone was asking for Nufail As though I owned the Abyssinians a debt."

This was such a momentous event that it soon spread throughout Arabia and many poets made it the subject of their laudatory poems. In these poems one thing is quite evident that everyone regarded it as a manifestation of Allah Almighty's miraculous power, and no one, even by allusion, said that the idols which were worshiped in the Ka'bah, had anything to do with it. For example, Abdullah ibn Az-Zibara says: "The sixty thousand returned not home, Nor did their sick man (Abrahah) survive on return. Ad and Jurham were there before them, And there is Allah, above the servants, Who sustains it."

Abu Qais bin Aslat says: "Rise and worship your Lord and anoint The Corners of the House of Allah between the Mountains of Makkah and Mina. When the help of the Owner of the Throne reached you, His armies repulsed them so that they were lying in dust, pelted with stones."

Not only this, but according to Hadrat Umm Hani and Hadrat Zubair bin al-Awwam, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said:"The Quraish did not worship anyone but Allah, the Only and One, for ten years (and according to others, for seven years. Umm Hani's tradition has been related by Imam Bukhari in his History and by Tabarani, Hakim, Ibn Marduyah and Baihaqi in their collections of *Ahadith*. Hadrat Zubair's statement has been related by Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah and Ibn Asakir, and this is further confirmed by the *mursal* tradition of Hadrat Sa'id bin al Musayyab, which Khatib Baghdadi has recorded in his History.

The Arabs describe the year in which this event took place as *Am al-Fil* (the year of the elephants), and in the same year the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace) was born. The traditionists and historians almost unanimously state that the event of the people of the elephant had occurred in Muharram and the Holy Prophet was born in Rabi al-Awwal. A majority of them states that he took birth 50 days after the event of the elephant.

Theme and Substance

If Surah al-Fil is studied in the light of the historical details as given above, one can fully well understand why in this Surah only Allah's inflicting His punishment on the people of the elephant has been referred and described so briefly. It was an event of recent occurrence, and everyone in Makkah and Arabia was fully aware of it. The Arabs

believed that the Ka'bah had been protected in this invasion not by any god or goddess but by Allah Almighty Himself. Then Allah alone had been invoked by the Quraish chiefs for help, and for quite a few years the people of Quraish having been impressed by this event, had worshiped none but Allah. Therefore, there was no need to mention the details in Surah al-Fil, but only a reference to it was enough so that the people of Quraish, in particular, and the people of Arabia, in general, should consider well in their hearts the message that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) was giving. For the only message that he gave was that they should worship and serve none but Allah, the Only and One. Then, they should also consider that if they used force to suppress this invitation to the truth, they would only be inviting the wrath of God, Who had so completely routed and destroyed the people of the elephants.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْفِيلِ ﴿١﴾

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِى تَضْلِيلٍ ﴿٢﴾

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ﴿٣﴾

تَرْمِيهِم بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٤﴾

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ﴿٥﴾

[1-5] Have you not seen[1] how your Lord dealt with the people of the elephant?[2] Did He not cause their plan[3] to end in vain?[4] And sent down on them swarms of birds,[5] which pelted them with stones of baked clay.[6] Then He rendered them like straw eaten up by cattle.[7]

1Though the address apparently is directed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), its real addressees are not only the Quraish but all the people of Arabia, who were well aware of the event. At many places in the Qur'an the words alam tara (have you not seen?) have been used, and they are meant not to address the Holy Prophet but the people in general. (For example, see Ibrahim: 19, Al-Hajj: 18, 65, An-Nur: 43, Luqman: 29, 31, Fatir: 27, Az-Zumar: 21). Thee, the word 'seeing' has been used here to signify that in and around Makkah and in the vast country of Arabia, from Makkah to Yaman, there were many such people still living, who had witnessed with their own eyes the event of the destruction of the people of the elephant, for it had occurred only about forty to forty-five years earlier, and the people of Arabia had continually heard it described by the eye-witnesses themselves so that they had become so certain of it as though they had seen it with their own eyes.

2Here, Allah has not given any detail as to who were the people of the elephant, where from they had come and what was the object of their march, for all these things were well known among the people.

3The word kayd is used for a secret plan meant to harm somebody. The question is, what was secret in this case? Sixty thousand troops together with several elephants had openly come from Yemen to Makkah, and they had kept no secret that they had come to destroy the Ka`bah. Therefore, there was nothing secret about this plan. However, what was secret was the motive of the Abyssinians. They by destroying the Ka`bah, crushing down the Quraish and intimidating the Arabians, wanted to take control of the trade route that led from south Arabia to Syria and Egypt. This motive they kept hidden, and instead proclaimed their intent that they wanted to destroy the Ka`bah., the principal House of Arab worship, in retaliation for the pollution of their cathedral by the Arabs.

4Literally, fi tadlil means: "led their plan astray", but idiomatically leading a plan astray means bringing it to naught and rendering it fruitless. At one place in the Qur'an, it has been said: "But the disbelievers plot (kayd) ended in vain." (Al-Mu'min: 25), At another: "And that Allah does not lead to success the plan (kayd) of deceivers." (Yusuf: 52). The Arabians described Imra' ul-Qais by the epithet of "al-malik ad-dalil " (the king who lost and wasted), for he had lost the kingdom left by his father.

5Ababil means many separate and scattered groups whether of men or other creatures, which come from different sides successively. 'Ikrimah and Qatadah say that these swarms of birds had come from the

Red Sea side. Sa`id bin Jubair and 'Ikrimah say that such birds had neither been seen before nor ever after; these were neither birds of Najd, nor of Hijaz, nor of Timamah (the land between Hijaz and the Red Sea). Ibn 'Abbas says that their beaks were like those of birds and claws like the dog's paw. 'Ikrimah has stated that their heads were like the heads of the birds of prey, and almost all the reporters are agreed that each bird carried a stone in its beak and two stones in its claws. So the people of Makkah had these stones preserved with them for a long time. Thus, Abu Nu`aim has related a statement of Naufal bin Abi Mu`awiyah, saying that he bad seen the stones which had been thrown on the people of the elephant; they equaled a small pea seed in size and were dark red in color. According to Ibn `Abbas's tradition that Abu Nu`aim has related, they were equal to a pine kernel, and according to Ibn Marduyah, equal to a goat's dropping. Obviously, all the stones might not be equal but differing in size to some extent.

6Literally, bi hijarat-im-min sijjil means "stones of sijjil type." Ibn `Abbas says that sijjil is the Arabic version of the Persian sang and gil, and it implies the stones made from clay and become hard when baked. The Qur'an also confirms the same. In Surah Hud :82 and Al-Hijr: 74, it has been said that stones of baked clay (sijjin were rained on the people of Lot, and about the same stones in Adh-Dhariyat: 33, it has been said that they were the stones made from clay (hijarat-im min tin).

Maulana Hamid-ad-Din Farahi, who in the present age has done valuable work on the research and determination of the meaning and content of the Qur'an regards the people of Makkah and other Arabians as the subject of tarmihim in this verse, who are the addressees of alam tara. About the birds he says that they were not casting stones but had come to eat the dead bodies of the people of the elephant. A resume of the arguments he has given for this interpretation is that it is not credible that `Abdul Muttalib should have gone before Abrahah and demanded his camels instead of pleading for the Ka`bah, and this also is not credible that the people of Quraish and the other Arabs who had come for Hajj, did not resist the invaders and leaving the Ka`bah at their mercy had gone off to the mountains. Therefore, what actually happened was that the Arabs pelted the army of Abrahah with stones, and Allah by sending a stormy wind charged with stones, destroyed it completely; then the birds were sent to eat the dead bodies of the soldiers. But, as we have already explained in the Introduction, the tradition does not only say that `Abdul Muttalib had gone to demand his camels but it says that he did not demand the camels at all but tried to dissuade Abrahah from attacking the Ka`bah. We have already explained that according to all reliable traditions, Abrahah's army had come in Muharram when the pilgrims had gone back and also it was beyond the power of Quraish and other Arab tribes living in the surrounding areas to resist and fight an army 60,000 strong. They had hardly been able to muster a force ten to twelve thousand strong on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench (Ahzab) with the help of the Arab pagans and Jewish tribes then how could they have mustered courage to encounter an army, 60,000 strong? However. even if all these arguments are rejected and the sequence of the verses of Surah Al-Fil only is kept in view, this interpretation is seen to go against it. If it were so that the stones were cast by the Arabs and the people of the elephant were rendered as chaff, and then the birds came to eat their dead bodies, the order would be this: "You were pelting them with stones of baked clay, then Allah rendered them as chaff eaten up, and then Allah sent upon them swarms of birds. " but here we see that first Allah has

made mention of sending swarms of birds; this is immediately followed by tarmihim bi-hijarat-im min-sijjil (which were pelting them with stones of baked clay); and then at the end it is said that Allah made them as straw eaten up.

7The word asfas used in the original has already occurred in verse 12 of Surah Ar-Rahman above: dhul-'asf war-raihan: "and corn with husk as well as grain". This shows that asf means the outer covering of seeds, which the farmer throws away after the grain has been separated from it. Then the animals eat it, and some of it falls down in the chewing and some is trampled under the hoofs.

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106. Surah Quraish

Name

The Surah has been so entitled after the word *Quraish* in the very first verse.

Period of Revelation

Although Dahhak and Kalbi regard it as a Madani Surah, yet a great majority of the commentators are agreed that it is Makki, and a manifest evidence of this are the words *Rabba hadh-al-Bait* (Lord of this House) of this Surah itself. Had it been revealed at Madinah, the words "this House" for the Ka'bah could not be relevant. Moreover, its subject matter so closely relates to that of Surah Al-Fil that probably it was revealed immediately after it, without any other Surah intervening between them. On the basis of this very relevance, some of the earliest scholars regard the two Surahs as one entity. This view is strengthened by the traditions which say that in the Quran copy belonging to Hadrat Ubayy bin Ka'b these two were written as one Surah, i.e. without the insertion of the *Bismillah* between them. Furthermore, Hadrat Umar had once recited the two Surahs as one in the Prayer. But this view is not acceptable because in the Quran copy which Hadrat Uthman (may Allah bless him) had got written down officially by the cooperation of a large number of the Companions and sent to the centers of Islamic lands, the *Bismillah* was written between these two Surahs, and since then these two have been written as separate Surahs in all the copies of the Quran everywhere in the world. Moreover, the style of the two Surahs is so different that they manifestly appear as two separate Surahs.

Historical Background

To understand the Surah well it is essential that one should keep the historical background relevant to the contents of this Surah and of Surah Al-Fil in view.

The tribe of Quraish was scattered throughout Hijaz until the time of Qusayy bin Kilab, the ancestor of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). First of all, Qusayy gathered it in Makkah and this tribe was able to gain authority over the Ka'bah. On that very basis Qusayy was called *mujammi* (uniter, assembler) by his people. This

man by his sagacity and wisdom founded a city state in Makkah and made excellent arrangements for the welfare of the pilgrims coming from all over Arabia, with the result that the Quraish were able to gain great influence among the Arabian tribes and lands. After Qusayy the offices of the state of Makkah were divided between his sons, Abdi Manaf and Abd ad-Dar, but of the two Abdi Manaf gained greater fame even during his father's lifetime and was held in high esteem throughout Arabia. Abdi Manaf had four sons: Hashim, Abdi Shams, Al-Muttalib, and Naufal. Of these Hashim, father of Abdul Muttalib and grandfather of the Holy Prophet, first conceived the idea to take part in the trade that passed between the eastern countries and Syria and Egypt through Arabia, and also to purchase the necessities of life for the Arabians so that the tribes living by the trade route bought these from them and the merchants living in the interior of the country were attracted to the,market of Makkah. This was the time when the Sasanian kingdom of Iran had captured the international trade that was carried out between the northern lands and the eastern countries and Byzantine empire through the Persian Gulf. This had boosted up the trade activity on the trade route leading from southern Arabia to Syria and Egypt along the Red Sea coast. As against the other Arabian caravans, the Quraish had the advantage that the tribes on the route held them in high esteem on account off their being keepers of the Ka'bah. They stood indebted to them for the great generosity with which the Quraish treated them in the Hajj season. That is why the Quraish felt no fear that their caravans would be robbed or harmed any where on the way. The tribes on the way did not even charge them the heavy transit taxes that they demanded from the other caravans. Hashim taking advantage of this prepared the trade scheme and made his three brothers partners in it. Thus, Hashim obtained trade privileges from the Ghassanide king of Syria, Abdi Shams from the Negus, Al-Muttalib from the Yamanite nobles and Naufal from the governments of Iraq and Iran, and their trade began to flourish. That is how the four brothers became famous as traders and began to be called ashab al-ilaf (generators of love and affection) on account of their friendly relations with the tribes and states of the surrounding lands.

Because of their business relations with Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Yaman and Abyssinia, the Quraish came across such opportunities and their direct contact with the culture and civilization of different countries so enhanced the level of their knowledge and wisdom that no tribe in Arabia could match and equal them. As regards wealth and worldly goods they became the most affluent tribe, and Makkah became the most important commercial center of the Arabian peninsula. Another great advantage that accrued from these international relations was that they brought from Iraq tile script which later was used for writing down the Quran. No other Arabian tribe could boast of so many literate people as Quraish. For these very reasons the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Quraish are the leaders of men." (Musnad Ahmad: *Marwiyat Amr bin al As*). And according to a tradition from Hadrat Ali in Baihaqi, the Holy Prophet said: "First the leadership of the Arabians was in the hands of the people of Himyar, then Allah withdrew it from them and gave it to Quraish".

The Quraish were thus prospering and flourishing when the event of Abrahah's invasion of Makkah took place. Had Abrahah at that time succeeded in taking this holy City and destroying the Ka'bah, the glory and renown of not only the Quraish but of the Ka'bah itself, would have faded away, the belief of the pre-Islamic Arabia that the House indeed was Allah's House would have been shattered, and the high esteem in which Quraish were held for being keepers of the House throughout the country would have been tarnished. Then, after the Abyssinian advance to Makkah, the Byzantium also would have taken the initiative to gain control over the trade route between Syria and Makkah: and the Quraish would have been reduced to a plight worse than that in which they were involved before Qusayy bin Kilab. But when Allah showed this manifestation of His power that the swarms of birds destroyed 60,000 Abyssinian troops brought by Abrahah by pelting then, with stones, and from Makkah to Yaman they went on falling

and dying by the wayside, the faith of the Arabs that the Ka'bah indeed was Allah's House increased manifold, and the glory and renown of Quraish too was enhanced considerably throughout the country. Now the Arabs were convinced that they were under Allah's special favor; therefore, they visited every part of Arabia fearlessly and passed through every land with their trade caravans unharmed. No one could dare touch them with an evil intention. Not to speak of touching them, even if they had a non-Quraishite under their protection, he too was allowed to pass unharmed.

Theme and Substance

As all this was well known in the time of the Holy Prophet's appointment to Prophethood, there was no need to mention them. That is why in the four brief sentences of this Surah, Quraish were simply asked to consider:"When you yourselves acknowledge this House (i. e. the Ka'bah) to be Allah's House, and not of the idols, and when you fully well know that it is Allah alone Who has granted you peace by virtue of this House, made your trade and commerce flourish and saving you from destitution favored you with prosperity you should then worship and serve Him alone."

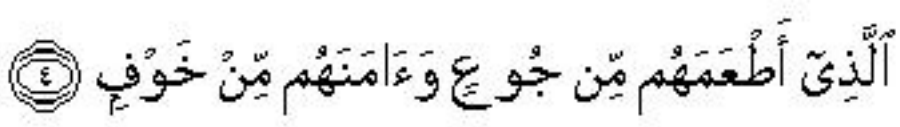
بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

لِإِيلَٰفِ قُرَيْشٍ ﴿١﴾

إِۦلَٰفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ ٱلشِّتَآءِ وَٱلصَّيْفِ ﴿٢﴾

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا۟ رَبَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْبَيْتِ ﴿٣﴾



[1-4] As the Quraish become accustomed.[1] Accustomed to their journeys in the winter and the summer.[2] So they should worship the Lord of this House.[3] Who has fed them against hunger,[4] and made them secure against fear.[5]

1The word ilaf, as used in the original is from alf which means to be habituated and accustomed to be reunited after breaking up, and to adopt something as a habit. About the lam that is prefixed to ilaf, some Arabists have expressed the opinion that it is to express surprise and wonder. Thus, Li-ilaf-i Quraish in means: "How surprising is the conduct of Quraish! It is only by virtue of Allah's bounty that they are reunited after their dispersion and have become accustomed to the trade journeys which have brought them their prosperity,. and yet from Allah's worship and service they are turning away." 'This is the opinion of Akhfash, Kisa'i and Farra', and holding this opinion something after this lam, the same thing itself is regarded as sufficient to show that the attitude and conduct a person has adopted in spite of it, is surprising and amazing". On the contrary, Khalil bin Ahmad, Sibawaih and Zamakhshari say that this is the lam of to `lil and it relates to the following sentence: Fa! ya `budu Rabba hadh a!-Bait, which means: "Allah's blessings on the Quraish are countless. But if for no other blessing, they should worship Allah at least for this blessing that by His bounty they became accustomed to the trade journeys, for this by itself is indeed a great favor of Allah to them. "

2That is, the trade journeys. In summer the Quraish traveled northward to Syria and Palestine, for they are cool lands, and in winter southward to Yemen, etc. for they are warm.

3"This House": the Holy Ka'bah. The sentence means that the Quraish have attained to this blessing only by virtue of the House of Allah. They themselves acknowledge that the 360 idols, which they worship, are not its lord, but Allah alone is its Lord. He alone saved them from the invasion of the army of elephants. Him alone they had invoked for help against Abrahah's army. 'It was His House the keeping of which enhanced their rank and position in Arabia, for before that they were dispersed and commanded no position whatever. Like the common Arab tribes they too were scattered factions of a race. But when they rallied round this House in Makkah and began to serve it, they became, honorable throughout Arabia, and their trade caravans began to visit every part of the country fearlessly. Therefore, whatever they have achieved, it has been possible only by the help of the Lord of this House; therefore, they should worship Him alone.

4The allusion implies that before the Quraish came to Makkah, they were a scattered people in Arabia and living miserable lives. After their gathering together in Makkah they began to prosper, and the Prophet Abraham's prayer for them was literally fulfilled when he had prayed: "Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in a barren valley near Thy sacred House. Lord, I have done this in the hope that they

will establish salat there. So turn the hearts of the people towards them, and provide fruits for their food." (Ibrahim: 37)

5"Secure against fear" : secure from the fear from which no one anywhere in Arabia was, safe. There was no settlement anywhere in the country the people of which could sleep peacefully at night, for they feared an attack any time from any quarter by some unknown enemy. No one could step out of the bounds of his tribe for fear of life or of being taken prisoner and made a slave. No caravan could travel safely from fear of attack, or without bribing influential chiefs of the tribes' on the way for safe conduct, But the Quraish were immune from every danger; they had no fear of an attack from an enemy. Their caravans, small or big, freely passed on the trade routes everywhere in the country. As soon as it become known about a certain caravan that it belonged to the keepers of the Ka`bah, no one could dare touch it with an evil intention, so much so that even if a single Quraishite was passing on the way, he was allowed to pass unharmed and untouched as soon as the word haram " or "ana min haramillah " was heard from him.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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107. Surah Al Ma'un (The Small Kindnesses)

Name

The Surah has been so designated after the word *al-ma`un* occurring at the end of the last verse.

Period of Revelation

Ibn Marduyah has cited Ibn Abbas (may Allah bless them both) as saying that this Surah is Makki, and the same also is the view of Ata and Jabir. But Abu Hayyan in *Al-Bahr al-Muhit* has cited Ibn Abbas, Qatadah and Dahhak as saying that this Surah was revealed at Madinah. In our opinion there is an internal piece of evidence in the Surah itself which points to its being a Madani Revelation. It holds out a threat of destruction to those praying ones who are unmindful of their Prayers and who pray only to be seen. This kind of hypocrites were found only at Madinah, for it was there that Islam and the Muslims gained such strength that many people were compelled to believe from expedience, had to visit the Mosque, join the congregational Prayer and prayed only to be seen of others, so as to be counted among Muslims.

Contrary to this is, at Makkah conditions were altogether different. No one had to pray to be seen. There it was difficult even for the believers to pray in congregation; they prayed secretly and if a person prayed openly he did so only at the risk of his life. This kind of hypocrites found in Makkah did not comprise those who believed and Prayed to be seen but those who in their hearts had know, and acknowledged the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace) to be on the true path, but were avoiding to accept Islam in order to maintain their Position of leadership and authority, or were not prepared to take the risk of being afflicted with the kind of hardships with which they found the believers afflicted in the society around them. This condition of the hypocrites at Makkah has been described in vv. 10-11 of Surah Al- Ankabut. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 13 to 16 of Surah Al-'Ankabut).

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is to point out what kind of morals a man develops when he refuses to believe in the Hereafter. In vv. 2-3 the condition of the disbelievers who openly belie the Hereafter has been described, and in the last four verses the state of those hypocrites who apparently are Muslims but have no idea of the Hereafter, its judgment, and the

meting out of rewards and punishments accordingly has been described. On the whole, the object of depicting the attitude and conduct of two kinds of people is to impress the point that man cannot develop a strong, stable and pure character in himself unless he believes in the Hereafter.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

أَرَءَيْتَ ٱلَّذِى يُكَذِّبُ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿١﴾

فَذَٰلِكَ ٱلَّذِى يَدُعُّ ٱلْيَتِيمَ ﴿٢﴾

وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلَىٰ طَعَامِ ٱلْمِسْكِينِ ﴿٣﴾

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ عَن صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٥﴾

ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَآءُونَ ﴿٦﴾

وَيَمۡنَعُونَ ٱلۡمَاعُونَ ۝٧

[1-7] Have you seen him[1] who belies the rewards and punishments[2] of the Hereafter?[3] He it is[4] who drives away the orphan[5] and does not urge[6] giving away the food of the poor.[7] Then woe to the praying ones,[8] who are careless of their Prayer,[9] who do good to be seen,[10] and withhold small kindnesses[11] (from the people).

1The words "have you seen", apparently, are directed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), but the Qur'anic style is that on such occasions it generally addresses every intelligent and thinking person. And "seeing" means seeing with the eyes, for what has been described in the succeeding verses can be seen by every seer with his eyes, as well as knowing, understanding and considering something deeply. If the word ara'aita is taken in the second meaning, the verse would mean: "Do you know the kind of man who belies the rewards and punishments." Or: "Have you considered the state of the person who belies the Judgment?

2The word ad-din as Qur'anic term is used for the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter as .well as for the religion of Islam. But the theme that . follows is more relevant to the first meaning, although the second meaning also is not out of the context: Ibn 'Abbas has preferred the second meaning, while a majority of the commentators have preferred the first. In case the first meaning is taken, the theme of the Surah would mean that denial of the Hereafter produces such and such a character in man; in case the second meaning is taken, the object of the Surah would be to highlight the moral importance of Islam, to stress that Islam aims at producing an altogether different character in its adherents from that found in its deniers.

3The style shows that the object of asking this question at the outset is not to ask whether he has seen the person or not, but to invite the listener to consider as to what kind of character is' produced in man when he denies the judgment of the Hereafter, and to urge him to know the kind of the people who belie this creed so that he tries to understand the moral significance of belief in the Hereafter.

4The letter fa in the sentence fa-dhalika-alladhi expresses the meaning of a whole sentence, which is to this effect: "If you do not know, then know that it is indeed he who..." Or, it gives the meaning: "Because of his this very denial of the Hereafter he is the kind of man who..."

5The sentence yadu `ul yatim as used in the original, has several meanings:

(1) That he deprives the orphan of his rights and evicting him from his father's heritage thrusts him away;

(2) that if an orphan comes to ask him for help, he repulses him instead of showing him any compassion, and if he still persists in his entreaties in the hope for mercy, he drives him away and out of sight;

(3) that he ill-treats the orphan.

For example, if in his own house there is a closely related orphan, it is the orphans lot to serve the whole house, to receive rebuffs and suffer humiliation for trivial things. Besides, this sentence also contains the meaning that - the person does not behave unjustly and tyrannically only occasionally put this is his habit and settled practice. He does not have the feeling that it is an evil which he must give up, but he persists in it with full satisfaction, thinking that the orphan is a helpless, powerless creature; therefore, there is no harm if his rights are taken away wrongfully, or he is made the target of tyranny and injustice, or he is repulsed and driven away whenever he asks for help.

In this connection, Qadi Abul Hasan al-Mawardi has related a strange incident in his Alam an-Nubuwwat. Abu Jahl was the testator of an orphan. The child one. day came to him in the condition that he had no shred of a garment on his body and he implored him to be .given something out of his father's heritage. But the cruel man paid no attention to him and the poor child had to go back disappointed. The Quraish chiefs said to him out of fun: "Go to Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and put your complaint before him. He will recommend your case before Abu Jahl and get you your property." The child not knowing any background of the nature of relationship between Abu Jahl and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and not understanding the motive of the mischief-mongers, went straight to the Holy Prophet and apprised him of his misfortune. The Holy Prophet immediately arose and accompanied the child to the house of Abu Jahl, his bitterest enemy. Abu Jahl received him well and when the latter told him to restore to the child his right, he yielded and brought out whatever he owed to him. The Quraish chiefs were watching all this earnestly m the hope that an interesting altercation would take place between them. But when they saw what actually happened they were astounded and went to Abu Jahl and taunted him saying that he too perhaps had abandoned his religion. He said: "By God, I have not abandoned my religion, but I so felt that on the right and left of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) there was a spear which would enter my -body if I acted against what he desired. " This incident not only shows what was the attitude and conduct of the principal chiefs of the most civilized and noble tribe of Arabia towards the orphans and other helpless people in those days but it also shows what sublime character the Holy Prophet possessed and what impact it had even on his bitterest enemies. A similar incident we have already related in E.N. 5 of Surah Al-Anbiya' above, which points to the great moral superiority of the Holy Prophet because of which the disbelieving Quraish branded him as a sorcerer.

6La yahuddu means that the person neither persuades his own self, nor tells the people of his household, to provide the poor man with his food, nor does he urge others to recognize the rights of the poor and needy people of society who are starving and do something to satisfy their hunger.

Here, by giving only two conspicuous examples, Allah has pointed out what kind of evils are produced in the people who deny the Hereafter: The real object is not to point out only these two evils-that the people drive away the orphans and do not urge giving away the food of the poor as a result of the denial of the Hereafter. But of the countless evils which are thus produced, two evils have been presented as an example, which every noble and sound-natured person will regard as hateful. Besides, another thing meant to be impressed is that if this very man had believed at he would have to go before God to render an account of his deeds, he would not have committed such evils as to deprive the orphan of his rights, tyrannize him, repulse him, neither feed the poor man himself nor urge others to give him his food. The characteristics of the believers in the Hereafter which have been described in Surah Al-`Asr and Surah Al-Balad are that they exhort one another to mercy, and they exhort one another to the truth and to render the rights of others.

7The words used are to `am-il-miskIn and not it am-il-miskin If to am-il-miskin were the words, the meaning would be that he does not urge (others) to feed the poor. But ta'am -il-miskin means that he does not urge (others) to give away the food of the poor. In other words, the food that is given to the poor man is not the food of the giver but of the poor man himself; it is his right which is enjoined on the giver, and the giver is not doing him any favor but rendering him his right. This same thing had been said in Surah Adh-Dhariyat above: "And in their possessions is a due share of him who asks and of him who is. needy." (v. 19).

8The fa in fa-wail-ul -lil-musallin signifies that such was the condition of the open deniers of the Hereafter. One may then consider the condition of the hypocrites who are included among the praying ones (i e. Muslims). Since, despite being Muslims they regard the Hereafter as a falsehood, one may note what path of ruin they are following.

Though "musallin" means "the praying ones", in view of the context in which this word has been used and the characteristics of these people that follow, this word, in fact, does not have the meaning of "the praying ones" but of "the people of salat", i.e. of those included among Muslims.

9The words used are an-salat-i him sahun and not fi salat-i-him lahum. In case the words fi salat-i him had been used, the meaning would be that they forget in the course of their Prayer.' But forgetting in the course of the Prayer is no sin in the eyes of the Shari `ah, nothing to say of its being hypocrisy, nor is it a fault or anything blameworthy. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself sometimes forgot in the Prayer and to compensate for it he prescribed the method of sajdah sahv. On the contrary, `an salat-i-him sahum means that they are neglectful of their Prayer. Whether they perform the Prayer, or do not perform it, it is of little importance to them. They are not regular at the Prayers. When they perform it, they do not observe the prescribed times, but offer it carelessly at the eleventh hour. Or, when they rise up for the Prayer, they rise up soullessly and perform it with an unwilling heart, as if it were a calamity imposed on them. They play with their garments, yawn and betray absence of every trace of Allah's remembrance in their hearts. Throughout the Prayer they show no feeling at all that they are performing the Prayer, nor of

what they are reciting; their minds wander and they perform articles of the Prayer without due attention; they somehow perform a semblance of the Prayer and try to be rid of it as soon as ,possible. And there are many people who would perform the Prayer only when they must, otherwise the Prayer has no place in their lives. The Prayer time comes but they show no concern that it is the Prayer time; they hear the call to the Prayer but do not understand what the caller is calling to, whom he is calling and for what purpose. These in fact are the signs of absence of faith in the Hereafter. The claimants to Islam believe thus only because they do not believe that they would be rewarded for performing the Prayer, nor have the faith that they would be punished for not performing it. On this very basis, Hadrat Anas bin Malik and `Ata bin Dinar say: "Thanks to God that he said 'an salat-i-him and not fi salat-i -him. That is, we do forget in the course of the Prayer but we are not forgetful and neglectful of it; therefore, we shall not be counted among the hypocrites."

The Qur'an at another place has described this state of the hypocrites, thus: "They come to offer their Prayer but reluctantly, and they expend in the way of Allah with unwilling hearts." (At-Taubah: 54). The Holy Messenger of Allah has said: "This is the Prayer of the hypocrite; this is the Prayer of the hypocrite; this is the Prayer of the hypocrite ! He watches the sun at the `Asr time until when it reaches between the two horns of Satan (i.e. when the time of sunset 'approaches), he gets up and performs the Prayer carelessly, in which he remembers Allah but little." (Bukhari, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad) Mus'ab bin Sa`d has related from his father, Hadrat Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas: "When I asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about the people who are neglectful of their Prayer, he said: "These are the people who perform their Prayers when the prescribed time for it has passed." (Ibn Jarir, Abu Ya'la, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn abI Hatim, Tabarani in Ausat; Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi in As-Sunan. This tradition has been related as a statement of Hadrat Sa`d himself also as a mauquf hadith and its sanad is stronger. Its being a marfu' narration of the saying of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). has been regarded as weak by Baihaqi and Hakim). Another tradition from Hadrat Mus'ab is that he asked his father: "Have you considered this verse? Does it mean giving up the Prayer, or wandering of one's attention in the course of the Prayer?-Who among us has not his attention divided? He replied: No, it implies wasting the prescribed time of the Prayer and performing it when its time has elapsed." (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Abu Ya`la, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi in As-Sunan):

Here, one should understand that coming of other thoughts in the mind in the course of the. Prayer is one thing and bing unmindful of the Prayer and thinking other things during it quite another. The first state is a natural human weakness. Other thoughts do interfere without intention, and as soon as a believer feels that his attention is wandering from the Prayer. he gathers it and brings it back to the Prayer. The other state is of being neglectful of the Prayer, for in it man only goes through an exercise of the Prayer mechanically, he has no intention of the remembrance of God in his heart. From the commencement of the Prayer till its completion his heart is not turned towards God even for a moment, and he remains engrossed in the thoughts with which he entered the Prayer.

10This can be an independent sentence as well as one relating to the preceding sentence. In the first

case, it would mean that they do not perform any act of goodness with a pure intention for the sake of God, but whatever they do , they do to be seen of others so that they are praised, are considered righteous, their good act is publicized and its advantage and benefit accrues to them here in the world. In the second case, the meaning would be that they pray to be seen. The commentators generally have preferred the second meaning, for at first sight it appears that it relates to the preceding sentence. Ibn `Abbas says: "It implies the hypocrites who prayed to be seen. They performed the Prayer if there was somebody to see them, but did not perform it if there was nobody to see them." In another tradition his words are to the effect: "If they were alone they did not pray; but if there were others, they prayed. ". (Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Hatim , Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi , in Ash-Shu ab). In the Qur'an too the hypocrites have been described thus: "When they rise up for the salat, they go reluctantly to it, merely to be seen of people and they remember Allah but little." (An-Nisa': 142).

11The word used is ma'un. The view held by Hadrat `Ali, Ibn `Umar, Sa`id bin Jubair, Qatadah, Hasan Basri, Muhammad bin Hanafiyyah, Dahhak, Ibn Zaid, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, `Ata' and Zuhri (may Allah show them mercy) is that it implies the zakat while Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibrahim Nakha`i, Abu Malik and many other scholars have expressed the opinion that it implies items of common use; for example, cooking-pot, bucket, hatchet, balance, salt, water, fire, flint (now its successor, the match-stick), etc. which the people generally borrow from each other. A statement of Sa'id bin Jubair and Mujahid also supports it. Another view of Hadrat 'Ali also is that it implies the zakat as well as the little courtesies and kindnesses of daily Iife. Ibn Abi Hatim has related from `Ikrimah that ma'un of the highest form is zakat and of the lowest lending of a sieve, bucket, or needle to a barrrower. Hadrat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud says: "We, the Companions of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), used to say (and according to other traditions, in the time of the Holy Prophet, used to say) that ma'un implies lending of the cooking pot, hatchet. bucket, balance, and such other things." (Ibn Jarir. Ibn Abi Shaibah, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Bazzar, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabarani in AI-Ausat, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi in As-Sunan). Sa`d bin 'Iyad without specifying any names has related almost the same view from the Companions of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), which shows that he had heard this from several Companions. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Shaibah). Dailami, Ibn `Asakir, and Abu Nu`aim have related a tradition from Hadrat Abu Hurairah in which he says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself explained this verse saying that it implies the hatchet, bucket and other such things. If this tradition is genuine it probably did not come to the notice of other scholars; otherwise it was not possible that other people should have given any other commentary of this verse.

Ma`un in fact is a small, little thing useful to the people. Accordingly, zakat also is ma'un, for it is a little amount out of much wealth, which one has to give away in order to help the poor, and the other small items of common use also are ma'un as mentioned by Hadrat `Abdullah.Ibn Mas`ud and the scholars who share his viewpoint. The majority of the commentators say that ma `un applies to all those small things which the neighbors usually ask each other for, and asking for these is not in any way blameworthy, for the rich and the poor, all stand in need of these at one time or another. However, to show stinginess in lending these is regarded as mean behavior morally. Generally these things by

themselves last and the neighbor returns them in the original form after he has used them. It would also be maim if a neighbor asks the other for a bed or bedding items on the arrival of guests, or asks the neighbor's permission to have loaves baked in his, oven, or wants to leave some valuables in the neighbor's custody when going out of his house for some days. Thus, the verse means to impress that denial of the Hereafter renders a man so narrow-minded and niggardly that he is not even prepared to make a most minor sacrifice for the sake of others.

108. Surah Al Kauthar (The Abundance)

Name

The Surah has been so designated after the word *al-kauthar* occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Ibn Marduyah has cited Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, Hadrat Abdullah bin az-Zubair and Hadrat Aishah as saying that this Surah is Makki. Kalbi and Muqatil also regard it as Makki, and the same is the view held by the majority of commentators. But Hadrat Hasan Basri, Ikrimah, Mujahid and Qatadah regard it as Madani. Imam Suyuti in *Al-Itqan* has confirmed this same view, and Imam Nawawi in his commentary of the *Sahih* of Muslim has also preferred the same. The reason for this assumption is the tradition which traditionists of the rank of Imam Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Daud, Nasai, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi and others have related from Hadrat Anas bin Malik, saying: "The Holy Prophet was among us. In the meantime he dozed; then he raised his head, smiling, according to some traditions, the people asked what for he was smiling, according to others, he himself told them that a Surah had just been revealed to him. Then, with *Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Rahim*, he recited Surah Al-Kauthar; then he asked the people whether they knew what Kauthar was. When they said that Allah and his Messenger had the best knowledge, he said; It is a river which my Lord has granted me in Paradise." (The details follow under "*Kauthar*"). The basis of the reasoning from this tradition for this Surah's being Madani is that Hadrat Anas belonged to Madinah, and his saying that this Surah was revealed in his presence is a proof that it was Madani.

But, in the first place, from this same Hadrat Anas, Imam Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Jarir have related the traditions which say that this river of Paradise (*Al-Kauthar*) had been shown to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) on the occasion of the *mi`raj* (ascension) and everyone knows that *mi`raj* had taken place at Makkah before the *hijrah*. Secondly, when during the *mi`raj* the Holy Prophet had not only been informed of this gift of Allah Almighty but also shown it, there was no reason why Surah Al-Kauthar should have be revealed at Madinah to give him the good news of it. Thirdly, if in an assembly of the Companions the Holy Prophet himself had given the news of the revelation of Surah Al-Kauthar which Hadrat Anas has mentioned in his tradition, and it meant that that Surah had been revealed for the first time then, it was not possible that well-informed

Companions like Hadrat Aishah, Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas and Hadrat Abdullah bin Zubair should have declared this Surah to be a Makki revelation and most of the commentators also should have regarded it as Makki. If the matter is considered carefully, there appears to be a flaw in the tradition from Hadrat Anas in that it does not say what was the subject under discussion in the assembly in which the Holy Prophet gave the news about Surah Al-Kauthar. It is possible that at that time the Holy Prophet was explaining something. In the meantime he was informed by revelation that that point was further explained by Surah Al-Kauthar, and he mentioned the same thing, saying that that Surah was revealed to him just then. Such incidents did take place on several occasions, on the basis of which the commentators have opined about certain verses that they were revealed twice. This second revelation, in fact, meant that the verse had been revealed earlier, but on some later occasion the Holy Prophet's attention was invited to it by revelation for the second time. In such traditions, the mention of the revelation of a certain verse is not enough to decide whether it was revealed at Makkah or Madinah, and when precisely it was revealed.

Had this tradition of Hadrat Anas not been there to cause doubt, the whole content of the Surah Al-Kauthar by itself bears evidence that it was revealed at Makkah, and in the period when the Holy Prophet was passing through extremely discouraging conditions.

Historical Background

Before this in Surahs Ad-Duha and Alam Nashrah we have seen that when in the earliest phase of Prophethood the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was passing through the most trying conditions when the whole nation had turned hostile, there was resistance and opposition on every side, and the Holy Prophet and a handful of his Companions did not see any remote chance of success. Allah in order to console and encourage him at that time had sent down several verses. In Surah Ad- Duha it was said: "And surely the later period (i.e. every later period) is better for you than the former period, and soon your Lord shall give you so much that you shall be well pleased". In Surah Alam Nashrah: "And We exalted your renown for you."That is, "Though the enemies are trying to defame you throughout the country, We, on the contrary, have arranged to exalt your name and fame."And: "The fact is that along with every hardship there is also ease."That is, "You should not be disheartened by the severity of conditions at this time; this period of hardships will soon pass, and the period of success and victory will follow."

Such were the conditions in which Allah by sending down Surah Al-Kauthar consoled the Holy Prophet as well as foretold the destruction of his opponents. The disbelieving Quraish said: "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is cut off from his community and reduced to a powerless and helpless individual. According to Ikrimah when the Holy Prophet was appointed a Prophet, and he began to call the people to Islam, the Quraish said: "Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is cut off from his people as a tree is cut off from its root, which might fall to the ground any moment." (Ibn Jarir). Muhammad bin Ishaq says: "Whenever the Prophet (upon whom be peace) was mentioned before As bin Wa'il as-Sehmi, the chief of Makkah, he used to say: Let him alone for he is only a childless man (*abtar*) with no male offspring. When he dies, there will be no one to remember him." Shamir bin Atiyyah says that Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait, also used to say similar things about the Holy Prophet, (Ibn Jarir). According to Ibn Abbas, once Ka'b bin Ashraf (the Jewish chief of Madinah) came to Makkah and the Quraish chiefs said to him: "Just see this boy, who is cut off from his people; he thinks he is superior to us, whereas we manage the Hajj, look after the Ka'bah and water the pilgrims." (Bazzar). Concerning this very incident Ikrimah reports that the Quraish had used the words *as-sunbur al-munbatir min qaumi-hi* (a weak, helpless and childless man

who is cut off from his people) for the Holy Prophet. (Ibn Jarir) Ibn Sa'd and lbn Asakir have related that Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas said; "The eldest son of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was Qasim; next to him was Zainab, next to her Hadrat Abdullah and next to him three daughters, viz. Umm Kulthum, Fatimah and Ruqayyah. Of them first Hadrat Qasim died and then Hadrat Abdullah. Thereupon As bin Wail said: "His line has come to an end: now he is *abtar* (i. e. cut of from root)."Some traditions add that As said "Muhammad is *abtar*: he has no son to succeed him. When he dies, his memory will perish and you will be rid of him."The tradition from Ibn Abbas, which Abd bin Humaid has related, shows that Abu Jahl also had said similar words on the death of the Holy Prophet's son, Abdullah. Ibn Abi Hatim has related on the authority of Shmir bin Atiyyah that the same kind of meanness was shown by Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait by rejoicing at this bereavement of the Holy Prophet. Ata says that when the second son of the Holy Prophet died, his own uncle, Abu Lahab (whose house was next to his) hastened to the pagans and gave them the "good news": *Batira Muhammadun al-lail*:"Muhammad has become childless this night, or he is cut off from root."

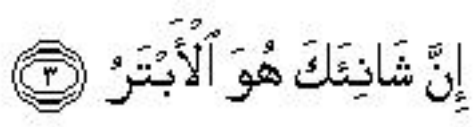
Such were the disturbing conditions under which Surah Al-Kauthar was sent down. The Quraish were angry with him because he worshiped and served only Allah and repudiated their idolatry publicly. For this very reason he was deprived of the rank, esteem and honor that he enjoyed among his people before Prophethood and was now as cut off from his community. The handful of his Companions also were helpless, poor people who were being persecuted and tyrannized. Furthermore, he was bereaved by the death of two sons, one after the other, whereat the near relatives and the people of his clan, brotherhood and neighborhood were rejoicing and uttering such words as were disheartening and disturbing for a noble person who had treated even his enemies most kindly. At this Allah just in one sentence of this brief Surah gave him the good news, better news than which has never been given to any man in the world, besides the decision that it will be his opponents who will be cut off from their root and not he.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنَٰكَ ٱلْكَوْثَرَ ﴿١﴾

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَٱنْحَرْ ﴿٢﴾



[1-3] (O Prophet,) We have granted you the Kauthar[1] (Abundance). So pray only for your Lord and sacrifice.[2] Indeed, your enemy[3] alone is cut off from the root.[4]

1The full meaning of the word kauthar, as used here, cannot perhaps be expressed in one word in any language of the world. This is an intensive form of the noun kathrat which literally means abundance, but the context in which it has been used does not give the meaning of mere abundance but abundance of good, of spiritual benefits and blessings, and of such abundance which is unbounded and limitless, and it does not imply any one good or benefit or blessing but abundance of countless benefits and blessings.

Have a look again at the background of this Surah given in the Introduction. The enemies thought that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had been completely ruined: he was cut off from the community and had become utterly helpless and powerless; his trade was ruined; his male children who could perpetuate his name were dead; the message that he presented was such that except for a handful of the people no one in entire Arabia, not to speak of Makkah, was prepared to listen to it therefore, failure and disappointment would be his lot as long as he lived and there would be no one in posterity to remember him when he died. Under such conditions when Allah said: "We have granted you the Kauthar," it by itself gave the meaning: Your foolish opponents think that you are ruined and deprived of the good things that you enjoyed before Prophethood, but the fact is that We have favored you with unbounded good and countless blessings." This included the matchless moral qualities which the Holy Prophet was blessed with; this included the great blessings of Prophethood and the Qur'an, the knowledge and wisdom that were granted to him; this included the blessing of Tauhid and also of such a system of life, whose simple and intelligible, rational and natural, and comprehensive principles had the potential to spread throughout the world and of continuing to spread for ever afterwards. This also included the blessing of the exaltation of renown because of which the holy Prophet's blessed name continues to be exalted throughout the world since 1400 years and will continue to be so exalted till Resurrection.

This also included the blessing that by his preaching eventually such a world-wide community came into being, which became the standard-bearer of Truth in the world for ever, which can claim to have produced the greatest number of the pious, virtuous and noble charactered men in any one nation, and which even when corrupted and deprived has the highest good in it as against every other nation of the world. This also included the blessing that the Holy Prophet during his very lifetime witnessed his invitation and message attaining to the highest success and the preparation of a community which had the power to dominate the world. This also included the blessing that although on his being deprived of the male offspring the enemies thought he would be lost to posterity, yet Allah not only blessed him with the spiritual offspring in the form of Muslims, who will continue to exalt his name in the world till Resurrection but also granted him from his one daughter, Hadrat Fatimah, the natural progeny, who have spread throughout world and whose only mark of distinction and pride is that they trace their descent from him.

These are the blessings which the people have seen and witnessed as to how abundantly Allah has blessed His Holy prophet within the world. In addition, Kauthar also implies two other great blessings which Allah will bestow on him in the Hereafter. We had no means of knowing these; therefore the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself gave us news of them, and told us that Kauthar also implied them. First, the Fountain of Kauthar, which he will be granted on the Resurrection Day in the Plain of Assembly; second, the River Kauthar, which he will be granted in Paradise. About both such a large number of the Ahadith have been reported from him through such a large number of the reporters that there remains no doubt about their authenticity.

What the Holy Prophet said about the fountain of Kauthar is as follows:

(1) This Fountain will be granted to him on the Resurrection Day when there will be the cry of al-atash, al-atash (thirst, thirst!) on every side. The Holy Prophet's community will gather together before him at it and will be watered thereby. He himself will be the first to arrive at it and will be occupying the central position.

He has said: "This is a Fountain at which my Ummah will assemble on the Resurrection Day." (Muslim: Kitab as-Salat Abu Da'ud: Kitab as-Sunnah).

"I shall have arrived at the Fountain before you. " (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Riqaq and Kitab al-Fitan; Muslim: Kitab al-Fida and Kitab at-Taharah; lbn Majah,: Kitab al Manasik and Kitab az-Zuhd. Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat `Abdullah bin Mas'ud `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Abu Hurairah.)

"I shall be there before you and shall bear witness on you, and by God, I am seeing my Fountain even at this time." (Bukhari: Kitab al-jana-iz Kitab al-Maghazi, Kitab ar-Riqaq).

Addressing an assembly of the Ansar, the Holy Prophet once said: "After me you will meet with selfishness and nepotism, endure it patiently until you meet me at the Fountain. " (Bukhari: kitab Manaqib al-Ansar and Kitab al-Maghazi; Muslim: Kitab al-Iman; Tirmidhi:Kitab al-Fitan).

"I shall be near the middle of the Fountain on the Resurrection Day." Muslim: Kitab al-Fada'il).

Hadrat Abu Barzah Aslami was asked: "Have you heard something about the Fountain from the Holy Prophet? He replied: Not once, or twice, or thrice, or four or five times, but over and over again. May Allah deprive of its water the one who be lies it." (Abu Da'ud: Kitab as-Sunnah).

Ubaidullah bin Ziyad thought that the traditions about the Fountain were false; so much so that he belied all the traditions reported by Hadrat Abu Barzah Aslami, Bara' bin 'Azib and `A'idh bin 'Amr. At last, Abu Sabrah brought out a writing which he had written down after hearing it from Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-`As, and it contained this saying of the Holy Prophet: "Beware! your place of meeting me will be my Fountain." (Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As).

(2) Different dimensions of the Fountain have been given in different traditions, but according to a large number of the traditions it will extend from Aylah (the present Israeli seaport of Ilat) to Sana'a of Yemen, or from Aylah to

Adan, or from 'Amman to `Adan in length, and from Aylah to Juhfah (a place between Jeddah and Rabigh) in breadth. (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Riqaq; Abu Da'ud at Tayalisi: Hadith No. 995; Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat Abu Bakr Siddiq and `Abdullah bin `Umar; Muslim: Kasab al-Taharah and Kitab al-Fads il; Tirmidhi Abwab Sifat al-Qiyamah; Ibn Majah: Kitab az-Zuhd). From this it appears that on the Resurrection Day the present Red Sea itself will be turned into the Fountain of Kauthar. And the correct knowledge is only with Allah!

(3) About this Fountain the Holy Prophet has told us that water will be supplied to it from the River Kauthar of Paradise (which is being mentioned below). "Two channels from Paradise will flow into it and supply water to it." (Muslim: Kitab al-Fada il). According to another tradition: "A canal from the River Kauthar of Paradise will be opened towards this Fountain. " (Musnad Ahmad Marwiyyat `Abdullah bin Mas`ud).

(4) According to the description of it given by the Holy Prophet its water will be whiter than milk (according to other traditions whiter than silver, and according to still others, whiter than snow), cooler than snow, sweeter than honey; the earth of its bed will be more fragrant than musk; the water jugs set at it will be as numerous as the stars in the sky; the one who drinks from it would never thirst; and the one who is deprived of it will never have his thirst satisfied. These things with a little variation in wording have been reported in numerous Ahadith (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Rigaq; Muslim: Kitab at-Taharah and Kitab al-Fada'il; Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Umar, `Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-`As; Tirmidhi: Abwab Sifat al-Qiyanmah: Ibn Majah: Kitab az-Zuhd; Abu Da'ud: Tayalisi, Ahadith No. 995, 2135).

(5) Concerning it the Holy Prophet warned the people of his time again and again, saying: "after me those from among you who would effect changes in my Way, will be removed from the Fountain and will be disallowed to approach it. I shall say: they are my companions, but it will be said: "Don't you know what they did after you? Then I too shall discard them and tell them to keep away." This subject too has been expressed in many traditions. (Bukhari: Kitab ar-Rigaq, Kitab al-Fitan; Muslim: Kitab al-Tahara and Kitab al-Fada'it Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat !bn Mas`ud, Abu Hurairah; Ibn Majah: Kitab al-Manasik. The Hadith which Ibn Majah has related in this connection contains very pathetic words. The Holy Prophet said: "Beware! I shall have arrived at the Fountain before you and shall pride myself by your means upon the greater numbers of my Ummah as against other ummahas Do not at that time cause my face to be blackened. Beware: I shall have some people released, and some people shall be separated from me. I shall say: O my Lord, they are my companions. He will reply: Don't you know what innovations they introduced after you?" According to Ibn Majah, these words were said by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in his Sermon at `Arafat.

(6) Likewise, the Holy Prophet has also warned the Muslims coming after him till Resurrection, saying: "Whoever from among you will swerve from my Way and effect changes in it, will be removed from the Fountain. I shall say: O Lord, they belong to me, they are the people of my Ummah. In response it will be said: “Don't you know what changes they effected after you and then turned back on their heels?” Then I too shall turn them away and shall not allow them to approach the Fountain." Many traditions on this subject are found in the Hadith. (Bukhari: Kitab al-Musaqat, Kitab ar-Rigaq, Kitab al-Fitan; Muslim: Kitab at-Taharah. Katab as-Salat, Kitab al-Fada il; Ibn Majah: Kitab az-Zuhd; Musnad Ahmad: Marwiyyat Ibn `Abbas).

Traditions about this Fountain have been related by more than 50 companions, and the earliest scholars

generally have taken it to mean the Fountain of Kauthar. Imam Bukhari has named the last chapter of his Kitab ar-Rigaq as Babun fil hawd wa qual-Allahu inna a `tainak al-Kauthar, and in a tradition from Hadrat Anas there is the explanation that the Holy Prophet said about Kauthar: "It is a Fountain at which my Ummah shall alight. "

The River Kauthar which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) shall be granted in Paradise, also has been mentioned in a large number of the traditions cf Hadith. Many traditions have been related on the authority of Hadrat Anas in which he says (and in some he explains that he is reporting the exact words of the Holy Prophet himself) that on the occasion of mi'raj; the Holy Prophet was taken round Paradise and shown a river on the banks of which there were vaults of pearls or precious stones carved from within; the earth of its bed was of the strong scented musk. He asked Gabriel, or the angel who took him round, what it was. He replied that it was the River Kauthar, which Allah had granted him. (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud Tayalisi, Ibn Jarir)

Again, according to Hadrat Anas, the Holy Prophet was asked (or a person asked him): "What is the Kauthar?' He replied; "It is a River which Allah has granted me in Paradise. Its earth is musk: its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey " (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, lbn Jarir)

According to another tradition of Musnad Ahmad, describing the merits of the River Kauthar the Holy Prophet said that at its bottom there are pearls instead of pebbles. Ibn `Umar says that the Holy Prophet said: "The Kauthar is a river in Paradise the banks of which are golden; it flows on pearls and diamonds (i.e. its bed has diamonds instead of pebbles); its earth smells sweeter than musk; its water is whiter than milk (or snow), cooler than snow and sweeter than honey." (Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Ibn Abi Hatim, Darimi, Abu Da'ud Tayalisi, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah, Ibn Abi Shaibah).

Usamah bin Zaid says that the Holy Prophet once went to visit Hadrat Usamah; he was not at home; his wife entertained him and during the conversation said "My husband has told me that you have been granted a river in Paradise, which is called the Kauthar." The Holy Prophet replied "Yes, and its bed is of rubies and corals and emeralds and pearls" (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Marduyah. Though the sanad of this tradition is weak, the presence of a large number of traditions dealing with this subject strengthens it).

Besides these marfu traditions, a great many sayings of the Companions and their successors have been related in the Hadith to the effect that the Kauthar implies a river in Paradise. These traditions describe its qualities as have been mentioned above. For instance, the sayings of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Umar, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Hadrat Anas bin Malik, Hadrat `A'ishah, Mujahid and Abul `Aliysh are found in Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i'; and the books of Ibn Marduyah, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Shaibah and other traditionists.

2Different commentaries of it have been reported from different scholars. Some of them take the Prayer to mean the five times obligatory Prayer (salat); some take it to imply the Prayer of `Id al-Adha, and some say that it implies the Prayer itself. Likewise, the meaning of wanhar and sacrifice according to some illustrious scholars, is to place the right hand over the left hand and to fold them on the chest in the Prayer; some say that it implies raising both hands with Allahu Akbar at the commencement of the Prayer; some say that it implies raising both hands at the commencement of the Prayer, at bowing for

Ruku ` and after rising from Ruku `; and some say that it means performing the `Id al-Adha Prayer and then offering the animal sacrifice. But if the context in which this command has been enjoined, is considered, its meaning clearly seems to be: "O Prophet, when your Lord has granted you so many and so splendid blessing, then you should perform the Prayer only for His sake and offer sacrifice only for His sake." This Command was given in the environment when not only the pagans of Quraish but the pagans of entire Arabia and the world worshiped their self-made gods and offered sacrifices at their shrines. Therefore, the intention of the Command is "Contrary to the polytheistic practice, you should remain steadfast to your creed: your Prayer is only for Allah and your sacrifice also is for Him alone, as it has been said at another place: `Declare, O Prophet, my salat and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, Lord of the universe, Who has no partner with Him. This is what I have been enjoined, and I am the first to surrender to Him.'(Al-An`am:162-163). This same meaning has been explained of it by Ibn 'Abbas. `Ata`, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Hasan Bari, Qatadah, Muhammad bin Ka`b al-Kurzi, Dahhak, Rabi` bin Anas, `Ata` al-Khurasani and many other major commentators (may Allah bless them all) (Ibn Jarir). However, this by itself is correct that when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) enforced by Allah's command the practice of the `Id al-Adha Prayer and the offering of animal sacrifice at Madinah, he himself gave the first place to the Prayer (salat and the second to the sacrifice, as commanded in the verses: Inna salati wa nusuki and fa-salli li-Rabbika wanhar, and enjoined an the Muslims also to do the same, i.e. they should first perform the Prayer and then offer the sacrifice. This is neither the explanation of this verse nor the occasion of its revelation but a deduction made by the Holy Prophet from these verses and his deduction of injunctions also is a kind of Divine inspiration.

3The word shani' as used, in the original is derived from sha 'n, which means the hatred and spite because of which a person may start ill-treating another. At another place in the Qur'an it has been said: "(And O Muslims,) the enmity of any people should not so provoke you as to turn you away from justice." (Al-Ma'idah: 8). Thus, shani aka implies every such person who blinded by his enmity of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) should bring false accusations against him, slander and defame him and vent his personal spite against him by taunting and scoffing at him in every possible way.

4Huwal abtar: "He himself is abtar", i.e. though he calls you abtar he in fact himself is abtar. Some explanations of abtar have already been given in the Introduction to the Surah. It is derived from batar which means to cut off, but idiomatically it is used in a comprehensive meaning. In the Hadith, the rak ah of the Prayer which is not coupled with another rak'ah is called butaira', i.e. the lonely rak ah. According to another Hadith "Every piece of work, which is in any way important, is abtar if it is started without the glorification and praise of Allah", implying that it is cut off from the root, It has no stability, and it is doomed to failure. A man who fails to achieve his object is abtar as also the one who is deprived of all means and resources. A person who is left with no hope of any good and success in life is also abtar. A person who has been cut off from his family, brotherhood, associates And helpers is also abtar. The word abtar is also used for the man who has no male child, or whose male child or children have died, for after him there remains no one to remember him and he is lost to posterity . after death. In almost all these meanings the disbelieving Quraish called the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) abtar. At this, Allah

said: "O Prophet, not you but your enemies are abtar." This was not merely a "reprisal", but a prophecy out of the most important prophecies of the Qur'an, which literally proved true. when it was made, the people regarded the Holy Prophet as abtar, and no one could imagine how the big chiefs of the Quraish would become abtar, who were famous not only in Makkah but throughout Arabia, who were successful in life, rich in worldly wealth and children, who had their associates and helpers everywhere in the country, who enjoyed intimate relations with all the Arabian tribes, being monopolists in trade and managers of Hajj. But not long afterwards the conditions altogether changed. There was a time when on the occasion of the Battle of the Trench (A.H. 5) the Quraish had invaded Madinah with the help of many Arabian and Jewish tribes, and the Holy Prophet being besieged had to resist the enemy by digging a trench around the city. After only three years, in A.H. 8, when he attacked Makkah, the Quraish had no helper and they had to surrender helplessly. After this within a year or so the whole Arabia came under his control, deputations of tribes from all over the country began to visit him to take the oaths of allegiance and his enemies were left utterly helpless and resourceless. Then they were so lost to posterity that even if their children survived, none of them today knows that he is a descendant of Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab, As bin Wail, or `Uqbah bin Abi Mu`ait, the enemies of Islam, and even if he knows it, he is not prepared to claim that his ancestors were those people. On the contrary, blessings are being invoked on the children of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) throughout the world; millions and millions of Muslims take pride in bearing relationship to him; hundreds of thousands of people regard it as a mark of honor and prestige to have descended not only from him but from his family and even the families of his Companions. Thus, some one is a Sayyid, another an 'Alavi, and `Abbasi, a Hashmi, a Siddiqi, a Faruqi, an `Uthmani, a Zubairi, or an Ansari, but no one is an Abu Jahli or Abu Lahabi. History has proved that not the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) but his enemies were, and are, abtar. "

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109. Surah Al Kafirun (The Disbelievers)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-kafirun* occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat Hasan Basri and Ikrimah, say that this Surah, is Makki, while Hadrat Abdullah bin Zubair says that it is Madani. Two different views have been reported from Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas and Qatadah, first that it is Makki, and second that it is Madani. However, according to the majority of commentators, it is a Makki Surah, and the subject matter itself points to its being a Makki revelation.

Historical Background

There was a time in Makkah when although a storm of opposition had arisen in the pagan society of Quraish against the message of Islam preached by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), yet the Quraish chiefs hall not yet lost hope that they would reach some sort of a compromise with him. Therefore, from time to time they would visit him with different proposals of compromise so that he accepted one of them and the dispute between them was brought to an end. In this connection, different traditions have been related in the *Hadith*.

According to Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, the Quraish proposed to the Holy Prophet; "We shall give you so much of wealth that you will become the richest man of Makkah. We shall give you whichever woman you like in marriage. We are prepared to follow and obey you as our leader, only on the condition that you will not speak ill of our gods. If you do not agree to this, we present another proposal which is to your as well as to our advantage."

When the Holy Prophet asked what it was, they said that if he would worship their gods, Lat and Uzza, for a year, they would worship his God for the same space of time. The Holy Prophet said: "Wait awhile; let me see what my Lord commands in this regard."

Thereupon the revelation came down: *Qul ya-ayyuhal- kafirun...* and: *Qul afa-ghair Allahi...* (Az-Zumar: 64): "Say to them: ignorant people, do you bid me to worship others than Allah?" (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabarani). According to another tradition from Ibn Abbas, the Quraish said to the Holy Prophet: "O Muhammad, if you kiss our gods, the idols, we shall worship your God.Thereupon, this Surah was sent down. (Abd bin Humaid).

Said bin Mina (the freed slave of Abul Bakhtari) has related that Walid bin Mughirah, As bin Wail, Aswad bin al-Muttalib and Umayyah bin Khalaf met the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and said to him: "O Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), let us agree that we would worship your God and you would worship our gods, and we would make you a partner in all our works. If what you have brought was better than what we possess, we would be partners in it with you, and have our share in it, and if what we possess is better than what you have brought, you would be partner in it with us and have your share of it."At this Allah sent down: *Qul ya-ayyuhal-kafirun* (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Hisham also has related this incident in the *Sirah*).

Wahb bin Munabbih has related that the people of Quraish said to Allah's' Messenger: "If you like we would enter your faith for a year and you would enter our faith for a year."(Abd bin Humaid, Ibn Abi Hatim).

These traditions show that the Quraish had proposed such things to the Holy Prophet not once, in one sitting, but at different times and on different occasions; and there was need that they should be given a definite, decisive reply so that their hope that he would come to terms with them on the principle of "give and take" was frustrated for ever.

Theme and Subject Matter

If the Surah is read with this background in mind, one finds that it was not revealed to preach religious tolerance as some people of today seem to think, but it was revealed in order to exonerate the Muslims from the disbelievers religion, their rites of worship, and their gods, and to express their total disgust and unconcern with them and to tell them that Islam and kufr (unbelief) had nothing in common and there was no possibility of their being combined and mixed into one entity. Although it was addressed in the beginning to the disbelieving Quraish in response to their proposals of compromise, yet it is not confined to them only, but having made it a part of the Quran, Allah gave the Muslims the eternal teaching that they should exonerate themselves by word and deed from the creed of kufr wherever and in whatever form it be, and should declare without any reservation that they cannot make any compromise with the disbelievers in the matter of Faith. That is why this Surah continued to be recited when the people to whom it was addressed as a rejoinder, had died and been forgotten, and those Muslims also continued to recite it who were disbelievers at the time it was revealed, and the Muslims still recite it centuries after they have passed away, for expression of disgust with and dissociation from ***kufr*** and its rites is a perpetual demand of Faith.

As for the esteem in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) held this Surah, it can be judged from the following few *ahadith*:

Hadrat Abdullah bin Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) has related that on many an occasion he heard the Holy Prophet recite Surahs *Qul Ya- ayyuhal- kafirun* and *Qul Huwu-Allahu ahad* in the two rakahs before the Fajr obligatory Prayer and in the two rakahs after the Maghrib obligatory Prayer. Several traditions on this subject with a little variation in wording have been related by Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Nasai, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, Ibn

Marduyah from Ibn Umar.

Hadrat Khabbab says: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said to me: when you lie down in bed to sleep, recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal kafirun*, and this was the Holy Prophet's own practice also; when he lay down to sleep, he recited this Surah." (Bazzar, Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah).

According to Ibn Abbas, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said to the people: "Should I tell you the word which will protect you from polytheism? It is that you should recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal kafirun* when you go to bed."(Abu Ya'la, Tabarani).

Hadrat Anas says that the Holy Prophet said to Hadrat Mu'adh bin Jabal; "Recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal-kafirun* at the time you go to bed, for this is immunity from polytheism." (Baihaqi in *Ash-Shu'ab*).

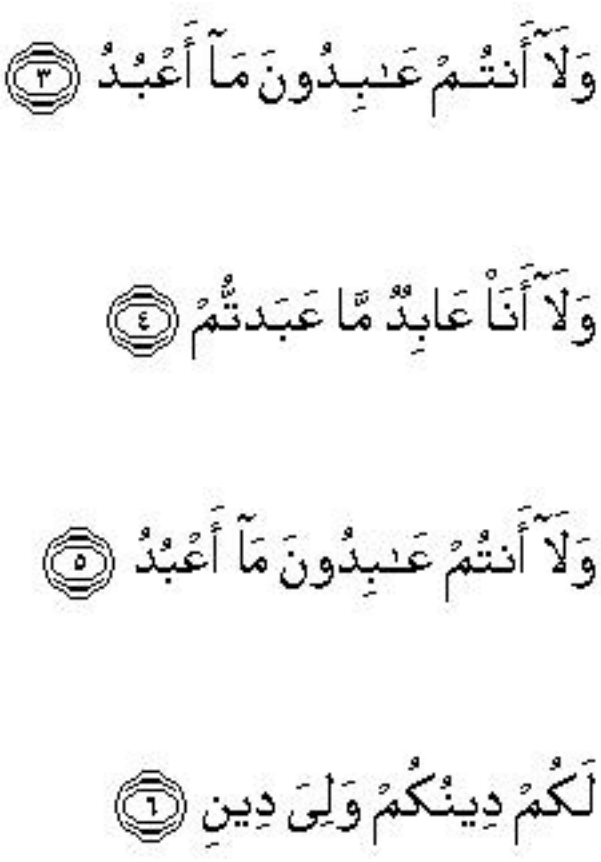
Both Fardah bin Naufal and Abdur Rahman bin Naufal have stated that their father, Naufal bin Muawiyah al-Ashjai, said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace): "Teach me something which I may recite at the time I go to bed." The Holy Prophet replied: "Recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal kafirun* to the end and then sleep, for this is immunity from polytheism." (Musnad Ahmad, Aba Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasai, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Hakim, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi in *Ash-Shuab*). A similar request was made by Hadrat Jabalah bin Harithah, brother of Hadrat Said bin Harithah, to the Holy Prophet and to him also he gave the same reply. (Musnad Ahmad, Tabarani).

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ ﴿١﴾

لَآ أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾



[1-6] Say: "O disbelievers![1] I do not worship those whom you worship.[2] Nor are you worshipers of Him Whom I worship.[3] Nor am I a worshiper of those whom you have worshiped. Nor are you worshipers of Him Whom I worship.[4] For you is your religion and for me is mine."[5]

1A few points in this verse are particularly noteworthy:

(1)Although the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been commanded to tell this to the disbelievers plainly, the theme that follows makes it explicit that every believer should tell the disbelievers plainly what has been said in the following verses; so much so that the person who has just believed and repented of kufr is also bound to express similarly his disgust with and disapproval of the creed and rites of worship and gods of kufr. Thus, though the first addressee of the word qul (say) is the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself, the command is not restricted to him alone but it reaches every believer through him.

(2)The word "kafir' is no abuse, which might have been used for the addressees of this verse, but it implies the one who refuses to believe, or is an unbeliever. As against it the word "mu min" is used for the believer. Therefore, the Holy Prophet's saying, by Allah's command, "O disbelievers, ... ', in fact, means: "O you, who have refused to believe in my apostleship and in the teachings brought by me." Likewise. when a believer uses this word, it will imply those who do not believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings),

(3) The word used is "O kafirs" and not "O mushriks"; therefore, the addressees are not only the mushriks but all those people who do not acknowledge Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as Allah's Messenger and the teachings and guidance brought by him as the teaching and guidance given by Allah Himself, whether they be Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians or the disbelievers, polytheists and pagans of the entire world. There is no reason why this address be restricted to the pagans of Quraish or of Arabia only.

(4) To address the deniers with the word "O kafirs" is just like addressing certain people as "O enemies", or "O opponents". Such an address is not, in fact, directed to the person of the addressee but it is made on the basis of their characteristic of enmity and opposition, and lasts only until they are so characterized. If one of them gives up enmity and opposition, or turns a friend and supporter, he no longer remains the addressee of this word. Likewise, the address of "O kafirs" to the people also is in view of their characteristic of kufr and not their person. This address would be perpetual for him who continues to be a kafir till death, but the one who believes will no longer be its addressee.

(5) Many scholars from among the commentators have expressed the opinion that in this Surah the address of "O disbelievers" applied only to a few persons of Quraish, who were visiting the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) with proposals of compromise regarding religion and about whom Allah had informed His Messenger than they would not believe. They have formed this opinion for two reasons. First, that it is followed by La a `budu ma to `budun: "I do not worship him or those whom you worship" . They say that this does not apply to the Jews and Christians, for they worship Allah. Second, that this is also followed by: wa la antum `abiduna ma a`bud "Nor are you worshipers of Him Whom I worship". Their reasoning is that this statement does not apply to the people who at the revelation of this Surah were disbelievers but later believed. Both these arguments are incorrect. As for these verses, their explanation that follows will show that they do not bear the meaning which has been understood from them. Here, to point out the error of the reasoning it would be enough to say that if the addressees of this Surah were only these people, why then does this Surah still continue to be recited when they are dead and gone from the world long long ago? And what was the need of making this Surah a part of the Qur'an permanently so that the Muslims should continue to read it for ever afterwards?

2This includes all those deities whom the disbelievers and the polytheists have been, and are still, worshiping everywhere in the world, whether they are the angels, the jinn, prophets, saints, spirits of the living or dead men, or the sun, the moon, stars, animals, trees, rivers, idols and imaginary gods and goddesses. One may say that the pagans of Arabia acknowledged Allah also as a Deity and the other pagans of the world also have never disacknowledged Allah as a Deity till today. As for the followers of the earlier scriptures, they also acknowledge Allah alone as the real Deity. How then can it be correct to exonerate oneself froth the worship of all the deities of all those people, without' exception, when Allah too is included among them?

The answer is that if Allah is worshiped along with others regarding Him as a Deity among other deities,

the believer in Tauhid will inevitably express his immunity from this worship, for in his sight Allah is oat a Deity out of a collection of deities, but He alone is the real Deity, and the worship of the collection of deities is no worship of Allah, although worship of Allah also is included in it. The Qur'an has clearly stated that Allah's worship is only that which does not have any tinge of the worship of another and in which man makes his worship exclusively Allah's. "And the only Command they were given, was to worship Allah, making their religion sincerely His, turning all their attention towards Him." (Al-Bayyinah: 5).

This subject has been explained at many places in the Qur'an forcefully; for example, see Au-Nisa': 145-146, AI-A`raf :29, AzZumar: 2, 3, 11, 14, 15, A1-Mu'min: 14, 64-66. It has been further explained in a Hadith Qudsi (i.e. Divine Word revealed through the mouth of the Prophet) in which the messenger of Allah says: "Allah says: I am Self-Sufficient of the association of every associate most of all. Whoever performed an act in which he associated another also with Me, 1 am free of it, and the entire act is for him who was associated." (Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Majah). Thus, acknowledging Allah as one of the two, three or many gods and serving and worshiping others along with Him is, in fact, the real kufr, declaration of immunity from which is the object of this Surah.

3The words used are: ma a'budu. The word ma in Arabic, is generally used for lifeless or unintelligent things, and the word man for intelligent and rational beings. The question arises why has ma a `budu been used here instead of man a `budu? The commentators generally give four answers to it:

(1) that ma here is in the meaning of man;

(2) that ma here is in the meaning of alladhi (i.e. which or who);

(3) that in both the sentences ma is in the meaning of a noun of action (masdar) and it means: "I do not perform the kind of worship that you perform, i. e. polytheistic worship, and you do not perform the kind of worship that I perform, i.e. worship of One God;"

(4) that since in the first sentence ma ta'buduna has been used, in the second ma a `budu has been used to keep the style; in both places there is only the uniformity of the word, there is no uniformity of meaning; instances of this are found elsewhere also in the Qur'an. For example, in AI-Baqarah: 194, it has been said: "Therefore, if anyone transgresses a prohibition by attacking you, you may do likewise." Obviously, to transgress likewise in retaliation is no transgression, but the word transgression (in retaliation) Gas been used only for the sake of uniformity in style. In Surah At-Taubah: 67, it has been said: "They forgot Allah, so Allah forgot them", whereas Allah does not forget. what meant to be said is that Allah ignored them. The word nisyan in respect of Allah has been used corresponding to their nisyaa (forgetfulness) only to keep the uniformity of the study.

Although all these four interpretations are correct in their own way, and there is room in Arabic to take all

these meanings, yet none of these explains the real object for which ma a'budu has been used instead of man a `budu. As a matter of fact, when man is used for a person in Arabic, it is meant to say or ask something about his person, and when ma is used, it is meant to ask or express something about his characteristics and traits. This can be explained in English by the questions: who is he? and what is he? about a person. When it is asked, who is he? the object is to know something about his person. But when it is asked, what is he? the object is to know whether, for example, he belongs to the army, and if so, what is his rank, or whether he belongs to some teaching organization, and if so, whether he is a lecturer in it, or a reader, or a professor, what science or art subject he teaches, what are his qualifications, etc.

Thus, if in this verse, it was said: La antum abiduna man a `bud, it would mean: "You are not worshipers of the being whom I worship, and in response, the disbelievers and the polytheists could have said that they too believed in the Being of Allah and also worshiped Him. But when it was said: La antum 'abiduna ma a`bud, it meant: "You are not worshipers of the Deity who has the attributes of the Deity whom I worship."

And this is the real point on the basis of which the religion of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is absolutely distinguish-ed from the religions of all kinds of disbelievers, besides the deniers of God, for his God is utterly different from the God of all of them. The God of some of them is such that He stood in need of rest on the seventh day after having created the world in six days, Who is not God of the universe but God of Israel, Who stands in a special relationship to the people of one particular race, which is not shared by other men, Who wrestles with the Prophet Jacob and cannot throw him, Who has also a son, named Ezra. The God of some others is father of an only son, called Jesus Christ, and He causes His son to be crucified in order to make him an atonement for the sins of others. The God of some has wife and children, but begets only daughters. The God of some assumes human form and shape and living in a human body on the earth works like men. The God of some is merely an Essence, or Cause of causes, or the First Cause, Who after giving the system of the universe the initial push is sitting aside unconcerned, the universe is working by itself according to some relentless laws, and now He and man have nothing to do with each other. In short, even the unbelievers who acknowledge God do not, in fact, acknowledge the God, Who is the Creator, . Master, Disposer, Administrator and Ruler of the entire universe, Who has not only set the system of the universe but is running and controlling it by Himself every moment, Who is above every defect, fault, weakness and error, Who is free from every similitude, every physical limitation, every likeness, Who is Self-Sufficient of every companion and associate, Who has no partner in His Being, attributes, powers and entitlement to worship, Who is far too Holy that He should have children, or should take some one for a son, or should have an exclusive relationship with a community or race, Who is directly related to each individual creature of His as His Providence, Sustainer and Guardian, Who hears the prayers and answers them, Who alone possesses all the powers to give life and death, to cause profit and loss, and to make and mar destinies, Who not only sustains His creatures but also guides each according to its nature and need, Who is not only our God Whom we worship but also enjoins commands and prohibitions through His Prophets and His Books, which we have to obey, before Whom we are accountable for our deeds, Who

will resurrect us after death, call us to account and reward and punish us accordingly. No one in the world except for Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and his followers, is worshiping the God with these attributes. If at all some others also are worshiping God, they are not worshiping the real and true God but the God who is their self-invented, imaginary God.

4A section of the commentators is of the view that both these sentences are a repetition of the theme of the first two sentences and the repetition is meant to strengthen the statement in the first two sentences. But many commentators do not regard it as a repetition. They say that a new theme has been expressed in these which is different from the theme of the first two sentences. In our opinion they arc correct in so far as there is no repetition in these sentences, for in these only "nor are you worshipers of Him Whom I worship" Gas been repeated, and this repetition also is not in the sense in which this sentence was used first. But after negating the repetition the meanings that this section of the commentators has given of these two sentences are very different from each other. There is no occasion here to take up and discuss each of the meanings given by the commentators. Avoiding details we shall only discuss the meaning which is correct in our opinion.

In the first sentence, it has been said: "Nor am I a worshiper of those whom you have worshiped." Its theme is absolutely different from the theme of verse 2, in which it was said: "I do not worship those whom you warship," These two things widely differ in two aspects. First, that although there is denial, and a forceful denial, in saying that "I do not, or shall not, do such and such a thing", yet there is much greater force in saying that "1 am not a doer of such and such a thing", for it means: "It is such an evil thing that nothing to say of committing it; it is not possible that I would even think of it, or have intention of doing it." Second, that the sentence "whom you worship" applies to only those gods whom the disbelievers are worshiping now. On the contrary, the sentence "whom you have worshiped" applies to all those gods whom the disbelievers and their forefathers have been worshiping in the past. Now, it is a well known fact that the gods of the polytheists and disbelievers have always been changing and their number increasing and decreasing. In different ages different groups of them have been worshiping different gods and the gods of all the disbelievers have never always been the same everywhere. Therefore, the verse means: "I exonerate myself not only from your gods of today but also from the gods of your forefathers, and I am not a person who would even think of worshiping such gods."

As for the second sentence, although its words in verse 5 are the same as in verse 3, yet its meaning at the two places is different. In verse 3, it follows this sentence: "I do not worship those whom you worship." Therefore, it means: "Nor are you worshipers of the God having the attributes of the One God Whom I worship." And in verse 5, it follows this sentence: "Nor am I a worshiper of those whom you have worshiped." Therefore, it means: "Nor does it seem you would become worshipers of the One God Whom I worship." Or, in other words, "It is not possible that I should become a worshiper of each of those gods whom you and your forefathers have worshiped, and on account of your aversion to adopting worship of One God, instead of many gads, it cannot be expected that you would desist from this wrong worship and will become worshiper of Him Whom I worship."

5That is, "My religion is entirely distinct and separate from your religion. I am not a worshiper of your gods and you are not worshipers of my God. I cannot worship your gods and you are not prepared to worship my God, Therefore, you and I can never follow and walk one and the same path together." This is not a message of tolerance to the disbelievers, but a declaration of immunity, disgust with and dissociation from them as long as they are disbelievers. Its object is to disappoint them absolutely and finally that in the matter of religion the party of Allah's Messenger and his followers would ever come to terms with them. This same declaration of immunity and expression of disgust has been made in the Makki Surahs revealed after this Surah successively.

Thus, in Surah Yunus, it was said: "If these people deny you, say to them: 1 am responsible for my deeds and you are responsible for yours: you are not accountable for what I do, and I am not accountable for what you do." (v. 41). Then further on in the same Surah it was said: "O Prophet, say: O mankind, if you are still in doubt concerning my Faith, know that I do not worship those whom you worship beside Allah, but I worship that Allah alone, Who has the power to cause your death." (v. 104).

In Surah Ash-Shu'ara it was said: "If they disobey you, tell them: I am not responsible for what you do." (v. 216).

In Surah Saba it was said: "Say to them: you will not be questioned for the errors we have committed, nor shall we be answerable for what you are doing. Say, our Lord will gather us together, then He will judge between us rightly." (w. 25-26).

In Surah az-Zumar: "Tell them plainly: O my people, do whatever you will, so shall I. Soon you shall come to know as to whom comes the disgraceful torment and who gets the enduring punishment." (w. 39-40).

Then the same lesson was taught in Madinah to all the Muslims: "There is indeed an excellent example for you in Abraham and his companions when they said to their people plainly: `We have nothing to do with you and your gods, whom you worship beside God: we have renounced you and there has arisen between us and you enmity and hatred for ever, until you believe in Allah, the One." (Al-Mumtahinah: 4).

These continuous explanations of the Qur'an do not leave any room whatever for the doubt that the verse Lakum dims kum wa liya din dces not mean: "You may go on following your religion and allow me to follow mine", but it is the kind of declaration made in Surah Az-Zumar: 14: "O Prophet, say to them: I shall serve Allah alone, making my religion sincerely His. As for you, you may serve whomever you please beside Him." (v. 14).

From this verse lmam Abu Hanifah and Imam Shafe`i have deduced that kufr (unbelief), as a whole, is one community, however discordant and different from each other be the religions of the unbelievers; therefore, a Jew can inherit a Christian, and a Christian a Jew, and likewise the unbeliever of one religion

can inherit the un-believer of another religion, if there exists between them a relationship by descent or marriage, or some other connection, which necessitates the passage of inheritance of one to another. On the contrary, Imam Malik, Imam Auza`i and Imam Ahmad hold the view that the followers of one religion cannot inherit the followers of another religion. They deduce this from the Hadith which has been related on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-As, saying that Allah's Messenger (upon whom be peace) said: "The people of two different communities cannot inherit each other." (Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah, Daraqutni).

A Hadith with almost the same content has been related by Tirmidhi from Hadrat Jabir, by Ibn Hibban from Hadrat `Ahdullah bin `Umar, and by Bazzar from Hadrat Abu Hurairah. Dealing with this legal problem comprehensively, the well known Hanafi Imam; Shamsul-A'immah Sarakhsi, writes: "The unbelievers can inherit each other mutually for all those reasons for which the Muslims inherit each other mutually, and they can also inherit each other in certain other cases in which the Muslims do not inherit each other ... The fact is that Allah recognizes only two ways of life, the religion of Truth and the religion of falsehood; that is why He has declared: Lakum dine-kum wa liya din. And He has classified the people also into two groups, one group will go to Paradise and this consists of the believers, and the second group will go to Hell and this consists of the disbelievers collectively. And He has declared the two groups only as the potential opponents of each other: "These are the two parties who have disputed about their Lord." (AI-Hajj: 19).

That is, one group comprises all the disbelievers collectively and they are opposed to the believers ... We do not admit that they are separate and distinct communities according to their beliefs, but as against the Muslims they all form one community. For the Muslims affirm faith in the prephethood of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and in the Qur'an and they refuse to affirm faith. For this very reason they have been declared to be unbelievers and are one community as opposed to the Muslims ... The Hadith, La yata-warith ahl millatain, points to the same thing as explained above. For the Holy Prophet has explained the word millatain (two communities) by his saying: La yarithul Muslim al-kafir wa lal-kafir al-Maslim: "The Muslim cannot inherit the disbeliever, nor the disbeliever can inherit the Muslim." (AIMabsut vol. 30, pp. 30-32). The Hadith cited here by Imam Sarakhsi has been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i, Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Abu Da'ud on the authority of Hadrat Usamah bin Zaid.

110. Surah An Nasr (The Help)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *nasr* occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas states that this is the last Surah of the Quran to be revealed, i. e. no complete Surah was sent down to the Holy Prophet after it. (Muslim Nasai, Tabarani, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Ibn Marduyah).

According to Hadrat Abdullah bin Umar, this Surah was sent down on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage in the middle of the *Tashriq* Days at Mina, and after it the Holy Prophet rode his she camel and gave his well known Sermon. (Tirmidhi, Bazzar, Baihaqi, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Abd bin Humaid, Abn Yala, Ibn Marduyah). Baihaqi in *Kitab al- Hajj* has related from the tradition of Hadrat Sarra bint-Nabhan the Sermon which the Holy Prophet gave on this occasion. She says:

"At the Farewell Pilgrimage I heard the Holy Prophet say: O people, do you know what day it is? They said: Allah and His Messenger have the best knowledge. He said: This is the middle day of the *Tashriq* Days. Then he said: Do you know what place it is? They said: Allah and His Messenger have the best knowledge. He said: This is *Masharil-Haram*. Then he said: I do not know, I might not meet you here again. Beware, your bloods and your honors are forbidden, until you appear before your Lord, and He questions you about your deeds. Listen: let the one who is near convey it to him who is far away. Listen: have I conveyed the message to you? Then, when we returned to Madinah, the Holy Prophet passed away not many days after that."

If both these traditions are read together, it appears that there was an interval of three months and some days between the revelation of Surah An-Nasr and the Holy Prophet's death, for historically the same was the interval between the Farewell Pilgrimage and the passing away of the Holy Prophet.

Ibn Abbas says that when this Surah was revealed, the Holy Prophet said that he had been informed of his death

and his time had approached. (Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah). In the other traditions related from Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, it has been stated that at the revelation of this Surah the Holy Prophet understood that he had been informed of his departure from the world.(Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir, Tabarani, Nasai, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduyah).

Mother of the Believers, Hadrat Umm Habibah, says that when this Surah was revealed the Holy Prophet said that he would leave the world that year. Hearing this Hadrat Fatimah wept. Thereat he said: "From among my family you will be the first to join me." Hearing this she laughed.(Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduyah). A tradition containing almost the same theme has been related by Baihaqi from Ibn Abbas.

Ibn Abbas says: "Hadrat Umar used to invite me to sit in his assembly along with some of the important elderly Companions who had fought at Badr. This was not liked by some of them. They complained that they also had sons who were like the boy. Why then was he in particular invited to sit in the assembly? (Imam Bukhari and Ibn Jarir have pointed out that such a thing was said by Hadrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf).

Hadrat Umar said that the boy enjoyed the position and distinction because of his knowledge. Then one day he invited the Companions of Badr and called me also to sit with them. I understood that he had invited me to the assembly to prove his contention. During the conversation Hadrat Umar asked the Companions of Badr: "What do you say about *Idha jaa nasrullahi wal- fath*?" Some said: "In it we have been enjoined to praise Allah and ask for His forgiveness when His succor comes and we attain victory."Some others said that it implied the conquest of cities and forts. Some kept quiet. Then Hadrat Umar said: "Ibn Abbas, do you also say the same?"I said no. He asked: "What then is your view?"I submitted that it implied the last hour of Allah's Messenger (upon whom be peace); in it he was informed that when Allah's succor came and victory was attained, it would be a sign that his hour had come; therefore, he should praise Allah and ask for His forgiveness. Thereat Hadrat Umar said "I know naught but what you have said."

In another tradition there is the addition that, Hadrat Umar said to the Companions: "How can you blame me when you yourselves have seen why I invite this boy to join the assembly?" (Bukhari, Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Marduyah, Baghawi, Baihaqi, Ibn al-Mundhir).

Theme and Subject Matter

As is shown by the above traditions, Allah in this Surah had informed His Messenger (upon whom be peace) that when Islam attained complete victory in Arabia and the people started entering Allah's religion in great numbers, it would mean that the mission for which he had been sent to the world, had been fulfilled. Then, he was enjoined to busy himself in praising and glorifying Allah by Whose bounty he had been able to accomplish such a great task, and should implore Him to forgive whatever failings and frailties he might have shown in the performance of the service. Here, by a little consideration one can easily see the great difference that there is between a Prophet and a common worldly leader. If a worldly leader in his own lifetime is able to bring about a revolution, which has the aim and objective of his struggle, this would be an occasion for exultation for him. But here we witness quite another phenomenon. The Messenger of Allah in a brief space of 23 years revolutionized an entire nation as regards its beliefs, thoughts, customs, morals, civilization, ways of living, economy, politics and fighting ability, and raising it

from ignorance and barbarism enabled it to conquer the world and become leader of nations; yet when he had accomplished this unique task, he was not enjoined to celebrate it but to glorify and praise Allah and to pray for His forgiveness, and he busied himself humbly the implementation of that command.

Hadrat Aishah says: "The Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) often used to recite *Subhanak-Allahumma wa bi-hamdika astaghfiruka wa atubu ilaika* (according to some other traditions, *Subhan Allahi wa bi hamdi-hi as- taghfirullaha wa atubu ilaihi*) before his death. I asked: O Messenger of Allah, what are these words that you have started reciting now? He replied: A sign has been appointed for me so that when I see it, I should recite these words, and it is: *Idha jaa nasrullahi wal-fathu*." (Musnad Ahmad, Muslim, Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Marduyah).

In some other traditions on the same subject Hadrat Aishah has reported that the Holy Prophet often recited the following words in his ruku and sajdah: Subhanak-Allahumma wa-bi hamdika, Allahumma- aghfirli. This was the interpretation of the Quran (i. e. of Surah An-Nasr) that he had made.(Bukhari, Muslim Abu Daud, Nasai, Ibn Majah, Ibn Jarir).

Hadrat Umm Salamah says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) during his last days very often recited the following words sitting and standing, going out of the house and coming back to it: *Subhan Allahi wa-bi hamdi-hi*. I one day asked: "Why do you recite these words so often? O Messenger of Allah". He replied: I have been enjoined to do so. Then he recited this Surah." (Ibn Jarir).

According to Hadrat Abdullah bin Masud, when this Surah was revealed, the Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace) frequently began to recite the words *Subhanak-Allahumma wa bi-hamdika, Allahumm-aghfirli, subhanaka Rabbana wa bi-hamdika, Allahumm-aghfirli, innaka anta at- Tawwab al-Ghafur*.(Ibn Jarir, Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Abi Hatim).

Ibn Abbas has stated that after the revelation of this Surah the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) began to labor so intensively and devotedly hard for the Hereafter as he had never done before.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

إِذَا جَآءَ نَصْرُ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْفَتْحُ ﴿١﴾

وَرَأَيْتَ ٱلنَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِى دِينِ ٱللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿٢﴾

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ﴿٣﴾

[1-3] When Allah's help comes and victory is attained.[1] And (O Prophet,) you see that the people are entering into Allah's Religion in crowds.[2] Then glorify your Lord with His praise,[3] and pray for His forgiveness.[4] Indeed, He is ever inclined to accept repentance.

1Victory here does not imply victory in any one particular campaign but the decisive victory after which there remained no power in the land to resist and oppose Islam, and it became evident that Islam alone would hold sway in Arabia Some commentators have taken this to imply the Conquest of Makkah. But the conquest of Makkah took place iu A.H. 8, and this Surah was revealed towards the end of A.H.10, as is shown by the traditions related on the authority of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Umar and Hadrat Sarra' bint Nabhan, which we have cited in the Introduction. Besides, the statement of Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas that this is the last Surah of the Qur'an to be revealed, also goes against this commentary. For if the victory implied the conquest of Makkah, the whole of Surah at-Taubah was revealed after it then it could not be the last Surah. There is no doubt that the conquest of Makkah was decisive in that it broke the power of the Arabian pagans, yet even after this, they showed clear signs of resistance. The battles of Ta'if and Hunain were fought after it, and it took Islam about two years to attain complete control over Arabia.

2"You see ... in crowds": "When the time for the people to enter Islam in one's and two's comes to an end, and when whole tribes and people belonging to large tracts start entering it in crowds, of their own free will, and without offering battle or resistance." This happened from the beginning of A.H. 9, because of which that year has been described as the year of deputations. Deputations from every part of Arabia started coming before the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace), entering Islam and taking the oath of allegiance to him, until when he went for the Farewell Pilgrimage to Makkah, in A.H. 10, the whole of Arabia had become Muslim, and not a single polytheist remained anywhere in the country.

3Hamd implies praising and hallowing Allah Almighty as well as thanking and paying obeisance to Him; tasbih means to regard Allah as pure and free from every blemish and weakness. The Holy Prophet was enjoined to do hamd and tasbih of Allah when he witnessed this manifestation of His power. Here, hamd means that in respect of his great success he should never entertain even a tinge of the idea that it was the result of any excellence of his own, but he should attribute it to Allah's favor and mercy, thank Him

alone for it, and acknowledge with the heart and tongue that praise and gratitude for the victory and success belonged to Him alone. And tasbih means that he should regard Allah as pure and free from the limitation that exaltation of his Word stood in need of his effort and endeavor, or was dependent on it. On the contrary, his heart should be filled with the faith that the success of his effort and struggle was dependent upon Allah's support and succor. He could take this service from any of His servants He pleased. and it was His favor that He had taken it from him, and made His religion meet success through him. Besides, there is an aspect of wonder also in pronouncing the tasbih, i.e. Subhan Allah. When a wonderful incident takes place, one exclaims subhan-Allah, thereby implying that only by Allah's power such a wonderful thing had happened; otherwise no power of the world could have caused it to happen.

4"Pray for His forgiveness": "Pray to your Lord to overlook; and pardon whatever error or weakness you might have shown inadvertently in the performance of the service that He had entrusted to you," This is the etiquette that Islam has taught to man. A man might have performed the highest possible service to Allah's Religion, might have offered countless sacrifices in its cause, and might have exerted himself extremely hard in carrying out the rites of His worship, yet he should never entertain the thought that he has fulfilled the right his Lord had on him wholly. Rather he should always think that he has not been able to fulfill what was required of him, and he should implore Allah, saying: "Lord, overlook and forgive whatever weakness I might have shown in rendering Your right, and accept the little service that I have been able to perform." When such an etiquette was taught to the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace), none in the world conceivably has toiled and struggled so hard in the cause of Allah as he did, how can another person regard his work as superb and be involved in the misunderstanding that he has fulfilled the right Allah had imposed on him? Allah's right, in fact, is so supreme that no creature can ever fulfill and render it truly and fully.

Allah in this command has taught Muslims an eternal lesson: "Do not regard any of your worship, devotion or religious service as something superb; even if you have expended your entire life in the cause of Allah, you should always think that you could not do all that was required of you by your Lord. Likewise, when you attain some victory, you should not regard it as a result of some excellence in yourselves but as a result of only Allah's bounty and favor. Then bowing humbly before your Lord, you should praise and glorify Him, and should repent and beg for His forgiveness instead of boasting and bragging of your success and victory."

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11. Surah Al Lahab (The Flame)

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *Lahab* in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Although the commentators have not disputed its being a Makki Surah, yet it is difficult to determine in which phase of the life at Makkah precisely it was revealed. However, in view of Abu Lahab's role and conduct against the Holy Prophet's message of Truth, it can be assumed that it must have been revealed in the period when he had transgressed all limits in his mad hostility to him, and his attitude was becoming a serious obstruction in the progress of Islam. It may well have been revealed in the period when the Quraish had boycotted the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) together with the people of his clan and besieged them in Shi'b Abi Talib, and Abu Lahab was the only person to join with the enemies against his own relatives. The basis of this assumption is that Abu Lahab was the Holy Prophet's uncle, and public condemnation of the uncle by the tongue of the nephew could not be proper until the extreme excesses committed by the uncle had become visible to everyone. If the Surah had been revealed before this, in the very beginning, the people would have regarded it as morally discourteous that the nephew should so condemn the uncle.

Background

This is the only place in the Quran where a person from among the enemies of Islam has been condemned by name, whereas in Makkah as well as in Madinah, after the migration, there were many people who were in no way less inimical to Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) than Abu Lahab. The question is, what was the special trait of the character of this person, which became the basis of this condemnation by name? To understand that it is necessary that one should understand the Arabian society of that time and the role that Abu Lahab played in it.

In ancient days since there prevailed chaos and confusion, bloodshed and plunder throughout Arabia, and the condition for centuries was that a person could have no guarantee of the protection of life, honor and property

except with the help and support of his clansmen and blood relations, therefore *silah rehmi* (good treatment of the kindred) was esteemed most highly among the moral values of the Arabian society and breaking off of connections with the kindred was regarded as a great sin. Under, the influence of the same Arabian tradition when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) began to preach the message of Islam, the other clans of Quraish and their chiefs resisted and opposed him tooth and nail, but the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib (children of al-Muttalib, brother of Hashim) not only did not oppose him but continued to support him openly, although most of them had not yet believed in his Prophethood. The other clans of Quraish themselves regarded this support by the blood relations of the Holy Prophet as perfectly in accordance with the moral traditions of Arabia. That is why they never taunted the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib in that they had abandoned their ancestral faith by supporting a person who was preaching a new faith. They knew and believed that they could in no case hand over an individual of their clan to his enemies, and their support and aid of a clansman was perfectly natural in the sight of the Quraish and the people of Arabia.

This moral principle, which the Arabs even in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, regarded as worthy of respect and inviolable was broken only by one man in his enmity of Islam, and that was Abu Lahab, son of Abdul Muttalib. He was an uncle of the Holy Prophet, whose father and he were sons of the same father. In Arabia, an uncle represented the father especially when the nephew was fatherless. The uncle was expected to look after the nephew as one of his own children. But this man in his hostility to Islam and love of ***kufr*** trampled all the Arab traditions under foot.

The traditionists have related from Ibn Abbas with several chains of transmitters the tradition that when the Holy Prophet was commanded to present the message of Islam openly, and he was instructed in the Quran to warn first of all his nearest kinsfolk of the punishment of God, he ascended the Mount, Safa one morning and called out aloud: *Ya sabahah* (O, the calamity of the morning!). This alarm in Arabia was raised by the person who noticed early at dawn an enemy tribe advancing against his tribe. When the Holy Messenger made this call, the people inquired as to who had made the call. They were told that it was Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). There the people of all the clans of Quraish rushed out. Everyone who could, came. He who could not, sent another one for himself. When the People had assembled, the Holy Messenger calling out each clan by name, viz. O Bani Hashim, O Bani Abdul Muttalib, O Bani Fihr, O Bani so and so, said: "If I were to tell you that behind the hill there was an enemy host ready to fall upon you, would you believe me?" The people responded with one voice, saying that they never had so far experienced a lie from him. The Holy Prophet said: "Then I warn you that you are heading for a torment." Thereupon, before anyone else could speak, Abu Lahab, the Holy Prophet's uncle, said: "May you perish! Did you summon us for this?"Another tradition adds that he picked up a stone to throw at the Holy Prophet. (Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Jarir, and others).

According to Ibn Zaid, one day Abu Lahab asked the Holy Prophet: "If I were to accept your religion, what would I get?" The Holy Prophet replied: "You would get what the other believers would get." He said: "Is there no preference or distinction for me?" The Holy Prophet replied: "What else do you want?" Thereupon he said: "May this religion perish in which I and all other people should be equal and alike!" (Ibn Jarir).

In Makkah Abu Lahab was the next door neighbor of the Holy Prophet. Their houses were separated by a wall. Besides him, Hakam bin As (Father of Marwan), Uqbah bin Abi Muait, Adi bin Hamra and Ibn al-Asda il-Hudhali

also were his neighbors. These people did not allow him to have peace even in his own house. Sometimes when he was performing the Prayer, they would place the goat's stomach on him; sometimes when food was being cooked in the courtyard, they would throw filth at the cooking pot. The Holy Prophet would come out and say: "O Bani Abdi Manaf, what kind of neighborliness is it?"Abu Lahab's wife, Umm Jamil (Abu Sufyan's sister), had made it a practice to cast thorns at his door in the night so that when he or his children came out of the house at dawn, they should run thorns in the foot. (Baihaqi, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Asakir, Ibn Hisham).

Before the proclamation of Prophethood, two of the Holy Prophet's daughters were married to two of Abu Lahab's sons, Utbah and Utaibah. After his call when the Holy Prophet began to invite the people to Islam, Abu Lahab said to both his sons:"I would forbid myself seeing and meeting you until you divorced the daughters of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings)."So, both of them divorced their, wives. Utaibah in particular became so nasty in his spitefulness that one day he came before the Holy Prophet and said: "I repudiate *An-najmi idha hawa and Alladhi dana fatadalla*" and then he spat at him, but his spital did not fall on him. The Holy Prophet prayed: "O God, subject him to the power of a dog from among Your dogs."Afterwards, Utaibah accompanied his father in his journey to Syria. During the journey the caravan halted at a place which, according to local people, was visited by wild beasts at night. Abu Lahab told his companions, the Quraish: "Make full arrangements for the protection of my son, for I fear the curse invoked by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) on him." Accordingly, the people made their camels sit all around Utaibah and went to sleep. At night a tiger came which crossed the circle of the camels and devoured Utaibah tearing him to pieces. (Ibn Abdul Barr: *Al-Istiab*; Ibn Hajar: Al- Isabah; Abu Nuaim al-Isfahani: *Dalail an-Nubuwwat*; As-Suhaili: *Raud al-Unuf*. Here there is a difference of opinion. Some reporters say that the divorce took place after the Holy Prophet's proclamation of Prophethood and some say that it took place after the revelation of *Tabbat yada Abi Lahab*. There is also a difference of opinion about whether Abu Lahab's this son was Utbah or Utaibah. But this much is confirmed that after the conquest of Makkah, Utbah embraced Islam and took the oath of allegiance at the Holy Prophet's hand. Therefore, the correct view is that it was Utaibah).

Abu Lahab's wickedness can be judged from the fact that when after the death of the Holy Prophet's son Hadrat Qasim, his second son, Hadrat Abdullah, also died, this man instead of joining with his nephew in his bereavement, hastened to the Quraish chiefs joyfully to give them the news that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had become childless that night. This we have already related in the commentary of Surah Al-Kauthar.

Wherever the Holy Prophet went to preach his message of Islam, this man followed him and forbade the people to listen to him. Rabiah bin Abbad ad- Dill has related: "I was a young boy when I accompanied my father to the face of Dhul-Majaz. There I saw the Holy Messenger (may peace be upon him) who was exhorting the people, saying: 'O people, say: there is no deity but Allah, you will attain success.' Following behind him I saw a man, who was telling the people, `This fellow is a liar: he has gone astray from his ancestral faith.' I asked; who is he? The people replied: He is his uncle, Abu Lahab." (Musnad Ahmad, Baihaqi).

Another tradition from Hadrat Rabiah is to the effect; "I saw that the Holy Prophet went to the halting place of each tribe and said: `O children of so and so, I have been appointed Allah's Messenger to you. I exhort you to worship only Allah and to associate none with Him. So, affirm faith in me and join me so that I may fulfill the mission for which I have been sent.' Following close behind him there was a man who was saying: `O children of so and so, he

is leading you astray from Lat and Uzza and inviting you to the religion of error and innovation which he has brought. Do not at all listen to what he says and do not follow him.' I asked my father: who is he? He replied: he is his uncle, Abu Lahab." (Musnad Ahmad, Tabarani).

Tariq bin Abdullah al-Muharibi's tradition is similar. He says: "I saw in the fare of Dhul-Majaz that the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) was exhorting the people, saying: `O people, say *La ilaha ill-Allah*, you will attain success', and behind him there was a man who was casting stones at him, until his heels bled, and he was telling the people: 'Do not listen to him, he is a liar.' I asked the people who he was. They said he was his uncle, Abu Lahab." (Tirmidhi).

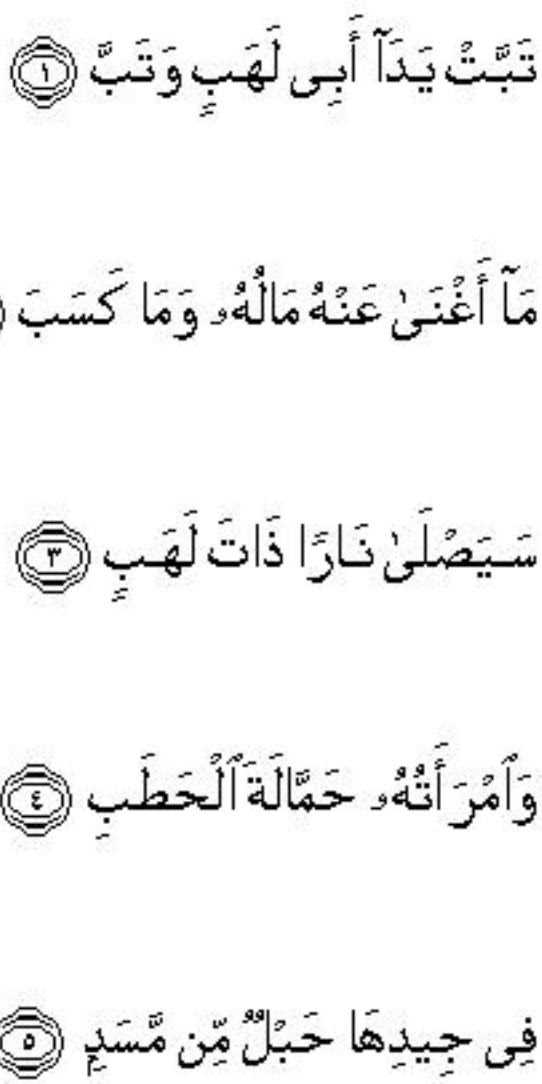
In the 7th year of Prophethood, when all the clans of Quraish boycotted the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib socially and economically, and both these clans remaining steadfast to the Holy Prophet's support, were besieged in Shib Abi Talib, Abu Lahab was the only person, who sided with the disbelieving Quraish against his own clan. This boycott continued for three years, so much so that the Bani Hashim and the Bani al-Muttalib began to starve. This, however, did not move Abu Lahab. When a trade caravan came to Makkah and a besieged person from Shib Abi Talib approached it to buy some article of food, Abu Lahab would shout out to the merchants to demand a forbidding price, telling them that he would make up for any loss that they incurred. Thus, they would demand exorbitant rates and the poor customer had to return empty handed to his starving children. Then Abu Lahab would purchase the same articles from them at the market rates. (Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hisham).

On account of these very misdeeds this man was condemned in this Surah by name, and there was a special need for it. When the Holy Prophet's own uncle followed and opposed him before the Arabs who came for hajj from outside Makkah, or gathered together in the fares held at different places, they regarded it as against the established traditions of Arabia that an uncle should run down his nephew without a reason, should pelt stones at him and bring false accusations against him publicly. They were, therefore, influenced by what Abu Lahab said and were involved in doubt about the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). But when this, Surah was revealed, and Abu Lahab, filled with rage, started uttering nonsense, the people realized that what he said in opposition to the Holy Prophet was not at all reliable, for he said all that in his mad hostility to his nephew.

Besides, when his uncle was condemned by name, the people's expectation that the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) could treat some relative leniently in the matter of religion was frustrated for ever. When the Holy Messenger's own uncle was taken to task publicly the people understood that there was no room for preference or partiality in their faith. A non-relative could become a near and dear one if he believed, and a near relation a non-relative if he disbelieved. Thus, there is no place for the ties of blood in religion.

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.



[1-5] Broken were the hands of Abu Lahab and he was doomed to utter failure.[1] His wealth and whatever he earned did not avail him anything.[2] Certainly he shall be cast into a blazing Fire. And his wife, too,[3] the bearer of slander.[4] Round her neck will be a rope of palm-fibre.[5]

1His real name was 'Abd al-'Uzza, and he was called Abu Lahab on account of his glowing, ruddy complexion. Lahab means the flame of fire, and Abu Lahab the one with a flaming, fiery face. His being mentioned here by his nickname (Kunyat), instead of his real name, has several reasons. First, that he was better known by his nickname than by his real name; second, that the Qur'an did not approve that he should be mentioned by his polytheistic name `Abd al 'Uzza (slave of 'Uzza); third, that his kunyat goes well with the fate that has been described of him in this Surah.

Some commentators have translated tabbat yada Abi Lahab to mean: "May the hands of Abu Lahab be broken", and tabby to mean: “may he perish" or "he perished". But this, in fact, was not a curse which was invoked on him, but a prophecy in which an event taking place in the future, has been described in the past tense, to suggest that its occurrence in the future is certain and inevitable.

In actual fact, at last the same thing happened as had been foretold in this Surah a few years earlier. Breaking of the hands obviously does not imply breaking of the physical hands, but a person's utterly failing in his aim and object for which he has exerted his utmost. And Abu Lahab indeed had exerted his utmost to defeat and frustrate the message of Islam presented by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). But hardly seven or eight years after the revelation of this Surah most of the big chiefs of Quraish, who were a party with Abu Lahab in his hostility to Islam, were killed in the Battle of Badr. When the news of the defeat reached Makkah, he was so shocked that he could not survive for more than seven days. His death occurred in a pitiable state. He became afflicted with malignant pustule and the people of his house left him to himself, fearing contagion. No one came near his body for three days after his death, until the body decomposed and began to stink. At last, when the people began to taunt his sons, according to one tradition, they hired some Africans, who lifted his body and buried it.

According to another tradition, they got a pit dug out and threw his body into it by pushing it with wood, and covered it up with earth and stones. His utter failure became manifest when the religion which he had tried his utmost to impede and thwart, was accepted by his own children. First of all, his daughter, Darrah, migrated from Makkah to Madinah and embraced Islam; then on the conquest of Makkah, both his sons, `Utabh and Mu`attab, came before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) through the mediation of Hadrat `Abbas, believed and took oath of allegiance to him.

2Abu Lahab was a stingy, materialistic man. Ibn Jarir has stated that once in the pre-Islamic days he was accused of having stolen two golden deer from the treasury of the Ka'bah. Though later the deer were recovered from another person, the fact that he was accused of stealing indicates the opinion the people of Makkah held of him. About his riches Qadi Rashid bin Zubair writes in his Adh-Dhakha'ir wat-Tuhaf. He was one of the four richest men of the Quraish, who owned one qintar (about 260 oz) of gold each. His love of wealth can be judged from the fact that when on the occasion of the battle of Badr the fate of his religion was going to be decided for ever, and all the Quraish chiefs had personally gone to fight, he sent `As bin Hisham to fight on his own behalf, telling him: This is in lieu of the debt of four thousand dirhams that you owe to me. Thus. he contrived a plan to realize his debt, for 'As had become bankrupt and there was no hope of the recovery of the debt from him.

Some commentators have taken ma kasaba in the meaning of the earning, i.r. the benefits that accrued to him from his wealth were his kasab(earning), and some other commentators have taken it to imply children, for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has said that a man's son also is his kasab (earning). (Abu Da'ud, Ibn Abi Hatim). Both these meanings fully correspond to the fate met by Abu Lahab. For when he was afflicted with the malignant pustule, his wealth availed him nothing, and his children also left him alone to die a miserable, wretched death. They did not even bury him honorably. Thus, within a few years the people witnessed how the prophecy which had been made in this Surah about Abu Lahab was literally fulfilled.

3Her name was Arwa' and her nickname (kunyat) Umm Jamil. She was sister of Abu Sufyan and was no less bitter than her husband, Abu Lahab, in her enmity to the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) Hadrat Abu Bakr's daughter, Hadrat Asma', has related that when this Surah was revealed, and Umm Jamil heard it, she was filled with rage and went out in search of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). She carried a handful of stones and she was crying some verses of her own, satirizing the Holy Prophet. She came to the Ka`bah, where the Holy Prophet was sitting with Hadrat Abu Bakr. The latter said: "O Messenger of Allah, there she comes and I fear lest she should utter something derogatory to you." The Holy Prophet replied: "She will not see me." The same thing happened. She could not see the Holy Prophet although he was there. She said to Hadrat Abu Bakr: "I hear that your Companion has satirized me." Hadrat Abu Bakr replied: "No, by the Lord of this house, he has not satirized you." Hearing this she went off. (Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Hisham; Bazzar has related an incident on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin `Abbas also, which closely resembles this). What Hadrat Abu Bakr meant was that she had not been satirized by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), but by Allah Himself.

4The words in the original are hammalat al-hatab, which literally mean: "carrier of the wood". The commentators have given several meanings of it. Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas, Ibn Zaid, Dahhak and Rabi` bin Anas say: She used to strew thorns at the Holy Prophet's door in the night; therefore, she has been described as carrier of the wood. Qatadah, Ikrimah Hasan Bari, Mujahid and Sufyan Thauri say: She used to carry evil tales and slander from one person to another in order to create hatred between them; therefore, she has been called the bearer of wood idiomatically. Sa`id bin Jubair says: The one who is loading himself with the burden of sin, is described idiomatically in Arabic as: Fulan-un Yahtatibu ala zahri bi (so and so is loading wood on his back); therefore, hummalat al-hatab means: “The one who carries the burden of sin.” Another meaning also which the commentators have given is: she will do this in the Hereafter, i.e. she will bring and supply wood to the fire in which Abu Lahab would be burning.

5The word used for her neck is jid, which in Arabic means a neck decorated with an ornament. Sa`id bin al-Musayyab, Hasan Basri and Qatadah say that she wore a valuable necklace and used to say: "By Lat and `Uzza, I will sell away this necklace and expend the price to satisfy my enmity against Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him)." That is why the word jid has been used here ironically, thereby implying that in Hell she would have a rope of palm-fibre round her neck instead of that necklace upon which she prides herself so arrogantly. Another example of this ironical style is found at several places in the Qur'an in the sentence: Bashshir-hum bi-`adhab-in alima "Give them the good news of a painful torment."

The words babl-um min-masad have been used for the rope which will be put round her neck, i e. it will be a rope of the masad kind. Different meanings of this have been given by the lexicographers and commentators. According to some, masad means a tightly twisted rope; others say that: masad is the rope made from palm-fibre; still others say that it means the rope made from rush, or camel-skin, or camel-hair. Still another view is that it implies a cable made by twisted iron strands together.

112. Surah Al Ikhlas (The Purity)

Name

Al-Ikhlas is not merely the name of this Surah but also the title of its contents, for it deals exclusively with *Tauhid*. The other Surahs of the Quran generally have been designated after a word occurring in them, but in this Surah the word *Ikhlas* has occurred nowhere. It has been given this name in view of its meaning and subject matter. Whoever understands it and believes in its teaching, will get rid of *shirk* (polytheism) completely.

Period of Revelation

Whether it is a Makki or a Madani Surah is disputed, and the difference of opinion has been caused by the traditions which have been related concerning the occasion of its revelation. We give them below ad seriatim:

1. Hadrat Abdullah bin Masud has reported that the Quraish said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be be peace): "Tell us of the ancestry of your Lord." Thereupon this Surah was sent down. (Tabarani).

2. Abul Aliyah has related on the authority of Hadrat Ubayy bin Kab that the polytheists said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace): “Tell us of your Lord's ancestry." Thereupon Allah sent down this Surah. (Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Abi Harim, Ibn Jarir, Tirmidhi, Bukhari in *At-Tarikh*, Ibn al-Mundhir, Hakim, Baihaqi). Tirmidhi has related a tradition on the same theme from Abul Aliyah, which does not contain any reference to Hadrat Ubayy bin Kab, and has declared it to be more authentic.

3. Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah has stated that a bedouin (according to other traditions, some people) said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace): "Tell us of your Lord's ancestry." Thereupon Allah sent down this Surah.(Abu Yala, Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Tabarani in *Al-Ausat*, Baihaqi, Abu Nuaim in *Al-Hilyah*).

4. Ikrimah has related a tradition form Ibn Abbas, saying that a group of the Jews, including Kab bin Ashraf, Huyayy bin Akhtab and other, came before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and said: "O Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), tell us of the attributes of your Lord, who has sent

you as a Prophet." Thereupon Allah sent down this Surah. (Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Adi, Baihaqi in *Al-Asma* was-*Sifat*).

In addition to these, some other traditions also have been cited by Ibn Taimiyyali in his commentary of Surah Al-Ikhlas, which are as follows;

5. Hadrat Anas has stated that some Jews of Khaiber came before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and they said: "O Abul Qasim, Allah created the angels from light, Adam from rotten clay, Iblis from the flame of fire, the sky from smoke, and the earth from the foam of water. Now tell us about your Lord (of what He is made)." The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did not give any reply to this question. Then Gabriel came and he said: "O Muhammad, say to them: *Huwa Allahu ahad*."

6. Amir bin at-Tufail said to the Holy Prophet: "O Muhammad, what do you call us to?"The Holy Prophet replied: "To Allah." Amir said, "Then, tell us of what He is made, whether of gold, silver, or iron?" Thereupon this surah was sent down.

7. Dahhak, Qatadah and Muqatil have stated that some Jewish rabbis came before the Holy Prophet, and they said: "O Muhammad, tell us what is your Lord like, so that we may believe in you. Allah in the Torah has sent down His description. Kindly tell us of what He is made, what is His sex, whether He is made of gold, copper, brass, iron, or silver, and whether He eats and drinks. Also tell us from whom He has inherited the world, and who will inherit it after Him." Thereupon Allah sent down this Surah.

8. Ibn Abbas has reported that a deputation of the Christians of Najran along with seven priests visited the Holy Prophet upon whom be peace), and they said: "O Muhammad, tell us what is your Lord like and of what substance He is made."The Holy Prophet replied, "My Lord is not made from any substance. He is unique and exalted above everything." Thereupon Allah sent down this Surah.

These traditions show that different people on different occasions had questioned the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about the essence and nature of the God to Whose service and worship he invited the people, and on every occasion he recited by Allah's command this very Surah in response. First of all, the pagans. of Quraish asked him this question in Makkah, and in reply this Surah was sent down. Then, at Madinah, sometimes the Christians, and sometimes the other people of Arabia, asked him questions of this nature, and every time Allah inspired him to recite this very Surah in answer to them. In each of these traditions, it has been said that this Surah was revealed on this or that occasion. From this one should not form the impression that all these traditions are mutually contradictory. The fact is that whenever there existed with the Holy Prophet a verse or a Surah previously revealed in respect of a particular question or matter, and later the same question was presented before him, Allah inspired him to recite the same verse or Surah to the people as it contained the answer to their question. The reporters of *Hadith* describe the same thing, saying: When such and such a question or matter was presented before the Holy Prophet, such and such a verse or Surah was revealed. This has also been described as repetition of revelation, i. e. the revelation of a verse or Surah several times.

Thus, the fact is that this Surah is Makki, rather in view of its subject matter a Surah revealed in the earliest period

at Makkah, when detailed verses of the Quran dealing with the essence and attributes of Allah Almighty had not yet been revealed, and the people hearing, the Holy Prophet's invitation to Allah, wanted to know what was his Lord like to whose worship and service he was calling them. Another proof of this Surah's being one of the earliest Surahs to be revealed is that when in Makkah Umayyah bin Khalaf, the master of Hadrat Bilal, made him lie down on burning sand and placed a heavy stone on his chest, Bilal used to cry "*Ahad, Ahad*!" This word was derived from this very Surah.

Theme and Subject Matter

A little consideration of the traditions regarding the occasion of the revelation of this Surah, shows what were the religious concepts of the world at the time the Holy Prophet began to preach the message of *Tauhid*. The idolatrous polytheists were worshiping gods made of wood, stone, gold, silver and other substances. These gods had a form, shape and body. The gods and goddesses were descended from each other. No goddess was without a husband and no god without a wife. They stood in need of food and drink and their devotees arranged these for them. A large number of the polytheists believed that God assumed human form and there were some people who descended from Him. Although the Christians claimed to believe in One God, yet their God also had at least a son, and besides the Father and Son, the Holy Ghost also had the honor of being an associate in Godhead: so much so that God had a mother and a mother-in-law too. The Jews also claimed to believe in One God, but their God too was not without physical, material and other human qualities and characteristics. He went for a stroll, appeared in human form, wrestled with a servant of His, and was father of a son, Ezra. Besides these religious communities, the Zoroastrians were fire worshipers, and the Sabeans star worshipers. Under such conditions when the people were invited to believe in Allah, the One Who has no associate, it was inevitable that questions arose in the minds as to what kind of a God it was, Who was one and Only Lord and invitation to believe in Whom was being given at the expense of all other gods and deities. It is a miracle of the Quran that in a few words briefly it answered all the questions and presented such a clear concept of the Being of Allah as destroyed all polytheistic concepts, without leaving any room for the ascription of any of the human qualities to His Being.

Merit and Importance

That is why the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace) held this Surah in great esteem, and he made the Muslims realize its importance in different ways so that they recited it frequently and disseminated it among the people. For it states the foremost and fundamental doctrine of Islam (viz. *Tauhid*) in four such brief sentences as are immediately impressed on human memory and can be read and recited easily. There are a great number of the traditions of *Hadith*, which show that the Holy Prophet on different occasions and in different ways told the people that this Surah is equivalent to one third the Quran. Several *ahadith* on this subject have been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daud; Nasai, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Musnad Ahmad, Tabarani and other books, on the authority of Abu Said Khudri, Abu Hurairah, Abu Ayyub Ansari, Abu ad-Darda, Muadh bin Jabal, Jabir bin Abdullah, Ubayy bin Kab, Umm Kulthum bint Uqbah bin Abi Muait, Ibn Umar, Ibn Masud, Qatadah bin an-Numan, Anas bin Malik, and Abu Masud (may Allah be pleased with all of them).

The commentators have given many explanations of the Holy Prophet's saying. But in our opinion it simply means that the religion presented by the Quran is based on three doctrines: *Tauhid*, Prophethood and the Hereafter. This

Surah teaches *Tauhid*, pure and undefiled. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (upon whom he Peace) regarded it as, equal to one-third of the Quran.

A tradition on the authority of Hadrat Aishah has been related in Bukhari, Muslim and other collections of the *Ahadith*, saying that the Holy Prophet sent a man as leader of an expedition. During the journey he concluded his recitation of the Quran in every Prayer with *Qul Huwa-Allahu ahad*. On their return him companions mentioned this before the Holy Prophet. He said: "Ask him why he did so." When the man was asked, he replied: "In this Surah the attributes of the Merciful God have been stated; therefore, I love to recite it again and again." When the Holy Prophet heard this reply, he said to the people: "Inform him that Allah holds him in great love and esteem."

A similar incident has been related in Bukhari, on the authority of Hadrat Anas. He says: "A man from among the Ansar led the Prayers in the Quba Mosque. His practice was that in every *rak`ah* he first recited this Surah and then would join another Surah to it. The people objected to it and said to him:"Don't you think that Surah Ikhlas is by itself enough? Why do you join another Surah to it? You should either recite only this surah, or should leave it and recite some other Surah. He said: "I cannot leave it, I would rather give up leadership in the Prayer, if you so desired." The people did not approve that another man be appointed leader instead of him. At last, the matter was brought before the Holy Prophet. He asked the man, "What prevents you from conceding what your companions desire? What makes you recite this particular Surah in every *rak`ah*?" The man replied: "I have great love for it." The Holy Prophet remarked: "Your this love for this Surah has earned you entry into Paradise."

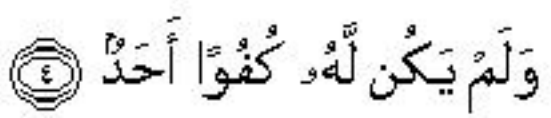
بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾

ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾



[1-4] Say:[1] "He is Allah,[2] the One and Only.[3] Allah is Independent of all and all are dependent on Him.[4] Neither has He an offspring nor is He the offspring of anyone.[5] And none is equal with Him in rank."[6]

1The first addressee of this Command is the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself for it was he who was asked: "Who is your Lord and what is He like? Again it was he who was commanded to answer the question in the following words. But after him every believer is its addressee. He too should say what the Holy Prophet had been commanded to say.

2That is, "My Lord to Whom you want to be introduced is none but Allah." This is the first answer to the questions, and it means: "I have not introduced a new lord who I want you to worship beside all other gods, but it is the same Being you know by the name of Allah." "Allah" was not an unfamiliar word for the Arabs. They had been using this very word for the Creator of the universe since the earliest times, and they did not apply this word to any of their other gods. For the other gods they used the word ilah. Then their beliefs about Allah had become fully manifest at the time Abraha invaded Makkah. At that time there existed 360 idols of gods (ilahs) in and around the Ka`bah, but the polytheists forsaking all of them had invoked only Allah for protection. In other words, they knew in their hearts of hearts that no ilah could help them on that critical occasion except Allah. The Ka`bah also was called Bait-Allah by them and not Bait-ilahs after their self-made gods. At many places in the Qur'an the polytheistic Arabian belief about Allah has been expressed, thus:

In Surah Az-Zukhruf it has been said: "If you ask them who created them, they will surely say, 'Allah'." (v. 87)

In Surah Al-`Ankabuu: "If you ask them, `Who has created the earth and the heavens and Who has subjected the moon and the sun?' they will surely say: Allah ... And if you ask them, `Who sent down rainwater from the sky and thereby raised the dead earth back to life?' they will surely say: `Allah'." (vv. 61-63)

In Surah Al-Mu'minun: "Say to them, `Tell me, if you know, whose is the earth and all who dwell in it?' They will say, `Allah's'... say to them, `To Whom do the seven heavens and the Glorious Throne belong?' They will say, `To Allah'... Say to them, `Tell me, if you know, Whose is the sovereignty over everything? And Who is that Being Who gives protection while none else can give protection against Him?' They will surely reply, `This power oolongs to Allah'." (vv. 8489).

In Surah Yunus: "Ask them: Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth? Who has power over the faculties of hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? Who directs the system of the universe? They will surely reply, `Allah'." (v. 31)

Again in Surah Yunus at another place: "When you set sails in ships, rejoicing over a fair breeze, then all of a sudden a strong wind begins to rage against the passengers and waves begin to surge upon them from every side and they realize that they have been encircled by the tempest. At that time they pray to Allah with sincere faith, saying: `If thou deliverest us from this peril, we will become Thy grateful servants.' But when He delivers them, the same people begin to rebel on the earth against the Truth." (w. 22-23)

The same thing has been reiterated in Surah Bani Isra'il, thus: "When a misfortune befalls you on the sea, all of those whom you invoke for help tail you but He (is there to help you), yet when He brings you safe to land, you turn away from Him." (v. 67)

Keeping these verses in view, let us consider that when the people asked: "Who is your Lord and what is He like to Whose service and worship you call us?" the answer given was "Huwa Allah: He is Allah." This answer by itself gives the meaning: "My Lord is He Whom you yourself acknowledge as your own as well as the whole world's Creator, its Master, Sustainer and Administrator, and He Whom you invoke for help at critical times beside all other deities, and I invite you to His service alone." This answer comprehends all the perfect and excellent attributes of Allah. Therefore, it is not at all conceivable that the Creator of the universe, its Administrator and Disposer of its affairs, Sustainer of all the creatures living in it, and the Helper of the servants in times of hardship, would not be living, hearing and seeing, that He would not be an All-Powerful, All-Knowing, All-Wise, All-Merciful and All-Kind Sovereign.

3The scholars have explained the sentence Huwa-Allah Ahad syntactically, but in our opinion its explanation which perfectly corresponds to the context is that Huwa is the subject and Allahu its predicate, and Ahad-un its second predicate. According to this parsing the sentence means: "He (about Whom you are questioning me) is Allah, is One and only one. Another meaning also can be, and according to language rules it is not wrong either: "He is Allah, the One."

Here, the first thing to be understood is the unusual use of ahad in this sentence. Usually this word is either used in the possessive case as yaum ul-ahad (first day of the week), or to indicate total negative as Ma ja a a-ni ahad-un (No one has come to me), or in common questions like Hal `indaka ahad-un (Is there anyone with you?), or in conditional clauses like Inja'a-ka ahad-un (If someone comes to you), or in counting as ahad, ithnan, ahad ashar (one, two, eleven). Apart from these uses, there is no precedent in the pre-Qur'anic Arabic that the mere word ahad might have been used as an adjective for a person or thing. After the revelation of the Qur'an this word has been used only for the Being of Allah, and for no one else. This extraordinary use by itself shows that being single, unique and matchless is a fundamental attribute of Allah; no one else in the world is qualified with this quality: He is One, He has no equal.

Then, keeping in view the questions that the polytheists and the followers of earlier scriptures asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about his Lord, let us see how they were answered with ahad-un after Huwa-Allah.

First, it means: "He alone is the Sustainer: no one else has any share or part in providence. and since He alone can be the Itch (Deity) Who is Master and Sustainer, therefore, no one else is His associate in Divinity either."

Secondly, it also means "He alone is the Creator of the universe: no one else is His associate in this work of creation. He alone is the Master of the universe, the Disposer and Administrator of its system, the Sustainer , of His creatures, Helper and Rescuer in times of hardship; no one else has any share or pan whatever in the works of Godhead, which as you yourselves acknowledge, are works of Allah.

Thirdly since they had also asked the questions: of what is your Lord made? what is His ancestry? What is his sex? From whom has He inherited the world and who will inherit it after Him? -all these questions have been answered with one word ahad for Allah. It means:

(1) He alone has been, and will be, God for ever; neither was there a God before Him, nor will there be any after Him;

(2) there is no race of gods to which He may belong as a member: He is God, one and single, and none is homogeneous with Him;

(3) His being is not merely One (wahid) but ahad, in which there is no tinge of plurality in any way.

He is not a compound being, which may be analyzable or divisible. which may have a form and shape, which may be residing somewhere, or may contain or include something, which may have a color, which may have some limbs, which may have a direction, and which may be variable or changeable in any way. Free from every kind of plurality He alone is a Being Who is Ahad in every aspect. (Here, one should fully understand that the word wahid is used in Arabic just like the word "one" in English. A collection consisting of great pluralities is collectively called wahid or one, as one man, one nation, one country, one world, even one universe, and every separate part of a collection is also called one. But the word Ahad is not used for anyone except Allah. That is why wherever in the Qur'an the word wahid has been used for Allah, He has been called itah wahid (one Deity), or Allah-ulWahid-al-Qahhar. (One Allah Who is Omnipotent), and nowhere just wahid, for this word ' is also used for the things which contain pluralities of different kinds in their being. On the contrary, for Allah and only for Allah the word Ahad has been used absolutely, for He alone is the Being Who exists without any plurality in any way, Whose Oneness is perfect in every way.

4The word used in the original is samad of which the root is smd. A look at the derivatives in Arabic from

this root will show how comprehensive and vast this word is in meaning. (Lexical discussion of the meanings of the derivatives is omitted).

On the basis of these lexical meanings the explanations of the word asSamad in the verse Allah-us-Samad, which have been reported from the Companions, their immediate successors and the later scholars are given below:

Hadrat 'Ali. 'Ikrimah and Ka'b Ahbar: "Samad is he who has no superior. "

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas`ud, Hadrat `Abdullah bin `Abbas and Abu Wail Shaqiq bin Salamah: "The chieftain whose chieftancy is perfect and of the most extraordinary kind."

Another view of Ibn 'Abbas: "Samad is he to whom the people turn when afflicted with a calamity." Still another view of his: "The chieftain who in his chieftaincy, in his nobility and glory, in his clemency and forbearance,. in his knowledge and wisdom is perfect. "

Hadrat Abu Hurairah: "He who is independent of all and all others are dependent upon him. "

Other views of 'Ikrimah: "He from whom nothing ever has come out, nor normally comes out:" "Who neither eats nor drinks." Views containing the same meaning have been related from Sha'bi and Muhammad bin Ka'b al-Kurazi also.

Suddi: "the one to whom the people turn for obtaining the things they need and for help in hardships. "

Sa'id bin Jubair: "He who is perfect in all his attributes and works."

Rabi' bin Jubair: "He who is immune form every calamity."

Muqatil bin Hayyan: "He who is faultless."

Ibn Kaysan: "He who is exclusive in his attributes."

Hasan Basri and Qatadah: "He who is ever-living and immortal."

Similar views have been related from Mujahid, Ma'mar and Murrat alHamadani also.

Munat al-Hamadani's another view is : "he who decides whatever he wills and does whatever he wills, without there being anyone to revise his judgment and decision."

Ibrahim Nakha'i: "He to whom the people turn for fulfillment of their desires."

Abu Bakr al-Anbari "There is no difference of opinion among the lexicographers that samad is the chief who has no superior and to whom the people turn for fulfillment of their desires and needs and in connection with other affairs." Similar to it is the view of Az-Zajjjaj, who says "Samad is he in whom leadership has been perfected, and to whom one turns for fulfillment of one's needs and desires."

Now, let us consider why Allahu-Ahad has been said in the first sentence and why Allah-us-Samad in this sentence. About the word ahad we have explained above that it is exclusively used for Allah, and for none else. That is why it has been used as ahad, in the indefinite sense. But since the word samad is used for creatures also, Allah-us-Samad has been said instead of Allah Samad, which signifies that real and true Samad is Allah alone. If a creature is samad in one sense, it may not be samad in some other sense, for it is mortal, not immortal; it is analyzable and divisible, is compound, its parts can scatter away any time; some creatures are dependent upon it, and upon others it is dependent; its chieftaincy is relative and not absolute; it is superior to certain things and certain other things are superior to it; it can fulfill some desires of some creatures but it is not in the power of any creature to fulfill all the desires of all the creatures, On the contrary, Allah is perfect in His attributes of Samad in every respect; the whole world is dependent upon Hun in its needs, but He is ,not dependent upon needs; everything in the world turns to Him, consciously or unconsciously, for its survival and for fulfillment of the needs of everyone; He is immortal and Ever-living; He sustains others and is not sustained by anyone; He is Single and Unique, not compound so as to be analyzable and divisible; His sovereignty prevails over entire universe and He is Supreme in every sense. Therefore, He is not only .Samad but As-Samad, i e. the Only and One Being Who is wholly and perfectly qualified with the attribute of samad in the true sense.

Then, since He is As-Samad, it is necessary that He should be Unique, One and Only, for such a being can only be One, which is not dependent upon anyone and upon whom everyone else may be dependent; two or more beings cannot be self-sufficient and fulfiller of the needs of all. Furthermore, His being As-samad also requires that He alone should be the Deity, none else, for no sensible person would worship and serve the one who had no power and authority to fulfill the needs of others.

5The polytheists in every age have adopted the concept that like men, gods also belong to a species, which has many members and they also get married, beget and are begotten. They did not even regard Allah, Lord of the universe, as supreme and above this concept of ignorance, and even proposed children for Him. Thus, the Arabian belief as stated in the Qur'an was that they regarded the angels as daughters of Allah. The Prophetic communities too could not remain immune from this creed of paganism. They too adopted the creed of holding one saintly person or another as son of God. Two kinds of concepts have always been mixed up in these debasing superstitions. Some people thought that those whom they regarded as Allah's children, were descended from him in the natural way and some others claimed that the one whom they called son of God, had been adopted by Allah Himself as a son. Although they could not dare call anyone as, God forbid, father of God, obviously human mind cannot remain immune against

such a concept that God too should be regarded as a son of somebody when it is conceived that He is not tree from sex and procreation and that He too, like man, is the kind of being which begets children and needs to adopt a son in case it is childless, That is why one of the questions asked of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was: what is the ancestry of Allah? and another was: from whom has He inherited the world and who will inherit it after Him?

If these assumptions of ignorance are analyzed, it becomes obvious that they logically necessitate the assumption of some other things as well.

First, that God should not be One, but there should be a species of Gods, and its members should be associates in the attributes, acts and powers of Divinity. This not only follows from assuming God begetting children but also from assuming that He has adopted someone as a son. for the adopted son of somebody can inevitably be of his own kind. And when, God forbid, he is of the same kind as God, it cannot be denied that he too possesses attributes of Godhead.

Second, that children cannot be conceived unless the male and the female combine and some substance from the father and the mother unites to take the shape of child. Therefore, the assumption that God begets children necessitates that He should, God forbid, be a material and physical entity, should have a wife of His own species, and some substance also should issue from His body.

Third, that wherever there is sex and procreation, it is there because individuals are mortal and for the survival of their species it is inevitable that they should beget children to perpetuate the race. Thus, the assumption that God begets children also necessitates that He should, God forbid, Himself be mortal, and immorality should belong to the species of Gods, not to God Himself. Furthermore, it also necessitates that like all mortal individuals, God also, God forbid, should have a beginning and an end. For the individuals of the species whose survival depends upon sex and procreation neither exist since eternity nor will exist till eternity.

Fourth, that the object of adopting some one as a son is that a childless person needs a helper in his lifetime and an heir after his death. Therefore, the supposition that Allah has adopted a son inevitably amounts to ascribing all those weaknesses to His sublime Being which characterize mortal man.

Although all these assumptions are destroyed as soon as Allah is called and described as Ahad and As-Samad, yet when it is said: "Neither has He an offspring nor is He the offspring of another", there remains no room for any ambiguity in this regard. Then, since these concepts are the most potent factors of polytheism with regard to Divine Being, Allah has refuted them clearly and absolutely not only in Surah Al-Ikhlas but has also reiterated this theme at different places in different ways so that the people may understand the truth fully. For example let us consider the following verses:

"Allah is only One Deity: He is tar too exalted that He should have a son: whatever is in the heavens and

whatever is in the earth belongs to Him." (AnNisa': 171)

"Note it well: they, in fact, invent a falsehood when they say, `Allah has children'. They are utter liars," (As-Saaffat: 151-152)

"They have invented a hood-relationship between Allah and the angels, whereas the angels know full well that these people will be brought up (as culprits)" (As-Saaffat: 158)

"These people have made some of His servants to be part of Him. The fact is that man is manifestly ungrateful. " (Az-Zukhruf: l 5)

"Yet the people have set up the Jinn as partners with Allah, whereas He is their Creator; they have also invented for Him sons and daughters without having any knowledge, whereas He is absolutely free from and exalted far above the things they say. He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth: how should He have a son, when He has no consort? He has created each and every thing." (Al An'am: 100-102)

"They say: the Merciful has offspring. Glory be to Allah! They (whom they describe as His offspring) are His mere servants who have been honored." (AI-Anbiya: 26)

"They remarked: Allah has taken a son to himself. Allah is AII-pure: He is Self Sufficient He is the Owner of everything that is in the heavens and the earth. Have you any authority for what you say? What, do you ascribe to Allah that of which you have no knowledge?" (Yunus: 68)

"And (O Prophet,) say: praise is for Allah Who has begotten no son nor has any partner in His Kingdom nor is helpless to need any supporter." (Bani Isra'il:111)

"Allah has no offspring, and there is no other deity as a partner with Him." (Al-Mu'minun: 91)

In these verses the belief of the people who ascribe real and adopted children to Allah, has been refuted from every aspect, and its being a false belief has also been proved by argument. These and many other Qur'anic verses on the same theme explain Surah Al-Ikhlas fully well.

6The word kufu' as used in the original means an example, a similar thing, the one equal in rank and position. In the matter of marriage, kufu' means that the boy and the girl should match each other socially. Thus, the verse means that there is no one in the entire universe, nor ever was, nor ever can be, who is similar to Allah, or equal in rank with Him, or resembling Him in His attributes, works and powers in any degree whatever.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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113. Surah Al Falaq (The Daybreak)

Please note that the following introduction is for both Surah Al Falaq (113) and Surah An Nas (114).

Name

Although these two Surahs of the Qur'an are separate entities and are written in the *Mushaf* also under separate names, yet they are so deeply related mutually and their contents so closely resemble each other's that they have been designated by a common name *Mu'awwidhatayn* (the two Surahs in which refuge with Allah has been sought). Imam Baihaqi in *Dala'il an-Nubuwwat* has written that these Surahs were revealed together, that is why the combined name of both is *Mu'awwidhatayn*. We are writing the same one Introduction to both, for they discuss and deal with just the same matters and topics. However, they will be explained and commented on separately below.

Period of Revelation

Hadrat Hasan Basri, 'Ikrimah, 'Ata' and Jabir bin Zaid say that these Surahs are Makki. A tradition from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also supports the same view. However, according to another tradition from him, it is Madani and the same view is held also by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair and Qatadah. One of the traditions which strengthens this second view is the *Hadith* which Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal have related on the authority of Hadrat 'Uqbah bin 'Amir. He says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peach) one day said to him: "Do you know what kind of verses have been revealed to me tonight? These matchless verses are *A'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *A'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*. This *Hadith* is used as an argument for these Surahs to be Madani because Hadrat 'Uqbah bin 'Amir had become a Muslim in Madinah after the *hijrah*, as related by Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i on the basis of his own statement. Other traditions which have lent strength to this view are those related by Ibn Sa'd, Muhiyy-us-Sunnah Baghawi, Imam Nasafi, Imam Baihaqi, Hafiz Ibn Hajar, Hafiz Badr-uddin 'Ayni, 'Abd bin Humaid and others to the effect that these Surahs were revealed when the Jews had worked magic on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in Madinah and he had fallen ill under its effect. Ibn Sa'd has related on the authority of Waqidi that this happened in A.H. 7. On this very basis Sufyan bin Uyainah also has described these Surah as Madani.

But as we have explained in the Introduction to Surah Al-Ikhlas, when it is said about a certain Surah or verse that it was revealed on this or that particular occasion, it does not necessarily mean that it was revealed for the first time on that very occasion. Rather it sometimes so happened that a Surah or a verse had previously been revealed, then on the occurrence or appearance of a particular incident or situation, the Holy Prophet's attention was drawn to it by Allah for the second time, or even again and again. In our opinion the same also was the case with the *Mu'awwidhatayn*. The subject matter of these Surahs is explicit that these were sent down at Makkah in the first instance when opposition to the Holy Prophet there had grown very intense. Later, when at Madinah storms of opposition were raised by the hypocrites, Jews and polytheists, the Holy Prophet was instructed to recite these very Surahs, as has been mentioned in the above cited tradition from Hadrat Uqbah bin Amir. After this, when magic was worked on him, and his illness grew intense, Gabriel came and instructed him by Allah's command to recite these very Surahs. Therefore, in our opinion, the view held by the commentators who describe both these Surahs as Makki is more reliable. Regarding them as connected exclusively with the incident of magic is difficult, for to this incident related only one verse (v.4), the remaining verses of Surah al Falaq and the whole of Surah An-Nas have nothing to do with it directly.

Theme and Subject-Matter

The conditions under which these two Surahs were sent down in Makkah were as follows. As soon as the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) began to preach the message of Islam, it seemed as though he had provoked all classes of the people around him. As his message spread the opposition of the disbelieving Quraish also became more and more intense. As long as they had any hope that they would be able to prevent him from preaching his message by throwing some temptation in his way, or striking some bargain with him, their hostility did not become very active. But when the Holy Prophet disappointed them completely that he would not effect any kind of compromise with them in the matter of faith, and in Surah Al-Kafirun they were plainly told: "I do not worship those who you worship nor are you worshipers of Him Whom I worship. For you is your religion and for me is mine", the hostility touched its extreme limits. More particularly, the families whose members (men or women, boys or girls) had accepted Islam, were burning with rage from within against the Holy Prophet. They were cursing him, holding secret consultations to kill him quietly in the dark of the night so that the Bani Hashim could not discover the murderer and take revenge; magic and charms were being worked on him so as to cause his death, or make him fall ill, or become mad; satans from among the men and the jinn spread on every side so as to whisper one or another evil into the hearts of the people against him and the Qur'an brought by him so that they became suspicious of him and fled him. There were many people who were burning with jealousy against him, for they could not tolerate that a man from another family or clan than their own should flourish and become prominent. For instance, the reason why Abu Jahl was crossing every limit in his hostility to him has been explained by himself: "We and the Bani Abdi Manaf (to which the Holy Prophet belonged) were rivals of each other: they fed others, we too fed others; they provided conveyances to the people, we too did the same; they gave donations, we too gave donations, so much so that when they and we have become equal in honor and nobility, they now proclaim that they have a Prophet who is inspired from the heaven; how can we compete with them in this field? By God, we will never acknowledge him, nor affirm faith in him". (*Ibn Hisham*, vol. I, pp. 337-338).

Such were the conditions when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was commanded to tell the people: "I seek refuge with the Lord of the dawn, from the evil of everything that He has created, and from the evil of the darkness

of night and from the evil of magicians, men and women, and from the evil of the envious", and to tell them: "I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, and the Deity of mankind, from the evil of the whisperer, who returns over and over again, who whispers (evil) into the hearts of men, whether he be from among the jinn or men." This is similar to what the Prophet Moses had been told to say when Pharaoh had expressed his design before his full court to kill him: "I have taken refuge with my Lord and your Lord against every arrogant person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning." (Al-Mu'min: 27). And: "I have taken refuge with my Lord and your Lord lest you should assail me." (Ad-Dukhan;20).

On both occasions these illustrious Prophets of Allah were confronted with well-equipped, resourceful and powerful enemies. On both occasions they stood firm on their message of Truth against their strong opponents, whereas they had no material power on the strength of which they could fight them, and on both occasions they utterly disregarded the threats and dangerous plans and hostile devices of the enemy, saying: "We have taken refuge with the Lord of the universe against you." Obviously, such firmness and steadfastness can be shown only by the person who has the conviction that the power of His Lord is the supreme power, that all powers of the world are insignificant against Him, and that no one can harm the one who has taken His refuge. Only such a one can say: "I will not give up preaching the Word of Truth. I care the least for what you may say or do, for I have taken refuge with my Lord and your Lord and Lord of all universe."

Question whether Mu'awwidhatayn are, or are not, Quranic

The above discussion is enough to help one understand fully the theme and content of the two Surahs, but since three points in the books of *Hadith* and commentary concerning these Surahs have been discussed, which are likely to create doubts in the minds, it is necessary to clear them also here.

First, whether it is absolutely established that these two Surahs are the Qur'anic Surahs, or whether there is some doubt in this regard. This question arose because in the traditions related from an illustrious Companion like Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, it has been said that he did not regard these two Surahs as the Surahs of the Qur'an and had eliminated these from his copy of the *Mushaf*. Imam Ahmad, Bazzar, Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah, Abu Ya'la, Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Hanbal, Humaydi, Abu Nu'aim, Ibn Hibban and other traditionists have related this from Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud with different chains of transmitters and mostly on sound authority. According to these traditions, he not only eliminated these Surahs from the *Mushaf* but it has also been reported that he used to say: "Do not mix up with the Qur'an that which is not of the Qur'an. These two Surahs are not included in the Quran. This was only a command enjoined on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for seeking God's refuge." In some traditions there is also the addition that he did not recite these Surahs in the Prayer.

On the basis of these traditions the opponents of Islam had an opportunity to raise doubts about the Qur'an, saying that this Book, God forbid, is not free from corruption. For when, according to a Companion of the rank of Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, these two Surahs are an annexation to the Qur'an, many other additions and subtractions also might have been made in it. To rid the Qur'an of this blame Qadi Abu Bakr Al-Baqillani, Qadi Iyad and others took the stand that Ibn Mas'ud was not in fact a denier of the *Mu'awwidhatayn* being Qur'anic but only refused to write them in the *Mushaf*. For, according to him, only that which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had allowed, should be written in the *Mushaf*, and Ibn Mas'ud did not receive the information that the Holy Prophet had

allowed this. But this stand is not correct, for according to sound evidence, it is confirmed that Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) had denied that these were Surahs of the Qur'an. Some other scholars, for instance, Imam Nawawi, Imam Ibn Hazm and Imam Fakhr-ud-din Razi, regard this as a pure lie and falsehood that Ibn Mas'ud had asserted any such thing. But to reject genuine historical facts without sound evidence is unscientific.

Now, the question is: How can the blame that attaches to the Qur'an because of these traditions of Ibn Mas'ud correctly refuted? This question has several answers which we shall give below in sequence:

1. Hafiz Bazzar after relating these traditions of Ibn Mas'ud in his *Musnad*, has written that he is solitary and isolated in his this opinion; no one from among the Companions has supported this view.

2. The copies of the Qur'an which the third Caliph, Hadrat Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him), had got compiled by the consensus of the Companions and which he had sent from the Islamic Caliphate officially to the centers of the world of Islam contained both these Surahs.

3. The *Mushaf* which, since the sacred time of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) till today, has the seal of consensus of the entire world of Islam, contains both these Surahs. The solitary opinion of only Abdullah bin Mas'ud, in spite of his high rank, has no weight against this great consensus.

4. It is confirmed by sound and reliable *ahadith* from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) that he not only recited these Surahs in the Prayer himself but instructed others also to recite them, and taught them to the people as the Surahs of the Qur'an. Consider, for instance, the following *ahadith*:

We have cited on the authority of Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Nasai the tradition of Hadrat Uqbah bin Amir that the Holy Prophet told him about Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An- Nas, saying that those verses had been revealed to him that night. A tradition in Nasai from Uqbah bin Amir is to the effect that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) recited both these Surahs in the Morning Prayer. Imam Ahmad on sound authority has related in his *Musnad* the tradition from a Companion that the Holy Prophet said to him, "When you perform the Prayer, recite both these Surahs in it."

In Musnad Ahmad, Abu Daud and Nasai this tradition of Uqbah bin Amir has been related: "The Holy Prophet said to him: Should I not teach you two such Surahs as are among the best Surahs that the people recite? He said: Do teach me, O Messenger of Allah. Thereupon the Holy Prophet taught him the *Mu'awwidhatayn*. Then the Prayer began and the Holy Prophet recited the same two Surahs in it also, and when after the Prayer the Holy Prophet passed by him, he said to him, 'O Uqbah, how did you like it?' Then he instructed him to the effect: When you go to bed, and when you get up from bed, recite these Surahs."

In Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Nasa'i there is a tradition from Uqbah bin Amir, saying that the Holy Prophet exhorted him to recite the *Mu'awwidhat* (i.e. *Qul Huwa Allahu ahad* and the *Mu'awwidhatayn*) after every Prayer.

Nasai, Ibn Marduyah and Hakim have related this tradition also from Uqbah bin Amir: "Once the Holy Prophet was

riding on a conveyance and I was walking along with him with my hand placed on his sacred foot. I said: Kindly teach me Surah Hud or Surah Yusuf. He replied: In the sight of Allah there is nothing more beneficial for the servant than *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq*."

A tradition from Abdullah bin Abid al-Juhani has been related by Nasai, Baihaqi and Ibn Sad, saying that the Holy Prophet said to him: "Ibn Abid, should I not tell you what are the best things out of the means by which the seekers of refuge have sought refuge with Allah? I submitted: Do teach me, O Messenger of Allah. He replied: *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil- falaq* and *Qul a-udhu bi Rabbin-nas* - both these Surahs."

Ibn Marduyah had related from Hadrat Umm Salamah: "The Surahs best liked by Allah are: *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*."

Here, the question arises: what caused Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud the misunderstanding that these two are not Surahs of the Qur'an? We get the answer to it when we combine two traditions: first, that Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud asserted that this was only a command which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was given to teach him the method of seeking refuge with Allah; second, the tradition which Imam Bukhari has related in his *Sahih*, Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad*, Hafiz Abu Bakr al- Humaidi in his *Musnad*, Abu Nu'aim in his *Al-Mustakhraj* and Nasai in his *Sunan*, with different chains of transmitters, on the authority of Zirr bin Hubaish, with a slight variation in wording from Hadrat Ubayy bin Kab, who held a distinguished place among the Companions on the basis of his knowledge of the Qur'an. Zirr bin Hubaish states: "I said to Hadrat Ubayy: Your brother, Abdullah bin Mas'ud, says these things. What do you say about this view? He replied: I had questioned the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about this. He said to me: I was told to say '*qul*', so I said '*qul*'. Therefore, we too say the same as the Holy Prophet said."

In the tradition related by Imam Ahmad, Hadrat Ubayy's words are to the effect: "I bear witness that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) told me that Gabriel (peace be on him) had told him to say: *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq*; therefore, he recited likewise, and Gabriel asked him to say: *Qul a'udhu bi- Rabbin-nas*; therefore he too said likewise. Hence, we too say as the Holy Prophet said." A little consideration of these two traditions will show that the word *qul* (say) in the two Surahs caused Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud the misunderstanding that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had been commanded to say: *A'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *A'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*. But he did not feel any need to question the Holy Prophet about it. In the mind of Hadrat Ubbay bin Kab also a question arose about his and he put it before the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet replied: "Since Gabriel (peace be on him) had said *qul*, so I too say *qul*." Let us put it like this. If somebody is commanded and asked: "Say, I seek refuge", he will not carry out the command, saying: "Say, I seek refuge", but he will drop the work "say" and say: "I seek refuge." On the contrary, if the messenger of a superior officer conveys to somebody the message in these words: "Say, I seek refuge", and this command is given to him not only for his own person but to be conveyed to others, he will convey the words of the message verbatim to the people, and will not have the permission to drop anything from the text of the message. Thus, the fact that these two Surahs begin with the word *qul* is a clear proof that it is Divine Word, which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was bound to convey verbatim. It was not merely a command given to him for his person. Besides these two Surahs, there are 330 other verses in the Qur'an which begin with the word *qul* (say). The presence of *qul* in all these is a proof that it is Divine Word. which was obligatory for the Holy Prophet to convey verbatim; otherwise if *qul* everywhere had

meant a command, the Holy Prophet would have dropped it and said only that which he was commanded to say, and it would not have been recorded in the Qur'an, but, on the contrary, he would have remained content with saying only what he was commanded to say.

Here, if one considers this, one can understand fully well how unreasonable it is to regard the Companions as infallible and to make the clamor that a Companion has been defamed as soon as one hears a saying or doing of his being described as wrong. Here, one can clearly see what a blunder happened to be committed by an illustrious Companion like Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud about two Surahs of the Qur'an. If such an error could be committed by an eminent Companion like him, others also might commit an error. We can examine it in the scientific way, and describe it as wrong if a thing said or done by a Companion is proved to be wrong. But wicked indeed would be the person who went beyond describing a wrong act as wrong and started reproving and finding fault with the Companions of the Holy Prophet of Allah. Concerning the *Mu'awwidhatayn* the commentators and traditionists have described the opinion of Ibn Mas'ud as wrong, but no one has dared to say that by denying these two Surahs of the Qur'an, he had, God forbid, become a disbeliever.

Question of Holy Prophet's being affected by Magic

The second thing that has arisen in respect of these two Surahs is that, according to traditions, magic had been worked on the Holy Prophet, and he had fallen ill under its effect, and Gabriel (peace be on him) had instructed him to repeat these Surahs to remove the charm. This has been objected to by many rationalists of both ancient and modern times. They say that if these traditions are accepted, the whole *Shari'ah* becomes doubtful. For if the Prophet could be charmed, and according to these traditions he was charmed, one cannot say what the Prophet might have been made to say and do under the influence of magic by his opponents, and what in his teaching may be Divine and what the result of magic. Not only this: they also allege that if this is accepted as true, it might well be that the Prophet might have been prompted to make the claim to Prophethood through magic and the Prophet by misunderstanding might have thought that an angel had come to him. They also argue that these traditions clash with the Qur'an. The Qur'an mentions the accusation of the disbelievers who said that the Prophet was bewitched (Bani Isra'il: 47), but these traditions confirm the accusation of the disbelievers that the Prophet had actually been charmed and bewitched.

For a proper investigation of this question it is necessary that one should first see whether it is established by authentic historical evidence that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had actually been affected by magic, and if so, what it was and to what extent. Then it should be seen whether the objections raised against what is established historically do actually apply to it or not.

The Muslim scholars of the earliest period were truly honest and upright in that they did not try to corrupt history or conceal facts according to their own ideas, concepts and assumptions. They conveyed intact to the later generations whatever was confirmed historically, and did not at all care how the material supplied by them could be used by the one who was bent upon drawing perverse conclusions from the facts. Now, if something stands confirmed by authentic and historical means, it is neither right for an honest and right-minded person that he should deny history on the ground that in case he accepted it, it would lead to these evil results according to his thinking, nor it is right that he should add to and stretch beyond its genuine limits by conjecture and speculation whatever is

established historically. Instead, he should accept history as history and then see what is actually proved by it and what is not.

As far as the historical aspect is concerned, the incident of the Holy Prophet's being affected by magic is absolutely confirmed, and if it can be refuted by scientific criticism, then no historical event of the world can be proved right and genuine. It has been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Nasai, Ibn Majah, Imam Ahmad, Abdur Razzaq, Humaidi, Baihaqi, Tabarani, Ibn Sad, Ibn Mardayah, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Hakim, Abd bin Humaid and other traditionists on the authority of Hadrat Aishah, Hadrat Zaid bin Arqam and Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, through so many different and numerous channels that forgery is out of the question. Although each tradition by itself is an isolated report (*khabar wahid*), we give it below as a connected event from the details provided by the traditions.

After the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) returned to Madinah, a deputation of the Jews of Khaibar visited Madinah in Muharram, A.H. 7 and met a famous magician, Labid bin Asam, who belonged to the Ansar tribe of Bani Zurayq. They said to him: "You know how Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has treated us. We have tried our best to bewitch him but have not succeeded. Now we have come to you because you are a more skilled magician. Here are three gold coins, accept these and cast a powerful magic spell on Muhammad." In those days the Holy Prophet had a Jewish boy as his attendant. Through him they obtained a piece of the Holy Prophet's comb with some hair stuck to it. Magic was worked on the same hair and the teeth of the comb. According to some traditions, magic was worked by Labid bin Asam himself, according to others, his sisters were more skilled than him and he got the spell cast through them. Whatever be the case, Labid placed this spell in the spathe of a male date-tree and his it under a stone at the bottom of Dharwan or Dhi Arwan, the well of Bani Zurayq. The spell took one whole year to have effect upon the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). In the latter half of the year the Holy Prophet started feeling as if was unwell. The last forty days became hard on him, of which the last three days were even harder. But its maximum effect on him was that he way melting away from within. He thought he had done a thing whereas, in fact, he had not done it: he thought he had visited his wives whereas he had not visited them; and sometimes he would doubt having seen something whereas, in fact, he had not seen it. All these effects were confined to his own person; so much so that the other people could not notice what state he was passing through. As for his being a Prophet, no change occurred in the performance of his duties.

There is no tradition to say that he might have forgotten some verses of the Qur'an in those days, or might have recited a verse wrongly, or a change might have occurred in the assemblies and in his counsels and sermons, or he might have presented a discourse as Revelation which may not have been revealed to him, or he might have missed a Prayer and thought that he had performed it. God forbid, if any such thing had happened, it would have caused a clamor and the whole of Arabia would have known that a magician had overpowered the one whom no power had been able to overpower. But the Holy Prophet's position as a Prophet remained wholly unaffected by it. Only in his personal life he remained worried on account of it. At last, one day when he was in the house of Hadrat Aishah, he prayed to Allah to be restored to full health. In the meantime he fell asleep or drowsed and on waking he said to Hadrat Aishah: "My Lord has told me what I had asked of Him." Hadrat Aishah asked what it was. He replied: "Two men (i.e. two angels in human guise) came to me. One sat near my head and the other near my feet. The first asked: what has happened to him? The other replied: Magic has been worked on him. The first asked: who has worked it? He replied: Labid bin Asam. He asked: In what is it contained? He replied: In the comb and hair covered in the spathe of a male date-tree. He asked: where is it? He replied: under a stone at the bottom of Dhi

Arwan (or Dharwan), the well of Bani Zurayq. He asked: what should be done about it? He replied: the well should be emptied and it should be taken out from under the stone. The Holy Prophet then sent Hadrat Ali, Hadrat Ammar bin Yasir and Hadrat Zubair: They were also joined by Jubair bin Iyas az-Zurqi (two men from Bani Zurayq). Later the Holy Prophet also arrived at the well along with some Companions. The water was taken out and the spathe recovered. There they found that beside the comb and hair there was a cord with eleven knots on it and a wax image with needles pricked into it. Gabriel (peace be on him) came and told him to repeat the *Mu'awwidhatayn*. As he repeated verse after verse, a knot was loosened and a needle taken out every time, till on finishing the last words all the knots were loosened and all the needles removed, and he was entirely freed from the charm. After this he called Labid and questioned him. He confessed his guilt and the Holy Prophet let him go, for he never avenged himself on anyone for any harm done to his person. He even declined to talk about it to others, saying that Allah had restored him to health; therefore he did not like that he should incite the people against anyone.

This is the story of the magic worked on the Holy Prophet. There if nothing in it which might run counter to his office of Prophethood. In his personal capacity if any injury could be inflicted on him as it happened in the Battle of Uhud, if he could fall from his horse and be hurt as is confirmed by the *Hadith*, if he could be stung by a scorpion as has been mentioned in some Traditions and none of these negates the protection promised him by Allah in his capacity as a Prophet, he could also fall ill under the influence of magic in his personal capacity. That a Prophet can be affected by magic is also confirmed by the Qur'an. In Surah Al- A'raf it has been said about the magicians of Pharaoh that when they confronted the Prophet Moses, they bewitched the eyes of thousands of people who had assembled to witness the encounter (v. 116). In Surah Ta Ha it has been said that not only the common people but the Prophet Moses too felt that the cords and staffs that they cast were running towards them like so many snakes, and this filled Moses' heart with fear. Thereupon Allah revealed to him: "Don't fear for you will come out victorious. Cast down you staff." (vv. 66-69). As for the objection that this then confirms the accusation of the disbelievers of Makkah that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was a bewitched man, its answer is that the disbelievers did not call him a bewitched man in the sense that he had fallen ill under that effect of magic cast by somebody, but in the sense that some magician has, God forbid, made him mad, and he had made claim to Prophethood and was telling the people tales of Hell and Heaven in his same madness. Now, obviously this objection does not at all apply to a matter about which history confirms that the magic spell had affected only the person of Muhammad (upon whom be peace) and not the Prophethood of Muhammad (upon whom be peace), which remained wholly unaffected by it.

In this connection, another thing worthy of mention is that the people who regard magic as a kind of superstition hold this view only because the effect of magic cannot be explained scientifically. But there are many things in the world which one experiences and observes but one cannot explain scientifically how they happen. If we cannot give any such explanation it does not become necessary that we should deny the thing itself which we cannot explain. Magic, in fact, is a psychological phenomenon which can affect the body through the mind just as physical things affect the mind through the body. Fear, for instance, is a psychological phenomenon, but it affects the body: the hair stand on end and the body shudders. Magic does not; in fact, change the reality, but under its influence man's mind and senses start feeling as if reality had changed. The staffs and the cords that the magicians had thrown towards the Prophet Moses, had not actually become snakes, but the eyes of the multitude of people were so bewitched that everybody felt they were snakes; even the senses of the Prophet Moses could not remain unaffected by the magic spell. Likewise, in Al-Baqarah: 102, it has been said that in Babylon people learned such magic from Harut and Marut as could cause division between husband and wife. This too was a psychological phenomenon. Obviously, if

the people did not find it efficacious by experience they could not become its customers. No doubt, it is correct that just like the bullet of the rifle and the bomb from the aircraft, magic too cannot have effect without Allah's permission, but it would be mere stubbornness to deny a thing which has been experienced and observed by man for thousands for years.

Question of Reciting Charms and Amulets in Islam

The third thing that arises in connection with these Surahs is whether recitation of charms and amulets has any place in Islam, and whether such recitation is by itself efficacious or not. This question arises for in many *ahadith* it has been reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) at the time of going to bed every night, especially during illness, used to recite the Mu'awwidhatayn (or according to other reports, the *Mu'awwidhat*, i.e. *Qul Huwa-Allahu Ahad* and the *Mu'awwidhatayn*) thrice, blow in his hands and then rub the hands on his body from head to foot as far as his hands could reach. During his last illness when it was not longer possible for him to so do, Hadrat Aishah recited these Surahs herself or by his command blew on his hands in view of their being blessed and rubbed them on his body. Traditions on this subject have been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Nasai, Ibn Majah, Abu Da'ud and Mu'atta of Imam Malik through authentic channels on the authority of Hadrat Aishah herself beside whom no one could be better acquainted with the domestic life of the Holy Prophet.

In this regard, one should first understand its religious aspect. In the *Hadith* a lengthy tradition has been related on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, at the end of which the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "The people of my *Ummah* to enter Paradise without reckoning will be those who neither turn to treatment by branding, nor to enchanting, nor take omens, but have trust in their Lord." (Muslim). According to a tradition reported on the authority of Hadrat Mughirah bin Shubah, the Holy Prophet said: "He who got himself treated by branding, or enchanting, became independent of trust in Allah." (Tirmidhi). Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud has reported that the Holy Prophet disapproved of ten things one of which was recitation of charms and amulets except by means of the *Mu'awwidhatayn* or *Mu'awwidhat*. (Abu Daud, Ahmad, Nasai, Ibn Hibban, Hakim). Some *ahadith* also show that in the beginning the Holy Prophet had altogether forbidden recitation of charms and amulets, but later he allowed it on the condition that is should not smack of polytheism, but one should recite and blow by means of the holy names of Allah, or the words of the Qur'an. The words used should be understandable and one should know that there is nothing sinful in it, and one should not wholly rely on the recitation of charms but on Allah's will to make it beneficial." After the explanation of the religious aspect, let us now see what the *Hadith* says in this regard.

Tabarani in As-Saghir has related a tradition on the authority of Hadrat Ali, saying: "One the Holy Prophet was stung by a scorpion during the Prayer. When the Prayer was over, he remarked: God's curse be on the scorpion: it neither spares a praying one, nor any other. Then he called for water and salt, and started rubbing the place where the scorpion had stung with salt water and reciting *Qul ya ayyuhal-kafirun*, *Qul Huwa Allahu ahad*, *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*, along with it."

Ibn Abbas also has related a tradition to the effect: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) used to recite this invocation over Hadrat Hasan and Husain: *U'idhu kuma bi-kalimat Allahit-tamati min kulli shaitan-in wa hammati-wa min kulli ayt-in-lam nati*: "I give you in the refuge of Allah's blameless words, from every devil and troublesome thing, and from every evil look." (Bukhari, Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah).

A tradition has been related in Muslim, Muwatta, Tabarani and Hakim about Uthman bin al-As ath-Thaqafi, with a little variation in wording, to the effect that he complained to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), saying: "Since I have become a Muslim, I feel a pain in my body, which is killing me." The Holy Prophet said: "Place your right hand on the place where you feel the pain, then recite *Bismillah* thrice, and *A'udhu billahi wa qudratihi min sharri ma ajidu wa uhadhiru* ("I seek refuge with Allah and with His power from the evil that I find and that I fear") seven times, and rub your hand." In *Muwatta* there is the addition: "Uthman bin Abi al-As said: After that my pain disappeared and now I teach the same formula to the people of my house."

Musnad Ahmad and Tahavi contain this tradition from Talq bin Ali: "I was stung by a scorpion in the presence of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). The Holy Prophet recited something and blew over me and rubbed his hand on the affected place."

Muslim contains a tradition from Abu Said Khudri, which says: "Once when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) fell ill, Gabriel came and asked: O Muhammad, are you ill? The Holy Prophet answered in the affirmative. Gabriel said: I blow on you in the name of Allah from everything which troubles you and from the evil of every soul and the evil look of every envier. May Allah restore you to health. I blow on you in His name." A similar tradition has been related in Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat Ubadah bin as-Samit, which says: "The Holy Prophet was unwell. I went to visit him and found him in great trouble. When I re-visited him in the evening I found him quite well. When I asked how he had become well so soon, he said: Gabriel came and blew over me with some words. Then he recited words similar to those reported in the above *Hadith*. A tradition similar to this has been related on the authority of Hadrat Aishah also in Muslim and Musnad Ahmad.

Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* has related this tradition from Hafsah, mother of the Faithful: "One day the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) visited me in the house and a woman, named Shifa, was sitting with me. She used to blow on the people to cure them of blisters. The Holy Prophet said to her: Teach Hafsah also the formula." Imam Ahmad, Abu Daud and Nasai have related this tradition from Shifa bint Abdullah herself, saying: "The Holy Prophet said to me: Just as you have taught Hafsah reading and writing, so teach her blowing to cure blisters as well."

In Muslim there is a tradition from Auf bin Malik al-Ashjal to the effect: "We used to practice blowing to cure diseases. We asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for his opinion in this regard. He said: Let me know the words with which you blow over the people. There is no harm in blowing unless it smacks of polytheism."

Muslim, Musnad Ahmad and Ibn Majah contain a tradition from Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah, saying: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had forbidden us blowing to cure disease. Then the people of the clan of Hadrat Amr bin Hazm came and they said: We had a formula with which we used to blow on the people to cure them of scorpion's sting (or snake-bite). But you have forbidden us the practice. Then they recited before him the words which they made use of. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: I do not see any harm in it, so let the one who can do good to his brother, do him good." Another tradition from Jabir bin Abdullah in Muslim is: "The family of Hazm had a formula to cure snake-bite and the Holy Prophet permitted them to practise it." This is also supported by the tradition from Hadrat Aishah, which is contained in Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, and Ibn Majah: "The Holy Prophet granted permission to a family of the Ansar for blowing to cure the evils effects of biting by every poisonous creature." Traditions resembling these have been related from Hadrat Anas also in Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi,

Muslim and Ibn Majah, saying that the Holy Prophet gave permission for blowing to cure the bite by poisonous creatures, the disease of blisters and the effects of the evil look."

Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Hakim have related this tradition on the authority of Hadrat Umair, freed slave of Abi al-Laham: "In the pre-Islamic days I had a formula with which I used to blow over the people. I recited it before the Holy Prophet, whereupon he told me to drop out such and such words from it, and permitted me to blow with the rest of it."

According to *Muwatta*, Hadrat Abu Bakr went to the house of his daughter, Hadrat Aishah, and found that she was unwell and a Jewish woman was blowing over her. Thereupon he said to her: "Blow over her by means of the Book of Allah." This shows that if the people of the Book practice blowing by means of the verses of the Torah and the Gospel, it is also permitted.

As for the question whether blowing for curing disease is efficacious also, or not, its answer is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) not only did not forbid anybody to have recourse to cure and medical treatment but himself stated that Allah has created a cure for every disease and exhorted his followers to use cures. He himself told the people the remedies for certain diseases, as can be seen in the *Hadith in the Kitab at-Tib* (Book of Cures). But the cure can be beneficial and useful only by Allah's command and permission, otherwise if the cure and medical treatment were beneficial in every case, no one would have died in hospitals. Now, if beside the cure and medical treatment, Allah's Word and His beautiful names also are made use of, or Word and His beautiful names also are made use of, or Allah is turned to and invoked for help by means of His Word, Names and Attributes in a place where no medical aid is available, it would not be against reason except for the materialists. However, it is not right to disregard intentionally a cure or treatment where it is available, and recourse had only to enchanting and reciting of charms, and the people should start a regular practice of granting amulets as a means of earning their livelihood.

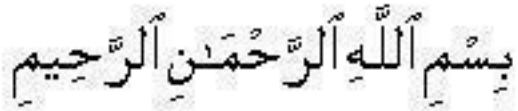
Many people in this regard argue from Hadrat Abu Said Khudri's tradition which has been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad, Abu Daud and Ibn Majah, and it is supported also by a tradition related in Bukhari on the authority of Ibn Abbas. According to it the Holy Prophet sent some of his Companions including Hadrat Abu Said Khudri on an expedition. They halted on the way at the settlement of an Arabian tribe and demanded hospitality from the people, but they refused to extend any hospitality. In the meantime the chief of the tribe was stung by a scorpion and the people came to the travelers to ask if they had any medicine or formula by which their chief could be cured. Hadrat Abu Said said: "Yes, we do have, but since you have refused us hospitality, we would not treat him unless you promised us to give us something." They promised to give them a flock of goats (according to some traditions, 30 goats), and Hadrat Abu Said went and started reciting Surah Al-Fatihah and rubbing his saliva on the affected place. Consequently, the chief felt relieved of the effect of the poison and the people of the tribe gave them the goats as promised. But the Companions said to one another; "Let us not make any use of the goats until we have asked the Holy Prophet about it", for they were not sure whether it was permissible to accept any reward for what they had done. So they came before the Holy Prophet and related what had happened. The Holy Prophet smiled and said: "How did you know that Surah Al-Fatihah could also be used for curing such troubles? Take the goats and allocate my share also in it."

But before one used this *Hadith* for permission to adopt a regular profession of granting amulets and reciting

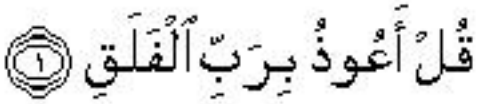
charms, one should keep in view the conditions under which Hadrat Abu Said Khudri had recourse to it, and the Holy Prophet not only held it as permissible but also said that a share for him also should be allocated so that there remained no doubt in the minds of the Companions that such a thing was permissible. The conditions in Arabia in those days were, as they still are, that settlements were situated hundreds of miles apart, there were not hotels and restaurants where a traveler could buy food when he reached one of these after several days journey. Under such conditions it was considered a moral duty that when a traveler reached a settlement the people of the place should extend hospitality to him. Refusal on their part in many cases meant death for the travelers, and this was looked upon as highly blameworthy among the Arabs. That is why the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) allowed as permissible the act of his Companions. Since the people of the tribe had refused them hospitality, they too refused to treat their chief, and became ready to treat him only on the condition that they should promise to give them something in return. Then, when one of them with trust in God recited Surah Al-Fatihah over the chief and he became well, the people gave the promised wages and the Holy Prophet allowed that the wages be accepted as lawful and pure. In Bukhari the tradition related on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas about this incident contains the Holy Prophet's words to the effect: "Instead that you should have acted otherwise, it was better that you recited the Book of Allah and accepted the wages for it." He said this in order to impress the truth that Allah's Word is superior to every other kind of enchanting and practice of secret arts. Furthermore, the Message also was incidentally conveyed to the Arabian tribe and its people made aware of the blessings of the Word that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had brought from Allah. This incident cannot be cited as a precedent for the people who run clinic in the cities and towns for the practice of secret arts and have adopted it as a regular profession for earning livelihood. No precedent of it is found in the life and practice of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) or his Companions, their followers and the earliest Imams.

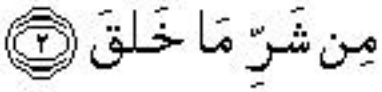
Relation between Surah Al-Fatihah and the Mu'awwidhatayn

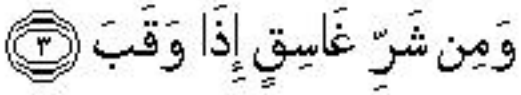
The last thing which is note worthy with regard to the ***Mu'awwidhatayn*** is the relation between the beginning and the end of the Qur'an. Although the Qur'an has not been arranged chronologically, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) arranged in the present order the verses and Surahs revealed during 23 years on different occasions to meet different needs and situations not by himself but by the command of Allah Who revealed them. According to this order, the Qur'an opens with the Surah Al-Fatihah and ends with the ***Mu'awwidhatayn***. Now, let us have a look at the two. In the beginning, after praising and glorifying Allah, Who is Lord of the worlds, Kind, Merciful and Master of the Judgment Day, the servants submits: "Lord, You alone I worship and to You along I turn for help, and the most urgent help that I need from You is to be guided to the Straight Way." In answer, he is given by Allah the whole Qur'an to show him the Straight Way, which is concluded thus: Man prays to Allah, Who is Lord of dawn, Lord of men, King of men, Deity of men, saying: "I seek refuge only with You for protection from every evil and mischief of every creature, and in particular, from the evil whisperings of devils, be they from among men or jinn, for they are the greatest obstacle in following the Straight Way." The relation that the beginning bears with the end, cannot remain hidden from anyone who has understanding and insight.

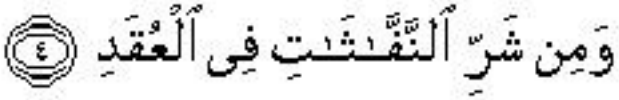


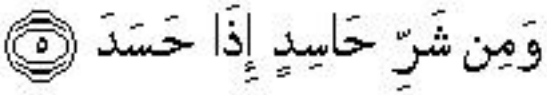
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.


قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ ٱلْفَلَقِ ﴿١﴾


مِن شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ﴿٢﴾


وَمِن شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ﴿٣﴾


وَمِن شَرِّ ٱلنَّفَّٰثَٰتِ فِى ٱلْعُقَدِ ﴿٤﴾


وَمِن شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ﴿٥﴾

[1-5] Say:[1] I seek refuge[2] with the Lord of the dawn,[3] from the evil of everything He has created.[4] And from the evil of the darkness of night when it overspreads.[5] and from the evil of the blowers (men or women) into knots.[6] And from the evil of an envious one when he envies."[7]

1As qul (say) is a part of the message which was conveyed to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) by Revelation for preaching his prophetic message, its first addressee is the Holy Prophet himself but after him every believer too is its addressee.

2The act of seeking refuge necessarily consists of three parts:

(1)The act of seeking refuge itself;

(2) the seeker of refuge; and

(3) he whose refuge is sought.

Seeking refuge implies feeling fear of something and seeking protection of another, or taking cover of it, or clinging to it, or going under its shelter for safety. The seeker after refuge in any case is the person, who feels that he cannot by himself resist and fight the thing that he fears, but stands in need of refuge with another for protection. Then the one whose refuge is sought must necessarily be a person or being about whom the seeker after refuge believes that he or it alone can protect him from the calamity. Now, one kind of refuge is that which is obtained according to natural laws in the physical world from a perceptible material object or person or power, for example, taking shelter in a fort for protection against the enemy's attack, or taking cover in a trench or behind a heap of earth, or wall, for protection against a shower of bullets, or taking refuge with a man or government, for protection from a powerful tyrant or taking refuge in the shade of a tree or building for protection from the sun. Contrary to this, the other kind of refuge is that which is sought in a supernatural Being from every kind of danger and every kind of material, moral or spiritual harm and injury on the basis of the belief that that Being is ruler over the physical world and can protect in supersensory ways the one who seeks His refuge. This second kind of refuge is the one that is implied not only in Surah AI-Falaq and Surah An-Nas but wherever in the Qur'an and the Hadith mention has been made of seeking refuge with Allah, it implies this particular kind of refuge, and it is a necessary corollary of the doctrine of Tauhid that this kind of refuge should be sought from no one but Allah. The polytheists sought this kind of protection, and seek even today, from other beings than Allah, e.g. the jinn, or gods and goddesses. The materialists turn for this also to material means and resources, for they do not believe in any supernatural power. But the believer only turns to Allah and seeks refuge only with Him, against all such calamities and misfortunes to ward off which he feels he has no power.

For example, about the polytheists it has been said in the Qur'an: "And that from among men some people used to seek refuge with some people from among the jinn (Al-Jinn: 16)."

And explaining it in E.N. 47 of Surah Al-Jinn we have cited Hadrat `Abdullah bin 'Abbas's tradition that when the polytheistic Arabs had to pass a night in an uninhabited valley, they would call out, saying: We seek refuge of the lord of this valley (i.e. of the jinn who is ruler and master of this valley)." Contrary to this, about Pharaoh it has been said: "When he witnessed the great Signs presented by the Prophet Moses, he showed arrogance on account of his might." (Adh-Dhariyat: 39).

As for the attitude and conduct of the God-worshipers the Qur'an says that they seek Allah's refuge for protection against the evil of everything that they fear, whether it is material or moral or spiritual. Thus, about Mary it has been said that when God's angel appeared before her suddenly in human guise (when she did not know that he was an angel), she cried out: "I seek the merciful God's refuge from you, if you are a pious man." (Mary: 18).

When the Prophet Noah made an improper petition to Allah, and was rebuked by Allah in response, he immediately submitted: "My Lord, I seek Your protection lest I should ask of You anything of which I have no knowledge." (Hud: 47) When the Prophet Moses commanded the children of Israel to sacrifice a cow, and they said that perhaps he was having a jest with them, he replied: "I crave Allah's protection from behaving like ignorant people." (Al-Baqarah: 67)

The same is the case with all the acts of seeking refuge which have been reported in respect of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in the books of Hadith. For instance, consider the following prayers that the Holy Prophet made:

Hadrat 'A'ishah has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) used to pray, saying: "O God, I seek Your refuge from the evil of the works which I did and from the evil of the works which I did not do." (i.e. if I have done a wrong, I seek refuge from its evil results, and if I have not done a work which I should have done, I seek refuge from the loss that 1 have incurred, or from that I should do what I should not do)." (Muslim)

Ibn Umar has reported that one of the supplications of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was to the effect: "O God, i seek Your refuge front being deprived of a blessing that You have bestowed on me and front being deprived of the well-being that You have granted me and I seek refuge lest Your wrath should descend on me suddenly, and 1 seek refuge front every kind of Your displeasure." (Muslim)

Zaid bin Arqam has reported that the Messenger Of Allah used to pray: "O God, I seek Your refuge front the knowledge which is not beneficial, front the heart which does not fear You, front me soul which is never satisfied, and front the prayer which is not answered." (Muslim)

Hadrat Abu Hurairah has reported that the Holy Messenger used to pray: 'O God, I seek Your refuge from hunger, for it is a most evil thing with which one may have to pass a night, and I seek Your refuge from dishonesty, for it is sheer evil-mindedness." (Abu Da'ud).

Hadrat Anas has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) used to pray: "O God, I seek Your refuge from leprosy and madness and all evil diseases." (Abu Da'ud).

Hadrat 'A'ishah has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) used to pray in these words: "O God, I seek Your refuge front the mischief of the fire and from the evil of affluence and poverty." (Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud)

Shakal bin Humaid requested the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to teach him some prayer. He told him to say "O God, I seek Your refuge front the evil of my hearing, from the evil of my sight, from the evil of lily tongue, from the evil of my heart, and front the evil of my lust," (Tirmidhi Abu Da'ud).

Atlas bits Malik has reported that the Holy Prophet used to say: "O God, I seek Your refuge from helplessness, indolence, cowardice, old age and stinginess, and I seek Your refuge from the torment of the grave and from the mischief of life and death, (and according to a tradition in Muslim also) from the burden of debt and that the people should overpower me. " (Bukhari, Muslim),

Khawla bint Hukaym Sulamiyyah says that she heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) as saying that the one who halts at a new stage (during the journey) and says: "I seek refuge in the blameless Words of Allah from the evil of the creatures", will not be caused .any harm until he departs from that stage. (Muslim)

We have related these few prayers of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) from the Hadith, which show that the believer should seek Allah's refuge from every danger and evil and not the refuge of anyone else, nor he should become self sufficient of Allah and place reliance only on himself.

3The word used in the original is Rabbul- Falaq. Falaq actually means to split and to pierce through. A great majority of the commentators have taken it to mean bringing out the light of dawn by splitting the darkness of night, for in Arabic falaq as-subh is often used for the breaking of dawn, and in the Qur'an also the words :Faliq-ul-isbah (He Who causes the dawn to appear by splitting the darkness of night) have been used for Allah. (Al-An'am: 96).

Another meaning of falaq also is to create, to bring into being, for everything created in the world appears by splitting something. All vegetation sprouts by splitting open the seed and the soil; all animals come out either from the womb of mother or by breaking open the egg, or some other obstruction. All springs gush out by splitting open the rock or soil. The day appears by piercing through the curtain of the night. The drops of rain pierce through the clouds and fall on the earth. In short, everything in the world comes into being as a result of breaking and splitting another thing; so much so that the earth and the heavens also in the beginning were one mass, then they were broken and parted. (Al-Anbiya': 30).

Thus, according to this meaning the word falaq is common to all creations. Now, if the first meaning is adopted, the verse would mean: "I seek refuge with the Lord of rising dawn", and according to the second meaning, it would mean: "I seek refuge with the Lord of all creation." Here the attribute of "Rabb" has been used for Allah instead of His proper Name, for Allah's attribute of being Rabb, i. e. Master, Sustainer and Providence, is more relevant to seeking and taking of His refuge. Then, if Rabbtrl-falaq implies Lord of the rising dawn, seeking His refuge would mean: "I seek refuge with the Lord Who brings out the bright daylight from the darkness of night so that He may likewise bring well-being for me from all kinds of physical and psychical dangers." If it is taken to mean Rabb al-khalaq the meaning would be: "1 seek refuge with the Lord of all creation, so that He may protect me from the evil of His creation."

4In other words: "I seek His refuge from the evil of all creatures." A few things in this sentence deserve

consideration;

First, that the creation of evil has not been attributed to Allah, but the creation of creatures has been attributed to Allah and of evil to the creatures. That is, it has not been said: "I seek refuge from the evils that Allah has created" but that "I seek refuge from the evil of the things He has created." This shows that Allah has not created any creature for the sake of evil, but all His work is for the sake of good and a special purpose. However, from the qualities that He has created in the creatures to fulfill the purpose of their creation, sometimes evil appears from some kinds of creatures in most cases.

Second, that even if this one sentence was given and no mention made of seeking Allah's refuge separately from the evils of some particular kinds of creatures in the following sentences, this one sentence alone would have sufficed to express the intent, for in it Allah's refuge has been sought from the evil of all creatures. After this general prayer for refuge making mention of seeking refuge from some particular evils by itself gives this meaning: "Though I seek Allah's refuge from the evil of everything created by Allah, I stand in great need of Allah's refuge from the particular evils that have been mentioned in the remaining verses of Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An-Nas."

Third, that the most suitable and effective prayer for seeking refuge from the evil of the creatures is that refuge should be sought with their Creator, for He is in any case dominant over His creatures and is aware of their evils, which we know, as well as of those which we do not know. Hence, His refuge is the refuge of the supreme Ruler Whom no power can fight and oppose, and with His refuge we can protect ourselves from every evil of every creature, whether we are aware of it or not. Moreover, this contains the prayer for refuge not only from the evils of the world but also from every evil of the Hereafter.

Fourth, that the word sharr (evil) is used for loss, injury, trouble and affliction as well as for the means which cause losses and injuries and afflictions; for example, hunger, disease, injury in accident or war, being burnt by fire, being stung or bitten by a scorpion or snake, being involved in the grief of children's death and similar other evils which are evils in the first sense, for they are by themselves troubles and afflictions. Contrary to this, unbelief, polytheism and every kind of sin and wickedness, for instance, are evils in the second sense, for they cause loss and affliction, although apparently they do not cause any trouble at the moment, rather some sins give pleasure and bring profit. Thus, seeking refuge from evil comprehends both these meanings.

Fifth, that seeking refuge from evil contains two other meanings also. First, that man is praying to his God to protect him from the evil that has already taken place; second, that man is praying to his God to protect him from the evil that has not yet taken place.

5After seeking Allah's refuge generally from the evil of the creatures, now prayer is being taught for seeking refuge from the evil of some special creatures in particular. The word ghasiq in the verse literally means dark. Thus, at another place in the Qur'an it has been said: "establish the salat from the declining

of the sun to the darkness of the night (ila ghasaq-il- lain." (Bani Isra'il: 78), and wagab means to enter or to overspread. Prayer has been taught to seek refuge in particular from the evil of the darkness of night, for most of the crimes and acts of wickedness are committed at night, harmful animals also come out at night, and the night was a very dreadful thing in the days chaos prevailed in Arabia when these verses were revealed. Raiders came out in the dark of night and plundered and destroyed settlements. The people who were thinking of putting the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) to death, also made their secret plans at night, so that the murder could not be detected. Therefore, command was given to seek Allah's refuge from the evils and calamities which descend at night. Here, the subtle relation that exists between seeking refuge from the evil of the dark night with the Lord of breaking dawn cannot remain hidden from anybody having insight and understanding.

A difficulty is confronted in the explanation of this verse' in view of several authentic traditions. Hadrat `A'ishah has reported: "Once during a moon-lit night, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) look hold of my hand and pointing to the moon said: `Seek Allah's refuge, for this is al ghasiq idha wagab'. (Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Nasa'i, lbn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Hakim, Ibn Marduyah). To explain this some scholars said that idha wagab here means idha khasaf, i. e. when the moon is eclipsed. But in no tradition has it been mentioned that when the Holy Prophet pointed to the moon, it was in eclipse. In the Arabic lexicon also idha wagab cannot mean idha khalaf. In our opinion the correct explanation of this Hadith is that since the moon rises in the night (in the daytime it does not shine even if it is there in the sky), what the Holy Prophet meant was this: 'Seek God's refuge from the night, the time when it (the moon) appears, for the light of the moon is not as helpful for the one who resists as for the one who attacks, and not as helpful for the victim of the crime as for the culprit.' On this very basis the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) is reported to have said: "When the sun has set, devils scatter on every side. Therefore, gather your children together in the house and keep your animals tied down until the darkness of night disappears."

6The word ' uqad in naffathat frl-'eqad is plural of 'uqdah, which means a knot that is tied on a string or piece of thread. Nafath means to blow. Naftathat is plural of naffathah, which may mean the men who blow much, and if taken as a feminine gender, women who blow much; it may as well relate to nufus (human beings) or to jama ats (groups of men), for both nafas and jama 'at are grammatically feminine. Blowing upon knots, according to most, rather all, commentators implies magic, for the magicians usually tie knots on a string or thread and blow upon them as they do so. Thus, the verse means: "I seek refuge with the Lord of rising dawn from the evil of magicians, male and female." This meaning is also supported by the traditions which show that when magic was worked on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), Gabriel (peace be on him) had come and taught hint to recite the Mu awwidhatayn, and in the Mu'awwidhatayn this is the only sentence which relates directly to magic. Abu Muslim Isfahani and Zamakhshari have given another meaning also of naffathat fil-'uqad, which is that it implies the deceitfulness of women and their influencing men's resolutions, views and ideas and this has been compared to a magic spell, for in the love of women man starts behaving as if he was under a spell. Though this explanation is interesting, it runs counter to the commentary given by the earliest scholars;

and it also does not correspond to the conditions in which the Mu'awwidhatayn were sent down as we have shown in the Introduction.

About magic one should know that in it since help is sought of the satans and evil spirits or stars to influence the other person evilly, it has been called kufr (unbelief) in the Qur'an: "Solomon was not involved in kufr but the satans who taught tragic to the people." (AI-Baqarah: 102).

But even if it does not contain any word of kufr, or any polytheistic element, it is forbidden and unlawful and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has counted it among the seven heinous sins which ruin the Hereafter of man. In Bukhari and Muslim a tradition has been related from Hadrat Abu Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Avoid seven deadly sins: associating another with Allah, magic, killing a soul, which Allah has forbidden unjustly, devouring interest, eating the orphan's property, fleeing from the enemy in the battlefield, and slandering simple and chaste Muslim women with un-chastity."

7Hasad means that a person should feel unhappy at the better fortune, superiority or good quality that Allah has granted to another, and should wish that it should be taken away from the other person and given to him, or at least the other one should be deprived of it. However, hasad does not mean that a person should wish that he too should be blessed with the bounty that the other one has been blessed with. Here, Allah's refuge has been sought from the evil of the jealous one when he feels jealous, and takes a practical step with word or deed to satisfy his heart. For until he takes a practical step, his being unhappy may by itself be bad but it is not an evil for the other person so that he may seek refuge from it. When such an evil appears from a jealous person the best thing would be to seek Allah's refuge from it. Besides this, there are a few other things also which are helpful for obtaining immunity from the evil of the jealous person. First, that one should have trust in Allah and the faith that unless Allah so wills no one can harm him in any way. Second, that one should have patience over what the jealous person says and does and should not start behaving impatiently so as to be degraded morally to the level of the jealous person. Third, that one should in any case maintain dignity and practice piety even if the jealous person behaves frivolously, being fearless of God and shameless of the people. Fourth, that one should free one's mind of every thought about the jealous person and should disregard him altogether, for making him a subject of one's thought is a prelude to being influenced by him. Fifth, that one should do the jealous person a good turn as and when one can, not to speak of treating him evilly, no matter whether this good behavior mitigates his jealousy or not. Sixth, that one should understand rightly and remain steadfast to the doctrine of Tauhid for the heart which enshrines Tauhid, cannot be affected by anyone else's fear except the fear of Allah.

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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114. Surah An Nas (Mankind)

Please note that the following introduction is for both Surah Al Falaq (113) and Surah An Nas (114).

Name

Although these two Surahs of the Qur'an are separate entities and are written in the *Mushaf* also under separate names, yet they are so deeply related mutually and their contents so closely resemble each other's that they have been designated by a common name *Mu'awwidhatayn* (the two Surahs in which refuge with Allah has been sought). Imam Baihaqi in *Dala'il an-Nubuwwat* has written that these Surahs were revealed together, that is why the combined name of both is *Mu'awwidhatayn*. We are writing the same one Introduction to both, for they discuss and deal with just the same matters and topics. However, they will be explained and commented on separately below.

Period of Revelation

Hadrat Hasan Basri, 'Ikrimah, 'Ata' and Jabir bin Zaid say that these Surahs are Makki. A tradition from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also supports the same view. However, according to another tradition from him, it is Madani and the same view is held also by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair and Qatadah. One of the traditions which strengthens this second view is the *Hadith* which Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal have related on the authority of Hadrat 'Uqbah bin 'Amir. He says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peach) one day said to him: "Do you know what kind of verses have been revealed to me tonight? These matchless verses are *A'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *A'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*. This *Hadith* is used as an argument for these Surahs to be Madani because Hadrat 'Uqbah bin 'Amir had become a Muslim in Madinah after the *hijrah*, as related by Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i on the basis of his own statement. Other traditions which have lent strength to this view are those related by Ibn Sa'd, Muhiyy-us-Sunnah Baghawi, Imam Nasafi, Imam Baihaqi, Hafiz Ibn Hajar, Hafiz Badr-uddin 'Ayni, 'Abd bin Humaid and others to the effect that these Surahs were revealed when the Jews had worked magic on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in Madinah and he had fallen ill under its effect. Ibn Sa'd has related on the authority of Waqidi that this happened in A.H. 7. On this very basis Sufyan bin Uyainah also has described these Surah as Madani.

But as we have explained in the Introduction to Surah Al-Ikhlas, when it is said about a certain Surah or verse that it was revealed on this or that particular occasion, it does not necessarily mean that it was revealed for the first time on that very occasion. Rather it sometimes so happened that a Surah or a verse had previously been revealed, then on the occurrence or appearance of a particular incident or situation, the Holy Prophet's attention was drawn to it by Allah for the second time, or even again and again. In our opinion the same also was the case with the *Mu'awwidhatayn*. The subject matter of these Surahs is explicit that these were sent down at Makkah in the first instance when opposition to the Holy Prophet there had grown very intense. Later, when at Madinah storms of opposition were raised by the hypocrites, Jews and polytheists, the Holy Prophet was instructed to recite these very Surahs, as has been mentioned in the above cited tradition from Hadrat Uqbah bin Amir. After this, when magic was worked on him, and his illness grew intense, Gabriel came and instructed him by Allah's command to recite these very Surahs. Therefore, in our opinion, the view held by the commentators who describe both these Surahs as Makki is more reliable. Regarding them as connected exclusively with the incident of magic is difficult, for to this incident related only one verse (v.4), the remaining verses of Surah al Falaq and the whole of Surah An-Nas have nothing to do with it directly.

Theme and Subject-Matter

The conditions under which these two Surahs were sent down in Makkah were as follows. As soon as the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) began to preach the message of Islam, it seemed as though he had provoked all classes of the people around him. As his message spread the opposition of the disbelieving Quraish also became more and more intense. As long as they had any hope that they would be able to prevent him from preaching his message by throwing some temptation in his way, or striking some bargain with him, their hostility did not become very active. But when the Holy Prophet disappointed them completely that he would not effect any kind of compromise with them in the matter of faith, and in Surah Al-Kafirun they were plainly told: "I do not worship those who you worship nor are you worshipers of Him Whom I worship. For you is your religion and for me is mine", the hostility touched its extreme limits. More particularly, the families whose members (men or women, boys or girls) had accepted Islam, were burning with rage from within against the Holy Prophet. They were cursing him, holding secret consultations to kill him quietly in the dark of the night so that the Bani Hashim could not discover the murderer and take revenge; magic and charms were being worked on him so as to cause his death, or make him fall ill, or become mad; satans from among the men and the jinn spread on every side so as to whisper one or another evil into the hearts of the people against him and the Qur'an brought by him so that they became suspicious of him and fled him. There were many people who were burning with jealousy against him, for they could not tolerate that a man from another family or clan than their own should flourish and become prominent. For instance, the reason why Abu Jahl was crossing every limit in his hostility to him has been explained by himself: "We and the Bani Abdi Manaf (to which the Holy Prophet belonged) were rivals of each other: they fed others, we too fed others; they provided conveyances to the people, we too did the same; they gave donations, we too gave donations, so much so that when they and we have become equal in honor and nobility, they now proclaim that they have a Prophet who is inspired from the heaven; how can we compete with them in this field? By God, we will never acknowledge him, nor affirm faith in him". (*Ibn Hisham*, vol. I, pp. 337-338).

Such were the conditions when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was commanded to tell the people: "I seek refuge with the Lord of the dawn, from the evil of everything that He has created, and from the evil of the darkness

of night and from the evil of magicians, men and women, and from the evil of the envious", and to tell them: "I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, and the Deity of mankind, from the evil of the whisperer, who returns over and over again, who whispers (evil) into the hearts of men, whether he be from among the jinn or men." This is similar to what the Prophet Moses had been told to say when Pharaoh had expressed his design before his full court to kill him: "I have taken refuge with my Lord and your Lord against every arrogant person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning." (Al-Mu'min: 27). And: "I have taken refuge with my Lord and your Lord lest you should assail me." (Ad-Dukhan;20).

On both occasions these illustrious Prophets of Allah were confronted with well-equipped, resourceful and powerful enemies. On both occasions they stood firm on their message of Truth against their strong opponents, whereas they had no material power on the strength of which they could fight them, and on both occasions they utterly disregarded the threats and dangerous plans and hostile devices of the enemy, saying: "We have taken refuge with the Lord of the universe against you." Obviously, such firmness and steadfastness can be shown only by the person who has the conviction that the power of His Lord is the supreme power, that all powers of the world are insignificant against Him, and that no one can harm the one who has taken His refuge. Only such a one can say: "I will not give up preaching the Word of Truth. I care the least for what you may say or do, for I have taken refuge with my Lord and your Lord and Lord of all universe."

Question whether Mu'awwidhatayn are, or are not, Quranic

The above discussion is enough to help one understand fully the theme and content of the two Surahs, but since three points in the books of *Hadith* and commentary concerning these Surahs have been discussed, which are likely to create doubts in the minds, it is necessary to clear them also here.

First, whether it is absolutely established that these two Surahs are the Qur'anic Surahs, or whether there is some doubt in this regard. This question arose because in the traditions related from an illustrious Companion like Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, it has been said that he did not regard these two Surahs as the Surahs of the Qur'an and had eliminated these from his copy of the *Mushaf*. Imam Ahmad, Bazzar, Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah, Abu Ya'la, Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Hanbal, Humaydi, Abu Nu'aim, Ibn Hibban and other traditionists have related this from Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud with different chains of transmitters and mostly on sound authority. According to these traditions, he not only eliminated these Surahs from the *Mushaf* but it has also been reported that he used to say: "Do not mix up with the Qur'an that which is not of the Qur'an. These two Surahs are not included in the Quran. This was only a command enjoined on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for seeking God's refuge." In some traditions there is also the addition that he did not recite these Surahs in the Prayer.

On the basis of these traditions the opponents of Islam had an opportunity to raise doubts about the Qur'an, saying that this Book, God forbid, is not free from corruption. For when, according to a Companion of the rank of Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, these two Surahs are an annexation to the Qur'an, many other additions and subtractions also might have been made in it. To rid the Qur'an of this blame Qadi Abu Bakr Al-Baqillani, Qadi Iyad and others took the stand that Ibn Mas'ud was not in fact a denier of the *Mu'awwidhatayn* being Qur'anic but only refused to write them in the *Mushaf*. For, according to him, only that which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had allowed, should be written in the *Mushaf*, and Ibn Mas'ud did not receive the information that the Holy Prophet had

allowed this. But this stand is not correct, for according to sound evidence, it is confirmed that Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) had denied that these were Surahs of the Qur'an. Some other scholars, for instance, Imam Nawawi, Imam Ibn Hazm and Imam Fakhr-ud-din Razi, regard this as a pure lie and falsehood that Ibn Mas'ud had asserted any such thing. But to reject genuine historical facts without sound evidence is unscientific.

Now, the question is: How can the blame that attaches to the Qur'an because of these traditions of Ibn Mas'ud correctly refuted? This question has several answers which we shall give below in sequence:

1. Hafiz Bazzar after relating these traditions of Ibn Mas'ud in his *Musnad*, has written that he is solitary and isolated in his this opinion; no one from among the Companions has supported this view.

2. The copies of the Qur'an which the third Caliph, Hadrat Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him), had got compiled by the consensus of the Companions and which he had sent from the Islamic Caliphate officially to the centers of the world of Islam contained both these Surahs.

3. The *Mushaf* which, since the sacred time of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) till today, has the seal of consensus of the entire world of Islam, contains both these Surahs. The solitary opinion of only Abdullah bin Mas'ud, in spite of his high rank, has no weight against this great consensus.

4. It is confirmed by sound and reliable *ahadith* from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) that he not only recited these Surahs in the Prayer himself but instructed others also to recite them, and taught them to the people as the Surahs of the Qur'an. Consider, for instance, the following *ahadith*:

We have cited on the authority of Muslim, Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Nasai the tradition of Hadrat Uqbah bin Amir that the Holy Prophet told him about Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An- Nas, saying that those verses had been revealed to him that night. A tradition in Nasai from Uqbah bin Amir is to the effect that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) recited both these Surahs in the Morning Prayer. Imam Ahmad on sound authority has related in his *Musnad* the tradition from a Companion that the Holy Prophet said to him, "When you perform the Prayer, recite both these Surahs in it."

In Musnad Ahmad, Abu Daud and Nasai this tradition of Uqbah bin Amir has been related: "The Holy Prophet said to him: Should I not teach you two such Surahs as are among the best Surahs that the people recite? He said: Do teach me, O Messenger of Allah. Thereupon the Holy Prophet taught him the *Mu'awwidhatayn*. Then the Prayer began and the Holy Prophet recited the same two Surahs in it also, and when after the Prayer the Holy Prophet passed by him, he said to him, 'O Uqbah, how did you like it?' Then he instructed him to the effect: When you go to bed, and when you get up from bed, recite these Surahs."

In Musnad Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Nasa'i there is a tradition from Uqbah bin Amir, saying that the Holy Prophet exhorted him to recite the *Mu'awwidhat* (i.e. *Qul Huwa Allahu ahad* and the *Mu'awwidhatayn*) after every Prayer.

Nasai, Ibn Marduyah and Hakim have related this tradition also from Uqbah bin Amir: "Once the Holy Prophet was

riding on a conveyance and I was walking along with him with my hand placed on his sacred foot. I said: Kindly teach me Surah Hud or Surah Yusuf. He replied: In the sight of Allah there is nothing more beneficial for the servant than *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq*."

A tradition from Abdullah bin Abid al-Juhani has been related by Nasai, Baihaqi and Ibn Sad, saying that the Holy Prophet said to him: "Ibn Abid, should I not tell you what are the best things out of the means by which the seekers of refuge have sought refuge with Allah? I submitted: Do teach me, O Messenger of Allah. He replied: *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil- falaq* and *Qul a-udhu bi Rabbin-nas* - both these Surahs."

Ibn Marduyah had related from Hadrat Umm Salamah: "The Surahs best liked by Allah are: *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*."

Here, the question arises: what caused Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud the misunderstanding that these two are not Surahs of the Qur'an? We get the answer to it when we combine two traditions: first, that Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud asserted that this was only a command which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was given to teach him the method of seeking refuge with Allah; second, the tradition which Imam Bukhari has related in his *Sahih*, Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad*, Hafiz Abu Bakr al- Humaidi in his *Musnad*, Abu Nu'aim in his *Al-Mustakhraj* and Nasai in his *Sunan*, with different chains of transmitters, on the authority of Zirr bin Hubaish, with a slight variation in wording from Hadrat Ubayy bin Kab, who held a distinguished place among the Companions on the basis of his knowledge of the Qur'an. Zirr bin Hubaish states: "I said to Hadrat Ubayy: Your brother, Abdullah bin Mas'ud, says these things. What do you say about this view? He replied: I had questioned the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about this. He said to me: I was told to say '*qul*', so I said '*qul*'. Therefore, we too say the same as the Holy Prophet said."

In the tradition related by Imam Ahmad, Hadrat Ubayy's words are to the effect: "I bear witness that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) told me that Gabriel (peace be on him) had told him to say: *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq*; therefore, he recited likewise, and Gabriel asked him to say: *Qul a'udhu bi- Rabbin-nas*; therefore he too said likewise. Hence, we too say as the Holy Prophet said." A little consideration of these two traditions will show that the word *qul* (say) in the two Surahs caused Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud the misunderstanding that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had been commanded to say: *A'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *A'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*. But he did not feel any need to question the Holy Prophet about it. In the mind of Hadrat Ubbay bin Kab also a question arose about his and he put it before the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet replied: "Since Gabriel (peace be on him) had said *qul*, so I too say *qul*." Let us put it like this. If somebody is commanded and asked: "Say, I seek refuge", he will not carry out the command, saying: "Say, I seek refuge", but he will drop the work "say" and say: "I seek refuge." On the contrary, if the messenger of a superior officer conveys to somebody the message in these words: "Say, I seek refuge", and this command is given to him not only for his own person but to be conveyed to others, he will convey the words of the message verbatim to the people, and will not have the permission to drop anything from the text of the message. Thus, the fact that these two Surahs begin with the word *qul* is a clear proof that it is Divine Word, which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was bound to convey verbatim. It was not merely a command given to him for his person. Besides these two Surahs, there are 330 other verses in the Qur'an which begin with the word *qul* (say). The presence of *qul* in all these is a proof that it is Divine Word. which was obligatory for the Holy Prophet to convey verbatim; otherwise if *qul* everywhere had

meant a command, the Holy Prophet would have dropped it and said only that which he was commanded to say, and it would not have been recorded in the Qur'an, but, on the contrary, he would have remained content with saying only what he was commanded to say.

Here, if one considers this, one can understand fully well how unreasonable it is to regard the Companions as infallible and to make the clamor that a Companion has been defamed as soon as one hears a saying or doing of his being described as wrong. Here, one can clearly see what a blunder happened to be committed by an illustrious Companion like Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud about two Surahs of the Qur'an. If such an error could be committed by an eminent Companion like him, others also might commit an error. We can examine it in the scientific way, and describe it as wrong if a thing said or done by a Companion is proved to be wrong. But wicked indeed would be the person who went beyond describing a wrong act as wrong and started reproving and finding fault with the Companions of the Holy Prophet of Allah. Concerning the *Mu'awwidhatayn* the commentators and traditionists have described the opinion of Ibn Mas'ud as wrong, but no one has dared to say that by denying these two Surahs of the Qur'an, he had, God forbid, become a disbeliever.

Question of Holy Prophet's being affected by Magic

The second thing that has arisen in respect of these two Surahs is that, according to traditions, magic had been worked on the Holy Prophet, and he had fallen ill under its effect, and Gabriel (peace be on him) had instructed him to repeat these Surahs to remove the charm. This has been objected to by many rationalists of both ancient and modern times. They say that if these traditions are accepted, the whole *Shari'ah* becomes doubtful. For if the Prophet could be charmed, and according to these traditions he was charmed, one cannot say what the Prophet might have been made to say and do under the influence of magic by his opponents, and what in his teaching may be Divine and what the result of magic. Not only this: they also allege that if this is accepted as true, it might well be that the Prophet might have been prompted to make the claim to Prophethood through magic and the Prophet by misunderstanding might have thought that an angel had come to him. They also argue that these traditions clash with the Qur'an. The Qur'an mentions the accusation of the disbelievers who said that the Prophet was bewitched (Bani Isra'il: 47), but these traditions confirm the accusation of the disbelievers that the Prophet had actually been charmed and bewitched.

For a proper investigation of this question it is necessary that one should first see whether it is established by authentic historical evidence that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had actually been affected by magic, and if so, what it was and to what extent. Then it should be seen whether the objections raised against what is established historically do actually apply to it or not.

The Muslim scholars of the earliest period were truly honest and upright in that they did not try to corrupt history or conceal facts according to their own ideas, concepts and assumptions. They conveyed intact to the later generations whatever was confirmed historically, and did not at all care how the material supplied by them could be used by the one who was bent upon drawing perverse conclusions from the facts. Now, if something stands confirmed by authentic and historical means, it is neither right for an honest and right-minded person that he should deny history on the ground that in case he accepted it, it would lead to these evil results according to his thinking, nor it is right that he should add to and stretch beyond its genuine limits by conjecture and speculation whatever is

established historically. Instead, he should accept history as history and then see what is actually proved by it and what is not.

As far as the historical aspect is concerned, the incident of the Holy Prophet's being affected by magic is absolutely confirmed, and if it can be refuted by scientific criticism, then no historical event of the world can be proved right and genuine. It has been related by Bukhari, Muslim, Nasai, Ibn Majah, Imam Ahmad, Abdur Razzaq, Humaidi, Baihaqi, Tabarani, Ibn Sad, Ibn Mardayah, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Hakim, Abd bin Humaid and other traditionists on the authority of Hadrat Aishah, Hadrat Zaid bin Arqam and Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, through so many different and numerous channels that forgery is out of the question. Although each tradition by itself is an isolated report (*khabar wahid*), we give it below as a connected event from the details provided by the traditions.

After the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) returned to Madinah, a deputation of the Jews of Khaibar visited Madinah in Muharram, A.H. 7 and met a famous magician, Labid bin Asam, who belonged to the Ansar tribe of Bani Zurayq. They said to him: "You know how Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has treated us. We have tried our best to bewitch him but have not succeeded. Now we have come to you because you are a more skilled magician. Here are three gold coins, accept these and cast a powerful magic spell on Muhammad." In those days the Holy Prophet had a Jewish boy as his attendant. Through him they obtained a piece of the Holy Prophet's comb with some hair stuck to it. Magic was worked on the same hair and the teeth of the comb. According to some traditions, magic was worked by Labid bin Asam himself, according to others, his sisters were more skilled than him and he got the spell cast through them. Whatever be the case, Labid placed this spell in the spathe of a male date-tree and his it under a stone at the bottom of Dharwan or Dhi Arwan, the well of Bani Zurayq. The spell took one whole year to have effect upon the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). In the latter half of the year the Holy Prophet started feeling as if was unwell. The last forty days became hard on him, of which the last three days were even harder. But its maximum effect on him was that he way melting away from within. He thought he had done a thing whereas, in fact, he had not done it: he thought he had visited his wives whereas he had not visited them; and sometimes he would doubt having seen something whereas, in fact, he had not seen it. All these effects were confined to his own person; so much so that the other people could not notice what state he was passing through. As for his being a Prophet, no change occurred in the performance of his duties.

There is no tradition to say that he might have forgotten some verses of the Qur'an in those days, or might have recited a verse wrongly, or a change might have occurred in the assemblies and in his counsels and sermons, or he might have presented a discourse as Revelation which may not have been revealed to him, or he might have missed a Prayer and thought that he had performed it. God forbid, if any such thing had happened, it would have caused a clamor and the whole of Arabia would have known that a magician had overpowered the one whom no power had been able to overpower. But the Holy Prophet's position as a Prophet remained wholly unaffected by it. Only in his personal life he remained worried on account of it. At last, one day when he was in the house of Hadrat Aishah, he prayed to Allah to be restored to full health. In the meantime he fell asleep or drowsed and on waking he said to Hadrat Aishah: "My Lord has told me what I had asked of Him." Hadrat Aishah asked what it was. He replied: "Two men (i.e. two angels in human guise) came to me. One sat near my head and the other near my feet. The first asked: what has happened to him? The other replied: Magic has been worked on him. The first asked: who has worked it? He replied: Labid bin Asam. He asked: In what is it contained? He replied: In the comb and hair covered in the spathe of a male date-tree. He asked: where is it? He replied: under a stone at the bottom of Dhi

Arwan (or Dharwan), the well of Bani Zurayq. He asked: what should be done about it? He replied: the well should be emptied and it should be taken out from under the stone. The Holy Prophet then sent Hadrat Ali, Hadrat Ammar bin Yasir and Hadrat Zubair: They were also joined by Jubair bin Iyas az-Zurqi (two men from Bani Zurayq). Later the Holy Prophet also arrived at the well along with some Companions. The water was taken out and the spathe recovered. There they found that beside the comb and hair there was a cord with eleven knots on it and a wax image with needles pricked into it. Gabriel (peace be on him) came and told him to repeat the *Mu'awwidhatayn*. As he repeated verse after verse, a knot was loosened and a needle taken out every time, till on finishing the last words all the knots were loosened and all the needles removed, and he was entirely freed from the charm. After this he called Labid and questioned him. He confessed his guilt and the Holy Prophet let him go, for he never avenged himself on anyone for any harm done to his person. He even declined to talk about it to others, saying that Allah had restored him to health; therefore he did not like that he should incite the people against anyone.

This is the story of the magic worked on the Holy Prophet. There if nothing in it which might run counter to his office of Prophethood. In his personal capacity if any injury could be inflicted on him as it happened in the Battle of Uhud, if he could fall from his horse and be hurt as is confirmed by the *Hadith*, if he could be stung by a scorpion as has been mentioned in some Traditions and none of these negates the protection promised him by Allah in his capacity as a Prophet, he could also fall ill under the influence of magic in his personal capacity. That a Prophet can be affected by magic is also confirmed by the Qur'an. In Surah Al- A'raf it has been said about the magicians of Pharaoh that when they confronted the Prophet Moses, they bewitched the eyes of thousands of people who had assembled to witness the encounter (v. 116). In Surah Ta Ha it has been said that not only the common people but the Prophet Moses too felt that the cords and staffs that they cast were running towards them like so many snakes, and this filled Moses' heart with fear. Thereupon Allah revealed to him: "Don't fear for you will come out victorious. Cast down you staff." (vv. 66-69). As for the objection that this then confirms the accusation of the disbelievers of Makkah that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was a bewitched man, its answer is that the disbelievers did not call him a bewitched man in the sense that he had fallen ill under that effect of magic cast by somebody, but in the sense that some magician has, God forbid, made him mad, and he had made claim to Prophethood and was telling the people tales of Hell and Heaven in his same madness. Now, obviously this objection does not at all apply to a matter about which history confirms that the magic spell had affected only the person of Muhammad (upon whom be peace) and not the Prophethood of Muhammad (upon whom be peace), which remained wholly unaffected by it.

In this connection, another thing worthy of mention is that the people who regard magic as a kind of superstition hold this view only because the effect of magic cannot be explained scientifically. But there are many things in the world which one experiences and observes but one cannot explain scientifically how they happen. If we cannot give any such explanation it does not become necessary that we should deny the thing itself which we cannot explain. Magic, in fact, is a psychological phenomenon which can affect the body through the mind just as physical things affect the mind through the body. Fear, for instance, is a psychological phenomenon, but it affects the body: the hair stand on end and the body shudders. Magic does not; in fact, change the reality, but under its influence man's mind and senses start feeling as if reality had changed. The staffs and the cords that the magicians had thrown towards the Prophet Moses, had not actually become snakes, but the eyes of the multitude of people were so bewitched that everybody felt they were snakes; even the senses of the Prophet Moses could not remain unaffected by the magic spell. Likewise, in Al-Baqarah: 102, it has been said that in Babylon people learned such magic from Harut and Marut as could cause division between husband and wife. This too was a psychological phenomenon. Obviously, if

the people did not find it efficacious by experience they could not become its customers. No doubt, it is correct that just like the bullet of the rifle and the bomb from the aircraft, magic too cannot have effect without Allah's permission, but it would be mere stubbornness to deny a thing which has been experienced and observed by man for thousands for years.

Question of Reciting Charms and Amulets in Islam

The third thing that arises in connection with these Surahs is whether recitation of charms and amulets has any place in Islam, and whether such recitation is by itself efficacious or not. This question arises for in many *ahadith* it has been reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) at the time of going to bed every night, especially during illness, used to recite the Mu'awwidhatayn (or according to other reports, the *Mu'awwidhat*, i.e. *Qul Huwa-Allahu Ahad* and the *Mu'awwidhatayn*) thrice, blow in his hands and then rub the hands on his body from head to foot as far as his hands could reach. During his last illness when it was not longer possible for him to so do, Hadrat Aishah recited these Surahs herself or by his command blew on his hands in view of their being blessed and rubbed them on his body. Traditions on this subject have been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Nasai, Ibn Majah, Abu Da'ud and Mu'atta of Imam Malik through authentic channels on the authority of Hadrat Aishah herself beside whom no one could be better acquainted with the domestic life of the Holy Prophet.

In this regard, one should first understand its religious aspect. In the *Hadith* a lengthy tradition has been related on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, at the end of which the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "The people of my *Ummah* to enter Paradise without reckoning will be those who neither turn to treatment by branding, nor to enchanting, nor take omens, but have trust in their Lord." (Muslim). According to a tradition reported on the authority of Hadrat Mughirah bin Shubah, the Holy Prophet said: "He who got himself treated by branding, or enchanting, became independent of trust in Allah." (Tirmidhi). Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud has reported that the Holy Prophet disapproved of ten things one of which was recitation of charms and amulets except by means of the *Mu'awwidhatayn* or *Mu'awwidhat*. (Abu Daud, Ahmad, Nasai, Ibn Hibban, Hakim). Some *ahadith* also show that in the beginning the Holy Prophet had altogether forbidden recitation of charms and amulets, but later he allowed it on the condition that is should not smack of polytheism, but one should recite and blow by means of the holy names of Allah, or the words of the Qur'an. The words used should be understandable and one should know that there is nothing sinful in it, and one should not wholly rely on the recitation of charms but on Allah's will to make it beneficial." After the explanation of the religious aspect, let us now see what the *Hadith* says in this regard.

Tabarani in As-Saghir has related a tradition on the authority of Hadrat Ali, saying: "One the Holy Prophet was stung by a scorpion during the Prayer. When the Prayer was over, he remarked: God's curse be on the scorpion: it neither spares a praying one, nor any other. Then he called for water and salt, and started rubbing the place where the scorpion had stung with salt water and reciting *Qul ya ayyuhal-kafirun*, *Qul Huwa Allahu ahad*, *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbil-falaq* and *Qul a'udhu bi-Rabbin-nas*, along with it."

Ibn Abbas also has related a tradition to the effect: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) used to recite this invocation over Hadrat Hasan and Husain: *U'idhu kuma bi-kalimat Allahit-tamati min kulli shaitan-in wa hammati-wa min kulli ayt-in-lam nati*: "I give you in the refuge of Allah's blameless words, from every devil and troublesome thing, and from every evil look." (Bukhari, Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah).

A tradition has been related in Muslim, Muwatta, Tabarani and Hakim about Uthman bin al-As ath-Thaqafi, with a little variation in wording, to the effect that he complained to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), saying: "Since I have become a Muslim, I feel a pain in my body, which is killing me." The Holy Prophet said: "Place your right hand on the place where you feel the pain, then recite *Bismillah* thrice, and *A'udhu billahi wa qudratihi min sharri ma ajidu wa uhadhiru* ("I seek refuge with Allah and with His power from the evil that I find and that I fear") seven times, and rub your hand." In *Muwatta* there is the addition: "Uthman bin Abi al-As said: After that my pain disappeared and now I teach the same formula to the people of my house."

Musnad Ahmad and Tahavi contain this tradition from Talq bin Ali: "I was stung by a scorpion in the presence of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). The Holy Prophet recited something and blew over me and rubbed his hand on the affected place."

Muslim contains a tradition from Abu Said Khudri, which says: "Once when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) fell ill, Gabriel came and asked: O Muhammad, are you ill? The Holy Prophet answered in the affirmative. Gabriel said: I blow on you in the name of Allah from everything which troubles you and from the evil of every soul and the evil look of every envier. May Allah restore you to health. I blow on you in His name." A similar tradition has been related in Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat Ubadah bin as-Samit, which says: "The Holy Prophet was unwell. I went to visit him and found him in great trouble. When I re-visited him in the evening I found him quite well. When I asked how he had become well so soon, he said: Gabriel came and blew over me with some words. Then he recited words similar to those reported in the above *Hadith*. A tradition similar to this has been related on the authority of Hadrat Aishah also in Muslim and Musnad Ahmad.

Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* has related this tradition from Hafsah, mother of the Faithful: "One day the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) visited me in the house and a woman, named Shifa, was sitting with me. She used to blow on the people to cure them of blisters. The Holy Prophet said to her: Teach Hafsah also the formula." Imam Ahmad, Abu Daud and Nasai have related this tradition from Shifa bint Abdullah herself, saying: "The Holy Prophet said to me: Just as you have taught Hafsah reading and writing, so teach her blowing to cure blisters as well."

In Muslim there is a tradition from Auf bin Malik al-Ashjal to the effect: "We used to practice blowing to cure diseases. We asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for his opinion in this regard. He said: Let me know the words with which you blow over the people. There is no harm in blowing unless it smacks of polytheism."

Muslim, Musnad Ahmad and Ibn Majah contain a tradition from Hadrat Jabir bin Abdullah, saying: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had forbidden us blowing to cure disease. Then the people of the clan of Hadrat Amr bin Hazm came and they said: We had a formula with which we used to blow on the people to cure them of scorpion's sting (or snake-bite). But you have forbidden us the practice. Then they recited before him the words which they made use of. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: I do not see any harm in it, so let the one who can do good to his brother, do him good." Another tradition from Jabir bin Abdullah in Muslim is: "The family of Hazm had a formula to cure snake-bite and the Holy Prophet permitted them to practise it." This is also supported by the tradition from Hadrat Aishah, which is contained in Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, and Ibn Majah: "The Holy Prophet granted permission to a family of the Ansar for blowing to cure the evils effects of biting by every poisonous creature." Traditions resembling these have been related from Hadrat Anas also in Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi,

Muslim and Ibn Majah, saying that the Holy Prophet gave permission for blowing to cure the bite by poisonous creatures, the disease of blisters and the effects of the evil look."

Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Hakim have related this tradition on the authority of Hadrat Umair, freed slave of Abi al-Laham: "In the pre-Islamic days I had a formula with which I used to blow over the people. I recited it before the Holy Prophet, whereupon he told me to drop out such and such words from it, and permitted me to blow with the rest of it."

According to *Muwatta*, Hadrat Abu Bakr went to the house of his daughter, Hadrat Aishah, and found that she was unwell and a Jewish woman was blowing over her. Thereupon he said to her: "Blow over her by means of the Book of Allah." This shows that if the people of the Book practice blowing by means of the verses of the Torah and the Gospel, it is also permitted.

As for the question whether blowing for curing disease is efficacious also, or not, its answer is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) not only did not forbid anybody to have recourse to cure and medical treatment but himself stated that Allah has created a cure for every disease and exhorted his followers to use cures. He himself told the people the remedies for certain diseases, as can be seen in the *Hadith in the Kitab at-Tib* (Book of Cures). But the cure can be beneficial and useful only by Allah's command and permission, otherwise if the cure and medical treatment were beneficial in every case, no one would have died in hospitals. Now, if beside the cure and medical treatment, Allah's Word and His beautiful names also are made use of, or Word and His beautiful names also are made use of, or Allah is turned to and invoked for help by means of His Word, Names and Attributes in a place where no medical aid is available, it would not be against reason except for the materialists. However, it is not right to disregard intentionally a cure or treatment where it is available, and recourse had only to enchanting and reciting of charms, and the people should start a regular practice of granting amulets as a means of earning their livelihood.

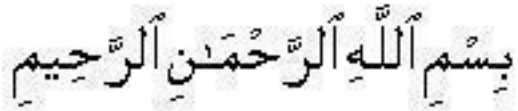
Many people in this regard argue from Hadrat Abu Said Khudri's tradition which has been related in Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Musnad Ahmad, Abu Daud and Ibn Majah, and it is supported also by a tradition related in Bukhari on the authority of Ibn Abbas. According to it the Holy Prophet sent some of his Companions including Hadrat Abu Said Khudri on an expedition. They halted on the way at the settlement of an Arabian tribe and demanded hospitality from the people, but they refused to extend any hospitality. In the meantime the chief of the tribe was stung by a scorpion and the people came to the travelers to ask if they had any medicine or formula by which their chief could be cured. Hadrat Abu Said said: "Yes, we do have, but since you have refused us hospitality, we would not treat him unless you promised us to give us something." They promised to give them a flock of goats (according to some traditions, 30 goats), and Hadrat Abu Said went and started reciting Surah Al-Fatihah and rubbing his saliva on the affected place. Consequently, the chief felt relieved of the effect of the poison and the people of the tribe gave them the goats as promised. But the Companions said to one another; "Let us not make any use of the goats until we have asked the Holy Prophet about it", for they were not sure whether it was permissible to accept any reward for what they had done. So they came before the Holy Prophet and related what had happened. The Holy Prophet smiled and said: "How did you know that Surah Al-Fatihah could also be used for curing such troubles? Take the goats and allocate my share also in it."

But before one used this *Hadith* for permission to adopt a regular profession of granting amulets and reciting

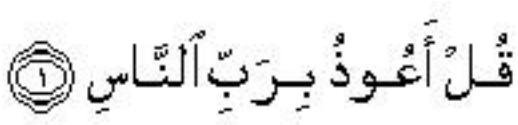
charms, one should keep in view the conditions under which Hadrat Abu Said Khudri had recourse to it, and the Holy Prophet not only held it as permissible but also said that a share for him also should be allocated so that there remained no doubt in the minds of the Companions that such a thing was permissible. The conditions in Arabia in those days were, as they still are, that settlements were situated hundreds of miles apart, there were not hotels and restaurants where a traveler could buy food when he reached one of these after several days journey. Under such conditions it was considered a moral duty that when a traveler reached a settlement the people of the place should extend hospitality to him. Refusal on their part in many cases meant death for the travelers, and this was looked upon as highly blameworthy among the Arabs. That is why the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) allowed as permissible the act of his Companions. Since the people of the tribe had refused them hospitality, they too refused to treat their chief, and became ready to treat him only on the condition that they should promise to give them something in return. Then, when one of them with trust in God recited Surah Al-Fatihah over the chief and he became well, the people gave the promised wages and the Holy Prophet allowed that the wages be accepted as lawful and pure. In Bukhari the tradition related on the authority of Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas about this incident contains the Holy Prophet's words to the effect: "Instead that you should have acted otherwise, it was better that you recited the Book of Allah and accepted the wages for it." He said this in order to impress the truth that Allah's Word is superior to every other kind of enchanting and practice of secret arts. Furthermore, the Message also was incidentally conveyed to the Arabian tribe and its people made aware of the blessings of the Word that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had brought from Allah. This incident cannot be cited as a precedent for the people who run clinic in the cities and towns for the practice of secret arts and have adopted it as a regular profession for earning livelihood. No precedent of it is found in the life and practice of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) or his Companions, their followers and the earliest Imams.

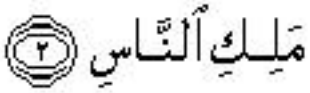
Relation between Surah Al-Fatihah and the Mu'awwidhatayn

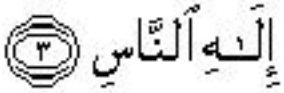
The last thing which is note worthy with regard to the ***Mu'awwidhatayn*** is the relation between the beginning and the end of the Qur'an. Although the Qur'an has not been arranged chronologically, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) arranged in the present order the verses and Surahs revealed during 23 years on different occasions to meet different needs and situations not by himself but by the command of Allah Who revealed them. According to this order, the Qur'an opens with the Surah Al-Fatihah and ends with the ***Mu'awwidhatayn***. Now, let us have a look at the two. In the beginning, after praising and glorifying Allah, Who is Lord of the worlds, Kind, Merciful and Master of the Judgment Day, the servants submits: "Lord, You alone I worship and to You along I turn for help, and the most urgent help that I need from You is to be guided to the Straight Way." In answer, he is given by Allah the whole Qur'an to show him the Straight Way, which is concluded thus: Man prays to Allah, Who is Lord of dawn, Lord of men, King of men, Deity of men, saying: "I seek refuge only with You for protection from every evil and mischief of every creature, and in particular, from the evil whisperings of devils, be they from among men or jinn, for they are the greatest obstacle in following the Straight Way." The relation that the beginning bears with the end, cannot remain hidden from anyone who has understanding and insight.

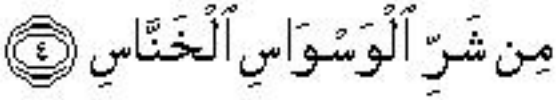


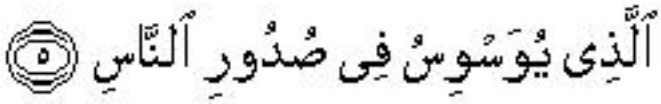
In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

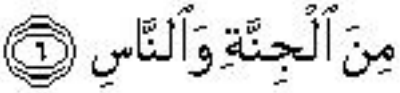












[1-6] Say: "I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the real God of mankind,[1] from the evil of the whisperer, who returns over and over again,[2] who whispers (evil) into the hearts of men, whether he be from among the jinn or mankind."[3]

1Here also, as in Surah Al-Falaq, instead of saying A'udhu-billahi (I seek Allah's refuge), a prayer has beat taught to seek Allah's refuge by reference to His throe attributes: first, that He is Rabb-un nas, i.e. Sustainer, Providence and Master of all mankind; third, that He is Ilah-un-nas, i.e. real Deity of all mankind, (Here, one should clearly understand that the word ilah has been used in two meanings in the

Qur'an: first for the thing or person who is practically being worshiped although it or he is not entitled to worship; second, for Him Who is ' entitled to worship, Who is in fact the Deity whether the people worship Him or not, wherever this word is used for Allah; it has been used in the second meaning). Seeking refuge by means of these throe attributes means: "I seek refuge with that God, Who being the Sustainer, King and Deity of men, has full power over them, can fully protect them and can really save them from the evil, to save myself and others from which 1 am seeking His refuge. Not only this: since He alone is Sustainer, King and Deity, therefore, there is no one beside Him with Whom I may seek refuge and he may give real refuge."

2The word waswas in waswas-il-khannas means the one who whispers over and over again, and waswasa means to whisper into someone's heart an evil suggestion over and over again in such a way or ways that the one who is being inspired may not feel that the whisperer is whispering an evil suggestion into his heart. Waswasah by itself suggests repetition just as zalzalah contains the meaning of repetitive movement. Since man is not tempted by just one attempt but effort has to be made over and over again to seduce and tempt him, such all attempt is called waswasah and the tempter waswas. As for the word khannas, it is derived from khunus, which means to hide after appearing and to retreat after coming into view. Since khannas is the intensive form, it would imply the one who behaves thus very frequently. Now, obviously the whisperer has to approach man for whispering again and again, and besides, when he is also described as khannas, the combination of the two words by 'itself gives the meaning that after whispering once he retreats and then again returns over and over again to repeat the act of whispering. In other words, when once he fails in his attempt to whisper evil, he withdraws, then he again returns to make the second and the third and the next attempt over and over again.

After understanding the meaning of waswas-il-khannas, let us consider what is meant by seeking refuge from its evil. Its one meaning is that the seeker after refuge himself seeks God's refuge from its evil, i.e. from the evil lest it should whisper some evil suggestion into his own heart. The second meaning is that the caller to Truth seeks God's refuge from the evil of the one who whispers evil suggestions into the hearts of the people against himself. It is not in his own power to approach all the people in whose hearts evil suggestions are being whispered against himself individually and remove the misunderstandings of every person. It is also not right and proper for him that he should give up his mission of inviting others to Allah and should devote all his tune and energy to removing the misunderstanding created by the whisperer and to answering their accusations. It is also below his dignity that he should stoop to the level of his opponents. Therefore, Allah has instructed the caller to Truth to seek only His refuge from the evil of the wicked people, and then to attend single-mindedly to his work of invitation and mission. For it is not for him to deal with them but for Allah, who is Sustainer of men, King of,men, God of men.

Here, one should also understand that an evil suggestion is the starting , point of evil act. When it affects a careless or heedless person, it creates in him a desire for evil. Then, further whisperings change the evil desire into an evil intention and evil purpose. When the evil suggestion grows in intensity, the intention becomes a resolution, which then culminates in the evil act. Therefore, the meaning of seeking

God's refuge from the evil of the whisperer is that Allah should nip the evil in the bud.

If seen from another aspect, the order of the evil of the whisperers seems to be this: first. they incite one to open unbelief, polytheism, or rebellion against Allah and His Messenger, and enmity of the righteous (godly) people. If they fail in this and a person does enter Allah's religion, they misguide him to some innovation. If they fail in this too, they tempt him to sin. If they do not succeed even in this, they inspire the man with the suggestion that there is no harm in indulging in minor sins, so that if he starts committing these freely, he is over burdened with sin. If one escapes from this too, in the last resort they try that one should keep the true religion confined to oneself, and should do nothing to make it prevail, but if a person defeats all these plans, the whole party of the devils froth among men and jinn makes a common front against him incites and stirs up the people and makes them shower him with invective and accusation and slander, and defames him as widely as it can. Then, Satan comes to the believer and excites him to anger, saying: "It is cowardly of you to have borne all this insult: arise and clash with your opponents." This is the last and final device with Satan by which he tries to thwart the struggle of the caller to Truth and entangle him in difficulties and obstructions. If he succeeds in escaping from this too, Satan becomes powerless before him. About this same thing it has been said in the Qur'an: "If Satan ever excites you to anger, seek refuge with Allah." (Al-A`raf: 200, Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 36);

"Say: Lord, I seek refuge with You from the promptings of satans." (Al-Mu'minun: 97);

"The fact is that if ever an evil suggestion from Satan so much as touches those, who are God-fearing people, they immediately get alerted and clearly see the right course they should adopt." (AI-A`raf: 201).

And on this very basis about the people who escape from this last attack of Satan Allah says: "None can attain to this rank except those who are men of great good fortune." (Ha Mim As-Sajdah: 35).

In this connection, another thing also should be kept in mind, and it is this: EviL suggestion is not whispered into the heart of man only from outside by the satans from among men and jinn, but also by the self of man from within. His own wrong theories misguide his intellect, his own unlawful motives and desires lead his power of discrimination, will and power of judgment astray, and it is not only the satans from outside but within tnan his satan of the self also beguiles him. This same thing has been expressed in the Qur'an, thus: "and We know the evil suggestions arising from his self." (Qaf : 16). On this very basis, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in his well-known Sermon said: "We seek Allah's refuge from the evils of our self."

3According to some scholars, these words mean that the whisperer whispers evil into the hearts of two kinds of people: the jinn and the men. If this meaning is admitted, the word nas would apply to both jinn and men. They say that this can be so, for when the word rijali (men) in the Qur'an has been used for the jinn, as in Al-Jinn: 6, and when nafar can be used for the group of jinn, as in A1-Ahqaf: 29, men and jinn both can be included metaphorically in the word nas also. But this view is wrong because the words nas,

ins and ihsan are even lexically contrary in meaning to the word jinn. The actual meaning of jinn is hidden creation and jinn is called jinn because he is hidden from man's eye. On the contrary, the words nas and ins are spoken for insan (man) only on the basis that he is manifest and visible and perceptible. In Surah Al-Qasas: 29, the word anasa has been used in the meaning of ra a, i.e. "the Prophet Moses saw a fire in the direction of Tur. " In Surah An-Nisa': 6, the word anastum has been used in the meaning of ahsastum or ra aytum (i.e. if you perceive or see that the orphans have become capable). Therefore, nas cannot apply to jinn lexically, and the correct meaning of the verse is: "from the evil of the whisperer who whispers evil into the hearts of men, whether he be from among the jinn or from the men themselves." In other words, whispering of evil is done by devils from among jinn as well as by devils from among rnen and the prayer in this Surah has been taught to seek refuge from the evil of both. This meaning is supported by the Qur'an as well as by the Hadith. The Qur'an says: "And so it has always been that We set against every Prophet enemies from among devils of men and devils of jinn, who have been inspiring one another with charming things to delude the minds." (Al-An'am :112)

And in the Hadith, lmam Ahmad, Nasa'i, and Ibn Hibban have related on the authority of Hadrat Abu Dharr a tradition, saying: "I sat before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), who was in the Mosque. He said: Abu Dharr, have you performed the Prayer? I replied in the negative. He said: Arise and perform the Prayer. So, I performed the Prayer. The Holy Prophet said: O Abu Dharr, seek Allah's refuge from the devils of men and the devils of jinn. I asked. are there devils among men also? O Messenger of Allah! He replied: Yes."

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Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi - Tafhim al-Qur'an - The Meaning of the Qur'an

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Preface

"The Meaning of the Qur'an " follows the interpretation of Maulana Abul A`la Maududi as contained in the "Tafhimul Qur,an." This work has been before the reading public for a decade or so and has elicited unqualified and universal praise because of the freshness of its approach and its clairity and force. It can be safely asserted that this work has contributed more towards understanding the Qur'an than any other such work in our time. For it has applied the Qur'anic principles to the solution of the problems of the modern age, and demonstrated in a wonderful way how up-to-date the Qur'an is and how surely it marches with the times.

It has, however, been felt that the people, who do not know Urdu or are not well-versed in it, cannot derive any benefit from the "Tafhimul,Qur an." I have, therefore, With a deep sense of responsibility, undertaken the delicate and difficult task of rendering this work into English under the guidance of the Maulana himself. I am fully conscious of my limitations and pray to Allah to help me in this work.

"The Meaning of the Qur'an" aims to fulfill the growing desire of the educated people to grasp the true spirit of the Qur'an and understand the real object of its revelation. It is hoped that this work will meet the demand that has been increasing day by day in spite of the praiseworthy efforts of the translators and commentators.

The main object of this work is to enable the English reader to understand clearly the meaning and the aim of the Qur'an and to impress em his mind, as far as possible, the same effect that it intends to produce. In order to achieve this,

1. An interpretation has been attempted instead of a literal translation, and

2. Explanatory Notes have been added wherever necessary.

A free explanatory translation has been adopted for two reasons:

1. A word for word translation of the Qur'an has already been done by several worthy persons and that suffices to serve its purpose.

2. It cannot fulfill the object for which this work has been undertaken. As a matter of fact, literal translation often becomes a hindrance to the full understanding of the Qur'an.

In order to avoid the common defects of the existing English translations, the following devices have been adopted in "The meaning of the Qur'an"

1. An attempt has been made to express the meaning of the Qur'an in simple, clear and effective modern English. An explanatory translation into intelligible English has been adopted and appropriate words have been placed within brackets to fill up the gaps which necessarily occur in every translation. Full care, however, has been taken to remain faithful to the original.

2. Anticipated difficulties have been removed and likely objections answered in the Introduction to each Surah.

3. The background of every Surah has been given in its introduction and the periods the circumstances and the occasion of its revelation have been specified, for every discourse has its own background and is so intimately connected with it that if it is isolated From it, its contents are liable to become unintelligible.

4. The meanings of the Text have been divided into coherent paragraphs.

5. Wherever there is no equivalent of an Arabic word in English, it has either been explained by a phrase or retained in the original.

In this connection it is necessary to add a word of caution. There is a general tendency to regard the English translation of the Holy Qur'an as The Qur'an. It is obviously a misnomer. No translation, However good is may be, can ever take the place of the original Qur'an, which is its Arabic Text, for it is impossible to reproduce its matchless, enchanting and grand style, its highly emotive and fiery language and its forceful rhetoric. Therefore one must turn to the original Arabic Text for fuller appreciation and understanding. Only then will the reader himself experience how irresistibly he is being moved to ecstasy and his heart melted and stirred to noble action

"The Meaning Of the Qur'an " merely attempts to help the reader to understand and appreciate the Arabic Text of the original Qur'an and is not an substitute for it. I pray to Allah to help and guide me in the achievement of this object.

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